

THE DRINK TANK



garcia@computerhistory.org

FADING, BUT NOT YET GONE

Letter Graded Mail
Sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my Loyal Reders

And now, on issues 118 and 119...Ted White!!!

Dear Chris,

It's been Too Long since a) I had a free day at work, and b) I read and LoCed *The Drink Tank*. So, let's rectify that.

Always glad to hear from ya!

The last issue I read was #117, your Corflu report issue, so I started in on #118, the Corflu Annex issue, so to speak.

John Purcell mentions "Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft" but forgot who originally recorded it. (I haven't read subsequent issues yet – gotta keep this spontaneous! – so I don't know yet if anyone else picked up on this. No, don't tell me yet.) The band was Klaatu, a Canadian group which was briefly accused of being the Beatles in a clever plastic disguise (although they sounded very little like the Beatles, in my opinion). In more recent times it was recorded by the Star People, a now-defunct New York (Long Island) band whose stage show was a delight. They used the song on both their first and second albums (same recording), they liked it so much.



I know Klaatu. I got one of their albums in a record exchange back in college. Good, kinda trippy stuff.

Then there's Michael Layne Heath's piece. Weird to see my name pop up in that. Weirder to realize that somewhere in my house I have copies of his *Sniffin' Glue*. I wonder if he realizes that the people who started rock fanzines – Paul Williams and Greg Shaw – were originally SF fans who had previously put out SF fanzines. Although I corresponded with Greg, I never met him (and never will, now), but I've known Paul since he was maybe 14, and he mimeographed the first issue of *Crawdaddy* in my basement in Brooklyn. (As soon as he started getting record company ads, he went to photo offset.) I didn't write a lot for his incarnation of *Crawdaddy*, and

nothing for the following incarnation which was published by Chester Anderson, but the *third* incarnation was from the publisher of the NYC sex tabloid, *Pleasure*, and I not only wrote a bunch for them, I was handsomely stiffed for my efforts with several large bouncing checks. Shortly after their checks bounced they disappeared from their offices and *Crawdaddy* entered its fourth incarnation, this time as a slick newsstand magazine. I understand the new publisher took it over so his college-age son could edit it. As such it lasted for several years.

I ran into Ben Fong-Torres not too long ago and we chatted about *Rolling Stone* and *Crawdaddy* and *Bomp* and he said something very interesting that I had never thought of. He said that most of the early zines weren't done by SF fans. The first rock zines were ClubZines for the Fan Clubs of the various performers that may or may not have had any connection with SF fandom. It's hard to tell. General rock fanzines certainly came out from SF fans. I have a few of those later issues of *Crawdaddy* and they're nothing compared to the originals, which had a lot of personality that the latter versions lacked.

Hope Leibowitz asks why you spelled it "CorFlu," and you offered

an explanation. But, Chris, “CorFlu” is something entirely separate from “Corflu.” “CorFlu” is what an unghodly number of us picked up at the San Francisco Corflu, a couple of years ago – it hit me as I was flying home, and had me sick in bed for the next couple of days, a wretched experience.

I didn't stay in the hotel for CorFlucisco so that must be why I avoided it. And remember the most important thing: how things are actually spelled/grammared/capitalized has little to no bearing on how I will spell/grammar/capitalize.

In #119 you passingly mention a laser disk player. Ah, yes. I have close to 50 Laser Disks, many of which I've never watched, but would like to. My original LD player, purchased circa 1985, stopped working in the early '90s with a disk still in it. In 1999, as DVDs were making LDs obsolete, I managed to pick up a Really Good LD player on close-out, and I thought I'd finally get to see those unplayed LDs (mostly music videos, concerts, like that – all of XTC's videos on one disk, for example – one of them being the Stones' *Rock & Roll Circus*, and another a quasi-illegal release of *Let It Be*). But, a few years ago when my son and I were watching rock videos together, I discovered that the LD player *wouldn't turn on*. Neither the front-panel control nor the remote



turned it on. Yes, it was properly connected. But for all intents and purposes it was an inert hunk. It still is. One of these days I must pay an extortionate amount (perhaps as much as the purchase price) to have it fixed.

Laser disks are great. To this day, the best version of 1776 (which I'm going to show at Westercon this year) is the laser disk version. Rock video videotapes were rarish and never sold too well unless they were

from really big names, but Laser Disk versions of videos did much better. I guess that folks who had the real interest in videos wanted the best quality and Laser Disk put out far better quality.

