

CHUNGA²⁶



CHUNGA

From the rills and chasms of a distant peak issues **Chunga**, descending in musical cascades through deserts of indifference and canyons of criticism to water the green, green hills of Trufandom. Come dangle your feet for a while and perhaps you too will receive a complimentary pedicure.

Edited by Andy (fanmailaph@aol.com), Randy, and carl (heurihermilab@gmail.com).
COA: Please address all postal correspondence to 11032 30th Ave NE, Seattle WA 98125.
Editors: please send **two** copies of any zine for trade.

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carl juarez design, other art



*Contributors' addresses have been removed
from this edition.*

Tanglewood

Tangledown

When last we met in *Chunga* #25, it was February of 2017. A majority of Americans were still in a kind of numb haze after the general election of 2016, and we bent over backwards to talk about fannish topics as far removed as possible from mundane politics. Our co-editor Randy Byers was in the 15th month of treatment for brain cancer, and received the news that the tumors had returned about the time that we went to press. Exhausted by the therapies as well as the cancer, he chose to stop treatment, and embarked on a final visit to Micronesia with members of his family. We're publishing his remarkable account of that trip in this issue. It would have been a major work at any time in his life; that he composed it while suffering from an increasingly difficult terminal illness leaves me quite speechless.

And before his Pacific Ocean adventure, Randy managed another major goal, which was to attend Corflu 34 in Woodland Hills, California. His account of the experience "Like Riding a Bike," was published in issue #12 of *BEAM*. Most improbably, Randy's name was drawn from the hat, and he was chosen the convention's Guest of Honor, in keeping with a long and random tradition. His speech, titled "Fandom is a Forge" was promptly published in *Banana Wings* #66 in June.

Over the summer, he worked on his account of the trip to Yap, with some assistance from our friend Ron Drummond, and did his best to continue walking, watching movies and communicating with friends online. Meanwhile, I was working daily on the "Amateur section" of the Biographical Directory of the Nycon, trying to get it ready for publication as quickly as possible. But that was a ridiculously long process, not completed until nearly a year later.

The last time I saw Randy was in the second week of October. Carrie and I brought over some Chinese food for lunch, but Randy slept through much of our visit, and we shared the food with his housemate Denys Howard. Denys had helped him move his bed upstairs into the middle room of the house, and he was able to greet visitors from there. But it was clear that his strength was ebbing. His family took over a few days later, and moved him down to a hospice in Portland early in November. He died on November 20th, 2017.

Randy's body was cremated, and in early 2018, the family scattered his ashes along the banks of the Hoh River, one of his favorite spots on Washington's Olympic peninsula. Ron Drummond and Geri Sullivan, Randy's collaborator on *Science Fiction Five Yearly*, went along to represent his friends in fandom. On their return to Seattle, we had what became a rather raucous wake at Randy's favorite Belgian pub and restaurant, the same place we had last gathered to celebrate his birthday.

A collection of Randy's fan-writing seemed like the most appropriate sort of tribute to him; *Chunga* contributor and cor-

respondent Luke McGuff volunteered to edit such an anthology, which was titled *Thy Life's A Miracle*. This was intended to be out in time for Corflu 35 in Toronto, in May of 2018, but wasn't ready until Corflu 36 in Maryland earlier this year. Members of both conventions received copies, and of course, it is accessible online at eFanzines.com.

Much of the material in this issue was solicited in the late summer of 2017, and I'm grateful to the contributors for their patience. In addition to his submission, Steve Bieler proofread the copy for the Biographical Directory, a huge job and a profound necessity. Thank you again, Steve. Ulrika O'Brien has also helped out with proofreading, in addition to contributing several pieces of original art.

I don't think carl or I feel quite "right" continuing *Chunga* indefinitely without Randy's participation. In addition to soliciting or finding a majority of the material that we have published in *Chunga*, Randy also did much of the actual editing of that material, and set a standard that I might not be able to match. But because the "Biographical Directory" is so impossibly long, only a portion of the "fan section" could be included in this issue, which compels me to publish *Chunga* #27 in order to finish it. My intention is to publish two more issues of *Chunga*, with the final number containing primarily the correspondence on #27. I have some unpublished material by Randy that I hope to include next issue, and I'm encouraging his friends and readers to share something about him there. I'm not looking for "tributes," so much as memories of things that we enjoyed with him and about him, or things that you endured together. With the passage of nearly two years, I hope that thinking of our co-editor will begin to elicit something beyond the immediate grief of his premature absence. And I really hope carl will be able to contribute something to #27, as he knew Randy just about as long as anyone in fandom.

But now, please enjoy *Chunga* #26, which is already in progress around you. Always one minute to midnight, and right on time.

—Andy
7/14/2019



Figure 5. A diagram from the literature of the Caudate–Putamen.

You Only Fail If You Stop Writing

by Steven Bryan Bieler

That's the best I can do. If it's not good enough, it'll have to wait until I'm better.

—Jo March in *Little Women*

One of the joys of writing is receiving rejections.

I've received nearly 500 rejections and look at me:

I am a joyful person.

Unlike Gaul, my writing career can be divided into two parts. In the 20th century, I wrote science fiction and I was unsuccessful. In the 21st century, I don't write science fiction and I am unsuccessful.

My 20th-century period was filled with an unremitting tide of rejections from SF magazines that, though the economics of the game are against them, still exist: *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *Fantasy & Science Fiction**, and *Interzone*. The science fiction reader who simultaneously looks to the future and to the past is not only in need of an ophthalmologist, she will happily chant this list of zines that I tilted at as if they were windmills and which long ago suffered a core breach and vaporized: *Aboriginal SF*, *Amazing*, *Eternity SF*, *Galaxy*, *Galileo*, *If*, *Last Wave*, *Omni*, *Owlflight*, *Rigel SF*, *Stardate: The Multi-Media Science Fiction Magazine*, *Twilight Zone*, and *Unearth: The Magazine of Science Fiction Discoveries*.

I was also weighed and found wanting by the editors of the original anthologies *Berkley Showcase*, *Dragons of Light*, *Elsewhere*, *Full Spectrum*, *Future Bazaar*, *New Dimensions*, *Orbit*, *Shadows*, *Silicon Brains*, *Sword & Sorcerers*, *Synergy*, and *Universe*

* Career rejection leader (30).

as well as anthologies that were also magazines that were also anthologies: *Far Frontiers*, *Pulphouse*.

And I don't remember what these were, but whatever they were, it were the 1980s: *Cosmos*, *Questar*, *Spectrum*.

(I sold stories to some of these places, which only proves that a sale is not a safeguard.)

What I'm saying is, I've been kickin' it. My street cred rules. As George Scithers wrote to me in a kindly rejection from 1976: *I think you stand a chance*. He may have been guilty of optimism. In the early '80s, Damon Knight, after several encouraging rejections, returned one of my stories with a small blue square of paper, one quarter of a full sheet of paper, on which he wrote *Sorry. DK*.

Peabody's Improbable History

In the 20th century, if you wanted a rejection, you worked for it. Your manuscript emerged from a typewriter or from a thunderous tractor-feed printer or laborious laser jet. You then went to work on the envelope. You wrote addresses. You found stamps. You made a second envelope to go inside the first one and addressed it to yourself in case your target editor wanted to stuff it with \$100 bills. You headed for a mailbox.

F. Scott Fitzgerald, in one humid summer,

received 122 rejections. I can't imagine how hectic this campaign must have been, in an era where you had to roll a carbon-paper sandwich into your non-electric, cast iron typewriter to produce a manuscript and a copy.

I can't imagine a world where editors responded so quickly.

In the 21st century, of course, we've bypassed envelopes, stamps, and paper. We have instead email and Submittable. Submitting a story is a series of clicks, not a game of inches. We should be singin' in a rain of rejections. This is not the case.

For example, you can't buy a rejection from the *New Yorker*. This is the stated policy at the *New Yorker*: *If you have not heard from us within ninety days, please assume that we will not be able to publish your manuscript.* (*McSweeney's* has the same policy, unstated.) I haven't received a *New Yorker* rejection in 15 years, which I suppose is an accomplishment.

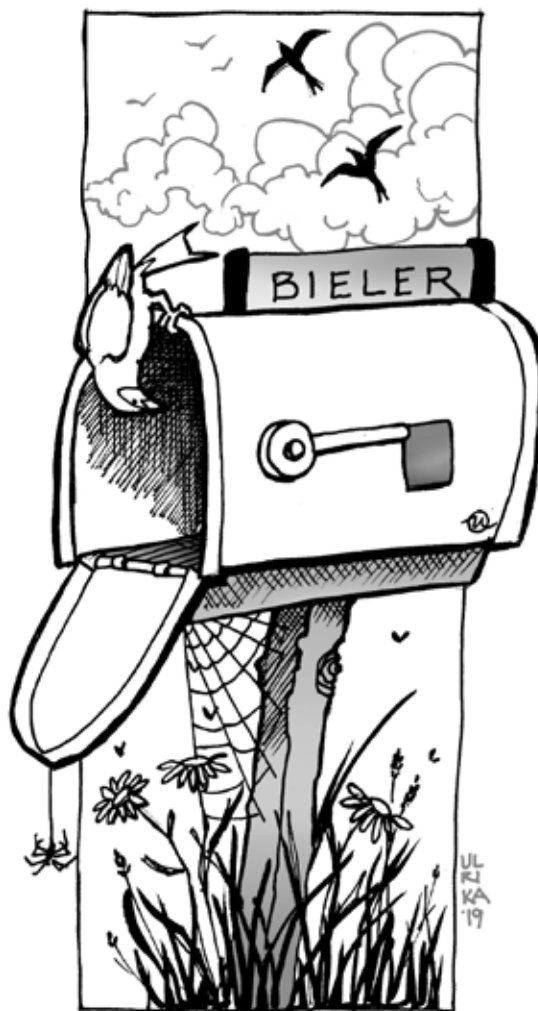
But even the zines that embrace the internet and send rejections (*Threepenny Review* specializes in 48-hour service) do so by email. Brief emails. There are no sheets of odd-sized paper with colorful logos and George Scithers signing off with *Stay wicked!* or Gordon Lish at *Esquire* scribbling *Show me more* or Shawna McCarthy at *Asimov's* observing that *the more I see from you, the more convinced I become that you are not a well person* or this comment from an anonymous editor at *Amazing: Use of gimmick does not make up for story's unoriginality. Shows some promise, though.*

Here in the 21st century I no longer receive critiques somebody put some thought into, as I received in the 20th century from many editors. Either no one has time or I have devolved.

Print an email? Are you from the '90s?

Thus there's not much to add to my collection. *We hope that you will feel encouraged by this short note and send us something else*, an editor writes, in an email that resembles all other emails. *We were impressed by your submission and hope you'll send something else*, another says in an equally anodyne format.

Even much racier content still looks superficially like yet another email I could've received at the



office: *It was a delight to read your work. After careful consideration, I was unable to include 'Clothing: Optional!' in Erotica for People Taking Blood Pressure Meds Vol. 22. I know your story will not have any trouble finding a home and I do wish you luck.*

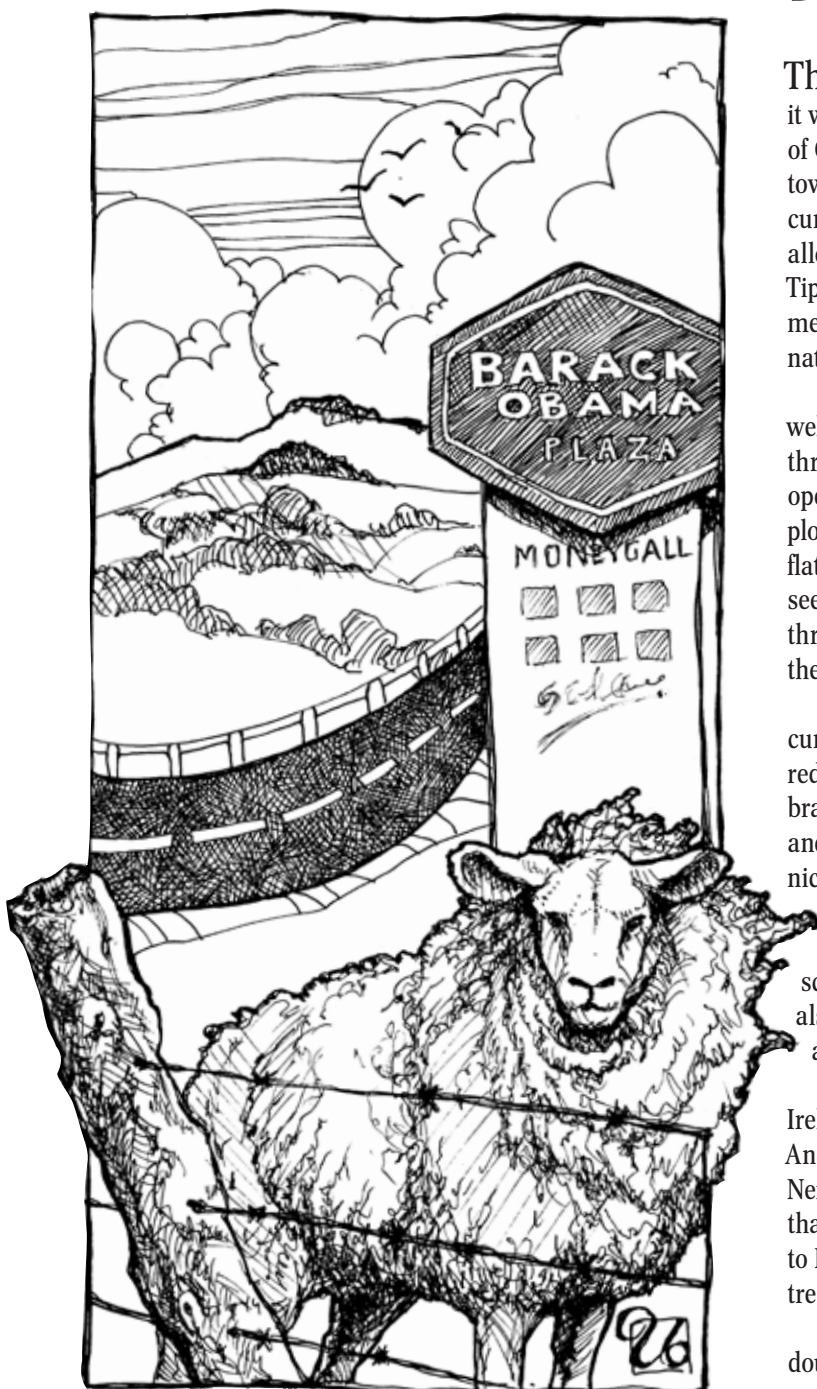
Mercy mercy me, Marvin Gaye lamented. *Things ain't what they used to be.* Marvin was talking about a wind full of poison and fish full of mercury. I'm talking about something even more serious — rejections. Twenty years from now — when, rather than write a story, an idea will form in our cerebral cortex and a 140-character editorial rejection will pop up inside our retinas nanoseconds later — how will anyone be able to write trivia like this essay?

I'll do my best. See you in 2037. ❁

*Title courtesy of
Ray Bradbury.*

Fear and loathing on the O'Bama trail

by James Bacon



The motorway is just right. It's not at all huge now, it would be two lanes each way, but here in the Irish Midlands of County Laois and then County Offaly, heading southwest towards Limerick, it is spot on. Rarely straight, just gently curving: a modern and well-engineered line that is direct and allows a decent speed. And so it passes in and out of Offaly and Tipperary, the county lines crisscrossing the motorway as they meet in a jagged and rough finger meshing, presenting a fascinating slew of welcoming signs.

The land is a rolling, gentle, hilly green, lush in its damp, well-watered spring time. Occasionally the motorway cuts through a hill, nothing too dramatic, and then the view opens wide, to higher hills in the distance, and the occasional ploughed field, hedgerows differentiating the fields. It is neither flat nor mountainous. It is Offaly and then Tipperary and you see no difference in the beauty. The motorway will continue on through the long county of Tipperary, towards Limerick, and thence tributaries will continue up into the mountains of Kerry.

Signs indicate a services stop. For those who are used to curves, cambers, and gradients designed to help the driver reduce speed, this is a white knuckle right-angled turn, where brakes need to be applied, and one descends to a roundabout and is then confronted by Ireland's finest, proudest, and indeed nicest Motorway Stop: Barack Obama Plaza.

Everyone loves to know their roots, and indeed it is rather ironic that a President who had so much hatred and scorn poured upon him in the guise of proving his birth place, also has had many a person engaged in finding out if he had an Irish heritage.

Ten years ago, in April 2007, the search for O'Bama hit Ireland when Kyle Betit, an Irish-genealogy specialist from Ancestry.com sent an inquiry from Salt Lake City to Stephen Neill, canon of Cloughjordan parish, a Church of Ireland parish that includes the town of Moneygall. Canon Neill referred this to Harry Shortt, son of Elizabeth Shortt, the one-time parish treasurer in Templeharry, not at all far from Moneygall

There was little said at this stage. Despite an excitement, double checks and investigations were required. It was strin-

gent. Genealogist Megan Smolenyak had begun preliminary research and methodically tracked Barack Obama's mother's family tree, looking for foreign births. The 1870 US census showed that Fulmuth Kearney, father of one of Obama's great-great-grandmothers, Mary Ann Kearney, was from Ireland. She even found Fulmuth's immigration information, but it was the Irish-local paperwork that really sealed the deal. It lined everything up.

The 3rd of May 2007 was a good day for Moneygall, and Ancestry.com issued a press release.

"Barack Obama's Irish ancestors originated in Moneygall and neighbouring Shinrone in County Offaly, Ireland . . . Baptism and probate records linking the family line back to Moneygall have been unearthed with the assistance of Canon Stephen Neill in the Templeharry rectory records, until recently stored in a parishioner's home."

Obama's third great-grandfather was Fulmuth Kearney who immigrated to New York aged 19 in 1850. The Kearneys had family in the US since the 1790s, and an inheritance of land brought Fulmuth's father to America. Fulmuth married Charlotte Holloway from Ohio, and they went on to have eight children, down the line came Ann Dunham who married Kenyan Barack Hussein Obama Senior, and thence the son, Barack Junior, on 4 August 1961.

What exactly happened next, seems to be in dispute, but this was news. Soon the local pub was sporting posters for Obama, The Corrigan Brothers band released "There's No One as Irish as Barack O'Bama," and local man, Henry Healy, was thought to be an eighth cousin, and so got the moniker Henry the Eighth. For a small town of less than 300 people, this was a fierce amount of attention and excitement.

Ollie Hayes' bar in Moneygall became an Obama campaign outpost, and celebrations occurred whenever he did well in the primaries. An Obama Cafe was opened up, and the town did its best to make good on the notoriety.

At some stage Senator Obama acknowledged the situation, and following his primary success in Illinois in January 2008, he said to Irish-born ITN correspondent, John Irvine, in a quiet personal moment, that "There's a little village in Ireland where my great-great-great-great grandfather came from so I'm looking forward to going there and having a pint."

The *Irish Times* made much of the first tourists to Moneygall, reporting on two tourists on the 5th of November, 2008. The victory celebrations were serious on election night, with the Gardai called to close

Ollie Hayes' Bar at 1.20AM. One has to grasp the nettle, and nearly immediately Canon Neill, Henry the Eighth, and Catholic priest Father Pat Mulcahy issued a formal invitation to President-elect Obama to visit the town. The BBC reported as such on November 7th 2008.

Canon Neill, who described himself and the others as 'chancers' in a well-spirited fashion, was invited along with Henry the Eighth and the Corrigan Brothers to attend the inauguration in January 2009. Apparently on the DC Metro, locals reckoned that Henry Healy did indeed have President Obama's ears.

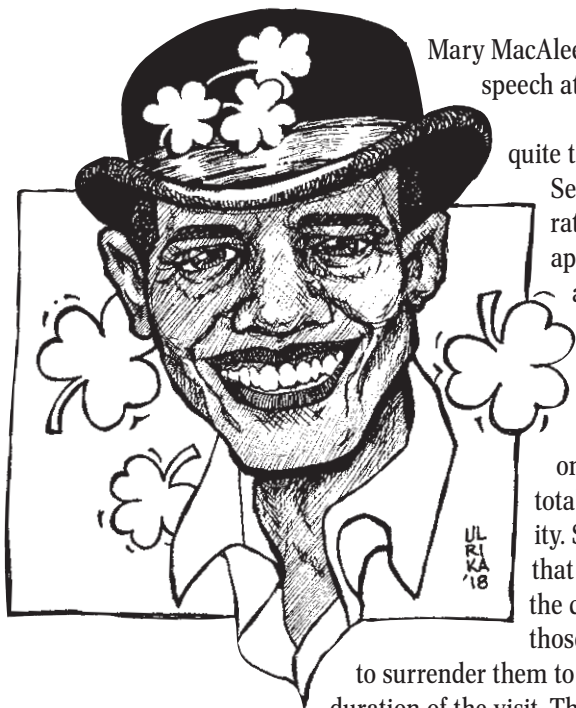
On St. Patrick's Day, 2011, President Obama took up the invitation to visit. It was coming close to the end of his first term, and a call to Ireland was no harm, indeed, the list of those presidents who the Irish have connections to is long, and the Irish towns that were considered ancestral homes include Boneybefore, County Antrim for Andrew Jackson; Deroran, County Tyrone for James Buchanan; Mounthill, County Antrim for Andrew Johnson; Dergenagh, County Tyrone for Ulysses S. Grant; Dreen, County Antrim for Chester Arthur; Conagher, County Antrim for William McKinley; Glenoe, County Antrim for Teddy Roosevelt; Dergalt, County Tyrone for Woodrow Wilson; Dunganstown, County Wexford for the hallowed John F. Kennedy; Timahoe in County Kildare for Richard Nixon; Ballyporeen, County Tipperary for Ronald Reagan, and Rathfriland, County Down for both Georges.

Ireland has been welcoming Presidents as much as it can, forging as strong a link as a nation the size of Maine and with fewer than 5 million people, could. President Clinton spent a lot of time on Ireland, helping to find a solution to The Troubles.

And so, on St Patrick's Day 2011, the announcement was made that the President would visit Moneygall in May. Moneygall was spruced up for the visit, indeed the whole town was painted. Money was found to do an incredible job of work. President Obama was visiting Ireland, in itself a huge deal, and going to Moneygall.

Although Canon Neill described himself as a chancer, there was to be no messing about. Fiona Fitzsimons of Trinity College, working for Irish genealogy service Eneclann, back-tracked the family heritage, and found current relatives. She communicated these to the US Embassy, to ensure that any family meeting the president had a genuine connection.

The visit was huge for Moneygall, and indeed for the country. Arriving in Dublin, President Obama was greeted by Taoiseach Enda Kenny and President



Mary MacAleese, and invited to give a speech at Trinity College.

For Moneygall, it was quite the situation. The Secret Service descended in preparation: Ollie Hayes' pub was approved as large enough for a Presidential Party, man-hole covers were welded, the Irish Police and Defence forces stationed 3,000 personnel, some one seventh of the national total, in the immediate vicinity. Security was so intense that Garadai were escorting the cows to be milked, and those with licensed guns had

to surrender them to the Garda station for the duration of the visit. The troops were stationed in a nearby forest, and the pub was designated as a Communications Centre for the Commander in Chief during his time there, should an eventuality arise.

The visit would last an hour, the lads were told. Henry the Eighth, Ollie Hayes, and John Donovan, owner of the Kearny home, were all briefed on the day. In Marine One, Obama flew to Moneygall and they used the local sports ground to land, where some 5,000 people greeted him. He was shown the ancestral home of The Kearneys, and enjoyed a pint in Hayes' Pub, while Michelle was shown how to pour the perfect pint.

Obama did a walk around, which surprised many including the Secret Service, and was shown the various parts of the town, and in the pub had a terrific time. The note he paid for his pint is framed there, and Michele was shown, and indeed learned, how to pull a pint of Guinness. It was a huge success.

In 2013, Supermacs, an Irish fast food chain based out of Galway, announced they would be building an £6 million rest stop between Dublin and Limerick, and that the location was to be Moneygall. It would be named Barack Obama Plaza, opening on May 28, 2014.

Henry Healy, our pal Henry the Eighth, was announced as the manager of the plaza. The plaza lies not far from the village but is in County Tipperary, and gainfully employs some 130 people. Quite an employer. The rest stop was apparently always on the cards, but one wonders if it wouldn't have been the same as every other one, but for the gang of "chancers".

Of course the plaza, lying between the motorway and the village, captures a huge new market of long distance (well, for Ireland) travelers, and has become quite a tourist attraction, but has sucked away a lot of the interest from Moneygall itself. It was reported in January of 2017 that the Obama Cafe was boarded up, while a number of Moneygall's shops — and there were not many to begin with — have closed.

The plaza is, though, a unique experience. It is very large, combining the fuel and food, unlike in the UK where usually they are separate. Supermacs is an Irish take on fast food, and although disappointingly they have Papa Johns as a franchise operator, they do have fresh food options that are appealing.

The second floor of the plaza has a number of conference rooms and the 'From Moneygall to the White House Exhibition' (which anyone I asked seemed to call the Obama Museum). An image of Fulmuth Kearney, maps, documents, and a history of connections are on display. There is a distinct focus on Barack Obama, but John F Kennedy also features strongly, both men represented by beautiful bronze busts. Reagan and Clinton seem to get a lot of mention; Nixon, not so much.

It is actually a lovely exhibit, and I really enjoyed it; there are some delightful things to see. Glass cases with unusual items: mail from the White House, buttons from the election, the crystal bowl with which the President was presented in Shamrock. And so, standing in Tipperary, but meant to be in Offaly, I find Obama, and it makes me miss him: a real world leader, a beautiful orator and an intelligent and thoughtful man, who appreciated his roots. ❀

For further reference...

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<http://www.moneygall.com/trace-obamas-roots/obama-family-tree>

Thumbs Up for Mr. Sardonicus

Marching to a different drummer can be particularly awkward on the road with a stream of dissenters all keeping step. Milt Stevens didn't bother to complain (1942–2017).

He was honored, selected, and unrecognized. He co-chaired L.A.con II (42nd Worldcon, 1984), the largest ever and one of the best — not the same thing. He chaired Westercon XXXIII (1980) and was Fan Guest of Honor at Westercon LXI. He chaired Loscon I (L.A. local con, 1975) and was Fan GoH at Loscon IX. He ran the Fanzine Lounge at Westercon LV and L.A.con IV (64th Worldcon). He ran programming at Corflu XXXIV (2017).

He was one of the finest fanwriters in the world, in his own zine *The Passing Parade* and elsewhere. We never put him on the Hugo ballot.

His sense of humor was often called dry. I might call it sandy. It could polish you.

For a while he used the handle “Mr. Sardonicus” (and his zine for SAPS, the Spectator Amateur Press Ass'n, was *Sardonicus*). The title character in William Castle's 1961 movie *Mr. Sardonicus* got his face frozen in a horrifying grin. Glow-in-the-dark cards with Thumbs Up and Thumbs Down had been distributed to the audience. Near the end the director appeared on-screen asking for votes in a Punishment Poll. No instance is known in which the thumbs-up ending was shown. Some say it was never filmed.

Properly the sardonic aims at self-relief when one can do nothing else against adversity. His blade was better pointed than that. Presumably the name appealed to his fannish self-deprecation. In leaving the unobservant to suppose his remarks were moved by pessimism perhaps he was sardonic. Like many people who can write, he could read. *We need men round us who can think and who can talk* (G. de Maupassant, “The Horla”, 1887); he was there too.

This lit up his letters of comment. Comments are the blood of an apa, and more generally letters of comment are the blood of a fanzine. Best are those whose authors show they have in fact read (and not, say, merely jerked a knee at) what they are commenting on. He was there too.

I'll tell one book story. At cons I've been leading Classics of S-F talks; often I pick the classics; at Loscon XLI one was *The Stars My Destination* (A. Bester, 1957). Regency dancing (see e.g. *Mimosa* 29) was scheduled on Friday at 4 p.m., *Stars* at 2:30, so I



had to conduct it in costume; couldn't get my neck-cloth right — “Beau” Brummell (1778–1840), with all the time in the world and a valet, would cheerfully discard a dozen — and arrived late. Milt Stevens had cheerfully started discussion. As I walked in he was just pointing out Bester's careful structure: starting in the dark, climaxing in the cathedral, ending in the light.

He was generous to his club — L.A. S-F Society, oldest in the world — with effort, money, as might be needed and he had at hand. At the first LASFS clubhouse, he did so much cleaning up he called himself the Lord High Janitor. He'd been attending since 1960. He was President in 1970. He was given the Evans-Freehafer, LASFS' service award, in 1971. He served long on the Board of Directors, sometimes in its chair. At the third clubhouse, parking restrictions were problematic. He arranged to meet with police and transit authorities, brought the club's lawyer, who was also a fan, and found a solution.

Other generousities have emerged, regarding fans, fanzines, conventions. Among other service, he was on the Board of the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (yes, that spells SCIFI; pronounced “skiffy”; sponsor of three Worldcons, a NASFiC, three Westercons, the Rotsler Award, and an edition of Harry Warner's history of 1950s fandom *A Wealth of Fable*).

If you looked for him at a con you might find him in the bar, wearing a sports jacket, drinking Bud Light. If you gave much weight to such things, or his mild manner, you might write him off as respectable. He was — but in fact by our standards. *Ave atque vale*.

—John Hertz

(reprinted from *Vanamonde* 1270)



by **Graham Charnock**

When Graham Charnock, the renowned science fiction writer, died recently his wife went through his trash bin and found the partially burned remains of this manuscript, together with a hoard of pornographic photos with which we will not be concerned here. The burning of the manuscript has meant that certain areas including some salient paragraphs, have become indecipherable although of course we have done our best to speculate about their possible meaning. She also found a charred pair of his carpet slippers which she is currently offering on eBay.

