

Wabe 6

Cover goes here

Wabe #6, January 2003, is a zine under the editorial Three Wise Editors of Jae Leslie Adams (gold), Bill Bodden (frankincense), and Tracy Benton (cute little sleeper with Winnie the Pooh on it). Thanks go to Maureen Kincaid Speller as our U.K. mailing agent. Vote for TAFF! Vote for DUFF! Members fwa.

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Art credits: Cover by Dave Hicks; page 3 by Jae Leslie Adams; page 6 by Alexis Gilliland; pages 10, 22 by Brad Foster; pages 11-14 by Georgie Schnobrich; page 15 by Mike Peterson; lettercol logo by Jeanne Gomoll, page 20. Dover Clip Art, page 4.

Wabe is available for the usual or editorial whim. Locs, submissions, and art may be sent to any of us. If so inclined, you could even email all of us at jaeleslie@charter.net, bill-zilla@mailbag.com, and benton@uwalumni.com. Please note a COA: Tracy and Bill now live together, abandoning their quest for the title of "Longest Dating but Not Living Together Fan Couple." For trades, a copy to Jae and a copy to the Bill and Tracy Chaos Center would be appreciated:

Jae Leslie Adams, 621 Spruce Street, Madison, WI 53715

Fore WORDS

BY JAE LESLIE ADAMS

It's the dark of the year, but we're determined to get this issue out before it gets much lighter. Tracy and I went to Novacon, and then I hardly had time to do more than make a list of all the art galleries I went to in Britain before it was the holidays. Things come up. Stuff happens. So it goes.

We thought food would be a nice subject, something everyone is interested in, but can politely differ as to tastes, a really visceral topic you might say. What do fans eat? what do fans cook? where do fans go when they eat out? These are matters that often come up in fanwriting. I thought we might have had something about baking cookies, or some Work Hell of food service, or table manners, or (ranging somewhat afield) legendary tales of bachelor squalor, or why fans in Milwaukee eat blue food and drink Blue Stuff. Clearly we have only scratched the surface.

But then the TAFF train came along again, with a whole slew of candidates this year, and took over a whole bunch of pages. It is really tough for me to figure out who to vote for on this one, and I admit I *nominated* Randy, when I thought I had pretty much sworn off. Then I found out about Orange Mike's candidacy. He's a Milwaukee fan who I have been seeing at local cons for ages (it's really pretty hard to miss him) and having friendly conversations about books, and politics, and religion, and clothing choices. Then there's Colin Hinz too, who I first met ten years ago at the last Madison Corflu, who is (like Orange Mike) a former member of Madison's *Turboapa* and another sterling fellow (okay so Mike is more coppery) to talk to about art and music, my favorites. And then Curt Phillips, who I have only seen online, a kind and friendly fellow from an entire region of the fannish country that I hardly know, who is very interesting on history and traditional folkways and health care systems and I would really like to meet him and what a fine opportunity this would be! So anyway, it's going to be great.

O happy new year, that has such people in it.



The Ultimate Fannish Dining Experience

BY MAX

They say that when you're first getting into convention going you should go alone. This way you are forced to speak to the people you encounter and you can't run off to your room and mutter to the companion you brought along about how nobody is talking to you and you both wish you hadn't bothered coming. A great ice breaker is to offer to buy people drinks, or to go along to a group meal. So they say.

It doesn't always work out. A big group was assembling at Seccord, I had no plans for the evening and thought I would try joining them. The details are hazy, now, and I don't particularly want to remember it all too well but inviting myself into the party sort of worked. Sort of. Once I got over the embarrassment of finding it was a reasonably closed invite for the friends of somebody or other who was celebrating his birthday. "But you're welcome to tag along anyway," they said, awkwardly. Then they pointed out that the table had been pre-booked for whatever number they were expecting but no doubt we could pull up another chair. Getting there was hassle. There were only just enough cars to go around and I wound up squished into a back seat and unable to get to the seatbelts.

Then, when we got there it turned out that, no, they couldn't pull up another chair, the table really was full. Of course, nobody was going to take me back to the hotel, they wanted to eat. Thankfully, at this point I spotted the vaguely familiar faces of Yvonne Rowse and Ian Sorenson amongst the other diners and pulled the inviting-myself-along trick again. I seated myself at their table, I stopped feeling entirely unwelcome and I ordered food. Then they pointed out that they'd love to stay and chat, but they actually had to rush back to the hotel because Yvonne was on a panel shortly.

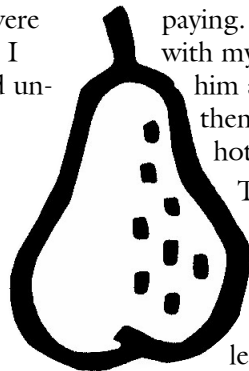
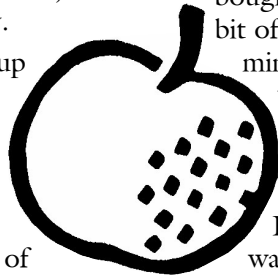
My food arrived, I realised that if I ate quickly I could get a lift back and if I didn't then I would be left sitting alone. I bolted my dinner and attempted to pay.

This confused the staff inordinately. They tried to charge me for Yvonne and Ian's food as well as my own, despite that already having been bought. Then they failed to figure out which bit of the bigger order had been mine for five minutes. Then, when I told them exactly

what I'd had and offered them the money for it, a waiter took my cash and wandered away. I'd spent something like 12 pounds and I handed over 15.

He didn't return for a long time. I waited and waited, then waited some more and eventually decided enough was enough and I'd kept Ian and Yvonne waiting far too long already. They didn't deserve a tip but they could have the change. I left the restaurant and we wandered back towards the carpark while I told the others what had held me up. We hadn't gone far when another waiter came rushing out, rather agitated, and started accusing me of not paying. The problem was settled when the guy with my money reappeared on the scene behind him and we left them to sort it out amongst themselves as we made our way back to the hotel.

The panel Yvonne had had to rush back for was pushed back by an hour or so. I was vaguely annoyed but offered Ian and Yvonne drinks and we chatted a little before parting ways. I felt that at least I had made a couple of contacts, if not friends, within the convention attendees. At least it would be an anecdote to talk about in future and meeting me had been memorable. I was wrong. Months later, Yvonne unexpectedly turned up at the First Thursday London group meeting. I wandered over and asked her something about fanzines. "Sorry," she said, "Who are



Because I Can

BY MAUREEN KINCAID SPELLER

“Why would you *do* that?” someone asked, when I happened to mention one day that I make my own tortillas. There’s a long answer that involves the shocking lack of tortillerias in Folkestone, and the lamentable quality of the packaged tortillas sold in the local supermarket. There’s a smart answer which goes, “why *would-n’t* I?” And then there’s the honest answer, “because I can.”

“Because I can,” covers a lot of ground, from the practical (turning chicken carcasses into stock) to the faintly improbable (those tortillas, for instance), taking in curry-making and bread-baking, to name two current favourites, along the way. It’s about trying out new cuisines, new recipes, new techniques and, sometimes, new gadgets too.

Partly, I do it to exercise my intellectual curiosity. As some people do crosswords, so I read recipe books and think about how to spatchcock a poussin (which I haven’t yet done, but I’ve got some poultry shears and I’m not afraid to use them) or how to make ravioli (I have a pasta machine, and fresh pasta is next on my list of foods to try). I’m mostly a self-taught cook and I’ve educated myself by reading and by watching TV cookery shows. Consequently, cooking is very much an intellectual and analytical exercise so far as I’m concerned.

Also, I like to replicate my favourite cuisines at home where possible, which is why I cook so much Indian food but I also like to experiment with the more complex oriental cuisines—I can spend hours in Chinese supermarkets, just looking at all the ingredients on sale, trying to work out what to do with them. And I am very curious about things like yoghurt and soft cheese, and sweet-making, and

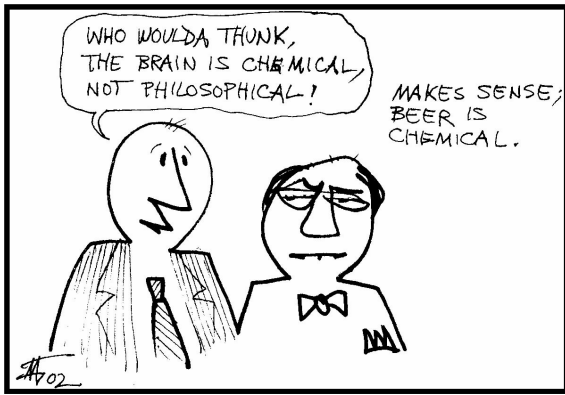
I also cook like this because I like to work with my hands when I get a chance. I spend most days working at a desk, trying to disentangle tortuous grammatical constructions; after a session of that, it’s a real pleasure to spend time making bread and then filling the house with the irresistible smell of baking. Or to spend time roasting and grinding spices for a curry. I like to

imagine myself as an alchemist, adding a little of this, a little of that, looking for the perfect garam masala mix. Making mayonnaise is a wonderful occupation for afternoons when there’s a good play on the radio, and I can beat eggs, drip oil and listen attentively to the broadcast.

