

THRILLING

# WONDER

MUMBLINGS

FROM MUNCHKINLAND

JAN 2003

20

Also

JOE HALDEMAN

FREDERIK POHL

ROBERT HEINLEIN



*Siren* of the

**BLACK GALAXY**

A Thrilling Incomplete Novel

By MURRAY LEINSTER

## AN APOLOGY

*In June 2002 Samoa marked 40 years of independence. We enjoyed observing the parades, dancing and customary tributes presented on the lawns of parliament. The most memorable event of the celebrations, however, was a speech made by one of the invited guests from overseas.*



In early November 1918 the steamship *Talune* dropped anchor in Apia Harbour following its regular run from Auckland via several ports in Fiji. It carried several hundred passengers and crew, as well as cargo and the mail from New Zealand. A dozen or so of the people aboard were unwell and the mail included news that the Spanish influenza epidemic sweeping the world had reached Auckland. What happened next was the worst tragedy in the history of colonial Samoa. Unfortunately, it was not the only one. Although little known elsewhere,

New Zealand's period of rule remained a dark and unfinished story for most Samoans, until 2002.

The influenza virus which swept the world in 1918-19 was exceptionally lethal, killing over 25 million people and affecting at least as many more. (Among them was my maternal grandfather, who, obviously but thankfully, survived). It had probably been evolving for years before growing strong enough to create a pandemic. Conditions in the trenches of Europe must have been ideal for its rapid spread, but military authorities on both sides hushed up news that the epidemic was claiming more lives than combat for fear of bolstering the enemy. As a result it became known as the Spanish influenza only because it was not widely reported in the press until outbreaks in Spain in May 1918.

All of this must have seemed a world away to most Samoans at the time. They knew of the Great War, of course, since a New Zealand Expeditionary Force had landed in Apia in August 1914 and taken control of the German colonial administration. All officials had been deported but private German citizens were given the option to stay, largely because the NZEF had insufficient people to oversee the plantations or make any significant changes to the systems instituted by the Germans. The Kiwi commander, Colonel Robert Logan, was a sheep farmer whose only previous administrative experience had been as a member of a county council in rural Otago. Unlike the former German administrators, he knew little of Samoan culture and quickly offended locals by returning ceremonial gifts and making other social gaffes. He became preoccupied with ridding the colony of its Chinese labourers. His troops thought that they should have been fighting in Europe.

Logan was also strongly anti-American, in part because some American traders in Apia were pushing for re-unification of the islands under US rule. He decried the American Consul in Apia as an agent of the Kaiser, for allowing some Germans to send mail out through the US diplomatic pouch. And he may have viewed the US administration in nearby American Samoa as the competition, a threat to New Zealand's ambition to rule the Pacific for King and Empire. Whatever the reasons, his antipathy towards the US profoundly affected the course of events which followed the arrival of the *SS Talune* in November 1918.

The *Talune* had been at a dock in Auckland when the *Niagara* from Canada tied up alongside. The *Niagara* had New Zealand's Prime Minister Massey and his finance minister aboard, returning home from an imperial conference. Their presence on the vessel may have influenced the decision by the Minister of Health not to quarantine it despite more than 100 other passengers and crew being sick and two, dead. This was simple influenza, he declared, not the epidemic. When the *Talune* departed for Fiji some days later it already had sick passengers and crew; it was placed in quarantine at both Suva and Levuka (although some passengers were, it turned out, allowed to leave the vessel in Suva).

By the time the *Talune* reached Apia, at least a dozen people were ill, three seriously. The port doctor was untrained but did briefly inspect passengers and crew, some of whom, he was told, were suffering from seasickness. He also inspected the ship's log and saw no entries pertaining to illnesses, nor periods of quarantine in Fiji. He might have suspected that the captain was lying, but he cleared the vessel and it sailed on to deliver the influenza virus to Tonga as well.

As soon as mail from the *Talune* was opened locals became aware of how serious the influenza was. A number of people from the ship had already sought medical attention, but it was too late for one girl, who died that night. Soon local people began complaining of fevers and chills. Armistice Day celebrations drew a big crowd to the town waterfront, probably speeding spread of the virus. Within a week, most of the population of Apia was sick; the rest of Upolu and then Savai'i quickly followed.

Samoans and half-castes proved more susceptible to the virus than the Europeans, but most medical personnel were expatriate and looked after the whites first. The mortality rate was highest among the elderly, which included most village leaders. Procedures for selecting new leaders were slow, leaving a vacuum of authority across the islands. Logan and his administrators did little to cope with the crisis and even hampered civilian efforts, closing down a temporary hospital established by the women of Apia. Mass graves were dug, further distressing the Samoans by denying them the opportunity to perform customary ceremonies in honour of the dead.

