

PEREGRINE  
NATIONS

VOL. 4,  
NO. 4

January 2005



### This Time Round We Have:

Silent eLOCutions / art by William Rotsler and Trinlay Khadro / 3  
Back to the Scene by Christopher J. Garcia / art by Alan White / 7  
Runaround the Roundabout by Ye Editor / 9  
They Pubbed An Ish: Fanzine Reviews by Ye Editor / 9  
The Free Book Deal / 12  
Will the Real Swamp Thing Please Stand Up? / mascot art by Brad Foster / 13

Additional Art: Brad Foster (cover)

---

**This ish is dedicated to a young woman who, if she hasn't been so titled by now, ought to be known as A Poem on Skates –  
Michelle Kwan has won another U.S. title. You go, 'Chelle!**

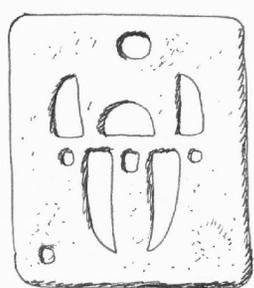
---

**peregrination**, n., *L.*, A traveling, roaming, or wandering about; a journey. (The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language, Avenel Books, New York: 1980).

---

This issue of *Peregrine Nations* is a © 2005 J9 Press Publication, edited and published by J. G. Stinson, P.O. Box 248, Eastlake, MI 49626-0248.  
**PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS. Copies available for \$2 or the Usual.** A quarterly pubbing sked is intended. **All material in this publication was contributed for one-time use only, and copyrights belong to the contributors.**

Contributions are welcome in the form of LoCs, articles, reviews, art, etc. in two methods: e-mail to me at [tropicsf@earthlink.net](mailto:tropicsf@earthlink.net) (please use *Peregrine Nations* in the subject) or via regular mail. **No attachments unless previously arranged.** Clearly scanned artwork is also welcome. Queries welcome. LOCers' addresses intentionally left out; if you need one, ask me. **Next editorial deadline: Apr. 10, 2005.**



## *Silent eLOCutions* *Letters of Comment* *(a drachm for your thoughts...)*

*Sue Bursztinski*

Thanks very much for your zine. EB urged me to continue sending to fanzines and I said

only if I could find one similar to his, because I really enjoyed Twink.

My eye was caught by the Bletchley Park item, because I just finished writing a children's book on spies and spying and I did a chapter that included Enigma. Fascinating subject!

Hobbits, bless their hearts, seem to eat mainly bacon and eggs, therefore keep plenty of pigs and poultry. It must be hard, when you're their size, to keep cows, even for milk.

Has anyone come across a very old article called "The Pleasures of the Hobbit Table"? Jan Howard Finner gave me a copy. It came out years before the Internet, so one has to applaud the author for having been able to research so many recipes for foods mentioned in The Hobbit. The seed cake recipe is especially nice and I've made it several times.

*Brad Foster*

Christopher Garcia's article about his Dad's hope for a con at the Winchester House was an interesting read, though his comment that "The place is generally creepy...." stuck with me, since I got a chance to visit there myself during a Worldcon, and my impression was a wonderfully eccentric and beautiful structure, fascinatingly weird, maybe, but certainly not in any way "creepy". But then maybe I have a higher creepiness threshold when it comes to old houses. Whenever I watch a horror flick where they are approaching the big

old Victorian mansion, and the lightning is flashing, the sound track is eerie, all I can usually think of is "You know, a little repair work and some nice paint and that would be a great place to live!" And then there are the shows where the budget is so low, simply having an old house is supposed to be creepy, even in full daylight and nothing at all wrong with it. It's kind of like the cheap short hand of tossing in a few plastic skulls to make a set "scary" in b-level horror flicks.

*Christopher Garcia*

Another great issue of PN lifts my spirits after so little time left for reading anything but books to review.

Great article on Bletchley Park...My workplace, the Computer History Museum in Mountain View CA, actually has one of the very few surviving pieces of an original Colossus machine (a rather non-descript paper tape pulley, in a case right next to a simple, three rotor ENIGMA, both of which stand right next to a piece of ENIAC). From what I understand, the Geheimschreiber code was much more difficult to crack, if only because any German could send ENIGMA code, but the G-Schreiber users were fewer and required much more training and better cryptographic discipline.

Re: "Family Man": I wasn't much of a fan, but Don Cheadle, who has been amazing in everything from "Ocean's Eleven" to "Boogie Nights" to "Meteor Man," was exceptional. He's one of the U.S.'s best actors and he seldom gets the notice he deserves.

*Joe Major*

**Cuyler "Ned" Brooks:** So the horses of the Shire were like Shire horses?

Frank Wu did put up on his website links to the other Fan Artist nominees. He seems mostly to appear in con art shows, though he did do the cover for *Challenger* #20.

**E. B. Frohvet:** I still recall the scene in Lucifer's Hammer

where the guy set about preserving books. He put each book in a zip-lock bag with some mothballs, put the bag inside another bag, and then put all the bags in a septic tank. Presumably looters wouldn't bother with that. It was books like The Way Things Work that he had.