I also cook like this because I love variety. Paul Kincaid and I both come from families that adhered religiously to an unvarying weekly routine: cold meat on Monday, sausages on Tuesday, and so on. I can’t speak for Paul but after many years of this unremitting diet, I wanted a change, lots of change. Crunch, texture, pulses, grains, vegetables, different flavours; anything that wasn’t cooked meat with gravy. Cooking for myself seemed to be the best way to achieve that. I know ready-made meals are a great boon to the world but to me they always taste like meat in thickener-laden gloop and I feel cheated after I’ve eaten one. I cook as much for the freezer as for the table, so as long as I remember to defrost something if I’m not planning to cook I can always have a home-cooked meal at the end of the day.

But those are all the glib versions of “because I can.” There are other, darker versions. Every time I bake bread, I subconsciously cock a snook at my mother, every time I roll pastry I’m subconsciously thumbing my nose at my sister, and every time I cook something outside our family repertoire of approved foods, I am gleefully jumping up and down on their prejudices and preconceptions.

I cook because I’m not supposed to be able to cook. My mother taught me some rudimentary stuff involving eggs, milk or water, and a pan, which was called scrambled eggs or omelette, depending on whether it was in curds or flat. This saved her having to get up and cook breakfast for her children each day but it was, frankly, disgusting, and I am to this day reluctant to make or to eat ‘omelette’ even though I now know how to make them properly. I learned a certain amount by observation but was rarely let loose in the family kitchen, except when my mother was away. In fact, between us, my father



and I could turn out an entire roast chicken dinner, and suet pudding for afters, but this, mysteriously, was not Cooking and was never noticed. I'd been assigned the role of "the clever one," and clever ones apparently don't cook. If this is true, I've never been entirely clear how clever ones are supposed to eat. Presumably we dine out at restaurants every night or else at high table, or are rich enough to afford a housekeeper. Or, tragically, we have to exist on convenience foods and are therefore objects to be pitied. School home economics lessons were a nightmare; my mother criticised successes and failures with impartiality, and railed at my teacher for wasting time on things that we didn't eat at home and I therefore didn't need to know about. My failures were discussed with neighbours—however would I manage when I left home; I was clever but useless around the house.

When I did finally leave home, when my family visited, they would bring food with them, because they "knew" I wouldn't be able to produce anything edible for them to eat. My sister, in particular, was convinced that I could not make pastry, and would bring sausage rolls to family tea parties for me. In fact, I actually made much better pastry than she did, because my hands are much cooler, but my sister was "the one who can cook," and appearances had to be kept up.

It was a relief to be finally alone in my own kitchen, no longer being watched over by a critical family, but instead cooking for an appreciative partner. I'm fond of remarking that Paul Kincaid is a monument to my cooking, but when you're cooking for someone who actively enjoys eating what you're cooking, you can go mad for a while. I went mad for a long time. I was determined to do everything my mother did, more of it and better. I was going to be an

earth-mother, double-income, no kids ever, but with a very well-stocked store cupboard, filled with jars of pickles and preserves, cooking wonderful meals for my friends. My table would always be full, with crowds of people gathered round it, enjoying my food. *My food!* I would make everything lovingly from scratch, by hand, hold down a job; had domestic goddess been invented at that point, I'd have been one of those too.

At that point, "cooking from scratch" was a fetish rather than something I did for pleasure. I creamed my sugar and butter by hand, beat my egg whites and sugar to stiff peaks by hand, chopped almonds by hand, because that's what my mother did. Actually, she didn't, but I was going to do everything so much better. I had wild plans for preserving fruit, pickling onions, making syrups and jams. I've no idea now why I thought this was so important but I presume that in some way this would have demonstrated that I was a good housewife.

Mercifully, I did eventually calm down, remembered that I also owned an electric beater and that using it was not a criminal offence. Paul bought me a food processor and I stopped spending hours chopping and blending things by hand. I got rid of the piles of jam jars I'd accumulated, and reminded myself that Paul didn't like pickles, so was I planning to eat everything myself? Gradually I stopped cooking just to prove a point—what *was* the point when the person I was trying to prove myself to wasn't there to see it—and began to cook for my own pleasure. Well, mostly. I may not cook to prove a point but there's always a moment of thinking "ha, bet you didn't think I could do *this*, did you?"

And yet, there are beneficial residues of family philosophy still guiding my cooking. I abhor waste of any kind. I don't like to see food thrown away and I like to make the most of everything if I possibly can. I compost vegetable peelings, and throw waste washing water on the garden. Cold meat goes into sandwiches or else into rissoles and pies. I feed food scraps to the worm bin (yes, and to the cats too). The ends of loaves are turned into breadcrumbs and either frozen or dried, the latter finding its way onto fried chicken later, or else I make croutons for soup. The soup comes from the stock I've made from chicken carcasses (these days I find it more economical to buy and joint chickens for


various recipes) which I store in the freezer until I need it. I love home-made soup and make it most weeks.

Ironically, the stock pot has become my symbol of being a good earth-mother type. I make stock from the chicken carcasses, from the pheasant we have at Christmas, from the ducks we tend to favour for special occasions. I've learned that swedes and leeks are excellent additions to the stock pot, while potato makes the liquid go cloudy. I've learned that stock pots should simmer gently rather than boil furiously (though if this does happen, it's not the end of the world). And I've learned to do fancy things with raw meat, egg whites and finely chopped vegetables to clear the stock for avgolemono soup, a Kincaid favourite. I chop onions, sweat them in butter, add the vegetables, add the stock. Sometimes, when it's cooked, I use my "blender on a stick" to puree it to the correct consistency. Much as I love the complex cookery, and still do it when I have the time, there is something tremendously satisfying about sitting down to a meal of home-made soup, accompanied by home-made sourdough bread, knowing that I made this myself. At the heart of it, the impulse is still the same: because I can.



Timeline of Fannish Dining

BY TRACY BENTON

1. Young and impoverished: which places deliver?
 2. Youngish: what's close? Gotta get back for the masquerade/ games/ Howard Waldrop reading.
 3. Less young: where can we eat with a party of 14, two vegetarians?
 4. Not so young: where can we eat with a party of 6, one lactose-intolerant and one gluten-free?
 5. Respected: what's close? Can't go far in a short dinner break.
 6. Revered: which places deliver?
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Grandma's Secret Swedish Pastry

BY JEANNE GOMOLL

Editorial note: I hope most of our readers have heard of the James Tiptree, Jr, Award for science fiction and fantasy that explores gender-bending topics. The award (which is juried and provides a cash prize to the winner) has had a lot of different fund-raising efforts over the years, but surely the most famous came from a joke made by author Pat Murphy: bake sales. In connection with this, Madison fans Jeanne Gomoll and Diane Martin edited a couple of cookbooks to sell in support of the award. These are notable not only for the tasty recipes they contain but also for the unique combination of personal-anecdote writing with cookery instructions. Here is a reprint from the first, *The Bakery Men Don't See*, still available from the award's literary council. Contact Scott Custis at 2825 Union Street, Madison WI 53704 or see www.tiptree.org for more information if you are interested.

Some recipes really should be prefaced with this bit of subjective advice. Right after they instruct us to “heat oven to 375 F,” cookbooks should add: “Maintain Positive Attitude.” The admonishment is usually omitted because the cooks who regularly publish their recipes are those who’ve long ago discarded their measuring cups and spoons; they measure by intuition. You can’t get much more of a Positive Attitude than these cooks possess. But they’ve maintained a Positive Attitude for so long that they’ve forgotten that some of us sometimes doubt.... For example, I have a friend whose fudge crystallizes whenever a particular person occupies the same room as the stove and the cooking butter-sugar-chocolate mixture. Without a Positive Attitude, her fudge flops each time that person enters the premises.

The cooking confidence of women in my family took a severe beating during the curious episode of Grandma’s Secret Swedish Pastry recipe. This recipe had been passed down from mother to daughter through several generations in my family. “Keep this recipe a secret,” my grandmother said. “I will,” I promised. (Of course, now you are all bound by this oath as well: keep this recipe a secret, OK?) This wonderful buttery dessert was my favorite birthday choice for many years and later it became my brunch specialty. My mother and grandmother had both made it countless times, with never a hitch until the day my cousin tried out the recipe for the first time. She called my mom—the cooking wizard in our

family—and reported that her pastry had failed to rise. Mom went over the recipe step by step with my cousin but concluded that she had added the ingredients in the correct proportion and order, and that she had followed all directions without mistake. Nevertheless, it had failed to rise. My cousin noted that the pastry tasted as wonderful as it always had, but that it just didn’t look the same. “Hmmm,” said my mom. “It must be a fluke. I’m sure it’ll turn out fine for you next time.”