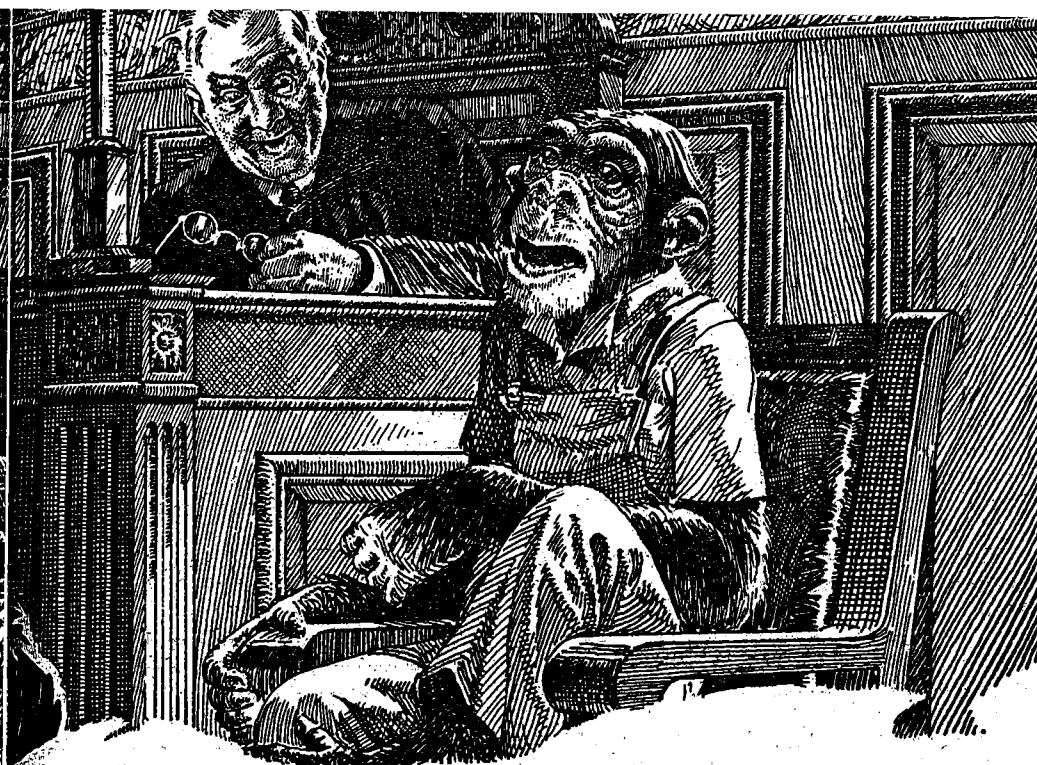
On November 20, the authorities in American Samoa radioed an offer of assistance. The US Navy had a large number of medical orderlies ready and willing to help. Logan ignored the offer and, a week later, ordered the wireless link to the US territory closed. It was not until December 2 that help arrived -- in the form of an Australian naval vessel and medical crew -- but by then it was too late.

In the end, whereas the virus killed between 2-3% of the populations it infected in New Zealand or the USA, Samoa lost around 22% -- one of the worst epidemics on record. American Samoa maintained strict quarantine procedures in Pago Pago throughout and was one of the few places in the world to escape the epidemic, a fact not lost on surviving village chiefs in Western Samoa. They petitioned for a transfer of power over their islands to the United States, withdrawing it when a new administrator was appointed. The Treaty of Versailles then handed Western Samoa back to New Zealand (on behalf of Great Britain). Their record of incompetent and insensitive rule gave many Samoans a renewed confidence in their own institutions and a desire for political autonomy.

Dissent against foreign rule had begun under the Germans but remained largely disorganised as any Samoan leaders who offended them were exiled. This policy continued under the New Zealand administrations and, combined with the loss of leaders during the epidemic and rivalries between Samoan families, delayed the rise of a coherent political opposition until 1926. Then the Samoa League was founded in Apia; it became better known under its Samoan name, the Mau. "Mau" literally means merely "opinion", but the unifying opinion in this case was that the traditional Samoan way of doing things -- the *fa'a Samoa* -- was better for Samoans than any of the systems imposed by foreign powers. Mau rallies and marches gained great popular support.



[continued on p.14]



"Way down upon de Suwannee Ribber—"

# JERRY IS A MAN

By **ROBERT A. HEINLEIN**

*He was an anthropoid—but did that make him human or did it make him a mere ape? On the answer trembled the entire commercial destiny of the brave new world of the future!*

## CHAPTER I

*To Order—One Pegasus*

**D**ON'T blame the Martians. The human race would have developed plasto-biology in any case. Look at the older registered Kennel Club breeds—glandular giants like the St. Bernard and the Great Dane, silly little atrocities like the Chihuahua and the Pekingese. Consider fancy goldfish.

The damage was done when Dr. Morgan produced new breeds of fruit flies by kicking around their chromosomes with X-rays. After that, the second generation of the Hiroshima survivors did not teach us anything new; those luckless monstrosities merely publicized standard genetic knowledge.

Mr. and Mrs. Bronson van Vogel did not have social reform in mind when they went to the Phoenix Breeding Ranch; Mr. van Vogel simply wanted to buy a Pegasus. He had mentioned it at breakfast.

**A COMPLETE FANTASTIC NOVELET**

## IS JERRY A MAN?

*Colonial arrogance in Samoa was in part due to racism – the conviction that Samoans (and half castes and Asians...) were somehow “lesser men”. Racism has not disappeared since those times, but a more current debate has extended the core issue of how we define “human” to encompass other species. Here is another case of reality catching up – almost -- with sf.*

Robert Heinlein’s “Jerry is a Man” first appeared in an issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in 1947 and was later included in one of his story collections (with a rather curious slight change of title to “Jerry was a Man”). It revolves around the technology of plasto-biology, or what we would today recognise as genetic engineering. Specifically, it concerns an engineered chimpanzee named Jerry, designed as a production line worker but now retired and destined to become dog food. Jerry is discovered and adopted by the ultra-rich Mrs van Vogel, whose legal eagles advise that the only way to prevent his fate is to demonstrate his “humanity” in a court of law. Her lawyers do so by showing that Jerry is capable of making moral judgements.

Fifty years on, morals are also at the centre of a campaign to gain legal rights for all chimpanzees as well as gorillas, orang-utans and other ape species. The long-term goal of The Great Ape Project is to have an UN-decreed Declaration of the Rights of Great Apes, asserting the rights of life, liberty and freedom from torture to all of these species (including humans). Since humans have a way to go with ensuring these rights for our own species, I guess it’s just as well that this is seen as a long-term goal. Even so, the current rate of clearing of native forests in the tropics seems likely to doom gorillas and orang-utans, at least, long before they join the “community of equals” espoused.

More immediately, supporters are concerned for the welfare of apes kept in captivity for scientific experimentation. An article in *New Scientist* in 1999 estimated that there are around 1700 of these in the US alone, used mainly for vaccine trials. The genetic closeness between chimpanzees and humans (>98%) is sufficient to make them attractive to researchers and animal rights supporters alike. In some medical studies this has actually proved to be a disadvantage – chimpanzees infected with HIV strains did not develop any symptoms for years. In any case, animal rights lobbyists argue that the great apes share other things with humans besides DNA – social organisation, the ability to use tools, learn sign language and so on – that justify giving them legal rights.

