

Wabe 4

Cover goes here

Wabe #4, November 2001, is a zine under the editorial tribunal of Tracy Benton, Bill Bodden, and Jae Leslie Adams... which continues to confuse us when we get trades and can't tell if we're supposed to share them. Thanks go to Maureen Kincaid Speller as our U.K. mailing agent, and to all fan editors who still have a sense of humor. Members fwa.

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Wabe is available for the usual or editorial whim. Locs, submissions, and art may be sent to any of us, fomenting chaos and disorder. If electronically inclined, you could even email all three of us at jaeleslie@aol.com, billzilla@mailbag.com, and benton@uwalumni.com. For trades, please add all three of us to your mailing list if you can spare the copies, but we could share:

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Fore WORDS

BY JAE LESLIE ADAMS

Georgie Schnobrich has been a member of Turboapa since issue number 98, in 1994. That was where I got to know her. Of course she also shows up at local conventions, where I actually met her, but then she disappears again to Milwaukee, so it took quite some time for me to figure out that she used to live in Madison, and contributed art work to the fanzine *Janus* way back when, in the fabled years of Madison's fannish fame long before my time. Milwaukee seems an awful long way from Madison sometimes, and the ties between Madison and Milwaukee fandom tenuous. But every month without fail she sends Turbo her six pages of trenchant observations.

Every so often she makes a cover, which over the years have stacked up to more than a dozen. Gradually I started stumbling across other work she had done: covers for convention program books, lizard women, winged men, fair folk, and portraits of fans and pros. The first one I ever saw was a punk green man, which gives a good idea of the Beardsley-like flavor of much of Georgie's stuff. The summer of the Australian worldcon I carried half way around the world a copy of an issue with another Georgie cover that showed an unmistakably red-haired imp—red-haired even in black and white. A lot of us who know her thought it had a suspicious resemblance to what Georgie must have looked like as a kid.

Writing back and forth in an apa month after month is really a fine way to get to know someone. You find out how their minds work. Georgie has a lot to tell about. She has been a baker, and a librarian, and of course a voracious reader, so she is full of deep and interesting things to tell. At conventions when she is on panels she is able to make cogent sentences out of her views in a way that strikes me with awe. And then she's fun at parties, an animated conversationalist, and wears funny clothes.

So we have been looking for a chance to do a whole Georgie issue of Wabe. Times being what they are, she accepted the offer. Cover, content, and illos, she is a well-rounded fan who can do it all. But then as editors we felt we had to pad out the issue with our own editorial views, because that is what editors do.



Disguise the Limit

BY TRACY BENTON

At 16, I discovered my dream job.

At that age, I think that one may be forgiven for picking out impossible goals. Usually when I talk to a teenager, I'm impressed if they have any goals at all—by then, they're tired of the “when you grow up” question and have been too busy dreading the SAT's to decide among tinker, tailor, soldier, or sailor. The ones who have made up their minds are those who give you an answer that makes your teeth hurt: “I'm gonna make a million with my rock band!” or “I'm dropping out of school to pursue a modeling career.” I wouldn't have told anybody my impossible goal. It was not only impossible, it made me sound certifiable.

I wanted to be Pluto.

No, not the planet, thank you very much. At 16, I took a trip with my family to Walt Disney World in Florida. Ever been there? They have a bunch of people who walk around in character costumes—Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Goofy, et cetera... and of course my favorite, Mickey's dog Pluto. They walk around all day and entertain people! That was what I wanted—to be something of a stand-up comic who was hidden inside an orange dog suit with an air-conditioning unit in the head. And they'd pay me!

Now, I know people whom you could not pay to walk around in a costume. The idea is anathema to them. One of the local Madison fans, Hope Kiefer, has been holding a costume-required Halloween party for years—those certain folks always have a conflict. “So sorry,” they say. Whereas I start figuring out what to make and wear about three months ahead of time. I'm dying to wear a costume. A funny one or a pretty one, a scary one or a sexy one (okay, not a sexy one very often), but something as far from my usual chinos and polo shirt as you can get without being arrested. I like to hit a renaissance fair in the summer—in part to

see all the costumes (pardon me, “garb”). I'm even hoping to sport Elizabethan-wear at the fair myself next summer (providing I don't pass out from the heat before even entering the gates). Why?

You could just stick with the conclusion of a few of my friends: “You're just weird.” But come on, I'm a science fiction fan. I've seen a huge number of people who think the way I do. When I first started attending Wiscon back in 1984, I wore a Doctor Who scarf—and I sure as heck wasn't the only one. I wore my share of hall costumes and even won a masquerade ribbon or two. Back then easily a third of the congoers wore costumes, ranging from the intensely elaborate person-on-a-dragon (scales cut from manila folders) to your basic pitiable Spock-ears-and-a-cape. We were all looking for a way to escape the “mundanity” of our lives, weren't we? A chance to be Starfleet-for-a-Day, or Ninja-for-a-Weekend?

Even people who weren't wearing *costumes* were still wearing costumes of a sort. How about the guys in the photojournalist vests encrusted with buttons? Costume. Or the people who made up their own name badges with extensive decoration as a trademark? That's a costume too. Many current attendees at Wiscon might be stunned if I told them that a third of the attendees are *still* wearing costumes. “What? Where?” they'd say. “I see no Viking helmets, no vampire fangs, no light sabers.” Wiscon's audience has matured. The last masquerade had six entries, if I recall correctly, and that was about seven years ago. But they're still wearing costumes: they get out clothing that they don't normally wear day-to-day and wear it to the con, particularly at night to parties. Feather boas, fishnets, leather pants, spandex, old disco regalia, tuxedos, sequined gowns—most of these people are trying to escape the ordinary, I think, using the

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

The International Revolutionary Gardener #4 is from Joseph Nicholas and Judith Hannah, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in 1992. It contains reminiscences of Judith's favorite childhood books, a substantial lettercol, and the final word comes from Joseph, showing some disdain for the reverence many American fans have for fanhistories, and a topic upon which I find Joseph and I have some common ground. J&J are not the least bit shy about their strongly leftist political views, for which I admire them tremendously. Available for the usual from Judith Hannah and Joseph Nicholas, 15 Jansons Road, Tottenham London N15 4JU, United Kingdom. —Bill

“safe” environment of a con full of friends to try on a different persona.

And that’s what I think wearing costumes is all about. To an extent, you are safe, because you’re not you—you’re somebody else. But at the same time, you’re exposing yourself; you’re letting people see a side of you that you normally keep hidden. And I suspect that some who are unwilling to wear costumes are made uneasy by that. Others, perhaps, feel no need to wear costumes because they have no hidden side! They can already express everything they are in their day-to-day lives. (Now that’s *really* weird.)

There are probably a million reasons why people wear and don’t wear costumes. I don’t pretend that my theory is universal. For example, I already know one other reason I like to wear ‘em—it’s because I like to think them up and make them. I bet that Bill harbors an unconscious suspicion that I only stay with him so I can dress him up for Halloween. (Not so, I quickly protest. The difficulty of creating those curly-toed shoes for the Sultan

would have precipitated a break-up, if true.) But what a great outlet for creativity, and what fine egoboo to go to a party and hear “That’s so clever!” or “That’s so cool!” Even being Pluto in Orlando wouldn’t produce that kind of feeling, because I wouldn’t get

credit for the work.

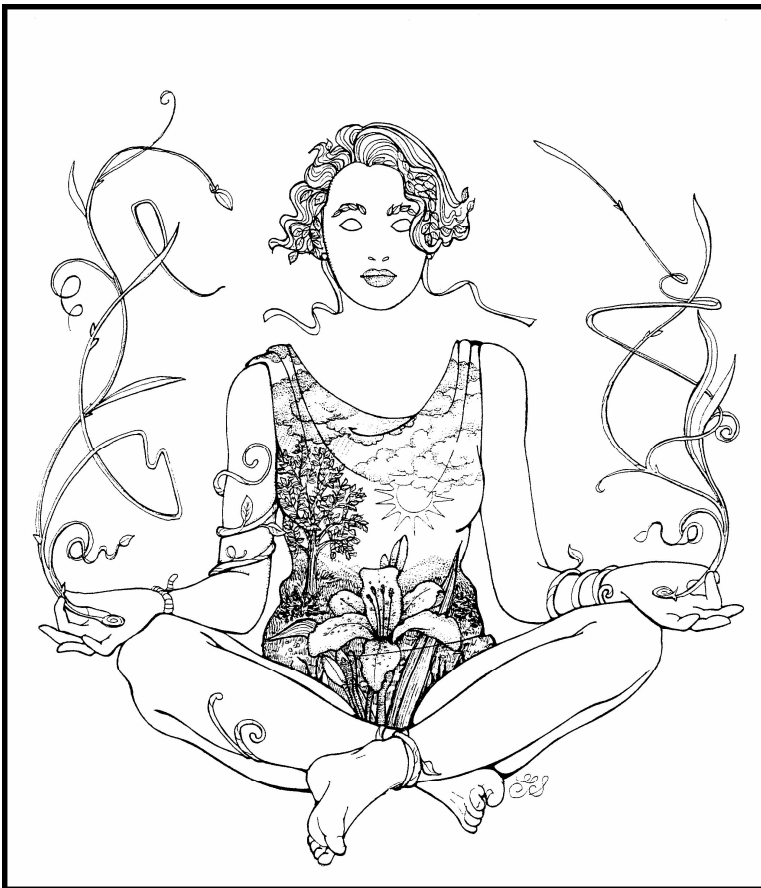
I did sort of get to have the Pluto experience, once. There’s a big Halloween party at the zoo every year. One of the first years they started it up, there was a call for volunteers in wacky costumes to distribute candy to the littlest attendees, those too young for the haunted house. Well, I just happened to have a penguin costume. (Long story.) So I got myself on the list, and on the day of the party be-penguined myself (carefully leaving off the head for driving). Once there, I hid a squeak toy in my flipper so I could honk at the kids, put on the

fairly-suffocating head, and handed out a lot of candy. I seem to recall the Good Fairy on my left and a Teddy Bear on my right. One boy of about three, wearing a jack-o’lantern shirt, came back to me a couple of times. He simply stood and stared, entranced. I offered him more candy, but he wasn’t really interested.

