

CHUNGA

10



sin city
stratozoid
Power!

Emerald City
Needler
Zapper!

The winner must
face Mozilla

Mais oui

Las Vegas
A. Katz, Prop.

CLASH
of the
TOWERS

CHUNGA

Thirty years after Deep Throat was Felt, leaking Nixon's congratulatory champagne on Reagan's pardon (cf. Wikipedia), *Chunga* is these days largely concerned with helping little Snowflakes of interfannishness to escape thawing without transfer by preserving and transmitting them to a potentially vast, potentially amused and not at all credulous audience, starting with this sentence.

Available by editorial whim or wistfulness, or, grudgingly, for \$3.50 for a single issue; PDFs of all issues are available at eFanzines.com. All postal correspondence should be addressed to 1013 North 36th Street, Seattle WA 98103. Editors: please send three copies of any zine for trade.

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Issue 10, June 2005

Corrected Edition

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Tanglewood

Rocket Summer!

Why is this zine early? I put it like this to my publishing partners: until voting for this year's Hugos come to a close, we're in a magic time where it is actually possible that *Chunga* might win the Best Fanzine award for which it is nominated. No matter that I don't honestly think we deserve to win (go *Banana Wings!*), it is still such an honor to be on the ballot that we owe a major debt of gratitude to the people who nominated us. So we decided to produce another issue in record time to thank them, as well as those who voted us the 2005 FAAn awards in the Best Fanzine and Best Fanzine Design categories.

My fannish energies were also renewed by attending Corflu Titanium; and before that weekend was half over, Randy had promises of enough material to fill at least one new issue. Your letters on issue #9 have also come thick and fast. So putting #10 in your hands this quickly was not the strain it might seem. But don't expect #11 to appear with similar alacrity; with neither Corflu nor TAFF reports pending, I've no idea what we'll use to fill out its pages.

—Andy

We've made it to double-digits, which has been one of our ever-evolving goals for seemingly ever so long. Number 9 was of course a Beatles reference, and, just to maintain the British theme, this issue's number is a reference to the PM's address.

Helping to put out a fanzine continues to be a complicated process for this neofaned. Andy, Carl, and I have no doubt gotten new insights into each other through working together like this, and it certainly feels as though we've hit a pretty good rhythm lately in tackling editorial and production needs and problems as they arise. We've had our disagreements and long moments of existential despair, but for the most part we seem to have found a way to divvy the work — and the egoboo — in satisfactory ways. Our editorial meetings are usually pretty good parties, with an excess of ideas that are simply too foul-minded to actually execute. (Fugghead bukkake may be high-concept — in the low sense — but it can only lead to war.)

Another of our ever-evolving goals has been to make *Chunga* into a stage where fans want to strut their stuff. The main approach to this is to make

the zine look good, so that writers feel their words glow and artists feel their lines leap off the page. Inevitably, however, the appeal of a zine depends a lot on the energy and attitude of the contributors, and that's largely outside of our control, except to the extent that we are contributors too and can try to strike a tone. The lettercol is also a key element in this, since it makes readers into contributors, provides continuity between issues, and creates a sense of conversation, conviviality, and community.

One thing I've noticed about this issue is that while all our writers are contributing articles for the first time, all of them have previously appeared in the lettercol. We even WAHFed this Langford fellow, but still he persisted. So send us a LoC, and you too might someday see your name in the table of contents. We hope you'll make that one of *your* seemingly ever-evolving goals.

—Randy

From none to ten, that's quite an achievement for a genzine, especially one that (despite our best-laid plans) keeps bulking out to at least 32 pages per issue. At our average of 750 words per page, that's about 24,000 words of titanium-standard prose (and occasional haiku) per issue, sandwiched with fine art from fan artists both live and dead.

And as you might think, as co-editor and design czar the latter crown lies uneasily on my head, assuming czars have crowns. The design phase of *Chunga* is fraught with carefully-calibrated intelligent design, and sometimes, due to the pressures of my decadent lifestyle of continuously seeking employment and falling behind on rent, the design of an issue seems, to me at least, ripped untimely, as compared to what it perhaps could be. (I shall now cease waxing Shakespearean, lest I end up sounding like one of the later *Star Trek* movies. Let Shakespeare wax *me* for a while.) It may not be an elephantine period of gestation, but it does occasionally feel like it, especially as we reach the final stretch. And so now we begin to **wrestle** with what will doubtless be an awkwardly extended adolescence.

P.S.: Thanx to J. Stinson for the shout-out in April's *Knarley Knews*. And did you know none of us wear glasses? I swear, that must be unique in the annals of fandom.

—Carl

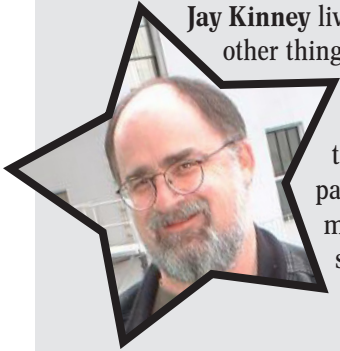
Here's hoping we don't get a nasty letter from the World Wildlife Fund.



CorFlu Titanium Tag-

“Gnostic” Jay Kinney and Michael “King Treo” Dobson

Wherein two mostly-gafiated fans encounter Corflu 22 and provide blow-by-blow email reports of the proceedings to a select circle of friends who couldn't attend.



Jay Kinney lives in San Francisco, host city to this year's Corflu. Preoccupied by, among other things, a book contract breathing down his neck, Kinney did his best to ignore the impending convention until the last moment. However, a fan in need is a fan indeed, and Kinney found himself with old fan pals crashing on the spare futon. Plus, email from Spike Parsons, fannish sparkplug and partner of Corflu chairman Tom Becker, had convinced him to 1) become a member and 2) even attend. Going into the con, he was still determined to skip the banquet. However, things didn't quite turn out the way he expected, as we shall see.

Michael Dobson has been essentially gafiated since the mid-1970s, though he's remained connected to Greater Falls Church Fandom. For Corflu Madison he published his first fanzine in 32 years, *Random Jottings 2*, and now has only 30 years more before the next issue is due. His decision to attend this year's Corflu hinged on combining the con with teaching a project management workshop in San Francisco. Things didn't turn out quite the way *he* expected, either.



THE FOLLOWING CON REPORT IS BROUGHT TO YOU IN REAL TIME. THE E-MAILS YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ HAVE UNDERGONE ONLY LIGHT EDITING TO FILL IN LAST NAMES AND CLEAR UP DETAILS. NO NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT OR GUILTY.

Friday, Feb. 25, 2005

Dobson:

I'm in the air somewhere in Flyover Country. It's 10:15 AM Pacific time, 1:15 PM Eastern. I've been up since 3:00 AM. There were rumors of snow in Maryland, so the county preemptively cancelled school, shooting the hell out of what was left of my week. I stayed up past midnight trying to catch up, failing miserably. I finally packed a FedEx box full of paperwork to do this week after the con.

I'm flying United to Oakland via Chicago. Burned an upgrade coupon to go first class, so I've

got legroom, a decent lunch, and enough free booze to dull my normal fear of flying. Haven't made the transition to a convention mindset yet, though perhaps that's just sleep deprivation (or the absence of a Chat With Ted White¹). I had vague ideas of getting *Random Jottings 3* out for Corflu, but I think the every 32 year thing works for me.

Well, looks like we're beginning our descent, so it's time to shut down. I'll hit SEND as soon as it's legal²...and by the time you get this, I'll be on the way to the hotel.

Friday, Feb. 25th, 2005

Dobson:

It's not quite midnight on the Left Coast, but in spite of naps on the plane, I'm toast.

I arrived, checked in, found the consuite, chatted with Moshe Feder about projects and compared computer toys with Moshe and Lisa Goldstein, called Ted White from the lobby and discovered

¹ TAFF winner James Bacon had revealed at a Second Friday party that getting sercon (new usage) was known in Britain as "having a chat with Ted White."

² While Jay's entries are written upon his return to his apartment in the Mission District each evening, Michael is writing on his Treo 600, a cellphone-browser-palm pilot-email client with a cute folding keyboard.

Team Con Report

VS. THE TITANIUM HORDE



Allyn Cadogan



Chris Garcia



The Harveys



D.S. Black



Robert Lichtman and Jeanne Bowman



Ted White



The Formans

All too early, I reached the MEGO (My Eyes Glaze Over) point. And so, as Samuel Pepys was wont to say, to bed.

the whereabouts of the Permanent Floating Crap Game,³ met Dick Lupoff for the first time, talked with Robert Lichtman and Frank Lunney, and finally registered.

Frank took me to see a sale of Dan Steffan art, and we each bought some. Then to dinner at Andalu, a very good tapas-style restaurant near Jay's apartment. Frank and I called Jay on his cell because we were literally across the street from his place. When he answered, though, he turned out to be in the men's room of the con hotel.

We got back as the Guest of Honor was being chosen. Frank had purchased his way to safety and I was trusting the odds. Murray Moore got the honor.

After the program items, I talked with Jay and John D. Berry in the consuite and then joined Ted White, Robert Lichtman, Frank Lunney, Victor Gonzalez, Andy Hooper, Ken Foreman and others in the Secret Ninja Lair.

Upon seeing my Treo 600, Victor immediately drafted it into the service of Trufen.Net, and began doing his own posts. Our location in Vice-President Cheney's Undisclosed Location became the Trufen.Net newsroom, and whenever I wasn't using the Treo, Victor was.

on, it's very distracting to other members of the audience."

Friday, Feb. 25th, 2005
(actually 12:45 am on Sat.)

Kinney:

Just past 12:30 as I write this. John D. Berry and I got back to the Kinney abode 10 minutes ago after an enjoyable evening at the con.

I ended up for a good long stretch in the hotel bar with the Brits (Pete Weston, the Harveys, Mark Plummer, Dave O'Neill, plus Spike and Rich Coad). Good conversation cut too short by the hotel bar's absurd 11:30 closing time.

John feels like he may be coming down with Dixie's cough,⁴ and he lost the key to our front gate at some point, so he headed back to our 16th Street apartment with me so that he could be sure of getting in. I'll read some of the zines I acquired at the con before falling asleep.

As usual, I'm skeptical about cons until I'm there — and then I enjoy myself. 'Nuff said.

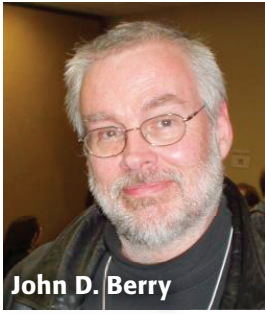
Saturday, Feb. 26, 2005

Kinney:

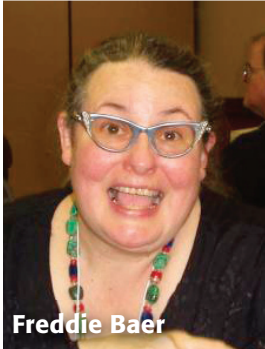
Saturday morning, 11:15 or so. I'm lingering around the flat, waiting to see if John chooses to arise from the dead and tackle another day of Corflu. I fear

³ AKA the Sercon (New Usage) Lounge

⁴ Dixie Tracy-Kinney has the flu. Now John has it. Could it possibly be...contagious? Stay tuned.



John D. Berry



Freddie Baer



Eric Lindsay

the worst. He was coughing in his room down the hall last night, and if he has what Dixie has, he is in for a rough time of it. If so, the one consolation is that he has probably already infected the rest of Corflu. He won't be suffering alone.

I myself read zines until 1:45 AM last night, an absurd indulgence. *Chunga* #9 and *Littlebrook* #4 are both "pretty good" and dovetail nicely into Corflu, both with authors and topics. Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer's *Banana Wings* #21 (which zine I'd not seen before) is a tad less compelling, perhaps due to its nearly all-text 2-column justified format, which reminds me uncannily of a magazine I used to get from Britain, published by the International Communist Current. BW #21 beats that publication, though I do miss the ultra-leftist frothing at the mouth. To make up for it, they have a Pickersgill piece.

Soon I will put on my shoes, walk to the ATM, board BART and go one stop to the Con again. Whether John will accompany me or not remains to be seen.

Saturday, Feb. 26, 2005

Dobson:

It's five o'clock in the afternoon, and the bar just opened. Originally, the con committee announced they'd made arrangements to open the bar at three, but on Friday nobody knew this, so nobody showed up. As a result, they cancelled early opening for today as well. Some of us took up station in the lobby outside the closed and locked bar door.

But all that came later.

I woke up promptly at 6:26 AM Pacific, the consequence of time zone travel, and meandered downstairs for a leisurely breakfast. Afterwards, I joined a conversational group with Victor Gonzalez (who immediately borrowed the Treo 600 again), Moshe Feder (who borrowed it from Victor so he could research ice cream joints in the area), and Bruce Gillespie (who, strangely, didn't borrow the Treo at all). I've known who Gillespie was ever since I got into fandom, but this was the first time I'd ever had a conversation with him. (I was going to say "chat" but that could be misconstrued.)

About 9:30 or so I headed up to the consuite, found nobody there I particularly wanted to talk with at the moment, went back upstairs and took a nap until 11:30, when Jay Kinney called to see what was going on.

"Did I interrupt something?" he asked.

"I was just taking a nap," I said. "But don't worry. I had to wake up to answer the phone."

I got downstairs in time to join a lunch crowd consisting of Ted, Jay, Frank, and two others I rec-

ognized but whose names I didn't know [Jay adds: *these were Catherine Crockett and Colin Hinz, hosts to next year's Corflu in Toronto*]. We went to a greasy spoon a block or so away where people ordered breakfast or lunch respectively depending on when they'd woken up. I had lunch.

After lunch, Ted moderated a panel on the new *Best of Xero* book, which started out on the topic of comics and turned into a panel on Harlan Ellison stories. Our contingent, now augmented by Carol Carr, headed for the bar, and this led to the aforementioned lobby congregation. I put on my career counselor hat and critiqued John Berry's résumé (he was combining Corflu with job hunting).

Then Bruce Townley showed up, gestured hypnotically, and the bar opened.

I'm going to pass my Treo around so the other members of our group can send greetings.

John D. Berry: Glad to see that you've got both accents on résumé, Michael. We were starting to run out of energy sitting around strenuously in the lobby, but at five o'clock sharp, the bar opened, and our energy was miraculously restored.

Carol Carr: Carol here, sipping on the bar's New Year's Eve Special—two kinds of Bacardi and every fruit juice in the known world. Great big strawberry and a side of bar food—fried grease with cheese. Heaven. I miss conventions, especially those that end after one day.

Robert Lichtman: Robert here, stealing sips off Carol's drink and eying the cherry sunk on the bottom. My third day and I'm still ticking.

Saturday, Feb. 26, 2005

Dobson:

As Carol and I were questioning our ability to make it to the Witching Hour at tonight's convention, we began to discuss the future of fanzine fandom. In particular, we discussed that in the absence of new blood, the existing crew would get older and older. Soon, room parties would end up around 9 PM with most retiring at 7 or earlier, and panels would be on topics like the new Cosmic Circle Nursing Home chain, prostate health ("How Large Is Too Large?"), and, of course, the latest TAFF scandal.

To which Carol added, "But the Harlan stories will go on forever."

Party Fun for everyone!