ALL MY LIFE I wanted to be hack writer. I read a lot of science fiction written by hacks and enjoyed it, so figured I had a good grounding in the field. Most of the sf I read was written by English hacks and published in John Carnell's *New Worlds*, and its cousin *Science Fantasy* (later *Impulse*) magazines for which I have retained a lasting affection. Ted Tubb, Ken Bulmer, Dan Morgan, Terry Pratchett, John Kippax, and others were the people who informed my albeit limited view of the hack writing universe.

QUITE TRUTHY

Sometime when I was young I met Chris Priest in a pub in the East End. He remarked upon my PVC donkey jacket and did not attempt to sexually assault me and we exchanged ideas about what writing was about and what our motivations should be.

GROUND ROUND

Chris's motivations were that he felt trapped in a dead-end job as an accountant and he saw writing as a way to get out of it. I could tolerate dead-end jobs and didn't have his drive to escape, but some of his motivation rubbed off on me. For a start he started selling stuff so could always buy me a McDonalds or a Wimpy as we called them in those days. I was jealous. Selling stuff has never been a big thing with me, but even I could see that selling stuff was better than not selling stuff. Chris taught me to look in the *Writers and Artists Yearbook* and seek out markets, so of course I did, but of course I had to steal a copy from W.H. Smith before I could do so.

HACK AS HACK CAN

So I sat down at my manual Barlock typewriter to hone my hack craft, something which I learnt involved a lot of paper and not enough carbon paper. The first market I sold to was a pecu-

liar one. Graham Hall, an old friend, had gone to Sussex University where he had been in charge of editing a student magazine. I sent a story to him, a fragmented non-linear piece, he bought it. Well, I say he bought it, but of course no money changed hands. No money changing hands would later become a theme in my dealings with Graham Hall.

HE'S RIGHT YOU KNOW

Meanwhile, following Chris's example, I was firing off stories to *Tit-bits*, a British weekly gossip and tits magazine which occasionally featured a page of fiction. At last I was beginning to become a hack.

FOUND WANTING

The trouble was work in that field would never even keep a retired arthritic greyhound in gainful employment. Dickey Howett, a cartooning fan, became involved as an illustrator with a gay magazine called *Jeremy* (those were the days) so I wrote some gay stuff for them. My career was obviously progressing.

CASH FOR CATFOOD

Of course I maintained contact with Chris Priest and we both very much wanted to become Serious Writers. He was writing his first novel called *Indoctrinaire* when I visited him in his flat in what is now a very fashionable area of Kensington, but wasn't then. There were tins of can food laying about, which puzzled me, because Chris didn't have a cat. When I enquired about this Chris confessed that he had been conscripted by a pet food company to write pet horoscopes which people could collect labels and send off for. I must admit this did strike me as the ultimate depths that a hack writer could descend to, although I confess I didn't know how I would have felt if I was offered the gig. I would probably have bought a cat.



ONE-HANDLED ENGINE

Chris has never been in denial about how he wrote porn, shit and cat food ads to support himself. He was kind of desperate in a way I told myself I would never become. I chose instead to work for several employers as a wage slave, as long as I could remain Precious about my Art. These are the decisions we make.

NEARLY CREDIBLE

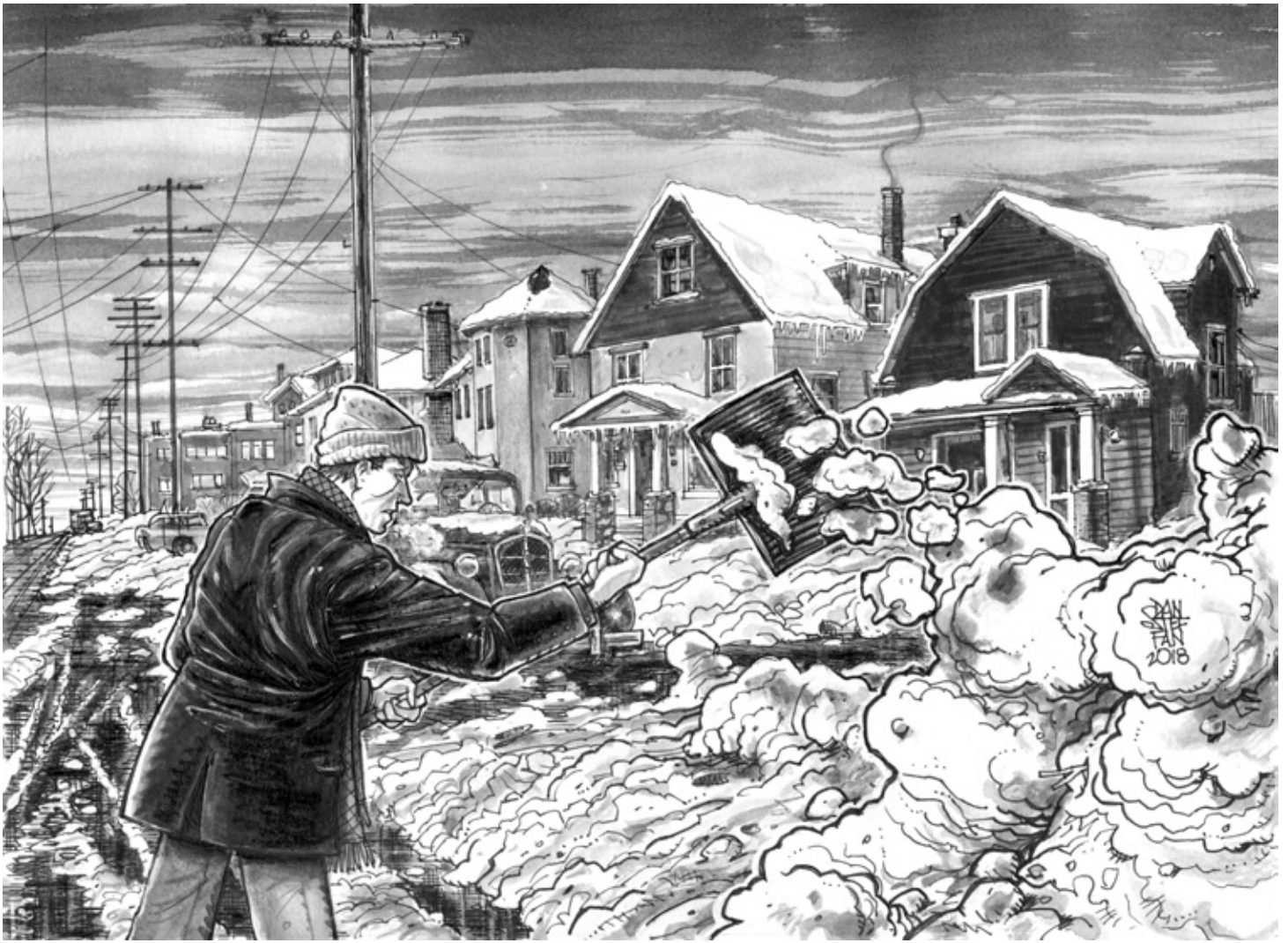
Chris has always been strangely proud about not writing shit under his own name. Thus there came about a series of soft-porn novels for New English Library under the pen-name Petra Christian, and cheap novelizations of films under the name of C.P. McKenzie. Sometimes the porn didn't always turn out as expected. Like all of us, he tried to write an explicit sex book for Essex House called *Three Old Ladies*, the main plot driver being about three old ladies trapped in a lavatory on a canal boat. Never did understand that one. He even drew me in by persuading me to write a chapter of his exploitation novel *Slave Island* by Brad Sademan where a forgotten territory in Mississippi was ruled over by a modern slave-master. Raping and degrading black women were a big part of that story I was not entirely happy with. If there had been money I would have taken it, but as usual with my dealings with Chris Priest there was none.

[It is when we get on to Graham's involvement with New Worlds magazine that things become difficult due to the poor state of the manuscript. Unfortunately only fragments remain, but we present these here for posterity to make its own judgement.]

Then I met Charles . . . anally fixated douche-bag . . . he helped Graham Hall move to a bedsit . . . Brandenburg Concertos and wet cum rags . . . Michael Moorcock . . . c—t . . . with a waxed moustache . . . Shared a bed with Tom and his gay nazi boyfriend John Cl . . . Woke up screaming "This wrong!" only to find J.G. Ball . . . standing over me with a hypodermic. "I wish I'd never had the sex change," said Barrington J. Bay . . . Meanwhile Mike Harris . . . was on the floor giggling hysterically as we all tried to penetrate him . . . I sold two stories to . . . spunk stains . . . Harry and Brian wrestling naked . . . Brian Burgess and his huge . . . Norman Spinrad getting . . . from Marilyn Hacker . . .

I THINK I CAN SAY my life as a hack writer has not been a categorical success. What money I made out of it, which was very little money, I spent on booze, which was very little booze. ❀





antecedents
by Gordon Eklund

I just got back home a short while ago from a week spent staying with my sister and her husband in the dusty little eastern Washington hamlet of Quincy WA. (Located in Grant rather than the more historically pertinent Adams County for unknown reasons.) I took Amtrak to nearby Wenatchee and back. \$46 round trip. Relaxing ride, plenty of leg room, gorgeous mountain scenery, even a decent chicken breast dinner in the dining car on the way over. I switched over to the other side of the coach for the early morning trip back. A pleasant time all in all.

One of my motivations for going over was that my sister had mentioned having recently come across a battered cardboard box chock full of accumulated Stuff she'd inherited from our parents, both deceased, my mother much too soon in 1984, my dad eighteen years later. "There was a whole stack of old letters inside," she said. "From back during World War II. Lots of black-and-white photographs too. You were in a bunch of them."

No huge surprise there. I was born in 1945. It sounded like my own era. My first one anyhow.

So after a day or two of quiet talking, a visit to downtown Wenatchee, and helping my sister feed the four horses belonging to the vacationing neighbors next door, I brought up the box.

"Let me go get it," she said.

Together that evening we went through the contents.

There were a few oddities in there too. Oddest of all was probably an Avalon Books hardcover first edition of *The Outlaws of Mars* by the redoubtable Otis Adelbert Kline. \$2.95, the 1962 original cover price. I grabbed it up immediately. "This has to be mine," I said. I'd presumably bought the book new when I was in high school and on the outlook for more Edgar Rice Burroughs style kicks. (I'd been through all of ERB's Martian books already.) Later on, back home, I checked on eBay and found copies of the book going for \$50 and up. Enough to pay for my train ticket over and back, I thought. Am I up to reading the book again? You're kidding, right? (Alas, no, I'm not.)

But most of the contents of the box turned out to be as described. There were indeed plenty of photographs of me taken during my early, more vulnerable years. There I was in a baby carriage. Squatting on the floor playing with wooden blocks. Sitting on the back of a bored looking pony—me in cowboy suit, chaps, and cap pistol. Several photos were clearly taken during the aftermath of the Great Seattle Blizzard of January 1950 when more than two feet of snow fell during a single day and temperatures dropped to zero Fahrenheit and hung

there for nearly a month. Peer close enough and you can spot the top of my head poking up from out of the deeper drifts. My curly blonde head. Inside an envelope inscribed *July 1946—Gordy's First Haircut* a lock of hair provided actual physical evidence of those onetime golden locks. Long gone now. Much like the fabled beers of yesteryears.

The World War II era letters my sister mentioned fell into four primary groups.

There were a number of relatively brief letters on official Army Air Corps stationery from my dad's younger brother Howard, written from England where he was stationed as an Eighth Air Force B-17 flight engineer. Nothing much in them besides the usual hi, how are you, wish I was there with you, not here where people around me keep dying. Shortly after the last of these letters from 1944, Howard's plane was shot down over Germany. He waited until the last possible moment before bailing out—to avoid German fighter planes picking off parachuting fliers as they descended—and made it safely to the ground, where he was eventually captured. He spent the remaining months of the European war in a German POW camp until it was hastily evacuated as the Red Army approached from the east and the prisoners and their guards marched furiously due west until they reached the comparative comfort of the Allied lines. There was nothing about any of this in the letters from England of course. I learned most of it much later on. Like many combat veterans, Howard, who moved to Seattle shortly after his return, never liked to talk about his war experiences back when I was still at home. In his later years he opened up considerably. Including on Facebook. He died at age 90 in 2013.

"Here's what must've come as some happy news," I said, passing a Western Union cable across the table to my sister. It was from my grandfather in Colorado to my dad in Seattle. "Howard reported German prisoner of war. More later when we hear it." "You call that happy news?" my sister asked. Since the initial reports of his plane going down could only have listed Howard as missing in action, I figured it had to be.

In one of his letters Howard wrote: "Sorry to hear about Ed. That's the way it goes, I guess. It can happen anytime. All of us over here know it too."

The Ed referred in the letter was his and my dad's uncle, Ed Eklund, who had been living in suburban Seattle Burien with his married sister Edith and her husband Bill Newman since the middle 1920's. Ed was among the first ever graduating class at the high school my two brothers and I attended



much later on. The rest of the family remained in Pueblo, Colorado. Most of the men were employed as steelworkers at the giant Colorado Fuel & Iron mill, the biggest west of Pittsburgh.

There were several letters from Ed in the box, all written shortly before he was killed in action in the Pacific in 1943. Chatterier than Howard's brief notes, well written, funny at times. Ed was an older man—single, in his middle thirties. The story in the local Burien paper found tucked inside the box quotes a number of Ed's fellow employees at the local gas company saying that Ed talked about enlisting in the Navy even before the war started. He wanted a chance to see some of the world he never had an opportunity of seeing otherwise. Ed and my dad were particularly close, only a few years apart in age. I imagine Ed's death hit him pretty hard. Ed's presence in Seattle was one of the main reasons he and my mom moved out here in 1942. By then though, Ed was already in the Navy on his way to the Pacific.

The biggest stack of letters by far were written by my mother's younger brother Bill Stewart, who like Ed was serving in the Navy in the Pacific. The letters date from May 1941 when Bill couldn't have been more than seventeen (if that) until early 1947. A long hitch. I saw a fair amount of Bill when I was growing up. He'd show every year or two, always with a different woman in tow (sometimes one or more of her kids as well), stick around for a few months sometimes working as a cab driver or such like, and then disappear, often overnight. On at least a couple of occasions when he disappeared, my dad's car went with him. Bill always left his own jalopy behind though. In partial payment, I suppose. He died in the seventies while living in Oregon working as a lumberjack. Everyone who met Bill said he looked like Clark Gable. I suppose he did. Especially when he wore a thin pencil moustache like Gable.

Bill's letters are pretty much what you'd expect from somebody his age writing to an older sister. He asks to borrow a few dollars now and then but more often it's particular brands of pipe tobacco he's after. He seems to be having a pretty good time of it. He mentions various people he's met along the way. Most of them seem to be women. At least one he mentions having "almost married." His favorite ports are San Francisco and Honolulu. He's fond of one of the ships he's served on. Refers to it as "Old Minnie" on a couple of occasions.

At some point around late 1944 or early '45, after several years in the South Pacific, Bill and a couple buddies apparently jumped ship. Somehow, he managed to make it all the way to Seattle. He told my mom and dad he'd gotten an early release from the

Navy and soon went to work driving a taxi downtown. Eventually, they figured out something was wrong and talked him into turning himself in to the Shore Patrol. The last few of Bill's letters bear a return address from a naval disciplinary barracks in Southern California. It reads as if he got six months for his AWOL. In one letter he mentions another man, presumably one of those who jumped ship with him but who didn't turn himself in, and how he "had it lots worse." Five years in a navy prison, he says. In any event, in his last letter from 1947, Bill's back on board ship again and looking forward to getting out in another few months.

The last two letters in the box are long ones written by a mystery man, a soldier stationed in Netherlands New Guinea who signs himself only as "Gordy." Now I was always told that I'd been named after a soldier my parents knew during World War II. My mother explained she just liked the name, never said anything else about the man who shared it with me. Finding Gordy's letters in the box was a real surprise. They're the best, longest, and most interesting of the entire bunch. He writes in some detail about New Guinea. The local women are all black, he notes, and as a white man he's not the least bit interested, though he knows others are. It's always hot here too. Steamy. A jungle. You step outside and you're instantly bathed in sweat. He goes on to say how much he liked rainy Seattle when he was there. How he might well want to settle there after the war.

There's a photo of him enclosed too. It shows an attractive dark-haired man in his middle or late twenties wearing an army uniform with staff sergeant stripes on the sleeve. There's a pin-up photo of Betty Grable (yep, that one) tacked to the wall behind and a small dog sits in his lap. I was reminded of one of the many handsome, fresh-faced B-movie actors of the era. The ones who played romantic leads in the many quickly forgettable low budget crime pictures of the forties, the kind TCM shows in the early morning hours and which seldom run longer than sixty or seventy crisp minutes. I couldn't quite put a specific name to him though.

"I think Gordy had a crush on our mom," my sister said, when she finished reading the letters.

It seemed possible to me too. Though I couldn't help mentally noting how like a lot of men the older I get the more I look like my dad. Sometimes on particularly bleary mornings, I glance up at the mirror while brushing my teeth and see him gazing back at me with a mouth full of Colgate toothpaste.

Apart from the letters the single most fascinating item in the box was a yellowed newspaper clipping,

undated, but which from internal evidence must have appeared sometime in 1927.

The headline above the story reads: *Jesse Stewart Kills Self by Shooting As Result of Charges Brought by Wife.*

Jessie Stewart was my mother's father, my maternal grandfather. The charges brought by his wife, my grandmother who died from complications of TB in the early 1940's, were desertion and lack of financial support.

In the last of nine stark paragraphs, the news story wraps up with a quote from a letter found among Jesse Stewart's possessions addressed to his younger brother Hack: *I have tried to get things straightened out today, but have failed. However, I don't blame none of them for I guess I brought it all on myself. Hack, try and get them to let Mother and Father take Delois and Billie.*

Delois was my mother, then eleven. Billie was her brother Bill. The story notes that he was two. They did end up spending several years living with the older Stewarts on their farm in north Texas. My mom always said it was happiest time of her early life.

Town Constable James Castle who had come to the hotel where Jessie Stewart was staying to serve the court summons is also quoted: "When I knocked on the door of room 20, Stewart said, 'Who's there?' I responded saying, 'It is Castle.' He told me to wait a minute and then I heard the shot ring out."

There was more in the box too. A few more stacks of black-and-white photographs going on up through the fifties and sixties. A pair of World War II ration books, one for each of my parents, the coupons largely intact. An August 1939 issue of *Readers Digest* notable for an article denouncing as an undeserved handout the coming start of Social Security payments to the elderly and unemployed. (No mention of Ponzi schemes; I guess that bit of right wing whackery developed only later.) On a more, um, intellectually vigorous plane, the issue wraps up with a short excerpt from Thomas Wolfe's new novel *The Web and the Rock*. The one thing you wouldn't guess from reading the magazine was that the whole world was about to explode in fire and fury in a matter of weeks.

Down near the bottom of the box was a notice from Selective Service dated March 1944 ordering my father to report for a pre-induction physical. He failed of course, presumably because he'd lost the sight in his

left eye from a botched operation when he was an infant.

Lucky break for me though, considering my eventual birth more than a year later in the summer of 1945. Fortunate for him too. 1944 was not a good time to be drafted into the army. The soft support jobs had long since been filled and new inductees were being handed a rifle and sent straight to the western front in Europe just in time for the Battle of the Bulge. A great many never made it back home.

We also came upon my mother's Pueblo Colorado Central High School senior class yearbook from 1933. I remembered having seen it before. Flipping through the many pages of photographs, including nicknames, clubs belonged to, athletic teams and so on, we found my mom on page six. Her nickname was "Dee" and she belonged to the Latin Club. At the end of the photos off in a little section by themselves, no nicknames, no clubs or sporting teams, something I'd not noticed before, the solemn faces of six black kids, three boys and three girls, stare fixedly back at the camera. Those were the days. ❁



On Distance and Expanding the World



by Pete Young

As I write, there are occasional, premature online articles about the retirement of the Boeing 747, otherwise known to me as ‘my office’. Boeing has not yet ceased production of this iconic aircraft, yet orders for new ones are slowing. I still work occasionally on thirty-six of them (gradually whittled down from a fleet of around fifty, ten years ago), and they’re good for at least another ten years. Sometime in 2000 I did the public tour of Boeing’s plant in Everett, and the tour, while very impressive, does not go into the history of the 747 — that has to get filed under Further Reading.

It’s often said by journalists trying to wax poetic that the 747 ‘shrunk the world’. I’d say that’s true. I’ve looked into how the 747 supposedly revolutionised international travel, and although long-haul jets were nothing new in 1969 somehow the 747 took aviation up a significant level, mostly as a result of its graceful appearance and never-before-seen wide-bodied configuration. People with enough money wanted to fly on it in a way that was only surpassed by the elitist cachet of Concorde; in comparison, a traveller’s desire to fly on today’s Airbus A380 seems rather muted in comparison, a resignation to the fact that you’re actually just another punter on an ugly double-decker bus that is superior in technical specification alone. No one on this smaller planet prefers the A380 over the 747 when it just comes down to looks.

So yes it’s true, the world has now been shrunk as far as it will ever be shrunk if you want to get somewhere; that is until a new generation of supersonic hybrid aircraft/spacecraft ever gets built, the kind that will (rumour has it) get you from London to Sydney in an hour. Right now there is just not enough money around to R&D this kind of flying all the way to commercial viability, but should it ever happen the only thing that will get you from London to Sydney quicker than by skimming the atmosphere will be by teleporting. Or as Alfred Bester had it in *The Stars My Destination*, jaunting instantaneously.

Amongst this rather rambling start to this essay, there might even be questions I could ask. Without this near-instantaneous travel to the other side of the globe available to us — which would literally be wonderful to experience but which I hasten to add will not be seen in our lifetimes — where can we go from here? What alternatives do we have if we want to experience the world differently?

One choice could be to consciously slow down our lives, to a pace where time does not have to be ‘of the essence’ to justify doing anything, when words, ideas and suggestions are not subjected to

the imposition of deadlines, when we don't have to race ahead at breakneck speed in order to get something useful done. In other words, to travel slowly.

And in order to also step back from the bleeding edge of technology in how we communicate with each other, it first takes the will to do so. To enjoy the experience of writing letters, not e-mails, and revel in the small pleasure of sticking a stamp on an envelope. In other words, to allow our communications to travel slowly, and perhaps more meaningfully.

Allow me to illustrate.

Ixpect just about every fan in my fannish circle will have heard of the Birmingham bookseller Rog Peyton. Rog, where are you now? I miss our banter.

At conventions Rog was occasionally known to champion a book or three, and at the time I first got to know him one of those novels he loved and would wax lyrical about to anyone who would listen was *Flicker* by the American author Theodore Roszak. With evangelistic zeal Rog claimed to have pretty much single-handedly promoted this book in the UK and flooded the country with copies of it: of all the copies on all the bookshelves in all the country, Rog reckoned he had probably sold most of them.

"You may not have heard of Roszak, he's not written many of the kind of books We like," Rog told me while trying to flog me a copy. Needless to say I bought one (still unread) because he probably had a boxful that he wanted to shift at that particular Novacon in Walsall.

"Well," I replied, "As a matter of fact I have. 'Counterculture' guy. He wrote *Person/Planet*. Heard of it?"

"Ohh... uh, can't say I have..." A rare, puzzled look came over Rog's face, one that, for all I knew, might fleet across his features when a conversation drifts into territory where his knowledge may be a little less than commanding. Out of consideration for this eminent bookseller whose friendship I wanted to cultivate I moved the conversation back onto safer ground: "I know he wrote *Bugs*, but I've not read it. Any good?"

A couple of years later at an Eastercon at Heathrow, (with Boeing 747s taking off and landing nearby with unalarming regularity) I brought along my copy of *Person/Planet* to show him. "Uh, Rog, your might remember we briefly talked about...?" I knew I was going nowhere with this; indeed the book had been out of print for decades (it was published in 1981) and I felt all I could really do was prove to him that the book existed. No, he confirmed after two years of probably never giving it a second thought,



he'd never seen it before. Nevertheless, I hope it became a curiosity. Score one small point for me.

So why am I talking about *Person/Planet* now? After all, its concerns aren't at all science fictional, being more a long-winded analysis of how people can somehow reconnect to the planet we live on in spite of our overly scientific society and *shrunk* world. Roszak does discuss things like *Frankenstein*, but his concerns are much more grounded in how people can exist meaningfully by living out their inner nature rather than by adopting the 'manufactured' roles that come with an industrialised society. It's a book that has long stayed with me, and it's most memorable moment was where Roszak quotes a long passage called 'The Desert Experience' from

...a Trappist monk, now living in New Guinea, with whom I have been corresponding for the past four or five years, exchanging views on the moral and spiritual turmoil of the modern world. Our letters pass back and forth at about six-month intervals. He prefers to send his by sea mail—to maintain a civilised pace to the dialogue.

I have always liked Roszak's description of that correspondence, and it always comes to me when I receive hand-written or typed letters that arrive by Air Mail, instead of the usual instant communication provided by e-mail. I somehow value these letters a little more because people have evidently



Above and below:
The first 747, now and
in 1969

Boeing 747 Facts

50,000 workers
Wingspan 195ft 8 in / 59.6m
Length 231ft 4in / 70.5m
Height 63ft 5in / 19.3m
Wing area 5,500 sq ft / 511m ²
Weight (loaded) 735,000lbs / 333,390kg
Weight (empty) 370,816lbs / 168,199kg
Cruise speed 640mph / 1,030km/h
Range 6,000mi / 9,656km
Ceiling 45,000ft / 13,716m
Accommodations 3 crew 12–14 flight attendants 374 passengers



taken time for me — when a far quicker alternative means they needn't — to do the necessary extraneous stuff to get their words on their way. I especially appreciate Steve Sneyd's handwritten missives using recycled paper and envelopes, and John Hertz's typed stream of consciousness (which is sometimes followed a week later by a second copy with corrections that he believes make that stream of consciousness flow better), and James Bacon's colourful letters and postcards.

The point is, perhaps, that this trickle of paper correspondence actually make the world a bigger place. They add time and distance to my life, while letters that arrive in my laptop's inbox somehow feel as if they were sent by someone six inches behind my computer screen, arriving a fraction of a second after they were sent, looking identical to everyone else's e-mails all in blessed twelve-point Helvetica.

Who would like to begin an international correspondence where our letters are sent and arrive by Surface Mail?

I live on a planet that, with the help mostly of Boeing 747s, I have now shrunk down to the size of my head over thirty-odd years. My daily experience of the world consists of news arriving on my computer screen mostly from places I personally know either very well or fairly well or not at all, all of which gets filed into Read Now, or Read Later, or Ignore And Likely Forget. Wherever in the world something significant is happening, these days it's rare that I have to ask myself "where

on Earth is that?" I have constant world-shrinking travel and instant global communications to thank for that.

Sometime in 2008 I read the four books in Harry Harrison's *Nova* anthology series, and in the fourth was an essay by Alfred Bester, 'My Affair with Science Fiction'. In it, Bester is recalling his time at *Holiday* magazine and mentions that as a journalist he took part in an inaugural flight of a Boeing 747. He doesn't mention which, but it was either the one out of Boeing's plant in Everett on 9 February 1969, or more likely its first commercial flight with Pan Am on 21 January 1970. If Alfred Bester was in there right at the beginning of the life of the 747, he was likely one the first people to refer to this aircraft as "world-shrinking".

On reading this detail I also remember thinking that there must have been photographs of Bester taken at such an event. Over the last few years I've briefly researched this in books that cover the early history of the 747, yet I've seen no photo in which Bester might be conveniently identified — we can imagine before-and-after black-and-white memento scenes of a bunch of suited journalists all lined up alongside the plane with self-congratulatory smiles on their faces, or perhaps a few of them propping themselves up on the First Class seats in the upper deck, collars undone and ties askew, the worse for wear after a few too many complimentary scotch and sodas. Yet while photographs of this event in Bester's life *ought* to exist, indeed they may not. There are some things that remain elusive where Google or Wikipedia still can't help you, and where the distance between myself and a closer knowledge of a time and place cannot be bridged, not without a lot of (perhaps futile) effort.

Perhaps someone should ask Bester's bartender Joe Suder, if he's still alive, if Bester ever talked about this and showed him the goddamn photos.

Maybe I need to make another visit to Boeing and their huge archives to get close to this almost insignificant moment in 747/Alfred Bester history. Or maybe a Seattleite Bester fan with time on his or her hands, and maybe a conveniently placed mole inside Boeing, would like to have a go finding out. But I doubt it would happen — maybe there's nothing to save me from making the long journey to Seattle and Everett myself, located far away on the other side of the planet that is my head, just to find out if this missing moment of Alfred Bester's existence also exists somewhere in photographic form or if it's all just an expansive daydream.

And I might even find the time to read Roszak's *Flicker* on the plane. ❁



Home Is Like No Place There

by Randy Byers

Micronesia: An Introduction

When I was diagnosed with glioblastoma multiforme in December 2015, the first thing on my bucket list was a return trip to Yap Island, where my family had lived for four years from 1966 to 1970 (ages 5 to 9 for me). If I was able to do that, I thought it was also high time for me to visit the mysterious abandoned stone city of Nan Madol on Pohnpei, which serves as the entrance to the subterranean world in A. Merritt's *The Moon Pool*, and was also allegedly the inspiration for Lovecraft's R'lyeh, where Cthulhu lies dreaming.

