

THE DRINK TANK ISSUE 117



***It's all gonna come to a head!
I'm back from CorFlu and I've already done two different reports, the one you're about to read and the one that'll be out in SF/SF. This one's a little more impressionistic, though they cover the same ground for very different audiences.***

The art in this issue is all stuff that I bought at the CorFlu auction. I'll talk a little bit more about that later in the zine.

So, here's the report that'll give you a brief look into the psyche and soul of Christopher J. Garcia.

My QuireFlu

or...

Graham Charnock Sings of Me

Picking on Chris is nothing like shooting fish in a barrel. It's far more like shooting the barrel.

-M Lloyd, 1999 or so.

I'll be writing about CorFlu in this issue and it'll be a strange look at a wonderful convention. I said it in my LJ post from last Sunday: I fall in love easily and I've done it once again with Fanzine Fandom. It takes an event like CorFlu, where so much energy and love go into things that get handed out and then there's amazing conversation on top of it all to make it an event that simply changes your perspective on the entire fanzining thing. I was so



A lot of 8 1950s Progress Reports- 18 dollars

happy to be there and I'll always have a soft spot in my heart for the Austin DoubleTree Hotel where it all took place.

It must have been great if I'm waxing nostalgic for a place in Texas...

I had three flights cancelled on me. That's right. 1-2-hooo, thrrrrree. The first a few days earlier, meaning that I was getting in at 3 instead of noon. The second meaning that I would be there around 7 with a lay-

over in LAX. The third meaning I'd have to find a way to fly to Los Angeles from San Jose on my own, as they'd not be having any American flights to LA out of SJ that morning. I managed to hop on a Southwest flight and made it down to LA. They have a Chili's in the terminal. I got a seat and started to think.

Maybe I wasn't supposed to go. Maybe I was supposed to stay in Northern California.

I flashed back a couple of weeks and I was talking to Evelyn and told her that I was going to Texas.

"Don't go to Texas, Chris. PLEASE! They have scorpions there and they can sting you!" she said with the kind of worry that kids usually get for their dolls. I started thinking, sitting there in the airport I wasn't supposed to be in at a time when I already should have been in Austin.

Am I not supposed to go? Am I supposed to turn around and stay in California where the rain is falling, snarling up traffic that I'm supposed to be in? Is that what's happening?

I'm a gambler, and as such, I'm a deep believer in the mystery world that lays far beyond this business that goes on here. All gamblers have it. It just makes sense that our losses are penance for crimes against reality and not simply poor planning or a failure to remember something. I ate my buffalo wings wondering if it was going to

happen; if fates was going to keep me away from Austin.

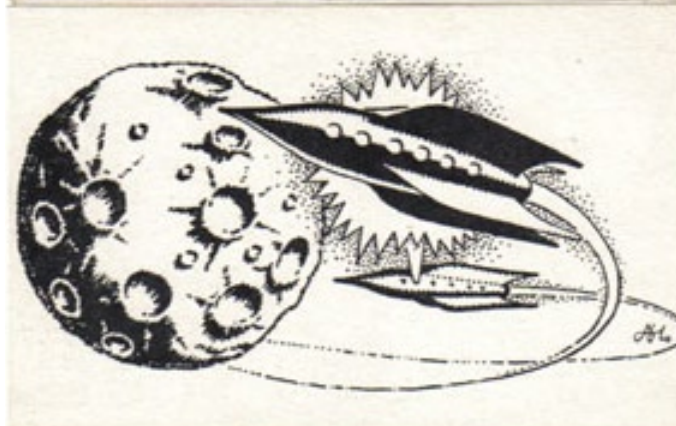
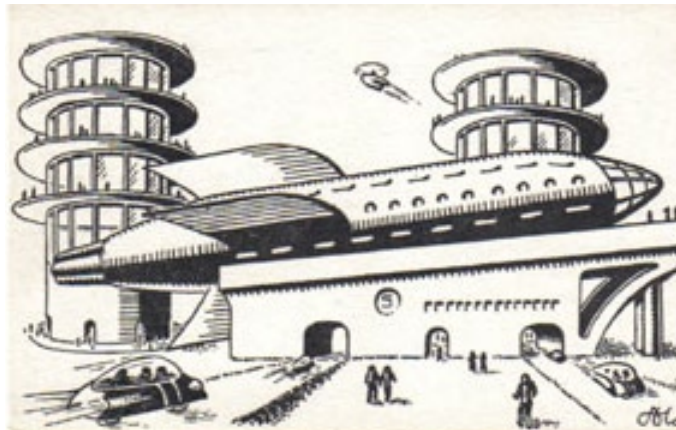
I got to the waiting area and discovered that the flight had been over-booked. Cruel fate was holding me back as well. I sat and waited. No one approached the counter to take up the offer of 300 dollars credit and a flight that got in at 11:30. I certainly wasn't going to do it: I had people to see.