The next time my mom made Grandma’s Secret Swedish Pastry, her pastry failed to rise, just like my cousin’s had done. The weirdness continued and doubt was sown. My mom told my grandmother about the phenomenon and even though Grandma’s pastry had always turned out perfectly, the pastry Grandma baked after that conversation with Mom failed to rise. Then my pastry failed: it emerged from the oven a sad, shallow pastry without its usual lovely peaks. Everyone in the family has our various theories as to why this sometimes happens (and sometimes does not). Mine is that “large eggs” were commercially redefined as smaller sized eggs around the time when the pastries mysteriously began to fail, and I add an extra egg to my version of the recipe. Since I began adding the extra egg, my pastry has turned out perfectly every time.

But who knows, maybe it isn’t the extra egg. Maybe it’s a Positive Attitude....

Grandma's Secret Swedish Pastry

PASTRY:

1 cup flour

1/2 cup butter

dash salt

1 tablespoon water

1/2 cup butter

1 cup water

1 cup flour

3 or 4 large eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375° F. Maintain Positive Attitude.

Combine with pastry cutter 1 cup flour, 1/2 cup butter, and dash salt. Add: 1 tablespoon water. Roll into rope-like shape and then press onto a greased cookie pan until it has a uniform thickness of about 1/8 inch. Grandma liked to lay the rope onto the pan in an S-shaped path—signifying “Swedish”—but I usually press it into a vaguely rectangular shape. (In honor of Canada Day, it was once pressed into the shape of that country by my father, who favors innovative baking, and the frosting was colored green, blue, and white to indicate land area, oceans, Hudson Bay, and glaciers.) Creative shapes are purely optional. Put the base aside while you proceed with the next step.

In a saucepan over a medium heat, heat until the mixture boils: 1/2 cup butter and 1 cup water. Quickly add and stir thoroughly with a wooden spoon: 1 cup flour. Remove the mixture from the heat. Rev up your Positive Attitude for this

part: One at a time, add 3 or 4 large eggs. This takes a strong forearm. Mix each egg until the stuff changes in texture, and becomes slick and begins to pull away from the sides of the saucepan. The third or fourth egg should fail to make the mixture transform in this manner. The final mixture should not look slick or pull away from the sides of the saucepan. After mixing it thoroughly into the batter, if the third egg still leaves the batter in this condition, add the fourth egg. Failing to do so will probably result in a tasty dessert that nonetheless is missing the airy texture which gives the pastry its height. Finally, add and stir into the mixture: 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Spread mixture on top of flour-butter base.

Bake at 375 F for 1 hour. Then turn off the oven and leave in the oven for another 5 minutes. Do not peek! When you remove the pastry it will be about 3” high and have lovely peaks. It will subside somewhat as it cools. After it has cooled, make a butter frosting.

BUTTER FROSTING

6 tablespoons butter

2 cups powdered sugar

1 tablespoon milk

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/3 cup chopped or sliced nuts

Mix butter and sugar, then add milk and vanilla. Frost the top of the pastry and sprinkle with 1/3 cup chopped or sliced nuts. My mom favors chopped filberts, but those are difficult to find and so I usually use sliced almonds.

“I'M ENGLISH. I'M CONTRACTUALLY OBLIGED TO TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER.” —MAX

Middle WORDS

BY BILL BODDEN

As you may have heard previously, Tracy and I have moved in together, sharing Tracy's palatial condo/townhouse on the West Side of Madison. As many of our fannish friends know, combining households is no simple task. For instance, there's the question of whose dishes are better, and should the rest be disposed of or put into storage in case we need them later?

And of course there's the question of the books, CDs and DVDs. Specifically, what to do with duplicate copies—items that both of you possess but sadly cannot find room to accommodate. One copy must be culled to allow the fullest, most breathtaking representation of the household's entire collection to be displayed. This brings up an interesting point: the level of confidence in one's relationship. Saying "No, I want to keep my copy as well" can easily be interpreted to mean "I think we're going to be breaking up soon, so I'd rather not bother." Thin and treacherous ice to be sure. We won't even discuss duplicate fanzines; please don't ask, either. Naturally, the games quotient around the house has suddenly increased by an exponential degree—the price of living with a "Games Industry Professional" (and if that doesn't sound pompous, I don't know what does).

But the real, true horror of cohabiting is finding out what your S.O. **really** thinks of your taste in various things. Points that seemed endearing or charming can only be taken as annoying when both live under the same roof. Take, for example, and mind you this is purely a hypothetical example, clothing. Hearing the phrase "You aren't going to wear **that**, are you?" out of the blue can make any fully-grown and basically self-confident man cringe in pure terror.

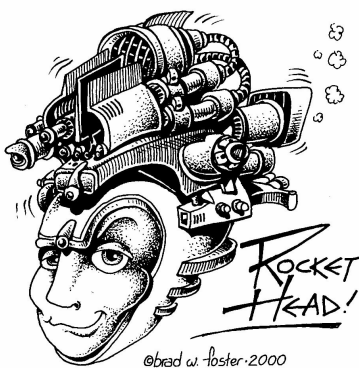
I admit that I have co-habited before, and admit also that it was something of a failure. However, experience is the best teacher, and I look for-

ward to seeing my mistakes coming this time, so I can fully appreciate their monumental stupidity before the fact.

Which brings me to the point, the focus, of this issue of *Wabe*: Food. I love to eat, and Tracy and I have been learning more about cooking for ourselves now that restaurant dining is a less desirable option. We've been watching a program on the Food Network called *Good Eats* hosted by Alton Brown. Alton is an unassuming chef, a TV man by trade who learned about cooking, rather than the other way around. His presentations often include a pastiche of some film genre or other, and are amusing as well as educational, as he generally takes time to explain **why** doing Thing A is a mistake and will cause poor results in the finished product. He does this in a way that is neither condescending nor overly technical, making him easily the most

accessible TV chef around. His "Butter on Trial" episode, done in the manner of a TV trial drama, lays to rest many of the myths surrounding butter's reputed lack of healthful qualities. As much as we'd love to try some of his recipes, we have been unsuccessful. Food Network is stingy with information; only the most recent recipes appear on the website, so if you didn't download those fabulous pineapple-themed dishes from several weeks ago, you are out of luck.

That's the great thing about fanzines; they stick around a bit longer, even if only in PDF form. We're resisting the temptation to include scads of recipes in this issue, just because it would eat up too much space, and hey; Jae, Tracy and I don't have limitless supplies of ready cash to print and mail a massive cookbook of a fanzine. Anyway, much of our current wherewithal is going towards marshalling the resources of Corflu, happening in Madison Wisconsin in late-April. Y'all stop by for some ice cream, y'hear?



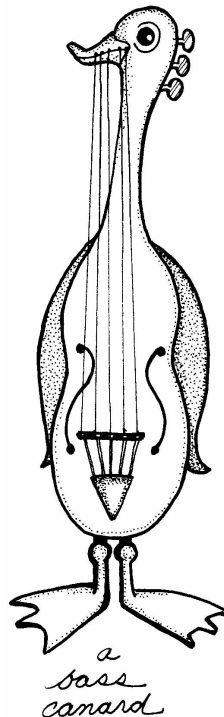
Novacon, Immersion Technique

BY TRACY BENTON

Jae Leslie Adams can be a very sneaky person. Through tantalizing remarks, wistful references, and (most importantly) bringing back large stacks of British fanzines, she brainwashed me into going to Novacon this year.

I'm usually a practical, organized, conservative person who wants to weigh everything before deciding to do something. But somehow, after WisCon in May, I suddenly found myself saying to Jae, "Can I go to Novacon with you?" I couldn't afford the money or the time off for a trip to the UK, I just really wanted to go!¹

The good thing about traveling with Jae is that she's an extremely laid-back person. That's also the bad thing about traveling with Jae... she's not in a hurry to get her plane tickets, for example, and her response to the question of how to get from Heathrow to Birmingham was "I think there's a bus. I'm pretty sure that's what I did before." Of course this freaked me out entirely. Luckily some of the kind British fen who check in at LiveJournal gave me some good advice, like avoiding London train stations if we wanted to keep our sanity, et cetera. As it turned out, after a totally uneventful flight from O'Hare, I followed Jae obediently through Heathrow to the bus station, and there was a bus listed for Walsall. Unfortunately it was full. So was the next one. We would be looking at an eight hour wait for a bus. We stared at the ticket clerk, flummoxed, when she suddenly told us that if we got on a bus to Victoria Station *this instant* we could get a bus to Walsall from there. A good omen! And we got a lightning tour of a few bits of London on the way to make our con-



nection, Jae identifying the things we'd just driven past at a breakneck pace. Unfortunately, the ride between London and Walsall was less pleasant for me. Running on no sleep, I had to survive (a) the motion of the bus spinning around roundabouts, (b) the people in front of us talking *without pause for four hours*, and (c) the pervasive smell of their spearmint gum. All this added up to quite a torture session, and I was never so happy to get off of a bus in my life. We gratefully collapsed at the Quality Hotel.²