You say, “folks like Michael Moorcock and John Shirley have lived in both the rock and music worlds at the same time.” Well, yes, sort of, and so has Norman Spinrad (who collaborated with Richard Pinhaus). But only John has been a real performer in a real band. Moorcock contributed ideas and words to Hawkwind, and made a fairly awful album with his own one-off band, The Deep Fix, to which he again contributed only ideas and words (but Graham Charnock played guitar).

There's also an SF poet name of Dave Meltzer (not the wrestling writer, but a different guy) who played with various bands too. I've recently found that Deep Fix album and I'll listen to it shortly...to my dismay!

If I may brag for a moment, my own involvement goes deeper. I was a professional jazz critic in the late '50s and early '60s, and a rock critic subsequently (starting in 1965), and a radio deejay in the '70s. But in 1979 I also became a performing musician. I played alto (and sometimes tenor)



sax with a number of local DC-area bands, and fronted my own, Dr. Progresso & The Hired Assassins, for live gigs. In the spring of 1979 I began recording my music (now available on the “privately released” CDs, *The Doctor Is On*, vols. 1 and 2), including the studio composition, “The Slow Mingus Shuffle/Goodbye,” my elegy to Charles Mingus.

In 1984 I was part of a band which met and played weekly, but not publicly, which evolved into Barbara & The Bohemians, ultimately a trio. We played what we called “macrominimalistic” music. We recorded everything we did, digitally, for four or five years. Thus far I’ve compiled two CDs, *Macrominimalism* and *On The Terrace*, from more than a hundred hours of recordings. The music was much ahead of its time and still sounds fresh, twenty years later. I tended to play more keyboards (I had six!) than sax by then.

I am totally using the phrase macrominimalistic from now on.

In late 2004, after a fifteen-year lapse, I got back into making music by forming a new band, Conduit. The quartet includes former fan, Dan Joy (who was

also in my Hired Assassins in 1980), and two non-fan friends, JD Mack and Bob Crain. We are a totally improvising band. Our material has ranged from melodic and orchestral to spacey and atonal, with free jazz thrown in. I play keys and saxes (including the C-melody, a sax which fits between alto and tenor). Dan plays keys, bass and drums. JD plays bass, keys and drums. Bob plays drums, tenor sax, bass and keys. We move around a lot on our instruments.

Sounds like a good trio. I’ve got a few other friends who are fans and musicians (including my good LA buddy George Van Wagner), though sadly, I’ve no musical talent whatsoever.

We get together about once a month and play for one to two hours, recording everything on a Fostex board with a hard drive with sixteen tracks available for simultaneous recording, plus additional “virtual” tracks. Around 99% of what we record is good and usable. Thus far we’ve had eighteen sessions and produced eighteen albums, several of them double CDs. Two of those sessions and albums were from live gigs at local venues, including Baltimore’s Orion, a premier venue for progressive rock.

I’ve been to the Orion. I can’t remember who I saw there, but it

was a nice venue compared to what I’m used to out here.

We have a page on MySpace, with four of our pieces available to be heard there (<http://www.myspace.com/conduitdc>), and we have a video of one piece from our appearance at the Orion also available on that page and on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axocQI4vess>) as well. Check ‘em out.

I will. I have two MySpace pages: one for Christopher J. Garcia and one for Pop Culture Associates.

Well, I was just interrupted (but not rudely) by Henry Sun, from our production department. “I don’t have anything for you today, and nothing’s coming in, so you might as well take off and go home,” he said, at about 3:30 PM on a beautiful spring day (our first in weeks!). So I shall. Thus ends this LoC. Expect another at an unscheduled time.

Always good to hear from ya, Ted and I hope you made the most of the unexpected afternoon off!

All best,
Ted

Thanks, Ted!



And now, with his Drink Tank debut, EsJay himself...Steve Jeffery!

Hi Chris

Re. Lloyd Penney's comment in DT123 (absolutely fantastic cover on this ish btw. Yours?)

Sadly the cover was not mine. I found it on DeviantArt and the artist was kind enough to lemme use it. Sadly, I've forgotten her name.