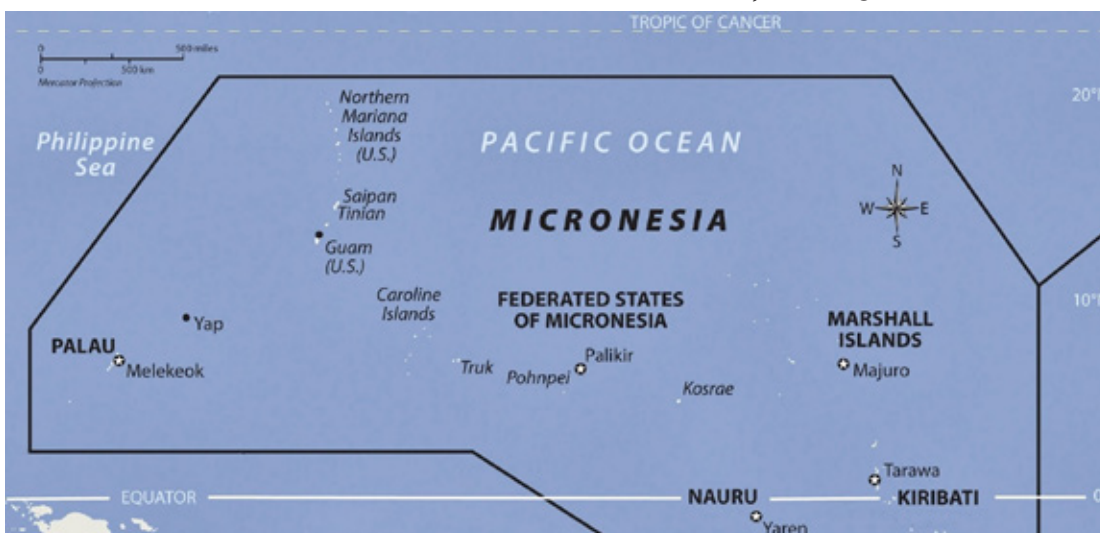
Micronesia (meaning "small islands") was settled by humans millennia ago, although anthropologists and archaeologists aren't sure exactly when. Magellan discovered the Mariana Islands, including Guam, in 1480, but the islands became particularly important to Spain when the Spanish were looking for an alternate route to China and the Spice Islands in the 17th Century. Spain took control of most of Micronesia in 1885, but lost control of Guam to the U.S. at the end of the Spanish-American War; the rest of their Micronesia possessions were sold to Germany at that time. After WWI the Japanese were granted rights to the islands by the United Kingdom and the League of Nations as a reward for their naval support against the Germans in the Pacific during the war. In WWII the U.S. fought its way across Microne-

sia, launching its atomic strikes against Japan from the Northern Mariana island of Tinian. After the war the islands were designated the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which was administered by the U.S.

By the late '50s there was a worldwide uproar over the U.S.'s failure to provide the TTPI any support. When JFK was elected in 1960, he responded to the criticism by sending Peace Corps volunteers to the islands, as well as hiring teachers and administrators to work on behalf of the TTPI. That same year, my father earned his Master of Education and started teaching. Not long after, he and Mom were looking for a place where he could teach and they could save some money. He thought about going to Perth in Australia, but he saw an ad in an education magazine looking for teachers for the TTPI. He says what clinched it for them was the final line: "No poisonous snakes." Apparently the Daggetts across the street had taught in Africa for a time, and told tales of fending off snakes.

So in the summer of 1966 we moved to Yap. Dad taught at two different schools, starting in the village of Kanifay. He was such a success there that the Yapese Secretary of Education, John Mangefel, hired him to be the principal of Alaw, which was

in the capitol of Yap, Colonia. Life on Yap was a formative experience for even the adults in our family. My parents had never been out of the country when we flew to Yap on a Pan Am propeller plane. My brother Lonnie was twelve, and it probably left the deepest imprint on him. He took his wife Terry out there in the late '80s and connected with some of the old crowd and some younger folks who became our main points





Left to right: The family in 1966 and 1998; travelling in 2017

of contact, particularly Theo (an old schoolmate of ours) and his wife Antonia (Yapese names, Thinnifel and Garek). By that point, the islands of the TTPI had become independent nations, although still dependent financially on the U.S. Yap was part of the Federated State of Micronesia, along with Pohnpei (formerly Ponape), Chuuk (formerly Truk) and Kosrae (formerly Kusrae). In 1998 our whole family, now expanded by three grandchildren, returned to the island, where Dad was greeted and feted as a legend out of the past. The governor at the time, Vincent A. Figir, admonished Thinnifel to watch over us, and he did a great job of it. In 2002, Lonnie and his family returned for six months in Theo and Antonia's village of Kaday. Our niece, Jolie, joined them, and I came along for nearly three months.

So it was natural for me to ask Lonnie if he'd be interested in another trip out there, and of course he was. I wouldn't have been able to do it without him and Terry. They did all the planning and organizing of the trip, and saw to my comfort when I was

struggling to find the stamina to do much of anything that I'd hoped to do. It didn't help that right before we headed out there, I was told that my cancer had returned and had spread, and I was put on daily "micro-doses" of chemo for the duration of our traveling. My oncologist wasn't thrilled about the idea of my heading out to the middle of nowhere under these conditions, and warned me that the worst-case scenario was that I might have some serious medical problems and then be stuck waiting for a medical professional to accompany me on the return trip. Still, in the end, she thought that it was the right quality-of-life decision for me to take a trip that was very important to me, and she was hopeful that it would actually help me find the ground on which to resist the resurgent cancer. I also had three infusions of the steroid Avastin before the trip for good measure.

I had to have my blood tested three times on Yap to make sure the chemo wasn't doing too much damage.

A Micronesian Diary

This account combines material from the Facebook posts I wrote during the trip with entries taken from the private handwritten journal I was keeping at the same time, edited for clarity and continuity. Material [in brackets] was added at the time of editing.

5/9/17 My brother, Lonnie, his wife, Terry, their youngest son, Cody, and I left Portland and made our way via San Francisco to Honolulu, where Lonnie and Terry's oldest son, Ryan, who has been living in Hawaii for two years, joined us for the trip.

5/10/17 We have arrived in Pohnpei via Majuro and Kwajalein, both of which are part of the Marshall Islands, which is one of the major island groups in Micronesia. I'd never been to any of the Marshalls or to Pohnpei before today. Kwajalein is still a top secret military installation, most recently testing anti-missile defense, and we weren't allowed to take photos, even from the airport. But we have made it to our first destination, which is also in tomorrowland, since we crossed the International Date Line between Kwajalein and Pohnpei.

Although this is my first time in Pohnpei, it is providing the familiar Micronesian experience. The island is substantially bigger than Yap, and the population seems much larger (indeed, it has 30,000 people compared to Yap's 10,000) and the traffic in Kolonia much busier. Still, they probably don't get many tourists

here, and when we went looking for food after we checked into our hotel, there wasn't much to choose from. We finally settled on the Cafe Oley, where I tried to order sashimi, except they had no fish. So three of us ordered chicken curry, which apparently overwhelmed the kitchen. Eventually a middle-aged woman showed up to the rescue. She stopped at our table to thank us gratefully. The five of us could well have doubled their income for the month. The curry was good, and when they failed to bring my orange juice I was happy to switch my order to iced tea, which they seemed to have in abundance. You have to be prepared to make adjustments in the islands. So far, so good.

And that's not even getting into the long wait for refueling on Majuro due to equipment failure. One of the common refrains on Yap is that it's easy to install a system, but foreign donors rarely think about what it takes to maintain a complex modern system far from the centers of technology. Fortunately, whatever the problem was was quickly fixed once they got the repair crew to the airport, which took about a half hour.

5/11/17 Unfortunately, my worst fear has come true: the micro-



doses of chemo are still enough to wipe me out, not to mention the long plane flights, radical change in time zones, a long hike in hot, humid weather, and wet sandals from wading through a canal. Consequently, I took a fall at Nan Madol today. **[1]** The worst damage was a scraped shin and bruised ego, plus diminished expectations of what I'll be capable of on this trip. It was still an interesting visit, which I'll post more about after a shower and a nap.

I'm in no shape to explain Nan Madol tonight, but it's an ancient stone city on Pohnpei, built by an earlier wave of immigrants than the current inhabitants. Our driver today, Wilson, said the surviving structure was a courthouse, and the tiny cell in it was a prison. He told us a lot of interesting stories, mostly about his own life. My sister-in-law, Terry, was instrumental in making sure I survived the ordeal of getting back to the car after I ran out of steam. **[2]** I'd probably be sleeping with the ghosts of Nan Madol tonight, if it wasn't for her. Love you, Terry!

The drive to Nan Madol took about an hour. **[3]** Wilson admitted that he wasn't much of a tour guide and claimed it was because he dropped out of school in the third grade when his grandfather offered to teach him how to fish instead. He's been off island once, when he went to Maui for two years to pick pineapple. He's 59 years old and has five children and at least one grandchild. He may not have been much of a tour guide, but he was very amiable to talk to. Also amiable when I got into the driver's seat by mistake. Dang these Japanese-made cars! I don't think he was very sympathetic about the tiny scrape I got in my fall, even though I played the cancer card in explaining what had happened. He asked if I wanted to be rushed to the hospital.

We had to wade through water to get to Nan Madol, which is on an artificial islet of its own. **[4]** At high tide you can't get there on foot. Children playing in the water greeted us with happy cries of Hello! while their parents requested an entry fee of three bucks apiece. Pohnpei should probably be doing more to protect this amazing historical site, but right now its remoteness is its best protection. I didn't see any graffiti, but I bailed out quickly after my fall and didn't explore the whole complex. Lonnie thought you could probably see more of it by kayak at high tide, because there's a lot of little islets in the complex, which is why it's been called the Venice of the Pacific.



5/12/17 Chaos and confusion at Pohnpei Airport. The Chuuk flight is either overbooked or overweight. We'll discover our fate in a half hour, but supposedly we have preference because we have connecting flights from Chuuk. It's an adventure! [The problem ended up being that we hadn't confirmed our flight all the way to Yap, but despite moments where it wasn't clear what our fate would be, we made it on board.]

5/13/17 When we arrived at Yap Airport on Saturday, the first familiar face we saw was Theo's brother, the Governor of Yap State, Tony Ganangyan. (None of us could remember his Yapese name, let alone pronounce it, so we referred to him as Tony G.) **[5]** Of course, Terry ran over and said hi and reminded him who we were.

"Oh yes," he said, "Theo told me you were coming." He came over to me and Lonnie and shook our hands. We chatted a bit awkwardly, and then he went back to stand in the Customs line for FSM Citizens. I was a little surprised that he didn't make use of his status to cut ahead of everyone, but I decided it was good politics.

Later, after we'd gotten through Customs and found Theo waiting for us, Theo told us, "Tony said that the apartment we found for you in the village is yours for free." Later still I found out that the apartment belongs to Yap Cooperative Association (YCA), which dates back to TTPI days and which Tony ran before he became governor, so I guess he's not above calling in favors



for the benefit of others. It was a generous gesture, and Tony has always struck me as a genial guy. I remember a conversation I had with him in 2002, when he told me he'd just been to Papua New Guinea. I asked him why, and he said he was looking for lumber. He told me that the PNG was a major source of lumber for Yap at the time. I believe this was in a little restaurant called Ganir that's above the YCA store. There was no reason he needed to indulge my curiosity, but he was being friendly.

Tony was also the one who told me at Lonnie's birthday party in 2002, where we were eating sea turtle (shhhh!) that turtle meat (or maybe the fat) gives you extra energy, and maybe this turtle would finally give him the energy to fix the koyeng near his house that had been destroyed by a typhoon. As I recall, it didn't, but I enjoyed his rhapsody about the benefits of eating turtle and wrote a piece called "Turtle Energy" about the whole experience and gave it to Lonnie for his 50th birthday a couple of years later.

5/14/17 Across the road from the YCA store is the Yap State Supreme Court building, where Mom used to work as a secretary in the '60s. There she was witness to Lonnie being knocked unconscious by a live powerline on the roof of O'Keefe's Saloon next door. The ambulance crew put a sheet over his face to protect him from the rain, but Mom interpreted it in the Western way and almost had a heart attack. He claims he didn't notice the wire because he was distracted by the sight of Claudia Giltinan swaying by. That's not a favorite family story, oh no. The lawn of that building has had the word YAP spelled out in white limestone since the '60s, although comparing photographs from then and now I see that this welcoming word has shrunk over time. **[6]**

This evening at the corner store in Kaday that Theo and family runs, where you can do your laundry while you drink Bud Lite, we had a barbecue with Theo and his son Marnie and grandson Little Theo. The ribs, taro, and rice tasted just like home. **[7]** Marnie's Pohnpeian wife, Judy, minded the store. Tomorrow she'll help me get my blood drawn for some tests to see how I'm handling the microdoses of chemo. It's good to have connections out here. One of the women who runs the hotel was able to figure out that we weren't the usual tourists just from the questions we

weren't asking and the people we know, including her old basketball coach, Thinnifel.

"He was hard on us," she said.

When I mentioned this to Theo, he said, "Of course I was, they lost every game they played."

"We were pretty terrible," she agreed.

When the Micronesian islands became independent nations in the '80s, several of them reverted to their native names. Palau became Belau, Ponape became Pohnpei, and Truk, sick of "dump truck" jokes, became Chuuk. Yap did not revert to Waab (sometimes spelled Waqab or Wa'ab, with the Q or apostrophe representing a glottal sound that doesn't exist in English). Yesterday Lonnie asked Theo why they didn't, and Theo said, "Of course when we speak to each other in Yapese, we say Waab, but I don't care what you call it. You can say Yap, or Pay, or Waab, whatever you want." This seems like a quintessentially Yapese attitude to me. They are very proud of their traditional culture, but there's an inward-facing quality to that pride: Yap for the Yapese. Theo also said that if he meets someone from Yap who tries to speak to him in English, he gets really irritated. He responds in Yapese to let them know his preference, as if to say, "Have some pride in your own culture, don't pretend you're something else." (This reminded us of the people we met diving in Honduras who introduced themselves as being from the Greater Chicago Area, but eventually confessed they were from Indiana.)

5/15/17 We're moving from the hotel in Colonia to an apartment in the village of Kaday today. Not sure what our internet access will be after that. I'm sure we'll find it where we can, but it'll likely be less frequent. Meanwhile we say farewell to dawns over Chamorro Bay, named after the Chamorros the Spanish imported from Guam partly to quell an uprising there. They brought in Pohnpeians for the same reason. **[8]**

5/16/17 The *Mnuw* is an old Indonesian sailing vessel that set out on a three hour tour (a three hour tour), only to be stranded on Yap, where the Manta Ray Resort turned it into a restaurant and bar. **[9]** It's also the one place on the island where we can find microbrew — an amber and a gold. The Manta Ray has a dive shop called Yap Divers, and divers love their middle class



luxuries. Me too!

The restaurant features a graphic (poster or t-shirt, I forget which) that translated *Mnuw* as Sea Hawk, which is enough to catch a Seattle football fan's eye. There are no raptors on Yap, so we asked Theo for the story. I'm sure I've gotten some of the details wrong, but I hope I captured the gist of it. He said the name was actually from a legend about a giant mythical bird. The story is that two brothers set sail on canoes with their two sons. After sailing far from Yap they happened upon two steep islands in the middle of the ocean, and the brothers agreed to explore each island separately, in case one of them was killed. So each climbed one of the rocks, as they appeared to be at first, but they soon discovered the "rocks" were the eyes of a humungous bird. The bird lifted out of the water, and one of the brothers and his son were killed in the process. The other was lifted far into the air and into heaven. (I'm not sure whether this was a Christian overlay on an old legend, or whether the Yapese had their own traditional concept of paradise.)

The brother and his son lived in paradise for a while, but eventually they began to miss their family and village. So they wove a rope out of coconut fiber and descended back to earth on it. When they got back to their village, they tied the rope off so they could climb back to heaven when they wanted to. Eventually, however, through some mistake (or I almost think the *Mnuw* told them to never do this one thing, so of course they went and did it, because that's the way fairy tales work), the rope was cut. The legend says that these people were from the region of Loess, and to this day the people of that region, which includes Kanifay, are teased about losing the way to heaven.

5/17/17 The scent of flowers and foliage along a village path, the taste of tiny bananas and of tuna sashimi in soy and wasabi, the weight of muggy air on my skin are enough to reduce me to a five-year-old stranger in a strange land again. It's a state of mind I can only rediscover here. **[10]**

Lonnie and family have already had a clash with Theo's younger brother, Thomas, who was Lonnie's bane in 2002. When they first came down to Gataman (called Sunset Park in English) to go snorkeling, Thomas showed up shortly thereafter and warned them not

to snorkel in the nature preserve, where they are trying to rebuild the fish population. Lonnie told him that Theo had given us permission. Thomas was having none of that and wondered aloud why we would keep coming back to Yap, since it was so expensive. Theo was outraged. "You and Lonnie grew up here," he said to me. "We're family." It smells, tastes, and feels like my childhood, I thought to myself.

His younger brother's refusal to pay heed to Theo or the even older brothers Henry and Stan got Theo off onto one of his favorite rants about how the younger generation has no respect for tradition. This got us into an interesting discussion of Yap's traditional social divisions, which included "the party of the old men" and "the party of the young men." Theo compared these to the Democrats and the Republicans, with the party of the young men representing the masses and the party of the old men representing the elite.

He said that in the old days if an upstart got power and challenged the elite, they would form a conspiracy to wage war until he was killed, but they wouldn't tell anyone who they wanted killed. This also seems supremely Yapese to me. You must not name your desire directly, but wait for others to figure it out. Anyway, the war would continue until their target was eliminated. He told a famous story about a man from Rumung who became powerful through leading expeditions that brought back stone



who were heavily into the old religion... They were spooky, and no one wanted to offend them.



money from Belau. Eventually the old guard began to resent him and started a war with the goal of taking him out. He rallied the party of the young men, and initially they backed him up. But as more and more men died, while the wily target of the war avoided the spears, back channel inquiries were made. Once they learned who the old guard wanted dead, they stopped answering when he showed up at the villages and blew his trumpet shell to rally the troops. He thought everybody had gone ahead without him, but when he got to the estate where the battle was supposed to take place and saw only his enemies, he realized what was going on and let himself be killed.

One of the things I hadn't understood before is that Theo's family holds traditional rights to the chieftainship of Kaday. Since the last chief died, who wasn't from their family, as far as I know, Theo's eldest brother, Stan, has been acting chief. I asked Theo whether Stan would ever become chief period, and he went off on a tangent that I couldn't follow. There's apparently some complicated logic involved, perhaps involving the lack of respect for traditional forms of power or the fact that nobody lives in the village anymore.

Another thing we learned almost immediately upon arrival is that Gaag—a cousin of Theo's whom we got to know in 2002—has a son in jail for stealing betel nut more than once. There's a betel nut shortage on Yap right now, and people can make quite a bit of money selling it either on Yap or off-island. Gaag himself has been exiled from Kaday until his family plants three hundred betel nut trees. His brother got into similar trouble for similar reasons back in 2002. He was living out in the bush like a wild man because he had been caught stealing betel nut. At that time Theo was trying to placate the chief on behalf of his cousins, and I recall a small piece of stone money being exchanged as part of the effort.

In short, village politics continue.

I'm reading William Alkire's work of anthropology about Micronesia, *Coral Islanders*, and I found this relevant note: *Political authority, especially the definition of chiefly powers, has also been altered. In some cases metropolitan controlled colonial administrations [i.e. the Spanish, German, Japanese, or Americans] stripped local chiefs of their authority; in other cases the authority of chiefs withered as those under them have seen new options or gained access to resources outside the traditional system. For example, those individuals who believe they are unjustly affected by a chief's decision may now choose to leave the island and establish themselves elsewhere.* (140)

As Lonnie pointed out, the disruption of traditional power disappoints Theo but represents new freedoms for women and the lower castes on Yap.

In case anyone is wondering whether our village accommodations are a grass shack, you'll be relieved to know that our apartment actually has all the modern conveniences: A/C and *two* bathrooms. There are two units. The other is taken by a couple of Mormon missionaries, one of whom has a British (or possibly Southern U.S.) accent. [11]

5/18/17 Today we drove past the house where we lived back in the '60s; it's located in the old Government Compound, a mostly white enclave at the time that has since been returned to the Yapese. The house was newer and fresher-looking back then, and Dad soon had a thriving garden of bananas and papayas filling the yard. Lonnie thought he spotted some banana plants that may have been descendants of what Dad planted. I did see the old mango tree behind what was then the Nelsons' house still growing after fifty years. We didn't look for the old tree fort. In 2002 our old Peace Corps friend, Gary Smith, lived in a house in the old compound, but since then his sister fetched him back to Iowa, where he'd grown up an unhappy gay man, and there passed away. [12]

The various colonial powers that have controlled Micronesia over the years have left their imprint here. The Spanish left the Catholic mission and a few words—for example, *gato* for cat. The Japanese left sashimi and the word *sensei* for teacher. The Germans left the German Channel, which connects Tomil Harbor to Miil Channel in the north. They also left three concrete radio towers, which transoceanic communications expert Bill Burns discovered were the physical anchors for a giant radio mast shot down during WWI. As a kid I thought they were pretty cool, so tall, pockmarked with bullet holes, and overgrown with plants, and while they look smaller to me now, the purpose Bill revealed to me makes them even cooler. [13]

I finally gave snorkeling a try for the first time this trip. For reasons yet to be determined my mask was leaky, so I got salt water up my nose, which as Terry put it acted like a Yapese Neti pot. I didn't know I had so much snot in me! Because of the equipment malfunction, I didn't get out to the best part of the reef, but I still saw an assortment of butterfly fish, clown fish, trigger fish, wrasses, and a cloud of sand that was probably the defecation of a parrot fish. Theo says that a lot the coral on the reef has died of



bleaching because the water temperature is rising.

5/19/17 Yesterday when Theo came over we got onto the subject of Rumung. I had always been under the impression that white people and modern technology were banned from Rumung, although as I recall Jolie and some of her Peace Corps friends were able to pay someone to take them there for a picnic in 2002. I believe she said that what they saw of the villages looked pretty run down. Theo said that the people of Rumung really just wanted to be left alone. Even other Yapese weren't welcome there. But things have changed. After the last big typhoon, Rumung was badly damaged and the villagers got a lot of FEMA money. Theo said they bought cars and fancy phones. There's no way to drive to Rumung. So they parked their cars across the channel in Maap. This made the people in Maap angry.

Theo says that eventually everybody in Rumung moved off island, mostly to the U.S., and there's only "one family" living there now. ("One family" seems to be a traditional measure of people. Theo used the same phrase when Lonnie asked him if anybody lived on the nearby island of Ngulu.) So, from being the most traditional and isolated people on the island they have gone to the most modernized Yapese living as far away as possible.

Theo told us a Yapese joke that started out like a story, with an introduction asking us if we were familiar with the reality TV show about gold prospecting in Alaska. (He was impressed to learn that the show's star, Jack Hoffman, is an old friend of Dad's, and that Dad gold-mined in Alaska with him in 1983.) Anyway, Theo told us a man once came to Yap to look for gold. He found a woman working in a taro patch in nothing but her underskirt. He told her he was looking for gold, and she said the Yapese equivalent of, "I've got your gold right here," and lifted up her skirt. We've never heard him laugh so long and hard as he did after that punchline. As Cody said, "I didn't put *that* much vodka in

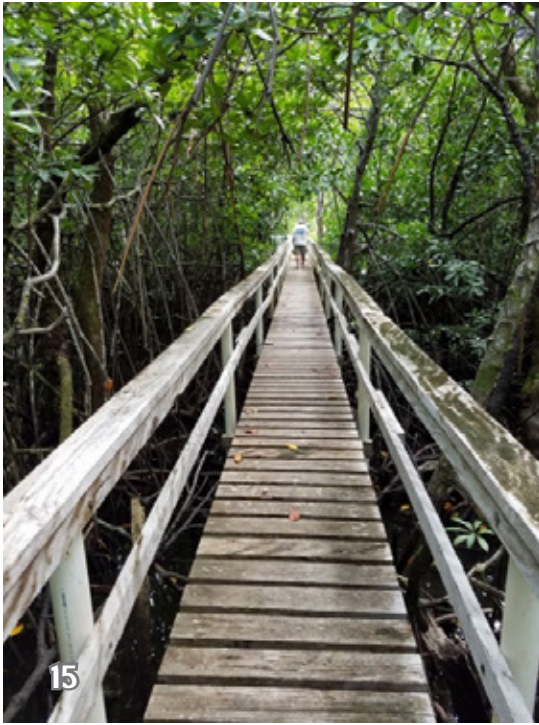
his drink." But Theo's laughter was infectious, and we all roared along with him.

Theo told us something else about women that was quite interesting. He said that traditional women's tattoos [14] were far up the leg, maybe on the inner thigh, and when a woman showed you her tattoos, you knew she was sexually interested. These days, women get tattoos all over the place, and the mystery is gone. In retrospect this has reminded me of how on Yap, women's thighs are considered highly erotic, because traditionally they were covered by the grass skirt. Breasts were bare, so they weren't considered erotic. Even in '02 Terry and Jolie were warned about showing their thighs in the village. That didn't seem to be as big a deal this time. The times they are a-changing. The only women you see going bare-breasted in public anymore are Outer Islanders, although that may have been true in 2002 too. They are less exposed to Western ideas about propriety, I'd guess.

Taro was the staple food on Yap at least until they started importing rice. According to Yapese standards of kosher, not only are there separate taro patches for women and men, but menstruating and post-menopausal women aren't allowed to even set foot in a man's taro patch. (This was perhaps more of a guideline than a rule.)

When asked about this, Theo talked about the central importance of purity to the Yapese concept of social regulation, which to Western eyes produces a bewildering number of rules and taboos, including who can harvest and cook food for various members of the various castes — thus gardens for men and for women, and some men only being allowed to eat food prepared by men, or the rules around menstruating women or post-menopausal women. For him, it's all about preserving one's purity, which is the source of power. I was reminded of this concept by a passage from Alkire's *Coral Islanders: The most highly trained specialists of the central Carolines, however, were the canoe navigators. A qualified Carolinian navigator undertook several years of tutelage from another specialist. He was subject during this time and subsequently to dietary taboos and restrictions on his sexual activities. He was a powerful figure in dealing with the supernatural world, in divination, weather magic, and in some cases sorcery. He was a man who commanded respect, admiration, and sometimes fear.* (Alkire, 115)

5/20/17 One of the things that I don't remember from even fif-



that eventually, without warning, became a single lane on a raised coral bed in a mangrove swamp. There, at the end of a boardwalk that led through the mangroves, we found the remains of a Corsair flown by Marine Major William Clay, Jr. as part of a squadron coming from Peleliu to strafe and bomb the Japanese airstrip on Yap. [15] After they completed their mission Maj. Clay looked for boats to strafe, but was shot down by anti-aircraft guns. Local villagers recovered his remains, and they were eventually repatriated and reburied in Arlington. The shot-to-hell Zeroes on the bombed-to-hell Japanese airstrip was a favorite childhood playground.



Today we visited Mom's old co-worker (and LaVelle's old boss at the post office), Carmen Chigiy. She says people don't call her Carmen any more, they call her Old. Old Chigiy. She's a spry 78, and she was surprised and delighted to see us. A blast from the past on a hot Sunday afternoon pattering around in her yard. As Lonnie said, once we left she probably wondered if it had all been a dream. Chigiy was one of the few women, along with Theo's older sister, Mutugnuy, who had been to school off-island when we were out there 50 years ago. [16]

We received a bountiful gift of fresh reef fish from a friend of Theo's. On top of the cooked taro he gave us last night and the previous gifts of bananas and papayas, we won't be starving anytime soon.



5/21/17 A traditional canoe is under construction to be sailed to Guam next year, although whenever we drove by the construction site we mostly saw men sitting around, chewing betel nut, and talking. Theo said it takes a lot of talking and chewing to build a canoe. First they lay down the keel, then they glue on the hulls, then the bow and prow, then they add the outrigger, then the ball-and-socket mast, and finally the sail. The Caroline islanders, which includes the Yapese, were great sailors who developed star maps made with shells to guide them, in addition to reading the currents, bird paths, weather patterns, and other signs that land was near. Theo said the navigator for next year's trip is from Satawal, the Outer Island where the traditional practice of navigation has been preserved into modern times, as memorialized in the book *The Last Navigator*. [17]

Alkire says that during some 19th century crisis, a lot of people from Satawal migrated to Saipan, while the Spanish punished the Chamorros on Saipan by moving them to Guam. For a while the Satawalese were the majority population on Saipan, but eventually the Chamorros started returning to Saipan. The

teen years ago is the World War II memorials scattered around the island. We were driving around the municipality of Fanif the other day when we followed signs down a bumpy dirt road

Satawalese didn't want to become an oppressed minority, so they had one of their old navigators bring a boatload of people to Saipan to prove that the old navigation methods still worked and to try to build up the Satawalese population.

The Last Navigator is a starry-eyed celebration of a Satawalese navigator and a silly white man's eulogy to the dying traditions of another people. Reading Alkire, I realized that the guy who had written *The Last Navigator*, Steve Thomas, had completely missed the political dimension of what he was witnessing, because he was so focused on the sailing story and on the great navigator who still understood the dying traditions of his people.



5/22/17 Most foreigners who have heard of Yap have probably heard of it because of the stone money. [18, 19] The pieces were quarried on another island, Belau, that's a couple hundred miles away, and then hauled back at great peril on bamboo rafts. If people died on the expeditions, the money was more valuable. It was used for ceremonial things like bridal dowries and tribute. The larger pieces wouldn't be moved when they were exchanged, and most villages had big pieces lining the path by the community house (*pebay*) or men's house (*faluzi*). The stone money quarried with metal tools and transported by sailing ships after the American trader, David O'Keefe, washed ashore on Yap in 1871 aren't very valuable by traditional measures.



5/23/17 We looked for Dad's old colleague Bumoon today, but he wasn't home. Since he lives near the old Japanese airstrip, we went looking for the old airplane wreckage we played on as children. We found one I didn't remember: a Nakajima Torpedo Bomber of the type that was used to destroy the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor. The Zeroes we used to play on have deteriorated considerably in the intervening 50 years. As have we all. [20]



5/24/17 Today we found Bumoon, with whom Dad taught at Kanifay School during our first year on Yap, starting in 1966. [21] Like Chigiy, Bumoon was surprised and pleased by our appearance at his doorstep. When our whole family came out in 1998, we spent a memorable Christmas afternoon with his whole family.