The next day we wandered around and blundered right into volunteering to help stuff packets. This was both urgent—as some publications still needed folding and stapling and people were starting to turn up to register—and funny. The funny part came in because we were collating, stapling, and stuffing on the tables for the dealers' room, which was being set up as we worked. As you fiddled with stacks of A4 paper someone would suddenly seize the table you were sitting at and begin to move it. There was nothing for it but to frantically grab up everything and move to a different table. I was displaced at least four times. (Here I am also restraining myself from commenting on the totally incomprehensible Novacon custom of arranging reg packets by number rather than alphabetically and insisting on marrying numbered publications to numbered reg packets. Got it? I am *not* commenting, really I am not.) Another amusing bit was when a committee member appealed to us for a pair of scissors. We looked at each other: two Americans, a Swede, a German, and an Irishman. We all came on planes! Of course we had no scissors! This was my first introduction, incidentally, to Irish

¹One of the many fine fanzines I got at Novacon was Banana Wings 18. In it, Michael Abbott describes the top ten marks of a bad con report. While this was, overall, a great article, I feel that Michael is, well, a little rigorous in his expectations of a con report. Just because I'm that kind of an annoying person, I thought I'd make sure to break all ten rules in this article, and let you know which ones I'm on. For example, I'm currently breaking rule 9, using "a bizarre framing device for your conreport that overshadows it completely."
²Rule 1 of bad con reports, "describing your journey to the convention."

fan James Bacon whose presence would have such an impact on the weekend in general. I should have known what was coming when I saw him drink a pint of beer as though it were water—and with no apparent affect. I haven't seen drinking like that since... well, since I met some of my ex-husband's Irish relatives, come to think of it. A stereotype fails to shatter.

The guest of honor for the convention was author Ian McDonald. Unfortunately I had not had much of luck getting his works from the local library system—I'd gotten a copy of his early novel *Desolation Road* but hadn't actually had time to read it all. Jae had a few of his books with her, and she loaned me a collection of his short stories for during-convention reading. We decided to relax in the lounge area of the hotel to read. (A note here—I don't think I've ever seen a more pleasant bar and lounge area in a hotel. While this would actually be a detriment for an American con, because people would be torn between the free food in the con-suite and the attractive tables and couches in the bar, it's perfect for a British con with no hospitality area. The only drawbacks I saw to this hotel were the small number of restaurants in walking distance and the extreme variances of temperature between the rooms. The programming room felt like Alaska and the bar like Arizona. Oh, and they were always out of toast. But enough con-runners' gossip.) We hadn't much time to read, though, before people we knew began to arrive, and I regret to say I never got any farther on the works of the honoree. I will say, though, that his narrative voice, with strong rhythmic cadences and creative use of vocabulary, reminded me of such authors as R. A. Lafferty and Cordwainer Smith. I did manage to buy a copy of a short novel of his at the con that I hope to get to soon.³

Before long we had gotten into the swing of meeting and greeting, and I was introduced to the longest strings of Steves and Tonys I've ever met in my life. I admit that I'm terrible at names. Because you are going to be henceforth



inundated with “someone remarked,” I hereby apologize in advance to everyone I met at Novacon whose names I can no longer remember a mere month after the convention. Luckily Maureen Kincaid Speller and Paul Kincaid found us early (Paul's comment on seeing the McDonald works we were reading: “Look! They're swotting!”) so I didn't feel as bewildered as I usually do in a crowd of strangers.

There were quite a few familiar faces floating around, including Max, Tobes Valois, and Ang Rosin. I'll claim Ang as a familiar face as I recognized her from her tiny picture on LiveJournal.⁴ But in the cruel trick that conventions so often play on one, I barely got to talk to her at the con. I did get to meet two of my favorite fan artists, though: Dave Hicks and Sue Mason. Judging by how they tend to fall in the Nova awards, a lot of other people share my opinion. Dave, who was working on the convention, seemed to be fairly vibrating with energy. (Or maybe nicotine.) Sue was set up in the dealer's room with her pyrographic wares; I was excited to see her wood-burned art as I'd heard a good bit about it. (As I might have known, I found myself incapable of leaving the con without a piece of it.)

Eventually we filed into opening ceremonies.⁵ The thing which stands out about this event could only be described as a Landmark of Human Endeavor: the Astral Pole Challenge. Steve-in-Programming announced that as the Americans had pronounced bafflement while trying to comprehend this classic act of British fandom that he had arranged for a demonstration. An energetic and flexible Brit, suitably togged out with lycra spandex and a broomstick, proceeded to... er... hmm. Now I see why I never understood the Astral Pole from written description. It's like the White Knight getting over the fence in *Through the Looking Glass*. Suffice to say that this volunteer (who I think was neither a Steve nor a Tony... perhaps a Neil?) was an old pro at holding the broomstick first in front of him, then crawling through his arms and the stick,

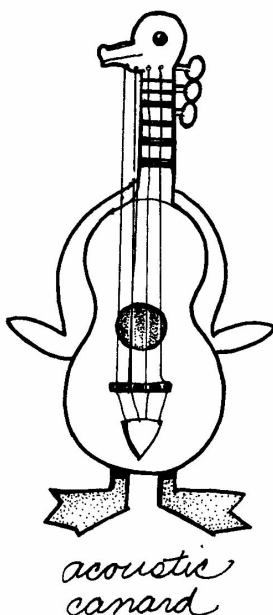
³Rule 5 of bad con reports, “listing all the books you bought that weekend.” Okay, that's not *all* the books I bought. But I didn't buy nearly as many as I wanted to as I was low on extra space in my luggage.

⁴Rule 4, “half-describing or alluding off-handedly to something in a way that doesn't make sense if you weren't there.” I won't go into great detail about LiveJournal here. It's an online journaling community of which I am a member. It's very useful for keeping in touch with people who are far away.

⁵Rule 8, “events are described in strict order.” I'm doing my best on this but my mind is not a linear place.

then crawling through in a different way, such that the broomstick did a total orbit of his body. It looked quite impossible for anyone without orangutans in his ancestry. I do hope my pictures will turn out. I also hope that sufficient alcohol at the New Year's party in Madison may convince someone with long arms and a short body to try it. The remainder of the evening dissolves in my memory into a bewildering kaleidoscope of accents. (I'm sure this is at least partially the fault of Iain Banks.) As I became more tired I became less able to decipher what people were saying, so... off to bed.

Next morning I hurled myself out of bed at a furious pace as I knew I'd keel over rapidly without breakfast. (Jae was totally unconscious at this point.) Unfortunately I'd failed to note that breakfast was served for an extra hour on the weekends. Much virtual slapping of forehead occurred. I also discovered one of the few other failings of the hotel: their utter inability to keep up with the toast demands of the masses.⁶ And after my internal reaction to some of what I'd eaten on Thursday,⁷ I wanted toast! Toast, by god! And a glass of water... which also proved impossible to get. (Tea, easy... also juice, coffee, etc. Water, forget it.) Escaping this breakfast nightmare I walked all of four feet before being waved over to a group of people and getting to meet, among others, Sue Jones, publisher of *Tortoise*. Sue turned out to be a fairly quiet person given to suddenly coming out with amazingly funny remarks. I was describing how Madison fans Hope Kiefer and Karl Hailman had been searching for a name for their expected baby: boy's name, can't end with an "n", a noun. They had rejected Cooper when it was defined as a barrel-maker. Wouldn't work, I reported, since Kiefer also means a barrel-maker. Sue Jones: "Oh, that would have been a double-barreled name." Good heavens. Watch out for that one. She's dangerous.



I spent the remainder of that morning shopping. I felt myself lucky to make the acquaintance of another of the Plokta cabal, Giulia De Cesare, and her fabulous hand-made jewelry. I spent a bit more than I meant to, but then I couldn't get the necklace and *not* the earrings, now could I? I chatted with whoever seemed to feel like it. And the more people I talked to, the more I realized there was quite a plague of unemployment going around. It seemed that every third person I spoke to had lost his or her job recently. Awful! I nearly stopped trying to put in plugs for Corflu, since I so often got answers like, "Love to, if I've managed to find work by then." Then there was Claire Brialey. I bought a book off that table, and noticed that Claire seemed quite miserably sick... so I ask you, *why* did I let her give me change? Undoubtedly the British germs that laid me low for two weeks after I got home came into my possession with those couple of coins. (Cue the heavy foreshadowing music, maestro!) But that's okay. She gave me a fanzine, too.

I had every intention of going to a lot of programming that day, but I ran into Jae as we both trooped back to the room, and suddenly the idea of a nap seemed, well, irresistible. I spent most of the con weekend doing three things: conversing, reading fanzines, and sleeping. This leaves me in the embarrassing position of being totally unable to tell you much of anything about the program. Sorry. Later that evening, after dinner, I did make it to a portion of the "rebroadcast" of the Ian Sorensen parody *The Booze Brothers*. I mostly wanted to see how this version differed from the one I saw at Corflu Valentine this year. I liked this one better, in part due to the great improvement in sound and visual effects. I have to admit it bothered me a little that the entire play was about running the next Corflu but nobody thought to mention where the next Corflu actually will be. Might have been nice.