“I don’t think he wants any more,” said his dad, holding his hand. “He just really loves penguins, and he’s never seen one so big.”

Well, that made

asphyxiation entirely worth it. So what do you say, DisneyCorp? Am I hired?



Theatre of the Macabre

BY BILL BODDEN

Way back in the Eighties, I used to work in a locally famous movie theater named The Majestic. In its glory days, it was a Vaudeville House, and had most likely hosted the likes of W.C. Fields and the Marx Brothers, though records from those days are few and far between. The Majestic has a lot of history, and its gold-painted plaster ornamentation has recently been lovingly restored by a new owner, who cares more about its appearance than either the corporation that owned the building, or the corporation that leased the building during the time I worked there. But the new owner might not realize that he ended up with more than he bargained for when he bought the hundred year-old structure.

I first started hearing stories about the Majestic's ghosts back in 1984. I was fresh out of high school, and a good ghost story would attract me from forty miles away. Most of my fellow employees had seen a phantom patron sitting in the third row from the front, second seat from the aisle. Joy, who was the assistant manager at the time I started, wouldn't sit within three rows of that particular spot, as she had seen the specter more than anyone. It was apparently a harmless apparition, merely sitting often in that one seat, waiting for an unknown performance to begin. This didn't make Joy feel any more comfortable about the whole thing, and she warned me not to sit there either, or I'd "piss him off."

My own first encounter with the theater's ghosts came on a late winter evening, early in my tenure there. My older brother Mike had been hired at the Majestic several years before me, and still worked there, though only in a custodial capacity. The freedom of cleaning the place whenever you

felt like it, as long as it was done before the next day's opening, fit nicely into his hectic post-grad schedule. One night I was helping him out. It was probably around 11:30 PM or so, and Mike had just gone upstairs to sweep out the balcony. I was downstairs, sweeping the main floor free of popcorn, when suddenly I felt the most malevolent stare aimed at my back that I've ever encountered. I stopped and turned, and the feeling followed me like something out of Scooby-Doo, boring into my mid-back. I set down my broom and walked to the front of the theater, out from under the balcony. There was Mike, way up at the top of the balcony near the projectionist's booth, sweeping things into a dustpan. It hadn't been him. Afterward, I started talking to the ghosts when I was alone in the theater at night, as I soon had inherited several janitorial shifts each week to supplement the \$3.35 an hour wage I was earning back then. It mostly seemed to work, as I rarely had such a spooky feeling again, though I would always see blurry things flitting along at the edge of my vision.

Another time, I brought some friends in for an after-hours tour of the building. I took them to the Haunted Seat and sat down. The main spotlight, focused perpetually on the stage curtain, went out. I stood up, with a slightly comical expression of fear, and moved across the aisle, sitting down once again. The light snapped back on. Never mind that the spot had recently been blinking out due to a short; it had never exhibited such a short period between blinking off and on; usually, it could last for minutes or even hours, but this time, it was a matter of about 15 seconds. Sure, it could still have been natural, but the timing of the event was a bit too eerie to convince me of a mere fault at work.

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

Binnacle came to me from Victor Gonzales and Randy Byers and was assembled for Corflu 18 and Eastercon 2001. This was a one-shot, which is a shame. Although it contains only three articles, they're full of fine writing: Alison Freebairn on the passing of her Peugeot; Byers on his forays into classic fanzines of the past; Gonzalez, in his usual lucid prose, on police brutality. While this might not be the cheeriest fanzine you've ever perused, it all resides behind one of the most chortle-inducing covers I've encountered, courtesy of Craig Smith. Maybe you can still get one from Randy Byers, 1013 N. 36th St., Seattle, WA, 98103, rbyers@u.washington.edu. —Tracy

We got up and walked backstage, down the steps to the old dressing rooms underneath the stage area. I was just showing off the fact that the dressing rooms of old were now used as storage for popcorn and soda cups, old, broken-down chairs, and one was even used as a work-room and tool storage area.

I had no sooner finished speaking when a heavy, steady tread of footsteps sounded on the stage above our heads. We were the only people in the building. As a janitor, I can attest to this, as the first task in preparing to clean up was to make sure all the doors were locked, and that all the hiding places where pranksters might hide had been checked, and I'd run through that sequence just after we'd arrived. I finished the tour somewhat more hastily than I'd intended, and we all left, glad to be in the open air once more.

The last time I had an encounter of note was in early January of 1986. We were perpetually short-handed over the holidays, as very few people make a career out of a minimum-wage job, so we relied on college students to fill the ranks. I'd been working extra hours to help out, over and above my regular hours and my janitor shifts. I was dog-tired, and sat down to rest, sliding down in the seat and letting my legs flop over the seats in front of me. It was a Rocky Horror night; Saturday. For those of you who are unfamiliar with Rocky Horror, let me explain: no, that's too long; let me sum up. People go to Rocky Horror to get drunk and act badly in public. Having a janitor shift after Rocky Horror paid better than any other janitor shift for good reason. Imagine forty pounds of wet rice scattered all over, with the occasional deposit of the contents of someone's stomach (usually beer), and several odd objects here and there. Once I found an empty cow syringe (it had been



used as an impromptu squirt gun), and there were always empty and half-empty beer bottles and cans strewn about, despite our best effort to confiscate them. Drunk people throw things, after all. This is what was facing me that night, and I was already tired. I flopped down and closed my eyes.

Even with the house lights and the cleaning spots turned on, the Majestic Theater is not the best-lit of spaces. The upper balcony in particular is quite shadowy, as are the boxes to the right side of the stage upstairs. Someone was standing in one of the boxes, and I couldn't tell if they were facing me or not, though odds are they were; behind them is a blank wall.

I thought to myself "Well, someone is inside the theater, and I need to get them out." Whoever it was looked kind of beefy, too. The first thing I thought of was how to be disarming. The best thing would be to just lead them to the door without incident. I smiled and waved in a big, friendly, overhead, full-arm kind of wave. The person waved back, but the only thing I noticed was that the arm waving was unusually long; much longer than it should have been—probably as long as their whole body. I leapt out of my seat and dove for the well-lit lobby, a split-second after the person I saw faded completely out in mid-wave.

Today, seventeen years and dozens of jobs later, it's easy to dismiss such ephemeral experiences, but think about this: I have never had things flitting at the edges of my vision, before or since. After the intensity of some of the experiences I had there, I am completely unwilling to write them off as circumstantial anomalies. Believe what you will, but I know there's more than just old popcorn and stale soda in the Majestic Theater.

Trick-or-Treat Fannish Style

Or, Doing Our Bit to Subvert Mundanity

BY GEORGIE SCHNOBRICH

This Halloween we had the French Revolution, and beautiful weather for it, too. The home-built guillotine was 90% operational, and surprisingly in demand. So ran my notes for 1999. On other Halloweens we have been the crew of a pirate ship, run an Old West saloon or a Galactic Immigration Center, served the Mad Tea Party, lurked in Jack the Ripper's London, operated a horror movie sound stage, and hung out at the Secret Super Villains' Club—to name just a few. Here is my report on the perverse and venerable tradition of fannish Milwaukee's Trick-or-Treat productions. Venerable, because it has gone on for 20 years, perverse, because—as we participants ask ourselves when we can't feel our feet after two hours, or Autumnal rain clouds loom—why the heck do we DO this, anyway? But first, as happens every year, let me set the stage for you.

Like most municipalities, Milwaukee assigns an official afternoon for kids to Trick-or-Treat. Most kids schlepp routinely from house to house, coat over their costume, mask (if any) tilted up, collecting the requisite candy. Most householders answer the doorbell as a more or less kindly obligation, perhaps with a mask of their own, wishing the kids were more enthusiastic, somehow. Or cuter. Or less threatening. But not on the East side of Milwaukee, at the rooming house known as Lytheria. As well as a

name, the house has its own presence. It's a huge white and blue steamboat-gothic building, over 100 years old, with a big two-story porch supported by Ionic pillars, and shrouded with trees and bushes. It suggests a stage set for action; and it is. Years before I got to Milwaukee, its owner, Lee Schneider, started it all when a bunch of his

friends in the Society For Creative Anachronism thought it would be fun to hand out Halloween candy in garb.