In 1999 New Zealand set a precedent when it passed an Animal Welfare Act with a section detailing “Restrictions on use of non-human hominids”, but this was largely redundant – there is no research involving great apes in the country. The EU countries have apparently followed this lead. In the US, Bill Clinton signed the more specific Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance and Protection (CHIMP) Act in 2000, which funded homes for chimps retired from US research programs (including the Air Force’s famous “space chimps”).

However, the US CHIMP Act also included a clause allowing the recall of retirees to laboratories if deemed necessary. Last year this led to a writer in *The Wall Street Journal* questioning whether chimpanzees should have the right to legal representation. He suggested that the courts might need to appoint legal guardians to defend their interests, as happens in cases involving children or mental invalids (or, in Heinlein’s story, Jerry).

Heinlein was not trying to predict the future. He may not even have taken his scenario that seriously, since Jerry’s case relies in part upon the prior recognition of a Martian plasto-biologist as a legal “man”, and the van Vogels treat other exotic designed creatures, such as a miniature elephant, as mere curiosities. But nobody in 1947 could have foreseen how quickly genetic engineering would develop.

More to the point, we are now at a stage where it is relatively easy to imagine a near future in which great ape genomes are altered to create new species. So the rights of “non-human hominids” become even more important, and the question of whether or not Jerry is a man may soon arise for real.

## THE HALDEMAN DIARIES (PART 1)

*What does world famous sf author Joe Haldeman do when he's not writing his latest bestseller? Why, he writes his diary, of course. Here, with his permission, are some extracts covering the period in mid-2002 when he and Gay stopped over in Samoa on their way to being Guests of Honour at cons in New Zealand and Australia. At right I've added an occasional note for the sake of comparison.*

23 May, 2002

The usual security hassles at the airport. At least we didn't get pulled out of line for an additional search; they stoppeth-ed one of three. Flight to Honolulu was uneventful, just long. We were supposed to lay over in Hawaii for five hours. We were an extra two hours late because security had pulled somebody from the flight, and before they took off they had to go through all the luggage.

When I heard the Haldemans were coming the Pacific route I assumed they would go via Pago Pago so was pleasantly surprised to find they were to stay a few days in Samoa on both forward and return trips.

24 May

I read and napped through the long flight. Customs at Apia was a pro forma walk-through, no delays. Chris Nelson graciously met us at the plane, at four in the morning, and drove us the forty minutes to the cottages. Chris is an ex-Aussie sf fan who learned we were coming through and got in touch by email. He's a university librarian here, and has arranged for me to do a reading and talk, when we pass through on our way back to the states.

Ruby and I scouted around to check accommodation; found a place near the beach (such as it is in Apia – all of the nice beaches are out of town).

Forgot to confirm their arrival time before heading out to the airport, so had a short nap in the car before meeting them.

The cottage is very comfortable, basically a five-by-eight-meter floorplan with a half-partition wall to separate the bedroom from the kitchenette/living room, and a nice bath with shower. Lots of light from jalousied windows and a sliding glass door on the ocean side. It's across the street from the ocean and a twenty-minute walk from the town. Ceiling fans instead of airconditioning, but so far I still prefer them. We'll see how long their charm lasts.

There was a large welcoming crowd at the airport, but 'twas for a champion Samoan fire-dancer on the same flight.

Tried not to drive off the road in my excitement at having a favourite sf author in the car.

I slept for an hour or so and, when it got light, went out to explore. The ocean was calm out to the reef, maybe 250 meters out, where there's surf. The water was wonderfully transparent. No beach as such, just a jumble of boulders. There are a couple of beaches not far away.

It's an interesting third-world-but-comfortable neighborhood, as we often see in islands. A lot of the buildings are just shacks, but they're surrounded by breathtaking beauty -- flowers, exotic trees, the sea down the road. In fact, some of the houses are not even proper shacks, since they don't have walls. Just four (or more) posts holding up a roof. Like an X-rayed house: tables and chairs and a kitchen area, clothes neatly hung in a transparent "closet." Beds that do double duty as couches, or vice versa. Exchanging privacy for ventilation.

The people are cheerful; if they're not smiling their look is thoughtfulness rather than frustration or anger. People stand on their lawns in circles, talking, trading stories, laughing. From the huts you hear people singing together in close harmony.

Around 9:00 we hit the bricks. Samoa is definitely Under Construction, sign of a healthy economy. Much of the road was either torn up or being surveyed. We had to stop in the landmark hotel Aggie Grey's. Aggie was a colorful local character who built a snack bar in the thirties to support her family after the no-good Mr. Grey gambled away everything they had. It grew in size and reputation until, by WWII, it was the most famous hotel and watering hole in the South Pacific. Now it's the most expensive place on the island, with air-conditioned fales (cabins) and spacious rooms going for as much as \$200 a night.

We roamed around the place and then went into the pleasant little bar that fronts on Beach Rd., the oldest part of the hotel, and I had a beer while Gay had a cappuccino. It came to me in a rush that my father must have sat here fifty years ago, when he visited the Samoas on Public Health Service business. It would have been the bar in Apia at that time, perhaps literally. (During WWII, Aggie Grey's was the only place in town allowed to sell liquor.)

Past the old hotel the town starts to get busy. It's the closest thing the island has to an actual city, though evidently it's really just a jumble of villages that have grown together in a lump. It's a strange mixture of run-down and smart, old and new. There are drinking places that are just a lean-to of rusty tin, but a block away, the airconditioned theater is showing *Spiderman*, and we picked up our email at a cybercafe.

We picked our way along mostly unmarked roads to the Maketi Fou, the large shaded marketplace that's the center of non-tourist life here. Acres of coconuts, taro, bananas, papayas, breadfruit, avocados, kava, and bundled firewood. I got a bag of seven knobby green things, which turned out to be a bitter wild-tasting cross between lemon and lime, for one tala (about 33 cents); one produces enough juice for a decent rum drink. For the same price we each got an iced coconut with a straw.