What I tend to remember more about Lucifer's Hammer is the quest for the blue van. The looters stole survival supplies from a bunch of people, then someone set the van afire. It's a common theme in disaster survival stories; by writing about how the hero survives with two bent pins and a piece of string, the author can get more word count.

(I recall being annoyed that the Mysterious Benefactor in The Mysterious Island donated to the castaways a chest containing all the things they needed. It was more interesting to read the explanation of how one seed of wheat can engender an entire crop. But then, the castaways didn't have their survival gear taken from them. If they'd had the sense to pull the ripcord after ten minutes they would come down over the Yankee siege lines, and there wouldn't have been a story.)

I think Mack Reynolds was popular with John Campbell, and at that because he speculated about politics and society. However, the legend of JWC as arch-reactionary has to ignore the fact that he published a Marxist-DeLeonist. Not that Reynolds's politics was all that sound in other areas. The central thesis of his "Black Man's Burden" stories was that American blacks must return to the homeland where they can serve as tribally neutral ancestrally akin arbiters. It doesn't work that way.

**Trinlay Khadro:** Could this asocialization be the product of small families and working parents? The trend for employees to be available 24/7, for example. I am thinking of the mother who got into trouble at work because she begged off a conference call for the preposterous reason that it was at eleven p.m. on a Sunday night. (And all these expanded meetings, conference calls, email chats, etc. seem to have a negative impact on productivity. Then there was the law firm which held a four-hour meeting with all the partners, several associates, paralegal, etc, all billed to the client, the topic of which

was the font for a document.)

**Me:** There is a Internet theorist named David Icke who claims that humanity is secretly controlled by alien lizard people. If he investigated the directorship of PETA, he might find proof for his thesis.

What do you do if you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?

**Lyn McConchie:** I know about pernicious anemia. I learned about it from reading about polar history; Robert E. Peary, the Arctic explorer, died of it. Then my doctor told me *I* had B12 deficiency; my Crohn's disease had affected the ileum to the point where it wasn't absorbing B12. Vegetarian diets are short of B12.

**Lloyd Penney:** I talked to Tom Sadler a few months ago; he seems all right. Last he spoke/wrote on the subject he was having a variety of problems (job, copier) and was expending a lot of energy on genealogy. I will try to get in touch with him again soon.

**Joy Smith:** I had a difference with my college English teacher about "Good fences make good neighbors" --- he read it as walling us off from each other, I read it as establishing self-boundaries. All the same he gave me a good grade.

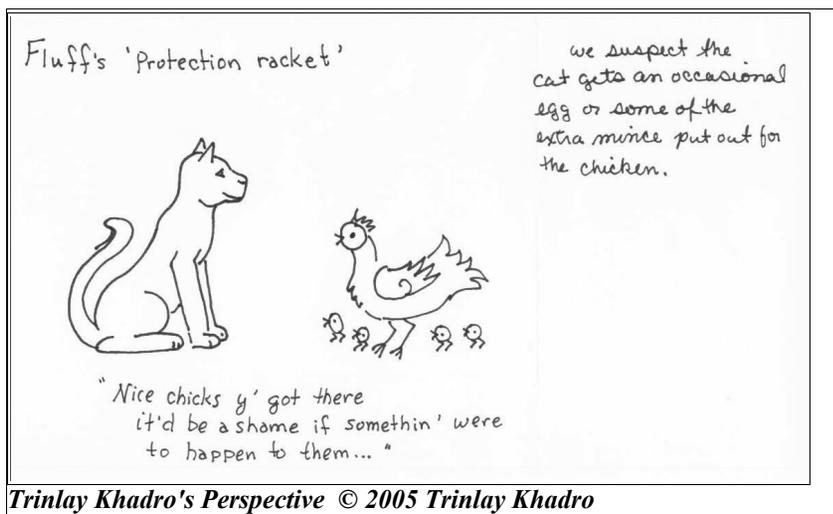
**"Adventures in the Spook Trade":** Dilly Knox was one of the Knox brothers, who were among other things early Sherlock Holmes fans (one of his brothers wrote a classic paper on the Canon), sort of proto-fanzine fans (they had a family magazine, and if only they'd mailed it to others . . .), religious polemicists (one was a Church of England parson, another a Catholic priest), and so on. A most interesting family.

One of the first British SF novels I read was Colossus, by D. F. Jones, a story about a super computer. Did he work at Bletchley? I have a Enigma simulator program suitable for Windows machines.

**"Frohvet on . . . Film":** I am somewhat askew on "It's A Wonderful Life" because I did not see it until after I saw a version of it with Marlo Thomas playing a developer as the George Bailey character. IMDB says it was "It Happened One Christmas" (1977) and the character was named Mary Bailey Hatch — in "It's a

Wonderful Life” George's wife was Mary Hatch Bailey.

“**Will the Real Swamp Thing Please Stand Up?**”: I was convinced for the longest time that *Reader's Digest* had a Wolf Editor; they published all kinds of heartwarming stories about wolves. Never got around to the Pinis' **ElfQuest**, but . . . Anyhow, one of said stories was about a family that adopted a wolf. He shed. They spun the shed hair into wool (with a little real wool) and made sweaters out of it. They were very warm, but about one dog in ten would go insane upon smelling said sweaters.