⁶Rule 2, "talking about what you eat." Honestly, what would be the fun of a con report if no dining experiences were ever mentioned?

⁷Rule 7, "over-sharing, but in the scatological sense." I simply refuse to go farther on this one!

⁸Baby boy Griffin Parker Hailman was subsequently born on December 4. Ten pounds. (Yes, Griffin ends with an "n". As Hope would put it: get over it, okay?)

⁹Rule 6, "over-sharing." I'm sure you didn't want to know I was all pouty about this.

Oh well.⁹

Next morning I was once again amazed at how people who had been up talking and partying all night still got up in time for breakfast (and apparently ate all the toast, because it was gone again). I had a great deal of fun suddenly realizing that the person I was talking to at any given moment was someone whose fanzines I'd received or who had left me comments on my LiveJournal. Some were simply very old friends, like Christina Lake, whom I had originally met on her TAFF trip... or Lillian Edwards, whom I had originally met on her TAFF trip... or Maureen, whom I had originally met... you get the idea. Pam Wells also fell into the former TAFF winner category. It was lovely to catch up with British fandom's Shoe Goddess. I had been scooped up and carried along to a party in someone's room and was very happy to sit down and talk to her. That party was a very interesting collection of people. At one point conversation stopped dead when Bridget Bradshaw exclaimed, "You've never seen baby gerbils? Have you seen hemorrhoids?"

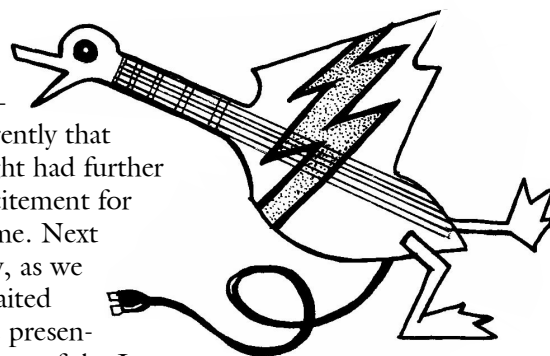
Much later that evening, like midnight, I did get to participate in a fabulous bit of programming. A fan named Ray Bradbury (no typo!) performs as a slight-of-hand artist, and there's little I like better than that, so I did manage to get his time for about three illusions. He was really talented and sharp! I was most impressed and had a few minutes of conversation with him about magic in Las Vegas. Later I found out he's also a sculptor. Fans are certainly a mixed bunch. I never cease to be amazed at their myriad abilities and interests.

That night provided exactly the type of experience that makes a con stick in your mind. Jae and I had just tucked ourselves in when, of all things, the fire alarm went off. We pulled our coats over our pajamas and went out the back door, trekking in the darkness around the whole building to the front entrance. Everyone had gathered there, providing a spectacular display of fannish negligees. (At least I was wearing my good pajamas, with the sheep.) After the expected appearance of the fire department, we were eventually readmitted. Later we heard that the alarm was due to the fog machine in the disco! A good story, whether correct or not.

Apparently that night had further excitement for some. Next day, as we awaited the presentation of the James

White Award, James Bacon approached the microphone as the award's administrator. Immediately a cry went up: "Trouser press! Trouser press!" Hilarity ensued. The words "trouser press" now seem to be following Mr. Bacon through fandom. Unfortunately I can not reliably reveal the origin of the trouser press story.¹⁰ I did hear a version of it from Mr. Bacon himself later in the evening—and he is a polished raconteur, that one—but I understand that Nic Farey's version is slightly different (and possibly even more colorful) and I don't wish to incite a riot. I guess the salient points were a party, a lot of non-hotel-supplied alcohol, a trouser press, an open window, and a great deal of profanity. Do try to hear it from a primary source!

The weekend was ending with an Irish Food Banquet. This appealed to me not at all, so (after briefly giving James the "Boiled Bacon" nametag from the buffet—no comeback from him, he looked bemused) I escaped. I went back to the room, considering what I might munch on, and then found Jae and Karen Babich planning an outing to a local Indian restaurant. I invited myself along in best fannish fashion (by looking forlorn and hungry), and we laughed about the fact that we'd come thousands of miles to have dinner with representative Midwest fans. Silly—but very tasty. Upon returning to the hotel I didn't last long for more talking and drinking. My voice had nearly gone by that time, and I had to go and pack for the tail end of my trip; this turned out to be rather difficult. Even removing the various smuggled American goods for Maureen and Paul from my luggage was little help. I'd literally been given too many fanzines! I briefly considered abandoning some of my clothes but then luckily realized I was packing Jae's copies in with my own. Stolen fan-



*electric
canard*

¹⁰Rule 3, "telling us about a joke that you obviously had to be there for."

zines returned, everything just fit.

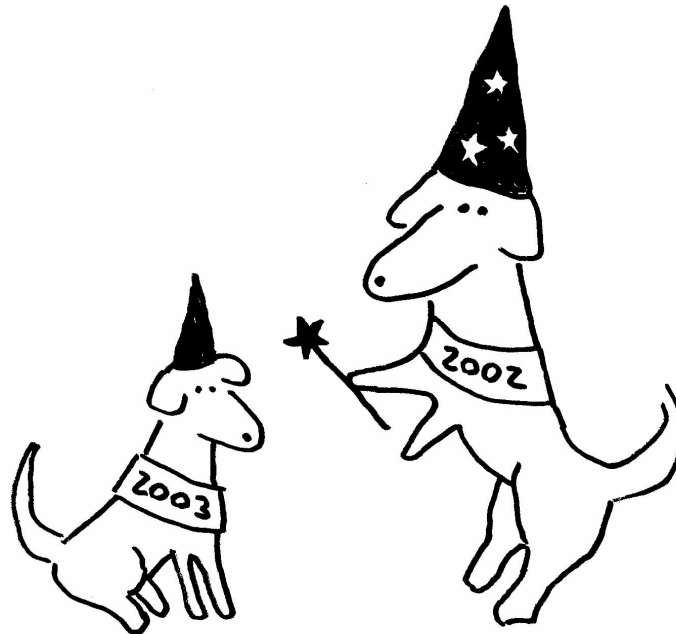
As I left Walsall for Folkestone—having first been introduced to the official Novacon Slug, there on the sidewalk—it occurred to me that

this had been just my kind of convention: friendly people, lots of comfortable places to sit and talk, a little programming, a few running gags, and a lot of fanzines. Honestly, it was only lacking a totally disastrous dining experience in

¹¹Rule 10 of bad con reports, “the writing is dull.” You’ll have to make up your own mind on that one. Don’t tell me what you decide, okay?

¹²Did I mention that Michael Abbott really doesn’t like footnotes? Sorry about that, Michael.

Wizard Dog Comix



Puppy New Year!

THE 22 SECOND FANZINE REVIEW

Idiosyncrasy Three by Dave Hicks is a rambling but charming personal fanzine. In the primary article, one finds out many of the reasons why Dave is the way he is. Also includes a large section of equally rambling fanzine reviews, two of which seem to be APAs that are open by “initiation only”. This doesn’t seem an overly friendly editorial policy for the curious and uninitiated, but doubtless helps get the word out about them anyway. Naturally it features a fabulous cover by Dave, and a mildly amusing cartoon at the end. Available for the usual from Dave Hicks, 1 St, Woolos Place, Newport, South Wales, NP20 4GQ, United Kingdom. —Bill

Extra! Extra! Again!

Wabe is pleased to present a special TAFF/DUFF section in this issue. The upcoming TAFF 2003 North America to Europe race has sparked the interest of many fans as no fewer than *four* candidates have decided to run: Randy Byers, Colin Hinz, Mike Lowrey, and Curt Phillips. We notified the candidates and their nominators that we'd run whatever articles in support of their platforms we could fit into this issue, and that's all here.

However, a dark horse wrote from the east, exclaiming, "How about DUFF?" Mike McInerney emailed to say that he and Linda are running for DUFF, and how about running a little something for them? The *Wabe* staff can only admire such an opportunist, so we are happy to present a little DUFF campaigning as well. (Guy and Rosy Lillian are their opponents. We were up against our deadline, or we would have contacted them for material as well; sorry about that.)

The voting deadline for TAFF is February 10, 2003; the voting deadline for DUFF is January 31, 2003. Ballots are very likely included in this issue. We hope.

∞The TAFF Part∞

UK Fandom Should Know Him Better

YVONNE ROWSE ON RANDY BYERS

I nominated Randy Byers for TAFF. This is the first time I've nominated anyone, though I've usually voted. Why am I so keen to drag him over to the UK that I've abandoned my

customary apathy? Because three short Corflu meetings and a long but sporadic e-mail conversation have not been enough. I don't know him as well as I'd like to.

I first met Randy at the wonderful Corflu in Seattle. I saw him again at Boston Corflu and then at the Corflu in Annapolis. In the meantime, though, I was aware of him quietly working in fandom.

