

tener, and available for news, trades, sometimes comments or 3/25¢. Our Overseas Agent is Peter Singleton, Ward 2, Whittingham hospital, Near Preston, Lancashire, England; subs thru him are 10 for 7/- (or 10/- Air). Circulation: 230. Colophon illo by Ross Chamberlain. March 12, 1965. EASTERCON IN '65, CLEVELAND IN '66 and NEW YORK IN '67!

FLASHNEWS! -- NEW PUBLISHERS FOR AMAZING & FANTASTIC: One of the hottest news stories this side of Flushing broke unexpectedly with a call from the West Coast. "Have you heard about AMAZING and FANTASTIC? They're folding with the June issues unless a miracle occurs." Armed with this information, your intrepid Focal Point staff sent out runners (especially imported from the jungles of Burma) and dug up the following Inside Information. This news is so new that even the Inner circles have it under DNO. :: Sol Cohen, the publisher of GALAXY, is leaving the Galaxy Pubs to form a new company. And, "miraculously," he has purchased AMAZING and FANTASTIC from Ziff-Davis. :: Z-D's decision to fold or sell is not unexpected; both magazines' sales have fallen drastically in the last two years, until the breakeven point was only a distant marker in the past. Z-D is a company more used, these days, to publishing slick magazines like CAR & DRIVER and

POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY; it was only a question of how long, not whether, they would stick by the failing sf titles. :: AMAZING has changed publishers only twice before: first in 1929 when Gernsback was forced out, and then again nine years later, in 1938, when Tech sold out to Z-D. FANTASTIC is the result of the shotgun marriage of FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, born in 1939, and FANTASTIC, born in 1952, when both were merged in 1953. AMAZING went digest-sized at the same time. :: At presstime, we have heard from Cole Lalli (via Andy Porter), who reports that the change in publisher will bring no major editorial changes. :: Rumored, but unconfirmed, is that Z-D's asking price was \$30,000.00. Circulation, also rumored, was in the neighborhood of 23,000. :: That's all we have for now, except to say that we only hope Sol treats the magazines well.

THE OPEN ESFA MEETING -- A Report By Ted White

The Open ESFA Meeting this year was, to put it simply, a drag. Of the half-dozen or so I've attended in as many years, this one was the least.

It's hard to put my finger on the why of it. On the surface, the meeting (a two-hour conference, in effect) had everything working for it. It was billed as a salute to GALAXY on its fifteenth birthday (although that birthday is close to three quarters of a year away as yet), and H.L. Gold, Harry Harrison, Groff Conklin, Jack Gaughan, Lester del Rey and Fred Pohl were all on hand to say a few words.

But it didn't come off. Horace Gold was of course the surprise of the afternoon; I doubt many of the assembled had ever seen him before. He was thin and seemed ill at ease; his speaking was forced and nervous. He had been hospitalized for three and a half years, since the taxi accident that had driven him out of editorial control over GALAXY, and this was undoubtedly the largest gathering he'd faced in many years. It is entirely to his credit that he made the effort.

But the microphone garbled his already strained voice, and it was not easy to listen to him. And while he should've been scheduled as the climactic point of the program, he went first. There was no impact.

Nor did Groff Conklin nor Jack Gaughan contribute much. Gaughan appears to consider himself too good an artist to be an illustrator, and he was a bit much the Arty Feller for my taste. Lester del Rey seemed a bit lost in having to deliver an appreciation instead of an excoriation -- as is more common with him -- and about all he could find to say about GALAXY was that it "had no bugs," meaning that it ground no axes, and that it was "the only magazine to publish science fiction without interruption for fifteen years" -- a statement palpably wrong, any way you want to look at it.

Harry Harrison was the only bright spot of the afternoon, really. He took neither himself nor the occasion too seriously, and managed to ease the stiff formality of the "salute" a good bit. But he was unrehearsed, and his anecdotes had no structure or real point.

Fred Pohl has demonstrated on other occasions (notably the 1963 Phillycon) his ability to hold an audience, but this afternoon he spoke extemporaneously and momentarily.