"Then there was the time in 1992 when NPR announced that Richard Nixon was declaring for the Presidency again. He was quoted as saying that, "I didn't do anything wrong, and I won't do it again"

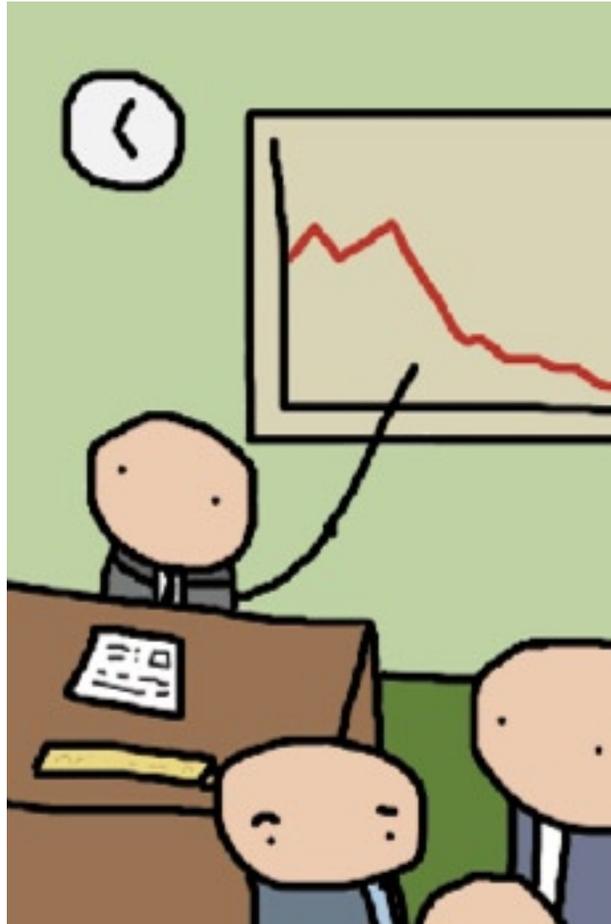
I love Nixon's post-Presidency. Yeah, he wasn't as good an ex-President as Carter has been, but he lightened up and was really funny. Kind of like Bob Dole when he used to show up on the Daily SHow.

On BBC Radio 'The News Quiz' a couple of days ago, humorist Alan Coren came up with an equally splendid remark attributed to Ronald Reagan to Caspar Weinberg, at the time of the Oliver North scandal. "OK. What don't I know, and when didn't I know it?"

Bests

Steve Jeffery

That's a famous one, right up there with the classic line from Casablanca about being shocked



that there was gambling!

Thanks, Steve! Hope you keep reading!

Let us roll over to Mr. Eric Mayer!

Chris,

Just a note. Well, you know about me and cons, or not. So what can I say? Well, for one thing, anent your remarks to Lloyd, here's a more sobering thought. I'm older than your mom! And, what Vince McMahon got his head shaved? I can't imagine that. I

ought to google for that. Or maybe not. **Vince's head is kinda pointy.**

Re the Hugos, I guess what Mark meant was that Harry Warner wasn't an sf pro but he was certainly a professional writer making a living writing for a newspaper. He also sold a lot of non-fiction to magazines, I recall reading somewhere, and I am pretty sure he sold some sf stories in the fifties.

That's true. I couldn't find any real evidence though.

It's always struck me that American fen tend to rate UK zines rather highly (too highly?) I think it is the effect of something slightly different being rated "better" when in fact it is just different. Mind you, I am married to a former UK fan. Mary always remarks that a lot of Americans are impressed by the British accent. People she talks to on the phone always remember her when she calls back. I think over the years UK zines have kind of got the benefit of having a "British accent."

That's a good point, but then again the only BritZines that get over here are the real good ones, I guess.

Good luck with the Hugo thing, by the way. At least they're not going to cancel the damn con on you!

And for that, I'm eternally grateful!

Best,

Eric



The Crappy Old Warehouse
by
Christopher J. Garcia

We all complain about the conditions we live or work in. We have one reason or another to hate it. It's too hot, it's too cold. It's cramped. It's cavernous. It's always something. On the other hand, there are wonderful things about places that are straight plain awful. One of those things is Building 126 on Moffett Federal Air Field in Mountain View, CA.

The history of this building is kinda strange. It started life in the 1940s, actually right around 1940 if the aerial photos of the base are to be believed. It was built as a support warehouse for the Hanger 1, the second largest airship hangar in the world (the one in Lakehurst, New Jersey is

exactly 2 feet longer, though three inches shorter) basically as extra storage. It was built quickly and cheaply, meant to stand for maybe a decade before being torn down and replaced

with something more permanent. They built a number of concrete buildings of equal and larger size when the war hit, but they never replaced the tin house.

During WWII, it housed what they called Quick Gear- stuff that needed to get off the plane and stowed and retrieved quickly like aerial maps, voice recorders and such. Since it was a short trip to the runway and the hangar, it was an ideal place for these things, as well as being out of the way. This was an active building during the war, though once the war ended, it was put to a much different use: furniture storage.