Eve Harvey told him, 'When I saw you in Seattle you looked just too cool to hang out with people like us, but now I know you better and you're just so *nice*.' In fact that was a common comment in Annapolis; 'Randy Byers? He's just so *nice*.'

He's kind and helpful and I trust his judgment. Lillian Edwards' 'Floss' was re-jigged for US paper sizes and distributed by Randy and he's doing the same thing for my Joie de Vivre with very little complaint. He takes up the tricky task of dealing with Trufen and Nurofen when Victor Gonzalez can't and moderates well. Best of all, when we sink into the mire of malicious gossip he drags us out with his generous and civilised attitude.

Oh yes, and he's very tactful. After he told me he was working on his TAFF platform I offered to help decorate it with ribbons and sequins. Under such intense pressure he didn't crack; he generously agreed that I could be his style manager for the campaign. How kind is that?

So, vote for Randy because he's cool.

Vote for Randy because he's nice.

Vote for Randy because we'll decorate him with ribbons and sequins and that'll be so much fun. The photos will be on PNN before the look of terror has faded from his face. Vote for Randy (this is important) because it'll make programming panels at our Eastercon easy. Well it works for Eve and me.

No, really, vote for Randy because UK fandom should know him better. He's interesting, amusing, fun to hang out with and good for a party.

We gave them Tobes, it's only fair that they should be generous and send Randy over to us.

Robert says: I was first aware of what fun Randy Byers is to be around at the 1984 Worldcon in Los Angeles, and have enjoyed his company at many conventions since then. I think our friends across the Big Pond would find his company pleasurable, too. I was first aware of his terrific writing when a copy of *Travels with the Wild Child*, his 1996 60-page account of tripping around the country with Tami Vining, appeared out of the blue in my mailbox. Anyone who has the potential to write a TAFF report up to that standard has my support—and vote.

Ted says: As one of Randy's nominators I can only agree. *Travels with the Wild Child* knocked my socks off—and you can quote me on that.

...And Man, Can He Write

ROBERT LICHTMAN AND TED WHITE ON RANDY BYERS

Ten Reasons to Vote for Mike

DAVE LANGFORD ON "ORANGE" MIKE LOWREY

What I mostly know about the very orange Michael J. "Orange Mike" Lowrey, the chap in orange, is his peculiar quality of—to coin a term—orangeness. An *Ansible* focus group has thus recommended the following major planks for his tastefully coloured TAFF platform:

1. It is widely supposed by versifiers that there is no rhyme for "orange". We owe it to Mike to give him the reassurance of visiting and even climbing the Bloreng, a modestly sized hill just south of Abergavenny in Wales.
2. Possibly the most poignant line of comic dialogue ever written by the great Alan Moore (in "D.R. & Quinch Go To Hollywood") is the celebrated "Mind the oranges, Marlon!!" The message, I think, is clear.
3. And who could forget the much loved science-fantasy series by the Roger Zelazny of a timeline just next to our own, beginning with *Nine Princes in Orange*? Furthermore, being an anagram of "Ego Ran", our man's nickname is also redolent of Sir Arthur C. Clarke himself.
4. Orange is the favourite colour of the Reverend Ian Paisley. Oh, sorry, that's from the anti-Lowrey knocking copy I wrote for one of the other candidates. Pay it no heed.
5. Oranges, Jeanette Winterson has informed us, are not the only fruit. Mike objects to this sentiment and needs to visit Britain for a quiet word with Ms Winterson. Or a loud one.
6. In homage to Stanley Kubrick's legendary movie *A Clockwork Orange*, our candidate pledges either to attempt the Astral Pole initiation ceremony to the tune of "Singing' In The Rain" or (as a TAFF fundraiser) to sit through a record number of showings of *Plan 9 from Outer Space* with his eyes wired open.
7. Another popular fundraiser should be Mike's recreation of the scene of the crime in Ellery Queen's *The Chinese Orange Mystery*, where the murder victim is found with all his clothes on backwards and African spears inserted down the back of his neck. "This," said an eager spokesfan, "will make Tobes nailed to a cross look tame."
8. As John Clute was swift to point out, what sf fan has a soul so dead as to be unacquainted with *The Orange R* (1978) by John Claggett, *The Big Orange Splot* (1977) by Daniel Pinkwater, or Andrew Lang's *The Orange Fairy Book* (1907)? ... Oh. Most of you, apparently. Never mind.
9. Additionally, a celebrated connoisseur of orangeness like Mr Lowrey deserves personal experience of such British and European traditions as Broken Orange Pekoe, the Orange Prize, Oranjeboom lager, Orange mobile phones, orange Smarties, the bells of St Clement's, and the Liberal Party.
10. This, I think, is the clincher. On his TAFF trip to Suncon in 1977, Peter Roberts covered himself with glory by wearing an orange suit. Fandom notoriously fails to learn from history (I've heard scary rumours that some people volunteer to be on a second or even a third con committee), and those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it. Resistance is useless. We are condemned to another orange-garbed TAFF winner.

Features of Light and Darkness

JULIAN HEADLONG ON CURT PHILLIPS

Maybe you read my piece in Victor Gonzalez's fanzine *Squib* #4. Maybe you didn't. Never mind. It was called "A Counterblast to TAFF" and was, on the whole, a bit negative about a certain fan fund of

our acquaintance. Just a little bit. Actually it was *very* negative.

So, what am I doing writing a supportive piece about a TAFF candidate. Indeed, what am I doing *nominating* someone for TAFF. Do I contradict myself? Am I large? Do I contain multitudes? It seems I do, and I am, and I do.

But there is reason in my madness. Because the person I have nominated is Curt Phillips. And I'd rather like to meet Curt.

I have only known Curt through the medium of glowing phosphor, and would like to know more. There are new fannish interconnections nowadays, not replacing fanzines, but enhancing them, adding a certain immediacy to a fanzine's inherently slow snail-mail letter columns. Trufen and Memoryhole are two of these new methods of fannish communication and through these groups I've come to know the electronic shadow of a number of American fans. Some shadows are pale and fleeting, some spiky and amusing, others more serious and constructive. Curt's shadow is spectacular. Curt's shadow has *presence*.

There's a phrase—"Do the Right Thing." An injunction in a Spike Lee movie that is seldom followed in the mundane world or the fannish. It is just so *hard* to do the right thing. It takes time. Time and commitment. There *are* people who do the right thing, and we admire them for it. As I admire Curt, or perhaps Curt's *shadow*. There aren't many people who give up a career in the military industrial complex, aerospace missile division, to re-train as an emergency nurse, paramedic and later OR nurse. There aren't many who take their interest in militaria and creative anachronism seriously enough to wander cold and muddy battlefields, in full kit, faithfully recreating the horrors and glories of civil war North America. There aren't many who take their fannish obligations seriously enough to create a new and useful fannish egroup—such as the pulp magazines group. But all I know of these matters is the shadow of them, cast on my screen by Curt's postings. And I want to know more.

Because it is the electric blue glow and shaded letters of his writings on these groups that, to my mind, almost defines fannishness. They are fresh and vivid. They show an old fashioned love of all things science fictional. They are interested and interesting. They speak of books and stories, of pulp magazines and fanzines. They speak of fire stations and ambulances and battle re-enactments. They are charged with a feeling of commitment that is the soul of trufandom. They do the right thing.

So I support Curt Phillips for TAFF. I have nominated him and will campaign for him. Together with Greg Pickersgill and the rest of UK fandom I hope we will welcome him to Seacon'03 as North America's 2003 TAFF winner.

I make the u-turn, put my foot down, and speed towards the bright lights of the league of fan funds. I admire the shadows on the road ahead.

œThe DUFF Partœ

Fanhistorical in Person

ERIC LINDSAY ON MIKE MCINERNEY

Jean Weber and I were the GUFF winners a few years back, and spent considerable time in the U.K. A fair amount of our time was spent with fans with a very long history within fandom. I feel that the history they shared with us was a significant factor

in helping us get a real feel for U.K. fandom.

Likewise, in the USA, fans with a long history in fandom were among those we visited. We learnt a lot about fannish history from people like Bob Tucker, Arnie Katz, Ted White, rich brown.

Most fans in Australia do not get the chance to travel and meet such historic figures. We had a strong historical stream at Aussiecon, and at some recent NatCons. So Mike and Linda McInerney should fit right in. Look at all that New York history, the clubs, the apas, and *Focal Point!* It is a wonderful opportunity for Australian fans to see how other fandoms became what they are. What is even nicer is that fans like Mike from that time have moved right along with the times, and are now active on the internet. It gives a chance distant fans a chance to start "seeing" them while the race is on.

A Longtime Trufan

ROBERT LICHTMAN ON MIKE MCINERNEY

Mike McInerney and I go way, way back. When he was one of the new kids on the block and I was a, er, seasoned fan with all of two years fanning under my belt, he tells me I made a suggestion: “You got me started

all those years ago by getting me to sign up for N3F and their apa N'APA.” He appears to have forgiven me for that.