Saturday, Feb. 26, 2005
(actually 12:30 am on Sunday)

Kinney:

The insanity continues. Here it is after midnight and I'm typing a con-report. This is the kind of ridiculousness that occurs if I let myself go to cons. Or at least Corflu. I get suffused in nostalgia for when I was an active fan, and before I know it, I'm bidding on Pete Weston's autobiography in the TAFF/DUFF auction (which Rich Coad kindly let me win for \$37 and Pete later inscribed), and I'm typing up same day con-reports.

As it turns out, John D. Berry was just getting up as I headed off for the Con about 11:30 AM. I left him to fend for himself and high-tailed it on down there, in time to join in the trek to Steve's Cafe, a half block from the Holiday Inn. A cut above a greasy spoon, I think. I had chicken teriyaki, which was actually quite good.

Like a dutiful fan, I sat through the afternoon programming, including the *Xero* Hour, which mostly consisted of venerable fans recounting distant events. It was entertaining enough, with the Lupoffs, Ted White as MC, Trina Robbins, Frank Robinson, and Jacob Weisberg, publisher of the *Xero* anthology.

I resisted buying the *Xero* anthology, which gave me enough buying power to leap into the fray during the later auction and one-up Rich Coad's \$36 bid for Pete Weston's book. I've been hugely enjoying Pete's benign and witty presence at this con, so I had a special reason to throw my money around on such luxuries.

The rest of the day consisted of chatting with Victor Gonzalez and then trundling off with 9 others to Tulan, the hole-in-the-wall good cheap Vietnamese restaurant 2 blocks away. Plenty of food at a total bill (including tax and generous tip) of only \$10 each. Amazing.

While Michael and Robert and Carol and Bruce and Bill Burns were in the bar, Frank and I (and others behind us) were getting the Andy Hooper play read to us by a panel of fannish non-actors. I rather enjoyed it.

I wrapped things up with a beer in the bar with

the aforementioned crew and then BARTed home around 11. John had already bugged out about 10:30 to return to his sick bed (futon, actually) in our House of Pain. Dixie was still in bed, in the dark, where she's been for 3 days. I feel like a creep for abandoning her for a con, of all things, but I didn't have any say in the terrible timing of sickness and fannishness coinciding in this household.

Alright. Enough. To bed, where I'll read Weston 'til I doze off to peculiar dreams of British fandom in the 60s.

Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005 (7:40 am)

Dobson:

I did see Jay's post when I got in, but as I'd reached the MEGO point already, I decided that posting before bedtime was not really an option. Yielding to Jay in fannishness, I did not turn to my accumulating pile of fanzines for stimulating bedtime reading, but rather to one of the two books I'd picked up: *Sin-A-Rama: Sleaze Sex Paperpacks of the Sixties*. Earl Kemp had donated one to the auction, purchased by Bruce "the Boss" Townley. During a chat with Ted White I mentioned to Earl how much I'd enjoyed looking at Bruce's copy and that I would certainly buy one, and he said, "I just happen to have two more copies in my suitcase at \$25 each." I bought one and had it autographed. Later, a couple of other people asked Earl about the book, and he said, "I just happen to have two copies left in my suitcase." Like the loaves and fishes, those two books subdivided to feed the sleaze-hungry convention masses.

But I'm getting a little unstuck in time. It starts to happen about this point, and I get the sensation that all the conventions I've ever attended in my life are actually one big single con, and the time in between cons has somehow disappeared or fallen into an alternate time dimension or something.

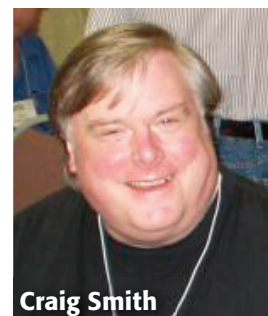
So in the last time-anchored post, we'd just opened up the bar, where we stayed until the afternoon program broke up and the fannish horde descended upon us. Bruce showed me his copy of *Sin-A-Rama*, and soon Ted et al. showed up, and this led to a trip to Area 51. Earl had gone to some lengths to try to arrange a small, intimate dinner of people he really wanted to talk with, but as the number of people seemed to grow and the original concept broke down, I joined a party of what turned out to be ten people going to dinner at a restaurant that looked as if it could comfortably seat about eight. The plan had been for the large group to break into smaller table groups, but the waitstaff shoved virtually every table in the place into one long cramped column, and there we were.



Art Widner



Hope Leibowitz



Craig Smith



Bruce Gillespie

The food was excellent, but seven dishes and three appetizers were way too much food for ten adults. Three more people (John, Bruce, and Dave O'Neill) arrived and sat upstairs. We discussed sending them our leftovers. I went up to suggest that they might want to order light. We chickened out on sending up the leftovers, but they ordered two dishes for the three of them and were full.

Back at the hotel, I talked with Ian Sorensen for a bit, missing the closing of the FaAN awards (I would have had to have someone help me fill the ballot out anyway), chatted with Ted White, and sat in the consuite talking with Carol and Robert until we moved to the bar.

I made plans for Monday night with Jay and Thursday night with Bruce. That means the convention spirit will continue through next week's seminar.

When Carol, Robert, Jay, and Bruce left, I decided it was time for me as well; I cruised through the consuite and slipped through the back of Del Florio's Tailor Shop to find the rest of the gang, talked (rather than chatted) with Ted White and others for a bit, and so, Pepys, to bed.

I woke up promptly at 6:26 AM. Damn you, body clock!

MICHAEL REVIEWS FANZINES FOR WHAT'S TRULY IMPORTANT:

- *Crazy From The Heat* #3: Picture of me, pg. 30.
- *Chunga* #9: Indirect mention of me by Ted White in letter about James Bacon, pg. 19. He mentions people in attendance at the Second Friday with James: "...Steve and Elaine Stiles, Walter Miles and rich brown did [make it] along with some of my *non-fan friends*." [Emphasis added.]
- *WorldConNomicon* (James Bacon TAFF Report): Direct mention of me, pg. 28. "Ted has a gathering of a grizzly bunch of science fiction fans—a meaner and more sinister crowd you won't find anywhere else—every second Friday at his home...Present that evening were Steve and Elaine Stiles, Dan & Lynn, rich brown, Walter Mills, and Michael Dobson." ["Non-fan friend." Sheesh.]⁵
- *Littlebrook* #4. No mention of me whatsoever.
- *Wabe* #7. No mention of me either.

Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005 (8:25 am)

Kinney:

So, I didn't dream of British fandom. I'm not sure what I dreamt of. All I know is that I read Weston's autobio amiably until 1:15 AM and the next thing I knew, Oscar the cat was biting me to get up and give him crunchies at 7 AM Sunday morning. That task done, I returned to bed, and

started conjuring images of a Get Well card for Joyce Katz—a task that Frank Lunney had deputized to me.

Image conjured, I arose and got a piece of paper and set about drawing it. Typing paper folded over once. A good size for a card that dozens will sign, but a bad size for envelopes. Thus, I went the extra mile and hand-made an envelope for the damn thing, and this before 8 AM in the morning! I can only hope that this gains me my egoboo quotient for the decade...

OK, time for that shower. All right, Dobson. Tag! You're it.

Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005 (11 am)

Dobson:

Of all the Corflu attendees, you wouldn't expect the posting fanboy jiants to be Jay and me...but so it goes.

Got downstairs to join the growing, hungry, caffeine-less crowd outside the locked banquet room doors. Jay showed up with hand-drawn card for Joyce, conversations were had, doors to banquet room opened, crowd moved into room. Ted grabbed a table in the front of the room; John D. Berry, Bruce Townley and I lost the game of musical chairs and sat further back...but consequently got to the food earlier.

We have been given a shorthand phrase "Oxygen 8" by the GoH, which we're told is an incredibly funny joke that only we get, and we are to laugh hysterically whenever the GoH says the phrase.

But we are now stuffed and somewhat sleepy, and who knows?

Bruce, to whom the idea of having his photo taken is anathema ("Magic box steal soul!"), has been dodging the various fannish photographers circulating through the room.

Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005 (2 pm)

Kinney:

I'm outta there. At least for the afternoon. Relenting on my original stand-offish plan to skip the banquet, I decided yesterday that if I paid for it, I might as well get value for dollar. I do have this Masonic Rosicrucian convocation this afternoon down the Peninsula, but that starts at 3 PM and I figured I could descend on the banquet like a fly, eat my fill, and escape in time to drive down to Los Altos by mid-afternoon.

So, I was out of our flat by 9:30 AM, with target time of 10 AM at the Hotel. John was up and stumbling about, but he waved me on to depart without him. I BARTed down, Get Well card in hand, and



Jae Leslie Adams



Marty Cantor

⁵ Ted responds: "Sorry about that. I wasn't including you in my 'non-fan friends.' But a number of Second Friday regulars are non-fans."

ran into a lobby full of fans waiting for the banquet room to open. The card started making the rounds until the magic signal, whereupon everyone ran for the banquet room, only to discover that most of the people were there already and most of the tables were staked out. Feh!

The banquet was more of a brunch than a lunch, but it was passable if not stellar. Once everyone had eaten and gotten restless, MC Tom Becker took us through the final program paces. FWA Prez went to Bruce Gillespie in a lightning strike of in-person sentiment. FAAn Awards: Lloyd Penney for the letterhack Warner award; *Chunga* for best designed and best zine. Steve Stiles got best fan artist, huzzah. It gets all blurry after that. Hooper was second place for best fan writer, but who was first? [Claire Brialley] Or was that Gillespie? I dunno...ask Dobson. [I dunno either, sez Dobson.]

Toronto got the bid for 2006, to be held in April not on Easter weekend. Eric Lindsay and Jean Weber made a valiant ill-fated bid for it to go to Australia, but were defeated by a weak dollar and obscurity of exact location.

Murray Moore's GoH speech was deadpan to a fault, but he got through it and didn't embarrass himself, which is about all one can ask. And he did appreciate the virtue of brevity.

Most foolish moment: Frank talked me into offering Dobson's and my tag-team con-report to Andy Hooper for *Chunga*, before it fully sank in that Frank hasn't even read what we've written. This may take some heavy rewriting.⁶

And now, I must don suit and tie and drive 35 miles or so to Los Altos...with the sky threatening rain. (In fact, it has just started to rain this very moment. Oh joy.)

Will we regroup for one final fannish fling later tonight? Stay tuned.

Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005 (10:35 pm)

Dobson:

The afternoon broke into leisurely conversations. I had a particularly pleasant chat with John D. Berry and Bob Webber that ranged from type to project management and shiny pretty things. John, still sick, repaired to Jay's and I repaired to the 11th floor (where, by the way, we'd learned there was a separate Rastafarian convention with appropriate hallway odors) and napped the rest of the afternoon away.

I repaired downstairs a little before 5. It had been drizzling for most of the afternoon, but it started to pour right about the time we were ready to go out for dinner. There was an Oscar-watching party in the bar, but the single overworked bar-

tender could only handle food orders in between drinks. In addition, she couldn't give us the 20 percent entree discount for convention members. This clinched it. We moved to the dining room.

Because of the rain, they were relatively packed, and their staffing did not allow for a crowd this size. This showed in service and cooking. Frank walked across to the bar side a few times to bring us Oscar reports.

Afterwards, we went through the fat lady's portrait where we were joined by Various People. My sense of detail starts to go out the window here, I'm afraid. By 9 PM, even Ted was saying, "You know, it feels like midnight already."

About 10, I felt as if I'd put down roots and if I stayed too long I'd become incapable of movement. I thought if I could only move around, clear my head, perhaps I'd catch a second wind. Well, it was a thought. I stood at the edges of a conversation John Berry was having with some people who'd already removed nametags. They were talking about transatlantic cable history, which was actually quite interesting, but not quite enough to provide that energy boost I was looking for.

I've bowed to the inevitable, so with only one quick check of the bar, I plan to surrender swiftly to the siren song of sleep.

Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005 (11 pm)

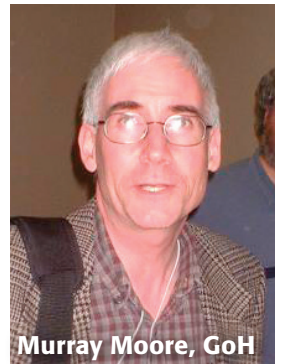
Kinney:

My post-Con day consisted of going home, changing into jacket and tie, driving through the intermittent rain down to Los Altos, grooving on the Masonic Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis (!) meeting, and driving back up to S.F. after 6 PM in the pouring rain. Yucko.

Consequently, I was not feeling like doing much of anything besides arriving home, checking in on Dixie (watching the Oscars and feeling somewhat better), looking at email, and taking it easy.

High point of the evening: a call from Pete Weston 20 minutes ago, who had gotten the message I'd sent Michael on his Treo that I'd like to hook up with Pete again if he was going to be in town for a few days. It looks like it might happen! Huzzah. Weston won my award for fan I most regretted not knowing (in person) previously, though I may have theoretically met him in passing at the DC Worldcon in '74. Not that I remember anything about that con. In fact, I can't even be sure I was there! But Pete was. It's in his autobiography, which I am going to get back to reading once I shut down the computer.

John's not back to our flat yet. But I trust that his homing device is working. I'm turning in. ☒



Murray Moore, GoH



Earl Kemp

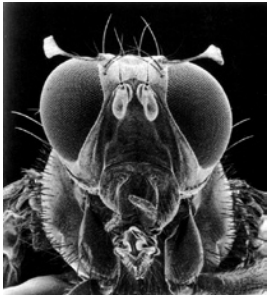


Pete Young

⁶ Not at much as we feared, it turns out.

Let's Hear It For The Vague Blur

by Rich Coad



Once a fan spent an entire convention shaking bugs out of paper. The bugs (perhaps they were aphids or perhaps they were sentient extraterrestrial bugs working as agents of a vast active living intelligent system) were hip to what was going on. As the fan shook the paper they scattered about, randomly like bugs, only to recoallesce as printed words on the paper. The aphids were trying to communicate with the fan but, being extraterrestrials and not really aware of all that was happening at the convention, let alone the long histories that had brought them and the fan together at this juncture, they were failing to get across the point.

BANANA WINGS, spelled out the extraterrestrial aphids, or ZOO NATION. The fan shook the paper harder in a desperate attempt to regain some semblance of normalcy. A BEAR WENT OVER THE MOUNTAIN spelled out the aphids; then, LITTLEBROOK which seemed to the fan to be almost a word, But the aphids crawled on, unshaken yet moving, to spell out THRILLING CHUNGA STORIES. The fan began to quake. He wondered if he needed to check into one of the new, but horrific, federal mundanity clinics. He knew the stories—long days full of meaningful, stimulating, work; evenings spent at home in the warm embrace of a loving family watching television and reading Dan Brown novels; weekends at the mall and in the garden. It had an appeal but first he had to get rid of these bizarre and weird extraterrestrial aphids. Or learn to communicate with them.

Rich Coad sat at the podium watching the fans shuffle about in their seats. They looked like a typical crop of fans in their jeans and multi-hued t-shirts. Guys all bearded and chicks with long hair. Some were even foreign which was easy to tell even though the foreign guys mostly had beards and the foreign girls mostly had long hair. But you could see they were foreign from the glowing tracer

anklets each had been assigned on entering the country. Based on advanced mood ring technology, enhanced by the technology wizards of Homestead Security, the monitoring anklets in the crowd all glowed a happy blue. Rich knew that, in addition to sending a beacon to all local cell phone towers allowing the authorities to track the movements of any non-citizen visiting the country, the anklets also monitored constantly the mood of the wearer, especially with regards to their views towards the United States, the Republican party, and, emphatically, God himself. It was not generally known that if the wearer began to think too negatively the anklet changed color first to green then to grey finally to black. If the anklet spent too much time in the grey zone the wearer was added to a list of people to be denied re-entry; once turned black, the wearer had only minutes to readjust their attitude before the anklet exploded resulting in maiming or, sometimes, death.