The program was finished off (and that's the phrase I wanted, all right) by a slide talk by Sam Moskowitz, who was, if anything, a little more inarticulate than usual. He said he would be assisted by Jack Gaughan, but this consisted only of his twice asking Jack, "How do you like that cover, Jack?"

Perhaps it was only that there were few people in the audience I cared to see whom I could not see equally well at FISTFA, but I found the meeting dull not only in its formal aspects, but also in its epiphenomena. It was curious too, the tight insularity of the ESFA people. It did not rankle that although Larry Ivie, "popular illustrator," who was sitting beside me, was introduced, as was Jack Chalker ("publisher of the famous fanzine, MIRAGE"), while as the only representative of F&SF there, I was not. Sam would've had fits had I been. But when Charlie Brown announced the Lunacon and pointedly refrained from mentioning the cooperatively scheduled Eastercon, and moderator Howard refused to allow Mike McInerney to do so, I was bugged. If there are schisms in NYC fandom, it is easy to see why. There is little profit in associating with narrow, unpleasant people like Brown or the ESFAans.

Fortunately, Newark, home of ESFA, is buried in the New Jersey swamplands. Once a year is enough of it for me.

focal point: three

NEWS OF MYTHICAL CAMBRIDGE FANDOM: Paul Williams exists, and he is playing a French roué in a production of Gigi (the play, not the movie). Joe Pilati is almost singlehandedly battling the Evil Administration of Boston U., trying to bait them into censoring the newspaper so that he will have an Issue on which to become the Mario Savio of Boston. Sid Coleman is locked away in his office with his Lovely Secretary, turning out thousands of revolutionary physics papers, so that he will continue to receive invitations to scientific conferences in Exotic Foreign Lands. Larry Stark is becoming a publisher, having put out three books so far (Almost Grown and Other Stories by Peter Guralnick, One Hundred Views of the Charles River by Larry Stark, and On My Knees by Judith Nemias; the first is short stories, the second haiku, and the third poems; prices are 50¢, 25¢, and 15¢ respectively; they are available from Larry Stark Press, 20 Mellen St., Apt 4, Cambridge, Mass., 02138) and currently wrangling money out of the banks to finance three more. I am thinking about publishing a second issue of CANVRETTI-SAT - it will be all about Wyoming in the 1880's. (This news comes to Focal Point from Spy XYZ, who sometimes operates under the penname of Larry McCombs.)

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IF YOU INTEND TO WRITE TO FOCAL POINT after March 31st, take note of the COA above for rich brown; your Other Editor, Mike McInerney, will be moving about that time, and though mail will of course be forwarded, a delay may occur which could lose you issues of FP; several people have Missed Issues because we heartlessly Cut Them Off before they got around to Doing Something. [Since several people have asked, no, there are no extra copies of any issue except #3.] We are pretty Evil that way, sometimes. Consider yourselves Warned.

MOVIE NEWS: Papa Bob Tucker (who doesn't like to spend money) sends us clippings, mentioning William Castle's The Night Walker (screenplay by Bob Bloch) -- we don't know about the movie, but the handbill is a gass -- Journey Beyond the Stars (directed by Stanley Kubrick; Arthur C. Clarke, "an authority on the communications satellite system" according to the clipping, wrote the book) which will be the first Cinema of film, House at the End of the World (with screenplay by Jerry Sohl) and something called The Outlaw Planet (with a script by Ib Melchior...good ol' Ib). All but the first are still being produced. :: John Boardman sent us the back page of The Village Voice with the proper spaces marked; Ed Emshwiller's experimental films, "Scrambles," "Thanatopsis," and "Totems," are being shown at the Bridge Theatre, 4 St. Marks Place, NYC, March 12 to March 18, \$1.50 admission at midnight. (On the same page, we also note that Wednesday, March 10, Professor Isaac Asimov (spelled Issac, so maybe VV isn't going fannish after all) gave a talk, "Escape to Reality," at Columbia University, which we unfortunately missed. :: John also sends us a clipping which lists the top 85 TV-Shows; the sf-types include #3, Bewitched; #23, Munsters; #32, Adams' Family; #36, My Favorite Martian; #39, Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea; and maybe #84, Flintstones.