The flight was finally announced and I was in group 6. I thought I was going to be told that I had been bumped, but it did not happen. I made it to my seat.

I should get off. The plane'll crash to keep me from Austin The thought alone unsettled me.

I put on my headphones and read a few fanzines I'd brought. It was strange the feeling I had. I couldn't place it, but it must have been some sort of combination of potentially-dashed hope, dread and sleep deprivation. I knew each individually, but this wouldn't make sense when they'd all be put together. The flight made it without incident.

I arrived in the Austin Airport, tired and over-laden with backpack and briefcase full of zines. I walked to the taxi stand and I had failed to realize that pedestrians are nearly as expendable as armadillos in the Lone Star State. Two cars came screeching to a halt. Yet another failed attempt



A lot of late 1940s and early 1950s Fantasy and Science Fiction Postcards plus a 1953 WorldCon Membership card- 45 Dollars

to keep me from the con. These things happen. I made it to the Taxi and the driver at the front of the line might have been the oldest man who ever lived. He was old, older than Moses Hardy was when he passed into eternity. He shuffled like Joseph Cotton at the end of Citizen Kane. I took my bags and got in the cab and waited.

And waited.

He finally opened the door and got in, put the car in drive and pulled out.

“Where to?” His voice sounded like it started in the 19th Century.

“The DoubleTree Hotel.” I said.

“The 6505 one, right?” He said. I didn't know, but anyone who must have been alive when Taft was President must know what he's talking about.

“Yeah, that's the one.” I said.

And then the drive. He drove like a guy who trained on a Model A. He merged slowly, stopped for long pauses at stop signs and generally seemed to keep things under 50. On the way from the airport to the hotel I got a great view of two gun clubs, a llama farm and several Church's Chicken places. I wouldn't have had those wonderful sights if he'd been even trying to keep up with traffic.

We arrived at the hotel and I gave the guy a big tip. I mean, to take time out of his busy schedule of trying

not to die from old age made a large tip required. I walked into the hotel knowing that I'd defied the fates and had arrived at QuireFlu, ready to make discover FANAC all over again.

I was checking in when John Purcell called across the lobby.

"That must be that Garcia kid!" He said.

I flung my arms open like a Church Tent Preacher but I didn't turn around. John came over and I greeted him with a classic Garcia Bear Hug. John's a good guy and we chatted as we made our way up to the room. He explained how Harry Bell had forces working against him too and they'd kept him on the ground in the UK, a much crueler form of fate than I had encountered. I told him the story of my trip and we headed to the ConSuite where folks were waiting. There were too many of them to name them all, but I know that I quickly discovered Claire and Mark, the driving forces behind Banana Wings, and Earl Kemp and Hope Leibowitz were both there too. And Craig Smith! I love his art in zines like Chunga. And there was Randy Byers, ever-dependable Randy, livin' large in the ConSuite. That



Not Sure what it is. It's a piece of British Fan Fiction from Dave Someone or another. I fell in love with the art and the way it was produced, but especially with the fact that the pages were single sided and there were hand-drawn illos on the inside- 10 Bucks