Rich was here, along with Spike and David Bratman, to answer questions about what was going down on the streets outside the convention hotel. The fans liked to come to these sessions and hear people like Rich and David and Spike tell it like it is or was, and to learn which directions were the best to follow to find or avoid stuff on the streets. Of course, each presenter had a script prepared for them by the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau, who listened in on each and every presentation to be sure that the city was being represented in the best possible light. Rich looked out at the assembled convention before him. It all looked like a vague blur, as first one fan then another then another came quickly in and out of focus, superimposing themselves one after the other as overlapping retinal impressions affecting Rich's higher centers of cognitive thinking. "Corflu 22," thought Rich. "It's gonna be great. Let's hear it for the vague blur."

Stately, gaunt, sercon Ted stood declaiming from the middle of the room. “The bats,” he stated, “may have their sonar disrupted by the swift rotation of the metallic wind turbine blades.”

“How,” thought Rich, “did it come to this.” Sercon burnouts infesting the very epicenter of fannishness. Even Bruce the Australian and Pete the Brummie were here, although both evinced some fannishness these days they had been huge in sercon circles in the past and possibly still were and all their fannish activities a mere cover to deflect attention from underground sercon activities.

But Ted was a special case. Once he’d been the most fannish fan alive — producing reams of material, slip sheeting in his sleep, corfluing stencils with a flourish. Christ, he’d even won a Best Fannish Hugo back in the day before he’d become sercon. And his sercon activities were insidiously spreading throughout all fandom. It was all too common to run into some amazingly talented and gifted fan, an Andy or a Colin or a Victor or a Frank, and when asked to participate in a fannish one-shot for the con to be rebuffed. “I have to go to Ted’s to get sercon.” Appeals to Ghu, to roscoe, to Foofoo himself, did no good. “Must be sercon.”

It was because of this influence that Rich’s boss, Sike, had assigned him to watch Ted over the convention weekend. “We know you move in those circles so you can avoid attracting attention. But don’t edit yourself out of the cell phone videos, otherwise we’ll know which of these sercon burnouts is actually our agent undercover.”

Rich headed back to his room and removed the pillow and washed the india ink from his beard and hair. Soon he

was moving through the consuite.

“Frank,” he exclaimed. “Are you sercon? Should we be?”

“Ted,” replied Frank. “It’s great to see you. Serconness has been bypassing me thus far. Let’s get sercon together.”

“What,” asked Frank, “do you think of Rudy Rucker’s theory of transrealism in fiction?”

“Isn’t it,” replied Eileen, “what other people in other contexts have described as writing?”

As they were getting sercon Ted began to idly flip through the program book. The hicksagram hit him hard. It showed him, Ted, transforming into him, Rich, by judicious use of india ink and pillows.

“Whoa!” thought Ted. “I’m Rich. I’m spying on me. Whoa!”

Morgan, who had been Ted and who had been Rich, looked at the complex machine on the table before him.

“You see,” said Dave, “I attach the stencil via these hooks here. Then it is stretched over the ink pad which is attached to a drum containing the ink that can porously seep through the pad. As the handle is cranked a sheet is forwarded and, as it passes under the drum the ink flows through the holes cut in the stencil. But it’s very difficult to get just the right amount of ink to flow through which is why your job, Morgan, is so important. Do you remember what it is you do?”

“I slip-sheet,” said Morgan.

Dave smiled and turned the handle. Morgan watched with deliberation as the inked sheet came out the other side. He reached for a piece of twill-tone and laid it over the freshly reproduced page. “I slip-sheet,” he thought, and smiled happily. ☒



The Journal of Federation Studies: The Titanium Incident

by Andy Hooper

Corflu Titanium fit the image of a San Francisco convention perfectly; the prevalence of a bitter respiratory infection among convention members gave the weekend a thick, druggy sheen exceeding reputation and anticipation alike. Weaving with a fever that waxed and waned at unpredictable intervals, my meetings and conversation with veteran Corflu habitués bordered on hallucination. Reading other reports of the convention, I find reference to events that I missed completely, while almost nothing I recall appears to have been experienced by anyone else. Several times I was so sick that I returned to my room and fell asleep, and experienced odd dreams inspired by the convention. I awoke wondering where and when I was, the voice of someone dead or gafiated in my head.

Friday night, while we waited for the opening ceremonies and GoH selection lottery, I fell asleep in our room again. I was invited to eat with fans, but found myself unable to walk across the street without feeling dizzy, and returned to the room for another nap. I turned on the TV to keep me company; I fell asleep to an *Angel* rerun, and when I awoke some time later, a brand new episode of *Star Trek: Enterprise* had begun.

The opening of the show apparently affected my dreams; just before I awoke, I was back in the rented Impala with Carrie, crossing over to San Francisco on the Bay Bridge. “Star Fleet Headquarters is here in San Francisco,” I pointed out. “And the MACOs have their command center in Alameda. Where they keep the Nuclear Wessels.”

The road sloped upward dramatically, and Carrie pressed the accelerator hard as we burst through a clatter of seagulls. “You wonder where they got the resolve to keep the headquarters on Earth. With their doctrine of fairness and decency,

we’d be more likely to move it somewhere equidistant from the centers of the all the major members of the Federation. Now hold on while I pass this pie wagon.”

I looked longingly at the fragments of purple and red filling in the road as we went by, then remembered I’m diabetic and can’t eat that stuff now. Then I was partly awake, and watching a group of Klingons struggle with blue-clad Federation security officers, complaining about impending genetic disaster. “You see,” said one (in my dream-paraphrased recollection), “already we have begun to look like humans!”

I sat bolt upright, fully awake.

When I wrote a column with this title before, I addressed the great burden of Federation Continuity, the challenge of trying to add something new to a 40-year-old space opera without contradicting significant elements of the stories that have gone before. While this is unquestionably a pain for the writers to deal with, it is also the central appeal of the program itself — why do a Trek series set prior to all previous iterations if not to address the evolution of elements familiar to fans of the previous programs?

One nagging *Star Trek* discontinuity can’t be laid at the feet of *Enterprise* or its producers: The question of smooth, original-series Klingon foreheads versus rough, contemporary Klingon foreheads. The question really dates from 1978, when a new make-up design was used for the Klingons destroyed in the opening scene of *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. I’ve never heard anyone really complain about the decision; it began a process of development that made Klingons more popular than Vulcans.

The discontinuity was acknowledged in a comical vein on a 1996 episode of *Star Trek: Deep Space*

Nine, titled “Trials and Tribble-ations.” Time-traveling into the events of the original series episode “The Trouble with Tribbles,” Jadzia Dax observed the physical differences between the Klingons of her time and those of the Original Series period. But when she asked Lt. Worf to explain this, he simply replied, “We don’t talk about that.” While this was amusing, it gave the impression that no one associated with *Star Trek* was really interested in generating a “serious” explanation, which is why the events of the two part *Enterprise* story “Affliction” and “Divergence” came as such a shock to me.

In the story, Medical officer Dr. Phlox is kidnapped by mysterious men in hoods, who turn out to be Federation spies working in co-operation with the Klingons. The Klingons are suffering from a virulent artificial contagion created with human DNA; part of its effect is to change the appearance of the normal ridge-headed Klingon into a swarthy human with pointed ears, along the way to a painful death. Phlox develops a technique to stop that pathogen short of lethality, but not to halt the transformation; thus tens of thousands of Klingons face life looking like John Colicos or Michael Ansara, and their visceral hatred and mistrust of humanity is given a highly plausible explanation at last. It’s



a continuity home run, even if the two-part story ended in a swirl of sparks and hot air.

My fever ramped back down as the episode ended, and I ventured back into the convention, trying to explain the wonder of what I’d seen. Most fans were able to parse what I was talking about, but not why it seemed like such an awesome turn of events. I didn’t explain the part about the sub-orbital dream on the Bay bridge that preceded it, which may have removed some of the story’s impact.

Not too many people had the same reaction I people, which does raise the question of what I’m doin’ here.

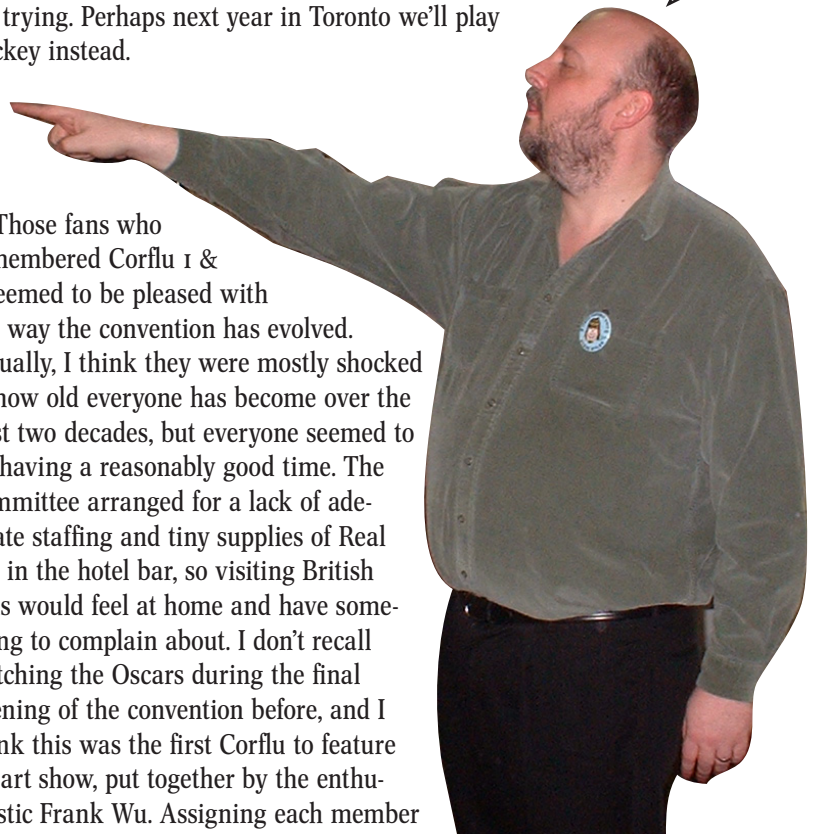
did; most shrugged, and said something like “Oh, too bad it’s been cancelled then.” But that was precisely the point; we’re so close to the end of this chapter of Federation history, and relatively little of it has connected to the events we know lie ahead. Getting this massive chunk of the puzzle so near the end is an unexpected pleasure, and just when it seemed like they didn’t even care anymore. But my enthusiasm for the topic itself was more of a source of amusement to other fans at Corflu.

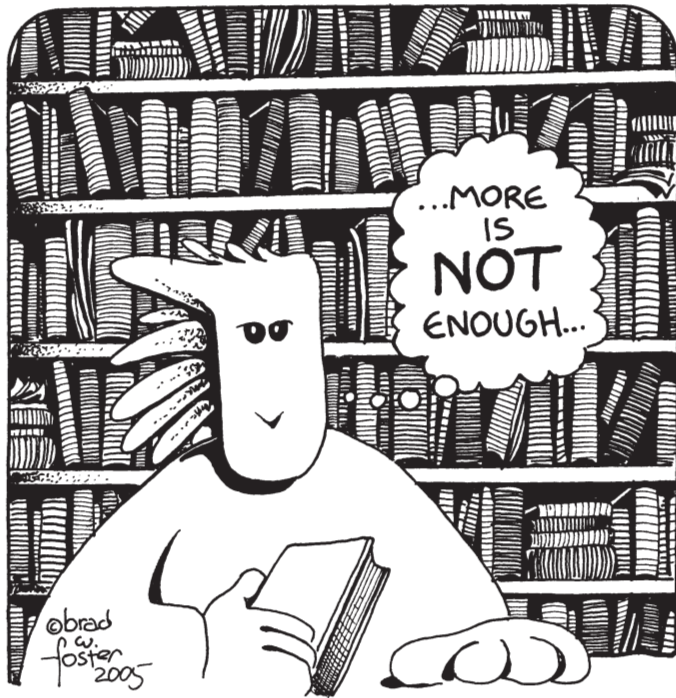
I thought that was how fans ought to be, really; educated about science fiction, even unfashionable bits like Tanith Lee and *Battlestar Galactica* (Version 1.0), but sufficiently jaundiced on the subject to tell me to shut up when I’ve talked about it for more than five minutes.

Corflu has its own continuity issues to deal with, too. Corflu Titanium had a number of members from the first two versions of the event, also held in Northern California, and it was interesting to take in their impressions of 22. Back then, Corflu was an insurgency; now it is an institution, with traditions and expectations as hidebound as any other long-running convention. I liked the way that Murray Moore threw us a curve by involving a dozen other people in his Guest of Honor speech. I was happy to see the return of a fanzine auction that was of benefit to fan funds and interests *other* than Corflu itself. I was bummed out when heavy rain and widespread illness forced cancellation of the soft ball game, but the committee deserves praise for trying. Perhaps next year in Toronto we’ll play hockey instead.

Those fans who remembered Corflu 1 & 2 seemed to be pleased with the way the convention has evolved. Actually, I think they were mostly shocked at how old everyone has become over the past two decades, but everyone seemed to be having a reasonably good time. The committee arranged for a lack of adequate staffing and tiny supplies of Real Ale in the hotel bar, so visiting British fans would feel at home and have something to complain about. I don’t recall watching the Oscars during the final evening of the convention before, and I think this was the first Corflu to feature an art show, put together by the enthusiastic Frank Wu. Assigning each member

J'accuse!





Through Time and Space With Jeffrey Combs

Actor Jeffrey Combs is probably best known to fans of fantastic media for his performance as Dr. Herbert West in Stuart Gordon's 1985 film *Re-Animator*. But Combs, who trained here at the University of Washington, also deserves some attention for being one of *Star Trek's* most prolific and durable supporting actors, with seven different roles to his credit.

Combs was nearly part of the crew of the *Enterprise* "D" — according to some sources, he came very close to beating out Jonathan Frakes for the role of First Officer Will Reiker in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Perhaps because of the impression he made on that series' producers, Combs has frequently been chosen to play recurring characters with a pivotal impact on a number of stories. Here is a list of Combs' characters, in chronological order of first appearance:

TIRON: Combs had a small part as this wealthy alien patron in Meridian, a 1994 episode of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. A brief, but visually striking role.

LIQUIDATOR BRUNT: Combs portrayed this Ferengi tax enforcer in seven different episodes of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, starting with Family Business in May of 1995.

WEYOUN: While his occasional death and reconstitution from clone stock might argue that the unctuous Vorta overseer really represented several roles for Combs, each version was identically oily and conniving. Combs wore his harmonica-like ear prosthetics in 25 episodes of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, beginning in 1996. In one episode, 1999's *The Dogs of War*, Combs had scenes as both Weyoun and Liquidator Brunt, which must have required some very long days in the make-up chair.

