

**THE DRINK TANK ISSUE 156
THE LAST OF 2007
COVER BY DITMAR**



Well, it's done. 2007 is gently slipping away into the sea of years gone by. I'm sad to see it go. It was a damn good year for me. I attended more cons than any other year I've been in fandom (FurCon, QuireFlu, WonderCon, BayCon, Westercon, Con-X-Treme, Silicon, NASFiC, LosCon, Construction (that might be worthy of debate as a con), and VintaCon) and I had a wonderful time at almost all of them. I met the Lovely and Talented Linda, who is a wonderful woman and one of the best things to happen to me in a long, long time. I watched Evelyn start her Karate stuff, which is both fun to watch and has helped her get less ADD and more likely to chop a man in half, and I managed to win TAFF against odds that I never thought I'd manage to beat. In short, a good year.

But hardly perfect. A few troubles with helping Gen and Evelyn came up and they were painful to help them through and now I have to move rather soon without much money to make it happen. I'll figure something out, but it's coming up on three weeks before I gotta have my new place and people won't even call me back after I've put in my application. It's very frustrating. I don't know what's gonna happen after I move. Money's pretty damn tight already and I'm probably go-

ing to have a doubling of my rent so that's gonna suck.

And there's always TAFF, which is going to be the big thing for next year. I still can't buy the tickets because the card for the TAFF account I opened hasn't arrived. That's a bit stressing, though it doesn't appear that it was stolen because there have been no actions taken on the account. That's a good thing. I'm working on getting a new one sent.

And there's so much more. I gotta thank everybody who's sent in stuff for me to run. I've got Chris' Little Thing and the Third Annual Giant Sized Annual coming up, so send stuff through if'n you can! I've already got stuff from Eric Mayer, Brad Foster, James Bacon and Myself for the Annual.

So, things ended kinda harsh, but I've had a really good year all things considered. 2008 should be fun, and I hope you'll keep reading.



Heinlein at his Hundredth

by John Hertz

reprinted from *Vanamonde* 760

He approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful; the event which he represents will not happen, but if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he has assigned; and it may be said, that he has not only shown human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be exposed.

Johnson

Preface, *Notes on*

Shakespeare's Plays (1778)

A. Sherbo ed., *Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*

v. 7, p. 65 (1968)

This is the centennial year of Robert A. Heinlein (1907-1988), one of the finest writers we've known. In 1939 he entered our field, which he called speculative fiction, and over two decades published six dozen short stories and novels still unsurpassed in quality. He had the gift, or skill, of story. He had a sense of event. He was a painter of people, some of whom were aliens. He had invention, which Johnson called the first and most valuable power of a poet. He was entertaining: he used to say "We're competing for their beer money." Born

in Missouri, the “show me” State, he at his best, of which there is a bushel, didn’t tell us, he showed us; he could make an object, or a word, show prevailing notions or technology, or when the story or people needed more detail, he could dilate. Four years before Heinlein at the first World Science Fiction Convention in Missouri, in the bicentennial year of the United States, was Writer Guest of Honor at a Worldcon for his third time, a writer for *The New Yorker* told me s-f made itself obscure. Heinlein had published s-f in *The Saturday Evening Post*. Among his jewels of those years are a dozen books for juveniles, clear, compact, craftsmanly, well worth the attention of an adult. He came to feel these chafed him. He burned for something bigger, which brought him fame and fortune, although beauty and even brilliance are not always bought with ire. At the 2007 Worldcon, the first in Asia, the first in Japan, a display by the Heinlein Society was in the exhibit hall, and I went to a panel about him, where people told how they agreed or disagreed with characters in his works, with whom they could or could not identify. No one would notice or care, I said from the audience, except for his writing so well.



OK, this is wild. I got this sent to me on paper and without a name. Normally, I would never run anything like this because it’s the snarkiest thing I’ve ever read and downright frothy at the way it bites at a lot of people who are friends of mine (and maybe even at me!), but this one I’m running because it’s 1) the kind of thing that bites at everyone on every side of every issue that seems to be running in fandom right now and 2) made me laugh so hard I had to explain myself. I’ve got an idea of who might have written it, but so far no one’s stepped up to take credit.

*Vague-Us Fandom Weakly –
December 2006*

The Clubhouse Affair – Part I

The name is Cats, Barmy Cats, and I’m a secret agent. Now some of you folks out there might see that as meaning “spy” or “terrorist” or something, but I prefer to see myself as a Freedom Fighter. I belong to an organization called CORPSE Fandom. That’s the Committee Of Really Persnickety and Senile Elders. I don’t rightly know what all of those words mean, but they are good words. We are the founders of Fandom, and it is our sacred duty to protect our community against Evil and Infiltration. Our motto is “Fans Are Born, Not Made”, and what we mean by that is that if you ain’t one of us already then we sure ain’t gonna let you in, unless of course we really like you, that is.