FAPA CORNER: You could've knocked us over with a wet GRUE -- the Shadow FAPA Mailing, all of 35pp, is finally out from Don Fitch (of the 3908 Frijo, Covina, California Fitch's). The new OE of Shadow FAPA will be Dave Van Arnam ("Fats"), 1730 Harrison Avenue, Apt 353, Bronx 53, New York. Deadline for the next mailing will be the end of May. If any of FAPA's four or five waiting-listers (or those 50 or so who maintain a nebulous position on same) want to be in it, they should contact Dave; he'll even run stencils, in a pinch, if they're four-holed.

RON WILSON (N. 3107 Normandie St., Spokane, Washington) is searching out contributions for THE VERMILLION FLYCATCHER, which was reviewed in the last issue of FP. Ron mentions that he's looking for good material, both serious and faaanish; his fine repro and meticulous layouts deserve your contributions. Write him. All 230 of you.

focal point: four

ENGLISH MAGAZINE ACTIVITY is increasing rapidly these days. A new magazine has come out called SF HORIZONS. The first issue of this "magazine of criticism and comment" includes an interview of Kingsley Amis and C. S. Lewis by Brian Aldiss, and articles by Robert Conquest, Brian Aldiss, Jim Blish, and Harry Harrison. SF HORIZONS is edited by Harry Harrison and Brian Aldiss. The business address of the magazine is Pelham, Friory Road, Sunningdale, Berks, England, and the cost per issue is 50¢ in the U.S. and 3s. 6d. in the United Kingdom.

NEW WORLDS AND SCIENCE FANTASY are now appearing monthly. The February issues of each announced the return to monthly publication. They both appear in pocketbook format, and the March issues do not carry dates on the cover or spine. With the decrease in number and circulation of almost all sf mags, and the incredible increase in the number and sales of sf paperback books, this is the logical next step for the sf mags.

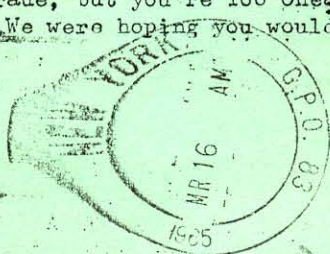
ETC. Frank Wilimczyk will be back with us next issue, reviewing fanzines in his "Wigglemiggie Reckoner," but we'd like to remind fans to send him zines for review at 447 10th Avenue, New York, New York. Fanzines intended for trade with Focal Point should be sent to Mike McInerney (with an extra for rich brown, only if you feel like it, since he doesn't collect fanzines anymore). :: Arnie Katz's rider with this issue was delayed by your hungry obedient editors, who were too lazy to run it off last time around; we apologize to you, dear FP readers, and to Arnie, if the material is dated. Needless to say, we will continue to take Arnie For A Ride every time the opportunity presents itself. :: This issue of FOCAL POINT is coming out early, for a change; usually we tend towards lateness, if anything. (Which caused Felice Rolfe to remark, "It was interesting to note, on March 9th, that I had to be a member of the LonCon on or before 28 February to take advantage of the Charter Flight." We hank our het in shem.) But, for once, we're getting out a week ahead of schedule, in the hope that you won't have read about our Exclusive News in last week's RATATOSK. The typer (for these last three pages), the mimeographing, the ink, and the money for postage are courtesy of Ted White, over whom we are now prepared to become Fawning Acolytes. Seriously, though, our thanx to Ted. :: Next issue and maybe we go back to multilith. Or, as Arnie Katz has been wont (and sometimes will) to say, Maybe Not. We have kicked that old multi in the gearteeth; we think the repro will be improved, especially since we'll be using a multilith ribbon this time.

BELLE DIETZ was elected Directress of Sci-Fi, a science fiction club sponsored by CCNY (City College of New York); we've not been to meetings (it meets the same time as FISTFA, which we host), but it's a good little group by most accounts. John Closser resigned and was re-elected Vice President of the group at the same time.

The Last Issue of FP You Will Receive Unless You do something is # P

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