We had our evening planned, having made reservations for a buffet dinner and fiafia night, a song-and-dance presentation of Samoan culture. All the large hotels have these, on different nights. Since it was Thursday, we went to the Kitano Tusitala. The shindig was held in the Stevenson Restaurant (Tusitala was his Samoan name, "Teller of Tales") a fale the size of an airplane hangar. The buffet was huge and excellent, mostly standard stuff like roast pig and beef, various sea things and chicken. Good tiny octopus. Two native dishes were oka, the Polynesian version of marinated raw fish, which "cooks" overnight in a mixture of lime juice and coconut milk, and palusami, tuna steak wrapped in taro leaves and baked. We got a nice Australian wine for about \$8; the meal and show for both of us was about \$30.

The show was pretty similar to ones we've seen in Fiji, Rarotonga, Aitutaki, and New Zealand, though I'm sure the differences are profound to locals. Lots of ritual dancing and harmonious singing, the dancing often mock combat among the males, with the women chanting in the background. There was a better-than-usual fire juggling display, three guys flinging flaming batons around with abandon.



Taxied home through the rain and crashed. After getting out of the taxi, he hastily adds.

25 May

Working in the morning cool, I heard a strange drumming sound, like a tom-tom being used for a fast "street beat" on the road behind us. I went out to investigate, and found the front gate was locked. The drumming dwindled away at a fast trot. I would solve the mystery later.

At nine, we asked a taxi driver to take us out of town up to Robert Louis Stevenson's house, and he didn't understand. But then Gay used the Samoan name, Vailima, and he got it. (That's also the name of the local beer. Just like a writer, to name his house after a brand of beer.)

Stevenson's estate is breathtaking; manicured lawn surrounded by exquisite flowering bushes and trees. A large clean building with three wings (two of them added after his death), wide verandas, white walls with a red roof. It probably wasn't so pretty in Stevenson's time. The estate is 410 acres, and much of it was a working plantation. You leave your shoes at the door, as you do for any house in Samoa. We hung around the gift shop for awhile, and when nobody else showed up, the guide took us on a tour. I found it fascinating, but then I'm kind of a Stevenson nut, with a shelf full of his books, including obscure ones like his correspondence and criticism.

We've been to Stevenson museums in California and Scotland, and possibly knew more about his life than the guide did. And there are aspects of his life in Samoa that wouldn't be proper to talk about. He was sexually enthralled by the women (and at least one of the men) in Hawaii and Samoa, so his decision to stay here was only partly because of his tuberculosis. Pictures of his wife, Fanny, taken during this period always look stern and disapproving. She had a bit to disapprove of.

He'd had to sell their estate in Scotland to pay for the place, and moved his mother in with the wife and her son and daughter. I take it that only the step-daughter shared his love of the island and its people. His mother, in photographs, always looks like Queen Victoria with dyspepsia. She roundly hated the place.

He lived here less than five years before dying of a stroke. He was ill all of the time, not just tuberculosis, but a tapeworm that had to be surgically removed, and who knows what else -- but he managed to write five books and part of a sixth, and seemed to party quite a bit. An expatriate pattern that Steven Crane was starting up back in England, even to the tuberculosis and demanding older wife. (Fanny was ten years older than Robert, and in various circumstances was a wise advisor or a bitch. She hated *Treasure Island* and *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* (at least the original version) and wished Robert would spend more time on grown-up pursuits like poetry and criticism. That would have kept them away from Samoa.)

The island returned Stevenson's love, and to a certain extent exploited it. He was a best-selling author at the time, and brought in a no small amount of tourism -- and still continues to. The house might be attractive but unremarkable without the Stevenson association. The view from the veranda is stunning, looking down over verdant forest to the ocean, 800 feet below. You walk from there into his study.

It's a little cluttered with memorabilia, busts and plaques and so forth. A couple of the bookshelves are full of Stevenson's various editions, in god knows how many languages. It would be a lot more interesting -- fascinating -- if they'd attempted to reconstruct it as the place where he worked. (One of the fascinating details of Hemingway's place in Cuba is that all of the books he used are still there, where he left them.) There's a solid walnut desk, sitting in a place where he couldn't be distracted by the view. In one corner, a bed, with a writing/reading tray that could be adjusted to various heights, where he wrote when he was feeling weak. A cabinet custom-made for manuscripts, with about thirty pull-out drawers. A corner fireplace that was never used.

The bedroom is large and attractive, paneled in imported California redwood, at Fanny's insistence. Off it is the sickroom, a small bed enmeshed in mosquito netting, surrounded by grim Victorian medical appurtenances. The large dining room downstairs has a music corner, with a piano and various stringed instruments. And the Victorian equivalent of a phonograph, a mechanical thing like a music box that had dozens of cylinders, now rusting away. Drawings and paintings and cartoons by his sister, who had talent.

[Afterwards] we walked around town, as much for exercise as tourism. Wandered through a large department store with an interesting combination of the familiar and exotic. A large collection of American kiddy cereals. Odd cuts of meat, beef flaps and pig tails. Machetes of various sizes. Lots of clothing without obvious prices or, often, sizes. Liter plastic bottles of vodka, whiskey and rum, but no wine. From there we walked on down to the flea market. About 90% junk and 10% very tempting.

One thing I couldn't resist was a Samoan craft called *siapo* ("tapa cloth" in the rest of the Pacific), which laboriously creates a cloth-like medium from the inner fibers of the mulberry tree, scraped off, soaked, and pounded into a thin felt. Designs are transferred by rubbing dyes of natural colors from minerals and sap. Stevenson's sitting room had siapo wallpaper, and I wanted to find some to bind my manuscript books of *Sea Change*, since a large part of it happens in Samoa.

We found a stand that had some varieties that'll look handsome on the shelf, and I hope will confer magic to the writing. (The guy running it looked Samoan but talked American; turns out he grew up in Chicago, but came back to help the family business -- in Samoa, family ties are complex and binding.)