I attended third and fourth grade at Alaw School in Colonia. [22] My most vivid memory of Alaw is of our Palauan teacher, Mrs Rummy, getting fed up with the antics of me and another American kid, David Barry, and having us cut switches with which she whipped our disbelieving asses in front of the class, no doubt to the delight of our Yapese classmates. I also remember my outrage that the principal, who happened to be my father, refused to inter-

vene when I complained about this abuse.

Lonnie graduated from eighth grade at Alaw. Now it's the administrative headquarters of the Education Department on Yap.

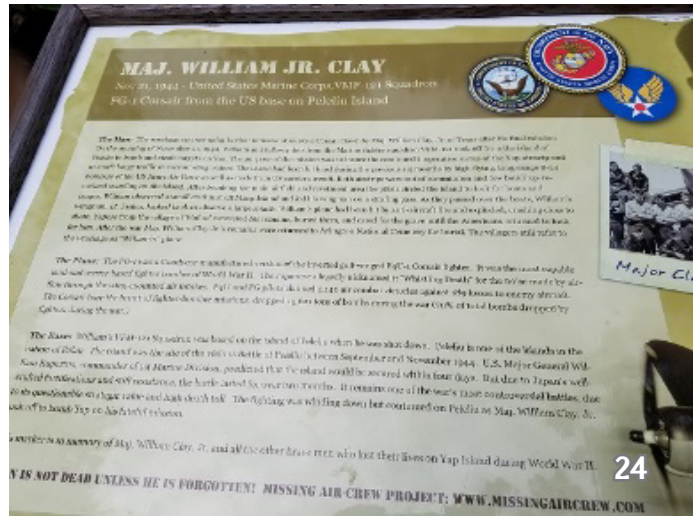


5/25/17 Theo once told us that if you looked at the zoris (flip flops) gathered on a doorstep and saw one crusted with red, you knew someone from Tomil was inside.

Today we went exploring on the bumpy red dirt roads of Tomil and Gagil, lurching through the villages of Wanyan and Gachpar, which were the centers of high caste power in the pre-Contact era. [23] We were curious why these two high caste villages hadn't gotten their roads paved. Were they trying to keep the riffraff out? Theo thought the road building project had just run out of money before that part of the road system could be paved. We looked for the second old Japanese airstrip, which I'd never even heard of before, and the remains of a Japanese lighthouse. We found signs for both, but not the things themselves. We did find the remains (basically just the engine) of another Corsair that had flown on a raid from Peleliu. The marker said it was seen going into a bombing dive that it never came out of. According to the marker by Tomil Harbor (the main harbor for Yap) over 40 U.S. aircraft and over 140 men were lost in air attacks on Yap. I had not thought death had undone so many on Yap in WWII.

[24] Interesting chat with the cute bartender on the *Mnuw*. I asked her if she was Yapese, because two of the other women who work on the *Mnuw* are from Satawal and Woleai. But this girl said yes, she was from Yap. Lonnie asked which village she was from, and she said Gachpar, which is the highest caste village on the island. So I said, "Whoa! High caste!" Because I'm cool like that. She said, "No, I don't consider myself high caste. I'm just a regular person." She's 18, and at first I wondered whether caste is disappearing amongst the younger generation. [Later, Lonnie pointed out that it's probably easier for someone from the highest caste to disavow the caste system than it is for those of the lower ranks. Whatever the case, she didn't last long at the *Mnuw*, and we never saw her there again. Outer Islanders are probably used to working more than upper caste Yapese.]

She said she was going to school on Guam and was just back for a couple months on summer break. She started working at the *Mnuw* about when we arrived a week ago and is still training. She wanted to know what we thought of Yap, and we explained our history here.



Then we tried to think who we know in Gachpar. She had never heard of Petrus Tun, which seems very strange, because you'd think he'd still be a name in the village, as one of the founding fathers, along with John Mangefel, of the FSM. Then Lonnie thought of Theo's sister Tinigig, who is married to a chief in Gachpar. The girl recognized her name and said, "Do you mean the sister of the governor?" Yes. "She's married to my grandfather." Lonnie said we'd heard that she had breast cancer, and the girl said she was back on the island now and growing back her hair after getting off chemo. Her eyes teared up, which implied a relationship, despite the strange wording of it. Not "She's my granny," but "She's married to my grandfather." She also didn't seem to recognize Thinnifel's name when I mentioned it, so the whole thing was a little confusing to us. Theo was unable to shed any light on it when we asked him what was going on there. He didn't think Tinigig's husband had had children by a previous wife.

5/26/17 When we saw Bumoon on Wednesday, he invited us to a family gathering the next day for a visiting relative named Shannon who was returning to her home in Portland. [25]

We weren't the only non-family guests who overshadowed Shannon's departure. Also in attendance was Henry Worswick. We had looked for him in 2002, but we thought we were told he was dead. He was just as surprised to see us, and greeted us all very warmly. Any child of Dean Byers was a valued friend of his, it seemed. He and Bumoon spent several minutes agreeing that Dad was a great man, someone they loved, and someone whose face they still remembered as if it were yesterday. (When Dad came out in 1998, Theo said something very similar: "I can still see his face in those days very clearly in my mind.")

Then we got down to talking stories. I wanted to say that I learned to ride a bike in Henry's yard, but felt unsure enough about it that I didn't mention it. Later I realized it was actually in Don Heck's yard, on the ridge above Henry's house. [After I got back to the U.S., Dad confirmed the memory.] Like Worswick, Heck was another American expat married to an island woman, hence the confusion. I don't remember that Henry had kids my age, but Heck did, including one named Enaro. [26]

So I told Henry instead that I remembered his reputation as the strongest man on the island. Bumoon grinned and echoed, "Strongest man on the island." Lonnie chimed in that we have a



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picture of Henry lifting a very heavy piece of metal at a contest that he won at a UN Day celebration. Since the TTPI was a UN trust territory at the time, we celebrated UN Day back then. All the elementary students made flags to carry in the parade. For some reason I made a South Korean flag. I think I just liked the design of it. [27]

Henry ducked these comments about his strength by saying, “My brother John was stronger.” Bumoon grinned and agreed with that too, so who knows. My memory is that Henry had the reputation of a brawler who could go into the toughest bars in Colonia (the Blue Lagoon is a name that springs to mind) and wipe the floor with men from the Seabees and Coast Guard.

When we brought this up with Theo, he told us about a guy in Antonia’s village who was paralyzed from the waist down. “His legs were like sticks, but his upper body was like the Hulk.” When this guy heard about Henry’s prowess at arm-wrestling, he challenged him to a match and whupped him.

Neither Henry nor Bumoon were pleased by the idea of the proposed Chinese resort development on Yap, which they seem to believe is still in the works, while Theo thinks they’ve been defeated by the tangle of property rights. They believe the contract that’s been signed gives the Chinese the right to transfer the deal to any third party they want to, and somehow this idiotic proviso will be enough to defeat all attempts to stop the development from happening. I couldn’t follow the argument, so I’m not sure how sound it is.

This segued into a generic old man’s rant about how everything is going to hell in a handbasket, the governments of Yap and the FSM are corrupt and incompetent, and even modern-day Americans aren’t as great as their predecessors, such as Dad. Lonnie asked how Yap could develop economically without the Compact of Free Association with the U.S. or the Chinese deal. They insisted Yap had plenty of business possibilities — perhaps tangerine exports, or a return to the old copra trade — but it lacks people with business know-how. It has always seemed to us that Yap is too far removed from even the Asian markets to establish trade of any kind, but maybe a genius could find a way.

Henry’s father was a GI from Cleveland who married a Palauan woman, whom I believe he said was from Peleliu. They moved to Yap in 1963. Through his mother he claims to be related to just about everyone in Micronesia. He’s been to the U.S. and likes Virginia and the East Coast, but doesn’t think as much of California and the West Coast — despite the presence of Dad there.

Henry said he never had much empathy with animals until he



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was converted by his wife’s dog, “Who was so smart, he could predict earthquakes and storms; he’d come put his head in my lap.” Now he loves dogs. He fed Bumoon’s cute little dog, Boom Boom, half the food from his plate, then innocently exclaimed, “Louis, your dog keeps following me around! I don’t understand it!” We and the dog feasted on taro, yams, sashimi, barbecued chicken and pork, rice, spaghetti and much, much more. It was a splendid evening on Memory Lane.



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[When I got back to the U.S., Dad told me that Henry had been in prison when Yap Education Secretary John Mangefel first told Dad about him in 1967. Mangefel said Henry was a good man who deserved a second chance, and he persuaded Dad to hire him as a teacher at Alaw. No wonder he worships the ground Dad walks upon! Dad didn’t remember what crime Henry was in prison for. Maybe it was public brawling.]

I went snorkeling again today. We got my swimming cap and mask adjusted correctly, so no Yapese Neti Pot snot. The swimming cap was to protect my radiated scalp from exposure to the sun. I still had problems with confidence, dry throat from breathing through the snorkel, and cramps in feet not accustomed to using fins, so I still didn’t make it out to the best snorkeling areas, but I managed to see a couple of sea cucumbers and some gorgeous angel fish with broad bands of black and yellow and a long white streamer coming off the top fin. (Probably a Moorish Idol.) I gained some confidence in the process, and by the end was thinking that maybe next time I’ll make it out to one of the holes where the best snorkeling has always been.

5/27/17 I attended first and second grade at Gaanelay School. My only memory of Gaanelay is of learning how to read the hands of a clock. I want to think Luce Nelson taught that class. She was our neighbor — a Filipina who was married to an American from Salt Lake City. She introduced us to the wonders of lumpia.



My sister reminded me that my time at Gaanelay is also the source of another favorite family story, which is about the time in second grade when I allegedly got up on the desk in my classroom and mooed like a cow. I told her that I only remember the incident through the family story, but the more I thought about it, the more it came back to me: before we moved to Yap, some farm cousins taught me that cows don't really say *moo* but more of a *merrrr*, and I was trying to demonstrate this sound for Yapese kids who had never seen or heard a cow before, although memory tells me there was a single cow at the Ag Station when we were here in the '60s. Who knows? [28]

We visited Tony G. to thank him for his generosity with a gift of smoked salmon. He invited us to have dinner with him and his wife on the *Mnuw* this evening. Theo is cooking us dinner on Monday, and we're taking him to dinner on the *Mnuw* Tuesday night before we fly home. The trip is almost over. On the one hand, if I had a couple more weeks here, I'm sure I could work my way back into snorkeling shape, although probably not back to 2002 levels. On the other hand, it'll be good to get back to the comforts and routines of home. Whenever I'm out here I feel both like I belong here and that I will always be an outsider. Maybe if I spoke the language I'd feel more at home. But Gary Smith was fluent in Yapese but still went back to the U.S. to die.

I think Terry's feeling it this time too, maybe partly because Antonia isn't here to smooth the way socially. Terry has noticed that even the people she hung out with quite a bit in 2002 don't immediately recognize her. Once she introduces herself and reminds them who she is, they remember her, but it isn't automatic. So we feel like outsiders, except with Theo and Antonia, who have spent time with us in the U.S. as well as here.

5/28/17 In the immortal words of Jim de Liscard, "Fuck fuck fucketty fuck fuck fuck!" Yesterday after Terry and I paid our respects at Dave Vecella's grave, I had a seizure while we were driving to town to pick up Lonnie. I was able to warn Terry it was coming and ask her to head back to the apartment. The seizure was very similar to the ones I've suffered in the past. I was conscious the whole time and was in partial control of my body. The major symptoms were shuddering in my chin and jaw, raling breaths, and uncontrollable contortions of the mouth.

It was mostly over by the time we got home, and I was able to slurrily ask Terry to feed me a dose of Zopheram, which is intended to nip seizures in the bud. Eventually she got me into the apartment and onto the couch. While I rested and she tried to figure out what to do next (Lonnie was expecting us to pick him up after a dive), I felt my chin and jaw start to shudder again,



maybe a half hour after the first seizure. This time Terry was able to get a Zopheram into my mouth immediately, and sure enough the seizure abated.

Terry (my guardian angel) then drove into town where she could get cellular reception and called the emergency number at UW Medical Center. To my surprise and vast relief, the nurse she talked to said I was unlikely to have any further seizures before I fly back to Portland on the 31st. If I do have another seizure, I'm to seek immediate medical attention. Meanwhile we'll do our best to make sure Terry is seated by me all the way to PDX, with the vial of Zopheram clutched in her fist.

So much for dining with Governor Ganangyan! This trip was always a calculated risk. I chose adventure over moving directly into a new treatment plan, although we tried to hedge our bets with the daily microdoses of chemo. Apparently that trick didn't work, but we won't know the full extent of the damage until I get my next MRI on Friday. The seizures aren't a good sign, no doubt. But we'll see what step comes next. Stay tuned. [In case you haven't already heard, I should mention that the seizures were a kind of false alarm. The MRI actually showed that the cancer had diminished since the previous MRI.]

As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted by the seizures, yesterday Terry and I paid our respects at Dave Vecella's grave. Dave and his wife Teri and son Ryan (a source of constant amusement in our family) lived across the lane from us in 2002, and Lonnie, Ryan, Jolie, and I took the basic diving course from him. Jolie and I went on to take advanced diving from him as well. We became good enough friends that I was devastated to hear of his death in a tragic diving misadventure in 2008, about which we learned more details on this trip. I've thought of him often during our time here. If you google his name, you'll likely find the memorial website his brother set up for him, bursting with



testimonials from people all around the world who dived with him and got a dose of his pungent personality and warm sense of humor. I asked Ryan, who showed us the grave in their front yard, apparently oriented to a dive site out on the reef, whether his Dad had ever given him the top secret recipe for Painkiller, a powerful cocktail that Dave served us on one of my last days here in 2002. Of course he hadn't, because he wasn't expecting to die. Rest in peace, Dave. I miss your smiling face. [29]

5/29/17 Thinnifel, family, and friends unleashed the Yapese magic on us last night. Some of the food I'd never tasted before, particularly the land crabs served in their own shells. The land crabs have been out in hordes on this trip, scurrying around with their claws held above their heads. Theo said he's never sure whether the gesture is menacing or a friendly wave. It always looks menacing to me, but also a bit comical. I got out of the car yesterday and saw one scuttling away and raised my hands over my head and made claws out of them. It promptly raised its claws over its head in response. [30]

I asked Lonnie whether he really stuck his hand down a land crab hole when we were kids, and he said his theory had been that you had a second to feel whether you were touching the legs or the claws. My theory is that you should never stick your hand in a hole inhabited by an animal with claws. Ah well, Lonnie still has all his fingers, although a giant hermit crab once took his thumbnail off. Like father, like son. Cody tried to pick up something curious in the mangroves around Nan Madol and yelped when it turned out to be a crab that drew blood when it nipped him.

Theo says that on Yap slobos are called crabs, because when crabs dig their holes they leave the dirt strewn at the doorstep. Who knew that slobos tasted so good? They were delicious, as was everything else. Home cooking at its finest. Kammagar, Theo!

5/30/17 The itty bitty gecko that lives in our upstairs bathroom came out of the drain to bid me adieu this morning. We leave soon. Bye bye, itty bitty gecko, eat plenty of bugs, especially mosquitoes, grow big and strong, chirp your gecko song, multiply your tribal throng, and prosper and live long. [31]

5/31/2017 "Don't say Kammagar to me," said Henry Worswick



gruffly, "I'm not Yapese." He pointed to an American flag hanging in front of his store, the Lagoonia.

"Thank you," Terry corrected herself.

"That's right," Henry approved. It was a good reminder that not everyone on Yap is Yapese, and we shouldn't assume. A lot are Outer Islander, for example, and there are Belauans and Pohnpeians too. Probably Chuukese, Kosraean, and Chamorro as well.

Another thing that Henry and Bumoon grouched about at the feast at Bumoon's house was Yap's lack of preparation for the Micronesian Games being hosted here in 2018. "Where are the hotel rooms everyone can stay in? Where is all the food they'll need? We should be making preparations now!" They shook their heads in united disgust. It's true, if the Games attract a lot of people, it's hard to see where they will all stay, and if they need to build new hotels, time is short. But if they build new hotels, what will they do with them after the Games? It's a conundrum. Maybe the locals should look into Airbnb, but with the weak internet out here, I don't know how that would work. Maybe if we'd had dinner with Tony G., he could have shed some light on the problem.

We are leaving in the wee hours tonight. Terry has successfully upgraded our seats to Business Class, thanks to Mom and Dad's generosity and concern for my health. I will have a wheelchair waiting for me here, in Guam, and in Honolulu. I feel like such a fraud, but at the same time just the idea of standing for long periods makes me feel tired, so I guess I need to get over it and accept my invalid status. [In the end I didn't make use of the wheelchairs, because I felt good enough to stand on my own two feet.] [32]

Today while I was using wifi at Techstar (aka the internet café), the kid who runs it came out to chat with me. He asked if I was leaving today. (I told him I would be when I'd paid for more wifi a week ago, so good memory there.) He asked how I'd enjoyed my stay, and I explained our history out here. He wanted to know where we had stayed while we were here, and when I told him, he said, "Oh, I live near there." I asked where. "In Kanif," he said.



One of the things on our To Do List that we never got to, because none of us knows her, was to say hello to Mom's old friend Leegibay, although we got as far as asking Theo to draw a map to her house. Which is in Kanif. So when Renny, as I learned his name was, said he was from Kanif, I asked if he knew her. He said yes. I asked if he would do me a favor and pass along regards from Carol Byers. "She's very old," he said pleadingly, but he agreed. Now I feel guilty, because I think what he was trying

to say is that she won't last long and would appreciate a visit from us personally. He's probably right, and if I were a better person, I'd make the special effort. It's the Yapese way. Chigiy was obviously very moved that we showed up on her doorstep. Ah well, I hope Renny remembers Mom's name and passes along her regards. It's the best I could do under the circumstances.

He asked me when I was coming back to Yap. I said I didn't know, which was easier than explaining why I doubt I'll ever be back, and he said, "Look for Techstar, and I'll be there." I told him that next time the internet would be faster because of the fiber optics. (A Japanese company is apparently donating two trunk lines — one of which will go to Yap.) He had apologized for the slow speed of the satellite service when I gave him more money last week, and I said, "No, no, I'm happy to help your business." That's probably why he was so friendly today, although honestly most Yapese have been friendly and hospitable on this trip, even those who don't know me personally. [33] I don't remember that from 2002, and Theo told me on that visit that he thought the Yapese were losing their traditional hospitality. You can still get a freezing glare from people, especially out in the villages, but in Colonia a lot of folks will wave and say, "Good morning." Maybe they're more used to dealing with strange white people in the big city.

CODA

So, in the end, was it worth it? It wasn't what I dreamed of, because in my dream I had recovered from treatment, and was able to hike and snorkel as much as I wanted to. But in terms of a trip down memory lane with people I loved, it was absolutely wonderful. I have no doubt that the experience gave a boost to my system, and that Yapese food and the love of my family, American and Yapese, helped my recovery. Whenever I go out there, I feel it in my blood, but, as I mentioned earlier, I also feel I'm always an outsider. Eventually I'd like to have some

of my ashes spread out there, but that's not something I need to worry about quite yet, seizures be damned.

How has Yap changed over the years?

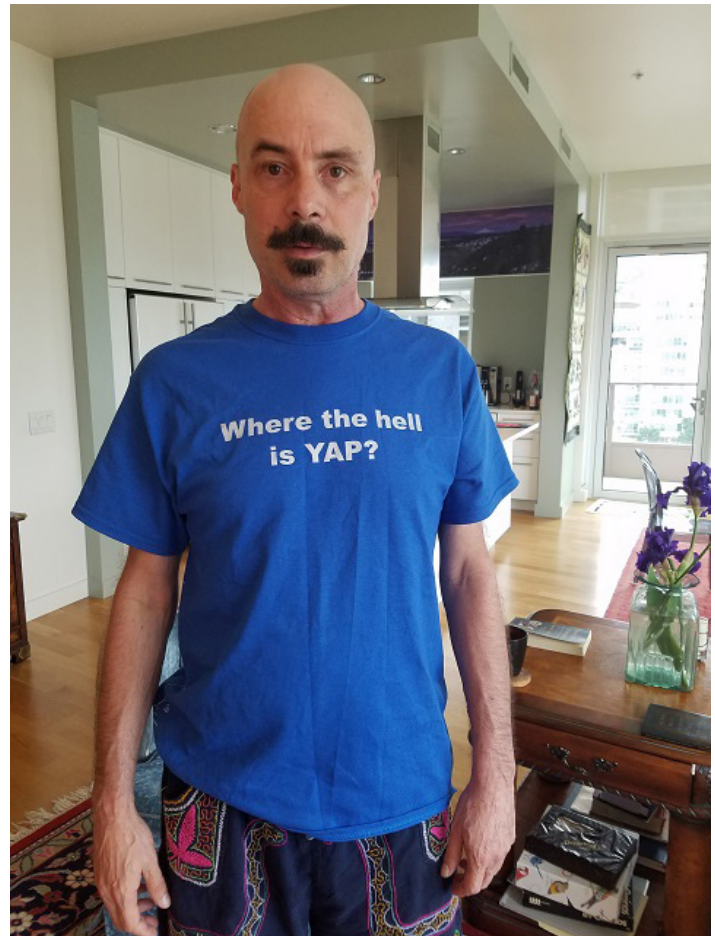
Theo [34] says most working age Yapese have left the island, or at least the villages, which leaves the impression that grandmothers or great aunts are doing the child-rearing. At the same time, there are a lot of new houses lining the paved main roads, which are much more extensive than they were in 2002, extending around the north end of the island and south all the way to Gilman. Considering how recent the paving is, it's kind of amazing how quickly people moved to new houses along the way. Everybody seems to have cellphones now. Smartphones aren't as common, because of the limited internet, so those who have them tend to cluster around the wifi nodes, just like the tourists.

The new construction and new technology (including a few solar panels in the Public Works compound) give the impression of greater prosperity, but this may be misleading. Theo, ever the conservative in such matters, is of the impression that the FSM should get off the dollar and adopt its own currency, so that they would live within their means and stop pretending they're living in a First World economy. It makes sense on the face of it, but my guess is that it's unlikely to happen, between continuing cash from the Compact of Free Association and remittances from relatives living in the U.S., which probably has a Yapese population larger than the island does at this point.

Despite the impression of greater material wealth, things are the same as ever in terms of maintenance of the infrastructure that various American, European, and Asian aid agencies have given the FSM. For example the hospital was unable to run the Comprehensive Metabolic Panel (CMP) test that my doctor requested while I was out here, because the machine is broken and nobody on the island knows how to fix it. Theo is sure that the same thing will happen with the solar panels and windmills that an EU agency wants to install here. He says foreign agencies do these things to impress their donors, with no thought for what it will take to maintain them down the line. Sounds about right.

Theo also told us that he's read Homer, both the Iliad and the Odyssey. "There's a Yapese legend just like the Odyssey," he said, "and it takes all night to tell. When I was a kid, my granny would start telling it in the evening, and when I woke up in the morning, she'd still be going." It's about Puluwrap, which means Great Navigator, who sailed to Micronesia from Asia and discovered all the islands along the way. Each island group was a separate set of stories within the larger narrative, which sounds like it was an adventure epic, full of cannibals, ghosts, and sorcerers. So yeah, much like the Odyssey. Theo says nobody in his generation remembers all of the story anymore. Like so much of the traditional culture, it has been lost over time. I sure hope an anthropologist or folklorist recorded someone telling it before it was gone. I believe Theo said there were dances based on the story too.

Another example of the problems of high tech in a low tech context is the cellular network. Theo's son, Marnie, works for the telecommunications company, and he's currently on Ulithi installing a cell tower that will allow Yap and Ulithi to communi-



cate. He first tried to install it a month ago, but the wrong equipment was sent. I don't know whose fault this was — the cell company or the FSM telecommunications company — but it sounds as though it was a failure of training and/or competence. Or maybe it's just the tendency of the best laid plans to go awry out here.

I've been meaning to inventory some of the ways the island has improved and gotten worse. In the worse column is the increasing encroachment of kudzu and the reported dying off of the coral, which I haven't seen, but have heard about from Lonnie and Ryan, who said it wasn't as bad at diving depths, but is very noticeable everywhere else. Lonnie says he's also seen far fewer shells than in 2002, and smaller fish populations even in the reserve in Kaday that is supposed to help them increase. He thinks it's probably the death of the coral or the increased water temperature that's killing the coral too.

Improvements include things I've talked about before, including more paved roads, more modern housing, and less garbage along the roads (probably because they now charge a deposit on bottles and cans that's refunded when they're turned in). I don't know if this is different than 1998 or 2002, but there's also an initiative to keep the margins of the paved roads clipped and clean, with every village in charge of the section of road closest to them. They generally look great. The lagoon looks a lot cleaner than in 1998, although I did see where some old plastic and foam still gathers at the east end. Internet is more widely available; though it's still pretty weak, fiber optic lines are supposedly on their way — another gift from the First World. There was no cellphone

continued on page 61

A Biographical Directory of the 1939 Worldcon

Part II

by Andy Hooper

We continue with the second part of the project to identify all the parties in attendance at the opening day of the First World Science Fiction Convention in Manhattan's Caravan Hall on July 2nd 1939. The first part contained those members of the convention best or primarily known as "professionals" in science fiction or another field of literature. Part II contains an attempt to identify everyone else at the convention.

There are some individuals here who wrote stories or published criticism of science fiction, but their activities in the field were primarily as amateurs. Forry Ackerman, for example, had many professional publishing credits, but his role as the most recognizable representative of fandom in the 20th century outweighs even his considerable bibliography.

This segment will present alphabetized biographies from Ackerman to Mosher: the list will conclude with listings from Moskowitz to Young in issue #27 of *Chunga*. A complete list of

all known attendees can be found in #25. The most important sources for this directory are two fanzines that published a list of documented attendees within a year of the convention. These are *Fantasy Fiction Field's Illustrated Nycon Booklet* by Julius Unger and *New Fandom* #6, with a version of Unger's list corrected by con chairman Sam Moskowitz.

The effort to link the names on those lists with some individual living in 1939 has led me to some conjectural conclusions which will inevitably require revision. There were certainly mistakes in the biographies of major and minor professionals in *Chunga* #25. Our reader Charles Levi has uncovered enough material regarding the individual known as "F. E. Hardart" that he is publishing his findings in an academic journal, and I look forward to sharing a summary of his conclusions about one of the most interesting *women* at the convention. Cleaning up corrections and omissions from the list will eventually be taken up in issue #28.

Key to Reference Sources

- | | |
|--|---|
| CH Charles D. Horning in his 1939 diary, as quoted in the Noreascon Three Program Book | JS Julius Schwartz in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book. |
| DK David A. Kyle in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book. | JU Julius Unger in the Illustrated Nycon Review issue of his fanzine <i>Fantasy Fiction Field</i> , which reproduces the convention registration list. |
| FA Forrest J. Ackerman in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book | LE Lloyd Arthur Eshbach in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book |
| JB John Baltadonis in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book. | MR Milton Rothman in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book |
| JP This individual's autograph appears in the program book scanned for the 17th issue of the fanzine <i>Journey Planet</i> in 2014. | NT A personal account by this individual is included in the 1989 Noreascon Three Program Book. |
| JR John Rubinstein (Jack Robins) in his 1940 fanzine <i>The Fifth (World's Fair) Convention</i> . | RB Ray Bradbury in his 1939 fanzine <i>Futura Fantasia</i> #2 |
| | SM Sam Moskowitz in his contribution to the Noreascon Three Program Book |

Attendees of the 1939 World Science Fiction Convention

Part II: The Amateurs



Forrest James Ackerman (November 24th, 1916 – December 4th, 2008)

Although his accomplishments as an agent, writer, editor and publisher exceeded those of many professionals in the room, “Forry” Ackerman’s seven decades of active participation in science fiction fandom is responsible for most of his fame. A native of Los Angeles, Ackerman first experienced fantasy at the movies with the 1922 silent *One Glorious Day*, a story of spiritual possession starring Will Rogers. He wasn’t quite 10 years old when he discovered Gernsback’s *Amazing Stories*, but like most first-generation fans, the experience had a lifelong effect on him. He formed his first fan group, The Boy’s Scientificion Club, in 1930. He became an enthusiastic correspondent and collector, and contributed to the first true SF fanzines, *The Time Traveler* and *Science Fiction Magazine*. When Hugo Gernsback and Charles D. Hornig formed the Science Fiction League in order to promote *Wonder Stories* in 1934, Ackerman enthusiastically joined its ceremonial Board of Directors, and organized its Los Angeles chapter. The Los Angeles Science Fiction League would later become the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, one of the most successful and longest-running such organizations in the world.

He attended the University of California at Berkeley in 1934, but left after a single year. He does not seem to have had any particular ambition to write fiction, but was always eager to see good stories published, and made his first professional connections by representing aspiring professionals. Like his younger friend Ray Bradbury, Ackerman was inspired by his proximity to the movie industry, and would carry on a lifelong flirtation, eventually appearing in more than three dozen theatrically-released films — often as very

thinly-disguised version of himself. But his best-known endeavor was *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, a true fan magazine, published for many years by the Warren Group. *Famous Monsters* was a de facto official organ for the branch of fandom that loved horror and suspense, what we now sometimes refer to as the Monster Culture. A devotee of Esperanto and other artificial languages, his magazine was often composed in a unique patois known as Ackermanese, characterized by stylized abbreviation and portmanteau inventions; “Sci Fi” was one of his contributions to the field.

His collection became a legend unto itself, encompassing both amateur and professional works of science fiction and fantasy, and a lot of props, costumes, art and memorabilia from his many Hollywood acquaintances. His Los Angeles homes, always styled the Ackermansion, had the reputation of being both a treasure vault and a pop cultural museum. From the 1960s, he was frequently referred to as Mr. Science Fiction, and became fandom’s best-known ambassador, and remained its tireless booster until his death.

