

Note: No copy of the first 'BCSFAzine' is known to exist. Here I have gathered all the information relevant to how this first issue came about, including the few details known as to its contents

– R. Graeme Cameron, BCSFA Archivist.

1973 THE REBIRTH OF THE B.C. SF ASSOCIATION

This year witnessed a kind of fannish miracle, the rebirth of BCSFA, not as a front for the university club UBC SFFEN as before, but as a truly independent, wholly self-sufficient SF fan club.

During the first six months of 1973 ex-members of UBC SFFEN/BCSFA occasionally phoned each other to talk about reviving the club, but nothing came of these tentative contacts. Then in June the University of Western Washington Continuing Studies hosted the FIRST FANTASY AND FACT FAIR with Guests of Honour Ursula K. Le Guin -- who participated in two panels and impressed everyone with her usual gentle good nature -- and Harlan Ellison, who attended the first evening only. Vonda McIntyre was also present. Canadian speakers included Province movie critic Michal Walsh and SFU Professor Dr. Kris Paulsen. A small, intimate convention, its success was to be instrumental in inspiring the rebirth of BCSFA.

Of the 90 people registered, at least a third were Canadians from the Lower Mainland! People like Ex-BCSFans Mike Bailey, Pat Burrows, David George, Chuck Davis, John Thomson and Daniel Say, plus SF fans like Fran Skene and CHQM radio reporter (and later CBC National News reporter) Eve Savory.

To quote Mike Bailey, *"32 Vancouverites joined the Bellingham convention and we had only heard of 7 of them. This situation implied that 25 people who had never been members of SFFEN had enough interest in SF to travel to Bellingham from Vancouver. Consequently, we (Mike, David & Pat) decided that the basis existed to form a successful off-campus organization."*

Mike obtained a copy of the Con's mailing list from Pauline Palmer, the chair, with an eye to contacting these people and arranging meetings to discuss resurrecting BCSFA as a permanent off-campus club.

JULY 1973:

The first meeting of the reborn BCSFA was held July 27th at Pat Burrows' house. Old-timers like Rob Leung, Rob Scott, Claire Toynbee Hogg, David George, Chuck Davis Mike Bailey were present, and a few new recruits. About 10 to 15 people in all. Apart from talking about the club and SF in general, the upcoming World Convention in Toronto was the major topic of discussion.

AUGUST 1973:

The second meeting was also held at Pat Burrows' house, on August 10th. Similar to the first in every way, except that people were becoming more and more interested in holding another convention.

THE BIRTH OF BCSFAZINE

Though it wasn't actually called BCSFAzine until issue #34. The very first issue was, in fact, titled 'VANCOUVER REVIVAL MEETINGS' and was mailed out on August 18th. Mike Bailey explained its origin in BCSFAzine #38:

"While struggling to get BCSFA rejuvenated, I became tired of telephoning people to advise them of future meetings.... Consequently, one day at work I spontaneously punched out a stencil with the relevant data and ran it off using government (my employer) stationery on a government Gestetner. Thus the newsletter was born. Later I wrote a computer program to generate address labels and added frills such as issue numbers and publication dates."

#1 consisted of a single sheet, and the postage (8 cents per) was paid out of the club bank account Mike had retained control of while BCSFA was dormant.

In the Newsletter Mike mentions the upcoming Torcon, recent books by Michael G. Coney & Roger Zelazny, and calls for articles to be submitted to his own fanzine LAGNIAPPE. He also comments on the first two meetings:

"David George and Pat hosted the meetings, the object of which was to organize an of-campus group. Our first meetings had an atmosphere that was a little tight. Some people didn't know one another and most of them didn't know what to do. There should have been more people present so smaller groups could start discussions and participants could find their own soulmates. Next meeting will have more people...."