After a while, it became a part of the Exchange as the Furniture Department. The main Exchange is across the street from 126, but you had to come to the old tin shack to buy your patio furniture back in the day. It's hard to

pinpoint when that started, but it was certainly before 1960. Moffett was at the peak of its use between 1955 and 1985, with thousands of airmen stationed there and a large civilian population working at the wind tunnels and computation centres. It was, for the better part of two decades, the largest single location of employment in Mountain View and Sunnyvale.

My Dad was a firefighter at Moffett from the 1979 to about 1982. The fire station is located on the far side of the hangar from 126, but I remember driving by it a bunch over the years. We used to go to Moffett to watch fireworks every Fourth of July and we'd get great parking and seats for the annual airshow.

Dad got fired for fighting with the chief. He always hated that guy, and when I was working in the flight tower, my office was right across the hall from his. Luckily, I've not got my Dad's tem-





per.

During the Clinton Administration, Moffett was scheduled for closing. This was sad, sad news for the area, but it was good news for private business. While a certain percentage of the base would remain in use for the California National Guard and Onizuka Air Force Base, which was co-located on Moffett, would remain open, this was the opportunity that business and non-profits had been waiting for. A large swathe of free land for building. The group started looking at technology companies and non-profits to be brought in to the base. Deals were

inked to bring the Carl Sagan Astrobiology Lab to Moffett and to establish an outpost of Space Camp. Carnegie-Mellon signed on to open up a West Coast campus and UC Santa Cruz was going to start another campus. Most of these things fell through because of Super-Fund issues and cost. The biggest failure was the California Air & Space Museum, which would have been in Hangar One and featured a Space Shuttle and more. Sadly, they closed off Hangar One when they discovered that it was full of PCBs and they're trying to tear it down over the objections of just about every local group.

One of the groups that came to the dance a little late was the Computer Museum of Boston. It had been around since the 1970s and was looking to expand. Boston was pricey and a large percent of the support that came to the Boston Museum came from the 408, so they started looking into a way to better tap that money. They decided that it would be a good idea to start a History-focused museum in the BArea since they'd changed their focus to teaching kids about computers and letting the history slide. In 1997, they moved the collection of the Museum in Boston (minus a few items on display) over to Mountain View. They originally had a small piece of Hangar One and used it as very dense storage until a more suitable site could be found. That old tin shack, building

126, was being retired and that allowed the building to be put on the list of secondary users, namely those paying customers like us. We moved in in late 1997 and started giving tours right away.

I came over from Boston on March 1st, 1999. When I started, there were about 200 items in what we were calling Visible Storage. There were another 3000 in dense storage, which we called Area 51. On display were big iron pieces like SAGE, which you can see below, parts of Stretch, The Honeywell Kitchen Computer, A couple of Crays, Johnniac and a bunch more. I was trained to give the tours and after a very short span, I was the best tour guide we had. I do things like that a lot. I really did fall in love with the place and I discovered that I could give special tours that I couldn't do if it were in a regular building. At night, it was dark, dark, dark in there, so you could give tours by flashlight that



would cause the large old CRT displays to glow when you made it dark again. It was also really freaking scary at night since the lights were a good fifty feet from the front door meaning that you had to walk a good ways in the dark in the twisty paths with dangerously placed computers from the 1950s and 60s all over the place for my shins to connect with.

We stuck around there until 2002. By that time, we'd moved the collection offices to the Flight Ops building. This was difficult during 9-11 because we were locked down and we got to overhear the chatter of stuff that was going on. When they realised that we were civilians with highly sensitive information (and at least one of my co-workers has sold some of the info he heard to various media sources), they booted us out for three days. After that, we were allowed to go to our warehouse, but not our offices in flight ops. I spent the better part of a week



there and rather enjoyed it.

While I was there, I saw the place change and change again. We originally had our document collection in the middle bay, the visible storage in the front section and the dense storage in the back. Within a year, we had moved things around so that the middle section was also open for tours. We put various types of temporary exhibits in there, like one chronicling the rise and fall of Digital Equipment Corporation and another we did for the Intel Youth Science and Engineering Faire. These things started to crowd the place. We installed a platform for our robots, including two different Mars Rover prototypes which took up lots of space.

After those years, the museum started to look elsewhere. We had wanted to build a new building right in front of the giant hanger. The winning design was pretty sweet. The building would have been shaped roughly like a Flying-V guitar so that when you looked at it from 101, it would look like it was hovering. The miniature model was so cool looking! Sadly, the museum went through the first of its hard times as money started to dry up. Instead of being able to build a museum to our needs, we started looking around for a new building and ended up one exit up 101 in an old SGI building.