In 1939, Ackerman crossed the country by train with Myrtle Grey, aka Morojo, in order to attend the Fifth Convention. He also loaned money to the very young Bradbury, so he could afford a bus ticket to New York. Morojo had made the two of them science-fictional outfits to wear at the convention, based on characters from Doc Smith’s Lensman series. For a Hollywood insider like Forry, getting a nice costume for a special event seemed less than earth-shattering, but these simple gestures have been called the origins of costuming and cosplay in fandom. It was an immediate tradition; several more fans dressed up on Saturday night at Chicon in 1940, including Art Widner, who cross-dressed!

During the war, Ackerman enlisted in the army, and his organizational and literary skills soon made him a staff sergeant. His entire service was conducted within the state of California.

Forry was prone to health issues; he had major cardiac events in the mid-1960s. He also seemed prone to neuralgia and



An unusually relaxed Forry Ackerman

debilitating headaches in earlier decades. At several later World Conventions, he suffered fainting spells and events that sound very much like anxiety attacks. At the Nycon, he was looking very uncomfortable when Dona Campbell gave him an aspirin, which he credited with saving his convention. We know that he was an enthusiastic autograph collector, and left behind several fanzines with signatures gathered at the first two World Conventions. Although women were a distinct minority in the room, Ackerman seems to have collected an autograph from virtually all of them, including the daughters of Guest of Honor Frank R. Paul.

Ackerman had relationships with several women, including Gray, prior to his marriage to the German-born Mathilda Wahrman (1912-1990), whom he met at a bookstore in 1952. Known to Forry and fandom as Wendayne, she would remain married to Ackerman through a variety of separations, reconciliations and reunions, until her unfortunate demise. She suffered severe internal injuries during a violent robbery in Italy in 1990, which led to eventual kidney failure and death. **(CH, DK, JB, JP, JR, JS, JU, NF, NT, MR, RB)**

Jack Agnew (March 10th, 1922 – March 5th, 2007)

One of the core members of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, and a founding member of the Boys Science Fiction Club in 1935. His contribution to early fanzines, including *Cosmic Tales*, *Fantascience Digest* and *Fantasy Fiction Telegraph*, were primarily illustration, but he later became both a member and official editor of FAPA. Jack Speer suspected him of being the party behind the pseudonym

Vermyn Slinko, who published dirt on Philadelphia fandom. Agnew was also on the 1947 Philcon committee, and was one of the organizers of the Big Pond Fund.

He served in the U. S. Army during both World War II and the Korean War. He was employed as a production manager by the Inductotherm Corporation for 30 years. He was a member of First Fandom, and was admitted to its Hall of Fame alongside fellow Philadelphians John Baltadonia and Milton Rothman. (JB, JU, NF)

Francis Teresa Alberti Sykora

Quarterman (August 16th, 1920 – April 1st, 2006)

Frances Alberti was a member of the New-ark science fiction group prior to Nycon. This is probably where she met her future husband, Will Sykora; she was so young, not yet 19 at the time of the convention, that it is more difficult to imagine where they might have met otherwise. The two were married in August of 1940; and one can't imagine why Francis would have brought her parents and her older sister, Rose, to the convention, if not for the presence of her fiancée.

She was also sometimes known as Felicia Alberti, and was listed under that name in a 1937 phone directory. Her marriage to Sykora lasted 30 years, and they raised five children together. It ended in divorce in 1970, and Sykora was convicted of sexually assaulting one of his children the same year. Francis remarried in 1975, to Leonard A. Quarterman, a former sergeant in the U.S. Army, who was also a native New Yorker. Sadly, he died in January of 1978, less than three years into their marriage. They are interred together at the U.S. National Cemetery in Farmingdale, Long Island. (JU, NF)

Rose Theresa Alberti Barbaro (October 1st, 1915 – October 19rd, 1993)

Frances Alberti's older sister, Rose, was a graduate of DeWitt Clinton high School in Brooklyn. She married a man named George Barbaro, or possibly Barberi, in 1946, and was a lifelong resident of Brooklyn. (JU, NF)

Domenico Alberti (b. 1895) and **Isabella "Bella" Neumann Alberti** (1902–1958)

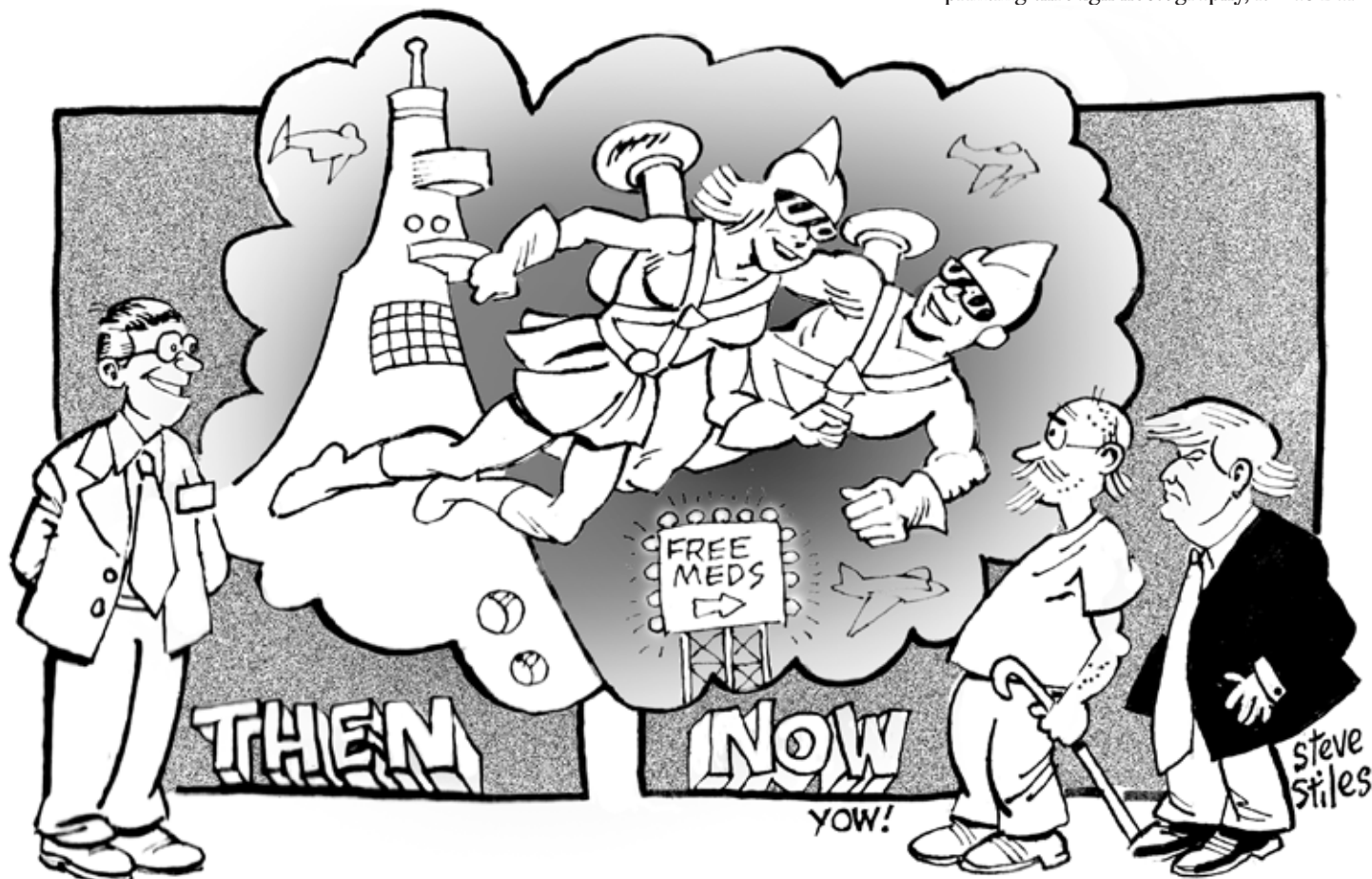
Mr. & Mrs. D. Alberti were married on December 27th, 1917, in Manhat-

tan. Domenico was a native of Italy, and owned his own barbershop in Queens. Bella was a New York native. The couple had at least three children together, Rose, William and Frances, but the 1920 Census also lists an 8-year-old son named "Frank," who pre-dated the Alberti's marriage by five years, and was no longer living with the family in 1930. Frank may have been an adopted nephew or cousin. (JU, NF)

B

John V. Baltadonis (February 7th, 1921 – July 27th, 1998)

John Vytautis Baltadonis was easily one of the most famous fans in attendance at Nycon — he had been voted Number One Fan in both 1938 and 1939. Between 1936 and 1941, when he was between the ages of 15 and 20, Baltadonis was active in every field of activity embraced by fandom at the time, collecting science fiction, writing, illustrating and publishing fanzines, writing letters to professional magazines, and attending and organizing early conventions. If any fan was really a master of printing through hectography, it was Bal-



tadonis, whose artistic and multi-colored efforts were the state of the art before the widespread adoption of mimeography. He was a mainspring of Philadelphia fandom when it set the standard of organization, activity and harmony in active fandom. But his period of dedicated fan activity ended with the American entry into World War II, and although he remained in the Philadelphia area all his life, his contact with fandom after 1945 was limited.

John was the child of John Michael Baltadonis (1890–1957) and Zenaida Daniels Baltadonis (1897–1959), both natives of Lithuania. John M. arrived in America in 1910; by 1920, he was the proprietor of his own restaurant. Once Prohibition began, he served beer and spirits to his customers illegally, and his establishment is characterized as a speakeasy by later writers. But the availability of its barroom would be of critical value to science fiction fandom, as the first “convention” would convene there in 1936.

Baltadonis began his friendship with future big name fan Robert Madle in the first grade. The two discovered science fiction together at the age of 10, and in 1934 their circle of school chums, including Jack Agnew and Harvey Greenblatt, formed the nucleus of the Boys SF Club, a group that soon merged with Milton Rothman’s Philadelphia chapter of the Science Fiction League to form the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society. Their first effort at publishing was titled *The Science Fiction Fan*, and was produced on carbon paper, and thus limited to no more than three or four copies. Baltadonis’ drawings were unquestionably its best feature. For these early zines, Baltadonis would actually reproduce the art by hand on each of the two or three copies.

By 1936, he opened a new world for the PSFS by beginning the production of fanzines with the gelatin-based hectograph, which allowed as many as 50 to 60 copies of a fanzine to be produced. His next title, *Fantasy Fiction Telegram*, premiered in 1936, and would run for four issues. In June of 1937, he assumed the publication of *Science Fiction Collector* from Morris Dollens, and it would become one of the primary fan publications across its run, which extended for 17 issues through 1941.

Baltadonis also pioneered the practice of creating his own publishing house for his fanzines, and Comet Publications counted as many as 15 Philadelphia-based titles in the months before Nycon.

Baltadonis was an undergraduate at Temple for the latter years of his fanzine career, and completed a graduate degree there after the war. He became an art teacher in Haverford, Pennsylvania, and would work in that district for more than 35 years. Although his fan activity was nonexistent across that period, he remained an avid science fiction reader, and reconnected with many of his old friends in the 1980s, when the PSFS invited the former PSFL and Boys SF Club members to Philcons and their Founders’ dinners. **(JS, JU, NF, NT)**

Leon A. Burg (April 8th, 1923 – February 5th, 2014)

Burg was active in New York fandom from 1937; in *The Immortal Storm*, Sam Moskowitz states that he was part of the New York contingent that attended the Third Convention in Philadelphia, and was one of those who eagerly debated with John Michel and his mouthpiece, Don Wollheim, at that event. His is also the last name on Moskowitz’s list of well-known fans at Nycon I. He made several contributions to fanzines in the late 1930s, sometimes in collaboration with Julius Unger. Leon was born in Michigan; in the 1930s, the family relocated to New York, where his father, Solomon, ran a laundry. After high school, he attended medical school and returned to the Detroit area. **(IS, JU, NF)**

C

Mrs. J.W. Campbell / Dona Louise Stebbins (1913 – 1974)

Dona Louise Stebbins Campbell Smith was John W. Campbell, Jr.’s wife at the time of the Nycon. She was born in Akron, Ohio, in November of 1913. Her mother, Mary V. Stebbins, was a native of Canada, born circa 1889. Mary came to America around 1901 with her mother, a woman who called herself Martha Stuart. Martha’s father was born in France; she reported his name as Benjamin Stebbins. One would assume Stuart was the name

of Dona’s grandfather, but Martha also reported that she had two half-siblings, both with the surname Stewart. Dona clearly identified with the name Stuart, as John W. Campbell would use the pseudonym Don A. Stuart for a number of his best-regarded science fiction stories.

But the identities of her father and grandfather are not currently determinable through online genealogical sources. At Dona’s first appearance in the U.S. Census, she was living with Mary and Martha in Boston. Mary was the head of the household, and listed herself as widowed; her husband had been an Ohio native like her daughter. She gave her profession as singer, and was employed in a Boston theater. Martha Stuart listed herself as married, but there was no sign of her husband. All we can really assume about Dona’s father is that he was named neither Stebbins nor Stuart.

Dona and John W. Campbell, Jr. met when he was an undergraduate at MIT; they were married in 1931, when she was at most 18 years of age. She would follow him to New Jersey and North Carolina after he left MIT, and they remained together as he became the dean of science fiction editors. It’s clear she was a part of Campbell’s work as a writer of science fiction; she was inevitably a first reader and typist, but Campbell’s use of the Don A. Stuart pseudonym, far more complicated than merely using her maiden name, is a signal of how intimately she was involved in his work. Dona also formed a close friendship with Frances Swisher, the wife of John’s Boston friend and correspondent, R. D. Swisher, and it is likely they spent time together during the Nycon weekend. She also came to the aid of a neuralgic Forry Ackerman with an aspirin tablet; the refreshed and ever-wolfish Ackerman made sure to give her signature a place of prominence among his autographs.

John and Dona had one child together, Philinda Duane Campbell Hammond (1940–2005), who was commonly nicknamed Lynn or Pee Dee. The Campbells divorced in 1949, but both were apparently remarried within a year. Dona married George O. Smith in Philadelphia in 1950, and they would remain together until her death in 1974. **(FA, JU, NF)**



In this vignette, editor Charles Horning peruses a manuscript while Otto Binder pleads on bended knee. Chicago fan Jack Darrow holds his nose to the right.

Allen Randall Charpentier (April 15th, 1917 – November 3rd, 1985)

Allen Charpentier was a native of Houston, Texas, and like almost all first-generation fans, made contact with fandom in the letter columns of the “promags.” His father, Jesse S. Charpentier, was born in Iowa to French parents, and worked as a tugboat channel pilot for a steamship line; Allen’s mother, Katy, was a native of Galveston. In 1940, Allen listed his occupation as mail carrier for the U. S. Postal Service, a singularly appropriate profession for someone so avidly involved in correspondence.

Allen was part of the circle of Texas fans recruited by Dale Hart to join the Tri-City chapter of the Science Fiction League in 1934 and 1935. The three sprawling cities included were Baytown, Goose Creek and Pelly, Texas, all in the vicinity of Houston. Today, all three are incorporated into Baytown, which still has a population well under 100,000. Despite the bucolic setting, Hart was able to assemble nearly a dozen active fans for his club. Many chapters of the League had begun to slow their activities and disperse by the end of the decade, but the Tri-City chapter was still going strong. In *The Immortal Storm*, Sam Moskowitz commented on the large delegation of Texans to attend the Nycon, which included Hart, Charpentier, A. S. Johnston, Julius Pohl, Jr. and Robert Young.

Allen enlisted in the U.S. Army in March of 1941, nine months before the attack on Pearl Harbor, and he was discharged from the service in October of 1945. After his service, he attended the University of Houston, where he received a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering in 1949.

In an interesting coincidence, Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle named the protagonist of their 1976 novel *Inferno* Allen Carpentier, but noted that he had added the “i” to his surname in order to sound more sophisticated. (IS, JU, NF)

Ruth Cuher

Possibly a misspelling of Cohen, but she might also be the Ruth A. Cuher listed in the 1944 city directory in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Ruth signed in very near the end of the list, and her name appears right next to another mystery woman, Betty Keat. Since Betty is tentatively identified as a telephone company clerk living in Elizabeth, New Jersey, it may be that Ruth and Betty were among the girlfriends whom Sam Moskowitz suggested were in attendance. (JU, NF)

Elizabeth Starr “Betty” Cummings Hill (November 4th, 1925 – September 12th, 2017)

Betty Cummings was the only daughter of Raymond King Cummings and the former

Gabrielle Wilson. She was just about 135 years old at the Nycon in July of 1939, and not unlike many of the young fans gathered for the event, she would soon enter the field as a professional, selling her first stories to the comics in 1942. Being the daughter of one of the most revered of all pulp science fiction writers was probably quite helpful, but Betty took full advantage of her opportunity, writing a wide variety of comics and children’s books. In the comics, she specialized in stories about animal characters, like Clancy the Colt for *Goofy Comics* in 1943, and “The Mouse and the Moose” for a 1944 issue of *Barnyard Comics*. And like most female writers in comics she at least dabbled in romance, as in “Date Bait,” composed for issue #5 of *Intimate Love*, in January of 1950.

Elizabeth attended Finch Junior College before enrolling at Columbia University. In 1949, she married Russell Gibson Hill (1921–1999), a former lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Russell pursued a successful career in chemical engineering; he and Betty had two children, Andrea and Bradford Wray Hill. Betty’s most famous work was the 1967 children’s book *Evan’s Corner*, created in collaborator with illustrator Judith Grossman. A new edition with more contemporary pictures by Sandra Speidel appeared in 1990. (FA, JU, NF)

D

N. Gilbert Dancy (Nicholas Gilbert Dancy) (September 24th, 1922 – June 24th, 2012)

Nicholas Gilbert Dancy was not quite 17 years old in July of 1939, and he presumably attended the convention as part of his summer vacation. He was a resident of Albany, New York, but a native of Gary, Indiana. His father, Nicholas E. Dancy, was born in Bulgaria; his mother, the former Luba Tzwetawood, was also from Indiana, though her family were also recent arrivals. When the younger Nicholas was born, his father listed his profession as salesman, but in 1940, the family lived in Albany and the elder Nicholas told the census-taker he made his living as a chiropodist. During the 1940s, his son sometimes went by the name Gilbert N. Dancy, possibly in

an effort to avoid being confused with his father. (JU, NF)

Jack Darrow (Clifford Kornoelje) (May 14th, 1912 – May 12th, 2001)

Older than many of the other members of Nycon I, Jack Darrow was one of the earliest Big Names in fandom, having made his fame through prolific participation in the letter columns of the science fiction magazines. He was one of the founders of the Chicago Science Fiction League in 1935, and was one of the major reasons why Sam Moskowitz considered the Chicago chapter to be the best in the SFL. The same year, he and fellow CSFL members Otto Binder and Walter Dellenback took a trip to New York to meet with League members there. Charles D. Hornig arranged a meeting of the New York fans with the Chicago delegation in the offices of *Wonder Stories*; unfortunately, the Chicagoans arrived a day late for the meeting, which might otherwise have been the first science fiction convention! Instead, Darrow and his companions spent several hours chatting with Hornig, Mort Weisinger and Julius Schwartz the following day. So there were several faces familiar to Darrow present when he entered Caravan Hall on July 2nd, 1939.

The Chicago chapter of the SFL broke away from the organization in 1937, and renamed themselves the Chicago Science Fiction Club. The group produced at least one additional issue of the club's fanzine, *The Fourteen Leaflet* (so named because Chicago had been chapter #14 of the SFL), but several members moved away from Chicago, and the club drifted apart. Jack Darrow had generally ceased any fan activity in 1939, when teenagers Erle Korshak and Mark Reinsberg suggested that he should attend the Nycon with them. After the convention, Darrow served as assistant director of the resurgent Chicago Science Fiction League, and William Hamling's original Chicon committee, but he was not part of the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers, which took over the event.

All the while, "Jack Darrow" was in fact the pseudonym of Clifford Charles Kornoelje, born in Ottawa, Illinois, to John (Johannis) and Lydia Chatfield Kornoelje. John was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, but his father Cornelius Kornoelje was a

fantasies in the water, but they pass like dreams.



William Henry Dellenback Jr. (top row, bow tie) poses with Alfred Kinsey (center) and fellow members of the Institute for Sex Research (later the Kinsey Institute) in 1947.

native of the Netherlands, and came to America in the 1870s. Clifford worked as a technician and tester for a chemical firm prior to World War II, and enlisted in the U.S. Navy after Pearl Harbor. Like many other sf fans who performed scientific, technical or documentary duties in the service, Cliff was a Navy photographer. In later years, he was employed as a chemist by the G.D. Searle pharmaceutical company, and retired in the mid-1970s when then-CEO Donald Rumsfeld discharged 60% of the company's employees and eventually engineered its sale to Monsanto. A lifelong resident of the Chicago area, he was married and divorced, and had no children; but was survived by numerous grand-nieces and -nephews. (CH, JR, JS, JU, NF)

William H. Dellenback (March 7th, 1917 – August 18th, 2000)

One of the bigger names from outside the New York/New Jersey/Philadelphia area at the Nycon, Bill Dellenback was one of the founding members of the Chicago chapter of the Science Fiction League, widely

considered one of the League's best. Along with fellow Chicagoans Otto Binder and Jack Darrow, Dellenback was part of a Chicago delegation to the offices of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in 1935; sadly, they arrived a day late to meet a collection of New York members who had gathered in their honor, and thus avoided inventing the science fiction convention a year early.

Dellenback and Walter L. Dennis were co-editors of a fanzine titled *The Fourteen Leaflet*, which served as an official organ for the CSFL. There were nine issues published between 1935 and 1937.

In the years when fandom primarily existed in the letter columns of the science fiction magazines, Dellenback was a frequent and well-respected contributor. When *Thrilling Wonder* published a series of quizzes designed to give readers a "degree" in science fiction, Dellenback tied for the highest score with Forrest J. Ackerman and Lewis Torrance, at 97% correct. By 1939, the Chicago club had fallen largely dormant, but Dellenback was encouraged to attend by Erle Korshak and Mark Reinsberg, the teenage dynamos who

would end up chairing the Chicon in 1940. Dellenback's photos at the convention are a unique record of the event.

Bill was born in Chicago in 1917; his father, also named William Henry Dellenback, was from DeKalb County, Illinois, while his father, Charles, had come to the United States from France in the 1850s. His mother, born Margaret Albright, was also a Chicago native, whose father had come from Germany about the same time as Charles Dellenback. The elder William was an attorney and master of chancery. Bill Jr. followed his interest in photography to a position as the official photographer of the Kinsey Institute for Human Sexual Research at Indiana University, from its inception in 1947 to his retirement in the 1970s. He married Julia Carmen Harris, a photographer and cartographer, in the mid-1950s, and they remained married until his death at home in August of 2000. (CH, JU, NF)

D. DePass

With no other documented presence in science fiction fandom, and not even a first name to go on, it may not be possible to positively identify some attendees, and D. DePass is apparently one of those. However, DePass is not a particularly common name, so we are dealing with a relatively small pool of candidates. My current favorite is Donald Delbert Depass (August 21st, 1926 — July 6th, 1995), not least because he was a teacher. Mr. Depass taught German, French and Spanish at Sweet Home High School in Grand Island, New York from 1955 to 1987, and was his district's first chair of foreign languages. In July of 1939, he was not quite 13 years old; his possible attendance at the convention must have corresponded to a family vacation centered on the World's Fair.

We might also consider Douglas Patrick DePass (June 23, 1924 — February 22nd, 1995), a Manhattan native who sadly ended up interred in the potter's field on Hart Island in the Bronx; or perhaps John Albert "Jack" Arnow (1920-1982), born John D. DePass, and a resident of Schemectady, New York, in 1939. (JU, NF)

George J. Dowds, Jr. (January 11th, 1929 — August 5th, 2003)

George Dowds made a sufficient impression on Sam Moskowitz that the latter added Dowds' name to the list of Nycon attendees collected by Julius Unger, nearly a year after the event. However, he does not appear to have had a long or noteworthy presence in fandom. And while Dowd is a relatively common name, both in fandom and the population at large, Dowds is far less so. One potential George Dowds actually died in January of 1939, making his attendance far less likely. Another George Dowds lived in Illinois in 1939, but as he was born in 1887 and made his living as a farmer, he seemed like a long shot. The most intriguing George Dowds come as a father-son set. George John Dowds Senior was born in 1902, and listed his profession as chauffeur. He married Mary R. McElwee in 1925; their son George Junior was born in January of 1929. Being not quite 11 years old in July of 1939, George Junior was a bit young to be part of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, and his Dad was a bit old. But on the holiday weekend, one could imagine George Senior delivering George Junior for an afternoon of scientific talks and movies; after all, the program was free! The Philadelphia Dowds were by far the closest candidates geographically, so George Junior might be considered the youngest member of the convention, barring Julius Unger's infant son. (NF)

E

Charles Eastabrooks (b. 1918?)

While Eastabrooks appears to have had no further impact on science fiction fandom, it is intriguing that a family by that name resided in Newark, New Jersey, also the home of Nycon chairman Sam Moskowitz, around the time of the convention. The head of the household, Charles Howard Eastabrooks, was 56 in 1939, and had been employed as a stenographer before becoming a civil comptroller in the late 1930s. His son, Charles Everett Eastabrooks, was 21 in 1939, and seems a more likely candidate to have attended the convention. He enlisted in the Army during the Second World War, and married a woman named

Pearl Forster while stationed near Montgomery, Alabama in 1942. (JU, NF)

F

Izadore Flaumenbaum / Isador Flaumenbaum (September 9th, 1909 — August 20th, 1980)

Isador Flaumenbaum was a Brooklyn native, and listed as an electrical contractor in city directories in the 1930s. He later changed his first name to Irving, and lived in Nassau, Long Island. There was also an Isidore Flaumenbaum living in Queens in 1939, but as this Flaumenbaum was 53 years old and made his living as a tailor, the electrician seems a more likely candidate. (JU, NF)

Arthur W. Ford (May 13th, 1919 — May 21st, 1986)

Arthur W. Ford was the son of Elwood and Suzanne Ford of Maplewood, New Jersey, a town close to Newark and the organizers of the 1939 convention. In the 1940 census he listed his profession as bookkeeper, with four years of high school to his credit. He enlisted in the U.S. Army on December 8th, 1941, and did not receive his discharge until the fall of 1945. After the service, he returned to live in Trenton, New Jersey, and would remain there for the rest of his life. (JU, NF)

Irving Frenkel (July 21st, 1909 — August 14th, 2005)

Another name with no explicit connection to fandom before or after the Nycon. There are certainly a number of Irving Frenkels to choose from in the Northeastern U.S. in 1939, but the Irving who lived on Rogers Place in the Bronx seems to be the most likely to have attended the convention.

Just short of his 30th birthday in early July of 1939, this Frenkel was born in Lodz, Poland. in 1909, and may have used a more Polish-sounding name or spelling while answering the 1930 and 1940 Census. But by the 1950s, with Jewish-Americans who had roots in Eastern Europe answering many questions about their political affiliation, Frenkel successfully sought U.S. citizenship using the first name Irving. He and his wife, Helen, also a Polish immigrant, are interred at West Babylon cemetery in Suffolk County, New York. (JU, NF)



Herbert Edward Goudket (October 19th, 1913 – January 6th, 2004)

Herb Goudket was slightly older than many of his peers in early New York fandom; by 1939, he was 26 years old, and working as a clerk and cashier at a hotel. He was part of the inter-city fandom that began to organize the Eastern Conventions in October of 1936, joining fellow New York fans George Hahn, Dave Kyle, John Michel, Fred Pohl, Will Sykora and Donald Wollheim in a trip to Philadelphia to meet out-of-town fans, an outing which Wollheim styled a “science fiction convention.” He had been a member of the Science Fiction League, but also a founding member of the New York chapter of the rival International Cosmos Science Club, which officially declared itself at a meeting on February 3rd, 1935; Goudket was elected its treasurer. When a much-anticipated second convention was held in Astoria’s Bohemian Hall in February of 1937, Goudket served as its chairman.

Goudket and Will Sykora shared an interest in science fiction cinema, and began trying to collaborate on an amateur sf movie before the second convention in 1937. Goudket was probably at least one of the camera operators that filmed the rocketry experiments of the ISA (successor to the ICSB), shown at the Astoria convention. In early 1938, Sykora enlisted Goudket and Chester Fein in the formation of the Scientific Cinema Club of New York, which had an inaugural meeting on January 28th in the same Bohemian Hall. The same version of Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World* which would be shown at Nycon I was screened, interrupted by the antics of a very drunk Harry Dockweiler, who had to be taken away by the police. The second meeting, at Goudket’s home, became a skirmish in the ongoing war between Sykora and Donald Wollheim. Friends of the latter packed the meeting, prompting Sykora’s resignation. (He promptly founded a rival group, the Scientifilmakers.)

Goudket was present at the Third Eastern Convention, held in Philadelphia on October 30th, 1937, and took a well-known photo of the New York delegation.



Nycon Street scene — Jack Darrow and Julius Schwartz, center; also identifiable are Jack Williamson and Conrad H. Ruppert

He was also present at the Fourth Eastern, titled the “First National” convention, held in the Slovak Sokol Hall in Newark, New Jersey, on May 29th, 1938. At that event, another attempt was made to organize a committee to present a convention in association with the impending 1939 World’s Fair. Goudket introduced a motion asking the assembled magazine editors to pledge their support to the effort, which chairman Sam Moskowitz suggested was peremptory in tone; Goudket then offered to table his motion, a procedure with which Moskowitz, a novice parliamentarian, was unfamiliar, and he had to step aside and let Sykora take over the convention so that the notion could be properly deferred. But all the editors present tried to outdo one another in their support of Goudket’s idea in their addresses. Herb was also named to the provisional 1939 committee created at the Newark convention.

However, Goudket did not attend the committee’s meetings, which Moskowitz interpreted as support for Wollheim’s rival effort dating from the Second Eastern Convention. It seems more likely that Goudket wanted to avoid the feud, and had wearied of Sykora’s many projects, which usually had a secret agenda which was not shared with Goudket and others.