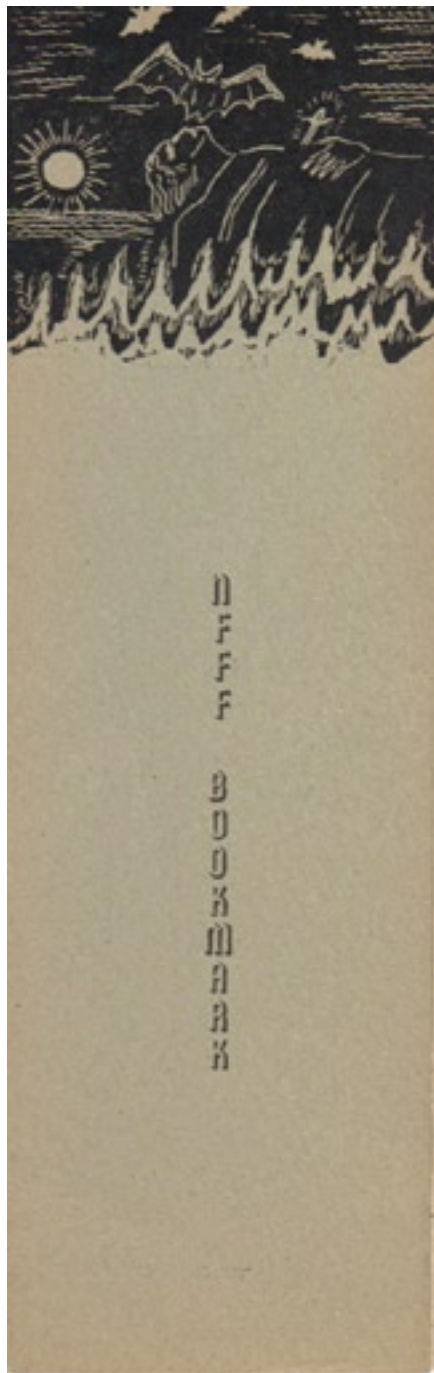
was good stuff.

We all hung around until it was time to head over to the Opening Ceremonies. No lightning bolts. No earthquakes. No homeless madman jumping in front of the group as we traveled down saying that he'd kill everyone unless they threw him a registered computer historian. It was all-clear and I now knew that I'd been allowed to attend because I'd struggled so mightily.

The opening ceremonies were wonderful. There was a section where they gave folks who finished in the Top Five of the FAAn Awards a button to represent their achievement. I got three of them. Hmmmmm...fate was being funny with me. One was in Best New Fan. Oddly, I'm not that new, especially since I won it just a year ago. Still, Top five in that, Best LetterHack and Best Fan Writer were good things. I was happy and the buttons jingled. That was a nice touch. Then they chose the Guest of Honor.

I only wish TAFF had such an easy selection process. They put everybody's

name in a vase and draw one who is then the GoH. It's no fuss, no muss. Colin Hinz, who hosted last year's CorFlu in Toronto, was selected and would be giving his speech later in the con. We talked a bit, there was some comedy and a bunch of us went off to dinner at Pappadeaux, the Cajun/Creole place across the street. The group was Randy, Hope Leibowitz, myself, Johnny P, Tom Becker and Spike. The conversation was good, but the food was another gift as apology for being put through the flight from Hell. There was Crawfish Bisque that was delicious and even if it wasn't quite as rich as some I've had, it was full of flavor. There was Crawfish etouffe which just rushed in and took no prisoners. The Banana Pudding for desert was good, though the Nilla Wafers weren't fresh and that took it down a notch. Best part: John Purcell, glorious shining light that he is,



Early 50s N3F Bookmark

picked up the tab.

I headed over to the ConSuite and we all started chatting. I took a seat with Ted White for a while and he explained the workings of one of his pipes. It was quite a piece of work and actually a beautiful pipe. I mentioned that I used to smoke pipes and once in a while would buy my tobacco from Marty Cantor's shop in Hollywood. Much discussion of Marty's hair ensued. Peter Weston, who I had toured around the Museum a couple of years back, was there and almost instantly asked if I'd be interested in running a CorFlu. I said I was thinking about it, because in fact I was thinking about it, and word started to get around. Luckily, there were others planning on doing CorFlus for the next three years, so it wasn't like I was going to have to jump in right away. When I tried the reverse on Pete, saying that he'd agreed to do an

article for me on the WorldCon he'd chaired, he didn't buy the bluff. Damn, Peter's good!

The night went on and I was chatting with various folks, including Mark Plummer, Claire Brailey and Lillian Edwards. They were all chatting about how giant a Giant Panda was and I told them my story of being next to the glass on the keeper's side at The National Zoo when one was pounding his giant paws on the glass. That was freakin' scary. I also suggested that Claire should look into getting a Red Panda, smaller and nearly as adorable, for the place in Croyden. Mark said OK. I'd never met Lillian and she was a funny funny gal. Overall, very good stuff.

After about 4 hours in there, I needed sleep. I'd already managed to get zines from Ian Sorensen, Randy Byers, Mark and Claire, and Rich Coad, so I figured It was a good time to get some sleep, after I read one of those marvelous zines.

Let's take a little break and hear from my QuireFlu rommie, John Purcell!

Gotta rush this quickie loc on *Drink Tank #116* in to you before you crank out those seventeen zines you formulated in your mind over this past weekend...