Next year a theme was suggested: the Mad Scientist's Laboratory. Lee scrounged furnishings to dress the set, and other house inhabitants and volunteers improvised costumes and devised a little shtick. The Trick-or-Treaters had fun with it; but more important, the fans had a blast.

You know how it is: once is a Trend. Twice, and a Fannish Tradition is born.

It became a challenge to put on a production of sorts for the kids every year, be it scary or silly. Was it work?

You bet! It still is. But

Lee likes making infernal machines out of scrap found at rummage sales, and some of us are inveterate hams, and some feel that any excuse to costume is a GOOD excuse. But perhaps what truly drives us are our own memories of loving Trick-or-Treating, of running loose in the magical dark of misrule; and wanting, now, to bring a little of that creepy foolery to the current sedate afternoon experience.



In the really old days—to judge from the tales of our grandparents—the trick-or-treaters devised tricks and practical jokes that today would be considered theft and vandalism and get a kid a police record. They extorted treats from the neighbors who, on every other day, they had to politely address as Mr. or Mrs. That lent the night a tang of illicit power and excitement.

In recent times, though, when everything has been made safe and pedestrian, (except that some Milwaukee Southsiders would really like to see the death penalty instituted for vandalism, and people don't like other people's kids much, period) the ritual of costuming to get candy has become, in some neighborhoods, a sort of routine tax collection.

Kids get driven in by minivan to passively hold out their bags for the loot, and silently leave. Some don't bother with costumes. Why should they exert themselves? The householder OWES them candy. Women have started complaining that Trick-or-Treaters who do show a little life are rude or obscene, and it makes them nervous.

Ah, but at Lytheria, the kids have to earn their candy: they have to interact with US. And we're way weirder than they are. And—at any given moment—we outnumber them.

So: Picture a shadowed porch about 30 feet wide by 10 feet deep. A flight of slightly cracked cement steps lead up to it. Unkempt bushes lean into it. Fallen leaves rustle in the afternoon haze of late October. All that morning, neighborhood kids have drifted by, trying to snoop out the theme of the year. But most years tarpaulins or old convention art panels partially obscure the interior—or even a fake door! Some years mysterious panels flash with blinking lights, or the walls are hung with fabric, or with axes and swords. Real ones. Necessary furnishings come from the house: tables, chairs, carpets, candlesticks, treasure chests, pewter goblets, volumes of arcane lore, glass laboratory beakers, antique brass plant mister—all the standard impedimenta.

The year we did the pirate ship, the house sported rope ratlines from the second floor, two hefty

black cardboard cannons run out on either side of the steps, and a big ship's wheel inside. The kids had to sign the ship's articles to be a member of the pirate crew before we'd give them a go at the treasure chest. (The treasure was full-sized chocolate bars.) Pirate Captain Greg Rihn led them in the Official Pirate Cheer: "Give me an R!" "R!" "Give me another R!" "R!" "What does it spell?" "AARRRR!" Between batches, those of us who knew how had cutlass duels up and down the sidewalk, and the rest of us did a slow, synchronized, bent-kneed swaying to suggest the motion of the ship.

For the Old West Saloon, the kids had to get a poker chip from the table of gamblers by cutting cards with them, and exchanging the chip at the bar for a mug with the candy bar in it. A memorable few sat down at the table and demanded to be dealt a poker hand. So, of course, we indulged them. That year we were gamblers, cowboys and cowgirls, outlaws, dancehall girls—and sheriff. We had a hitching rail down by the sidewalk. And wouldn't you know? That year a girl came costumed as a horse. We tied her reins to it, and her Dad took photos, laughing all the while.

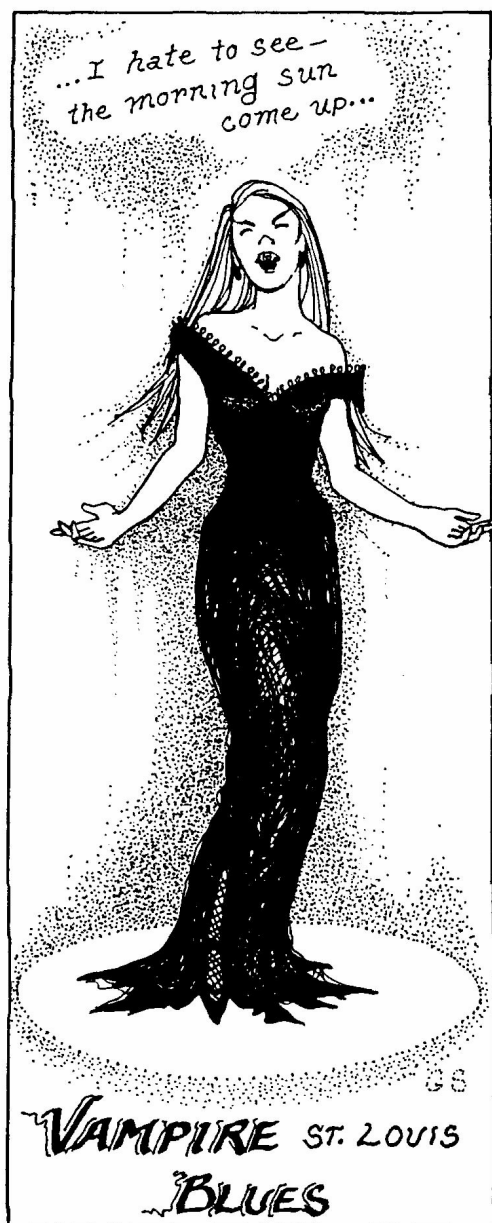
I wasn't there for the Addams Family production, but I've heard the stories. The photo album shows a great Cousin It, and Thing, the disembodied hand, emerged from a box to give out the chocolate. Thing was portrayed by divers hands, since crouching by the slot under the table and sticking one's arm up grew really uncomfortable.

We often get a kid—usually a boy—who issues a challenge of some sort. This year it was a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, who menaced our Gomez Addams with his plastic weapon. Gomez cried, "Thing! My sword!" And after a long, inspired moment, and some scrabbling, Lee carefully poked out of the box a four foot broadsword. Gomez grabbed it and promptly assumed theatrical fighting posture. The kid was speechless. We live for such moments.

The Arabian Nights required a lot in the way of drapery, scene-setting, costumes and make-up. I was a sort of female afreet in a nifty teal green satin

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Ansibabble springs fully-formed from the fevered brow of Kim Huett, who openly admits his involvement in this brilliant and hilarious parody of David Langford's *Ansible*, the zine that pretends to be something. Huett's satire is biting, his paper is a pale magenta, and his chief regret in publishing this amusing parody is that the title is no longer an anagram of *lesbian*. (I am not kidding.) To inquire as to availability, or to post threatening and/or anonymous mail, send to Kim Huett, 29/63 Pearson Street, Holder ACT 2611, Australia. —*Bill*



costume I had purchased at the Skylight Theatre's moving sale, but frankly all that I remember was being so cold I hurt. This in spite of having a space heater on the porch, and a fire in the fireplace indoors to escape to for quick thawing. I have no idea how the belly dancers survived. Ever after, I have described the Trick-or-Treat production as "Three hours of improv and hypothermia." The hypothermia doesn't always get you, but, considering we get 600 kids through each year, at some point the sustained improvisation usually does.

Take the B Movie Sound Stage, for example. There wasn't much set dressing: just a bench, a cardboard mock-up of an old film camera, some

real stage lights (found tossed out in an alley) and the door Lee had made and fitted to the porch entrance. It said, El Cheapo Monster Movie Company. Miracle Productions: If it's good, it's a Miracle. Lee posted a "cattle call" announcement for "expendable extras" on it. Now the neat thing about this was that no one could see what went on inside, but the whole neighborhood could hear....

We'd take the kids in bunches, and cast them as either the imperiled heroes/heroines of a B horror movie, or the mutant zombies. On the Director's cue, the zombies got to menace the victims, who were posed on the bench. The zombies growled; the victims got to SCREAM, er, bloody murder. My ghod. I knew teen girls could be good screamers, but after three hours of this I am now an expert, and believe me, NO ONE screams like 8 year old girls—in a pitch that could likely cause sterility in mice! Being within feet of them was exhausting. It happened that we had two groups of girls in 1950s poodle skirts that year, so the effect was perfect. We also had a little pink satin Princess who was absolutely set on being one of the zombies. I wish we had pictures, because it looked hysterical: Cinderella run homicidally amok.

Then the Director would yell "Cut!", we'd make them members of the Scream Actors Guild and pay them "scale," which was, of course, the candy. Then we'd send them off by the porch's new side exit, so those waiting saw kids go into the porch, heard them scream, and did not see them come out again... Aren't we awful?