MULKAHEY: In *Far Beyond The Stars*, one of the most highly regarded episodes of *ST: DS9*, Captain Benjamin Sisko undergoes an extended vision of himself and his colleagues as science fiction writers in the New York of the 1950s. At one point, his dream-self is confronted by two abusive policemen, one of whom, "Mulkahey," looks much like the Vorta Weyoun. It's a bit of stretch, therefore, to call this a new character, but the attitude at various fan web sites seems to be that a different name makes him a different person.

PENK: In *Tsunakate*, a 2000 episode of *Star Trek: Voyager*, Combs portrayed a spacefaring impresario who kidnaps Seven of Nine for his interstellar gladiatorial games. A one-off, but one with a lot of screen time.



SHRAN: The stern, but hyper-honorable Commander made his debut in *The Andorian Incident*, which first aired on Halloween of 2001. The makeup features moveable antennae that remind one of *The Tick*.

KREM: Combs' played a Ferengi dogsbody alongside Original Series alumnus Clint Howard in *Acquisition*, a 2002 episode of *Enterprise*. The Ferengi eventually get clear of humanity without revealing who or what they are, but Captain Archer promises that if they ever come back, he'll give them such a zetz....

Some fan sites devoted to Combs state that these seven characters equal a record for most roles across all version of *Star Trek*. Anyone out there got any idea who co-holds this record with Mr. Combs?

—Andy

an element of a fannishly-extended periodic table for their name tag was a fun idea. Fifty people cast ballots in the FAAn awards, two of which were won by this very fanzine; probably the best medicine of the weekend for me!

It's nice to feel this kind of mellow contentment in regard to Corflu, and I have much the same feelings about the cancellation of *Enterprise*. There was some effort to mount a letter-writing campaign in the same vein as the original "Save *Star Trek*" movement, but I've heard no reaction to it from Paramount or UPN. They've been broadcasting a series of "fan favorite" episodes while waiting to go into the show's final story arc. It was stunning to see an episode from just 4 years ago, the one where veteran character actor Jeffrey Combs introduced the cheerfully racist Andorian Commander Shran (who derisively calls humans "pink skin"), his recording seventh character in a *Star Trek* episode. What caught my eye was the appearance of the Vulcan character T'Pol, played by Jolene Blalock. In the first season, she was an androgynous elf, someone Taral might have drawn — and now she's become a pouty, high-cheeked sex kitten. Even worse, the writers gave her an addiction to chemicals that limit her ability to control her emotions — certainly a far more outré perversion to a Vulcan than merely sleeping with the ship's redneck frat-rat chief engineer.

I'm willing to admit it would be better to drop the current series and start all over again.

National cable networks continue to re-run three of the four previous *Trek* series, so knowledge of the Roddenberry universe is likely to remain high and continue to stimulate fan interaction. And if producers have been willing to resurrect properties as cheese-infused as *Car 54*, *Where Are You?*, you know that it can't be too long before another group of earnest would-be Great Birds of the Galaxy brings *Star Trek* back to a screen near you. I'm encouraged by the transatlantic remake of the previously belittled *Battlestar Galactica*, which has transformed the comical Cylons into the best new alien nemesis since the Borg. If they can take something as painfully dumb as *Galactica* and turn it into something fans actually want to watch, I have hopes for *Trek* as well. *Tales of Starfleet Academy*, anyone? Perhaps by Corflu 25, in Liverpool....

—April 17th, 2005



Torching John Brosnan

by Dave Langford

Although that witty writer and fan John Brosnan had been a chronic depressive, the pathetic fallacy refused to play along. A week of British gloom and rain gave way to bright sunshine for his funeral on 29 April 2005. Despite a few large, would-be ominous crows amid the flowers, Kensal Green cemetery and the West London Crematorium looked positively cheerful.

I was a bit nervous about attending the actual ceremony, never having been very close to John; indeed I hadn't seen him for some while. But Rob Holdstock — who with John Baxter, Malcolm Edwards and Leroy Kettle organized this funeral and wake — had made encouraging, even begging, noises. A mere nine years after following the same route by rail and Tube to see off Gollancz editor Richard Evans, I'd forgotten just how long the journey to Kensal Green took, and ineptly arrived an hour early. Worries about appearing morbidly keen on these events were dispelled by the sight of a besuited figure who looked the way Ian Maule might have looked if miraculously unchanged since the 1980s. Bloody hell, it was Ian Maule!

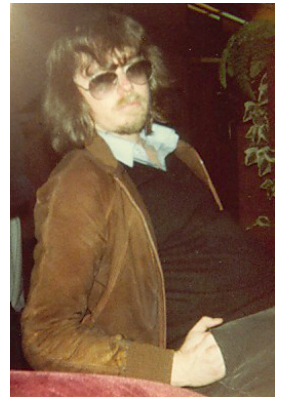
Then Chris Priest appeared, and Harry Harrison, and the maudlin reminiscences began, interrupted by cries of “Bloody hell, it *is* Ian Maule!” The growing and mostly greying crowd could be partitioned in several ways, though I'll spare you the Venn diagram. There were the old buddies who knew John Brosnan in his home country of Australia — i.e. John Baxter — or from his first appearance at a London Globe meeting in 1970: Graham Charnock, Edwards (now a supremo at Orion Books, whose Gollancz imprint publishes John's sf), Kettle, Holdstock, and Priest. There was what might be the final muster of the seventies Ratfandom scene which had featured John's scurrilous fanzines *Big Scab* and *Scabby Tales*. “The Last Hurrah of the Silver Horde?” said Malcolm later: “Maybe”. This contingent included both Graham and Pat Charnock, Edwards, John Hall (not sighted in fandom for

decades), Holdstock, Kettle & Kath Mitchell, Maule, and Peter Roberts. Only the Ratfather himself was missing, now gone into seclusion as the Hermit of Haverfordwest: Greg Pickersgill.

Then there were ex-inmates of the Ortygia House writers' colony in Harrow, whose various flats had housed a variety of sf professionals: Priest (the first to move in), Chris Evans, Lisa Tuttle (who journeyed from the remote wilds of Scotland for this funeral) and of course John Brosnan himself, who actually died in Ortygia House. He wasn't the first Ortygia writer to go. The former occupant of John's own flat was Ian Marter, an actor who appeared in *Dr Who*, published ten *Who* novelizations and died in late 1986. According to John in 1993, “I moved in at the start of 1987. About three years ago Colin Greenland moved into the adjacent flat on my floor, and a few months ago an American horror writer called Jessica Palmer moved into the flat above.”

Other pros: Pat Cadigan, marking this solemn occasion by not once saying “Langford, you dog!”; Jo Fletcher of Gollancz, Harry Harrison, Steve Jones, Roz Kaveney, Garry & Annette Kilworth, literary agent John Parker, and some guy called Langford. Other fans: Rob Holdstock's partner Sarah Biggs, Rob Hansen, Linda Krawecka (once Linda Pickersgill) and... well, most of the above. And some unfamiliar, er, young adults who I slowly realized were the Charnock and Kettle offspring. Where does the time go?

As is now traditional, this gathering was billed as a celebration of John's life and work rather than a mere funeral. A couple of days beforehand I'd noticed a *Private Eye* cartoon of a priest addressing almost totally empty pews with, “I see this as not so much a funeral, more a celebration of his life...” We knew that John was in safe fannish hands when the same cartoon reappeared on the back of the photocopied Order of Ceremony for JOHN RAYMOND BROSINAN (1947–2005).



John Brosnan, Yorcon III
(1985 Eastercon)

In the crematorium chapel, the coffin was conspicuously decorated with a plastic dinosaur and a garishly-jacketed Brosnan sf epic whose title I was unable to parse, however hard I squinted. Something *Mission*? This unintelligibility was to be explained. Malcolm Edwards and John Baxter spoke, and as is traditional I couldn't hear a thing, though I must say I've never seen Malcolm, Master of Cool, look quite so visibly distressed in front of an audience. He let me see his prepared script afterwards, pointing out that "it was written to be read aloud to an audience of John's close friends," rather than as a formal obituary for, say, the *Christian Science Monitor* or *Locus*.

This began by quoting a Brosnan letter: "I occasionally watch *Neighbours*, just to keep in touch with my cultural roots, and whenever a character is written out of the series people say that he or she has gone to 'Perth', which I've deciphered as being a metaphor for being dead. I should know." Well, quite.

Malcolm went on to talk about John's vigorous atheism, his bouts of depression, his professionalism as an author ("he was very disciplined, writing in the mornings and drinking in the afternoons

and evenings"), and his failing health as alcohol and despair got the better of him. Sadness at losing an old friend was mixed with anger at John's stubborn refusal to call in the doctors.

Nevertheless, tirelessly supported by the same friends who'd organized this funeral, John had lasted a great deal longer than medical science might have thought possible. (His general appearance at Novacon in 1995 had suggested that even then the sands were running out.) And although it's easy to moralize about a wasted life, there are plenty of longer lives which couldn't match his output of some thirty books, several funny fanzines — one of which shared the first Nova Award in 1974 — and a huge run of humorous magazine columns which brought his fanwriting talents and movie erudition to a wide, appreciative audience. This last was a career move which I found personally inspirational.

Even his struggle with depression provided a source of melancholy vindication, as noted by Holdstock and Kettle in their *Ansible* tribute:

John's demon was also his triumph. He leaves some bloody funny memories, and one superb piece of theoretical human psychology. John's twin pet hates — organised religion (he was an ardent Dawkinist) and alternative therapies, especially homeopathy, were often the starting pistol for spirited and hilarious evening discussions with his friends. And the theory? He always believed that the "default" condition of the human mind was "depression", and all other emotions — happiness, contentment, libido, ambition and so forth — merely the unfortunate side effects of the evolution of intelligence. He fought this corner fiercely. Then, in the mid 90s, an article appeared in New Scientist claiming much the same. The triumphant crowing of that boy went on for years! John was never more happy than when being proved right: that depression was the best! (Ansible 214, May 2005)

The brief ceremony ended on a cheerier note, nodding to the legendary bad taste of those 1970s Brosnan fanzines. Malcolm again:

One of the things John was interested in was the phenomenon of spontaneous human combustion. One could even theorise that he kept up his liquid intake to minimise the risk of it happening to him. He wrote a novel — Torched — about it, in collaboration with John Baxter. What we're going to move on to now is something slightly different — premeditated human combustion. You'll notice that we've put a couple of symbolic objects on

The Author of SLIMER, a seminal work which has influenced everything I have ever written: Alasdair Tynecon Gray 1984



the coffin: a plastic dinosaur, in the absence of a bust of Roger Corman, and a copy of one of John's books, in what I firmly believe to be a Polish edition. I wanted to launch the coffin by breaking a bottle of red wine against it, but apparently that isn't allowed. But I will now press this button, and the coffin will slide away, and I'm sure John would have appreciated the irony of his being torched now.

Whereupon, without any discreet veiling of euphemistic curtains, John Brosnan's final receptacle — dinosaur, Polish space opera, and all — moved off through automatic doors, to the jaunty sound of the James Bond movie theme. For everyone else's exit into the sunlight, the soundtrack was "The Time Warp" ... explained by Malcolm as "the only piece of music I can remember seeing John dance to. Feel free to try a few pelvic thrusts as you go."

The day's thoughtful organization didn't stop there. A well-timed fleet of taxis wafted the entire crowd across London to the next stage; I found myself crammed in with Messrs Maule, Roberts, and Hansen — "There's three TAFF winners in this cab!" said Rob excitably. An ideal if somewhat seedy venue for a farewell party would have been the Troy Club just off Tottenham Court Road, where John spent so many long and liquid afternoons (as Terry Pratchett wrote, "I never really knew him well, but if you went into the Troy Club in the late 80s he was *always* in there."). But the club closed years ago, its proprietor "Helen of Troy" died of liver failure, and considerable research must have been needed to find an equally tiny upstairs room for the Brosnan wake, at The French House pub in Dean Street, Soho.

Much preparation was in evidence: Malcolm's wife Jacks had been hard at work. The walls, tables and window-sills were covered with block-mounted photos of John as toddler, neofan and sophisticate, and of his book jackets. Covers from serious and genuinely notable works of film criticism like *James Bond in the Cinema*, *Movie Magic*, and *The Primal Screen* were varied with such modernist literary novels as *The Fungus*, *Bedlam* and *Carnosaur* (the one which became a Roger Corman dinosaur exploitation flick, loyally characterized by John as "crap ... but it's interesting crap."). Also reproduced was a testimonial from the great Alasdair Gray, who made ink sketches of various fans at the first Mexican in 1984, and whose Brosnan drawing is inscribed: "The Author of *Slimmer*, a seminal work which has influenced everything I have ever written."

Later, Roy (co-author of *The Fungus* by "Harry



Malcolm Edwards

Adam Knight", who was praised as "The New Stephen King" in a *Starburst* movie column whose authorship I shall not reveal) produced an armload of photocopies of John's 1993 ANZAPazine *Son of Why Bother?*, containing this fragment of introspection:

Philip Larkin died of throat cancer. I've just been perusing the volume of his collected letters and discovered, to my chagrin, that I had a lot in common with the miserable old sod. Morbid obsession with death, hypochondria, disgust at the ageing process, serious alcohol dependence, heavy smoking... the lot. About the only thing we don't have in common, come to think of it, is the ability to write great poetry. But then Larkin was probably incapable of writing something like James Bond In The Cinema... or Slimmer.

Cynical bastards that we are, the guests expected no more than a few glasses of plonk and some nibbles, and were taken aback by the ceaseless flow of good wine and premium lager, the sit-down meal of plentiful cold salmon, ham and other treats, the high-calorie desserts.... Several of us muttered that we'd quite like the same team to organize *our* funeral celebrations, though perhaps not just yet.

All along, further people turned up and squeezed in somehow, including Faith Brooker (late of Gollancz), Avedon Carol, Chris Fowler, David Garnett, Alun Harries, John Jarrold, Paul McAuley, Kim Newman, Andy Richards, Jimmy Robertson, and doubtless others who escaped my notebook. Sorry about these boring lists: I have the notes and I'm damn well going to use them. You're lucky I didn't take photos. Come to think of it, Rob Hansen and Ian Maule took lots; some of Ian's can be seen on line at www.nabu.net/brosnan/brosnan.htm.

There were, of course, informal speeches. Roy



Kettle stole the show, I think, explaining this wake as striving to be “the sort of event that John would want to gatecrash — that he would have enjoyed — that he wouldn’t want to be remembered.” Or something like that. He followed up with some droll extracts from *The Dirty Movie Book* by John Brosnan and “Leroy Mitchell”, the pusillanimous co-author having borrowed his partner’s surname for fear of prejudicing a fast-track Civil Service career. “This book, published 17 years ago, is as popular today as it was then.” It took a moment for the penny to drop. Malcolm: “Is that the last copy?” Roy: “Yes.”

That day, Roy’s most reliable weapons of mass hilarity were John Brosnan’s own words — like this all too characteristic fragment from his 1975 fanzine *Scabby Tales* 1 (I still have the copy that he mailed to me at the dread Atomic Weapons Research Establishment hostel: Boundary Hall, Tadley, Hampshire...), in which our hero muses on alcohol and its effects:

This is a subject close to my heart, and also to my liver and kidneys. I really do think that I am drinking too much these days, which is quite a confession for me to make, but when your liver starts making knocking sounds when you walk you know it’s time to slow down.

Last Saturday I really overdid it. I started at about 11 o’clock in the morning drinking in a pub with a few friends and at closing time someone invited us all to his club a short distance away. It looked exactly like a pub, though it was more expensive, and the drinking continued unabated. Everything gets a bit hazy after that [...]