It was seventeen, but then I had the flight back and there was another

six. Still, I'd expect only a couple in the next few hours.

Heck of a con, wasn't it? I enjoyed Corflu #24 immensely, and a large part of that enjoyment was you. As evidence of this, I attached the following picture that Geri Sullivan took of us at the Sunday morning banquet. It shows the resulting effect of sharing a room with you at a con is on a person.



Me with Chris Garcia at the Corflu 24 banquet. (11 Feb 2007)
(photo © 2007 by Geri Sullivan)

It's a great photo! Geri did a great job of blogging it so that all could join in. I'm only hoping it'll make more folks wanna come and join us next year (coughPeterSullivancough).

Kevin Standlee's account of changing guilders at the Hague worldcon was interesting. I have never been to a Casino in my life; a horse racing track a couple times (Hollywood

Park in LA and Canterbury Downs in Shakopee, Minnesota), but never a full-blown, gamble-your-life-away-and-sell-the-kids-for-cash casino. Maybe at the Vegas Corflu or Westercon I will just for shits and giggles to say that I played the blackjack tables or slots.

I love casinos. Certain periods of my life spent with flat wallets attest to that fact. I've been to a dog track, but not a horse track.

I have known people with major league gambling addictions: my brother was one, and a friend in Rochester, MN is another. It ain't pretty. Both are doing much better now, and having their examples to remind me of how utterly destructive a gambling addiction can be is probably why I have never gotten into that form of "entertainment." Blowing my money away like that is not my idea of fun. Now, somebody *else's* money, not a problem.

I like playing at charity casinos at Cons. Jason Schachat and I clean up in the BayCon casino every year...except when we don't!

Hey-hey! More Guidolon stuff! I love it! I watched the video on Frank's LJ and it is wonderfully silly. Good news that the Seattle SF Short Film Festival folks enjoyed it, too. Pass along to Frank my congratulations for the showing and the good vibes, and especially for the possibilities that might be arising from that showing.

Sounds quite hopeful.

I wish I'd been able to get up to Seattle. It sounds like it was a blast! I rerecorded a few other lines a couple of weeks ago, which was good.

I shall close with a brief recap of QuireFlu:

it was bloody fantastic!

That about covers it all, don't it? Thank you for being a great sport, a fine roomie, and if we're both at Corflu Silver Vegas on our own - my wife is thinking seriously about my offer to bring her out as her graduation present, so keep this in mind - let's do it again. You are one energetic young pup, you know that? You're a fun guy, and I enjoyed meeting you and all the rest of the QuireFlu gang. A great time. **I'll be there (I bought my membership from James on Monday so I'm Member #11) and the Chris Machine will come partying through!**

Now back to reality.

All the best,

John Purcell

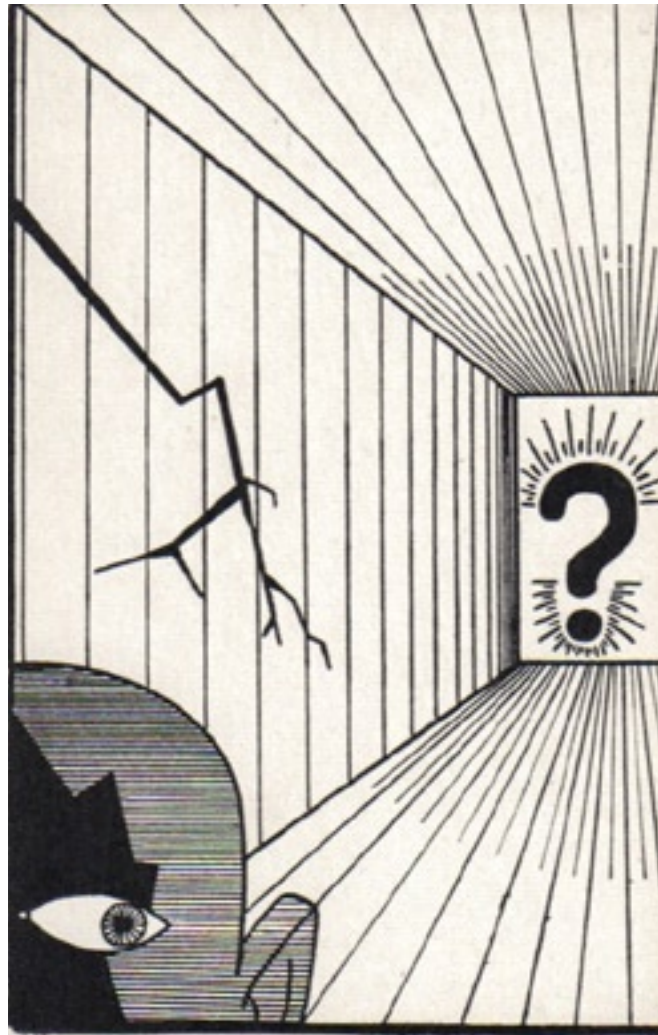
Indeed, I'll get back to my review...