We were all stage crew or bit part actors for this one. I was a mad scientist, an injector of zombie serum. (This is where the antique brass plant mister came in handy.) I put together an outfit of long (warm!) tweed skirt, cotton tights, black turtleneck, dorky shoes, and a lab coat, and pinned up my hair, wore blue glasses, and dark red lipstick, (a trick I had noticed worked to some effect in the movie *Twelve Monkeys*.) I have to admit that it is both a matter of artistic pride but also some embarrassment to realize that I can costume as a demented frump out of my own streetwear closet.

We have only had one real failure, and that was because of wretched weather. It was very cold, windy and rainy, so only the most determined of the older kids came out, and then not for long. We didn't get many actors, either—despite the inducement of hot spiced cider. The production was Alien Cafe, with lizardy monsters in chef coats and toques and waiter dinner jackets—and a buffet of the weirdest foods we could find. (Try Vietnamese canned grass jelly some time: it is black as obsidian

and it jiggles as you sculpt it. It tastes like mower clippings.) Cherimoyas look alien, too. And the little covered dish of live crickets from the pet store was fairly well received.

But the floor of the upstairs porch was awash and began to drip on us about 3 pm. We hadn't had a Trick-or-Treater for many minutes. So some of us wondered whether we should pack it in. To which came the reply, the only possible reply, the punch-line of an old joke: "What? And leave show business?!" We stayed open another 30 minutes.

Some years the star of the show is one of Lee's devices. The lit sign over the entrance that could be set to flash SECRET VILLAINS' CLUB was elegant and ironic, and the talking Sorting Hat from Harry Potter was great—but more of that one presently. My personal favorite has to be the guillotine. It is big enough to lie down upon comfortably and have the sturdy wooden lunette fitted down over one's neck. The metal blade is hauled up by pulley: not as high as real ones, but tall enough to be manageable on the porch. The blade is heavy enough to make, when released, a wonderful, horrifying, plausible, hair-raising SCHUNCK! Lee is familiar with magic act effects, and the blade retracts so only wood frame hits protective wood frame. No one can get hurt—but, oh! the effect it has upon anyone with the least imagination!

It occurs to me that it is difficult to conjure up for you the trick-or-treaters' experience of all this, because I have never seen it. Once it's show time, I am within my own imagined performance—Lucrecia Borgia with a goblet suggestively wafting dry ice vapors, or Mrs. Lovett of Sweeny Todd, patting pie dough into tins and remarking on the quality of meat a Trick-or-Treater might provide. And I am acutely aware of my underlying functions, which is often to give our visitors a quick clue as to what is expected of them, to signal the fan doing traffic control out at the sidewalk that we are ready for another bunch, or—if my charac-

ter is not too scary—to give treats to the children too tiny or timid to be up to the fun-house challenge. It's ensemble playing. There's a rhythm to it.

But truly, much of what I see is only in my mind's eye. Unless, by our energy and our own conviction, we can infect others, I suppose there is less to these performances than we think. And indeed, some of the kids go through with it looking amiably baffled, while many parents, rather enviously, see a bunch of grownups being ragtag amateur actors without a license, permission, or any discernible embarrassment. But others—we can tell!—they see what we do, and our windmills pass marvelously as giants.

For the French Revolution, we had a big tricolor flag hung above the porch entrance, and Henry Osier as a guard in an 18th c. coat and hat, barring the way up the walk with a pike. Todd Voros assisted with escorting arrestees, when he wasn't busy being the King of France. (Nobody takes the chop like Todd: it's that little reflexive whole-body twitch he does after, that adds such verisimilitude.) That morning, Therese Roden, our Madame De-Farge, had posted fliers around the block offering a bounty for the apprehension of the Scarlet Pimpernel. I'd made up a bunch of red-white-and-blue ribbon cockades for all us revolutionaries to wear. I was doing Theroigne de Mericourt—an actual person—a wild woman who occasionally wore men's clothes and was rumored to be a vampire. (History is a lot more fun than most people think.) A Marat and a Charlotte Corday took part for a little while. There was a desk with ledgers and paper and a quill pen right inside the porch, where Greg Rihn as Barras, Head of the secret Police, stood in red-sashed black frock coat and plumed bicorn hat, and little sinister glasses, to harangue patriotically, and test the loyalty, of all who came before him. He got the kids shouting "Vive le Revolution!"

Not that it saved likely looking aristocrats from being offered their chance to "test drive" the guil-

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

If you've come into fandom relatively recently, like in the last fifteen years, Marty Cantor's *No Award* may be the best introduction you will find to the old boys who are still active in fanzine fandom. It's a classic fanzine, with in-jokes explained, much text, a bit of fanhistorical emphasis on the local LA area, and plain enough declarations of literary and aesthetic taste for nitpicking by those of us who enjoy such correspondence and argument. (Its availability as a "colourized PDF" at www.efanzines.com seems to contribute typos, along with wider distribution.) The letter column is the liveliest discussion currently published in an American fanzine of whatever the common subject might be anymore, and I find Thom Digby's absurdities awfully funny. Marty makes much of his grumpiness, but in print he is the friendliest curmudgeon you will find amongst the oldpharts. Available for the usual, Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore Street #105, North Hollywood, CA 91606, louisshoohah@netzero.net or [11](mailto:martyhoo-</p></div><div data-bbox=)



lotine. Our "National Razor" stood discreetly out of sight of the street, and was operated by Lee, in executioner's robes. Word got around, however. This led to a fascinating study of adolescent peer group dynamics, which can be boiled down to the following verbatim exchange:

"Go on, Chris—you said you'd do it!"

"No I DIDN'T!"

"Chris, you LIAR!"

But if Chris braved the machine, his friends inevitably would too; and they'd be so hopped up on pride and adrenaline that they'd want to go around again. We had to move them along, so Lee explained that they only had one head, so only one chop to a customer. So two enterprising lads went off and came back with a friend in a two-headed mask... The little princess returned, (in aqua satin this year) and she insisted on getting the full treatment. She left her tiara behind on the guillotine. It seemed appropriate. I'm beginning to wonder if her mother picks out her costumes.

Some day, a child dozing in class will hear the word "guillotine" in a unit on European history, and a vivid memory will rise up before his eyes. At least, that's what I hope for. There's half a chance. It is always better to have a large cast for these

productions. Even on fine days, the sheer effort of interpersonal involvement gets tiring. Voices need a rest. Bladders need relief. Candy bar caches need refilling. It's hard if there is no one to spell you. Over the years our personnel has flowed and ebbed and flowed again. The Vampire Nightclub brought out a lot of fans. (We had velvet ropes out at the sidewalk, and groups were let in as though they had reservations. "Mr. Wayne's party," the Door-man announced when we had a little Batman show up.) But the next year several of the women were busy with babies, and our participants dropped again. This always worries me, but I grow determined to stick out the lean times in hope that new fans may decide to play, or old fans may find more time.

It seems to be working. Last year our theme was the Hogwarts School of Wizardry from the Harry Potter books—we figured we had one chance to do it before the kids could complain that we didn't match the movie. And we had a big cast. Some were house denizens, a few were friends from more academic circles, and one girl, Jackie Hanchar, was the daughter of fans. As a Trick-or-Treater, she had seen what we did with the French Revolution the year before, and realized that, at 13, her place was now properly with the perpetrators. (We let her pull the lanyard to give her Dad the chop: that may have been an added inducement.) Anyway, we had a Hermione of the perfect age, and naturally officious. Lee was Professor Snape, Greg was Dumbledore, I claimed Professor McGonagall (and wore a plaid as an academic gown), Therese was Madam Pomfrey, the school nurse who dispenses chocolate to cure magical ills, Gary Cone was Filch the grumpy caretaker, and Mike Davis, in a superb werewolf costume, was "Professor Lupin on a Bad Day". Jan Long gave Madam Hooch the Quidditch mistress a distinct flavor of Vince Lombardi.

We had three Trick-or-Treaters come as Harry Potter. Jan hailed one, "Hey Potter! Where were ya?" And the kid replied, never missing a beat, "Gee Coach, did I miss the game?"

The idea was that the kids were enrolling at Hogwarts, and had to be sorted into the school houses of Gryffindor (the good and brave) or Slytherin, (the clever but unprincipled) by the talking Sorting Hat. A two-way radio in the crown of a rather shabby wizard's hat and a discreetly placed video camera allowed Todd Voros to hide on the upper porch and make appropriate remarks as Dumbledore held the hat above each applicant. "Take off your hat!" the Voice reproved one child, "I have to work here." And to another, "This is a hard one. I'm thinking! I'm thinking!" A few of the

younger ones, though knowing it was “pretend” have reportedly taken their Sorting into Gryffindor rather seriously.

The Gryffindors came to me and Madam Pomfrey for their candy and a list of school supplies. The Slytherins went over to Professor Snape, who gave them a hard time, and their candy, eventually. We had a Dementor (Pat Bowne) lurking in the foliage, so still that kids assumed she was a dummy—till she moved. Madam Trelawney the Divinations teacher worked the waiting line, telling really dire fortunes from a crystal bowl of tea leaves, assisted by a red-haired Ginny Weasley.