Lyn McConchie / January 2005

Hmmmm, PN arrived the other day but is datelined October 2004. I'm not sure if you were late doing it or if the P.O. was even later getting it here. Christmas may have a lot to answer for. [*Nope, I was late in getting it done, all my fault.*]

I plan to be in America over most of May 2005 ending with Wiscon before I head home. So I'm -- er -- 'available' if anyone would like me to see if I can stop off at their place for a couple of nights.

**Lloyd** did mention he might like to see me. I also plan to be in Wisconsin, Maryland and Tennessee, possibly in Pennsylvania and

L.A. with 5-6 days in the UK somewhere in the middle. Speak now, before I begin firming dates in early March.

**Ned** was mentioning Mt. Horeb, that isn't the place which is swamped in trolls is it? [*Yes.*] That's the place I was dying to get to for a couple of hours when at Wiscon in 2001, no public transport from the con to there though, and no one who could drive me over. But my own village here has a troll fixation, and my friend who runs the big craft shop/information center here wanted me to go there to get photos and info. [*Well, maybe we'll get there this year; note to all readers, I'm also planning to attend Wiscon this year.*]

And to **Joy**, I certainly am collecting my farm tales. The first book, Farming Daze, has been in print with one publisher or the other since 1993, and the second, Daze on the Land, was published February 2004. They are available on Amazon and my Australian publisher, Avalook Publications (who does them), is now talking about a third.

I'm immersed in a welter of books to be edited, proofed, completed, or printed out, and my unfortunate agent doesn't know it yet, but the current activity is going to result in 3 more books to him by mid-year. As it was I spent a very hectic December writing 83,000+ words, which left me with a new themed short-story collection I'd never intended to write but which I got booby-trapped into by my subconscious. So I'm cleaning up outstanding work until the USA trip and will begin the next new book on my list this September or October.

Meanwhile lambing has begun, and I have two new babies racing about at the moment, next door's three ducks keep marching down my land just where I don't want them, and Poppy, my heifer, is so excited by hay making that she sounds like a foghorn every time the machines come back to work on the hay -- and half the area must wish she'd get laryngitis, I know I do.

Lloyd Penney

I believe Don Anderson is the fellow I met some years ago in

the Rochester area. I think Don is First Fandom, or is at least old enough and around long enough to be a member, and I had a chat with him the last time I attended an Astronomicon there. The next one is this coming November, so I hope I can go.

In the Lord of the Rings books, there are references to overweight hobbits. Maybe this is part of the reason why fans took to the books; you could be interesting and slightly different, and also short and fat. (I've described about a quarter to a third of fandom right there. If Tolkien had given hobbits glasses, that number might have gone up to a half.)

The rumour is become fact! I look forward to the fourth *Steam Engine Time*. [You're on the mailing list. Anyone else who wants on it and either can't or prefers not to print out the electronic copy at efanzines.com (**and** will send a contribution of either publishable material or money) should e-mail or write to me, and I'll see you get a copy of SET 4].

I enjoy **Lyn McConchie's** tales of her farm animals. A friend of mine who used to live on a farm got married and took with her, of all things, one of the barn cats to live with her in the city. This semi-feral animal has become a true lapcat, and she has spent several hours purring up a storm on my lap. She has been dubbed Momcat, for she was the mother by birth or adoption of all the other barn cats on the farm.

Paid proofreading is a hard gig to find, to be sure. Over the years, I've had a number of them. In the new year, I start training for a paid proofing job in the proofing pit of Canada NewsWire, one of the corporate/financial news services, with their offices in downtown Toronto. I have worked for law book firms, Sears, print plants and other companies, and most times, it's as a proofreader, copy editor, copywriter or other editorial person. [*Here's to the latest job being one that lasts at least a few years, as long as you're happy with it.*]

Interesting to see the name Peter Jarvis not connected with the Torcon fiasco -- another Mr. Jarvis is showing off the contents of a Turing Bombe in the photo.

Good to see that Christopher Garcia picked up the fannish detritus of his father's life, and has caught the fannish interest. The

son of a Canadian fan from the 1940s has done much the same thing -- Gordon Peck Jr. is looking for any of his father's creations in Canadian and American zines from the 1940s, and is willing to pay for copies of Pecks Sr.'s material.

Thank you for the early Christmas present of the Lackey/Edghill book! (I will keep an open mind about it.)

Your story on knitting reminded me of Yvonne's passion for fabric; I have a collection of homemade Hawaiian and tropical shirts many people envy. She has a collection of buttons [with sayings] on her corkboard, and I think most of them are from Nancy Leibowitz's collection:

Whoever dies with the most FABRIC wins!

Ladies Sewing Circle & Terrorist Society

Fabric: The Gathering

You'd be surprised at the things you can learn while doing alterations. - Elim Garak (the Cardassian tailor on Deep Space Nine)

*Joy Smith*

Interesting cover. I presume that's smoking ruins behind the robot? I also enjoyed the illos, and photos and articles on Visiting Bletchley Park and Christopher Garcia's con background.