Saturday started around 9am. I woke up, got my shower and headed over to the ConSuite. Everything was going well and I thought they'd only

be getting better. I made myself a breakfast of bagels and Dr. Pepper and Orange Juice. Yes, I'm a little weird. I sat down and chatted with Ted a little more and then I wandered back to my room to get a few things I thought I'd need.

That's when it hit me: this was the right thing. CorFlu was the right thing for me. It was a glorious place, surrounded by those folks who were even more into zining than I am. They lived it to the point where they actually CARED about what their zines looked like, how they read. I often feel that I don't take my zines seriously enough, but on the other hand, even if I tried to labor over every sentence, tried to figure out the proper way to pace the zines and so on, I'd probably produce only a mildly better zine and would also manage to suck some of the fun I have doin' this strange FANAC ritual every couple of days. This feeling flowed through me while I walked to my room, got the stuff and headed down to the program.

I was actually very deeply in thought when I got to the panel on what folks would be doing if they weren't in fandom. It was Peter Weston, Lenny Bailes, Howard Waldrop and Andy Hooper I think. Like I said, I was deep in thought. I knew I had come to the point where I had no artistic integrity and I was wondering what that made me. I mean, was I



Another of those 1940s or 50s Postcards. I love these things!

simply wasting my time making these zines that I knew were crudzines? Was I a fool who was simply masturbating on inDesign? Did that make me a bad person? I hardly noticed the panel because I was thinking on that so thoroughly.

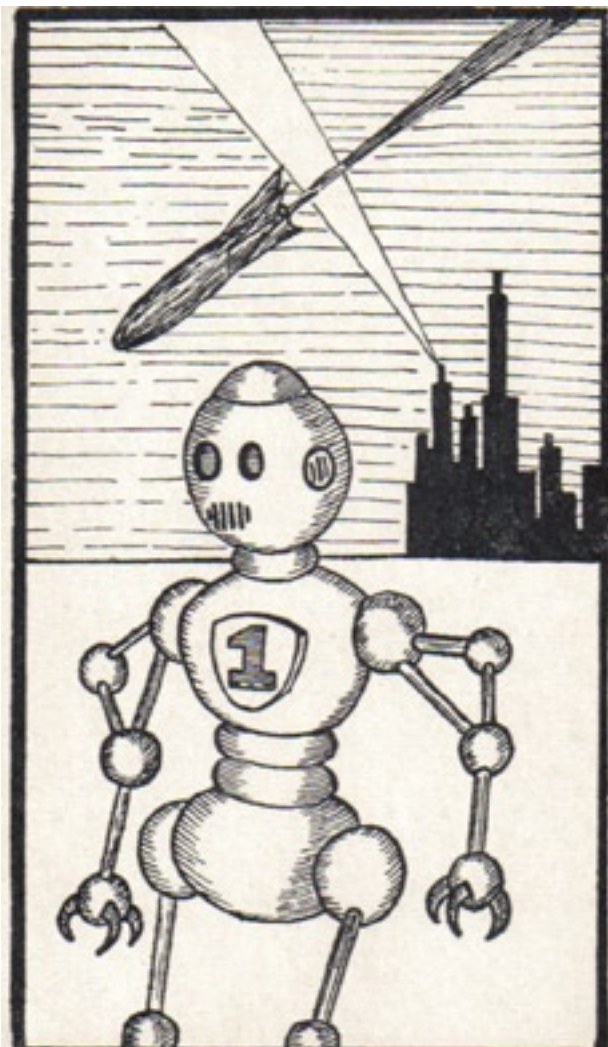
My panel was up second and

it was actually a fun one. It was on TAFF. I said a couple of comedy bits (mostly about how I had run a subtle, understated race for TAFF and that up to a point, campaigning is unfannish, but beyond that it got fannish again and I was well beyond that point) but the thoughts of my personal artistic conundrum remained heavy in my thoughts.