26 May

I didn't explain the drumming noise I'd heard yesterday morning. It happened again at sundown, and I ran down to the water and saw the source: a longboat rowing by with the captain drumming fast cadence. A hundred feet long with about thirty oarsmen, it slides by with the speed of a motorboat. You see them everywhere; there's going to be a big race on June 1st, celebrating the 40th anniversary of Samoan independence from New Zealand. There will be twenty-some teams competing for a 25,000-tala prize, about eight grand.

Yesterday the clouds lifted about five in the morning, and I took the telescope out. Couldn't really see much because of the full moon, but wandered around the strange skies looking at double stars and the faint ghosts of globular clusters in a sky the color of a solution of milk.

[Later, at] the Palolo Deep Marine Reserve, it was low tide, only a foot or eighteen inches of water for quite some distance out. Much of it was live coral, so you didn't want to walk on it. So we gamely swam out, our masks a few inches off the bottom.

There was plenty to see. A surprising number of large fish in the shallows, and lots of little ones, brightly colored, schooling. Sea urchins and sea cucumbers everywhere. What really stopped me, though, was a large field of giant clams, maybe a hundred of them. I'd never seen so many in shallow water. (These are not "giant" in the grab-a-diver-by-the-foot-and-drown-him variety. They're about one to two feet in diameter. They sit there with their shells open, exposing lips of fantastic colors -- bright blue, purple, red, orange -- which perhaps lure unwary fish in. You touch their shells and they snap shut.

I wanted to call Gay over, and that was my undoing. In thrashing around to find a clear place to stand, I managed to get a bad coral cut on my left forefinger. It was like a shallow scalpel cut -- it didn't hurt much, but bled profusely. I couldn't get Gay's attention, so went back to swimming. Tried to staunch the cut with my right hand while I kicked along with the fins, but it was billowing blood.

I stood up again and this time did get Gay's attention, shouted to her what had happened, and swam back to shore as fast as possible. When I stepped up on the beach I realized I didn't know the half of it; there was a long coral cut on my right leg; the calf was a bright flag of blood. Very dramatic but, like the other, not painful.

I washed both wounds in the beach shower and decided neither of them needed stitches, though they kept bleeding profusely as we walked home. Stopped at a snack stand across the road from our place, and the nice lady gave us a first-aid kit. Back at the fala, I cleaned the wounds with soap and Gay painted them with something like Betadyne, and bandaged the finger. The leg stopped bleeding, so I just let it be. Applied rum internally.

We spruced up a little in the afternoon and at six Chris Nelson came by to take us out for a home-cooked dinner. They live in a kind of a rambler a couple of miles out of town. Megan served up a delicious vegetarian meal, most welcome since we're obeying the guide book's admonition not to eat salad, since it's probably rinsed in tap water, full of e. Coli. She made a good egg-and-veggie casserole, great lentils, roasted potatoes and actual salad, with home-made poppy-seed cake and ice cream. (All very Aussie, the only exotic thing was an appetizer of breadfruit crisps, sinfully good.) We both went back for seconds on everything.

*"What should I cook?"* asked Megan. *"Will they want something Samoan?"*

"No, they'll be eating that at all the restaurants," I said. "How about one of those fantastic eggplant dishes you make?"

*"Well, check if there's anything they can't eat."*

"Joe's allergic to aubergine," Gay emailed back, "but that's all..."

(I also bought some lime Jell-O for the meal, but Megan had not been impressed when I told her why, so it stayed in the cupboard.)

They have three daughters (Ruby, Lauren and Ella) aged one, three, and six, who were remarkably well-behaved and too cute to be real. Gay and I read the two oldest their bedtime stories. We chatted for a while, listening to the radio, which the children like as bedtime music. It was a fun, relaxing evening, talking mostly literature and politics.



27 May

Yesterday morning we got duded up and went to church, to hear the singing. It was good churchly harmony, but after the collection plate we felt we could honorably leave. Everything was in Samoan and they were probably talking about us, anyhow. There weren't any other foreigners around.

Kind of skipping church to go play. The rain had stopped, so we went back to get dressed for snorkeling -- and just as we went to step out the door, it was thunder and lightning and a downpour. God doesn't like people playing hokey.

We had a half-day tour starting at one. Went up the road that goes to Stevenson's house, which becomes the Cross Island Road. Houses become more prosperous as you climb to the highest point, about 800 meters, where a large and beautiful Baha'i temple, one of seven in the world, rises out of the rain forest. Just past that, we stopped at the Papapapai-tai Falls, which drops 100 meters into a dramatic dark forested gorge.

[At Matareva] there was a protected coral cove for snorkeling, so Gay and I dove in and spent a wonderful hour paddling around looking at the colorful fish and coral. The predominant form of coral was my favorite color, mauve, and if you looked really close you could see tiny mauve fish, only about a quarter of an inch long, hanging in close to the coral. There were plenty of fish, including a long butterscotch one that I chased until he got tired of the game and ditched me, but I didn't see anything actually exotic until Gay told me about a weird creature. I swam out in the general direction and eventually found it, hanging on to a gray boulder of coral -- a thing that looked like a seahorse grafted onto a long black-and-white sea snake. Neither of us had ever seen anything like that before.

P.S. After four days, I still prefer the ceiling fans to air conditioning, especially for sleeping.

28 May

Not much yesterday except transportation hassles. Our taxi almost hit a pig on the way to the airport, but otherwise it was lines, lines and far too much lifting.

Actually, the shoulder's not too bad this morning, just a bit sore. Coral cuts are healing nicely. Bipolar disorder's getting better. No it isn't, you idiot! Oh, shut up.

One of the transportation hassles was me. I dropped in to see the Haldemans early in the morning to let them know I could take them out to the airport, thinking that their flight was not until that evening. The cottage was spotless and I thought to myself that Joe and Gay were very tidy folk -- they were, of course, already packed. There followed a short conversation, ending in me saying "See you at 9:45", which I still thought of as p.m. and they, as a.m., since their flight was at noon. They waited as long as they could before taking a taxi out to the airport and I was mortified when I realized my goof.

Joe and Gay were extraordinarily generous, bringing beautiful toy songbirds for each of the girls and a copy of *The Coming* for myself. They also proved to Megan that not all science fiction folk are as strange as she feared! Our thanks and best wishes to them both.