For a while, we still had all of 126, but the cost for the use of the

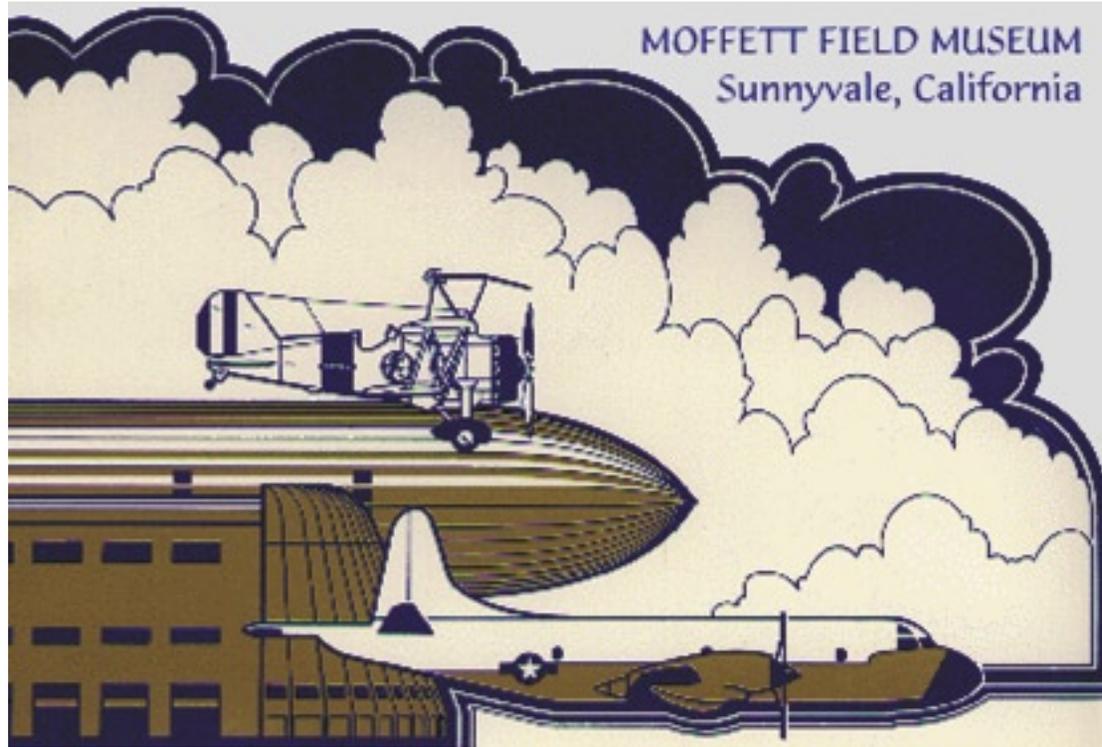


building was ever-increasing. Most of the groups that had initially signed on were forced out of their deals because the rates (along with the SuperFund issues) were just too darn steep. We agreed to give up one section of 126 for a rate break. The new tenants were a lot like us, in fact.

The Moffett Field Historical Society has only been around for about 15 years, but they managed to put together a pretty swell museum. It was originally in the giant Hangar, but when they started finding asbestos, they forced them out. Their stuff ended up in a warehouse on-base that only authorized personnel could get into, so there were no visitors to their collection for more than two years. This was a sad thing because they had a great collection of stuff including a piece of the Macon, the Airship that was housed in Hangar One that crashed off of Big Sur, and a piece of the Akron, the other airship housed in the other giant Hangar in New Jersey. They also

had such fun stuff as a blimp gondola, uniforms, tonnes and tonnes of photos and odd bits and pieces. They kept a huge amount of material and with the front 1/3 (actually slight more) of Building 126 they finally had enough space in a building that didn't have asbestos and PCBs flowing all over the place. They took over the building, leaving the back half for us to store our big objects that just wouldn't fit in the new building we moved into. The stuff we left behind were things

like the giant Stretch computer (which I still maintain was the inspiration for HAL) and the larger pieces of computers from the collection. There's also the Stanford Cart and a PUMA industrial robot that make me happy to have



around. There's also a SwissTelecom Phone Booth with a computer directory in it. It's an awesome thing to see and you can even play with it and, when hooked up to a car battery, you can search for 1999 phone numbers in and

caught fire and the guys pulled me out of there."

I figured I had to answer the exact same way as my Dad would have.

"Well, it was all a part of their job!"

around Zurich! I've done that many times.

The Moffett Historical Society Museum is a pretty good place to visit, though it is a little bit of a hassle to get on to Moffett. I went there recently and an old guy with more hair growing in his ears than on his head was kind enough to give me a tour of the place and told me all his stories. I mentioned that my Dad was a firefighter, he glowed.