We left around 5 o’clock and I went and had a meal, I think. That night Harry Harrison and his wife were having a small soiree round at their tem-

porary residence in Gloucester Rd. I arrived early so I naturally killed time in the nearest pub. I can remember the first hour or so at the Harrisons but not much else. I was later gleefully informed that I was rather obnoxious to poor old Chris Priest (me?) and that I made a pass at Little Mal (me?) but mercifully it’s all a blank. I can’t remember leaving either but I do remember getting into a cab and giving the driver my address. And I also remember standing outside the front door trying to find my key. It was then that I realized I was at 62 Elsham Rd in Shepherd’s Bush... which was embarrassing seeing that I had moved away almost a year ago. Very annoyed I stomped around Shepherd’s Bush, bouncing off parked cars and stop signs, trying to find another cab. I eventually stopped one and informed the driver that I wanted to go to South Ealing. “No chance, mate,” he said and roared off. The same thing happened with the next two cabs I stopped and I became even more annoyed; I remembered the law that once you get in the cab they have to take you where you wanted to go. So the next time one stopped I immediately leapt in and snarled at the driver, “Congratulations, you’re going to South fucking Ealing.” Amazingly he took me there and it was only later that it occurred to me that the law I was thinking of was an Australian one, not English.

Several other people spoke, as recalled out of order by my random-access memory. John Parker set some kind of record for inaudibility, and for once this wasn’t just me: Chris Priest later grumbled that he “seemed to be whispering deliberately.” Lisa Tuttle bravely revealed an uncharacteristic escapade from her Ortygia House days, when she’d become seriously tiddy and John was filled with utter delight and wonderment by the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to steer someone drunker than himself. This led Malcolm to remember John’s proud calculation that his alcohol intake *did not exceed* the UK medically recommended maximum of 28 units, a startling conclusion made possible only by failure to grasp that this was a weekly rather than a daily figure. Jo Fletcher treated us to passages of semi-comic dialogue from the latest Brosnan sf epic *Mothership*, or possibly its sequel. Someone else read out a comic tirade against ill-mannered cinema-goers from his film column — traditionally the first page turned to by readers of *Starburst* magazine.

(For one year beginning in December 1999, John also had a column in *SFX*, where I’ve been a regular since its 1995 launch. I lived in terror of being dropped in favour of the wiser and funnier Brosnan,

but something went wrong after his piece for the December 2000 issue. Despite weeks of editorial entreaties, John simply stopped delivering copy and let it be known through a bemused third party that he was giving up writing to become a teacher. This seemed wildly unlikely.)

What else? Faith Brooker, full of editorial memories, favoured us with a threnody in the manner of *Private Eye's* E.J. Thribb:

Ode to JB (with apologies, etc)

*So, farewell then, John Brosnan, Harry Adam Knight, Simon Ian Childer, et al.,
Master of Horror and the vicious bon mot*

*At last you go to that great Troy Club in the sky
Where Peter Cook and Richard Evans
wait to hear you score points off the Pope*

*You, like the Scotch Eggs,
are now immortal
And the drinks are on the house—
Suddenly three guys break the door down,
Carrying machine guns...*

Any perceived connection between those final lines and John's favourite way to end unpromising scenes in potboilers would be both libellous and accurate. Simon Ian Childer, for those not in the know, was another Brosnan/Kettle pseudonym, the distinction apparently being that Harry Adam Knight wrote HAK horror while Simon Ian Childer produced SIC jokes. Blame them, not me.

In the wake (as it were) of so much coruscating stuff, it didn't seem worth barging in with my own tiny, not particularly funny Brosnan anecdote. John consulted me on the physics of his 1981 tech-thriller *Skyship*—involving a giant atomic-powered zeppelin whose overheating reactor he wanted to have cooled by an emergency plunge into Niagara Falls—and bore up bravely when I revealed that nuclear fission was somewhat more complex than depicted in *Doctor No*. As my reward I received not only a thank-you in the acknowledgements but my very own Tuckerization, a chief engineer called Langford whose big line was the crucial engineering diagnosis, "Bullet holes." Another fellow-author got off less lightly in *Skyship*: "Ballard's a megalomaniac..."

But enough of me. Once again, much applause to the whole organizing team for giving John such a splendid send-off. "The room was full of love for the man and the knowledge that he will be truly missed," Linda Krawecka wrote afterwards. Inevi-

escaped my pouty lips in a moment of pure, unbridled passion."



Peter Roberts and Alun Harries



Harry Harrison and Chris Priest



Leroy Kettle and Graham Charnock

tably there's a certain grim irony in enjoying a lavishly boozy party in memory of a friend who died of acute pancreatitis brought on by alcohol-induced liver damage. But—for once, I think, the usual easy assumption of the views of the departed is entirely justified—it was most definitely what he would have wanted.

Afterwards, making my unsteady way up Dean Street in search of an Underground station, I came across a chance epitaph for John Brosnan chalked on a blackboard outside another Soho pub: "When I read about the perils of drinking... I gave up reading." ❧

Norton and Re-Norton

by Randy Byers

If these were actual flesh-and-bloods, social workers would make gloomy observations in casebooks, and the rest of us might look away. That's because what these characters face are the very things that we all fear: loss, exile, loneliness, pain ... and they face it under stark circumstances.

Then it usually gets worse.

—Susan Schwartz,
“Andre Norton: Beyond
the Siege Perilous”

As with many science fiction readers of a certain age, I first found my way into the genre through Andre Norton. She was my first favorite SF writer, and when I was twelve (in myth, if not in memory), I worked my way through the shelf of her books in the Childrens Section of the Salem Public Library. Maybe that location is a clue to why, when I stopped reading her, I never went back to reread. I had moved on to the grown-up stuff and left childhood's end behind.

When she died this year at age 93, I experienced a rush of nostalgia for bygone reading thrills, so I decided to revisit her work at last, after thirty years. I wasn't completely sure which of her hundred-odd titles I had read back in the day, and I couldn't remember any plot details or characters. Instead I had vague notions of telepathic connections with animals, the threat of blasters and needleguns, the riddle of Forerunner relics in dead ruins, and the eerie drifting descent of people in grav shafts. The idea of Forerunners was what most excited me in memory: ancient alien races that have long disappeared, leaving only mysterious artifacts behind.

I began to study her bibliography and search the web for clues as to which titles I wanted to read. There was also the matter of finding copies of the books, so the fact that my housemate, Denys, owned a Gregg Press edition of *Sargasso of Space* was one of the reasons I decided to start there, despite the fact that I was pretty sure I hadn't read it before. (My sense is that I read very little of her '50s work as a kid.) I soon found myself immersed in a thwacking good adventure story aboard a Free Trader ship with apprentice cargo-master Dane Thorson. When the stalwart crew was enveloped in an unexplained fog on the planet Limbo and forced to tie themselves to a mechanical crawler with a preprogrammed route to find their way through the cloying murk, I knew I had found my way home.

When Dane and a couple of crewmates descended into a subterranean Forerunner installation that was shaped like the Minotaur's maze—and *then the lights went out*—I knew I was in heaven.

Other fans of Norton have commented that it is the mood she creates that sticks with you, and I'm finding that I'm never happier than when her characters are crawling around in the dark over ominous and incomprehensible alien machinery. (The story of my life!) Three more of the books I've read—*Catseye*, *Night of Masks*, and *Dark Piper*—feature sequences where characters crawl through underground labyrinths and discover ancient alien artifacts or ruins. *Night of Masks* consists of almost nothing but such scenes, and is thus my immediate favorite. It doesn't hurt that the planet Dis on which most of the action occurs orbits an “infrared sun” and is completely dark to humans without special goggles. The juvenile protagonist and his even younger companion have one pair of goggles between them, and so one of them must always rely on the other to lead him safely through a darkness teeming with *Deathworld*-like dangers.

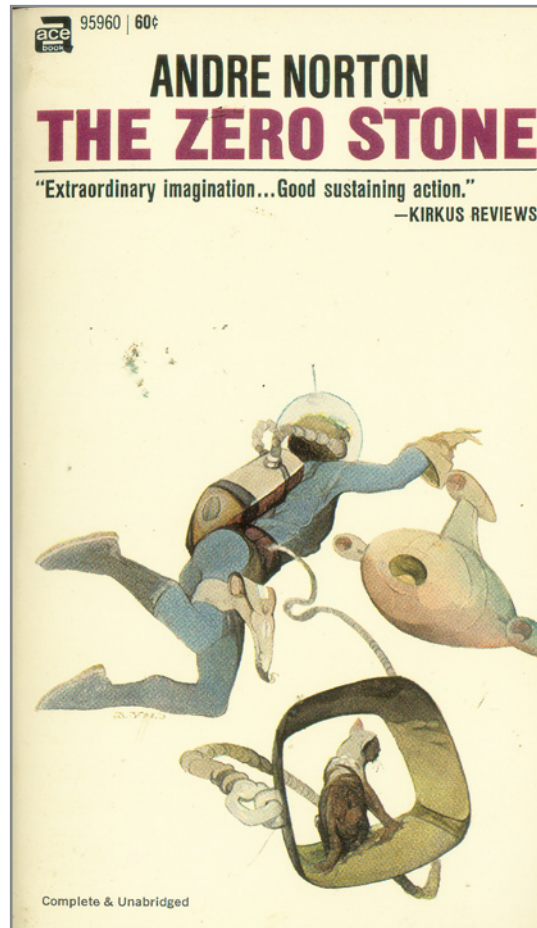
It's all very intense, in its bracing, pulpy way, and I've also been struck by the post-war sense of dislocation, disfigurement, and loss in these stories. Four of the novels take place after a planet-destroying interstellar conflict called the War of the Two (or sometimes Four) Sectors. (Shades of Berlin?) The main characters are orphans of the war, and Nik, the protagonist of *Night of Masks*, literally lost his face when a space freighter carrying refugees crashed on a deserted moon. Like Nik, most of these orphans end up in the Dipple (short for “displaced people”), a refugee camp on the planet Korwar, where their options are to find scarce employment locally, ship themselves offworld as

indentured servants, or join the criminal underworld, called the Thieves Guild. Different novels follow different of these paths. The characters undergo desperate adventures, struggles for survival that take them to the limits of endurance. People die, people are tortured, their scars tell tales. Victory is usually a compromise with a more powerful force—usually the Patrol, in the end—where safety is guaranteed by giving up any treasure gained.

In short, these books are surprisingly dark, although the main characters always come through in the clinch, and gain confidence and self-reliance (if no treasure) from surviving their ordeals. They are not superheros, and there are no conceptual breakthroughs or political revolutions. To the contrary, the Forerunner ruins, like the statue of Ozymandias, serve as reminders that political empire, civilization, culture, and knowledge are subject to collapse and erosion. Furthermore, aliens frequently remain unexplained, if not inexplicable, as those on Limbo and Dis; likewise for the Forerunner relics, even when the characters find a use for them. The young protagonists use reason to work themselves out of jams, but the universe remains mysterious and threatening.

Norton works in a loose future history with many features that recur and are examined from different angles in later books. The basic furniture is the Patrol, the Free Traders, the Thieves Guild, with the related piratical Jacks, the Forerunners, the scholarly alien Zacthans, the Dipple, the Waystar (a thieves den), and much paraphernalia: blasters, flitters, hoppers, cold-sleep, E-rations, credit chips, grav lifts, snooper rays, tractor beams, and on and on. Along with subterranean ruins (and surface slags), almost all of the books I read had animal companions, usually in telepathic contact with the protagonist. Sometimes the animals are uplifted, and sometimes they are intelligent aliens. Psionics appears in many forms, including the ability to read the imprint of the past on objects, which Ms. Norton crankily insists in the preface to *Forerunner Foray* is a real possibility, now being studied scientifically. In the later books, the grappling of mind with mind encompasses questions of identity and intimacy. Personality becomes a mask, and one can get lost in the labyrinth of the Other. At the end of *Uncharted Stars*, the alien-animal companion transforms into a Girl, and there is a psionic whiff of sex—just barely.

Norton herself never got married, as far as I can tell, and I find myself shamefully curious about her private life. It seems as though she was always the old lady who lived with cats, at least to all us kids,



but how did she get there? Not that it really matters, no doubt. Her writing certainly engendered children: I was struck over and over in my reading by the thought that here was where CJ Cherryh got that mix of riffs: the elusively-inscrutable alien, the chaos and confusion from lack of information in dire emergency, the Free Traders, the rogue navies, the victory through compromise, the hurt/comfort cycles. Indeed, all of us who found our way into science fiction through these books are her children, and it seems that at least late in life she went to conventions and called herself Moonsinger, so perhaps she had fandom as well as cats to keep her company. In any event, I find that after thirty years her books are once again keeping me up after bedtime, still searching for Forerunner treasure in the dark. ☒



Books Read

Sargasso of Space, 1955

Plague Ship, 1956

Catseye, 1961

Night of Masks, 1964

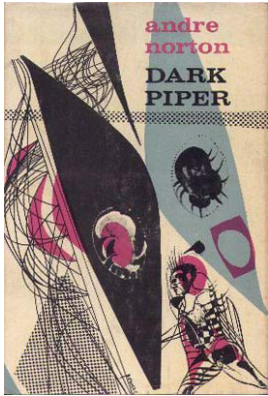
Dark Piper, 1968

The Zero Stone, 1968

Uncharted Stars, 1969

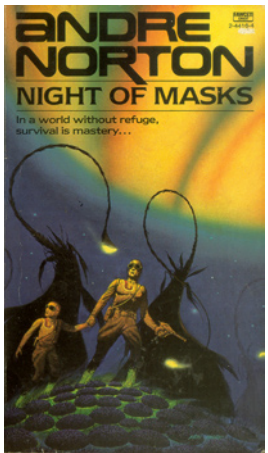
Forerunner Foray, 1973

Dark Star's Stone Mask



an Andre Norton mix-up

(All sentences are from Norton. Names were changed to pronouns.)



He awoke to darkness, a black so thick it was a match for the humid air about him. That murk had a quality close to fog, he thought—as if the dark itself swirled about with independent motion. For those few seconds, panic held him, and then he remembered where he was. This was not like the sapped exhaustion of his last confused recollection—this was a new helplessness. Was there any other way out of this dead, fungoid world?

But those walls—they ran crazily at curves and angles, marking off irregular spaces which bore small resemblance to ordinary rooms. Corridors began nowhere and ended in six- or eight-sided chambers without other exit. He reached the turn in the corridor, got around it, and saw before him a wide space giving opening to a score of passages, another terminal such as they had seen in the refuge. He sagged against the wall. To explore every one of those was beyond his strength or ability now. Only a guess would guide him.

He kept strong rein on his imagination, which tended to people this place with shapes that crept and slunk toward the target—which was himself. He sucked in his breath, steadied himself, and fought a terrible battle with insane panic. Because he was limited by lack of information and driven by a feeling that there was little time?

A man could guess and guess and piece together a logical surmise, but that did not necessarily mean his guesses were correct. Unreal to one people or species can be real to another. He stood halfway down the ramp, wiping his hand on his thigh as he lifted it from the dripping guide rope where the moisture condensed in large oily drops. It had, at least to his sensitive senses, an unpleasant smell and it left the skin feeling slimy and unclean. But the dark pressed in upon him, thick, tangible, with that odd sensation that darkness on this planet always possessed. It was like pushing through a

sluggish fluid and one lost any belief in ground gained, rather there was a feeling of being thrust back for a loss.