Our mortal enemies are the WSFS, the World Society for Fandom Suppression, an evil bunch of lawyers, accountants and marketing executives who are trying to steal fandom from us and sell it to interlopers and newbies. The WSFS makes a

godamn fortune out of running conventions that used to belong to us, and we mean to get those cons back.

The boss of our organization is grouchy old guy called Mr. White. That's not his real name, of course. It is just a codename. Like in that there movie, Reservoir Dogs. But don't let that get you thinking that we are just a bunch of criminals or anything. It is just a bit of fun. A game we play. My English counterpart likes to use what he calls a "military metaphor". ("Metaphor" is an old English word for a game, I think.) He calls Mr. White "The Colonel", and he calls himself Captain Ddu. ("Ddu means "black" in one of them old languages they use in certain remote parts of old England.)

I've done a whole load of missions with Captain Ddu myself, and I could really have done with his help on this one, but the poor guy still hasn't recovered from last year. That was when the WSFS managed to raise the evil demon Scaltzathoth and send him against us. Poor



Agent O'Brien was blown away by a flame waugh in seconds. Captain Ddu managed to fight the demon off, but he's been in the nut house ever since. He just sits their drooling and muttering to himself, "whatever, whatever, whatever..."

So that's how I came to be running this mission by myself. It began like this. Mr. White called me into his office.

"Cats! Cats!!! Get your godamn arse in here right away!"

"Coming sir. There ain't no need to bark at me like that, you know."

"Cats, if you don't understand why I always bark at you then you are even more brainless that I thought! Now

listen up, and listen up good!"

"Sir!"

"I'm sending you on a mission, Cats! The WSFS are up to their old tricks again! Do you remember why we hate them!?"

"They stole our Worldcon, sir."

"And!?"

"They stole our Hugo Awards, sir."

"And their latest outrage is!?"

"Sir?"

"They are instituting a Lifetime Achievement Hugo!"

"Sir?"

"And they are not going to give one to ME!!!"

"Why, the godamn fiends, sir! What shall we do?"

"What shall YOU do, Cats! Listen up! The list of Hugo winners is kept in a safe in the WSFS headquarters in Boston! I want you to sneak in there, crack the safe, and replace their list with ours! Here, look, on our list, all of the Hugos are won by ME!!!"

And that is how I ended up here, in Boston, outside that

lowdown fortress of depravity known only as... The Clubhouse!

Good old Mr. White would not send me out unarmed, of course. Before I left, I was sent to see our chief technologist, V. He fixed me up good with a whole pile of useful weapons, all miniaturized and cleverly disguised as business cards, airline tickets, bow ties and other sorts of pseudo-corporate gee-gaws that them WSFS folks so love to carry around with them. My favorite gadget is the iPhone, which is really a pocket hectograph. Armed with it, I can pub my ish in five seconds flat. Though of course for tradition's sake I would always take at least five months to do the job.

And so, well equipped for anything I might face, I walked confidently up to the door of The Clubhouse and wandered in.

I was met by a beautiful dame.

"Hi, I'm Geri", she said. "Are you a WSFS member?"

"Sure am," I said, showing her my Worldcon progress report



envelope with my membership number printed clearly on it. V had forged this, of course. No self-respecting CORPSE Fandom member would ever be seen dead anywhere near a WSFS-run Worldcon. But Geri was fooled, poor dear.

"That's great!" she beamed, "and the secret password is?"

Once again I was well prepared. This time it was not V but Chris who saved my arse. She's one hell of a dame. To start with she's the only member of CORPSE Fandom who is less than 90 years old. Indeed, she's the only person we've let into the

organization in decades. What's more, she's a right computer whiz. Most of us CORPSE guys are a bit flaky with new technology. We've heard about new-fangled computers such as IBM, DEC and the rest. We know about these clever, so-called "user-friendly" systems such as punched cards and Unix. But for the most part we are happy to stick with our faithful Difference Engines. They've served us well for over a century. Why should we change?

But Chris, she's a computer whiz. In no time at all she had hacked into the WSFS network, gotten past all of their wicked security software, and stolen their password right from under their noses. Ha! She sent it to me encrypted as a LOC in one of those new-fangled e-fanzine things. There was a message on the front saying, "This fanzine will self-destruct in 10 seconds."

I couldn't work out how to get it open in time. But knowing Chris, if she'd written one fanzine, she'd write another five minutes later, and another five

minutes after that. And she did. Eventually I figured it out.

“I ♥ SMOFcon”, I said.

“So do I,” beamed Geri.