Mike soon went on to greater accomplishments in the world of fanzine publishing, and in 1965 he and rich brown began publishing the first iteration of *Focal Point*, a fannish newszine that started in 1965 after Ron Ellik ceased publication of his estimable *Starsprinkle*. *Focal Point* shared the fannish newszine stage with Bruce Pelz's *Ratatask*, providing East Coast coverage that complemented the latter's more West Coast orientation. He also published a few genzines and a whole passel of apazines.

I recall first meeting Mike at one of the mid-'60s Westercons. He was part of a group of New York area fans who drove west for those conventions. By the late '60s Mike began to disappear from the fannish stage, but not mine. He moved to San Francisco and I saw him on occasion at his new home in the Haight Ashbury, where he lived in the same apartment building as a number of my business associates and other friends of the time. He fit easily into the scene at the time with his long hair, flowing beard, and colorful clothes.

When I came back into fandom in the early '80s, Mike seemed to have dropped off the edge of the fannish firmament. So imagine my surprise when he showed up at the very first Corflu, the one held in Berkeley at the same resort hotel that had hosted the 1968 Worldcon. Although his appearance had changed considerably—his long hair was history and he was wearing, mighod, a suit and tie—as soon as he opened his mouth I could tell his fannish spirit was unchanged. It's been my pleasure to see Mike at various other conventions, mostly Corflus, over the years since then and at various fannish gatherings in the Bay Area.

His current fanzine, SFFF, is published but infrequently (largely due to his dicey employment situation in recent years, I believe) but it shows the same spark of trufannishness that has characterized Mike since my first knowledge of him over forty years ago. I'm proud to count him among my fannish friends, and happy to support him in his DUFF bid. I'm sure Australian fandom will enjoy meeting and partying with him.

The Restful Fan

LEE HOFFMAN ON MIKE MCINERNEY

I met Mike McInerney in the early 1960's in New York. Mike and rich brown shared an apartment in Manhattan that was big enough to accommodate a good sized party, and that's what they had there every other week. They were co-hosts of FISTFA, a fan group too informal to be properly called a club. They invited me to join, and I went regularly. The bi-weekly gatherings were technically "meetings" but Mike and rich were so personable and such excellent hosts that they certainly seemed like parties.

Mike was one of the gang of Fanoclasts I traveled to California with in 1966. I especially remember our visit to Disneyland, where I got separated from the rest of the group. I ran into Mike, also who was also away from the others. By then both of us needed a little quiet time, away from the hecticvity of the trip. Together we took refuge on an artificial wooded island (“Tom Sawyer's Island”) where we sat on the bank of the fake river, chatting and waving at the boatloads of tourists going by. This is one of my favorite memories of that trip.

Although Mike and I had become instant fast friends, I lost touch with him after I left New York. Then one day I received a fanzine from him. Reading it, I knew he was still the Mike McInerney I'd known then, and I felt we were still friends despite the miles and years. If I were in the middle of another two-week-long hubbub and in need of a little quiet time, I can't think of anyone better to sit and talk or be silent with.

IMPENETRABILITY!

A Note from the Editors: Thanks for all your fine letters! We love the huge variety we see, from William Breiding's three, count 'em, three postcards to the lengthy screed from the indomitable rich brown. We wish we didn't have to edit, but we do. Here are some choice cuts....

Regarding Collecting

ALEX SLATE:

I used to collect lots of stuff. I try not to now.

Collecting, it becomes too easy to become attached to things.

JUDITH MILLER:

In addition to your two criteria for what's a collection, I'd want to add something about "being" versus "doing."

Though a painter might have 200 tubes of oils, for me they are not a collection. If I have 200 tubes, that I gather because I like the color or the texture or whatever, then it is a collection (though I might dabble in painting once in a while.) The "being-ness" of the items is more important than its "doing-ness."

In the needlework world (rec.crafts.textiles.needlework) there are two acronyms related to collecting. S.E.X...Stash Enhancing eXperience...to refer to a shopping trip. And, perhaps more relevantly, S.A.B.L.E....Stash Accumulated Beyond Life Expectancy.

RICH BROWN:

That's a nifty theme you have there, starting with Dan Stefan's delightful cover and running all through WABE #5—collecting. But both Jae Leslie, in "Fore Words," and Tracy, in

"After the Cool," offer implicit definitions of collections that I find myself just a bit uncomfortable with. I think they have to be more than just an accumulation of stuff, or even an accumulation of somewhat similar stuff. In the one area where many of us come together, fanzines, I think most of us have had fanzine *accumulations*, whereas only a few folks—the late Bruce Pelz, for a prime example—have had fanzine *collections*. If it's all just laying around in boxes, in no particular order, the good stuff scattered among the only so-so, where you know you may have certain things but can't actually lay your hands on them without hours of search and disruption, it's just an accumulation of things you would *like* to be collecting.

But, *sigh*, I'm just uncomfortable with the looser classification—not completely hard-nosed about it—since I'm not sure where the fanzines I have would fall if I were to insist on my narrower definition. I mean, about a quarter of my fanzines are in folders in a huge lateral filing cabinet, which fits my idea of what a real collection should be—but the rest are in more than a dozen large boxes I have scattered throughout my apartment, in no particular order, which falls into accumulation territory. I dunno; maybe what I have is a fanzine accumulection. You think?

...Bill, in "The Collection Infection," hits on one of the reasons I'm not currently more of a collector than I am. Namely, Bill still has a number of the things he began to collect long ago, and I don't. This factor has to be extreme to have an effect on my desires to accumulate, however; I



A LETTERCOL

"got over" my parents tossing my sf-related EC comics—frankly, I didn't have very many of them—enough so that, when Marvel started featuring super heroes with problems, I started collecting again. But, then, when I got divorced, I had room for only my comics or my fanzines, so I sold the comics for about \$4,000. Well, when I thought I was gafiating, in the mid-60s, I also sold the largest part of my first fanzine collection to Greg Benford. Although I've been unable to replace a lot of the fanzines I once had (near complete runs of *Vom*, *Spacewarp*, *BCSFS/Science-Fantasy Bulletin/Dimensions*), I have nonetheless restarted, as I said above, a fanzine accumulation.

But I'm too thoroughly disheartened to restart my collection of sf pulps. When I was 12 or 13, not long after I discovered that there *were* such things as sf prozines, I started buying old pulps from various stores I found around Pasadena, California, mostly *Amazing*, *Fantastic*, *Planet*, *Thrilling Wonder*, *Startling Stories*, &c.—for 5 cents apiece or 25/\$1. Oh, it's true, I had to pay upwards of 25 cents a copy for 1940s *As-toundings* because they were only available in one store and the guy who ran it knew they were worth something. I was turning most of the \$30/month I made from my paper route, plus \$2 to \$5 a week I made at a local golf course, into a collection that was to die for. Then I got lucky. The family of one of my best friends moved into a house which had a small unopened shed on the property. This friend and I decided to see what was inside—and found it piled, floor to ceiling, with hundreds of even older pulps as well as a large number of bed-sheet-sized early *Amazings*, *Air Wonder* and the like. He didn't want them, so he let me have them for nothing; I "hired" a kid's little red wagon and spent part of every day after school for a couple of weeks carting them home. While you're picking your tongue up off the floor, I'll add the capper: I traded all copies of TWS and SS to my friend Paul Stanbery for two quires of stencils and five reams of paper when I discovered fanzine fandom, and my parents gave the rest to Goodwill Industries for bulk paper while I was in the Air Force. Somehow, I just can't force myself to spend \$5+ a copy for stuff I once got for 5 cents or less...until or unless I win a major lottery....

WILLIAM BREIDING:

Thank god I never was struck by the collecting desire! I do buy things but I am rarely a completist (like Mr. Lichtman) and I admire folks with cool stuff (like Tracy's friend, Sara Gordon). My dream has always been to be neat and tidy, but also to have things, but like Jae, I have too much loose paper, and clutter just gets deeper and deeper. To collect things that need to be dusted is to live in hell, at least for me! So, I live in some twilight world because I have extensive "collections" (what I call "libraries") of books, CDs, records, tapes, but, like Tracy, I don't buy them to collect, I buy them to use.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS:

Many thanks indeed for *Wabe 5*, and for the previous four issues as well.... I've enjoyed them all, but found myself curiously unable to say much in response to them—a problem redoubled in spades by this latest issue, since it's all about collecting and I'm not a collector of anything.

Judith [Hanna], of course, would instantly disagree with this, pointing to my complete (and continuing) runs of *Interzone* and *F&SF*. And she would doubtless say, also, that I have a fine collection of unmade helicopter kits in the drawer under the spare bed in my office. But while I might concede the point about the magazines—if one has every issue since the first, it's difficult to stop....even if, er, one doesn't actually read all of every issue any more—I'd definitely argue against the unmade kits. And the shelves of CDs on the ground floor—it may be "a" collection, but only in the sense that it belongs to us rather than being representative of anything (other than our tastes in music). And the shelves of history and archaeology texts—another collection which is illustrative only of our interests rather than anything more definitive. And in any case, I'm nothing like the squirrel she is.