"Maybe he saved the old Officer's club.

I was in there when it

The next issue of The Drink Tank will feature a special addendum to the Vonnegut issue. One came in to my SPAM filter and one I just found out that I could have gotten...had I sent out the right eMail. I thought the last issue turned out really good. Got a little something for it? Garcia@computerhistory.org is where you send it



What Chris Missed
by
Dave Langford

Somewhere in an alternate timeline too bizarre and terrifying to come to the notice of the Sidewise Awards, the 2007 TAFF race went the full distance and Chris Garcia came to Eastercon in Chester. For this hypothetical traveller, I imagine, it would have been like a character from the Vingean Beyond visiting the Slow Zone (older fans and Peter Weston may wish to substitute a reference to Eric Frank Russell's "The Waitabits"). "Incredible," the slummer from the stars would doubtless have muttered, "there are guys here who take WHOLE WEEKS to produce a fanzine!"

Of all the strange, slow-moving beings of British fandom, the most sluggish was probably me. Contemplation 2007 may have been my laziest convention ever: though I made the token gesture of offering to do a programme item, I cunningly did this so late in the day that the committee had to find a diplomatic way of saying "Sod off, the programme has been full up for weeks." Thus British fans were spared the 5,271,009th repetition of the Live Thog's Masterclass which too many of them already know by heart.

Contemplation started to feel good on the last lap of the train journey,



Chester: a touristy bit. They do it with mirrors.

when I discovered fans in the carriage next to mine and moved up to talk *Encyclopedia of SF* shop with Graham Sleight and Niall Harrison until we reached Chester.

(In the alternate timeline, TAFF delegate Chris Garcia seizes Graham's laptop from his nerveless fingers, laughs heartily at the revealed glacial pace of John Clute's updating progress, rattles off new versions of all 7,000-odd *ESF* entries, and suggests that there's plenty of time to do the *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* as well before the con begins.)

Chester. A lovely little city, full of

historical and touristy bits for cultured fans, plus pubs and restaurants for slobs like Langford. After too many UK cons in the desert wastes of the Hinckley Island Hotel or its Novacon equivalent -- where in both cases the chief local amenity is a historically crucial motorway junction -- this felt like a return to the golden age. Also, since Contemplation had been so hastily flung together in the wake of the sunken Convoy (Liverpool) there was a general sense of fannish gratitude that we were getting an Eastercon at all. It was tacitly understood that traditional Britfan whingeing would be unreasonable, even when unmissable focal-point events like Cyberdrome (don't ask) and the Masquerade had to be dropped. No one seemed to miss them.

The Plain People of Fandom: So what did you actually do, Langford?

Myself: Er um well. I had important networking sessions with all sorts of old fan and pro friends, plus large contingents from the Milford UK writers' conference and the rec.arts.sf.composition newsgroup....

The Plain People of Fandom: In other words, you stayed in the bar.

Myself: That is a hideous calumny. I may play the Deaf Twit card when it comes to actual programme items, but I made a point of frequently circulating to, well, the other bar. And I took a lot of historically uninteresting

photographs, most of which didn't come out because (if I correctly understand my technical advisers) either I bought a crap camera or the camera was being operated by a crap photographer. Charlie Allery of r.a.s.f.c tried to tell me how to work it, but I fear her advice bounced off the steely carapace of my intellect. At the time I was distracted by deep techno-envy, being totally surrounded by Charlies -- the other one was Mr Stross -- who were brandishing shiny notebook computers costing forty times as much as the aforesaid camera.

I even tried to take a picture of someone in a hall costume which I actually recognized. (Usually I don't. At a past con when Ian Watson was prancing around in a long curly wig, I guessed he must be impersonating Casanova and tried to impress him with a quip about "his" skiffy novel *Icosameron*. He fixed me with a contemptuous glare and said: "I am Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die!") Anyway, the Contemplation costume was No Face from *Spirited Away*, a concept requiring only a vast enveloping black shroud and a stylized mask. God knows who was inside. When the con was over I discovered that (a) the photo hadn't worked, and (b) my registration pack contained a little pile of Hall Costume Tokens for presentation at such moments. Argh. That's my life.

Several of the pictures that came out were of Greg Pickersgill, Famous Monster of Fandom. In that alternate timeline where TAFFman Garcia stalked the corridors of Contemplation, he would find it valuable to recognize the Pickersgillian moods:

The genial Greg, ready to buy you a drink.



A depressed and Angst-ridden Greg, urgently needing to be bought a drink.