Herb was the eldest child of Morris Goudket and Fannie Jacobs Goudket, married in Manhattan on August 5th, 1912. Morris was employed as a clerk by the U.S. post office. Morris’ father, Louis Goudket, who lived with the family into the 1920s, was a native of the Netherlands. Herb’s younger brother, Bertram Joseph Goudket, was born in April of 1918. The 1940 Census showed Herb and Bert still living at home with their parents on Jackson Boulevard

in the Bronx. Herb was still working as a hotel clerk, while Bertram was a book-keeper for a wholesale coal company. Still single after the U.S. entered World War II, Herb was inducted into the U.S. Army in April of 1942 and was discharged in late July of 1945.

After the war, Herb married Rose Janowitz and settled in Seaford, Long Island. They had one daughter, Karen Goudket Seitzer, and a son, Michael J. Goudket. Herb listed his profession as “precision production” during this period, and worked for several different firms making optical and other instruments. His son Michael Goudket is now well-known as an amateur historian, and portrays Revolutionary War spymaster Robert Townsend at the Raynham Hall museum in Seaford. (JU, NF)

Lee Gregor (Milton Rothman)

Pseudonym imposed on Philadelphia fan Milton Rothman by John W. Campbell Jr., on the occasion of the former’s first professional sale. This was the story “Heavy Planet,” which appeared in the August 1939 issue of *Astounding Science Fiction*. This is generally considered to be Rothman’s single best work; it has been translated into German and Italian, and shared its title with a posthumous collection of his fiction. He published another seven or eight short stories, including at least one mystery, under the Gregor pseudonym through 1957. While Rothman’s use of the pseudonym was a profoundly fannish piece of self-promotion, “Lee” should not be counted as a genuine attendee of the Nycon.

Alphonse Grimminger (March 12th, 1924 – 2015)

Al Grimminger was one of the younger members of the convention, having celebrated his 15th birthday about four months before the Nycon. He was a native of Danzig, Germany, the erstwhile “free city” created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1920. His father and namesake brought the 4-year-old Alphonse and his mother, Christina, to America in 1928. In the 1930s, they resided in an apartment at 1544 First Avenue. That’s a rather desirable address on the upper east side of Manhattan, but

most of their neighbors were wage workers, employed by trucking companies or working as housemaids. Alphonse Sr. was a “cutter,” and worked with suede in a factory that made shoes and fancy bags.

The younger Alphonse would not graduate from high school until 1942. He enlisted in the army in February of 1943, and served in the Pacific theater. He married a woman named Marianne Solveig Sylvester in 1953, and the couple had a daughter, Karin Therese Grimminger, in 1953. They later divorced and both remarried. Alphonse and his second wife, Edda Grimminger, were residents of Huntington, New York, for many years; Edda reports that Alphonse died in 2015. (JU, NF)

H

F.E. or “Flossie” Hardart / Flossie Elizabeth Hardart Currey Murphy Jordan Sheehan (May 13, 1913–1992)

Florence Elizabeth Hardart was one of several members of the convention with roots in the Akron, Ohio, area. Her parents were John A. Hardart and Gladys Mossholder Hardart, both of whom were born in Germany. John Hardart worked a variety of jobs, including general farm labor and machine maintenance. Florence was apparently a born storyteller; she had several versions of her childhood, one in which she was raised on a small subsistence farm, and another in which she was raised by an uncle who was a mechanical engineer and who passed his acumen on to her. There is little evidence to support either version.

She was the valedictorian of her high school class, but it’s not clear how and where she continued her studies after graduation. At age 22, she married a man named Ray P. Currey in Hammond, West Virginia; the marriage is quite well-documented, but it had ended by the time of the Nycon, as she attended it in the company of her second husband, Arthur James Murphy, who was employed as a factory draftsman. He was 23 years older than Florence, and had apparently left a wife and four children in order to marry her. In 1940, they resided together in Poughkeepsie, New York, but by 1941, she was living

on her own in Newark, New Jersey, and he resided in Detroit.

It’s not clear exactly when Florence and Arthur Murphy divorced, or what she did during the Second World War. But she resurfaced in 1946 as a student at Purdue University, where she was a resident of the Novadale Co-op house. She also acquired a third husband, the otherwise anonymous Ray Jordan. By the time she graduated with distinction in 1948, with a degree in mechanical engineering, he was nowhere to be found. She treated herself to a two-week cruise to the Bahamas, and on her return, changed her address to a P.O. box at New York’s Grand Central Station. She moved on to the Illinois Institute of Technology, where she received a master’s in 1950. In 1951, she became the first female engineering instructor at Rice University in Dallas, Texas, where she taught courses in technical drafting. In 1954, she accepted a position with the U.S. Air Force Corps of Engineers, and worked designing pipelines in Morocco.

She left that job to become an assistant professor at the University of Arizona, but also took a protracted tour through Asia hunting rocks and fossils, worked for some time in Lockheed Martin’s drafting department, and acquired her fourth husband, a diesel mechanic named James Roy Sheehan. He was 10 years younger than Florence, and had seen much of the Pacific in the U.S. Navy.

By 1960, she was employed at the California State Polytechnic College, on the staff of their Mechanical Engineering Department. From there, she moved to the Hallikainen Institute in Berkeley, a private engineering firm. Hallikainen’s internal newsletter noted several details about Florence, including the fact that she and her husband enjoyed sailing on their cabin cruiser. In 1965, they left on another extended cruise to Japan and Hong Kong; when they returned, she took a job teaching at Chabot College in San Leandro. She would remain there through her retirement in 1976, having completed a six-year-long process of divorcing James Sheehan in 1972. She retired to Alameda, California, where she died on April 4, 1992.

As F. E. Hardart, she published two science fiction short stories, “The Devil’s

Pocket” in 1940 and “The Beast of Space” in 1941. This was during the time that she and Arthur Murphy were living in Poughkeepsie, and Sam Moskowitz noted her as being a member of the Queens Science Fiction League “way back when.” Both stories generally involve questions about petro-geology, and pointed the way toward her future employment as a designer of pipelines and other systems for transferring liquids from one place to another. It’s also clear that she did her best to conceal the true gender and identity of F. E. Hardart from readers, and possibly editors as well. In a humorous piece written for a Texas newspaper, she claimed to be a man, 26 years old, and married for three years — all details lifted from her brother Frank Hardart, and she sealed the deal by using his name as well. Shielded by the anonymity of her P.O. box, she might have maintained the deception for years. It was probably her divorce from Arthur Murphy, as well as her desire to study and teach engineering at the university level, which led her to abandon the pseudonym. (JU, NF)

(Thanks to researcher Charles Levi for his work on this biography.)

(Edward) Dale Hart (February 14th, 1920 – February 19th, 1966)

Dale Hart was born in Happy Hollow, Oklahoma, and grew up in Harris County, Texas, near the city of Houston. His father, Robert Edward Lee Hart (1896–1960), was employed as a pipefitter at an oil refinery. Dale was one of the organizers of the Tri-City chapter of the Science Fiction League, based in Baystown and two smaller municipalities in the Houston area. He was part of a contingent of Texas fans who made the long trip to New York by car in June of 1939, a group which included Robert Charpentier, Albert Sidney Johnston, Julius Pohl and Walter Sullivan. On the way back south after the convention, this group appeared without warning at the Hagerstown, Maryland, home of Harry Warner, Jr., and spent the night sleeping on the Warner family’s front porch.

At the Nycon, Hart began a friendship with the writer Ross Rocklyne that would continue after both of them relocated to Los Angeles. Dale was an enthusiastic proponent of the traveling annual convention

that was initiated at the Futurian summit on July 4th, 1939, and attended the next two “World” conventions in Chicago in 1940 and Denver in 1941.

Hart listed no profession in the 1940 census, but he was a U.S. Navy Reservist, and was called up during the war, reaching the rank of Bosun’s Mate, 2nd Class. The Navy sent him to the West Coast, and he made contact with that “fannish USO,” as Forry Ackerman once termed it, the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. After the war, he remained in Los Angeles and took an active role in LASFS and its institutions, including the Westercon, which began as a one-day event in 1948. Hart also played a prominent role in the Pacificon, the 1946 world convention, held in the same hotel that would host the first Westercon. Hart published three issues of his own fanzine, *Ichor*, the first number appearing as part of the *Pacificon Com-bazine*, distributed at the 1946 convention. He was fond of publishing both fiction and poetry, and his own verse garnered him the title of Best Poet in the inaugural FAPA Egoboo Poll of 1948. He also edited a few issues of the LASFS club fanzine, *Shangri L’affaires*.

He was a member of LASFS at a time when many in the club aspired to be professional writers and several pros were frequent visitors, and Hart had a handful of science fiction publishing credits. His story “Conquest by Proxy” appeared in *New Worlds* #19, and “Tongue of the Dragon” was published in *Fantasy Book* in 1949. A poem, “Le Roi Dans Mort,” appeared in *Haunted* #2 in 1964. But his primary professional field was engineering. In the early 1950s, he was an instructor at the National University in Mexico City.

Even while residing in Mexico, he was a frequent participant at conventions in Texas and other south-central states. He was part of the throng at Nolacon I in New Orleans in 1951. And Harry Warner, Jr. reported that he was part of an all-night one-shot fanzine session at Oklacon in 1957, an event which did not break up until 4 o’clock in the morning, when lightning struck within 50 feet of the building.

Hart was also an alcoholic; author Gregory Benford reports that he saw Hart publically intoxicated on numerous occa-



Dale Hart dressed as a Grey Lensman at the 1946 Worldcon. The costume was so tight he could not sit down.

sions when they were both involved in Texas fandom in the 1950s. This led to liver and heart issues, which combined to kill him at the early age of 46 in 1966. He had returned to Southern California in the 1960s, and was living in Acton at the time of his death. But he is buried alongside his family in Baystown, Texas, where he founded the Tri-City Science Fiction League as a 14-year-old in 1935. (CH, JU, NF)

George Herman (July 15th, 1918 – July 25th, 2003)

George Herman was one of the Nycon members whom Sam Moskowitz added to his version of the attendees list, compiled a few months after the event and published in issue #6 of *New Fandom*. But he is not mentioned in any of the narratives of early fan history in New York or Philadelphia, and Moskowitz does not mention him as being part of the Newark group or the ESFS in *The Immortal Storm*. For these reasons, it seems less likely that George was a native New Yorker, although the name George Herman is so generic as to present at least one candidate in most states of the Union.

One George Herman fits the demographic patterns of Nycon attendees particularly well. He was a native of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and just days short of his 21st birthday in July of 1939.

His father was Jacob Herman, a butcher who ran his own retail shop; his mother was the former Minnie Goldberg, born a subject of the Russian Empire. In 1940, George’s younger siblings Bennie, Ethel and Dorothy were all still living at home, while his older brother Irving Israel Herman had already set off to find his fortune in California. George, however, had taken a job with his Uncle Sam; in 1940, he was a private first class in the U.S. Army. He claimed four years of high school education.

He later married a woman named Esther “Essie” Goldberg (another very common name!), and was living in the Bronx at the time of his death in 2003. (NF)



Mr. & Mrs. Insana

Rosario Insana and his wife, Angelina, lived with their six children on 39th Street in Queens. He listed his profession as laborer, and he was born in Italy in 1885. One suspects strongly that their 15-year-old son Anthony was responsible for Rosario and Angelina’s presence in Caravan Hall, but his name doesn’t appear on the published list of attendees. Perhaps his was one of the illegible signatures that Julius Unger referred to as missing from his list. (JU, NF)



Mary MacGregor Jameson (December 13th, 1889 – May 26th, 1973)

The wife of science fiction author Malcolm Routh Jameson, Mary MacGregor was one of five daughters of Dr. William Wallace MacGregor (1851–1931) and Anna Eliza Jones MacGregor (1862–1943). Both of Mary’s parents were born in New Jersey, and Dr. McGregor received his training at Columbia University. But Mary’s family had connections to Texas, where the climate was thought to be better for Dr. MacGregor’s health. He was an attending physician at Laredo’s Mercy Hospital, and later became superintendent of the Southwestern Insane Asylum in San Antonio. While in San Antonio, the MacGregors became acquainted with a young bookkeeper with

political ambitions also working at the asylum. Joe Lee Jameson and Clarissa Amaryllis Routh Jameson became friends with William and Anna MacGregor, and Mary MacGregor was a childhood playmate of the Jameson's oldest son, Malcolm.

But Joe Lee Jameson died tragically young; in 1904, aged just 34, he succumbed to typhoid fever. This sent the Jameson family on an odyssey across Texas, and almost certainly separated Malcolm Jameson and Mary MacGregor for more than a decade. In 1907, Mary, her older sister Anna, and Mary's friend Ethel Gribble all took jobs as teachers for the children of miners in remote Minerva, Texas. Minerva was located at the end of a 25-mile narrow-gauge railway that spurred from the main line near Laredo; despite the short map distance, it was nearly a full day's ride out to the mines.

The MacGregor girls were fondly remembered as "angels" by former Minerva residents writing several decades later. But the town was actually abandoned when the mines flooded out in 1915. The miners moved inland to the works at Dolores, Texas, where Helen MacGregor was also a teacher. But by that time, Malcolm Jameson, now a student and a Naval Officer Candidate, had made contact with Mary again. Amaryllis Routh Jameson had remarried, to another Texan with a promising political career, Austin Judge Robert Hamilton Ward. The family lived in a landmark house across the street from the Texas State capitol. The Judge's connections and bank balance probably helped Malcolm secure a commission in the U.S. Navy in 1916.

Malcolm and Mary had two children; their daughter Vida was born in 1916, and their son Malcolm MacGregor Jameson arrived in 1919. Generally called MacGregor by family members, he served for over 20 years in the U.S. Army, seeing combat tours in World War II, Korea and Vietnam (and see Vida Jameson's biography below).

Mary and Malcolm moved their children to and from stations in Texas, Louisiana, Washington, D.C., and Virginia, while Malcolm performed duties as a naval draftsman. When the U.S. entered World War I, Jameson saw several months of sea



Vida Jameson Cartmill Skinner —
a wartime photo.

duty, some of it aboard the battleship *USS North Dakota*, and the family was briefly resident in the Philippines. He remained in the Naval Ordnance Bureau into the mid-1920s, but his inability to achieve senior rank in the notoriously slow-moving interwar U.S. Navy eventually led him to resign his commission. By the time war returned at the end of 1941, his health prevented him from returning to active duty. During these many moves, Mary remained in close correspondence with her mother and sisters. Two of them married servicemen as well and lived for years on Luzon, while another stayed single and taught in rural Texas schools for decades. Photos show that Anna Jones MacGregor made visits to Mary and Malcolm and her grandchildren in both Washington and New York.

By 1932, the family had relocated to Manhattan, and took up residence in the same apartment building where Malcolm's younger brother House Baker Jameson lived with his wife, the actress Edie Talianferro. Malcolm worked in sales for the International Correspondence School until the effects of throat cancer forced him to stop, and take up writing fiction as a less strenuous profession. After Malcolm died in 1945, while both of their children were in the service, Mary remained in New York City. She is interred in the Long Island National Cemetery, next to Malcolm. (NF)

Vida Jameson Cartmill Skinner

(September 10, 1916 – September 23rd, 1988)

Daughter of author Malcom Jameson and Mary McGregor Jameson, born in Houston, Texas. Her brother, Malcom McGregor Jameson, was born in 1919, after the family had moved to Washington, D.C. The family followed the father's naval career from Washington to the Philippines and back to the West Coast of the United States, before returning to the Capitol again. After high school, Vida attended college while working part-time as a clerk for an industrial firm. She was well-known to both sf professionals and fans in the late 1930s, who all seem to have been eager to give her their attention. In 1944, she joined the Women's Army Corps, but returned to civilian life after the war. In 1949, she married SF author Cleve Cartmill (1908–1964), best known for his 1944 short story "Deadline," which prompted an investigation by describing the development of an atomic weapon very similar to the then-incomplete Manhattan Project. Their marriage lasted less than five years, because Vida remarried, to William Dwight Skinner (1926–1985), in 1954. Their daughter, Marianna, was born in 1955.

Vida was commonly known within the family as Vida II, as she was named in honor of her father's younger sister, who died suddenly of meningitis at the age of 7 in November of 1900. Her death had a profound effect on her brother Malcolm, who wrote to relatives at the age of 9, describing the rope of violets that adorned her tiny white casket. (JU, NF)

Franklin Janson (March 15th, 1920 – March 16th, 2001)

A resident of Burlington, New Jersey, Franklin listed his occupation as "brick cleaner" in the 1940 U.S. Census, but had also been out of work for three years. He married Eva Emily Viereck in August of 1941, and enlisted in the U.S. army on June 9th, 1943. They had one son together, Franklin S. Janson, Jr., born July 16th, 1946. (JU, NF)



from A. S. Johnston's college yearbook

Albert Sidney Johnston (December 2nd, 1911 – December 31st, 1976)

One of the contingent of six Texas fans who traveled to the Nycon by car, Johnson was also a founding member of the Tri-City Chapter of the Science Fiction League, operating out of Bayston, Goose Creek and Pelley, Texas. Named for a prominent Confederate general killed at the Battle of Shiloh, Albert was a high school teacher. He attended North Texas State Teacher's College in Denton, Texas, where he was editor of its literary magazine, *Avesta*. His science fiction collection was extensive. According to Harry Warner, Jr. in *All Our Yesterdays*, Johnson created an eight-day wonder by reporting he had found a copy of the January 1931 issue of *Amazing Stories* printed on "slick" paper on a vacation to New York, but this apparently occurred after his 1939 trip. His active participation in fandom appears to have ceased after the Second World War. (JU, NF)

K

Betty Keat (October 25, 1907 – November 1986?)

Julius Unger translated this name as Betty Kost, and Sam Moskowitz corrected it to Keat in his version of the list. Unfortunately, this puts us little closer to fixing her identity. Elizabeth S. Keat of Milburn, New Jersey, was conveniently close by, but in July of 1939 she had just given birth to her first daughter, Elizabeth Ann Keat. A better possibility is Elizabeth P. Keat, born

1907, living in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in 1939. She was divorced, and employed as a clerk by a telephone company; she lived in the home of her uncle and aunt, William and Asenath Duncan, along with her younger sister, Ruth, and their 84-year-old grandmother, Emma Keat. She had married Elliot P. Millpaugh on June 23, 1927, at Rye, New York. A woman willing to put her faith in a character named Elliot Millpaugh is surely comfortable with flights of fancy, so she seems potentially fannish. (JU, NF)

Bernice Keller (September 16th, 1923 – February 18th, 2005)

No apparent relation to Dr. David H. Keller, Bernice was the daughter of jeweler Leo C. Keller and resided in Rockville Center, Long Island, for the majority of her life. She and her brothers, Chester and Lewis Keller, had already made two ocean trips to Bermuda by July of 1939, once in the company of their aunt, Eliza Silverman. Silverman died in April of 1939 and left Bernice a portion of her \$8,000 estate. In 1943, she was employed as a secretary in Brooklyn, and appeared in a story about Spanish-language instruction in the *Brooklyn Eagle*. In 1945, her older brother Lewis committed suicide in a Manhattan doctor's office. In 1955, she accompanied her father, then 79, on a cruise to Hawaii. (JU, NF)

V. Kidwell

Mr. V. Kidwell is an unusual case — we have documentation of specific things he did at the convention, and we even have a picture of him: he was one of the fans who posed for the famous photo taken at Coney Island on the afternoon of July 4th. But we don't seem to know what his full name was, or where exactly he came from. He played center field for the PSFS Panthers in the softball game won by Moskowitz's Queens Cometeers also on July 4th. He cuts a pretty slender figure in the Coney Island photo — perhaps he had the speed to patrol center, but the PSFS team suffered from several lapses in defense. It's possible that he was Vernon H. Kidwell, of Baltimore, who was 19 years old in 1939. But that V. Kidwell followed his father into the steel mill, where he worked as a roller man. If Vernon is our Kidwell, one hopes



Bernice Keller — A yearbook photo

he put on some weight before taking on that work. (JU, NF)

Sol Knegev aka Saul Knegov, aka Solomon Krieger (June 26th, 1921 – January 15th, 1990)

Born in the Bronx, Sol was the 18-year-old son of Russian immigrants Julius and Esther Knegov; Julius was a cutter in the clothing trade. (JU, NF)

Erle Melvin Korshak (b. Oct. 13th, 1923)

The son of Chicago salesman Sam Korshak, Erle grew up on Hyde Park Boulevard, and had the means to be one of fandom's most avid early collectors. He was part of a circle of young Chicago fans which became active after Ziff-Davis Publications acquired *Amazing Stories* and relocated it to the city in January of 1938. New editor Raymond Palmer enjoyed attention from friendly fans and readers, and often made them gifts of original art and manuscripts. Korshak's fa*n circle formed in high school, where he attended with early actifans Chester S. Geier, W. Lawrence Hamling, Richard Meyer and Mark Reinsberg.

Korshak was only 16 when he, Reinsberg and early 1930's letterhack Jack Darrow traveled to New York to attend the Nycon. They were given approval to hold the "next" convention at the Futurian meeting of July 4th, but sought an additional mandate by traveling to Philcon in October of 1939, where the authorization was repeated. Korshak ws one of five high school students on the Chicon committee;

the only legal adult was the 26-year-old Bob Tucker.

Korshak was one of the first fans to become a professional book dealer, what fandom would generally refer to as a “huckster.” He offered his first set of duplicate books for sale in 1938; ten years later, he had more than 1,300 customers on his mailing list, and employed several assistants. In 1947, Korshak, Reinsberg and Ted Dikty formed their own science fiction publishing house, which they named Shasta, after the mountain where Korshak and Reinsberg had worked in the summer of 1942. Their first release was Everett Bleiler’s *Checklist of Fantasy Literature*, a landmark work with more than 5,000 well-indexed titles. Shasta thrived for its first seven years, and ultimately released 17 original works. But the company was never well-managed; its ability to pay royalties and acquire new works was hurt by the contraction of the SF market in 1954, and probably sealed its own fate by making an agreement with Pocket Books to issue paperback editions of Shasta hardcovers.

After Shasta folded in 1957, Korshak ended most contact with fandom, and moved to California, where he built several successful businesses. In the late 1980s, he began attending conventions again, and in 2009, he and his son Steve Korshak began publishing under the imprint Shasta Phoenix. At this writing, he is one of two living members of the Nycon, the other being Philadelphian Bob Madle. (JS, JU, NF)

Anna Krenzel and Israel Krenzel

In 1939, Israel Krenzel was a 12-year-old 7th grade student, who lived with his parents at 632 E. 9th Street in Manhattan. His parents, Benjamin and Fannie Krenzel were born in Russia and Poland, respectively, and neither reported any occupation to the 1940 census. Israel’s 25-year-old sister Vera was employed as a “Counter Girl,” but 22-year-old Annie apparently had no job, which is likely why she was free to chaperone her little brother to Nycon I. (JU, NF)



Photo of Joe Kucera

Joe Kucera (June 19, 1906 – February 10th, 1991)

Joseph A. Kucera was an Omaha, Nebraska-based dental technician, who came into contact with fandom by writing letters to the promags. His August of 1932 letter to *Wonder Stories* extolled the virtues of SF by non-U.S. writers. By 1939, he and his wife, Clarice, had been married for 10 years, and had a 2-year-old son named Dana. (JU, NF)

Gertrude Kuslan Lambert

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, co-editor of early fanzine *The Nucleus*, on which she collaborated with her brother, Louis. In 1938 and 1939, they also collaborated on *Cosmic Tales*, a fanzine which they took over for James V. Taurasi, and later bequeathed to John Giunta. Gertrude also attended the Chicon, and was one of the hostesses of the famous party in Room 589. She was also a founding member of the Stranger Club, contributed to Art Widner’s clubzine *Fanfare*, and had a brief but intense romance with Earl Singleton, whose hoax “pseuicide” rocked fandom in 1941. Her tears at Boskone I memorably convinced those at the convention that Singleton was really dead. Founding member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation or NFFF (member #6). She was sole editor of the last two issues of *The Nucleus*, published after 1944, but left fandom after the war. Her last documented appearance

was at the Philcon in 1947. She appears in city directories for New Haven, Connecticut, into the 1950s, where her profession is given as teacher. (JU, NF)

Louis Kuslan (Feb. 14th, 1922 – October 9th, 2015)

Native of New Haven, Connecticut; with his sister Trudy Kuslan was the co-editor of the fanzines *The Nucleus* (1938–1946) and *Cosmic Tales* (1937–1941), the latter passed on to them by founding editor James V. Taurasi. He studied chemistry as an undergraduate, but after completing his Ph.D. at Yale, he specialized in the training of science teachers, and wrote several books on the history of science. He was a founding member (#9) of the NFFF, and of Boston’s Stranger Club. (JU, NF)

David A. Kyle (February 14th, 1919 – September 18th, 2016)

David Arthur Kyle was born in Monticello, a village in Sullivan County, New York. Kyle’s father, Arthur Charles Kyle, was an attorney, and the family ran a print shop and local newspaper. They were sufficiently affluent that young David and his mother, Harriet, were sent to Indian River, Florida, during the winter months. Trips to New York City from Monticello were accomplished via private car services and the Erie Railroad out of Middletown. In later years, Dave made the 100-mile trip by bus.

An early experience with a stage production of *Dracula* helped create an attraction for the fantastic, which Kyle indulged through Tom Swift novels and the work of Edgar Rice Burroughs. He was obsessed with airships, airplanes and aviation, with a romantic affection for the aerial aces of the First World War. Later, Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon and the magazines edited by Hugo Gernsback extended his fascination to travel beyond Earth. When Gernsback formed the Science Fiction League in May of 1934, Kyle joined enthusiastically. By the time it folded in 1936, Kyle had become acquainted with dozens of fans, and they formed his peer group when he moved to New York City to attend an art school in the penthouse of the Flatiron Building in the fall. Kyle attended the first SF “convention” in Philadelphia in 1936, and also became involved in publishing;



Dave Kyle at the 2012 Worldcon

his first fanzine, *Fantasy World*, appeared in 1934. After World War II, Kyle and Martin H. Greenberg founded Gnome Press, one of the genre's most famous specialty houses.

Kyle was a member of the grandly-named International Scientific Association, which was New York's most active sf fan club in 1936 and 1937. But he gradually became more closely associated with those young fans later known as the Futurians, including John B. Michel, Fred Pohl and Donald A. Wollheim. Michel's treatise "Mutation or Death" precipitated a debate that effectively ended the third Eastern convention on October 30th, 1937, and began the schism that would eventually divide New York fandom in 1939.

When the triumvirate of Moskowitz, Sykora and Taurasi assumed the organization of the "World's Fair Convention" authorized by the Newark gathering of May of 1938, Kyle was one of many who felt they had usurped the authority to present the event. His mimeographed "yellow pamphlet" titled *A Warning* was allegedly the catalyst for the Exclusion Act, and therefore helped inspire the meeting of July 4th, where the Chicago convention was proposed. Kyle was not barred from the convention as he had not signed his work, and did not step up to take credit for it, even when his friends were apparently barred because of it.

Kyle's ambitions were clearly excited by the events of 1939. When the Worldcon returned to New York in 1956, much

expanded and improved, Kyle was its chairman. In one of the more ironic twists of fannish history, Kyle decided to bar fans who had not paid for the \$7 banquet from hearing the speech by the Guest of Honor, the cartoonist Al Capp. Years later, he claimed that a fire marshal had instructed him to clear the area where the so-called Balcony Insurgents were seated, which echoed Moskowitz's revisionist claim that the 1939 excludées had refused to make a pledge of good conduct, and thus provoked their own exclusion. In any event, the Balcony Insurgents—who included Bob Tucker, Andy and Jean Young, Boyd Raeburn, Ron Ellik, Larry Stark and Ted White—popularized the phrase Dave Kyle Says You Can't Sit Here, uttered by a well-meaning henchman, for years thereafter.

He married fellow fan Ruth Landis in 1957; their honeymoon consisted of a trip to the 1957 Worldcon in London, in the company of many other fans. Kyle was made a Knight of St. Fantony in 1961, and received the Big Heart Award in 1973. He was the Guest of Honor at Constellation, the 1983 Worldcon in Baltimore. His publishing credits include two noted works on the history of SF, *The Illustrated Book of Science Fiction Ideas and Dreams* (1977) and *A Pictorial History of Science Fiction* (1979). In the 1990s, he submitted a series of articles and memoirs to Richard and Nicki Lynch's fanzine *Mimosa*, describing many key events and personalities of early fandom. (CH, FA, JP, JR, JU, NF, NT, SM)



J. Lacker (b. 1923?)

With nothing but an initial to tie to the surname, and no other known comment on their identity or activities, there is little chance of positively identifying J. Lacker or even confirming their gender or place of origin. One intriguing candidate was a sophomore at Carl Schurz high school in Chicago in 1939, where he was on the staff of the school newspaper. But there is no indication that J. Lacker attended the Chicago the following year, so my speculation ends there. (JU, NF)



Dave Kyle (left) congratulates Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund winner Robert Madle at the 1957 World Science Fiction Convention in London.