But the best laughs came from a sign posted by the seated and motionless Professor Lupin that read DO NOT SAY WINGNUT. Now and then a kid would say the forbidden word—sometimes just by reading the sign aloud—and then the werewolf would rise, and menace, and growl or howl, and the kids would generally flee, shrieking. Pretty soon, the word got passed on to the kids waiting on the sidewalk: “Say WINGNUT!” though further explanation was withheld. One 12-year-old in a knight's costume stood his ground and declared, “You can't scare me!” At which our werewolf merely nuzzled his neck and said “Kissy kissy kissy!”—and the kid fled, shrieking.

Who, you may ask, are the kids who come to this? The very first ones have their own little monsters by now. Neighborhood kids know the drill and play their part; but neighborhoods are in constant change, so there are always the new ones who seem to be wondering what madness they have wandered into. And quite a few people wander in from other neighborhoods, too. The event has grown much more racially mixed with the years, which is heartening.

Some—perhaps a fourth—wear trendy, store-bought costumes, often Disney or Warner Brothers. A few have a parent who sews. Some construct something on their own, or improvise a costume out of odd old clothes. Brides and witches are standard every year, and there is always one hippie. A lot of the boys put all their money into a big, grotesque rubber whole-head mask, and wear their usual clothes with it.

For a few years, a good number of older kids didn't costume at all. Some of those years were pretty cold, so I didn't really hold it against them, but, for our own amusement, we began to pretend that they were meant to be something, and tried to guess at what they could be. The kids found this a little disconcerting, somehow—the implication that their ordinary selves could be taken as some bizarre character. There were always one or two smart-aleck conceptualists who really got onto it with us,

though.

When cheap face paint became easily available, attempts at self-decoration, if not costume, came back strongly. A goodly number wear their own sports clothes, especially hockey gear. (A goalie mask alone is now a horror icon.) Packer jerseys are ever popular. At the Vampire Nightclub, one vampire lady languidly observed, as 4 boys in green and gold departed, “Two more, and we could have drained a six-pack.”

But why do we do it, when it takes effort, time, planning, materials and occasionally hardship? All those things that grownups seem to begrudge, even when they get paid for them. I can't answer for everybody, but I'd guess, first: because it's still fun. Second: because we can. I am not happy in a world where a few professionals get to do things, however silly, and the rest of us get to pay to sit and watch. What fun is that? We often limit ourselves so, and to no one's benefit.

Lytherian Trick-or-Treat is a sort of guerrilla theater, and a reminder that Halloween is the Carnival season of the North, and that - so far - no one needs permission to give a “free lunch.” That's pretty radical, in a small way, and reason enough.

The Chronology

- 1981: SCA gave out candy in Court garb
- 1982: Mad Scientist's Laboratory
- 1983: Dark Crystal
- 1984: Control Center for “V”.
- 1985: Egyptian Mausoleum
- 1986: Mad Tea Party
- 1987: Wizard's Study
- 1988: Addams Family
- 1989: Jack The Ripper's London
- 1990: Medieval Dungeon
- 1991: Galactic Immigration Center
- 1992: Pirate Ship
- 1993: Arabian Nights
- 1994: Supervillains' Club
- 1995: Old West Saloon
- 1996: Vampire Nightclub
- 1997: Alien Cafe
- 1998: B Movie Sound Stage
- 1999: French Revolution
- 2000: Hogwarts School
- 2001: Babylon 5

Middle WORDS

BY BILL BODDEN

Fall is a depressing time of year for most people, as it means winter is following closely behind. I'm a fall baby (late September); winter happens to be my favorite season, so I find autumn invigorating. With the first real nip of frost in the air, I feel more alive than I have all year. The anticipation of the first snowfall gives me a thrill like few other things can. I guess I'm still a kid at heart.

Like snow, life has a way of piling up when one isn't looking. This is certainly the case in my life. The job I've held since last November is starting to become more time-consuming, I've landed an extremely part-time professional writing gig, and I still have as many hobbies as ever, so free time continues to be at a premium. Still, Jae, Tracy and I make time for WABE, although the diminishing returns in terms of Letters of Comment we've seen lately leave us wondering if we're losing interest, or if our readers are.

Which brings me to my announcement: Madison-area fans would like to bid to hold the 2003 Corflu, and, (following a longstanding fannish tradition) since it was my idea, I've offered to be the chair. The last Corflu held in Madison was in 1993; ten years seems to be a perfect interval. No hotel announcement as yet, though we're certain to have one by the end of the year. For the uninitiated, Corflu is short for "Correction Fluid" and is a convention of fanzine fans. If you haven't signed up yet for Corflu 19, I'm sure Nic Farey would be happy to hear from you, not to mention having more information with which to plan the event: <http://www.megspace.com/arts/corflu> or, for those without Internet access:

Corflu 19

P.O. Box 178

St. Leonard, MD 20685

Full attending rate is \$60 by this time. Make the check payable to Sheila Prosterman.

The dates are February 14-17, 2002. Corflu 19 will be held at the Radisson Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland.

Corflu is a laid-back opportunity for a segment of the fannish community to get together. Corflus were started for, among other reasons, a chance to bring people together who'd only corresponded through fanzines. If you're serious about your fanzine interest, I urge you to attend; it's a great place to meet people, bring home a stack of new fanzines to read, and of course this year there's the crab cakes... mmmmm... crab cakes.

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

You'll have to forgive Jae. She's still in third person from her journey North (http://www.geocities.com/north_afanzine) —Tracy

On her return from Canada, Jae found a small stack of fanzines had arrived, and the thing she sat right down and read straight through was a personal zine issue (Number 48.5A) of *Opuntia*, from Dale Speirs in Calgary. She had waved from the highway in his direction as she whizzed through Alberta at just about the time that he was apparently mailing out this zine concerned largely with his recent adventures in the hospital for emergency gallbladder surgery. It was good to hear how well the Canadian health care system took care of him ("I can't complain but sometimes I still do.") Then with an elegant segue through the moose in the National Geographics he had read in his sickbed, he took us along through some of his daily events, including an enviable trip into the Kananaskis mountains just outside of Banff. When Jae is looking for botanists and geologists to staff her journeys in the future, this is the kind of observation she wants. His connections to mail art projects are interesting, and his remarks on books eclectic, but the personal zines are the best. Available from Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2E7 for \$3 cash (one-time sample copy), trade, or letter of comment. —Jae

Working at the Cem

BY JAE LESLIE ADAMS

What would you like to know about working at the cemetery? Yes, it was very quiet. That was always the first joke. "Must be pretty dead," people would say when I told them where I worked.

Of course I have told many people over the years various things about working at the cemetery. While I was there, and I worked there for nearly three years, I had a boss that drove me at least half way round the bend. He had lots of jokes about the cemetery, and would tell them with little discretion as to whether his audience was a tavern, or a scout troop, or a recently bereaved spouse. I had ample opportunity to observe how different people took his pleasantries. It is possible that you would prefer to skip the entire subject, my friend. One of the most interesting things about the cemetery is how many people would prefer to ignore it, although all of us eventually have recourse to it. With luck.

My cemetery was nearly in the middle of town. My first encounter with it was at least a month before I started working there. The bus that took me to my new job at a large insurance company on the west side passed by that little office at the entrance. It was an early January morning, and a warm light was on there in the window in the frigid blue dawn. As I rode past all the stones lined up across the snowy hills in that part of town the cabbies call The Bone Zone, the thought passed through my mind that someone was already at work there in the cemetery office. I still know the people who are at work there. They are city employees.

When the cemetery was first measured out in 1857, it was far outside of Madison. Then the city grew. The cemetery office building was originally a brick shelter at the end of the line when Madison had street cars, and families at the turn of the last century would bring picnic lunches out on Sundays. When I worked there I talked to a couple of old ladies visiting who remembered when there was a meadow with cows across the street where you could pick flowers. The wrought iron fence that was com-

missioned in 1911 to keep the cows out has long since been removed. Now across the street is an athletic field for the high school.

The insurance job didn't pan out, and a month later I was the only person who showed up to interview for the permanent clerical position at the cemetery. I needed the job to support my guitarist boyfriend, and badly wanted to get back into some kind of civil service which is the kind of work in Madison that has the best benefits. The previous incumbent at the cemetery had retired after twenty-odd years' service. The supervisor patriarch who interviewed me worked at the city parks office downtown, and he hired me on the behalf of the cemetery manager and assistant manager for whom I would work. The woman who had just retired came in one morning to show me the work, particularly that involved in preparing everyone's time cards to go downtown to the city parks office. I was given a gray metal desk with a manual Underwood typewriter on it, a couple of very old file cabinets full of very old files, and a fireproof vault behind me full of typed and handwritten records that dated back a hundred and thirty years. There were large windows by my desk that looked out on the grounds. There were plants to water in the windows.