I fought vainly against the power which made me see so, for I feared I would be utterly lost in that other mind, that he was becoming me, and I he. And we would be so firmly welded together in the end that there would be no he and I, but some unnatural whirling mass fighting itself—trapped so—

“Do you—?” Her mind-touch was the faintest of whispers.

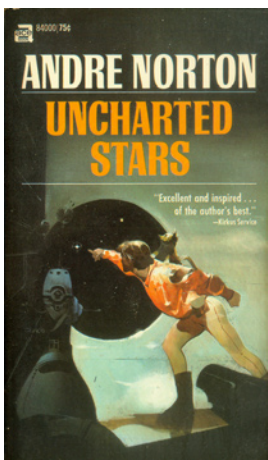
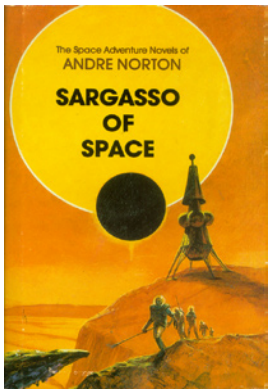
“No!” My reply was strong, clear, and I meant it with all of me.

“Why?”

My imagination supplied such an answer. I would probably never know whether or not it was the truth.

So did I fight my battle—with mind, with a hand which will always bear the scars, with my determination, against death itself, or what her kind knew as the end of existence. Then I lay back weakly, unable even to put away the precious source of my pain. Then her touch was on my body, light, soothing above my bruised hurt. I had a sudden vision of a plantation where the robos kept on laying up foods for men who never came—until the storage bins burst with rot, never halting until their inner workings wore out. There was the taste of blood in my mouth. I drooled it forth to flow stickily down my chin.

We turned and ran, out of that room of unfinished, or perhaps now finished, history, down the corridors beyond, out of that building, and into the field where the silent, dead ships stood pointing to the stars from which we were now perhaps forever exiled. But for the rest, it was all thick black, and when he turned his eyes to the sky, not a single gleam of a star broke the brooding darkness. ☒



Put Andre Norton on the Totem Pole!

by Andy Hooper

As is ever the case with literary figures, Andre Norton's death has brought her new attention from fannish and critical sources. This month, Seattle fandom must consider a new "Book of Honor" for the 2006 edition of Potlatch, the rotating Northwest SF convention, and Andre Norton's name has come up repeatedly. Norton's work is very attractive as an inspiration for fan activity, but no one has been able to suggest one of her works that could carry an entire day of programming, as has been Potlatch practice.

This is only part of an outburst of heterodoxy regarding Potlatch among Seattle's fans. Some parties argue that almost no work of genre fiction is capable of sustaining an entire convention's interest, and that the institution alienates fans who don't care for the book that is chosen; thus they conclude we should abolish the practice altogether. Others argue it would be better to choose a deceased author as the guest (or ghost) of honor, and to consider that writer's entire body of work in the con's program. Only one Seattle Potlatch to date has had a Book of Honor (John Brunner's *The Shockwave Rider* in 2004), so the "tradition" seems on shaky ground here.

I would suggest that Books of Honor function in the same way as Guests of Honor do, and we seldom ask one Guest of Honor to entertain and enlighten a convention of fans solo. Potlatch represents a gathering of distant tribes of fandom, and talking about the same book all weekend long doesn't represent a very broad selection of what we have to offer and show off to one another. At the same time, thematic—even totemic—symbols seem to fit Potlatch well. I think it would be fun to announce *several* books—maybe as many as four or five—to be celebrated at Potlatch next year. Each book could have some fan "advocate," just as with a guest author, who might moderate or organize a panel about the work. They might also

secure a supply of copies that we would offer to attendees in exchange for a donation to the Clarion West workshop program.

What immediately appeals to me about this idea are the wonderful juxtapositions that might occur. Suggestions already afloat include works by F.M. Busby, Andre Norton, Roger Zelazny, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Judith Merrill, and H.P. Lovecraft. And we might break another Potlatch tradition and choose a work by a living author. Already I can see a little gilded easel on the table in the program area, on which we could set up a copy of each book as its hour arrived. We could even physically carve and paint a *Totem Pole* with sfinal archetypes, like a robot, a BEM, or a rocketship, and fannish avatars like Roscoe and Ursula Le Guin (*The Queen of all Space*), all chosen for some resonance with one of the convention's books of honor.

Of course, this solution will inspire another debate in turn; whose head goes where? But that's what committee meetings are for!

— June 4th, 2005



"Dismemberment"? In order to dismember something, doesn't it have to have, you know, *members*?

Rain City Tangler

News (and Gossip)

CENTER OF UNIVERSE MOVES TO SEATTLE—GUFF Race Results: UK vote count-31; Australian vote count-36. Total first place votes: 67. First round voting: **Damien Warman and Juliette Wood**-37; **Sue Ann Barber**-8; **Alison Barton**-7; **David Cake**-8. Thus **Damien & Juliette** win by a straight majority with no further distribution of votes. The enterprising winners have since set up a **LiveJournal** to chronicle plans and progress of their trip: www.livejournal.com/users/guff_trip/. In other funds, the winner of the southbound DUFF race: **Joe Siclari**; Eastbound TAFF race winner: **Suzanne Tompkins**. Thus leaving **Seattle** with a total of 8 resident fan fund winners. Take that, **Hugos of Reading**.

TUNS O' FUN—The **London Circle** found a convivial new home with shockingly minimal loss of life and property: April saw the **London Circle First Thursday** moved to **Walkers of Holborn**, a venue so suited to fannish wish fulfillment as to move **Dr. Plokta** to lifelike raptures. Another wag apostrophized **Walkers** as totally unsuitable for **Tuns** on the grounds that it left fans with nothing significant to complain about, particularly as the hosts were even threatening to bring in bottled cider 'specially for those who preferred it in future months. Meanwhile, **Seattle Second Sundays** took up residence in the smoke-free, accessible, and blissfully quiet private back room of the **Blue Star Café & Pub** in **Wallingford**, christening its tenure with a visit from everyone's favorite **Edinburgh** law academic, **Lilian Edwards**, and thus temporarily bringing the **Seattle** fan fund winner count to 9. Hah.

REPENT, FOOLSCAP—Long-time fanzine fan **Nalrah Nosille** is slated as **Guest of Honor** at **Foolscap VII** (Sept. 23-25, 2005; **Bellevue Sheraton**, Bellevue, WA), and in a piquant juxtaposition of tastes and approaches shares the bill with online

gaming comic impresarios **Tycho and Gabe** of **Penny-Arcade(.com)**. **Tangler** predicts a low boredom quotient.

SUE ANDERSON ON THE MEND—Reader **Don Anderson** reports back that wife **Sue's** doctors found a surgical correction that reversed her 18-month downhill slide. She is now able to eat without a feeding tube, and is making incremental progress toward regaining the weight and stomach-capacity lost during her long illness. **Don** concludes, "I have let her drive a little bit and we are hoping to get back to cardiac rehab in a month or so. Thanks to those many people whose wishes and prayers seem to have helped." The mighty **Tangler** news network sends its continuing well-wishes for a full recovery.

R.I.P. PRECURSOR—After some weeks of unsubstantiated rumors, **John & Eve Harvey** returned from their home in **France** to announce that they were indeed canceling **Precursor** due to lack of interest as indicated by low membership sales. Among **British** fans there seemed to be some feeling that someone else might pick up the ball and do a confusingly similar **Precursor**-like-event in the remaining three months, but as of the **Tangler** deadline the only word was **Mike Scott's** announcement that the new **Tun** venue, **Walkers of Holborn**, has been booked for Monday, August 1, from 5pm, for overseas visitors and locals to mingle before the **Glaswegian** deluge.

CAPCLAVE DOES WALDROP—**Capclave** (14-16 October, 2005, **Hilton Washington**, Silver Spring, Maryland) will be publishing a chapbook including two new stories by **Howard Waldrop**, which will only be available as a gift to members. And anyone who books 2+ nights in the **Hilton** may choose one of two past **WSFA Press** books: **Pat Cadigan's Home by the Sea** or **Lewis Shiner's The**

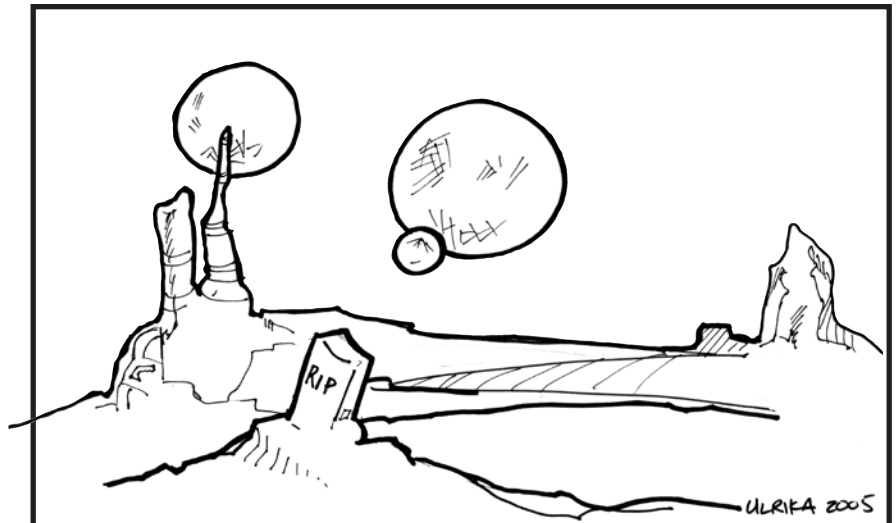
by Ulrika O'Brien

Edges of Things as well. Between free books, Wal-droppy goodness, GoHs **Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden**, and a predicted rare US appearance of **Avedon Carol & Rob Hansen**, the entire staff of the **Tangler** have already booked their travel. Hope to see you there.

(NON-NORN) IRON TAFFMAN—**James Bacon** continues to prove that sometimes youth, enthusiasm, and blarney really do beat old age, guile, and an overly rigid subservience to the rules of grammar. After churning out his own **TAFF** report in time for **Corflu Titanium** in a decisively record-shattering 6 months, **Bacon** spearheaded a plot to extract a completed report from **Tobes Valois** dictated under duress in two beer-blurred hours in the program(me) of **Paragon 2**. Conventionally edited versions of both **James's WorldConNomicon** and **Tobes TAFF Ting** are now available for purchase for the benefit of **TAFF** for \$6 and \$4.50 respectively. Contact **James Bacon** or **Randy Byers** for details. (The video clip of the torture that produced **Tobes's** report is entirely free: www.hawkida.com/taff/electrocution.wmv.) **Alison Scott** has since been inspired to seek out potential contributors to the completion of **Sue Mason's** report. Interested fans, particularly **Americans** who saw **Sue** on her visit, should contact **Alison** directly.

UK YESTERDAYS—**Rob Hansen** has scanned, compiled, and edited a DVD album of the fannish photo collections of **Vincent Clarke** and **Ethel Lindsay**, to be made generally available to fandom. The editors of this very fanzine have a master and can produce copies of same for **The Usual**, or fans can contact **Rob Hansen** directly.

CANUCKS OVER OZ—As selected at **Corflu Titanium**, the **2006 Corflu** will be held in **Toronto** sometime in April of 2006. Chairs **Catherine Crockett** and **Colin Hinz** indicated that the con-



BILL BOWERS, 1943–2005—**Cincinnati**-based fanzine fan, editor, and writer **Bill Bowers** passed away on the evening of April 17; **Bill** had suffered chronic illness for years, but his sudden death shocked even his closest friends. A six-time **Hugo** nominee, **Bill's** pubs included his long-running **FAPA**zine *Xenolith*, the 1960's *Double:Bill* (with **Bill Mallardi**) and the influential and critically acclaimed labor of love, *Outworlds*, itself nominated for a total of five **Hugos** between 1971 and 1977. **Bowers** was elected **Past President of fwa** in 1990, was **Fan Guest of Honor** at **Con-fusion**, **Orycon**, and the **1978 Worldcon**—**Iguanacon** of glimmering legend. **Bill's** convention running credits included **Corflu IV**—designed as a live issue of *Outworlds*—two **Dittos**, and several **Spacecons**. In 1976, **Bill** tied the **TAFF** race with **Roy Tackett**, later declining travel when funds proved sufficient for only one. In 2001, **TAFF** offered **Bill** a chance to go over on the **Silver Anniversary** of his win, but health forced him again to decline. Over the subsequent years illness increasingly circumscribed **Bill's** physical reach, but he continued to make himself known to fandom as he always had, through his thoughtful and carefully crafted fanzines. He will be remembered as a shy man but a generous friend, and a devoted collector of books and fanzines, and a meticulous craftsman in the pursuit of his fanac. A final issue of *Outworlds* was in process at the time of **Bill's** death, and fans on the **Timebinders** list are exploring the feasibility of completing and publishing it as a posthumous memorial.

vention will not be scheduled on **Easter** weekend, but further date and hotel details have yet to be finalized. The **Toronto** bid won in a contested vote, besting the **Australian** bid for **Airlie Beach**, as headed by **Jean Weber** and **Eric Lindsay**. Watch this space for further details as we get them.

PEREGRINATIONS' END—**Orycon 27** finds new, larger hotel home with new dates: November 4–6, 2005; **Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront**, 1401 SW Naito Parkway, Portland, OR 97201, (503) 226-7600. For reservations, please use the electronic reservation form available at the **Orycon** website: www.orycon.org/orycon27/index.html. Fantasy fans should note that the new convention dates coincide with those of **World Fantasy Con**. ☒

The Iro

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I was surprised to learn act "Rain City Tangler" that whichever of us who wins TAFF will go to the Worldcon in Edinburgh, while everyone else heads off to the Worldcon in Glasgow...Edinburgh is a bigger hotbed of fanwriting activity than Glasgow, so that's one reason to vote for Edinburgh for the next UK Worldcon, isn't it?

Regarding Tamara Vining's piece "Road Trip", they say that nobody *goes* to Denny's, they just *end up* there. The arkle reminded me of the song "My Front Door" by Trout Fishing In America:

*All roads lead to my house,
Even roads I've never known,
And when I'm backing out my driveway,
I'm just taking the scenic route home.*

Hey, you punk, just because you put your neck on the TAFF chopping block doesn't mean you get to mock us for our errors! Or maybe it does, at that. We'll make sure that Suzle makes it to the right Worldcon, and I hope you'll continue to put out issues of *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*. (Or perhaps its philosophical follow-up, *All That He Could See*.)

Claire Brialey

I find your letter column lively, diverse, and always interesting — for all that I had exactly the same confusion as Jerry Kaufman about authorial voice

Comments by Randy
(unless specified)



in some of the letters, due to your policy on placement of addresses. I discover, at last, that I am not wholly alone in the resonance I find in your title; but I wonder whether I'm the only one to have got both Chumbawamba (Steven Bieler) and chunder (Greg Benford), although in fact I was thinking of John Foyster's *Chunder*.

We, too, receive little gems of correspondence from John Hertz on the backs of the envelopes containing *Vanamondes* — although I'm always struck by the up-to-the-minute status of the notes compared to the less contemporary nature of the fanzines. John seems to be nine months back at the moment, and I really don't know whether he's gaining on *Vanamonde* or it on him.