Henry Lemaire (January 24th, 1921 – September 20th, 2010)

Henry Lemaire was another teenaged member of Nycon who would build a career as a bona fide scientist. He attended the Riverdale Country School and Pomfret Academy before receiving his B.S. from MIT. He was commissioned in the U.S. Chemical Corps the same day as he received his diploma, and served four years in the wartime army. After the war, he received a Ph.D. in synthetic organic chemistry from Cal Tech, and worked for Wyandotte Chemical for two years before beginning post-doctoral work at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. In Madison, he also met Connie, his wife of 57 years. He accepted a position at Lever Brothers research laboratory in New Jersey, where he received several patents for his work. In 1966, he took a position at the University of New Haven, where he remained an instructor until his retirement in 1978. (JU, NF)

Leonard Levy

With no candidate connected to science or science fiction in any documented manner, there's no way of determining which of the dozens of Leonard Levys living in the United States in 1939 was at the Nycon. If asked to pick a favorite, I would choose the 23-year-old Leonard Levy who lived at home with his widowed mother and younger brother at 210 East Madison Street on New York's Lower East Side in 1940. He listed his profession as laborer, but many fans worked relatively menial jobs as the Depression wore on, and this Leonard was 12 years old when Gernsback brought

Amazing Stories to the newsstands. (JU, NF)

A. W. Lincoff (Abraham Walter Lincoff) (March 7th, 1920–December 24th, 1998)

Walter Lincoff was a Brooklyn native; his father and mother, Isadore and Fanny Lincoff, were Russian immigrants. Isadore worked in a shoe factory. There does not seem to be a 1940 census listing for Walter, but when he was inducted into the U.S. Army in 1943, he stated that he had two years of college education. He was employed as a skilled mechanic or repairman at the time of his induction, and, although single, was his parents' sole source of income. He attained the rank of corporal in the service, and returned to New York after the war. He never married. (JU, NF)

Joseph Lipton (September 14th, 1914–November 6th, 1997)

Either already married or engaged to be at the time of the Nycon, Joseph Lipton seems to have been a bit older than the average convention member, and had apparently completed three years of instruction in pharmacy school. He was employed as a dispensing clerk at a drug store in 1940. His father, Isadore, and his mother, born Meriam Spielberg, were both natives of Russia. (JU, NF)

Jack Lynch

There were many individuals named John or Jack Lynch in the United States in 1939, and the name Lynch is pretty well-known to latter-day science fiction fans, and Richard and Nicki Lynch's fanzine *Mimosa* has been an important source in the compilation of these entries. But there seems to be no other record of his presence in fandom. The most intriguing of the many Jack LYNCHES to me is Brooklyn native Jack Lynch, who was 25 years old in 1940. He was well-educated—he claimed to have completed three years of college—and listed his profession as salesman. The year after the Nycon, he was living in a rented room in Chicago—site of the second World Convention. Hmm.... (JU, NF)

M

Robert A. Madle (b. June 2nd, 1920)

Bob Madle was a founding member of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, and was one of the co-hosts of the first science fiction convention in 1936. He was among what Jack Speer called the "eo-fan" generation, discovering fandom in 1933, before Charles Horning formed the Science Fiction League. In 1937, he and Jack Agnew began publishing a fanzine, *Fantascience Digest*, first by hectograph, and later by mimeograph; it ran 14 issues, through December of 1941. Along with fellow Philadelphians Agnew, Milton Rothman and John V. Baltadonis, Madle seemed to fall naturally into a rivalry with New York fandom; along with Jack Speer, they formed a counter to the Wollheimist faction in the June of 1938 Fantasy Amateur Press Association officer elections. Wollheim sent the ballot out with a flier accusing the Philly slate of fascist intentions, and they were soundly defeated.

Wollheim and the other Futurian officers soon quit FAPA anyway, but it



was still understandable that Madle and other Philadelphia fans were friendly to Sykora and Moskowitz in the latter's effort to present the World's Fair Convention as "New Fandom." Unlike so many central participants in those early feuds, Madle remained in fandom long after the Nycon, and became a central figure in the Worldcon tradition. He was at Boskone I, a single-day gathering at the home of Boston fan R. D. Swisher in February of 1941. Later that year, he joined Milton Rothman, Julius Unger and George Bell in Art Widener's car, the Foo-foo Express, on an epic drive to the third World Convention in Denver.

He was a central figure in Philcon I, the 1947 Worldcon, the first on the East Coast following the war. He moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, in the early 1950s, and founded the Carolina Science Fiction Society. In 1957, he stood for and won the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, later publishing his report "A Fakefan in London." At the second Grand Ceremony of the Knights of St. Fantony at the 1957 Worldcon in London, Madle was one of seven Americans admitted to the Order. He was also one of the founders of First Fandom, and was inducted into its Hall of Fame in 1990. He was the Fan Guest of Honor at Suncon, the 1977 Worldcon in Miami Beach, Florida. He received the Big Heart Award in 1974. He was also an enthusiastic "huckster" or book dealer, and did business by mail order for many years. (JB, JS, JU, NF)

Carmen Maris (Carmine Mario)

The surname Mario was frequently misinterpreted as Maris when written longhand in census documents, and this seems to have applied here. (Most of the individuals actually named Carmen Maris were living in Mexico in 1939.) Carmine was a Brooklyn resident and a machine operator who worked in a dress factory, an industry which seems to have been a hotbed of science fiction readers. He was born in 1914, making him 14 years old when *Amazing Stories* first appeared. (JU, NF)

Robert J. McCarthy (December 10th, 1915–April 5th, 1981)

Living in his parents' home on 197th Street in the Bronx, Robert was listed as a teletype clipper and typesetter for a pub-

lishing house in the 1940 Census. His Dad, Robert L. McCarthy, was also a pressman. (JU, NF)

John A. Mellerner

This is almost certainly a misspelling, but what could the correct name be? Millerner? Milliron? Mulhearn? There was a John A. Millerner who seemed quite promising, until it became clear that he died in Chicago in 1937. Most of the potential candidates appear to be coal miners from Western Pennsylvania, born in the 1890s, and quite unlikely to be in New York City on the 4th of July in 1939. Perhaps this will remain one of the names which Julius Unger was unable to interpret. (JU, NF)

Eldred Mendyk

One of the names which Sam Moskowitz added to the list of attending members in *New Fandom* #6. No one by the name of Eldred Mendyk can be found in the 1940 Census, so this might have been a *nomme de fan*. There was a clutch of young clerks and students named Mendyk living in Waterbury, Connecticut, at the time of the convention; perhaps more research will reveal one with the middle name Eldred. (NF)

Francis J. Moreff or Moroff

Moskowitz took it upon himself to correct the spelling of the name Moreff as it appeared in the Unger list, but this might just be a case of thinking that he was better able to read the signature than Julius. His name does not appear in any period reference work, such as the 1940 *Who's Who In Fandom* or Moskowitz's *The Immortal Storm*. And no one by the name appears in U.S. Census records or city directories for 1939 through 1942. The only F.J. Moroff in the country was a student in Delafield, Wisconsin, about 12 or 13 years old in 1939. "Frank" Moreff and Moroff strike out just as thoroughly. Perhaps neither Unger nor Moskowitz had any luck reading the real signature. (JU, NF)

Morojo (Myrtle Rebecca Douglas Smith Gray Nolan) (June 20, 1904 – November 30, 1964)

Myrtle Douglas, better known to fandom by her Esperanto moniker Morojo (pronounced "More-oy-oh"), was considered



Myrtle Rebecca Douglas Smith Gray Nolan

the most influential woman in science fiction fandom prior to 1960. She made contact with fandom through Forrest J. Ackerman, who encountered her at a World Language Conference. She became romantically involved with Ackerman, and the two became fandom's first power couple. She became an important member of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, and was credited with cutting many of the stencils for the club's first house organ, the fanzine *Imagination*.

She and Ackerman traveled to the Nycon together by train; she also put up some of the money that Ray Bradbury used to buy a bus ticket to New York for the convention. She designed and sewed futuristic outfits for her and Ackerman to wear at the convention, and performed a short skit with Forry inspired by *Things to Come*. She and Ackerman cut such fine figures in the outfits she made that a number of members wished they'd thought of the same thing; and at Chicon the following year, more than a half-dozen fans dressed up as some sort of character out of fantastic fiction. Because of this, she is now regarded as the founding mother of costuming fandom.

The pair traveled to Chicago for the second "World Convention" in 1940, and modeled some of her creative outfits again. But at the Chicon, Morojo was clearly one of the big names of the weekend, every bit as well-known as Forry. Her hotel room, number 689, was the site of one of the first real room parties in fannish history.

Myrtle was born into a ranching family in Phoenix, Arizona, and married her first husband, Van Buren Smith, at the age of 19. The couple had one son, Virgil Douglas Smith, who remained with Myrtle

after they divorced. Virgil also had some involvement in fandom, where he was sometimes known by the Esperanto nickname Vodoso. Myrtle also had a cousin, Mary Corinne Gray Russell, who became a member of the LASFS, and was known to fandom as Pogo.

Twice divorced before she met Ackerman, Morojo was happy to be known as his collaborator and girlfriend, but the two apparently never considered marriage. Their relationship ended in 1944, and Ackerman had bitter feelings over it for many years. Morojo remained active in fandom into the 1950s, publishing three different fanzines, and stayed dedicated to Esperanto years after most of fandom had forgotten it. She was legendary for her hospitality; during the acute housing shortage following World War II, she invited the population of the Battle Creek, Michigan "Slan Shack" to stay in her spacious four-unit apartment, while she slept outside on her cousin's porch!

Fandom lost track of her after she married her third husband, John Nolan, and became part of his community of high-desert nudists and UFO contactees. When she died of cancer in 1964, just two friends from LASFS joined her brother, Pogo, Vodoso and John Nolan at her funeral: Elmer Perdue, who dated her briefly in 1944 and remained her friend ever after, and Dale Hart, who had also been a member of the Nycon in 1939. With the documentation of her role in the invention of character costuming, Myrtle has begun to receive the attention which she deserves, and is better-remembered than many peers who were far more famous in their time. (CH, JR, JU, MR, NF)

1939 Coverage
continues with
Moskowitz (x 4)
and many more!



THE

William Breiding

Resplendent. Felicitous. Gorgeous.

Delicious. Descriptives of *Chunga*; one issue, or the entire run, take your pick.

Everyone is dying in the ineffable wane.

Some go well, braced by relief (J. D. Buhl, mentioned last issue, died; a performer to the end, he arranged for a live memorial three days before he expired), others fight it all the way down to stark madness, afeared of that infamous dying of the light (my mom, who died the day after her 97th birthday).

I frequently feel in disguise, a young man cloaked by old age. Grey-haired tottering snowbirds think they see a contemporary. The kids on the U of A campus (where I work) see an old man, but I am thinking that I am their contemporary, only weirder.

It's that strange time of life, where those with the tendency fall into being blowhards, and those who know better twinkle like the stars.

Chunga remains evanescent.

[*Andy sez*: I guess there is a natural tendency to see these transitions as full of tragedy—and for some, it is just as bad to be old as being dead. I think there is some comfort in knowing you will have to live with your decisions for only so long. Sorry for the loss for your friend J.D. We seldom print such unabashed praise, but your selection of adjectives was almost worthy of our own colophon!]

Gordon Eklund

Here it is! (he says, typing furiously). An actual real live letter of comment in response to issue number 25 (egad, really?), which showed up in my mailbox recently enough that I hope you haven't done cut me off the mailing list for non-response in the interim.

As always, plenty of great stuff in here, richly illustrated—the well-chosen photographs providing a particularly fine touch—maybe too much to allow a struggling young commentator like me to hit all the high points.

One definite favorite piece was Randy's fine personal take on yet another WorldCon I never did quite make it to. Pure coincidence, I'm afraid, that I happened to be in Spokane only a few weeks

before the con as part of a Grand Tour of Northwest League Ballparks undertaken along with my son and grandson—and, yeah, I know, priorities!—but from what I can tell the convention went off well enough without me as it has for most all of the last fifty odd (some of them, yes, very) years.

As for Andy's loving (or so it seemed to me) breakdown on some of the attendees at the first ever NYC 1939 WorldCon, I missed that one too, not having yet discovered science fiction due to the unfortunate handicap of not yet being born. The accompanying biographical sketches and photos, fascinating stuff all the way from A to Z and in between. The snapshot of the very young looking Ray Bradbury alongside Marlene Dietrich particularly fascinating and making me lust to know the backstory behind that one. (Was she trying out for a role in the film version of *Moby Dick* that Bradbury wrote? Which part? I wonder. How would her Ahab have stacked up against the one we eventually got from a bearded Gregory Peck?)

Of those first WorldCon attendees listed here, in fact, the only two I ever personally met were Jack Williamson (my distinct privilege) and Charles D. Horning. Horning I met in 1967 at a club meeting in San Jose where he'd been discovered living and was then enticed into attending by host Ed Wood. I can only recall my awestruck astonishment at being in the presence of someone who had once worked for Hugo (himself!) Gernsback editing *Wonder Stories* and thinking how spry this gentleman looked and acted for someone of such antique vintage. Now thanks to Andy I see that Horning was all of a tad past fifty at the time. These days when I look back on my own fiftieth year, it's like contemplating an age of innocence. Pre-Trump too.

[*Andy sez*: I also had the pleasure of meeting Jack Williamson, but envy your opportunity to speak to Charles Hornig. In several of the published accounts of fandom in the 1930s, Hornig seems to be largely missing from the narrative. In *The Futurians*, Damon Knight discusses Don Wollheim's litigious first experience with professional publishing, in which he was stiffed on payment of \$10 by *Wonder Stories*. Wollheim

IRON PIG

organized several other writers and hired a lawyer, who won a judgment of \$75, of which \$10 was his fee. Knight attributes this malfeasance to Hugo Gernsback, although it definitely occurred during Hornig's time as editor, and it's likely he purchased the story and should have provided Wollheim with a check. As publisher, Gernsback would have been named in the suit, but Hornig would have been aware who had been published and what they deserved in compensation. Anyway, these stories seem arcane, but as you demonstrate, we end up being connected to them in surprising ways.]

Steve Bieler

"A Biographical Directory of the 1939 Worldcon" is a towering inferno of research. After reading the first page, I wanted to face north toward Seattle and bow before Andy. I am not worthy. I enjoyed the rest of *Chunga* 25, particularly your con report. It would've been hilarious if you had censored the convulsions, fainting, stress, and malignant tumors.

I also enjoyed the piece about Nerd Camp. I considered going to their next event, but I would've felt like somebody's dad. (*Seattle Weekly* sent me to an early Nirvana show. I was 33. Everyone in the pit was 15. I felt like somebody's dad.)

But the directory immediately hooked me, I guess because I'm always interested in the lives of writers.

Digression: The first thing I noticed is how many of these "professional" guests (some were too young to have started their careers) were not science fiction or fantasy writers at all. They were from comics. The 1939 Worldcon was a watershed for comics. There are 41 individuals on Andy's list, counting Harry Harrison, who might have been hallucinating, but not counting F.E. Hardart, who anyway has no age. Although judging people of the past by today's standards is not only fruitless, it's plainly unfair, this group was a Fortress of White Male Privilege. (What an awesome name for a band!) The youngest was 11 (Milton Lesser); the oldest was 63 (Dr. Ruroy Sibley). The average age was 29 and the median almost the same, 24.

Only four people were older than 50: Sibley (what kind of name is Ruroy?) (a more interesting name than Steve), A. Merritt, O.A. Kline, and Ray Cummings (the baby at 51).

Seven of the 41 were 19: Asimov, Bradbury, Harry Docketweiler, John Giunta, Leslie Perri, K.K. Sternly, and Richard Wilson.

When will you ever go to a convention where the demographics of the pro guests match this!

I particularly identified with Ross Rocklynnne, because he wrote slowly and was unprolific. I became so interested in him that I checked *Again, Dangerous Visions* out of the library to read his comeback story, "Ching Witch." It didn't hold up, and I didn't remember it from my original reading in 1972. But I totally remembered his entire afterword after 45 years! It's about living an alternate lifestyle and visiting his sons in Haight Asbury in the Summer of Love. So either Rocklynnne and I are spiritually connected or I also like reading about hippies.

Around the same time that *Chunga* 25 appeared, *Model Railroader* published its 1,000th issue. Like *Time* and *Fortune*, *MR* was born in the Great Depression and grew into a publishing empire. The editors asked readers to choose their favorite issue and tell them why it was their favorite. The faves ranged from 1944 through 2014. Surprisingly, people chose an issue not because of the article that taught them a specific modeling skill or featured some sexy train. It was because of the people who wrote them or who were profiled in them, many of whom these readers met later at train conventions. SF fandom and train fandom have some similarities. There are fanzines and prozines. Most of the fanzines have gone online or mutated into SIGs. There's an active, worldwide convention calendar. But the overwhelming male imbalance resembles SF fandom from, well, the 1939 Worldcon.

[Andy sez: Steve, you and Charles Levi have been the first readers to build on the research I've done on the Nycon, and I'm delighted by this development. I'll be curious if these general demographic patterns hold true among the non-pros present. The extreme youth of the first generation of fans has been an item of



received wisdom since before we entered fandom, and it is interesting to see it confirmed in hard numbers. But there are significant exceptions, like Ross Rocklynnne, a working professional who also pursued friendships within fandom as enthusiastically as any N3Fer.

I think there more women present than we have generally been told. A great example is Flossie Hardart, whom Charles Levi has discovered behind the non-committal pen name of "F. E. Hardart". And out of all the people present in the hall, only Leslie Perri had the courage to ask Moskowitz to relent in his exclusion of the Futurian Six. Moskowitz might have been technically correct in classifying her as "someone's girlfriend," as she was dating Fred Pohl at the time, but her contributions to the field and its culture went well beyond that or any relationship.

But on the other hand, I think that in 55 years of intermittent interest in model railroads, I don't know if I've ever seen a layout that was entirely built and operated by a female hobbyist. Like any such generalization, there must be exceptions, but I'm unable to bring any to mind.

I have no idea where the name "Ruroy" might come from. It sounds like a cartoon dog trying to pronounce the name "Leroy." It's disquieting to think that you and I would be challenging Dr. Sibley for the title of the oldest person present, and that Ray Cummings would have crowed over his comparative youth....]



Fred Smith

I enjoyed very much your biographies of the pro attendees at Nycon One but have to tell you that several errors have crept in, easily done in heavily researched stuff like this. The most prominent one (which was also in your article for *Trap Door*) was in the identification of Malcolm Jameson's first published story as "Doubled and Redoubled" when it should have been "Eviction By Isotherm" in the August 1938 *Astounding*. "Doubled and Redoubled" was, in fact, published in the February 1941 *Unknown* and can't really be called "the earliest incidence of a temporal loop in science fiction" since it's pure fantasy caused by a witch! Hence published in *Unknown*! That last is nit picking, I know!

Other minor errors I spotted: "Who Goes There" was also in that Aug. '38 *ASF*, not the January '38 issue that you credit. And Schneeman's first cover for *ASF* illustrating "The Legion of Time" was in 1938, not '36 (in fact the May '38 issue). You might think I'm being overly fussy but I feel if dates are being quoted they should be accurate. These are the only corrections that I'm sure about and not familiar enough with the rest to make any other comments. Except... if we accept the birth date given for Milton Lesser as August 7th 1928 then by simple arithmetic he would have been nine years of age in July '39, not 13! A bit young to be attending a world convention!

Anyway, an intensely interesting survey and I hope to see in due course the same done for the fans who attended the Nycon, although this would presumably be much more difficult in the case of less well-known fans.

[Andy sez: Fred, your corrections seem like fairly significant points, and are much appreciated. I'm a newcomer to the world of pulp-era scholarship, and at the mercy of the references chosen. And there were several more serious errors, which will probably get their own sidebar somewhere in issue #27. *Chunga* has been a more or less annual exercise for some time; the whole archive can be found at efanzines.com.]

Dale Speirs

Reading all the convention reports about Stateside cons makes it appear that the policy wonks and PoliSci majors have taken over. Instead of celebrating SF and fantasy at conventions, and how to write it good and get it published, far too many people are fussing over puppy training, harassment claims, and politically correct quotas.

I note that at WWC in Calgary, each of the panels had two or three women, not because of quotas but because that's how it was. The talk around the con-

vention was not politics but how to game Amazon and get better sales.

Re talking horses: I grew up on a cattle ranch in west-central Alberta, and remember, when a young boy, listening to a conversation about zebras. A family friend had returned from missionary work in Southern Rhodesia, as it then was, and said that horses were easier and cheaper than trying to tame zebras. The comparison was made to a local rancher we knew who had broken a moose to the saddle. My father remarked that it was an impressive feat but also quite a waste of time.

[**Andy sez:** Given that early U.S. fans styled their gatherings "Conventions" in homage to American political party conventions, several of which were very exciting during science fiction's nascence, I can't say I'm ever surprised when "mundane" or larger political issues assert themselves in fandom's discourse. Also, one saddle-trained moose is enough to stimulate miniature wargamers and gaming figure designers into action. Mark my words, Moose-mounted cataphracts will soon vie with Giant Electric Penguins for control of a tabletop somewhere....]

Michael Dobson

It may well be too late to provide any meaningful response to *Chunga 25*, but as always, I did enjoy it. It's the *Atlantic Monthly* of fanzines, filled with odd, yet, well-researched points of view. In particular, I'm impressed with Graham Charnock's ability to get his hands on the original Manhattan Project correspondence, which I assume was being archived in the same warehouse as the Ark of the Covenant. *Tell Heisenberg I miss him, but only occasionally.* I feel that way about a number of people. Oppenheimer's craving for guacamole is certainly troubling, but is somewhat redeemed by his fondness for tequila slammers. Of course, it's a very serious subject, not to know whether we will all be (redacted) or (redacted) or (redacted). Personally, I think it's going to be (redacted).

I had thought it was impossible to tame zebras; at least, that's what Jared Diamond claimed in *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. Although Africa boasts a wide assortment of large mammals, most, he said, cannot be domesticated, even though there was ample reason to try. The African elephant doesn't seem to have been domesticated, though other variants, of course, have. The hippopotamus would surely have made a good substitute for the ox, and a giraffe cavalry would be, let's face it, pretty awesome. Still, that photograph of the Schutztruppe riding zebras is impressive, Photoshop or not.

Lesley Reece's article really has that *Atlantic Monthly* feel to it. I was fascinated to learn the difference between a conlang and an auxlang, and I had no idea that Hildegard of Bingen created her own language as well. If she had only gone on to write a fantasy epic using that language, it could even now be generating Big Royalty Bucks.

[**Andy sez:** Those who play wargames set in the ancient world know that Hannibal had a corps of elephants which he attempted to bring across the Alps into Italy. These creatures are generally believed to be a remnant of a smaller sub-species of elephant that lived on the Saharan grasslands before they became a desert. Some number lived on the Mediterranean coastline and in the foothills of the Atlas range, and the Carthaginian and Numidian states kept herds of them in a rather domestic condition. There are other exceptions to Diamond's rule — onagers and camels were introduced in Neolithic times — but it remains essentially correct. If giraffes could be somehow induced to participate in warfare, putting a rider on them would be redundant — like elephants, they can bite and kick with a greater reach than any lancer.]

John Purcell

I had to read Graham Charnock's article at arm's length due to the radioactivity seeping out of the pages. Even so, it had me chuckling in spots. Andrew Hooper's Biographical Directory of the professionals at the 1939 WorldCon stole the show this issue, in my opinion, not only informative, but a lot of fun to read as well. I know I want a copy of the finished product.

I really liked the reflections that D. West provided to Randy Byers' letter, and the assorted covers perfectly illustrated the points Don was making. This is the kind of writing that I find extremely helpful because learning of an artist's influences is, I believe, very enlightening. When he wrote *I try to draw not the same as my favourites, but to draw so as to produce the same sort of effect on the viewer*, that made a ton of sense. As a musician and amateur writer, that's what I'm attempting, too: to put my own take, my own sound, to either a well-known or original song, or add a different perspective on a common theme or subject. That is an excellent credo to abide by for any creative person.

It was also quite enlightening to learn about the Nerd Camps that Sarah Gulde organized and worked on for a few years. If I recall correctly, the most recent Nerd Camp was cancelled, but after reading what Sarah has been doing and promoting,





I do hope it is revived. Sarah's goals of promoting diversity and letting voices be heard, and how she's doing this, is worthy of promotion, and I most certainly hope she can get back to working on it. Until this year's TAFF race I had never heard of Sarah before, but after Googling her name and asking around, I also learned of her background in working on conventions, so I am positive she should run again for TAFF, or the next North to South DUFF race. Getting your name out in front of fandom like this will help in future races. For example, Curt Phillips didn't win TAFF until his third try (in 2014), so persistence pays. In fact, I would wager that her TAFF candidacy will help bolster support for future Nerd Camps. That sounds like a good plan for the future. Build on the experience and name exposure.

I really like how Sue Mason did the "through the looking glass" thingie with the front and back covers. Nicely done, Sue! How about a cover for a future issue of *Askance*? It would be an honor to feature her work there.

[**Andy sez:** A year out from your TAFF trip to Helsinki, you have run a successful Europe to North America race and published nine chap-

ters of your trip report. If you've any anecdotes left for *Chunga* #27, they would be welcome, but you seem to have been an unusually active delegate!]

Luke McGuff

Well, as it was foretold, *Chunga* came yesterday and I spent the night reading what I could. On the way home, I'd found out my coworker-friend from King County had been called for an interview for PSII (the permanent version of what I do seasonally) and I hadn't, so I was in a pretty bad mood.

In spite of that! I liked Randy's article on Sasquan a whole lot, of course. So many details I hadn't noticed or been aware of. Despite all the problems, it sounds like you did a great job on the fan lounge/fanzine lounge and all the rest. Getting a good crew to help is essential. Yes, there's a surprising difference in scale between a small convention and a larger one, even if you're working directly with the same number of people. That's quite a boiling pot to throw yourself into.

I'll go back and read the Sarah Gulde article, she sounds like she'll be an excellent TAFF representative. I also noticed that she's sponsored by Nisi Shawl as well. Whether I vote for her is another matter. When you said that you and your coeditors were of different minds about the TAFF candidates, I expected Andy's name to turn up as a sponsor of one of the others. It's happened before.

[**Andy sez:** Luke, I supported John Purcell for TAFF in the last North America-to-Europe race, but when I eventually voted, I named Sarah as my first choice and John as my second. As I expected, John ended up winning, and he has been an exemplary delegate and administrator. It would also have been delightful to have Sarah's perspective on Helsinki, but it didn't seem like we had any bad choices.]

David Langford

After Curt Phillips's TAFF instalment in *Chunga*, I meant to write and confess the added complication that he gently glossed over — the fact that the canalside pub I'd suggested for our rendezvous had, as it turned out, gone bust. But during months of the usual distractions I failed to get around to it, and that nice John Nielsen Hall has stepped in instead. Despite his apoplectic speculation, my previous visit to The Fisherman's Cottage wasn't two years previously but two days, when I'd checked that all seemed well. I apologize for presumably hacking John's satnav so that it directed him not to the easily road-accessible pub car park — which Keith Freeman found with no trouble at all — but to a narrow



towpath mostly closed to motor vehicles. If it's any consolation to John, the pub soon re-opened under new management but closed unexpectedly (24 hours notice) when I took brother Jon the rock star there for a meal. It was soon back in operation, but the latest dirty little secret is that — as I found on my birthday last month when planning to treat myself and Hazel — it now closes on Mondays. Argh.

[Andy sez: Fiendish, indeed. Yet I can't imagine a more appropriate introduction to Britain than using satnav to drive oneself along a semi-passable towpath to a mysteriously closed pub, unless one could arrange for the pub to be redeveloped into a luxury tower owned by a shell corporation based in the Emirates. Your long and laudable efforts at international hospitality can't be expected to halt Britain's evolution.]

Milt Stevens

In *Chunga* #25, "Letters from PO Box 1633" by Graham Charnock reminded me of something my mother told me about WWII correspondence with the boys at the front. She received one letter from my father which read "I ran into [Redacted] who was on his way from [Redacted] to [Redacted] and he told me [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted]. My parents later compared notes and couldn't imagine anything of military significance in the redacted material. My mother suspected the censors sometimes got bored and redacted things just to make people wonder.

If time travel exists, the attendance of the first worldcon should be gradually increasing. Of course, we wouldn't notice. The sort of people who would build a time machine would be more interested in visiting the first worldcon than visiting mundane events like the assassination of Lincoln. I'll bet there are names on that membership list that absolutely nobody ever knew anything about.

Sasquan was memorable for a number of things. I remember they had the view from the International Space Station projected on one wall in the bar area. I thought that was really cool. I also remember the guy in the Groot Suit. That guy must have been really suffering for his art. At times, there was a definite lack of oxygen in the air. I recall seeing a bunch of fans sitting around the fanzine lounge in powered down mode. There wasn't enough oxygen to do anything else. I engaged in the same lack of activity at times.

The fanzine lounge was my default hangout at the convention. That's been true at several recent worldcons. The fanzine lounge is the place where I am most likely to run into someone I know. The location of the fanzine lounge next to the bar area

was a good one. However, we still should demand a budget for the fanzine lounge. I ran the fanzine lounge in 2006, and I modeled my effort on the fanzine lounge Geri Sullivan had run in 1996. In both cases, the fanzine lounges were located in a function room in the hotel and had a budget for refreshments. I definitely favor the idea of fanzine lounge as a hangout. Some people feel that fanzine lounges should recruit people for fanzine fandom. I don't think that idea has ever worked. I don't know of any fanzine fan who ever had their first contact with fanzines at a convention.

[Andy sez: I am so sorry that Milt will not be able to see this or any other replies. He was an indefatigable fannish correspondent to the very end of his life. But I'm curious — did any "fanzine fans" out there first see a fanzine at a convention? My first true fanzine was a convention program book, as Wiscon 2 configured its program as an issue of the fanzine *Janus*. I also feel like Nyon might be an ideal place for time travelers to drop in — it is an event which ought to be more "elastic" in the face of observation or participation from the future than so-called "mundane" turning points is history.]

Jim Linwood

Thanks for the wonderful *Chunga* #25 sent via the wonderful Banana Twins.

I was intrigued by Graham Charnock's item, Letters from PO Box 1663. It was such an intriguing idea that deserves expansion into several pages covering the whole period of the Manhattan Project and its aftermath.

[Andy sez: If someone would offer Graham a few quid, I'm sure he'd be happy to make the expansion you suggest, Jim. *Chunga* retains no interest in the material beyond its first and perpetual publication here....]

Jerry Kaufman

Sue Mason's front and back covers are charming. I don't recognize the domicile from which the iron pig is venturing into the unknown. Is it perhaps Carl's home? The back cover, I'm sure, is where you all go when you're in Jane Hawkins' basement or around the bonfire in Andy's back yard.