**Lyn McConchie**: Congratulations on your Russian sales! (Foreign sales are good!) Fascinating about the chicken's nest next to Fluff. And I enjoyed your article on the Aunt Dimity series. Will keep my eyes open for that. (Am passing this issue on to my sister, the mystery fan; she'll also like the Bletchley Park piece.)

**WAHF: Sheryl Birkhead** ("... the type of kick done by a cow is actually differentiated from that of a horse by simply being called 'a cow kick' -- one gets used to giving the rear ends of the respective species a certain amount of room based on their firing power"), **Trinlay Khadro** (see illo elsewhere thish), **Dave Szurek** (recovering from another bout of pancreatitis -- stay well, Dave! -- and "loved Garcia's 'Mystery Con' article"), **Paul Di Filippo** (who also liked the Garcia piece), and **E. B. Frohvet**.



## Back to the Scene

by Christopher J. Garcia

Where did it happen? That's a question that haunts all of us historian types. While we have the stories down, the names and circumstances, we don't know enough about the locations of many of the classic moments. I've searched for Caravan Hall,

trying to find the spot of the confrontation that took place as part of the Fan Exclusion Act of 1939. I looked for the former site of LA's original Fan Hilton, the legendary home of so many hugely significant fans. Driving around LA in the 90s, I found the site of the Booby Hatch and a few of the locations where LASFS would meet. There is one truly significant location to the history of fandom that is known exactly: the location of the introduction of the Society for Creative Anachronism to national fandom.

The SCA grew out of a party held during the early summer of 1965 in Diana Paxson's backyard. Diana, a medieval studies major, had read about *The Last Tournament*. The Earl of Eglanton, who had been a huge fan of tales of chivalry, set up an event to re-enact the good old days in Scotland in 1839. Though the event was severely dampened by rain, the story of the event inspired Paxson to hold her own medieval event. The event went off extremely well, and by the next summer, the SCA had been incorporated and was regularly holding events in Berkley. In 1967, the SCA exposed itself to West Coast fandom with an event at Westercon XX in Los Angeles.

While this had exposed a good-sized chunk of fandom to the existence of the SCA, it wasn't until the following year's WorldCon,

the Berkley BayCon, that fandom really got its introduction on the largest possible stage.

The Baycon Tourney was won by Earl of Morris, but more important than who won or lost was the fact that more than 300 people watched the fighters and joined in on the feasting and revelry afterwards. One of those who went and took a few photos happened to be my father, who told me the stories of the event whenever I would crack open one of our photo albums. When I decided to make my rounds to the sacred sites of fandom, the first idea I had was to fight at the same location where national fandom first fell in love with the SCA. There was only one problem: in the intervening years, the Hotel Claremont had become a resort spa and tennis club. I would not be dissuaded, so I brought my friend James and our potential girlfriends and headed up to Berkley.

The whole resort is gorgeous. I checked up and found that I could get into the lobby until 11 with no problem. James and the girls carried the padded wooden swords so that I would have my hands free for the important action. They hung back as we made our way up to the desk where the tennis court attendant was sitting. I had found out when the last time you could use the tennis courts that now occupied the space where the Baycon tourney had taken place. We came ten minutes later.

"Hi, I'd like to use your tennis courts for a little while." I told the guy.

The Tennis Court keeper was in his late 20s, reading a copy of the *National Review* and listening to talk radio.

"And you are?" he responded, making me think of the maitre-d' in "*Ferris Bueller's Day Off*."

"Well, I'm hoping that I can recreate an important moment that took place on those courts."

"What, some sort of match between the greats? Is this where Billy Jean King beat that Riggs guy?" the fellow asked me.

I signaled my friends closer.

"No," I said, hoping that the guy would understand any of my next few words, "this is where the Society of Creative Anachronism

did the big tourney that really established them in a lot of folks' eyes."

The guy set down his magazine.

"What?"

"This is where the big tournament took place, out where the tennis courts are, and we were hoping we could recreate one of the fights."

"You mean with those wooden sword-thingees?"

"Yeah. It won't take us any longer than a few minutes."

The attendant looked us over and reached for the phone.

"Brian? This is Craig at the Tennis courts. You mind coming down for a second?"

James and the girls and I waited for a few minutes until the aged, grizzled head of security for the Claremont appeared. The guy strode up to the desk and leaned on it, as if he were coming straight out of a 1980s independent film.

"And who are these folks?" he said in either a very strange accent or a fairly decent Christopher Walken imitation.

I launched into the story about how the Society had done their tourney on the area where the courts are, about how the 1968 WorldCon had been so important, and what we were actually planning on doing.

"Lemme see one of those swords." He said after I had exhausted all my knowledge on the situation. James' girl, I think her name was Stacey, handed the old guy a short sword. He grabbed it by the handle and lifted it. He swung it back and forth like a Jerry Lewis prop before bringing it crashing down onto his palm. The guard shook his hand a bit. "More solid than I expected."

I looked at the attendant and he half-smiled.

"You mind watching these guys for a few minutes, Brian?"