John Purcell, Claire, Ted White, Jerry Kaufman and Rich Coad all did a panel about LetterHacking. They talked about how they liked to see lettercols done and the kind of letters they liked to see. Of course, I provide neither. My questioning deepened. Perhaps it was the forces of nature that wished me well that tried to keep me from Austin so I wouldn't have to face these issues. I had the thought in my head that I'd have to fold the Drink Tank until the moment came when I was able to put a lot of deep and meaningful thought into it and had perfected the craft of building a proper fanzine. I was crushing myself a bit here.

After that, there was another panel about the InTheBar mailing list and more questions bouncing around my skull. I did get some release from those thoughts from the next item: The Auction.

I love auctions because I love the bidding process and the methods of competition between bidders. I bought several wonderful things and found



Another Postcard from that set. I'm gettin' a lot of mileage out of that one purchase!

myself in a few battles with people like Joyce Scrivner, Randy Byers, Geri Sullivan (who I was surprised could manage to vote since she was blogging the con so much that I figured she'd have been too busy typing to bid) and Craig Smith. I won some (like the N3F history package, a few issues of zines

like The Spanish Inquisition and a 1953 London WorldCon membership card along with some postcards) and ended up spending a ton of money. They raised a ton of money for CorFlu, for TAFF, for DUFF, for GUFF, HANA and Get Harry. It was a lot of fun and I got some great stuff.

After that it was time for dinner. John and I went to Fuddruckers. Meat always makes me forget my heavy thoughts. Fuddrucker burgers are heavy and delicious and I was quite pleased. I kinda wish a few more fans had come with us, but they mostly went downtown. That was OK, it was a little bit of time for me and John to chat one-on-one and he has some big plans coming up, including a new zine that'll give him more time to work on his dissertation and still keep zining. That's a good thing. We wrapped it up and headed back.

I went to the ConSuite, a few of those dark ideas clinging to my brain. What was to become of me? What of The Drink Tank? What of it all? I was heavy in thought, though I still clowned around a little and chatted with Jack Speer and Art Widner and Earl Kemp and Geri Sullivan and a few others who were around. The biggest thing about CorFlu is conversation. There's a world of miraculous chatter going on at almost every moment. I headed back to my room for a bit and read one of two of the zines I bought

in the auction before heading over to the evening's entertainment: Graham Charnock in concert.

Graham sang several songs about The Astral League, a group from the British long ago which cost 50p to join and had a tradition involving stepping over a pole in a certain way. The songs were all really good and I was happy to hear them. I took a seat off to the side with some of the zines, wallowing in my state of artless self-pity. What was the fannish equivalent of seppuku? Maybe I should write Richard Bergeron and ask.

After he'd done a few, Graham announced that he'd only be doing one more and we were not to ask for an encore because he only had the one song sheet.

"Just make it up!" I yelled out.

Graham laughed a little and then started in on a new song.

A song that said it wasn't easy.

A song that said that you had to plan and put your mind behind things and that not everyone could just put things out there like I did because they had Artistic Integrity. I was laughing so hard it was nearly riotous. Others laughed right along. It was brilliant. Graham had come up with his greatest song ever on the spot, and it was a condemnation of everything I did! I loved it muy much!!! I hope it ends up on YouTube before too long.

I ran into Graham afterwards.

“Great set, Graham.” I said.

“Sorry about the integrity thing.” He responded.

“Naw, it’s dead on. I don’t have any integrity.” I said, then added “Chris for TAFF!”

Entire quandary solved. No more questions in my mind. All fixed by being able to laugh at my own poor execution. Less than 12 hours of deep questioning in the heart of my fannish soul. I was now free to do what I’ve always done. Why? Because once you can laugh at your own failures, they’re no longer failures...they’re quirks!