So began the time when I got off the bus every morning at the high school, and crossed the street in front of the monument dealer to get to the cemetery office. I usually arrived several minutes early, as the bus let me off at 7:20, but if I missed that bus and caught the next one I would be

nearly ten minutes late and the assistant manager would get bent out of shape. That didn't happen for many months, but when he decided to write me up I had to type the report form myself for his signature. That was Bill. The manager Buck was more easygoing. Usually one or the other of them was in the office when I arrived. The grounds crew they supervised had a shop on the other end of the cemetery. They drove back and forth from the office to the shop and back, along



the sinuous paved drives through the cemetery grounds.

First we would read the paper. The first order of business was to check the obituaries. "Caught one," Buck would tell me, one day in three, and he or Bill would look up the name in the index in the vault. Sometimes we had to wait for the funeral director to call. In the meantime they would try to figure out which four by ten foot space in all their acres would be requested. That was the next order of business, to get the order for the opening of a grave, find the location, and tell the old Norwegian who operated the backhoe. I typed up a little form with the name of the deceased and details, drew a small diagram of the grave plot on the green graph paper at the bottom of the form, and posted it on the bulletin board under the day of the week the funeral was scheduled.

By eight in the morning, it was my job also to put a pot of water on the ancient hot plate to make instant coffee. Then we traded around the sections of the paper, and drank instant coffee. The supervisor patriarch would come in on his way to work uptown and trade war stories, which was a particular interest of Bill's. I read the funnies and worked the crossword and the cryptoquote, although eventually Bill told me not to do that when their supervisor was around because it looked bad. Buck had been on the Italian front in World War Two and could very occasionally be persuaded to talk about it, although he had been a forester for the city since then and had wider interests. One of the local monument dealers was a nice old German fellow who had been a prisoner of war in Wisconsin after freezing his feet on the Russian front, and came to settle here after the war. Bill had been in Korea and was sorry to have missed the Big One. The postman Hank would come in later in the morning and have his coffee break and trade war stories too.

I set about reading everything in the files. Buck was amused by my interest and industry. I read the files about the cemetery fence, no longer there, which was built by a famous ornamental ironworks in Milwaukee. I found photos of what the entrance looked like before one of the workers ran into the brickwork with a city truck in the fifties when he suffered a convulsion, and heard many other various stories. I found caches of City of Madison stationery from the forties which featured a wonderful illustration of Madison's lakes from the air. I read all the local newspaper articles about the cemetery, which always come out around Memorial Day at the end of May when the cemetery is looking its best. I answered correspondence from people who wrote with genealogical questions that

had led them to records with the name of our cemetery in them. We had a copier that made nasty slick gray copies, but at least I could make copies of the burial permits for them from the files. Eventually I persuaded my managers to find me an electric typewriter, and got my own Selectric. I copied the big index books in the vault, ledgers six inches thick and bound in leather, like St. Peter's might be. They were arranged in very rough alpha order, as the names had been entered chronologically over the years under the red leather tab for their letter. I put the names in close alpha order and typed the list over.

It was some months before I started to get to know the ground maintenance crew. I filled out their time cards and reported the hours they worked every two weeks. In the summer they would come into the office to use the rest rooms when they were working on that end of the cemetery—if they could see that Bill's vehicle was not parked out front. The old Norwegian who ran the backhoe had worked there since he was seventeen, cutting grass and raking leaves and shoveling snow in season, and he remembered the office girl (that was what my job was called) before the last. There was one woman on the crew, and we got to be friends. There were not many women on construction and grounds maintenance crews at the time. She would let me know when they were going out drinking on a Friday after work.

Occasionally people came in to buy cemetery lots, either at The Time Of Need or because they were thinking ahead. People came in to find the locations of graves that they hadn't visited in many years, and I could look it up and mark the location on a cemetery map to give to them, and tell them how to find their way there. My husband's parents and grandparents are buried there.

Eventually I got to know all the local funeral directors and monument dealers. The monument business is very seasonal, because in our climate all the monuments for people who died during the winter are installed in the spring, in a rush before Memorial Day. The funeral directors' work, on the other hand, is very steady, however slow. (That was always the second joke.) My work there was steady too.

There came a time when I knew that I would not always work there, because Bill would surely drive me completely round the bend before he retired, and his retirement was still too many years off. But I knew from the first that I would always look back on those working conditions with awe, that I would regret leaving. And somehow I still do. It was a peculiar peaceful stroke of fortune, to have a job at a quiet window, with a typewriter, the seasons and scale of human life close at hand, and all

Mausoleum: A Game Review

BY BILL BODDEN

This is what my part-time writing gig consists of: writing reviews of games and miniatures for a magazine called Games Unplugged. My first work for them has been published in issue # 11. If you don't have a good gaming store near you, you can always check it out online at:

<http://www.gamesunplugged.com/>

The site is full of typos, but will at least give you the idea.

And while you're in your local game shop, look for this title:

Mausoleum

By Savant Garde Entertainment

Card games have been moving in the direction of being non-collectible lately, and with the advent of sophisticated desktop publishing, anyone can put together a decent card-game company. So it is with Savant Garde, whose second offering, *Mausoleum*, will appeal to the Edward Gorey fan in everyone. The object of the game is to build the most impressive mausoleum; i.e., be the first player to rack up \$10 million worth of tombs in the family crypt. Players do this by offing their heirs, and using their intended inheritance money to add to the pile of majestically mouldering marble in the family plot. Designed for three to five players by R. Hunter Gough, the game can be expanded to allow for more than five players by adding an additional deck.

There are four types of cards in the game: Heirs, Accidents, Graves, and Incidents. A flash of bril-

liance had them number each card, to make replacing lost ones infinitely easier. The game progresses as follows: each player starts with cards in hand, the number of which varies depending on the number of participants. Each player in turn draws a card, and plays or discards one card. Heirs must first be played to a party, ostensibly thrown by the host to show off their Place of Final Repose to those who will be paying for it. Then the heir must be "offed" the next turn with an accident card, and moved to the morgue pile in front of the player. Finally, the heir may be "buried" by being spent, along with other unfortunate heirs, if they add up to enough to purchase the particular grave. Once an heir has been spent and the grave purchased, it may not be taken away from the player. However, heirs in the Morgue pile are fair game, and can be discarded by other player through "Misplaced" incidents. Heirs can also be discarded from parties before they are killed, by using "On Holiday" incident cards. The discard pile is recycled as soon as the draw pile has been depleted, so cards don't end up disappearing from play for very long.

This game has a fairly broad appeal, and is full of dark humor. My particular favorite is the "Billiards Accident" card, which even now makes me chuckle out loud. If I had to make one change to the game, it would be to add a few more low value Grave cards to the deck. With discards, it can occasionally be vexing to find enough grave cards to win. At \$9.95, *Mausoleum* is a reasonably priced way to enjoyably while away a few hours.

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

Jae kindly allowed me to read her copy of *Tortoise Ten*, edited by Sue Jones and an imaginary tortoise. It's got beautiful layout, clever choices of illustrations, and is all-in-all a comfortable curl-up-on-the-couch-and-immense-yourself zine at 18 pages. Good material throughout, but the lettercol rather out-numbers the articles, making it a little disappointing to the first-time reader. I particularly enjoyed Sue's detailed book, CD, and fanzine reviews. She's refreshingly straightforward. Available by Editorial Whim, but "asking nicely usually works, especially if postage is included." Sue Jones, Flat 5, 32/33 Castle Street, Shrewsbury UK SY1 2BQ 01743 289306, sue.tortoise@btinternet.com.

IMPENETRABILITY!

Thanks for all your great letters. We really look forward to them! As usual, we have edited due to space constraints.

Regarding the cover, illos

KAREN BABICH:

Love the cover, though Jae looks more military/G&S [Gilbert and Sullivan] than the Pirate Queen she is. My favorite part? Stu's artistic license allows you all to be about the same height—tall! Or did Stu crop your feet to hide the orange crates that Jae and Tracy are on?

Tracy notes: actually, for that drawing, Jae posed artfully, Bill stood in quicksand, and I balanced on a small armadillo. Luckily, Stu works rapidly.

NED BROOKS:

Much thanks for the zine—great cover! I always enjoy Gilliland's cartoons too.

SHERYL BIRKHEAD:

Nifty Shiffman cover!... Boy, you guys must really rate—it has been a long time since I've seen Alexis (Gilliland) artwork!

Err... well, we misaddressed Alexis' copy of WABE #1 in such a spectacularly bad way that he wrote to correct us. We were embarrassed... but we got art!

Regarding Schooners

LLOYD PENNEY:

"Schooner Women" was a wonderful essay. So many women subsume themselves in the life of a husband or into a marriage without any time for themselves. It looks like this trip on a sailing ship was the ideal opportunity to cut loose and do something for themselves, for some, for the first time in a long time.

SHERYL BIRKHEAD:

The Schooner trip sounds great—as long as one is not prone to *mal de mer*. In the vein of recreation trips—my sister (Mormon) and her family participated in a recreation of the trek and all said it was interesting—with the wagons, etc. Hmm—I, personally, think such trips are fun *until* something goes wrong or the weather changes....