"No sweat. I used to see those guys out at Gragmore Park when I was in school. Looked like a lot of fun."

And with that, James, his lady, my fair lass Denise, the guard, and myself all walked out to the tennis court. I could remember the photos and descriptions and walked about thirty paces before I thought we might be standing near the location of the BayCon

tourney. James had Stacey hand him his helmet, heavily-taped suede work gloves, and finally his sword. Denise put the helm on for me, then handed me puffy ski gloves and my sword. James and I stood on either side of the net, deciding to try our hand at fighting over it, as we had seen at some of the sword demos that real SCA members put on at various conventions.

We set up on either side and waited, possibly because we were hoping that someone would say something appropriate for the start of a fight. Denise came over to where I was standing, tied something that she had been wearing in her hair around the dangling hook for my gloves, and gave me a kiss on the cheek.

"Win this one for me and there'll be more of that." She whispered in a quite-less-than medieval way. I noticed that James' girl was doing the same, though she must have been trying to whisper the words into his mouth. We stood at attention, our swords quite near each other.

"OK, you two," I heard the old security guard call, "fight!" I struck quick, knocking his sword's hand guard to pieces before diving in with a stab for the kill in less than ten seconds. We set up again and I killed him again. I was the king of over-the-net swordsmanship! We decided to go for full terrain next, making full use of the court. While I was strong when I had to work over a net, I was chopped down fast when he could strike at my legs. I ended up with a half-dozen nasty grey-red bruises on my shins. We did six stand-ups and I lost five, though won the final with a spectacular falling strike across James' chest. We were about to call it a night when the security guard came up to me.

"Mind if I take a few swings?"

I didn't say anything, breath being at a premium for this slightly pudgy gladiator, and I handed him my sword and he took my helmet and waited patiently for my gloves. He and James set and took mad swings at each other. I wondered how I had lost to someone with such ill form. James took the guard down once, but lost the next two. I watched with the same highly amused awe that I figure my Dad felt when he watched the BayCon tourney.

“Um, Chris,” Denise said, running her fingers through my hair, “you’re bleeding.”

I felt her touch a cut right below my ear. She grabbed the collar of my shirt and pressed it in hard. She held her hand there for a few minutes, then finally took it off as Brian the Guard told us it was time to pack it up.

Our near-recreation of one of the most significant recreations of all time had left two friends and a security guard exhausted, and two young women impressed enough to agree to further dates. We carried the stuff back to the car and drove off to get a Denny’s appetizer sampler. I read the reprint of *A Handbook of the (Current) Middle Ages*, the book that had been passed around at the BayCon tourney, and lost myself in the thought that I had just managed to bring myself a step closer to another event in fannish history that I missed because I was born a little late. I almost completely forgot where I was and what Denise was doing until I heard James talk.

“We should head down south, see the Ackermansion this weekend.” He said.

“I’m up for it.” Denise answered.

At that point, I knew what needed to be done, and we ditched the bill, hopped into the car, determined to find the Grand Piano where Bjo and John Trimble met during one of Forry’s weekend-long birthday parties.

## Runaround the Roundabout

Review: “Soundstage: Yes: 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert”, PBS

I took notes on this show with the thought that I’d write up something on it for PN, so here it is. But, to save space and lessen the boredom for nonYesfen, I’m reproducing the notes here with just a few added comments. If Yes means nil to you, skip this.

Lineup: Anderson/Howe/Squire/Wakeman/White...”Going for the One”... “Sweet Dreams” (drum intro by White)... “All Good People” (classic version) – bridge was a bit weak, but maybe I was

just missing the “wall of cymbals” White used to play at this point in the song... short solo spot by Wakeman – he’s got 30+ years of his own music to draw on and I’m familiar with only a small part of it... “Song for You” (Wakeman & Anderson) – very sweet, maybe too sweet... “Long Distance Runaround” acoustic version... Stage patter from Anderson & Squire on the acoustic version of “Roundabout” and how they came up with it – a Chicago blues shuffle, no less! Wakeman takes a piano solo in the bridge, and the shuffle rhythm is maintained throughout the song... “Owner of a Lonely Heart” (acoustic) – Anderson teases White for wearing a kilt as an intro to this one... “And You And I” (electric) -- “It’s all about what we do” is how Anderson introduced this one... Set design is new by Roger Dean, utilizing several of the design themes he used in previous Yes stage sets... *Everyone* has hair this time!... Anderson in *excellent* voice!... someone once said that countertenors generally improve as they age, and in Anderson’s case, they were right ... Wakeman looked relaxed and pleased to be back... every time I’ve seen Squire with Yes, he always looked like he was having fun, and he looked that way this time as well... Howe is, well, Howe; he still has trouble on the night with just cutting loose and ripping off solos – his best are recorded on *Yessongs* (my opinion, of course)... White is the same as ever, no hint of slowing down... not a bad show for a bunch of “dinosaurs”!

**Dept. of Obscure References:** “When hit, the shining, flying purple wolfhounds tended to crash out of the sky, bouncing to the ground or just exploding in hot blossoms.” -- Alastair Reynolds, [Revelation Space](#) (2000), p. 240. Reference: “Yours Is No Disgrace,” Yes, *The Yes Album* (1972).