“Come on in. I’ll show you around the con suite. It is really well stocked. It is amazing how much food you can buy with the profits we make from Worldcon.” And it was. Amazing, that is. There were donuts. There were cream cakes. There were cream-filled donuts. There was cheese. There was cheesecake. They were having an ice cream tasting, and I swear to you there were more flavors than Baskin Robbins has shops.

The members of WSFS lounged around on their scooters, stuffing their faces and laughing at how much profit they had made this year. Every so often, they would drag some poor neo-fan out of a cage and then chase after him on their scooters until they ran him down. “Objection to Consideration!” they would yell above the kid’s death screams. Eventually I got up the courage to go over and see the mess for myself. The woman who had won



the race wiped blood from her face and began to cackle.

“That’s another one who won’t ask me for a program item on Battlestar Galactica again!”

I shuddered. These fiends had actually said something I approved of.

I ate the food. I had to. It was delicious, and I would have looked out of place if I did not. Geri kept feeding me cookies.

“I baked them especially for you,” she cooed.

“That’s funny,” I thought, drowsily, “How did she know I was coming?”

And then it was too late...

When I awoke I was in chains. Given the smell, I guess I was somewhere in the basement of The Clubhouse. The whole damn place reeked of the smell of dying conventions, and of fanzines that the WSFS had destroyed. I was hanging from a wall. Rats scuttled beneath my feet. At least I hoped that they were rats. Who knows what sort of unnatural creatures the WSFS Secret Police have at their disposal?

For a while I thought that I might actually meet their leader, the fearsome General Robert himself. But as it turned out he only sent his bully-boy henchman, Captain Standlee. That was bad enough, of course. Standlee is a rotten egg through and through. And he’s a known close associate of the most evil person in all of WSFS, Bitch Morgan. What she whispers into his ear, Ghu only knows.

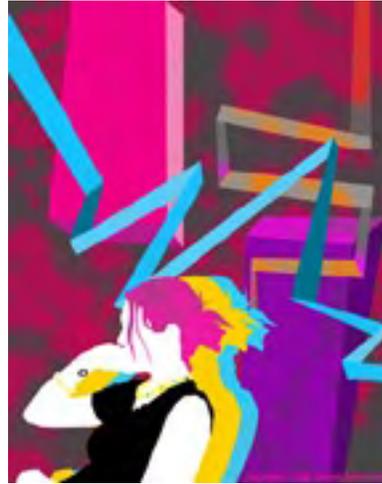
It was clear that he was going to torture me. What would it be? If I was lucky, it might be waterboarding. He might try to crush my typing fingers, all two of them. He might read to me from *The Eye of Argon*, or lock me in a cell with a group of hungry filkers. He could force me to enter a *Masquerade*, dressed as Sailor Moon. But no, he was far more ruthless than that.

Captain Standlee leered at me from behind his dark glasses and silly peaked cap.

“Cats”, he said, “you are going to tell me everything you know about CORPSE Fandom. If you don’t, I am going to subject you to Parliamentary Procedure!”

To be continued...

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Normally, I'd do an index this time of year, but this year it just isn't going to happen. Here's a list of folks who I know submitted stuff in 2007- Bill Burns, Brad Foster, Frank Wu, Ed Green, Ted White, Kelly Green, The Lovely and Talented Linda Wenzelburger, Espana Sheriff, Judith Morel, Mike Heath, Jason Schachat, Diana Sherman (though I'm still waiting on that Frank Wu article!), Jean Martin, Warren Harris, Arnie Katz, Kevin Roche, Kevin Standlee, Kurt Erichsen, JohnO, Mark Valentine, John Hertz, George Van Wagner, Selina Phanara, Andy Trembley, John Purcell, Mark Plummer, Manny

Sanford, ATom, James Bacon, Derek McCaw, Claire Brialey, Harry Bell, Randy Byers, Leigh Ann Hildebrand, Abra Sands, Brianna, Lloyd Penney, Alan White, Ditmar, Niall Harrison, John Coxon, Jack Avery, David Moyce, Vanessa Van Wagner, Anonymous, Robert Hole, Howeird, Bill Rotsler, Marty Cantor, Suzle, M Lloyd, SaBean MoreL, Ken Patteron, Barbara Haddad-Johnson, Trey Haddad, Jay Crasner, Steve Jeffries, Mark Ferrari, Spring Schoenhuth and many others. I've got to get a master list. And I want to think folks who will be making their debut in 2008. I'm lookin' for ya!

And now, back to looking for a home for the coming year and worrying about the TAFF account and so many other little things. Christmas was wonderful, and I hope whatever you celebrate went well too. And if you didn't celebrate anything, come on! There's never a good reason not to party!