Greg in murderous "Mr Hyde" mood -- highly risky to approach, even if bringing him a drink.



Learning that I was trekking in each morning from a far-off guest house on the Hoole Road, Greg warned me of terrible consequences if I walked back late at night. "Take a taxi," he urged: "I've heard Hoole is full of muggers!" I stayed on foot and somehow evaded this terror (about which local fan Darroll Pardoe was strangely sceptical, but what does he know? Darroll merely lives in Hoole).

Further random memories:

-- Italian nosh with Peter Weston, during which he pointed out all the possible articles I could write for *Prolapse* and I failed to write them. The

bill contained a horrific charge of over sixteen pounds (\$32) for a bottle of Chianti, which I managed to evade by the cunning legal strategy of pointing out that the wine had never arrived. "That was very *masterful*," said Peter wonderingly.

-- The *Plokta* cabal producing the contemplative con newsletter *The Navel* (All the Fluff That's Fit To Print), with the smug innovation of colour-laser reproduction of photos taken during Contemplation itself. All right, the printer glows white-hot and copies of that issue have to be doled out in twos and threes, but it's definitely a UK first.

-- Contenting myself, meanwhile, with the quiet nostalgic wallow of relentlessly handing out real paper *Ansibles*, ignoring the protests of those who got given it on the previous day and/or the day before that, and read it on line anyway.



-- 1/2r

Cruttenden's whiskers vanishing by slow and horrible degrees: sponsored mange, in aid of the fan funds.

-- Malcolm Edwards and Jo Fletcher of Gollancz taking all their authors out for a Chinese feast, to the agony of *Doctor Who* fans forced to choose



Bill Burns coming to terms with being a Famous Fan GoH.*

between this bounty and the now-traditional mass viewing of the latest episode while cowering behind the sofa. (Fran Dowd, convention co-chair, is traditionally known as the Sofa, and as an act of kindness she sits in the front row.)

-- Murray Moore ... what the hell is Murray Moore -- with his lady, too -- doing at an Eastercon? It seems he just wanted to surprise us all.



-- Sue Mason promising (for the umpteenth time) a long-delayed batch of "tiny bloody illos" for the tiny *Ansible* art slot. At

present, the only other artist prepared to work in a space 1.24 inches square is Bill Rotsler, who is dead....

-- Big grins from Jon Courtenay

Grimwood as he wins the BSFA Award for *End of the World Blues*, and from Mary and Bill "eFanzines.com" Burns after the earth-shattering revelation that they're fan guests of honour at LXcon, the 2009 Eastercon.

Ah, that quiet 2009 site selection with its single unopposed bid would be very different in the timeline where TAFFman Chris Garcia is here to infuse us with his famous dynamism. Fresh from revitalizing the con newsletter with an hourly production schedule, he charismatically proposes that one Eastercon a year is not enough -- why not one a week! Despite warnings of doom from the staid and conservative voice of moderation, James Bacon, a hypnotized audience votes to have monthly Eastercons and to extend *Contemplation* until the following weekend. There are indescribable scenes of excess. All die. O the embarrassment.

Maybe I need to read less alternate history....



Chris Bell displays elation at not having to run Convoy



A trainee Dirty Old Man with Anne Sudworth (not a hall costume: she's an artist and always dresses like this).

And now Chris Garcia really wishes he had made it to *Contemplation!*

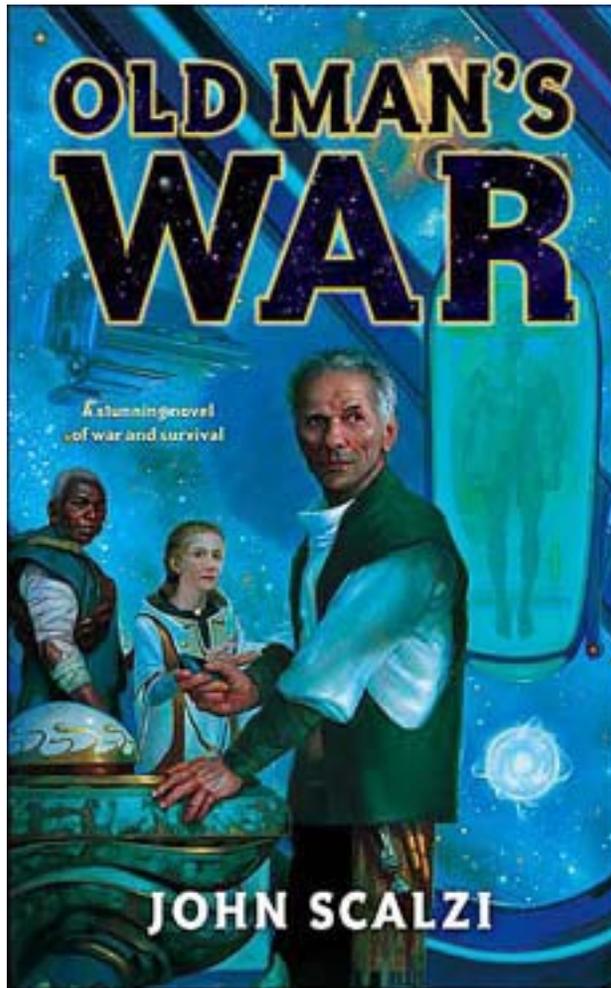
Do Not Mess With Matthew Appleton (and that means you, Scalzi!)