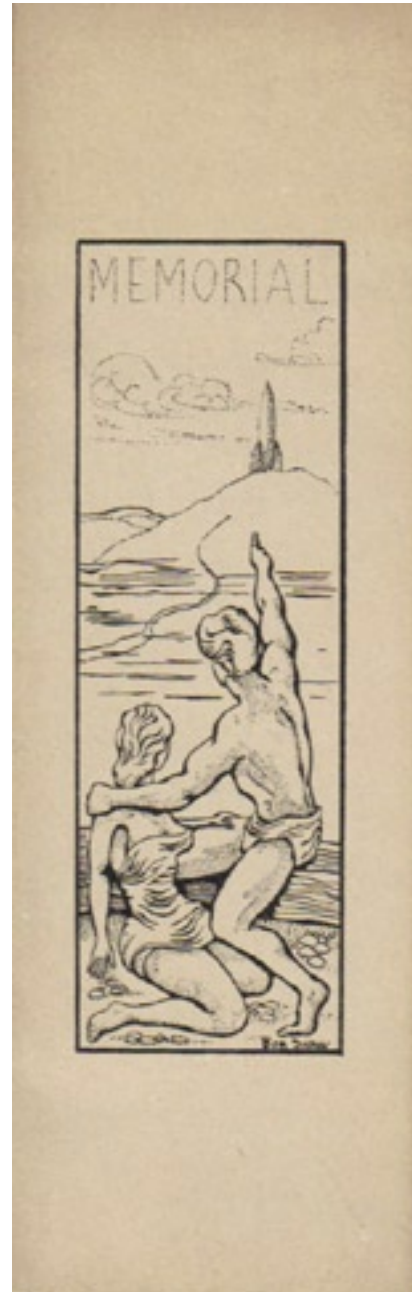
After the arm wrestling, which Ted White won over Graham, we retired to the ConSuite and it was good stuff.

Sunday started with a wonderful chatting with folks like Earl Kemp, Earl Cooley (aka The Other Earl) and various folks. We went to the banquet where we were given large quantities of fajitas and bean and rice. It was a wonderful meal. I knew this was my day. They started with choosing the Past-President of the Fan Writers of America (where America is defined as The Entire World) and Pat Vrizi beating out Harry Bell. She’d put the con on and did an amazing job. I can’t say I’ve ever been to a better run convention.

After that, Murray Moore came up and convinced us to flip each other off as a new form of egoboo. I got to give my entire table The Finger. That

was a nice touch. He then announced the winners. No one from the BArea won anything. I came in 3rd in Best New Fan, 3rd in #1 Fan Face, 4th in Best Fan Writer, 5th in Best LetterHack, and 6th in Best Fanzine for The Drink Tank (which was tied with eI, one of the greatest fanzines ever produced!). Yeah, I didn’t win anything, but hey, it didn’t matter. I had three buttons to play with (well, two after Lillian Edwards convinced me to give her one to take to Alison Scott) and I’d managed to become a running joke. I have to admit, I’m a guy who would much rather be the butt of the joke than the guy snapping on all of those around him. Ian seemed to be the best at taking shots at me. I have to say, he’s pretty good at it, though a fair sight below Alana and Billiam at work.

After that, Colin Hinz gave his speech, which was pretty low key until he started reading from the old issues of



Another of the N3F Bookmarks. Apparently these were put out for a number of years, but these are pretty early.

Novoid. At the end he said “And now these are going to Chris Garcia” and he handed me the pile. At that point I went “I won! I won!”. Indeed I had because they were exceptionally good little zines with sharp layout.

After that it was time for ConSuite, where Michael Moorcock had joined us. He was a really nice guy and we chatted for about half-an-hour before he had to go. After that, I headed back to the room to get ready for dinner. I cleaned myself up and managed to finagle my way into the Randy ByersMobile with Craig Smith (who is one of my Top Five Fan Artists and I feel bad that I didn’t have him on my Hugo Ballot), Colin Hinz and Catherine Crockett. We got there without getting lost and we got several tables. You had to choose between ordering ala carte or from the meals menu and I had to jump tables and go in with Colin, Catherine, Spike, Claire and Mark. We order some

Lovecraftian Beast BBQ platter. There we were, devouring some devourer of worlds slathered in vinegar-based sauce. We ate what we could and they were really good. Sadly, we couldn't finish, though the waiter came back and asked "You need anything else?" Mark found that exceptionally funny. We did a zine at the table at the request of Bill Bodden. I titled it Dinner and a One-Shot. We played around and Colin did some really good art. I should try and get him to draw somethin' for this here zine!

After that, back to the ConSuite, though I didn't stay long. I needed recharging. I headed to my room and flipped around the channels.

Ah, Simpsons.

An hour of The Simpsons brought me back and recharged my batteries enough to head back to the ConSuite. I only lasted another hour and then I had to go and get some real sleep. I said good night and I headed



The Last of the N3F Bookmarks. I might start using this one since it's in rough shape and I've got dupes.

back.