\* \* \*

## They Pubbed An Ish: Fanzine Reviews

I said I’d get back to this area, and here I am. There are some

who still think there aren't many fanzines being pubbed these days. These people must be the folks who aren't online, as efanazines has TONS of the things available, and new ones are started almost monthly. I don't read all of them (as not all of them interest me), but I read several. Code: Bold = new; italics = one-shots and specials

ALEXIAD Vol. 3 No. 6 // ANSIBLE 209 & 210 // BANANA WINGS 20 // THE BBB BULLETIN 19 // \*brg\* 39 // // DE PROFUNDIS 383-384 // eAPA 8 & 9 // **THE GAY BLADE** #1 (Woody Bernardi) // **HARD SCIENCE TALES** 1 & 2 (Joyce Worley) // IT GOES ON THE SHELF #26 // IN A PRIOR LIFETIME 4// THE KNARLEY KNEWS 109 // **MORE BALLS** #1 (Ang Rosin) THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN VOL. 4 NO. 4 // NICE DISTINCTIONS 8 // iPLOKTA // SOUTHERN FANDOM CONFEDERATION BULLETIN VOL. 8 NO. 7 // STEAM ENGINE TIME 4 // TRAPDOOR 23 // **THE UNNAMABLE** 2 // VANAMONDE 563-567 // **VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY** 1-8 (Arnie Katz) //

That's just the stuff I've managed to read since the last ish of PN; there's more I haven't gotten through yet, including stuff from the last "In the Interim" list. Oi!

The December '04 **Alexiad** finds Lisa Major reflecting on the importance of things and memories (and thereby practicing what's preached on the TLC Channel show "Clean Sweep" as well as following her own rules) – I know how she feels. Joe Major hints that he'll be taking a swing at revising LotR for a Web site ("Anyone want to see 'The Tragedie of Frodo Baggins' by Will: Shakspur?"). Oh, yes, we do! We do!!! And we gets it, at least the opening salvo, on the last page. The reviews include 15 books, two magazines and three candy bars. Hey, how about a review of the Fast Break bar? Or the new one from Hershey's that has pretzels, caramel, chocolate and two other ingredients I can't remember? Hmm, maybe I should review them; can't beat that for an excuse to buy chocolate. The loccol is jam-packed, as usual, with witty and insightful comments, and of course there's more but space here is limited. Getting this fanzine is always a good reason to take a break and relax.

Dave Langford continues to bring US readers news and views

from across the puddle in **Ansible** with his well-established, arch prose stylings. There, Dave, howzat?

**Banana Wings 20** has a cover which sports a Brad Foster butterfly, very much like the one on thish except without the banana. Inventive lad, that Brad. Urgh. This time, Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer bring us articles by Greg Pickersgill, Fred Smith, Cardinal Cox, James Bacon, Tony Keen and themselves, along with a hefty loccol. Nice to see that banana winging in again to the mailbox.

Now for an extinction notice: Arnie and Joyce Katz of **The Bring Bruce Bayside Bulletin**, having succeeded in their aim to raise enough money to allow Australian fan (and my co-editor for **Steam Engine Time**) Bruce Gillespie to attend Corflu Titanium and Potlatch 14 in February and March 2005, have closed the PayPal donations account and announced the BBB Fund has officially ended. Why? Because they've raised over US\$5,000 through the Fund, so it's no longer needed. Wow. Congratulations to Bruce, and I wish I could fly out to the Left Coast to visit, but I'm still saving for Wiscon. Speaking of Bruce, \*brg\* 39 details the move he and Elaine Cochrane made to the Greensborough area near the end of 2004. Bruce counsels, "Don't move house – unless you really have to. But if you do, it helps to be married to a genius who finds you a place like 5 Howard Street, Greensborough." Well said. And that outdoor cat enclosure screen is the coolest thing I've seen in a long time. Cat lovers, contact Bruce for info. He also reviews [The Best Australian Science Fiction Writing: A Fifty Year Collection](#) .

The LASFS clubzine **De Profundis** still makes me wish I lived in L.A. just so I could attend their meetings, but perhaps the written minutes are more interesting than the actual meetings?

eAPA is an electronic-only APA run by Dave Burton (by default, not fiat) which pubs monthly. There are now 7 members, and likely room for at least one more, so if you're interested, check it out at efanazines.com. We do have a good time.

**The Gay Blade** comes from Vegas fan Woody Bernardi, and he regales readers with what he's been doing the last few years (becoming a Realtor, moving to Vegas) while using some Rotsler

illos to decorate the pages, along with some photos. A bit more attention to details (copy editing) would improve the overall effect of this fanzine, but it's otherwise a very readable pub.

Joyce Katz introduces yet another publication with **Hard Science Tales**, and readers familiar with (and fond of) her breezy writing style will be happy to find it here. HST is primarily intended for SNAFFU members, but she's generously made it available at efanazines for others. She writes about how she found fandom, and uses interesting science facts as speculative launch points for tangential wonderings. Fun stuff.