Meanwhile, Graham Charnock seems set to become a National Treasure, although I'm not entirely sure of which nation. But...less surreal than James Bacon? Hmmmm.

You've had quite a lot of James in *Chunga* recently. Actually, I'm not sure it's possible to have a little of James; one of the things I like about his writing is that he writes as he speaks, and so a mass of energy and exuberance tumbles across the page. I find the greatest challenge in editing James is retaining his very distinctive 'voice'. As you'll know, spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors frequently need tidying up, although the punctuation needs to continue to convey a sense of dynamism. And occasionally I add explanation or context; James has got to know so many people that I think he assumes everyone else knows everyone too.

In practice, though, that's something I think many fans are really quite bad at, steadfastly refusing to meet or even notice people who aren't in their own part of fandom or doing things of which they personally approve and support as fun fannish activities — and it's an attitude which applies equally to the ageing rebels of our close acquaintance in Croydon fandom and to the eminent and venerable fans who still aren't so sure about the merits of fandom becoming more numerous and diverse. And this is rapidly converging with the conversation Randy's been having with Dave O'Neill in the

m Pig



pages of Pete Young's marvellous *Zoo Nation*, so back to the plot: in editing James — who I think is genuinely wanting to write for and reach out to a diverse audience — I think it's important to leave the words mostly alone and ensure that it all still *sounds* like James.

Mark wrote in an issue of *Banana Wings* sometime last year about the phenomenon referred to by journalist Simon Hoggart as 'secondary Prescott', whereby any Opposition spokesman shadowing our current Deputy Prime Minister ends up picking up a similar style of contorted verbal expression. I always thought Hoggart was exaggerating for comic effect — UK Parliamentary sketches having a great deal in common with fan reportage in this respect — but then I edited James. Two fanzine articles, some contributions to ensemble pieces and, now, the majority of a TAFF trip report later, and I find that even an email from James is enough to set me off: as I begin to form my response, a torrent of idiom rushes through my mind in a blur of run-on sentences. By the time it's gone through my internal filters and emerged onto the screen, however, I've usually added some punctuation in appropriate places and calmed the pace of expression, and it begins to sound like me again. Albeit, usually, a version of me that's been inspired and challenged by James's ideas.

Which brings me back to Peter Weston, who seems to be feeling a bit less inspired but very much in the mood for challenging. I was really rather surprised to see the letter in #9 from Peter at this stage. Maybe before James's trip someone who had seen only his style of campaigning (and had somehow contrived to avoid getting to know him until then) could have been concerned that this was someone going all out to secure votes from everyone they knew, including people who had no interest in the fan funds previously and would instantly return to that state after casting their ballot. But anyone who has heard about James's plans to raise the profile of TAFF with people in parts of fandom that *don't* usually care much, to keep them engaged and get them more fully involved; any-

one who's aware of James's success in publishing a TAFF report less than six months after his trip (and of his disappointment at being unable to do it in two months because there was so much he wanted to write about) and of the way he's provoked at least one previous TAFF winner already to produce his own report and raise more funds; and above all anyone who, like Peter, saw James in action as a TAFF delegate, at the Worldcon in particular, could surely have no doubts that his campaigning was just an early manifestation of his inclusive and outgoing approach?

I should add, perhaps, that I thought Anders Holmström was also a good candidate who campaigned well. Peter seems to cast doubt on James's assertion that Anders was not running a 'traditional low-key' campaign, but I'm happy to clarify that I saw both enthusiastically drumming up support and encouraging people to vote; neither, in my perception, expected to win. I had thought that James and Peter hit it off very well in Boston, and find it quite disturbing that underneath what seemed like so much bonhomie and sympathy Peter was harbouring doubts and suspicions about his TAFF descendant. It seems so odd that I begin to wonder if Peter was being light-hearted and I've missed his point; or else he's just taken on board too strongly the message from his other TAFF-winning friend, Victor Gonzalez, that even fannish writing should contain a conflict. Otherwise I don't think it's necessary to explicitly take up Peter's invitation to call him old-fashioned, but I hope that he and James had the opportunity to have another good long conversation about TAFF at Eastercon. They seem to have a lot in common, as I had thought both of them recognised — particularly, I think, a tendency to take fandom very seriously. I'd be sorry to see anyone getting too hung up here on the look of the thing.

Art Widner was the first person to ask me whether our title was a play on "chunder," back before I became fascinated by all things Aussie. I'll point out, too, that I snuck a joke about it



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into my Brief Glossary of Strine in issue 7. Inasmuch as I consider John Foyster a strange (and perhaps unwilling) guardian spirit of this zine, I hope someday to have the pleasure of catching up with his zine.

And you weren't the only one who had some thoughts about James Bacon...

Alexis Gilliland

I quite liked the take you did on James Bacon, though I missed him at the Worldcon. He sounds like Tigger, a lot of fun to be around but bouncy. In his letter Peter Weston says that Bacon succeeded against better qualified candidates who had taken the traditionally more modest attitude of keeping quiet and letting others do their TAFF campaigning, and suggests that this is somehow unfannish. Well, no. Bacon was being himself, a high energy extrovert, and what the voters saw was what they got. What makes one "better qualified" anyway, the credentials accumulated by introverts? Bacon appears to have done the TAFF tour in fine style, and if he can con his friends into transcribing his notes, it looks like his TAFF report will be a worthy addition to the canon. All that remains is the bookkeeping, and I'd give him credit for being honest until he proves otherwise.

The undead Terry Schiavo is much in the news lately, to the point where I made a living will, had it notarized, and put in my safety deposit box. Basically I don't want to linger on life support just because it is technically possible, even though tomorrow *is* Easter. Nor to be stashed in liquid nitrogen against the day when I will be revived, reanimated, and rejuvenated by the kindness of strangers. The T. Rex marrow recently discovered encapsulated in a femur has a better chance at being cloned. Certainly a readout on the DNA should clarify T. Rex's phylogenic relation to birds and reptiles.

Alexis, with that last paragraph you have brought the Campaign for Real Letters (cf. Claire Brialey) at last a rousing success. Everyone who yearns for a Harry Warner Jr. Memorial Award for Best Fan Correspondent should study that move: the slingshot into the wider world, with all its topical richness and mystery. Somewhere, Terry Schiavo has been reincarnated as a T. Rex in a mad scientist's lab and is stomping happily through a primeval forest.

I'll also take the opportunity of your remarks to advertise the fact that James Bacon has, in fact, completed his TAFF report, *World-ConNomicon*, and, as Claire pointed out, has

also pried one out of Tobes called *Tobes TAFF Ting*. I have copies of both reports available to North Americans for \$6 for \$4.50 respectively.

Meanwhile, Peter Weston has heard rumors of discontent with his comments in our last issue ...

Peter Weston

I'll be surprised if my remarks about TAFF last time don't draw some fire so perhaps I should add a couple of points. First, of course, is that I have no complaints about the actual result of last year's contest; James was a superb delegate who worked extremely hard during his trip. What worries me is that the universe of potential voters is so poorly defined. I mean, it could so easily have worked out the other way; what if James had sat modestly on his hands and lost because vast numbers of unknown Scandinavian voters had been deployed? That wouldn't be fair, would it?

The trouble with TAFF is that it has always been based on the idealistic assumption that all voters will somehow be "real" fans. My opinion is that voters need to meet rather more strict criteria before their ballot is accepted; some evidence that they actually know what TAFF is about and have been in fandom sufficiently long enough to have a valid opinion. Or should we just advise all candidates to abandon false modesty and simply get as many votes as they can, regardless?

The problem of course is defining a "real" fan. The ballot lists two criteria for voting: you must have been active in fandom for a minimum of two years prior to the end of the current race, and you must make a minimum donation to the fund. The ballot also suggests that if you are not known to the administrators, you should give the a name of an active fan known to them and to whom you are known. It is up to the administrators to judge whether a voter is a "real" fan according to these criteria. I know that in the just concluded race, I had reason to check the fannish references, as it were, on some names that were unknown to me. (Interestingly, many turned out to have been active in fandom for decades, had been GoHs at conventions, etc. Therefore the problem was my ignorance.)

But these really are minimal qualifications, and I don't see how it could be otherwise. How are we to determine that voters "actually know what TAFF is about?" Do we set up a voter registration system that limits qualified voters somehow? I'd say that's a recipe for factional warfare.

In the end, yes, I think it's up to the candidates and their supporters to get out and campaign for votes, and it's up to the administrators to make sure that the votes are legitimate.

It's also good to bear in mind the 20% rule, which says that a winning candidate must receive at least 20% of the first-ballot first-place votes on both sides of the Atlantic. This is intended to block someone from gathering a hundred votes at their local convention, say, and forcing themselves on an uninterested host country. I don't see that the system is broken on this front.

—Randy

I think a certain amount of hurt feelings might be inevitable when anyone is compared to Mario Bosnyak; you may wish to emphasize the latter's electioneering, but you know that anyone hearing the name is going to flash on his failure to return the funds first. But TAFF has changed a great deal since you stood for the honor nearly 35 years ago. The squabbles of Topic A, *l'affaire Frost*, and the lack of visible activity by some winners have alienated many people that would otherwise call themselves TAFF's core supporters. Some members of the Worldcon community see TAFF as a confidence game run on their operational budget by fanzine fans, and a contemporary TAFF winner might have to volunteer in the manner of Mr. Bacon if they want to be a part of the Worldcon which they must still attend by the terms of the fund.

There have always been fans who don't

actively support TAFF, but now a growing would like to see it eradicated. And no matter who wins the fund, it seems like some significant percentage of fans will find fault with the result. In the face of this reality, it falls to the candidates to generate enthusiasm for a fading fannish tradition. Packing the ballot box with mundane fellow travelers seems less likely than ever—it's hard enough getting fans to vote. A candidate that fails to ask their friends and acquaintances to vote for them at parties and conventions is letting the fund down, missing a major opportunity to remind fans about TAFF's existence, or to introduce new voters to the tradition. Given far less helpful examples of the recent past, Jumbo is all right with me.

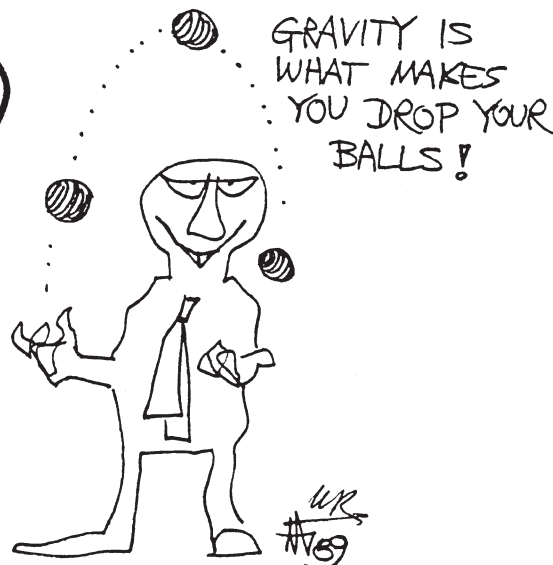
—Andy

Jerry Kaufman

Suzle and I both liked your tribute to Johnny Carson in the colophon. So now you know that we read every word. In fact, I even read the usually puzzling quotes along the bottoms of the pages, and noticed you picked up that item about actor Tom Sizemore and his amazing fake penis. I remember the newspaper article in which this appeared. The article suggested that fake penises are a commercial item specifically sold to help men (well, that's my supposition) beat drug tests. So do you suppose that people administering these tests actually watch men filling up their little cups? And if they think that the penis they see is fake, what do they do? Grab it to find out for sure? "Whoops, sorry—that's a real one!"



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Well, I suppose that's better than applying the blow job test. But who knew there was such a sexual subtext to the last issue? But I guess some of it was more surface than subtext...

Steve Jeffery

I'm really slow these days. It took a long time for the penny to drop, linking Ulrika's illo of a confectionery clad James Bacon ("do you want a flake with that, love?") on page 18 of *Chunga* #9 with Peter Weston's remark about James' Wonderful Ice Cream Suit.

And then I was really glad Ulrika hadn't taken her inspiration from Claire's closing remark about James smuggling his Hugo through Customs internally.

Earl Kemp

The cover is wonderful as is the back one...the reproduction as usual a star of the whole issue itself. The design flawless. I hate you.

The Celluloid Fantasia 2005 section was superlative. All three of the writers, Stu Shiffman, Andy Hooper, and TV. Chariot wrote with the same pen and vocabulary. It was delightful. It brought back all my own old memories of the same time periods, the same stars and feature-length bad films that populated the imagination of my youth. I was with those guys word for word, step for step, flickering film shudder for shudder.

So there, that should be enough to satisfy at least a moment of your insatiable needs.

Ooh, Earl, you make me feel so dirty when you talk that way! *giggle!*



Erika Lacey

I think that you fellows were some of those I forgot to tell I was moving way back when. My apologies for it. There is no excuse. I'll do my best to keep up with *Chunga* from efanzines.com, as I will with most fanzines, as it's the best way for me to get things when I've no fixed address anymore, nor will I likely for many years.

Short version of things: have now gone to water, left behind land-living for a while, unless one considers living in a tent while going touring around on my bicycle land-living. While it's a spiffy tent it's not exactly what one would consider a home. Even when I have a fluffy green elephant dangling from the top so I can push it around a bit to make it feel more homey. I'm buying a yacht, however, and shall take ownership of her real soon now! Less than a month; upon returning from a convention on the other side of the country I'll move on in and become one of those weirdo solo sailors one reads about.

Speaking of which, damn it, I never even realised that I hung around Brisbane fans when at conventions until Andy Hooper pointed it out in his piece. Now that I am no longer from Brisbane I wonder what I will do. Probably still consider myself honorary Brisbaner despite this no longer being entirely fact. How very silly.

I'm afraid all the information about Corflu makes me want to have been there and also not really get what did go on. Too far away. Damn these conventions overseas! Must make it there someday, but at this rate I'll be well into my forties before I get to sail anywhere near the US waters.

Bruce Gillespie's works want me to get better, and I'm glad that he's putting a backlog of stuff online. I once mentioned to him the possibility of a backlog online...but I suppose not, since he's written oodles over the years and the process of scanning and then OCRing everything would take ages and ages. And then there'd the cataloguing, tables of contents, keywording, and the lot. Maybe I should just buy that *Incompleat Gillespie* and be done with it, forget about the rest!

Another good looking issue, even as raped as it was with the way I printed it out to save upon paper since I'm a skint bugger. At least it looked better on PDF! The magnifying glass I had to get out kind of put a dampener on things.

Regarding making it to Corflu, you could always throw yourself behind Jean Weber and Eric Lindsay's efforts to hold one at Airlie Beach. They pitched it again at San Francisco this year, and I think they're gaining support! Imagine tying your yacht up to the dock and

stepping into the premiere fanzine convention. Watch out for the backpackers!

I'm completely jealous of this yachting life you've set up for yourself. Hope you send us some stories of your adventures. And maybe you'll run into Sharee in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Please don't sink her boat!

Joseph Nicholas

This issue has another chunk of invented Hollywood silliness from Stu Shiffman, supplemented with similar forays by others into the same territory. I admire Stu's articles, and the detail and rigour with which the alternate universe in which these films are set is worked out, but have never felt any urge to translate that admiration into actual comments on them — in part because I'm just not that interested in old monster movies and Broadway-style musicals. (But then lots of people don't care for the sorts of things which interest me, so that probably leaves us about even.)