I think that Graham Charnock's selection of "Letters from PO Box 1663" is a very fine piece of hokum, and I will not trouble myself to fact-check it. These are exactly the letters and telegrams that top scientists would send if they could have. Too many redactions, though.

Andy, your Biographical Directory is just an amazing piece of work. I had no idea there were

before the startup had to shut down, but they say they're legal now and ready to try new markets.





so many professionals at the first Worldcon, and enjoyed reading about the more obscure ones. When your book comes out, I will certainly want a copy. One of the photos, I should mention, disturbs me. Otis Adelbert Kline does not look quite human. He looks more like one of the milder Wessen from Grimm, or maybe like someone Photoshopped a face onto a different head.

I am happy to hear from Lesley Reece after so many years. I'm not sure, in the photo you printed, which one is Lesley — is it the woman on the left end? I enjoyed her musing on the uses of constructed languages. However, if a gryphon were to walk in at a party, trying to select the proper word for it (actually, "gryphon" is probably the word I'd use, with certainty that everyone would know what I meant), but rather the location of the nearest exit. Or perhaps my copy of *Hallucinations* by Oliver Sacks.

I've already forgotten everything I read in the letters — skimming reminds me that I was glad to see letters from Steve Bieler and Wilum Pugmire, and loved Craig Smith's bobble-heads.

[Andy sez: And we have waited even longer for this issue to be finished. Putting together #26 has been made more difficult by Randy's departure. Just in practical terms, there are so many parts of this that he did. It feels very much like reaching for something with a phantom limb.]

Brad Foster

Enjoyed "Letters from PO Box 1663", even though I am quite sure I probably only got half the references, if that many. I also so much want the line about: *Meanwhile Feynman persists in escaping from the compound and then turning up at the front gate to confuse the guards* to be totally true. Oh, and has anyone else noticed that a large number of the (redacted) words could be replaced with your favorite obscenity, and the sentence would still flow and make sense? Yeah, me too.

One thing that stood out from me on that list of 1939 Worldcon attendees was the several "Mr & Mrs" entries. Definitely has an old-school feel to it. When do you think that finally ended? Or, has it?

Kim Huett would return my leg, once finished pulling on it.

Thanks so much for sharing D. West's writings on his influences, very interesting read indeed. Also loved the samples of so many of his larger pieces. Kind of like Teddy Harvia, I think a lot of folks after a while only think of their small pieces, and forget these artists created a lot of stunningly creative larger pieces as well.

[Andy sez: I think it was well after 1970 before telephone books and other directories began listing married women by their own first names. As a researcher, it is a continuing struggle to work past this tradition to figure out who people really were. I'm pleased that *Chunga* played a part in helping Don West put some of his most impressive pieces in front of fandom, even if he was occasionally a bit disappointed by the way we reproduced his work.]

Teddy Harvia

I loved the cover art by Sue Mason. An artist cannot go wrong porking fun at pigs.

The blurb under your fanzine title on the colophon page read like a red herring. Revenge cannot be a valid reason for publishing, even when served in cold print.

Artists (including myself) talking about their art are not very illustrative. The art should speak for itself. Of course, writers writing about writing makes for some illustrious reading.

And ending on a positive note, I found Andy Hooper's biographical article of the first WorldCon fascinating. That I've read stories by many and actually met and talked with a few gave it added meaning for me.

[Andy sez: The "Colophon Similies," as no one calls them but me, are a small but critical part of the *Chunga* process. To call them red herrings is perhaps an overestimate of their coherence. Most were originally the work of one of the three of us, and steered toward their final form by mutually agreed corrections. Writing about art is certainly a time-honored tradition for writers — perhaps graphic artists just can't get out of the slush pile.]

Allen Baum

The last issue (24) was a sad one — remembrances of friends (Art Widner, Stu Shiffman) and the Vanguard plaques full of names of acquaintances, friends, and very good friends. There's a bit too much of that going around here, outside of famished circles. Lots of connections.

The current issue (25) had a lot of connections as well. I'd run into Peter Weston at every British convention I've attended. The FKBs (of which Sam Williams was a noteworthy member) touched my life a bit more deeply. We continue to use FKB lines at home every week, if not daily, and we know the front row seats aren't the best seats.

I knew D. West almost exclusively through his dry, usually piercingly ironic artwork. I hadn't real-

ized how deep his knowledge of art history and its influence on him went, so I'm more impressed now than before reading this.

The closest connection, though, was Randy's description of working under Randy Smith in the fan lounge at Sasquan — which neatly mirrored my experience working for Spike at ConFrancisco (except for the health issues, of course). Spike recruited me to help, and I suddenly found out I wasn't a gofer, but in charge of a good sized exhibit space in Moscone Center that showcased the Bay Area and San Francisco.

It was quite a ride. I, too, had to learn about power drops and drapes and panels and unions. I got to cold-call NASA, the SF Mime Troupe, and Bill Graham Presents for exhibits. I learned how organized working for a force of nature could be, and came out of it feeling pretty good (don't tell her because there's another local Worldcon next year).

[Andy sez: For the past few decades, during which a minority of fans have been exposed to compulsory national service, working on the World SF Convention has become our equivalent. Working on Worldcon is something like being in the army, the Peace Corps and a successful religious cult, all at the same time. I also worked for Spike at ConFrancisco — and similarly found myself "in charge" of a healthy space bounded by pipe and drape and dubbed the Fan Lounge. It was not much when compared to the Lost World Fanzine Lounge — the beer was rather pale, and it closed down a lot earlier. But it was still a great time, and my only experience to date charging California sales tax on fanzines.]

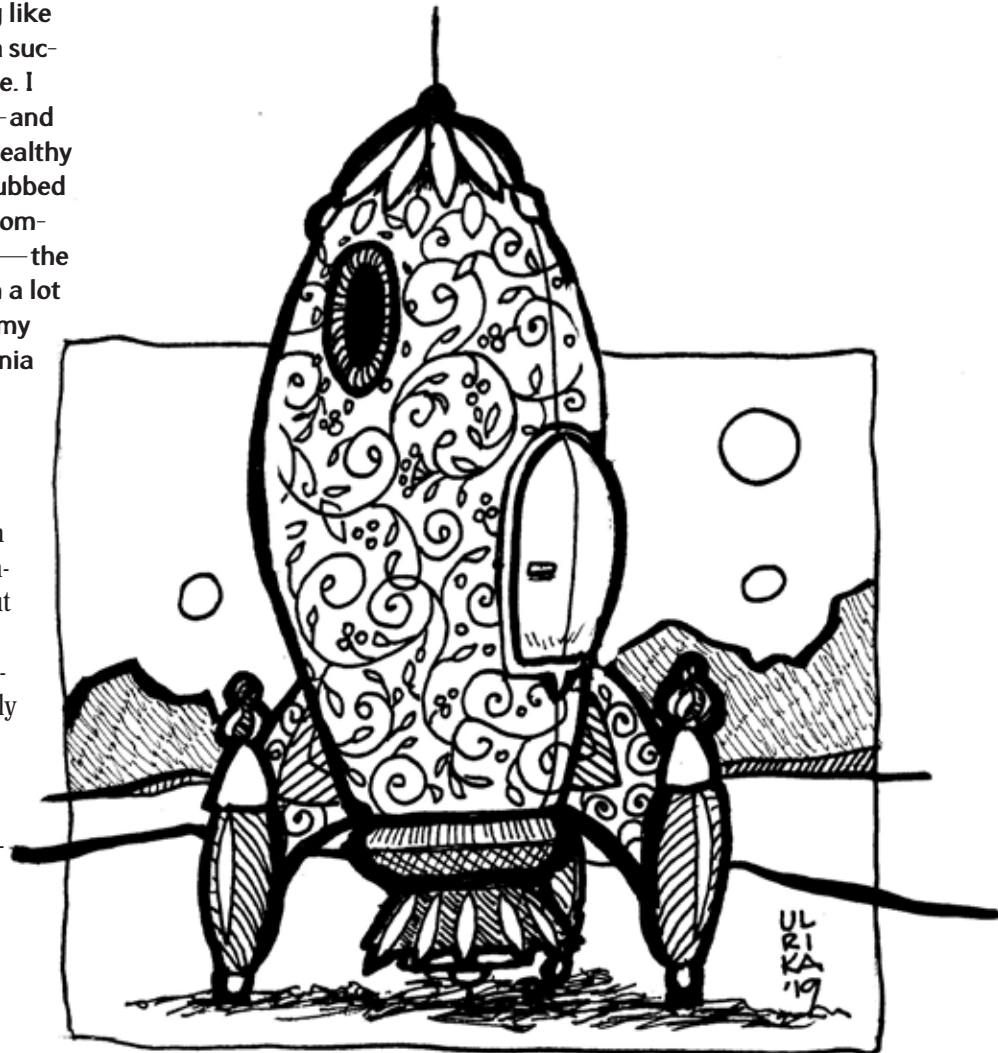
Tom Becker

I was thinking about the Flying Karamazov Brothers last night while I was asleep. When I awoke I realized it was because my subconscious was trying to tell me something about John Hertz's article "Flying" in your latest issue. It is a lovely article and I enjoyed reading it, but my subconscious points out, rightly I think, that it does not clearly state the true greatness of Smerdyakov's last act. John is an extraordinarily intelligent man. All the information is there in his article so discerning readers may connect the dots and reach the appropriate conclusion. Similarly, a colleague of mine would write *IOTTMCO* in tiny letters in the margins of his most complex engineering diagrams, meaning Intuitively Obvious To The Most Casual Observ-

added: "The American dream is alive, but fraying."

er, of course. My subconscious, knowing what it takes to get through to my conscious brain, prefers to draw circles and arrows connecting the dots, and a paragraph on the back of each one explaining what each one was and why it was obvious. So let me just say the obvious. Sam Williams went out with one of the greatest juggling feats of all time: He caught a bus. No, not that way. I mean he didn't drop it. It must have been really hard to push that brake pedal, but he put everything he had into it, and he inspired his passengers to finish the job and bring the bus to a safe stop. I imagine that somewhere, up there, he is still juggling.

[Andy sez: As *Chunga* appears to have entered a memorial spiral, it's nice that some of this stuff still has the capacity to make you laugh. No one whose working name began with the word "Flying" should be memorialized without a few good jokes. And it's just amazing how many cool people you find yourself connected to by entering fandom, which seems to be all-purpose reply this issue. But thank your subconscious mind for us.]





Steve Jeffery

Highlight of this issue for me has to be D West's On Art And Influence, and the illustrations that go with it and show the sheer range of D West's skills at taking on and pastiching the style of artists and illustrators as diverse as Gorey, W Heath Robinson and Escher. Plus that stunning and painstakingly detailed rendition of James Pryde's *The Death Bed*. The time that must have taken. And then West writes that it's probably the tenth or twelfth versions he's done of it.

I did originally wonder, however, about the etiquette of you printing this letter as an article, but on re-reading it I suspect I've misread the phrase *If you want something publishable I'd prefer to do it new*, which I originally took as a form of DNQ notice, but now think is more a request not to use the accompanying drawings out of the context as illustrations to the article.

Kim Huett suggests that sometime after the 80s and 90s, as British sitcoms got stranger and more quirky (and in the case of *The Mighty Boosh* and *The League of Gentlemen*, downright surreal), US sitcoms drew back into safe mode after series such as *Soap*. To be honest, I don't watch American sitcoms enough to comment, but I do remember *3rd Rock From the Sun* in the mid 90s as being as odd and quirky as anything in *Red Dwarf*. On the other hand, anarchic bad taste seems to have migrated from sitcoms like *The Young Ones* in the UK to animated series such as *South Park*, *Family Guy* and *American Dad* in the States which is an equally curious trend.

I did like Craig Smith's series of 'BNF Bobbers' action figures in this issue. I've love to see more of these sometime.

[Andy sez: I think any reservation which D. West felt about the publication of his letter was founded on the presumption that he might be called on to elaborate on or defend his ideas, which is sadly no longer a possibility. I'm glad we published it also as an example of Randy's ability to solicit the most remarkable material through his correspondence, another of his exemplary talents.]

Lloyd Penney

In doing my TAFF voting duty, I wondered about the other candidates I wasn't familiar with. It's good to see we're accepting candidates from other areas of fandom, like Trek fandom, because, I gotta be honest, that where I can from, too. Yvonne and I were past members of Shirley Maiewski's Star Trek Wel-committee. And, good to see an article from Sarah Gulde. Fandom is not only more faceted than we

imagine, but more faceted than we can imagine. In a past era, conlangs/auxlangs would include Esperanto and Volapük. Today, it is LotR Elfish (indeed, anything by Tolkien), and of course, Trek's Klingon. Their pop culture beginnings make them more popular than their predecessors, I suspect.

The article on communication with D. West shows me how underappreciated fan artists have been, and are, especially those who have been students of the art masters. I had admired Don's homages to some of the world's best artists, and some of its most admired artists, like Escher, and the wonderful works are created and provided, all for the limited audience of a fanzine. My, we have been spoiled.

Yvonne and I have been on Worldcon committees before. In some cases, there is mass appreciation for the work that you do, no matter how small your workload may be, but in other cases, as you might imagine, the long knives come out, and often stay out. I've run a couple of fanzine lounges (Winnipeg and Montréal), to the delight or dismay of many. I have no regrets at all; I have done my best to fulfil the responsibilities I take on. It's a great experience to work on such an event, but I suspect that my experience with the last Worldcon committee I was on, Torcon 3, was so negative, it put me on the eventual path of not attending Worldcons at all. The last Worldcon we attended was Reno. We had ourselves such a good time, but our time and responsibilities there didn't allow us to actually see any of Reno itself. We rectified that by going to London to see the city, two years after Loncon.

I agree with John Purcell on those fershlugginer zines. They are all communications, mostly personal, and some historical, but I enjoy them all. I wouldn't be writing all these locs, all these years, to help fill out the zines if I didn't. I believe I have been in the local now about 36 years.

Life is a little sad around here... Yvonne's mother Gabrielle died about a week ago at the age of 94. She was a pillar of the French-Canadian community in Toronto, and Yvonne and her sisters have been running around and planning a suitable funeral and remembrance. When it is my time, I would hope someone might do that in my memory. The will will be read and explained at a later date, and there may be some fireworks over that, but we shall see what happens.

[Andy sez: Conventions seem to me to be much like fannish dinner expeditions — if they grow beyond a certain point, you can only interact with the 3 to 4 people closest to you, and you might as well have gone somewhere with them alone. We habitually hang out with the

people we know, even when we're in a strange city, and surrounded by hundreds of new fans. But there are also certain spectacles of excess than can only be experienced when 4,000 or 5,000 fans gather together to produce them, and I feel a recurring impulse to go see them every few years or so.]

Ron Drummond

The gorgeous new issue of *Chunga* arrived yesterday, and I just wanted to write and thank you for sending it to me, and all the earlier ones too. I remain an admirer of what you and Carl and Randy and all your contributors are doing. Especially loved the Stu Shiffman memorial issue, very moving and beautiful. *Chunga* is incredibly cool, and it's always a turn-on to get a copy in the mail.

[**Andy sez:** And I want to thank you in turn for helping with the manuscript of Randy's account of his 2017 trip to Micronesia. He always enjoyed collaborating with you, and I know he was grateful for your editorial assistance.]

Howard Waldrop

Suddenly a lot of my incidental stuff is being reprinted. Steffan is printing the never-published *Gasworks* #2 (with a column I thought I had written for someone else, but no! It was for Berry.) *Feast of Laughter* (the Lafferty App. Zine) is reprinting the only thing I wrote for them; ditto *The Farmerphile* (they also promise a complete Farmer bibliography, which must make the damned thing the size of a phonebook...) So it goes. George warns me to find the only thing I ever wrote about working for Wild Cards (except "The Annotated Jetboy") which, I think was only printed in an *Orbit SF Yearbook* (edited by Dave Garnett) around 1986 or so. I'm still looking around here for it. I hope it's not in Brad and Barbie's storage shed in Manchaca (15 miles from here.)

Suddenly I feel like a fan writer again.

[**Andy sez:** I note with grim resignation that you seem to have killed two fanzines with one submission, as Dan Steffan has been no more able to publish another issue of *Fughead* than John D. Berry and Steve Swartz were able to publish a second issue of *Gasworks*. I've been tempted to ask you to write something more substantive for *Chunga*, but I've always been more than slightly worried that we would figuratively drop dead with your work in hand, like so many before us. But time is probably running out on that scenario, so feel free to punish my suggestive hubris while you still can.]

Claire Brialey

I was going to describe *Chunga* 25 as a fanzine that reminds us who we are, but began to wonder whether that's not true of most fanzines for most of their readers — which is not to dispute the observations from Bob Jennings about fanzines specifically reflecting the personalities and preferences of their editors. What I mean in this case, though, is what Paul DiFilippo described (of course) so much better in his letter: the connections we have now with one another, with the people who came before us so that we could be here now, and with those who will be doing some version of this in future. You know, it's almost as if you planned that.

So there undoubtedly are ways in which a fanzine like *Chunga*, with such breadth and variety of content and contributors in which to glory, is reminiscent of a Worldcon as Andy suggested in his editorial, albeit the Platonic ideal of a Worldcon in which there is both a wealth of subject matter to inform discussions and a wide range of participants with different perspectives, who yet retain a shared knowledge and context for it all — and can make connections across all those discussions, both while taking part and in remembering it (fully!) afterwards.

It makes writing a coherent response even more challenging, of course: at first the connections chime sweetly, building into resonant chords as the would-be correspondent reads on and glimpses more angles and branches for this issue's conversation. Then other notes strike, still clearly part of the pattern but revealing a greater complexity. And then more, but surely out of sequence and in the wrong time; the aspirant and out-of-condition Loccer struggles to hold onto the melody and keep in their mind's eye the towering structure envisaged by the editors — and eventually everything collapses. A fan lies crushed beneath the weight of engagement, her





brain leaking out of her ears as her fingers grasp feebly at the swirling shadows of association and meaning. Imagine the Sorcerer's Apprentice were instead trying to conduct Pachelbel's *Canon* and what disastrous cacophony of a LOC I should spare you.

Having theoretically touched on Worldcons I'll seize on that as a starting point for actual response. That said, given the way in which Andy's New York 1939 project — not to be confused with the slightly later Manhattan Project reconstrued in this issue by Graham Charnock, although I would like to see Dan Steffan's take on Nycon commemorative postage stamps — is gradually seeing publication across a range of fanzines, it's a further challenge to keep responses focused on the matters at hand, and indeed not just duplicate discussions already under way elsewhere.

As I tend to do, I looked for the women engaged in the sf community of the time. This isn't to say that the men weren't interesting, at least as Andy wrote them; I learned new things even about those whose names I already knew. But I must take some ways to keep this letter proportionate. In any case,

although it might be gratifying as a writer, editorially it could be harder work to manage a response which gives the impression I'd been watching a firework display, full of admiration and exclamation but adding little to the original spectacle.

Female names comprise about 18% of those listed overall and just over 2% (i.e. one person) of the roster of sometime professionals as defined here; the former was rather higher and the latter a little lower than my assumptions. And I admit that the name of Doris Baumgardt, and indeed that of her pseudonym Leslie Perri, had been among many on the list previously unknown to me. I presume it was her Futurian membership as much as her gender which led to her introduction so late in the Nycon proceedings. Following links, I went to the summer 1940 *Who's Who's in Fandom* (online at fanac.org) for a contemporary biography and was about to bristle — as an over-privileged beneficiary of alphabetical order myself — about Baumgardt's potential relegation to the middle of the listing by dint of married surnames. But I was tripped up by my own assumptions and prejudices; she was listed logically under under Perri which did, at least, mean that her entry preceded her then-husband Fred Pohl.

I had also pondered briefly what distinction to draw between those whose public names at the time were Mrs Male Person but appeared on, at least, a line of their own, and those who warranted only an '& Mrs' on their husband's line; but I'm again aware that I'm applying different standards in that reading. Maybe I should take as some small consolation that the name of John W Campbell's first wife was potentially immortalised in one of his own pen names. As I read on, I couldn't fail to note how many of the male professionals' biographies revealed not only the expected domestic and emotional support from their spouses but also a variety of professional inspirations and collaborations, at least as much as was acknowledged from some of their male friends. Behind every slightly famous man, an' all that...

Although this initial instalment of the biographical dictionary focused on all those who could reasonably be classed as professionals, I was struck by the comment from Lloyd Eshbach that he considered himself '...a science fiction fan who happened to sell some of his own fiction...'. That was the spirit in which the pros then active in British fandom were presented to me some fifty years after Nycon, those who had also been active fans before achieving professional success seeming particularly cherished. The idea of fannish activity and achievement is simply a stepping stone to professional status, by



contrast, may not be all that new either but seems rather to demonstrate the point that not everything done by a fan is inherently fannish.

In rushing forward to the future from 1939 I find myself heading first for the branch of the family tree that leads to Nerd Camp rather than to the 2015 Worldcon. My immediate impression on reading Sarah Gulde's article was that, if she had won TAFF last year as I thought she might well do, I must make sure that she knew about the opportunity to come through London the weekend before the Worldcon in Helsinki and attend another convention.

In February 2013 a Kickstarter project announced a group of fans putting together a weekend-long, multi-genre convention in London that summer, 'founded on the radical belief that geekdom should not be restricted by class, age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, disability, or the ability to cite Wookieepedia in arguments'. Nine Worlds has been running annually since then — and it's thus entirely possible that Sarah not only knew about it already but had been at the 2014 convention, which was held the weekend before the London Worldcon which she also attended. It continues to have a broad and growing base, although I think opinion is divided about its success in eliminating restrictions based on perceptions about age or class.

I can't make this as engaged and informative a comment as it should be, since I've never attended Nine Worlds myself; I might have a marvellous time if I actually did so, but I have a lingering sense that there isn't quite a natural and comfortable space there for me. Although Nine Worlds addresses many of my interests in sf and some in fandom, I feel that it chooses to disregard much of the context of fandom which is why I'm actually here. Nine Worlds is clearly a vital part of the conversation nonetheless, and we've tried to engage with that, including by inviting several of the current organisers to present their approach and experiences at the fourth Conrunner convention last year.

Back to Nerd Camp itself, though. Sarah wrote: 'I wanted attendees to do more than just attend — I wanted them to make new friends and learn new things, and leave feeling like their life is better in some way.' That struck me as a high-flying ambition — which is not intended as any sort of criticism. Surely you do need to aim high in conrunning (perhaps in everything), not least since it's possible that not everything you would like to have happen will come off. You might well not be content with having then run an averagely good convention with some pretty good things going on, and so you'll want to do it again and do better — but if you are content with average and so simply aimed for that, obviously

enough there's still only one direction in which to go when things go wrong. . .

I would also say that I want convention attendees to do more than just attend, in that I want people to feel motivated and welcome to participate rather than to just consume what's on offer, and for the social side of things to lend itself to discussion and engagement and getting to know people better. And it can be a challenge, not least because not all of us are great at meeting new people. (I liked on several levels Andy's characterisation of the Nycon as 'a room filled with precocious children', a description which could doubtless be applied in the same spirit to fandom as a whole. I also really like Sarah's 'merit badges', especially for a small event like the first Nerd Camp.) And I certainly want people to go away from a convention feeling that they'd had a good time and would want to continue to be involved in this community. By comparison with Sarah's goals, though, I recognise that I'm not really aiming very high at all, but then I am an old fan and tired; without now having that sort of inspiration and aspiration myself, I think I'm definitely making the right decision to give up conrunning (yes, again) after this year's Eastercon.

I hope Sarah runs for TAFF again, not least because I'd like to meet her and get to talk.

It seems apposite that I was initially distracted in reading Lesley Reece's article by what seemed to me to be a non sequitur or at least a red herring. I had never previously come across the term 'church key' for a bottle opener, and spent some time staring at the photo to try to make out something that looked like a huge key to a church door. Apparently we can, sometimes, still be divided by a common language. And indeed it was only last weekend, in our usual Sunday evening pub with local fan friends (where no church keys of any sort are required, despite the day), that I learned the origin of the term 'red herring', which I had previously believed not actually to be a fish at all.

One of the programme items I wish I'd seen in Helsinki at last year's Worldcon was an introductory workshop in Lang Belta, as spoken by the Belters in *The Expanse*. The item description noted that the language 'is especially interesting in the ways it draws from a tremendous variety of Earth languages' — something I'd noticed from reading most of the novels and stories in the Expanse sequence although, being better at reading than aural comprehension in other languages, I could understand less of the more developed version of the language used in the tv series. A friend who attended the workshop reported back that it was actually conducted





Above: Fishlifter Stout label (design by Carl, drawing by Ulrika)

in Lang Belta; she works as a translator herself and said it was excellent.

Despite my own limitations, I have been using some of my current more-spare-than-it-used-to-be time to try to improve my previously very rusty French and to begin to learn some other languages too. I've started with Duolingo, and do listen to the spoken version of the sentences as well as focusing on learning the written forms; although I doubt I will generally be confident enough to speak to other people in any language in which they've known all their lives how to communicate fluently and intelligently, I want to know how the words sound in context even if this does just enrich watching films and tv drama series. It has been remarkable and enjoyable to see a lot of practical examples of how English has incorporated elements from such a variety of other languages — and also to learn the names for animals, which was inevitably going to catch my attention.

Sadly, despite the serendipity of some of the words and sentences that have emerged in my daily practice at various times, I have not yet learned how to translate 'Yngvi was a louse' into any other language. Neither have zebras featured among the host of everyday and exotic animals whose activities I have learned to describe in simple terms. I thus continue, prosaically, in English.

I was particularly pleased to see D West's Gorey-on-TAFF illustration, but — while quite taking his point about not necessarily being directly influenced by artists he nonetheless admired — I enjoyed all of the covers and illustrations where he consciously echoed a familiar style or piece by another artist in a fannish context. His observation of what was happening in the technique as well as the composition made them repay close study with additional enjoyment, for me, behind the initial recognition and

admiration of the whole.

I also loved Jeanne Gomoll's unpacking of her covers for *Chunga 24*, which I had enjoyed but not identified despite having had some close encounters with similar landscapes on Mark's old kitchen wall while replacing old cork tiles. This leads me in turn to Sue Mason's covers this time — and her own take, I presume, on the Iron Pig as well as her turn at echoing another familiar artist. (The Iron Pig is sliding down the poker. He balances very badly.) I laughed, though, when I saw the cross-hatching on the front cover. Sue produced some lovely covers for the progress reports for the 2004 Eastercon, when she was the fan Guest of Honour; we'd suggested a sequence showing gradual progress towards the convention itself. They were very detailed, and after Sue had provided the first one and we had enthused I think there was some degree of artist's remorse about the overall commission! Being a shining example of the sort of fan who gets to be a Guest of Honour at a national convention, though, she naturally delivered what we'd wanted on time to equal quality. Unfortunately we never thought to offer a psychedelic colour pay-off to make it feel even more worthwhile.

I really liked Steve Stiles's comic strip after Schulz, not only because I empathise with the sentiment. It was also lovely to see again some of the images from the Lost World Fanzine Lounge at Sasquan which, along with Randy's account of what happened there and what was happening to him at the time, naturally brought back a lot of memories. We still have an inflatable triceratops in the house to help with that, too, and will never forget the Fishlifter Stout. But I skirted writing about the memories initially in responding to the Sasquan piece, wanting for a little way to stay in the summer of 2015 and not come back to the future. I never really thought I would refer to our dear friend Randy as the elephant in the room, but it's inevitable how much his presence and his absence are felt in re-reading *Chunga 25* and in responding to it now. All the more so, of course, given your admirable memorial focus in the previous issue on Stu Shiffman, Art Widner and D West and thus the letters that were referencing that, as well as everything that's happened since — including seeing a letter from the now-late Milt Stevens, who I was pleased to see pondering the Platonic ideal of a fanzine since you know I like to feel that everything is connected. (Rather than that we collectively need a broader frame of reference.)

In the context of our fallen comrades, however, I'm sure I won't be the only one to note — or perhaps the only one to fear an inherent jinx — that one of

Andy's list of sf professionals who attended Nycon in 1939 is still with us, and indeed still sometimes seen at Worldcons: Erle Korshak, who we met briefly at Chicon 7 in 2012. For all that I say I don't really like Worldcons, they do have some clear benefits in providing such excellent opportunities to get together with people from across the sf community and from other countries, all in one place, and bringing so many conversations together. The same thing can also be true, of course, of fanzines — especially when they enable us to remember things we did together with other fans. Although it makes me feel like a living fossil (which is just an unevolved creature, isn't it?) John Purcell is probably right when he describes fanzines as a 'living history of science fiction fandom'. Or Paul DiFilippo again: 'the ceaseless effort to honor the past, appreciate the present, and hope for the future.'

But we all carry on, precisely because we still can; the elephant in the fanzine is not just a ghost in the machine and he remains inspirational in that respect as in others. It's probably unfortunate for directly engaged responses to Graham Charnock that his 'Letters from PO Box 1663' enters a whole new dimension when re-read in the light of recent exchanges between world leaders squabbling in the



nuclear playground about who's (got) the biggest arsenal. Until they blow us all to pieces, though, and turn the sky back to the colour of August 2015 in Spokane, let's keep on keeping on. And since *Chunga 25* so aptly demonstrates that we can strengthen our our bonds of community through exploring as well as performing it, perhaps we can take some consolation, with Tom Lehrer, that we will all go together when we go...

Much love, and continued thanks for *Chunga*,
Claire ❁

No Place There, Byers, continued from page 31



service in 2002.

The gasoline monopoly that Mobil held for many years has now been taken over by a state monopoly. Theo always used to complain that Mobil's prices were one reason it was so hard to get the economy going. I didn't ask him whether the state monopoly had improved the situation. ❁

We conclude this issue with a remembrance of happier times, courtesy of Graham Charnock.

In memory of Randy, Milt, Wilum, Vonda, Andi, and all the others we've lost, and all who're ailing.

Should death prove a mere event horizon we may meet again, but in the meantime you'll always be here in this glade of conviviality, when we share, when we drink, when we laugh, and not least when we cry.

—carl



Goodbye, old friend.