Ned Brooks reads a lot; maybe almost as much as Joe Major. Whenever his arms get tired of holding up books, he sets them aside and writes about what he's read in **It Goes On the Shelf**. Number 26 features yet another clever Brad Foster piece (that fella do get about) and more than 15 pages of book reviews. Eclectic is a good description of Ned's reading material. Nicely done is a good way to describe his zine.

Texas resident and fan John Purcell has returned to the fanzine fold with **In A Prior Lifetime**. In Number 4, he continues his remembrances of Lee Pelton, and proves people are reading his electronic fanzine by pubbing locs. Number 2 featured mole crickets. Oh, my, Ghod. You should get that ish and look at those suckers, they're HUGE. And John writes about them in a very amusing manner – the only reason you need to go read all four ishes.

The December edition of **The Knarley Knews** shows that Henry Welch knows how to pack in the columnists – he has four of them, plus Terry Jeeves' memoirs. This 25-pager sports a Schirm cover, always a treat, and Knarley's law-school knews.

In **Nice Distinctions** 8, Arthur Hlavaty tackles mental health (his own), elections (one guess – but not in the way you might expect) in addition to the ever-readable “Recent Reading,” where I learn about a lot of good books I didn't know existed. Arthur, you **have** to stop making my To-Read list so long! The Plokta Cabal turned out **iPlokta** with a March 2004 datestamp, but I got it several months after that (“We have suffered from a slight mailing delay,” sez the editorial). Flick muses on foundation garments, Giulia De

Cesare mutters about Things Not Working, Lilian Edwards' article on the Shouting Book Club has rather a lot of blue smoke (the language kind), “Lokta Plokta” sports a vast array of contributors, and Alison proves she can do more than yoga in “The Reluctant Costumer.” I haven't decrypted the dingbat code in “The Passion of the Plokta,” and I'm not sure I want to. But the cover is superfluously kewl. (Yeah, I know this was listed in the last “In the Interim” item – so sue me.)

**Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin** keeps arriving despite the fact I haven't sent in my dues in a while; I am beginning to feel guilty. Editor Randy Cleary maintains a steady hand on the rudder of this fine fannish clubzine. He gives brief glimpses into his experiences at Noreascon 4 and Constellation XXIII in V8 N7, and book reviews by Leana Justice are included along with Tom Feller's fanzine listing, news of Southern fandom doings, awards news, the conventions list, and locs. A sercon fanzine is a proud and lonely thing to be these days, and since I couldn't get enough of sercon chatter, I /h/o/o/d/w/i/n/k/e/d/ convinced Bruce Gillespie that reviving **Steam Engine Time** was a good idea. Number 4 includes the ever-gorgeous Ditmar covers (front **and** back, mind), a double editorial from Bruce (such a generous fellow), a trio of articles from Darrell Schweitzer, a reprint of Greg Benford's recounting of his most recent visit with Stephen Hawking, Andrew Butler and Paul Brazier debate the existence of a British Boom. and a couple dozen folks get their locs pubbed. Sorry for the long wait, but we're finally here.

The worst thing about **Trap Door** 23 is also the most memorable (for me) thing. John Hertz writes a memoir of a portion of his misspent youth in “I Thought I Had A Pumpkin Bomb” -- but he doesn't let the other shoe drop, one might say. Oh, Mr. Hertz, you are so very lucky your neck was not in range when I read the last sentence of this article. Less targetable items come from editor Robert Lichtman, Ed Burbee, Carol Carr, Robert Silverberg, Michael Dobson, Calvin Demmon, Ron Bennett, George Metzger, Joe Kennedy, Lee Hoffman and the Readers (sounds like a garage band

name). The D. West bacover is priceless.

An enterprising femmefan named Feorag NicBhríde (please excuse the lack of accent marks) from Edinburgh decided to let one of her stuffed toys do a zine, and the result is **The Unnamable 2**. The toy in question is the unquestionably fhannish Fluff the Plush Cthulhu, a surprisingly gifted and entertaining writer for an inanimate object (sshh, don't say a word!). I laughed a lot while reading this fanzine, and derived particular pleasure out of the evidence that Feorag had managed to coax several well-known writers and editors into letting Fluff pose on their heads for a photo ("pictures of Me consuming the brains of people"). There are many such photos in this ish. The main feature concerns Fluff's Noreason 4 experiences, with additional comments on Eastercon 2004, Plokta.con 3.0, and Convivial, ending with a review of a book about human cadavers. My, those Elder Ghods are gadabouts, eh?

**Vanamonde** is one of the most consistent, and consistently interesting, fanzines I've ever encountered. Editor John Hertz's economy of language is admirable and elegant. Some day, if I am lucky, perhaps the gentleman will teach me a few dance steps and I will actually be able to replicate them without falling on my face. One can but hope. And I'm not just saying this because he published the one decent haiku I've ever written, though that was a pleasant surprise (thanks John!). Arnie and Joyce Katz have a publishing empire going whether they know it or not, and Arnie seems to have started a brush fire with **Vegas Fandom Weekly**. It's up to 10 issues now, available to non-Las Vegans at efanazines.com, and maintains the energetic (dare I say sprightly?) approach to fannish news and folks that seems to have characterized a majority of Vegas fandom from its earliest days.