Joe's latest diary entry can be found on his webpage: <http://home.earthlink.net/~haldeman>



Eric Lindsay, Airlie Beach, Qld.

30 May, 2002

I must admit that, in reading this issue, I kept trying to press the Zoom button to make the type larger. For some reason the paper copy wasn't co-operating with me on that.

Isn't it astonishing how badly written some of the earlier pulp SF was? However some also had a vitality and liveliness that I think some better written recent stories totally lack.

A convention in Samoa already? Good on you. I liked the video program, but I always liked Nick Park. Likewise, the restrained reporting of the quality of the chairman's remarkable opening speech fails to do justice to it by not quoting it sufficiently. One suspects the reporter was so overcome as to be unable to record it in the detail it so richly deserved. And I feel insufficient attention was given to the claim that RLS was in fact the co-founder of science fiction. He certainly made a wonderful Ghost of Honour for the con.

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Robert Lichtman, Glen Ellen, CA.

18 July, 2002

MfM#18 was memorable for the description you provided of your move from Australia to Samoa, especially the details about the latter location, a place sufficiently alien to me that it might as well be on some other planet.

Also appreciated in this issue was the timeline of American SF and fantasy magazines from 1945 to 1964. After marveling over the 1926-1944 timeline in the previous this carried forward my enthusiasm for the project. It's a great supplement to reference volumes like the 3-volume Tuck encyclopedia and, to a lesser extent, the Clute/Nichols encyclopedia and the Day index. I hope you will continue it in future issues.

Your father's succinct review of the 1931 *Astounding* in MfM#19 made me laugh out loud. But it was the extended coverage of the first Moamoacon that really got me going, especially the interview with Robert Louis Stevenson. Your admission that all his words were taken from various of his works reminded me of the "Derelict Derogations" that the late Boyd Raeburn published in his '50s fanzine, *A BAS*. These were made up of excerpts from various fans' writings interspersed with connective comments by Raeburn and the other "Derelict Insurgents," his group of irreverent but entertaining Toronto area fans.

The Teletubbies presentation was also first-rate. When they were a new phenomenon, a series of small stuffed dolls (or "action figures," in the parlance of the day) of them were produced by some enterprising toy company. It was noted in the media of the time that the purple one (whichever one that is) outsold the others, and the theory was that gay people collected them and that purple was, somehow, a "gay color."

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Erika Maria Lacey, Logan Central, Qld.

29 July, 2002

The tale of your brother being broken into was not an occasion to laugh at, but his description of the burglars crushing Darth Vader did me in. I didn't know that there were others collecting one and two cent pieces.

Your convention report was hilarious. Average age being 12½ indeed. Moamoacon lives. Okay, I'm still laughing over it. Bringing up your children in the fannish culture of conventioning! Good gag.

The interview with Stevenson -- "got sex on the brain a bit, haven't you?" etc. Who on earth thought that one up? Seriously demented. I only wonder what capacity of 'fanny' was meant -- the, er, front, or the back.

[Don't be cheeky. Seriously, I don't know if either term had its modern connotation back then.]

I've never seen an episode of *Teletubbies*. The only way I know what the things look like is through pictures in various magazines or the internet. I still find it hilarious all over again remembering the hubbub over the show.

[Never seen Teletubbies? You don't know how lucky you are.]

Speaking of all the timelines of American SF magazines you've done -- I wonder about a timeline of Australian ones? It'd be very short in comparison [very], but it'd be interesting to see how many issues on average they appear to run and when they were the most prevalent.

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Ron Clarke, Bankstown, NSW

8 August, 2002

A special Con issue, eh? I liked the cover -- well suited to the theme. The con itself seems to have been enjoyed by all -- which is why the things are put on, isn't it? Not to give the organisers nervous breakdowns or not allow *them* to enjoy the con, as most cons seem to turn out. The interview with RLS went over quite well considering, and I thought it quite humorous. The article on the *Teleterrors* should be sent to the ABC in Australia -- *Media Watch* in particular.

I am sure that Graham Stone will appreciate your pop's reviews of the August 1931 issue of *Astounding Stories*, since this is the period he regards as the golden age of the pulps. Liked the illo of the fishy thing -- with one arm and one fin (or are there more of either out of sight?).

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Graham Stone, Sydney, NSW

8 August 2002

As for being -- what's the word -- beatified, perhaps, as guest of honour [at Moamoacon]...truth to tell I have always felt the concept of a guest of honour at those affairs somewhat foolish. But it is something to be bracketed with Harry Warner. I surely don't qualify as a regular or avid convention attendee since I was present at only the three in Sydney that I recognise as vaguely legitimate, as one of the organisers. There was a time though when I could have been called a party animal, yes.

[Not hard to believe, Graham. You look quite the rogue in some photos of '50s Futurian activities.]

Update on surviving attendees of the first Sydney Convention. Harry Brunen died on Yom Kippur, 27 Sept., 2001 after a long fight with lymphoma. He was my oldest friend -- we met in high school -- and closest. Never called anything but Harry, but in 1940 he confided to me that his legal name was Aaron Herman Brunen. Always had severe myopia, in later years he was legally blind, but graduated BA, LLB and LLM. Legal officer with the NSW Solicitor-General, though he had independent means and didn't need to work.

And I hear John Earls is still living somewhere in the USA. A walk-in at the first Convention, Bohemian student, then dropout, then professional standard guitarist. Became interested in South American folk music and stuff and went to Peru, last I heard of him around 1960.

[Thanks for the update, though I am sorry to learn of Harry's passing.]