So why am I responding to the invented Hollywood silliness this time? Because this time Stu's piece of invented Hollywood silliness is followed by two similar pieces by others — which are in turn followed by a review of the DVD edition of Fritz Lang's *Woman in The Moon*, a film which I *know* has a real existence. (I think there's even a reproduction of the poster for it in the first edition of the *SF Encyclopedia*. That or some other reference book in our possession.) But the preceding pages inevitably cause one to wonder whether this film, too, might be fictitious — especially as the review ends with a reference back to Lang's turning down the offer to direct *The Call of Cthulhu*, as discussed in Stu's article. Thus you buggers have made me start to distrust the existence (in this continuum) of the film *Woman in The Moon*. Or maybe it's the "fact" that the film is supposedly available on DVD that we're supposed to distrust. Or perhaps it's Randy's reference to the film being censored by the Nazis because it might have given away too many of their rocket secrets — an obvious impossibility on the face of it, when the film was made before they gained power in 1933 and they would probably have been copying Lang anyway.

Perhaps it's the existence of the review's author, Randy Byers that we're supposed to mistrust. But that can't be true — after all, I've met him. Unless that was an out-of-work Hollywood actor put up for the part....

Well, Joseph, you're close enough the truth that I guess it's time to reveal something I've been holding in for so long that it's start-

ing to hurt. You see, in September 1978, Carl Juarez knocked on a dorm room door at the University of Oregon, and was surprised to have it answered by Randy Byers. (He had been expecting Randy's roommate, who otherwise does not figure in this story.) He quickly noticed that Randy was reading Harlan Ellison's *Alone Against Tomorrow* and went into full trufan propagation mode. Carl was an unhappy teen-aged misfit from the bumfuck Oregon town of Tillamook (home of a cheese that the British probably wouldn't think qualified as true cheddar), and instantly envious of Randy's well-adjusted, self-contained, corn-fed Salem confidence and good looks. Carl promptly forced a swap of personalities upon Randy via previously unimagined x-dimensional mental byways and processes he'd learned from AE van Vogt (hence the now-lowercase name). So actually, the person you met at that party in Walthamstow wasn't Randy, but Carl. And bighod it's high time that Randy get credit for the brilliant design of this fanzine, if he do say so myself.

—Randy Carl Oh I'm so confused

We get all kinds of responses to *Celluloid Fantasia*; no one seems to have been fooled completely by the material in #9, thanks in part to Carl's helpful hokum meter on the editorial page. Some people find it fascinating, a majority admit to some measure of mystification in response, while a minority are actively annoyed by its continuing appearance. Personally, I've found it a delightful way to sneak original speculative fiction into *Chunga*, without leaving ourselves open to the sort of criticism that usually follows that kind of thing in a fanzine. I don't think you could argue that Stu and I would be better off sending this material to a paying market, yet I think it is more than nominally "good enough" to appear in our zine. I've got all sorts of weird monster movies and musicals still waiting in the wings, but I'd love to uncover cinematic treasures from many other genres as well. And to those who find it unendurable, I promise we won't fill up half the issue with *Fantasia* in the future.

—Andy

Kate Yule

Chunga #9 — wow.

Such a dizzying mix of real and not-real...I've vowed to stay off the computer this weekend in a bid to get things done [this doesn't count, this



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is getting things done], else I would be Googling many references, from Elizabeth Short to Madame Satan, to learn what if anything is behind them.

The humor & allusiveness in Ulrika's news squib about the state of London pubfandom is the kind of thing we give high marks for in this household. The movie summaries by "T. Vedic Chariot" — genius. Tami's one-page piece about her brief, impromptu road trip was very nicely complemented by the Schirmeister art sidebar. (But surely neither of these depicted snogging on p. 21 is Marci M!) and I love the duck

We're so pleased that you like our shrunken ducks.

—carl

Graham Charnock

Revisited Hinckley for the Eastercon. Discovered they'd changed the name of the hotel in a cunning effort to put me off, but managed to find it in the end. The lovely American boys I'd met last time weren't there so I had to buy my own Nylons and Hershey Bars. Woke up the first morning to find a huge and disconcertingly dry piss stain on the opposite side of the bed to which I'd been sleeping. Was faced with the alternatives that it was my own quick-drying piss stain (no recent history) or the laundry staff hadn't changed the sheets since the last occupant. If the latter, I certainly couldn't let them in my room because they would assume it was my piss stain. Thought I might challenge them, stare very menacingly at them, and accuse them of sloppy bed-making, but was afraid they might call in dna evidence. In the end could only face the prospect of sleeping in a piss-stained bed for the rest of the convention, by mentally accepting it was my piss-stain. All a bit Larry David, really.

Spent most of the convention in my hotel room watching porn. Three films for £9.95, which kind of assumes that one of them was worth two pence

more than the others (if so, it certainly wasn't 'White Chicks'). The snag was you had to watch them all in twenty-four hours which meant I was pretty worn out by the end of each day. Didn't want to appear sad, so rang reception and insisted they log the films title by title on my hotel bill.

Still, managed to prowl the corridors late most nights drunkenly leering at any woman who might conceivably be uglier than me, which was most of them. Met Pete Weston who told me yet again I was the best fan-writer ever. I said I'd go along with that if he dropped the 'fan'. Worst image of the con was Ian Watson propositioning me in the bar dressed as Captain Hook. I explained to him my theory that as new technology moved towards the time when music only existed as digital information on the internet and we could download our entire music collections into a chip in our skull, we would probably be faced with the prospect of *iPod fairs*, where you could pick up cheap second-hand iPods full of other people's record collections. Entrepreneurs would then create a new retro market by burning the albums they contained onto cds, or even having them pressed as vinyl. He soon fell asleep.

Was puzzled by the editorial in *Chunga* which claimed most of the fanzine was fiction. Decided not to read the rest of the magazine in protest, then decided Andy was probably only referring to the letter column.

Have finally come down with my first real 'old man' disease: gout. When I told the doctor my self-diagnosis she curled her lip and said, 'I'm not surprised.' Sent me for blood tests for kidney and liver function, saying, ominously, 'Unless you'd rather not have the liver one.' Last time she tested my liver function was six years ago when she told me I had six years left to live. Amazing how specific doctors can be when they're trying to get you to stop drinking. This time she will probably tell me I only have 2 hours, four minutes and twenty seconds. Hardly time to take up smoking again. Better hurry up with the next issue of *Chunga*, boys.

There must be a word for people who continue to write letters of comment long after they stopped actually reading the fanzine they're loccing. If not, we'll have to invent one. How about "charnock"? Perhaps it should be a word for the letter, rather than the writer. "They were hoping for a LoC, but got a charnock instead."

All joking aside (for the moment), I hope you're taking the warnings about your liver seriously. We don't want to lose you so soon after we lost Martin Smith. Still, you'll notice that we did get this issue out in rather a hurry.



Sue Jones

Thanks very much for sending *Chunga* #9—I'm sorry it's taken me a while to manage to respond. The Celluloid Fantasia pieces were good fun, although I suspect I've missed a lot of the humour, not being much into films and/or horror. I enjoyed pretty much everything in the issue, but haven't felt grabbed by any particular comment hooks this time, except a sudden pang of jealousy as I read Randy's mention of doing the Great Ocean Road. Next time I manage to get to Australia....

I'm impressed by the quality of *Chunga* #9: the general high standard of writing, smart, practical layout, the very many excellent cartoons, the variety of topics and styles—and a fizzy letter column that makes me suspect I've already missed several other good issues. Well, fingers crossed you'll be willing to pop my name on the list for the next few.

I also uttered a quiet cheer for your intention to keep this a paper zine in the main. I've nothing much against the electronic takeover—some, like *Ansible*, work perfectly well on line, and if the cost of overseas postage continues to rise, and my mailing list keeps expanding, I may have to consider doing this with *Tortoise*. But I want to resist the idea as long as possible. I don't enjoy reading at length on screen, and printing things out means using my choice of paper, etc. (And if I am feeling lazy, I might not bother: just skim the files online and eventually forget about them, however much I enjoy what I read at the time.) I'd rather keep my mailing list small and my zine properly tangible.

I'm putting one tangible copy of *Tortoise* 20 in the post to you today. I apologise for not sending three copies, as requested, but I did a very small print run for this issue, due to the coloured cover, and I'm also reluctant to pay a lot of postage for something that only one (or none) of you might be actively interested in reading. So you'll have to share this time. Tort is very much a perzine, is not particularly 'fannish', and it reflects my own interests more than anything else. So if you aren't too eager to see more, just let me know and I'll save the stamp next time.

Thanks, Sue. You aren't the only faned to worry about our request for three copies of your zine in trade, as Guy Lillian has mentioned this in *The Zine Dump* as well. We all have our own collections, but we understand too well the expense of production and are more than happy to share single copies of zines. The only thing that's sometimes confusing is that many people will send a copy to Andy (because he has been on their mailing list since he was

fifteen) as well as one to me (for sharing with Carl), so I don't always know when Andy hasn't also gotten a copy. If other faneds can, like Sue, give me the heads up when I am receiving the sole trading copy, then Andy won't be left in the cold, without grist for the sausage mill.

Ron Bennett

Heavens! Number nine. It doesn't seem two minutes since your inaugural issue arrived. Don't you fallows get any sleep?

I think the entire idea of efanazines is terrific. Entirely dynamic and full of vitality. It's a world that's in its infancy, yet those who are really at its centre are hard-bitten fans of long experience. Absolutely fantastic.

Having said that, it's not for me; I'm still locked into the time when Hectograph was king. Hell's teeth, you're not going to deny me my purple fingers are you?

Ah, Stu Shiffman. I invariably enjoy his writing, and this piece, on William Dudley Penney was no exception. I find it hard to believe that I've lived through half a century of FIAWOL but (a) I've never heard of this fine fellow or (b) I didn't know that Lovecraft was an anti-Semite. A *fallike* on both their houses.

And then there's this wonderful follow-up by Andy Hooper. Good gracious, what scholarship. What research. I'm half tempted to suspect that either Stu or Andy, or both, are having a little fun at our expense and have fabricated the whole thing. What the heck. a couple of fascinating reads, either way.

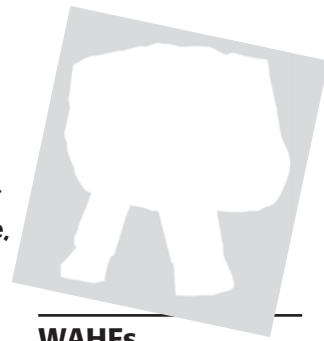
And hell's teeth. with the musical werewolves as well, you've really got me wondering. I must search the small print and see whether this issue is dated 1st April.

Did you know that dahlia is pronounced differently in our two countries?

Being partially sighted has its compensations. I read Graham Charnock's comment about the tiger in Shanklin Zoo suffering from various diseases as various cheeses. Edam shame, I thought.

Interesting point raised by Peter Weston about TAFF candidates. I remember one candidate long ago who actually nominated another candidate in the same race.

'Kay, another fine issue which I thoroughly enjoyed, even if I didn't understand a word of it. Let me shoot this short LoC to you before the mailman arrives with another half a dozen issues. ☒



WAHFs

John Hertz

All haiku are about Charlie Parker.

Brad Foster

That gun is fully loaded and the hammer is cocked back!

Martin Morse Wooster

Let me be provocative and argue the case that TAFF is no longer necessary.

Don Anderson

My comfortable recliner chair loses some of its comfort when I try to balance a desktop computer on my knees.

Jim Caughran

But somehow, the brilliant comments I imagined in the air stayed up in the air.

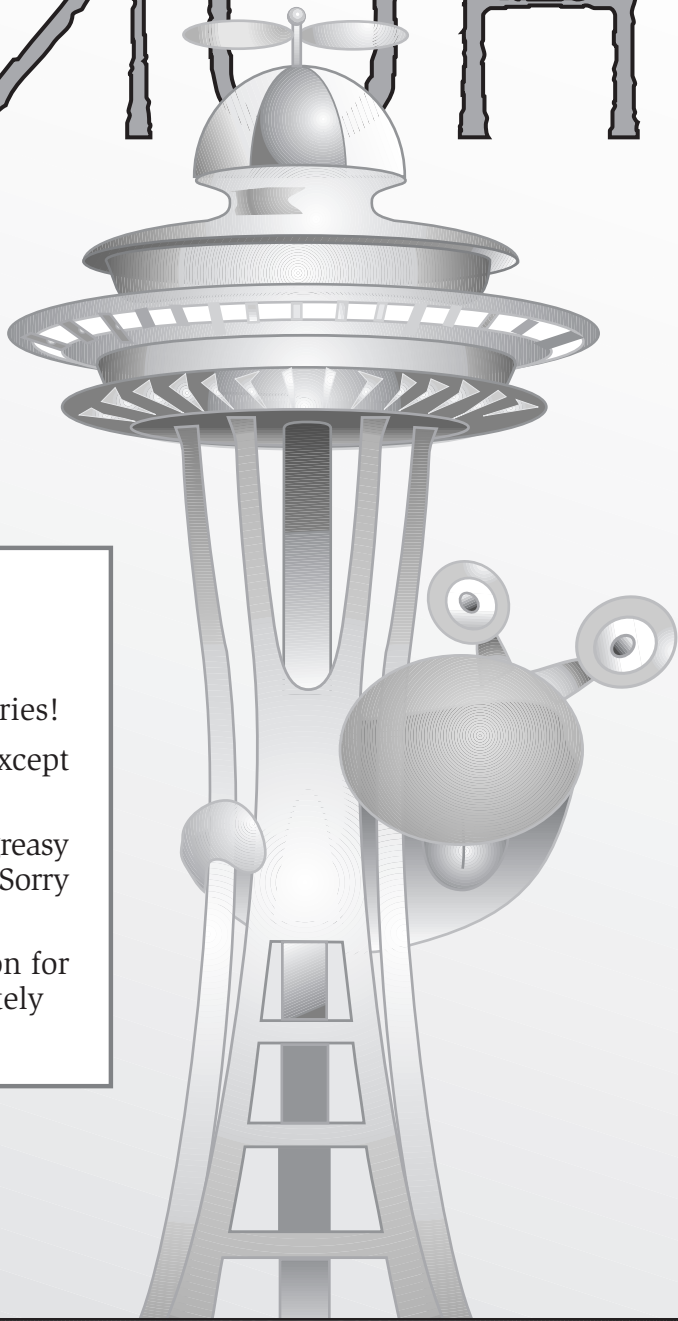
Lloyd Penney

Who knows, after a Ditto in Toronto, a Corflu there might just be the convention that reunites the clans.

Jack William Bell

(Now for the wrap-up, where I misconstrue the meaning of another LoC and then come to a somewhat confusing complete halt without ever tying up any of the threads which I pick loose above.)

AGNUNO



CHUNGA AWARD HISTORY

1. *Three* FAAn Awards in *two* categories!
2. Randy's mom's favorite fanzine (except for the parts he doesn't write).
3. Absorbed more spilled beer than a greasy paper napkin in a side-by-side test. (Sorry if you got that copy.)
4. And now, at long last, a nomination for the most important, most desperately coveted award of all . . .

2005 O, GHU! AWARD

for Showy Design and Excessive
Coverage of TAFF, *TAFF*, *TAFF*
(Not to Mention Possibly Counter-
factual Items Seen on eBay)

Craig
SMITH