Whew. There, I did it!

## ***The Free Book Deal***

Our query for Contest #11 uttered in dulcet tones thusly:  
"According to *The 2000 Old Fan's Almanac* by Dick & Leah Smith,

which four writers (all of whom have written as fan and 'pros,' as far as I know) have birthdays from Nov. 23 to Nov. 25?"

The correct answer is: Wilson "Bob" Tucker, 4SJ, Spider Robinson and Poul Anderson.

Only three readers entered this round (that's regular mail and online categories combined). Are you all getting bored? Would you prefer easier questions? <G>

Lloyd Penney wins Robert Bloch's The Eighth Stage of Fandom (and thereby eliminated himself from the online contest, but I'm sure he's not unhappy about that). The online prize is Heat of Fusion and Other Stories by John M. Ford, and goes to Steven H Silver. Congratulations to the winners; your books will be in the mail soon.

**Contest #12 Is Announced:** "Who won the first Grand Master Nebula ever awarded by the Science Fiction Writers of America? Hint: It's the same person who made a famous comment about lunch." Can't get too much easier than that, folks.

**Prize Preannouncement:** Since it doesn't seem to make much difference in the number of respondents, I'm reverting to announcing the prizes ahead of time. The regular mail winner will receive a great collection of short fiction, Jubilee: Stories by Jack Dann. The online winner will receive a lovely art book written and illustrated by Jim Fitzpatrick called The Silver Arm (it's his telling of the Irish Book of Conquests and the story of Nuada). If you don't have online access but know someone who does, and you want to enter the online contest, have that person send in your entry with "Free Book Deal entry for [your name]" as the Subject line. Check the colophon for my e-mail and regular-mail address details.

**Deadline for all responses to both contests is midnight (EST) April 10, 2005.**

Let me repeat something here: The reason there are a few folks who are winning more than one book is because **they** are the ones entering the contests. **You can't win anything if you don't enter.** I'm footing the postage bill on these prizes, folks, and I expect some effort in return from their recipients.

If you don't know the answer to the question, be resourceful: ask a friend, hit the local library's reference section, etc. No one said you had to squeeze the answer out of your brain for it to count. If you want a free book, it's easy enough to get one. If you haven't entered any of the contests and are whining, I don't wanna hear it – the only person you have to blame for it is yourself.

## Will the Real Swamp Thing Please Stand UP? editorial

I've been thinking lately about this fanzine, what I've published and the places I've visited with those contents (both "real" and imagined), and asking myself whether the contents have been in keeping with my announced theme of journeys. I think so, and from the reader responses I've received, you all like what you're reading here, so I presume I'm on the right road.

Despite the fact that the article pool idea never got off the ground, articles continue to come in at a rate which is generally commensurate with PN's publishing schedule, which is a relief. No one has complained about my lack of contributions here, again a relief; for a while I feared I might have to write everything in this fanzine myself, but the fear was short-lived since several readers rescued me from that fate. Most of the writing I do about myself for PN appears in this editorial space, and I think that's where it will stay most of the time. If I get a notion to write something that would be better suited as an article, you'll all know about it.

Christmas was a quiet celebration, spent with family. My son and I went down the road (about 5 minutes' drive) to my parents'



house for dinner and prezzies, and I got lots of cool stuff and only a few clunkers. Jamie also got cool stuff, which kept him occupied for all of a day, as I recall. Oh well. He's had far too many snow days since then for my taste, but then I wouldn't have been able to drive a bus in that weather either. We had yummy food and Jamie's Uncle John played pass the football with him in the back yard; good for them both, for several reasons.

I'm planning to attend Wiscon this year because it's in late May (weather's better than now), it's in Madison, Wisconsin (relatively close and not Detroit – no offense to anyone from there), Lyn McConchie will be there (as announced in her loc thish) as well as Trinlay Khadro (pending good outcome in other areas), one of the GoHs is Gwyneth Jones (I don't think I've read any of her books yet, but people keep talking about her like she Knows Something, so I'll go and see for myself), and my health has improved to the point where I think I can actually make the trip on one of the two car-ferry services from Michigan to Wisconsin (cheaper than airfare and I get to take my car). I haven't been to a con in nearly five years, and have wanted to attend a Wiscon if for no other reason than to find out What Goes On at one.

After 18 months of treatments that started out on a weekly schedule and progressed to a biweekly one, my acupuncture sessions are now every three weeks. This makes my needle lady happy, for, as she says, she'd rather see me in the grocery store than in her office. Changing to a tri-weekly schedule means progress, which also pleased my ENT doctor when I saw him recently. All I have to remember is to get enough sleep at night, eat regularly, take all my meds and supplements, and stay as calm as possible.

My son is maturing. Now that he's had to clean his room every night for a week, he sees the benefit in spending less time on doing it, since the room stays cleaner. He seems to have finally grokked that if he works for his allowance, and doesn't spend it as soon as he gets it, he will have enough money for Friday night Rock 'n' Roll Bowling and snacks to boot. Wonders never cease. Discipline, with love, works well.