HARRY WARNER, JR.:

Pat Hario's account of her schooner odyssey was sheer delight to read, even though for a while I was convinced it would end up with all these women threatened with white slavery or jobs in some Pacific Rim nation sweatshops. Naturally I was quite relieved to find that they had joined a jaunt that was just what it was advertised to be. The sense of joy in accomplishment and sharing with all those other individuals of the same sex that she describes might be a clue to why in the Middle Ages so many women went into convents. Today we think they wasted their lives by isolating themselves from the rest of the world. Maybe they were far happier than we can imagine for the same reasons that Pat enjoyed her adventure.

SHERRY THOMPSON

Pat Hario wrote about "Schooner Women" and, as I read, I was torn between the desire to do as you had done, and to get as far away from such an experience as I could! Sorry, Pat! You obviously had a terrific time, and I envy you that. Why, just the thought of the scent of sea air makes me pine to be aboard that schooner. I would love to feel part of a team like that, to feel the confidence, the sense of accomplishment that you obviously felt.



A LETTERCOL

On the other hand, did you feel at all like you were taking an incredible gamble, when you signed on? For better or worse, that's the way I would have felt. I guess I'm just a social coward. I can't even picture going on a cruise, for fear that I wouldn't like the people and that I would be "stuck" for a week. Had I seen the advertisement you did, I would have worried right from the get-go whether the rest of the crew were going to be "nice," whether I would "fit in" and (especially) whether I would "hold my own" at all that sweating and hauling.

Thanks so much for the article! Coward that I am, I much appreciated the chance to live vicariously through your experiences.

Regarding Civil War travel

ALEXIS A. GILLILAND:

Bill Bodden's piece about the Civil War battlefields was evocative and nicely done. Long time passing, Dolly and I went over the Gettysburg battlefield more than once, and when we were in Scotland we visited Culloden (1746) and were struck by how much smaller *that* decisive battle had been. Perhaps it is the effects of industrialization, using railroads for logistical support, etc., because Verdun (1916) dwarfed Gettysburg. What I remember from a documentary on Verdun was the panoramic opening shot that took in the whole landscape, and the narrator saying: "If all the men who fell here were to rise again, there wouldn't be room for them to stand." Which maybe explains why France and Germany don't have reenactors at Verdun. Or maybe "The South Will Rise Again," is an acceptably implausible sentiment, while German/Nazi revanchism is credible and scary. (As a side issue, we note that even though the anti-Civil Rights movement wrapped themselves in the Confederate flag they lost. Again. And as the large Afro-American plurality made its presence felt at the voting booth—and in the economy—those flags have been coming down in South Carolina, and Virginia, and elsewhere.)

SHERRY THOMPSON

Bill, in "Road Trip to the Past," you described what it was like to drive Alun down to Shiloh, or Pittsburgh Landing. Your words were indeed evocative of traveling into the past with every mile you drew closer to the river.

For me, your wonderful description stirred memories of driving down to my grandfather's place, along the sound of the southern North Carolina coast. There was (and presumably is) a swamp there called the Dismal Swamp. I'm sure that by now the interstates go nowhere near it. But when I

was a teenager, the scenes outside the car windows were either that of weathered wooden shacks surrounded by bits of cars and rusting appliances, or else the darkness and eerie silence of the swamp. Neither were places in which you wanted your car to break down.

Things were little different when we reached the end of the journey. At grandfather's property ("Long Acres") the road changed to crushed clamshells and aggressive vines, and the nearest neighbor was a mile away. You could just hear his dogs barking....

DAVID BRATMAN:

Like Bill, I've been to some Civil War battlefields (but not Shiloh: if I had, I might have gotten to Alabama, which is nearby), but more than visiting battlefields I like to stare at the maps with all the little arrows on them. That way I can easily tell what was going on, which anybody who was actually on the battlefield at the time certainly couldn't. After many years, I remain miffed at the staff at Manassas, from which (to the detriment of my schedule) I delayed my departure a couple hours so that I could take a scheduled "walking tour."

This proved to consist of an amble around the parking lot, from which relevant sights in the distance were pointed out. And when I complained about the misleading sign, the rangers said, "You walked, didn't you?"

The other thing that bothered me about Manassas was that, though many Civil War-era farm buildings remain on the battlefield, there's nothing about their inhabitants. The park museum would be a great opportunity to say something about farm life in the 1860s, what the inhabitants were like, how they lived after two armies swept across their land twice each in the course of a year. It would make a nice change from endless lists of regiments.

Regarding travel

RON BENNETT:

When I was just about pre-teen I sometimes accompanied my father on his traveling salesman rounds. One of his regular stops was one of the workers on the Earl's estate. We would push open the wooden gate and... freeze in sheer fright as we were rushed by a large, black, slavering, roaring dog. The hound of the Baskervilles... or Times New Romans... would be left far behind in the terror stakes by this beast. I had no idea then as to what type of dog this ferocious creature was. Possibly a rottweiler. Certainly not a golden hamster, anyway.

We were saved from being summarily torn to pieces, and, for all I know, eagerly consumed, by the piece of rope tied one end round the creature's neck and the other end to a metal stake by its kennel. The string was just long enough, or short enough, for the dog to be yanked backward a mere foot from my midriff. On one subsequent occasion, the last time I visited the place, Old Snarler hurled himself at us in the his usual friendly fashion and... the rope broke. The dog was even more surprised than were we at this extraordinary happening and immediately turned tail, yapping with melancholy, and retreated into its kennel.

Regarding fanfundery

BRAD FOSTER:

I think Tracy really nailed it on the head in "After Words" regarding TAFF, and all such funds and activities in fandom, with the line "I'm sure that won't happen as long as any six people are still interested..." SF fandom isn't an organized group with a president and vice president and elections and such. It's just a group of disparate people who all seem to overlap in interests enough to feel they are "a" group. But anyone can come in and out, and do what they want without asking, at any time. If I don't care for something, I don't get involved, it's as simple as that. Tracy's line summed up how this whole thing works quite well.

E. B. FROHVET:

I especially enjoyed Ms. Adams description of "...the TAFF report is the pinochle of achievement." As a general thing, however, I am less sanguine about amateur travelogues; tending to recall bad-amateur "what I did on my vacation" pieces as the downfall of the otherwise lamented *Lan's Lantern*. Not everyone has a gift for that sort of thing, I certainly don't.

Tracy interjects: I must hasten to agree. If I read one more con report in which the author tells us what she ate at every meal I may commit fanocide.

(E. B. continues, about TAFF trips) I imagine many share your view that they would like to take the trip, maybe even write about it, but have no interest in taking on the administrative burden. What's the saying, those who run for public office are the last ones who should be trusted with it. Maybe we should make up a pool of all potentially eligible candidates and draw one at random, much like jury duty: it's not something you're expected to enjoy, but clench your teeth and do your duty to the community.

DALE SPEIRS:

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund seems to have had

good luck lately with some of its winners. Lloyd and Yvonne Penney are currently plugging their report in aid of CUFF, and past winners such as Garth Spencer and R. Graeme Cameron have put out very good trip reports. CUFF is for an eastern fan to attend a western convention or vice versa. Garth holds the record for distance traveled, from Vancouver to New Brunswick. Too bad there are no Inuit or Dene fans; then we could have a north to south CUFF, although I doubt anyone could afford the airfare to Nunavut.

HARRY WARNER, JR.:

I can think of one possible explanation for a matter you bring up in your editorial, the better chance that a British TAFF winner will publish a report on the trip than an American winner. Even though all of us are familiar with distances of millions of light years and small things like parsecs in science fiction stories, I suspect that deep down, in the psyche of British and Irish and Scot fans the trip seems much longer and more impressive than it does to American fans. Residents of the British Isles are only a few hundred miles distant from any other point in their nation and several foreign nations aren't very far distant, particularly to residents of southern England. Three thousand miles to the East Coast of North America, another three thousand miles if they travel to the other side of the continent, those distances are much greater than their usual travels. A United States fan living near either the East or West Coast has probably traveled thousands of miles on trips within his own nation.

But if we combine Harry's theory with Dale's note above... we come to the conclusion that the U.S. fans are just lazy sods. Therefore: Lloyd Penney for TAFF!

LLOYD PENNEY:

Good words about trip reports...when Yvonne and I took our CUFF trip to Montreal in 1998, we decided to break new ground for CUFF, but tread old ground for other fan funds, and we wrote a trip report. There's not enough zines in Canada to serialize it, and CUFF needed the money, so the trip report is a complete stand-alone. Close to half of our print run of 60 copies is gone, so if you are interested in a trip report illustrated by Brad Foster and Teddy Harvia, and enjoyed by Robert Lichtman, than let me know...\$10, US, Canadian, Australian, don't care, and I'll send you a copy. The TAFF trip report is the pinochle of achievement? One of the better typos I've ever seen!

ERIC LINDSAY:

GUFF is in two ways in a worse position than any of the other long distance fan funds. It is the most expensive fund to run, since it covers a greater

distance than any other fan fund. It is also working from a smaller fannish base for donations, in that British fandom is only a fraction of the size of US fandom, and Australian fandom is only a fraction of the size of British fandom. It doesn't have the large fan base of the USA to draw from that TAFF and DUFF have.