On Monday, we were the dregs. There were still a dozen of us left when I made my way to the lobby. Ian, Yvonne Rouse, Art Widner, Hope Leibowitz, David Bratman and a few others. I was sitting on a couch and Peter Weston, Mark Plummer and Claire Brialey came down to get their cab to the airport. We said goodbye and shook hands (they're British after all so I enforced my rare No Hugging rule) and they walked out. I started writing a review and they came back in.

"Welcome to Austin!" I said.

Their cab was gonna be about ten minutes, which was long enough for Peter to tell us the story about the time he said his goodbyes at a con on Jersey and then had to turn back because his flight was a day later. Just as he finished, the cab arrived. I smiled.

Hope and I went to breakfast at Denny's and

that was wonderful. I have a thing for Denny's, I really do. We came back and chatted some more. I told Art about the Little Men's meeting we were having at Westercon and he was interested. I was glad to hear it because I want it to work.

After that, it was time for our trip to the airport. I said my goodbyes and we left, got to the airport and my backpack broke.

NOOOOOO000000000oooooo...
...

Luckily, there was a luggage shop in the airport, so that wasn't any trouble. I bought a cheap one, transferred my stuff to it and then waited for my flight. The flight was long, luckily being direct, and I was LoCing on the way across. I managed to write a hand-written letter for all but one zine on the way. That's a rarity for me.

I made it home and sleep called, but BASFA was more important. I attended the meeting, told the stories and announced that I'd be doing a CorFlu myself in a few years.

What have I gotten myself into?

Thanks are due...

To Geri Sullivan for all the wonderful blogging which allowed folks like Peter Sullivan to enjoy the show and for the backrub. Hope you enjoy that issue of Warhoon!

To Ted White for just being

Ted White. It was great to finally get to meet the man and chat about everything from weed smoking pipes to jazz to comic books.

To Craig Smith for the great art you did in the book and just being a good guy.

To Randy Byers for WAY, a fine, LJ-based zine of love.

To Hope Leibowitz, who was a fine dining companion.

To Johnny Purcell, the best damn roommate a con-goer could ever dream of. Hell, he also put out a fine zine that he handed out at the con.

To Pat Virzi for taking CorFlu to new heights of perfection.

To Earl Kemp for comedy and perfection in zines and, perhaps most importantly, for bringing the printed set of eI, even if John Berry ended up going home with them!

To John D. Berry for saying that he could tell me what font an article should be in (I'll take you up on that, too!)

To Art Widner and Jack Speer for always being willing to talk to us youngin's so we can get a feel for what went on so long ago.

To Andy Hooper specifically for the look on his face when Teresa Cochrane said "What's the TAFF Wars?".

To Teresa for being a great Best New Fan.

To James Taylor for presenting the Las Vegas CorFlu that's happening



1953 London WorldCon Membership Card-
This one cost me a fortune

next year and for taking my money!

To Joyce Scrivner for out-bidding me so I didn't have anything else to take home from the con.

To Graham for solving the Garcia Matter in my mind.

To Harry Bell for going through a flight nightmare and still managing to make it to the con.

To Earl Cooley for his BBS talk.

To the Bell Staff at the DoubleTree. They were real nice.

To Rob Jackson for coming to his first con in something like 20 years.

To Peter Sullivan for keeping up on the confun on the Intarwebs.

To Peter Weston for being practically a walking issue of Prolapse, which allowed me to feel like I'm not 100% devoid of any Brit FanHistory.

To The Banana Wings folks for a great zine and wonderful, Llama-filled conversations and for agreeing to be a

part of This Were WorldCon Part Deux!

To Neil Kaden, whoever he is, for giving Pat all those zines that she put out for us folks to buy.

To Bill Burns because The Drink Tank can't thank him enough.

To Colin for the Speech, the Meal and the Zines!

To Catherine for demonstrating Knurdling and that pole thingee.

To Lenny and David Bratman for the offer of future help with my potential CorFlu in the BArea.

To Lillian for offering to be one of my nominators when next I need to gather them and for Panda talk.

Did I mention that John Purcell makes a great roommate?

OK, that's enough gushing...well, not really. I've missed folks but you're all in my thoughts. I've fallen in love with fanzine fandom, and with The Drink Tank again. If you've got any problem, well, you can blame Graham for making me see that this is the way I like it!

And that's CorFlu 2007 as seen through the eyes and brain of Chris Garcia. There's a lot of CorFlu coverage on LJ, mostly from Randy Byers, Lillian and Geri. Go and read them! Their talk is really really real!

Other than that, I wish you peace and love and CorFlu!