I blame her hoarding instincts on growing up on a farm in Western Australia, where—when you're out in the country, tens of miles from anyone or anywhere else—there's a natural tendency to keep everything in case it might come in useful again someday (and where, apart from that, there's no "away" to throw things anyway). When I visited the farm at Kojonup for the first time in 1985, I was—as Judith correctly diagnosed from my silence for the first day or two—struck dumb at the sheer amount of absolute junk everywhere: packed into every room, piled



The thing is, there just isn't room. Even if I hadn't sold *Wabes* 1 & 2 I still wouldn't have been able to "put my hands on them" because, apart from a 28" shelf of special stuff like trip reports and fanthologies, all 12 boxes of zines-I-cannot-live-without are up in the loft, stacked against one wall where they'll put least stress on the joists, and currently unapproachable behind masses of transient junk. Those 12 boxes represent the results of two specific culls and as such are I suppose about 1/5 of the zines that have passed through

on the verandahs, stacked high in the sheds....there was scarcely room to move, even out of doors. And when we went down to her parents' retirement home in Albany on the south coast...!

As I constantly joke, if it wasn't for my tidy-ist urges, Judith's attempts to squirrel away almost everything that comes into the house would long since have overwhelmed us—although she retorts by pointing out that thanks to me she does throw or give things away from time to time: old clothes to charity shops and gardening magazines to fellow gardeners being the two most notable. But at the same time she's also started hanging on to other things—the caps from toothpaste tubes apparently make very good dolls-house-sized pots for imitation miniature house plants. And she has two dolls' houses on which she's working....

SKEL:

...But...I do have these recidivistic collecting tendencies which I have to keep firmly under control. I do this by ignoring them until I end up with 'Too Much Stuff' (a technical term of which true collectors are unaware). This triggers a safety-valve in my brain, vast amounts of high-pressure collecting mania spews forth like steam to dissipate harmlessly into the atmosphere, and then when calmness returns I proceed rationally once more to downsize drastically. Brutally, even.

my hands. I think that's a pretty good ratio—at least it's double Sturgeon's 10%.

And of course I have made mistakes, and disposed of stuff I've later wished I'd kept. I'm gonna feel pretty silly if I end up having to pay out a fortune at some future date to fill up my collection of *Wabes* with the two missing issues.

BRAD FOSTER:

I'm sure just about every reader was able to identify with the collecting theme this issue. I managed to break myself of being a full-blown "collector" years ago, and am now more of what I like to call an "accumulator" of things: I don't spend a lot of time actively seeking out items, and have definite low price ceilings on what I'm willing to spend.

The way I realized I was on the dark path to full collector was when the DAW paperback series started way too many years back for me to think about. I'd been reading science fiction and enjoying it, but here was a brand new line of books that actually numbered each new book they published. Not with some odd publisher code, but there was book #1, #2, #3, etc. It was when I was in a used bookstore, scanning the spines for numbers and checking that against my list of DAW book #'s that I suddenly stopped cold and looked at what I was actually doing. I didn't have a list of authors, or titles.... I had a list of numbers, and I was looking to buy those numbers to FILL IN THE COLLECTION. I'd enjoyed most of the DAW titles

I'd already gotten, but had also read some real stinkers. And here I was buying more, even if by an author whose work I had not liked before, simply to FILL IN THE COLLECTION. That was it, I've never had the collector compulsion since, thank God!

Regarding the artwork

SHERYL BIRKHEAD:

Ah—a cover style that brings back memories.... Love the Foster Raven on pg 11....I read your art comments on the back page—please let me know if you want doodlings (titles? cover? top-ics?) don't want to push—

Sheryl, what do you want from us? Prayer? Chanting? Burnt sacrifices? Seriously, we'll take any art

you'd like to send. You just push it, we'll print it. We love your stuff. And we'll get in touch with you soon about a cover for nextish this summer.

JUKKA HALME:

Liked the cover, but then again, it's Dan Steffan's. What's not to like?

STEVE GREEN:

Great cover by Dan Steffan: a grim warning of what life could be like for many of us were it not for sf and fanzines.

WAHF: Lloyd Penney, Ned Brooks, Jerry Kaufman, Henry Welch, Terry Jeeves (who coined "Fellowship of the Wabe"), Harry Andruschak, Eric Lindsay, E.B. Frohvet, Alexis Gilliland.

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...and Corrections

Last issue Tracy mistakenly typed that Banff was in Ontario. It's in Alberta. (Lloyd Penney: "Remedial Canadiana 101 for the lot of you.") Also, Ned Brooks' letter had a typo in it; his costume included "boots" not "books." (Although books might be nice too.) A software usability problem caused us to leave off the address of contributor Sandra Bond, 7 Granville Road, London N13 R44 UK, as well as that of Max. The editors regret the errors and would probably regret them more after a few Mai Tais.

After WORDS

BY TRACY BENTON

This is the part where I was going to explain how this fanzine came to be divided into three parts (“like Gaul,” Jae remarked): food, Novacon, and TAFF/DUFF. But as any fule faned knows, content can get away from you, and time-sensitive material has a way of taking over.

This is also the part where I was going to talk about cooking from recipes versus learning and using techniques. (For example, although I am mainly a recipe-user, I know enough about the techniques of baking to recognize Jeanne’s Swedish Pastry as a *choux* pastry—like cream puffs—sitting on top of a pie crust and slathered in butter frosting. Which leads me to conclude that those Swedish bakers are darn clever, because it’s fabulously delicious.)

But I’m going to veer from my previously charted course (as has most of this fanzine) and talk instead about fannish community and goodwill. And how I wish there were more of it.

Some time ago in these pages I reviewed E.B. Frohvet’s zine *Twink* (4716 Dorsey Hall Drive #506, Ellicott City, MD, 21042, USA). I wrote that I didn’t get it; it wasn’t to my taste. Someone wrote to me: “Keep reading *Twink*, and it will grow on you.” Well, it did. Despite a few articles that made me frustrated (like the one on science fiction awards in #25, where he guessed at how some awards were given, rather than just doing the research--and was corrected in #27 at length by Mark Plummer), I thought Frohvet had chosen a pretty cool recipe for a fanzine, a fairly-frequent book-centered zine liberally seasoned with personal opinion and a good lettercol. He goes out of his way to get really unusual covers. I think his list of “Poliad” awards in #28 are a fun idea, allowing him to recognize his favorites of the year. And occasionally there would be an article that would blow me away—Taral Wayne’s “Pencil Points” in *Twink* #28 is fantastic, the best article on making art I’ve ever read.

But it was also in #28, which arrived just as I was getting ready to send this issue to press, where I ran up against something that makes me just, well, sad. In his review of *Littlebrook* #1, he writes: “Of current zines it most resembles *Wabe*, i.e., it’s all about being fannish and in-group.” Uh... excuse me? *Wabe* is all about being in-group? Why? Because we invite people we know and like to write articles for us? Isn’t that what most faneds do? Because we support TAFF and DUFF? Because we publish the most entertaining letters of comment we get... like the one from E.B. Frohvet in issue 4? *Wabe* is mailed to more than 350 people each issue. Is that the “in-group” he refers to? And do my eyes deceive me, or did he just use “fannish” as a derogatory term? Does this sideways slam have something to do with Corflu, which we regularly attend and will be hosting in the spring?

Ah, yes, that’s another thing: Corflu. In his “Miscellany” column, he writes: “Corflu Badger... C\$ not specified, ask someone who cares. We have not the patience to copy out the interminable web site. You can rule out any prospect of our attending, for obvious reasons, however, we provide the information as a public service.” Let me get this straight: he doesn’t like our web site because it has too much information on it? You know, I think this is just discourteous. If he doesn’t like the convention—which he has never attended—then I think it might be more of a “public service” to just not mention it in his fanzine. This is not like a book review, where the reviewer gives opinions based on points he can cite about the publication; this is a convention listing. He’s just discouraged all his readers from attending by his tone.

Wabe is quite intentionally a fannish fanzine. It’s a place for writing by fans on the wide spectrum of topics fans are interested in. I happen to think that supporting the fannish community in general is part of being a good faneditor. Which is why, when Frohvet withdrew from working on Corflu 19, I wrote and urged him not to quit just because some of us shot our mouths off impolitely. Which is why we ran an ad for Ditto, giving the basic facts about that fanzine fans’ convention, even though none of us at *Wabe* have ever been to it. Which is why we gave over a big chunk of this fanzine for TAFF and DUFF.

Negativity like Frohvet’s makes me really sad. I understand if he feels “left out” of Corflu; it’s a group of people who have been meeting for 20 years, and they greet each other like the old friends they are. But I didn’t start at Corflu 1; my first was Corflu 10. I’ve only been to six of them. If anybody seriously wants to meet and make friends with the people who attend Corflu, all you have to do is show up and be friendly! That’s all any of us did. (Handing out a fanzine doesn’t hurt either.)

I still like *Twink*.