by Matthew Appleton

Without a doubt, my favorite (relatively) new author is John Scalzi. Between the *New York Review of Science Fiction* and *Some Fantastic*, I've reviewed all three of his large press releases thus far (and read his small press ones), and given them all glowing reviews. I also interviewed him in an issue of *Some Fantastic*.

So, when the Tor publicist decided to send me a copy of his new novel, *The Last Colony*, I squeeed like a teenage girl on her My Space page when she discovered she had won front row seats to a Justin Timberlake concert (well, he IS bringing sexy back). Yet, because I have a limited amount of time to devote to writing reviews (I should mention that I also interviewed him for an issue of *Some Fantastic*), I decided I would need to pass on reviewing it as I've never reviewed more than one book by any other author.

However, because I love his work—and based on his blog I would certainly be in love with the man (maybe even stalking him) if my inclinations ran that way—I thought I would remain his nappy-headed ho and gush about the new novel on my personal blog. His publicist thanked me for the effort, going so far as to say that she understood that it “can’t be ‘John Scalzi’ every day (though we try).” Unfortunately, Scalzi didn’t see it that way¹. Displaying the petulant type of ego exhibited by writers who receive massive critical praise early in their careers, he laid the smackdown on me for being “fair” to other writers—not unlike a little girl crying over a skinned knee. Now, I can understand to a certain degree because, as he states, “[f]air’ doesn’t pay the damn mortgage,” but when he started demanding that I bring him a cold



beverage, he went too far (although admittedly, I do love a good G. Love and Special Sauce reference as much as the next guy).

Now, it could be that his decision to launch a write-in campaign to become the next President of the SFWA has just gotten to his head, but when he threw his temper tantrum about being able to pay the mortgage, it seems that he forgot about all the

future royalties and advances due to roll in² very soon. If anything, he should be thanking my ass for providing glowing review after glowing review. In fact, Scalzi, where’s my cut of the take!? It doesn’t make a lick of difference that none of my reviews has ever been quoted as cover copy before.

I can’t believe an author who has won the John W. Campbell Award and is a two-time Hugo finalist is picking on me, but if it’s war he wants, it’s a war he gets. I will marshal all the resources that have allowed me to put out 11 issues of a fanzine with an online circulation of approximately 750-1000 to take the man on. I don’t care what type of mad Photoshop skills³ Scalzi has, you don’t pick on Matthew Appleton and get away with it.

Disclaimer: No SF authors were harmed, or meant to be harmed, in the writing of this essay.

(Footnotes)

¹ <http://www.scalzi.com/whatever/005026.html>

² <http://www.scalzi.com/whatever/005034.html>

³ <http://scottwesterfeld.com/blog/?p=54>

Well, yet another Drink Tank wanders off into the sunset. I wanna thank Dave Langford and Matt Appleton for lending some class to the process of creating this fine work.

I'm planning on Issue 127 to be out by next Friday, so if you wanna get LoCs out my way, do it fast! After that it's 128 (which is the first issue number that's a power of two in more than a year!) and that should be the one before BayCon. 129 will be produced AT BayCon, and starting with issue 130, BayCon post-coverage. Strange things are afoot at the Drink Tank.

Other than that, what can you expect to hear from me? Well, I'm waiting on seeing when my next bits will pop up. I know that a new Banana Wings is dropping soon and I believe I've got a piece in it. There's an issue of Some Fantastic with a review of Jay Lake's Mainspring and a piece about M. Night Shyamalan in it that's coming before I know it. I think There's a new Half Dome Happening hitting the streets next week too. It should be a good time for my eyes which love nothign more than seeing my stuff in print!

By the way, if you haven't already, stop by FanboyPlanet.com and check out the Podcast. I'm not on it every week, but it's always a good listen.

'Til we meet again!