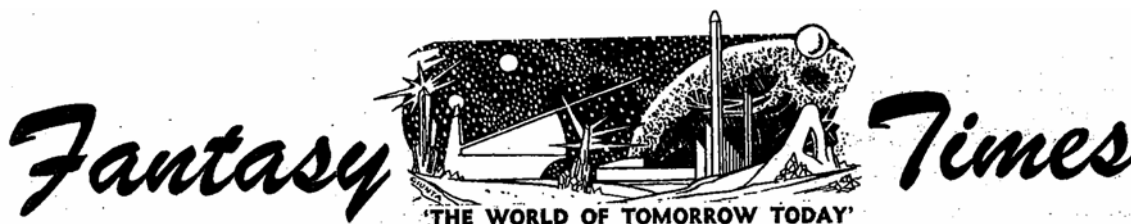
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Don Tuck, Lilydale, Vic.

27 October, 2002

I was intrigued by your writeup of your father's reading of the August 1931 *Astounding*. I can remember buying the issue (with others) when coming to Melbourne at the end of '41 and the family friend I was staying with at the time wondered what sort of stuff I was reading! On the story by Starzl -- there was a writeup about him by his son in a *Fantasy Commentator*. He ceased appearing in the sf mags as it wasn't worth the amount of time he put into it. I rather liked his stories; some in *Wonder Stories*, too.

Speaking of the first Australian sf convention...at this distance, it's hard to determine what has been done to commemorate it. For our contribution, here is a 1952 account of the con from a famous US newszine.



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New York, N.Y., Second April 1952 Issue

(Whole No. 152) - 10¢

## 1st Aussie Con

ENTHUSIASM SURPRISES ORGANISERS

by Vol Molesworth

Sydney, Australia, 28 March, (ONS) - The First Australian Science Fiction Convention, held on Saturday, March 22, in Sydney, was a great success. No less than sixty active fans attended, including delegates from country areas of New South Wales, and interstate. The pitch of enthusiasm came as a wonderful surprise to the organisers, and augurs well for the future development of activities "down under".

The Convention doors opened at 10 a.m., and within a few minutes thirty fans were looking over the exhibits which lined the hall. The first exhibit was an historical survey of science-fiction, arranged by Graham B. Stone, organiser of Australian Science Fiction Society (our equivalent of N.F.F.F.) This consisted of magazines and fan publications dating back to 1926. Mr. Stone gave conducted tours of the exhibit and explanatory talks to the newcomers.

The next stand was Futurian Press, where Vol and Laura Molesworth briskly wrote orders. The third stand was occupied by Convention auctioneer Arthur Haddon and his assistant, Bruce Purdy, and here the fans whetted their appetites over the 150 items on display.

The fourth stand was occupied by Australian Fantasy Foundation, which preserves and conducts the Library, now containing 100-odd books and 250-odd magazines. Here Librarian Ian Driscoll displayed a choice selection of items, and recorded 23 applications for membership.

On the dais, master-of-ceremonies Roy Williams kept a running fire of commentary over the P.A. system, and read congratulatory cables and telegrams, including messages from Tom Cokeroff

in New Zealand and Roger Dart in Western Australia.

At 11:30 the Official opening took place. Chairman William D. Venev gave a welcoming address, following which Vol Molesworth spoke on "What Is Science Fiction?" and Graham Stone on "What Is Fandom?".

At 12 noon the auction began. Bidding was keen, the highest price being 1pd (about \$5) for a copy of *Galaxy*. In all, the auction raises 35 pds, about \$100. This will offset the expenditure, which included hire of the hall, P.A. system, film projector and amplifier, printed matter, refreshments, etc.

As each fan entered the hall he received a 20-page printed souvenir programme booklet, featuring booster ads from all over the science-fiction world, and a copy of "What Is Fandom?", a duplicated booklet issued by A.S.F.-S., and a copy of *Stopgap*.

In the afternoon, a business session was held, with William D. Venev in the chair. Reports were received from the various organisations and groups, and questions were fired from all parts of the Hall. Many resolutions were carried, including one that the only Australian pro mag, *Thrills, Inc.*, should endeavour to publish stories on a more mature and serious level. Incidentally, among the new faces was Norma K. Hemming, a pro writer who has had stories in *Thrills, Inc.*, and *New Worlds*.

Another resolution welcomed the appearance of science-fiction in general magazines which do not normally publish fantasy.

It was unanimously agreed that there should be a Conference later this year and a Convention next year.

After a dinner at the Mayfair, attended by 40-odd fans, the Convention resumed in the evening for films, projected by Ian Driscoll and Lex Banning. These included scientific documentaries and fantasies, one in colour.

A local airline company arranged a 8 ft. display of a lunar landing, illuminated by black light.

The Convention broke up at

11 p.m., but groups of fans kept talking till 2 and 3 in the morning.

Several informal gatherings, and much hot debates, occupied Sunday, the main group meeting at Bill Russell's flat in Bondi Junction, where the history of Australian fandom was discussed in detail.

On Monday, March 24, an "open" meeting of the Futurian Society Of Sydney was attended by twenty-five fans. The visitors had a chance to see Australian's oldest and most active fan club in action, and several highly contentious issues were keenly debated. The stage has been set for a round of activity in the following weeks.

The Convention Chairman (Mr. Venev) has announced that proceedings were recorded by a stenographer, and that an official, removed report will be published within a few weeks. This will be 10 or 12 pages, and will be sent all over the world.

Some of the visitors remained in town for the normal Thursday night gathering at the Katinks, in Pitt Street. Here we get about 30 fans and fennes, talking, auctioning off magazines, etc.

All in all, the Convention was a tremendous success, and credit is due to Bill Venev, Graham Stone, Nick Solntseff, Arthur Haddon, Lex Banning, Kevin Smith, David Cohen, Roy Williams, for the unstinting efforts they put into the show.

## Cosmic Reporter

by Arthur Jean Cox

I'm told that the publication of *Vortex Science Fiction* has been postponed till fall. Whitehorn seems to be having trouble getting good material for this magazine which will print shorts exclusively.

Ziff-Davis' new mag, *Fantastic*, was delayed for one week in New York and elsewhere because of a strike of its distributor, The American News Company.

[continued from p.3]

The Mau was a pacifist movement and called for democratic change through non-violent protest and non-observance of regulations made by the colonial administration. The New Zealanders were again antagonistic and incompetent in dealing with this, sending more Samoans into exile or stripping them of their native titles of authority. These measures only strengthened the cause.