One result of the higher costs and smaller base fandom means GUFF has run only once every three or so years. This feeds back into a lack of publicity. One thing we have decided to do is to attempt to have a GUFF race every year for the next four years. This means a vast increase in fund raising. To support that, it also needs a vast increase in publicity. Which brings us back to trip reports, which are after all the main way most fans hear the results of the trip....

Regarding Tracy's editorial about TAFF, I think all the fan funds need to work harder at presenting the results of each trip, by multiple means. Publicity amongst convention fans is one of the methods by which the funds could become better known, however most of the publications target the relatively small fanzine population.

Eric also notes that GUFF has an extensive website at <http://psiphi.server101.com/guff/> which includes fan fund trip reports as well as the ability to donate via PayPal and Amazon! Well done.

Regarding editorial teams

HARRY WARNER, JR.:

It's true that there aren't many examples of editorial combines of an all-male nature. There have been a few notables in the past, particularly *Cry of the Nameless*. I started out in fanzine publishing in just such an arrangement. A Maine fan, Jim Avery, and I decided to start *Spaceways* in 1938 as partners. I was to search out material and edit it, he was to assemble it into pages and do the duplicating. Alas, Jim learned the hard way about the horrors of hektography and gave up after he'd published a half-dozen or so pages.... It should be noted, however, that fanzines with two or more editors of similar importance have been scarce down through the years, whether the co-editors were all of one sex or mixed.

Regarding feminism

BRAD FOSTER:

Pamela writing about defining oneself as a "feminist" also brought up the thought of labels. The trouble with such things seems to be that people will define labels by the most outrageous exam-

ples of the group. If I say I'm a liberal, many will see me in sandals and beads, hugging trees and tossing away taxpayers money.

If I say I'm a conservative, many will see me in suit and tie, frowning at anyone who wants to have any sort of fun, booting widows and orphans into the snow. If I say I'm a feminist, many will see me...well, as a male, that would probably confuse the hell out of them, since they "know" a feminist can only be a crazy woman, probably a "lesbo", who wants to emasculate all males. You can't win with labels, but it's the only shorthand we seem to have at the present time to even try to communicate with each other. I guess I'm a liberal-conservative-humanist-feminist-masculinist-fan-pro-....hmmm, I guess I'm just Brad Foster.

RON BENNETT:

I'd go along entirely with Bill on his short article on feminism [in #2] were it not for his derogatory remark about a Doctor Who scarf. I take exception to this, primarily because I happen to be wearing one at the moment as I belt this out with obviously unappreciated frozen fingers. Listen Bodden... when you endure a North Yorkshire winter you wear what you can lay your hands on. All grist to the neck.

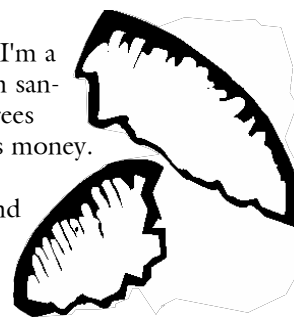
Regarding etymology

JULIE ZACHMAN

I must comment on "bubbler" [Ish #2]. The word is not as peculiar to this state as you suppose. In 1967 my Minnesota-bred family moved to Massachusetts, where the accent, the land, and even the road signs were sometimes incomprehensibly different. (What were we to make of "Thickly Settled?")

There were a lot of unfamiliar words and word usages as well. 'Bubbler' was one of them, used for 'drinking fountain' just as it is in Wisconsin. In my turn-of-the-century parochial school, with its sand-papered ramps and its transoms, coatrooms, woodwork and man-high leaky paned windows, there were a slew of other new words to be learned.

A 'press' was a tall metal cabinet, while a 'cabinet,' I learned while slinging burgers in my teen years, could be a milk shake. 'Coffee milk' was not a made-up perversion, but the beverage of choice for many fourth-graders, and available in the milk machines along with chocolate and regular. "Regular" coffee, as I also learned in the burger joint, meant



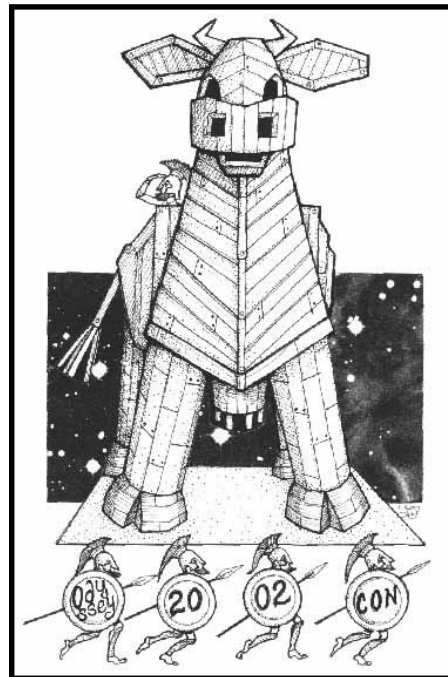
one sugar and one cream, not too light, not too sweet.

A 'pocketbook' was a purse (to really appreciate this word you have to hear the rapid way it shot out of the mouths of girls in a hurry). And the little wool vests we uniformed sixth-grade girls graduated to when suspenders were deemed too child-like (and not sufficiently modest) were called 'weskits.' I was always mystified by the origin of 'weskit' until I encountered a form of it in a Victorian novel, apostrophed down from "waistcoat." Ah.

WAHF: Catherine Mintz, Mark Proskey ("ah, sweet mimeo"), William Breiding, Harry Andrushak, Henry Welch

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What's that cow doing there? The logos above and below were created by Georgie (Resident Artist) for a Madison convention called Odyssey Con. We must say, her designs make particularly fine T-shirts. (Jae's son Matthew wears his religiously.) Next year's OddCon, April 12-14 2002, will feature writers Timothy Zahn and David B. Coe with gaming legend Gary Gygax, among others. For more information—or a T-shirt—see <http://www.venture-1.com/~oddcon/index.html>.



After WORDS

BY TRACY BENTON

Well, at least E.B. Frohvet and I aren't feuding. Hey, since September 11th, I'll take my good news where I can get it. E.B. and I have settled that while we don't necessarily agree on some aspects of fanzines, we're neither of us trying to make trouble for the other. (He is feuding with somebody else, I believe, but my information may be out of date.)

The fan feud is of course stuff of legend. I think it must be a little like the Civil War—interesting to read about later, with no annoying hardships like blood, gore, or severed limbs to detract from your enjoyment. I'm sure that many people who've been part of a fan feud wouldn't classify it as "fun." But I bet there are those who rather reveled in it. For example, their lettercols were rife with controversy! No problem filling up space there. One wrote heated letters to others' fanzines, too, I suppose, defending one's position and standing firmly on the side of... well.. whatever.

The underlying theme of our issue this time around—if not explicitly stated—was "things are not as they seem." Quite some time ago in the Turbo-Charged Party Animal Apa, I had the great amusement of watching a fake fan feud unfold (try saying that quickly, then wipe off this page with a rag). The fake feud went on between... let us preserve their scant privacies... "Mr. Iowa" and the "Ohio State Kid." They clashed with fake insults and Big Ten taunts. A bystander drew fake battle maps. Non-combatants took sides and lambasted the opposition. If I recall correctly, a few even piously declared neutrality and offered their homes as fannish sites of parlay. It was all in good fun. In fact, I'm returning to the TurboApa next month, and a few weeks ago I jokingly said to Jeanne Gomoll, "I know! Let's have a nice feud to get things rolling!"

That just doesn't seem so funny now. Seems rather stupid, in fact. But I'm going through what I think most of the country is going through; I'm overly sensitive to things that were funny on September 10th, then weren't on September 11th. I have to find that middle ground again. For example, I have this habit, picked up from Daffy Duck, of saying, "Shoot me now!" when things are going badly. Now when I say it, I flinch. A lot of people

are going to get shot in Afghanistan. Should I have said that? Before I tell a joke, I review it in my mind: who will this offend? Not because of who the joke pokes fun at—but because of painful associations it might have for people. I used to tell this one: "Two drunks are sitting in a bar at the top of a skyscraper...." Ooops. Skyscraper? Not funny anymore.

You know who is still pretty funny, though? George W. Bush. I really don't agree with the folks who say, "Ooh, there's a war on, don't make fun of the president, don't question what he does." Well, the heck with that. If he doesn't do anything dumb, he won't be made fun of. If he does something dumb, it's fair game.

A fake conflict, though, with battle maps and rules of engagement, just seems to be in poor taste. Speaking of which, what will the re-enactors do? Is it a good idea to play pretend with the Battle of Somewhere while we have forces deployed overseas? I don't know. The lines are all blurry. It's suddenly fashionable to like New York, and that hasn't been true since the 70's. It's suddenly the done thing to pay homage to firefighters; this hasn't been true for some time in Madison, because we have several being dismissed on drug charges. More things have changed in our social fabric than I can hope to follow.

And in the mean time, I'll just stick to mailing comments. And the skeleton who walks into a bar and asks for a beer and a mop.