Things came to a head in December 1929 when Mau supporters marched to welcome home one of their exiles. The police decided to use the opportunity to arrest other Mau members, but the situation deteriorated when some rocks were thrown and police opened fire in return. Eleven of the marchers were killed, including the Mau leader, Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III. Additional Kiwi marines were sent to restore calm, which they did by terrorizing villagers in a hunt for now outlawed Mau officials. Surviving leaders of the movement split on how to react and the tension dissipated only after a change of government in New Zealand.

WWII interrupted further progress towards Samoan self-determination and post-War the country was made a UN Trust territory, still under New Zealand administration. A constitutional convention was held in the early 1950s and by the end of that decade Samoa had its first indigenous Prime Minister. Full independence finally came on New Year's Day, 1962.

In the lead-up to celebrations commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence, held in June 2002, it became known that the current Prime Minister of New Zealand was likely to refer to colonial events in a speech. Much speculation revolved around whether or not Helen Clark would apologize for the acts of the NZ administrations. Surprisingly, the Samoan Government's official position was that no apology was necessary. They argued that the events were all in the past and that NZ had been forgiven upon independence. Every Samoan that I spoke to, though, hoped that some statement of regret would be made.

Uncertainty remained on the day. Clark began her speech by praising Samoa's impressive record of development and relations between the two countries. She mentioned the colonial era, but only in passing, and the assembled crowd was getting a little restless when she momentarily paused. There was immediate silence when she continued with these words:

"But before coming today I have also been troubled by some unfinished business. There are events in our past which have been little known in New Zealand, although they are well known in Samoa.

"Those events relate to the inept and incompetent early administration of Samoa by New Zealand. In recent weeks we have been preparing to come to Samoa, there has been a focus on these historic events, and the news has been a revelation to many New Zealanders. That focus has come about because my government believes that reconciliation is important in building strong relationships. It is important to us to acknowledge tragic events which caused pain and sorrow in Samoa.

"In particular we acknowledge with regret the decision taken by the New Zealand authorities in 1918 to allow the ship *Talune*, carrying passengers with influenza, to dock in Apia. As the flu spread, some twenty two percent of the Samoan population died. It is judged as one of the worst epidemics recorded in the world, and was preventable.

"There were also the shootings in Apia in December 1929 on non-violent protesters by New Zealand police. At least nine people died, including Tupua Tamasese Lealofioaana III, and fifty were injured. The early colonial administration also banished Samoan leaders and stripped some of chiefly titles. These actions split families apart and many families lost their titles forever.

"On behalf of the New Zealand Government, I wish to offer today a formal apology to the people of Samoa for the injustice arising from the New Zealand administration of Samoa in its earlier years, and to express sorrow and regret for those injustices.

That was not quite the end of her speech, but the important words had been spoken. A huge cheer went up from the crowd as soon as the New Zealand Prime Minister said the words “formal apology”, so it was quite clear where public sentiment lay. The Samoan PM, in his response, reiterated that no apology had been necessary, since Samoans were well aware of their history and the Head of State had told Samoans to forgive and forget in 1962. He thanked Helen Clark, however, for ensuring that more New Zealanders would now be aware of their country’s colonial past. (Another reason for the official reticence to embrace an apology was left unstated. The current Head of State’s family was among those who were not strong supporters of the Mau movement during the NZ administrations.)

Megan and I heard Helen Clark’s speech on the radio and were as moved as the local population. Her apology must have struck a chord for other Australians, too. The contrast between her willingness to apologize for past misdeeds perpetrated overseas and John Howard’s continued refusal to say sorry for the crimes committed against Aborigines in Australia is stark. Reconciliation, and the little matter of Australia gaining *its* full independence, as a Republic, are simply not on his agenda.

It’s a sorry state of affairs.

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#### A FEW WORDS FROM FRED POHL

Early in 2002 I wrote to Frederik Pohl assuming that he might have been one of the US fans who corresponded with the early Australian Futurians in the 1930s and early 40s. His reply was succinct:

"I've searched my memory for any contact with Aussie fans in the late '30's and have come up blank. English and French, sure. But no others outside North America that I can think of."

I guess I must have been thinking of the several letters from Aussie fans that Pohl published as editor of *Astonishing* and *Super Science Stories*. Anyway, for the record.

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*Thrilling Wonder Stories* aside, this issue seems like a *Reader’s Digest*, since I’ve condensed Samoan history, glanced at the Heinlein story, heavily edited Joe Haldeman’s diary and hacked away at the letterhacks. But semester approaches, so it’s a truncated zine or no zine at all.

Heinlein, Pohl and Leinster were no strangers to *TWS*. Before the flood of new sf magazines after WWII, it and other Better Publications featured many top authors. Murray Leinster may even have written a story or two about a “black galaxy”, but probably none incorporating a siren. Virgil Finlay contributed many fine illustrations to *TWS* so I am happy to advise that the galaxy on the cover is his work. My technology-assisted attempt to emulate his scratchboard technique for the siren was not very successful – but it’s the thought that counts, right? On the back cover, Gillette shows how you, too, can become head of an Atomic Security Force *and* get the girl. This, the original illustration by Lawrence Stevens for “Jerry is a Man” (p.4) and the header on page 11 are all from either *TWS* or its stablemate *Startling Stories*.

New Zealand features quite a lot in this issue, by coincidence, but I’ve omitted the sections of Joe’s diary dealing with the Haldemans’ trip to Kiwiland and Oz. They returned via Samoa, however, so we will see more of them next issue. All photos accompanying the diary were taken by Joe or Gay.

Sources of Samoan history I used herein included Malama Meleisea’s *The Making of Modern Samoa* and *Lagaga: a short history of Western Samoa* (both USP, 1987), and Michael Field’s *Mau: Samoa’s struggle for freedom* (Polynesian Press, 1984).

Letters of comment, please, to: Chris Nelson, P.O. Box 1571, Apia, Samoa  
via email: nelson\_c@samoa.usp.ac.fj (or nelsonleesamoa@hotmail.com)



