

At Last: The Drink Tank 56- The Issue About Days Gone By!



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Editorial Note

HELLO, GENTLE READERS. THIS ISSUE WILL BE ONE FOR THE AGES BECAUSE IT WILL TALK ABOUT...WELL, ABOUT THE AGES, I GUESS. THIS ONE'S ALL ABOUT HISTORY: REAL AND IMAGINED. THERE'S A FICTION PIECE FROM MIKE SWAN THAT HE SENT TO ME FOR AS OF YET UNTITLED THAT I'LL FINALLY BE USING. THERE'S AN ARTICLE FROM FRANK WU ABOUT HIS FAVOURITE HISTORICAL STRANGENESSES. I'VE GOT A COUPLE OF VIEWS OF HISTORIA, AND THERE'S A LOOK AT WHAT HISTORY CAN MEAN TO SOMEONE ON THE EDGE FROM THE SISTERS MOREL.

IN ADDITION, I'LL BE TAKING A FEW MOMENTS TO CONSIDER THE PLACE IN HISTORY OF A FEW FOLKS IN SF-DOMS (BOTH FAN- AND PRO-) AND SEE HOW A HISTORIAN IN THE FUTURE MIGHT REJECT THEM OR ELEVATE THEM.

PLUS...WELL, IF I TOLD YOU EVERYTHING YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO READ THE ISSUE NOW, WOULD YOU?

ENJOY
CHRIS

A Strange and Distant City
in Honor of The Last Century's Early Horror
Writers
by
Mike Swan

Jesse's name had been called across the alleys, from roof top to roof top in voices that seemed to favour panic over reason. Mother voices. Father voices. The neighbours' voices that all seemed to wonder aloud if they were wasting their breath.

No sound ever returned in answer, merely a cacophony of questioning yells to the dark night that returned to the asker through the hollow city echo.

Jesse was not the first, and he would not be found. Detective Lawrence knew what had happened to him, knew that whatever pieces of a puzzle he would be asked to put together, they would all add up simply to a young boy who would always be disappeared. He stood on the roof top, looking out over the poorest parts of San Francisco, the towers built in battles between mule and man,

with the mule wearing victory laurels.

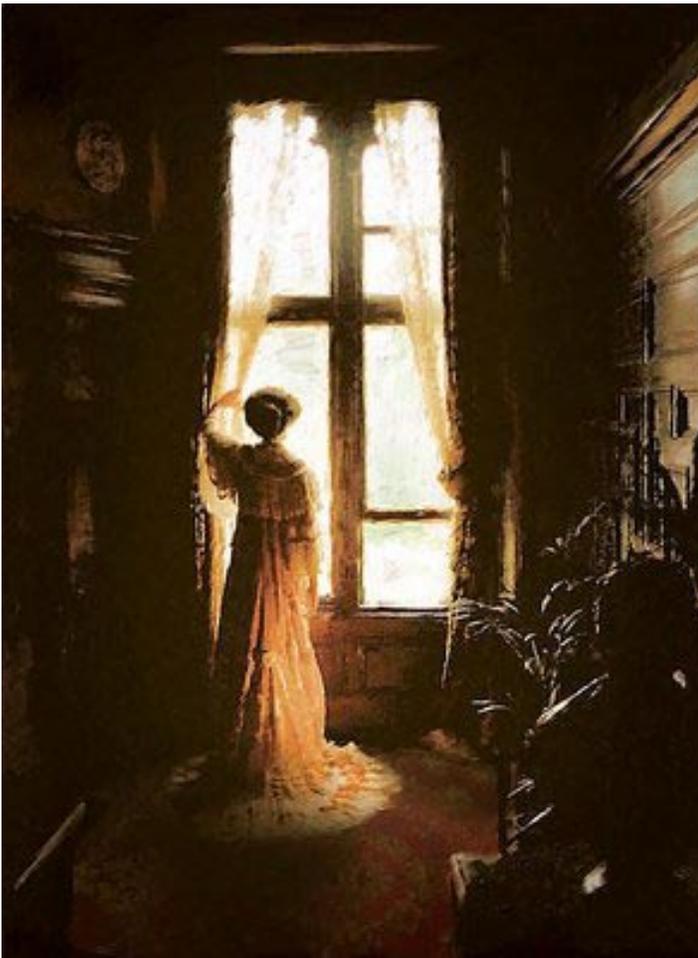
Why am I bothering with this? The Detective asked himself. He had been of no help in finding the seven others. The first was Ginny Martin, a girl of nine whose mother said she walked to the highest point of their slightly twisting building and never returned below for bed. Following that was Andrew Hayen. There was a footprint on his roof, and a matching one on the roof across the street, and a streak of blood beside a third print a few wooden buildings over, nearer to the Sacred City of the Chinaman. The next three were closer, less than a day between each, each taken when putting clothes on line or drawing water from a rain collector. The sixth was another boy. One moment he was in his bed, asleep with dreams of cautious angels, and the next he had left only a small spot of what might have been saliva on the top cover.



And now he dealt with Jesse.

“Detective,” the voice of Marcus Dryer had never seemed clearer “there’s something you should see.”

The detective walked behind Dryer as they came down the series of stairs



that went from added level to the one below, showing signs of forty years of growth without concern for the fact that earthquakes had once rocked the region.

The room where they arrive was well-pannelled, as if a gentleman had ordered it built and then forgotten to tell anyone to leave the rest of the house alone. Lawrence had spent years in the good houses of The City, including time with the Stanfords, but here, here he felt as if the singular vision of a man had built something beautiful only to allow it to be rolled in cheap wood additions.

A woman stood at the window, though she had not opened it.

“Excuse me Miss.” The Detective said.

“You should bother, she’s mute, sir.” Dryer told him as he walked to her.

Though they say that the loss of one ability will make itself up in acuity of the others, the young woman had not noticed them arrive. Dryer’s hand on her arm caused her to wordlessly job, then speedily turn and walk across the room, up another flight of stairs.

“We have to follow her. She did this last time.”

Lawrence and Dryer followed her to another set of stairs, this one going at a much different angle into a building that neighboured. The roof must have been much higher, for they used four different sets of stairs to finally arrive at a roof with very high clotheslines.

The young lady pointed upwards to the highest line. It would have taken a ladder of nearly twenty feet to reach that point, but there, hanging down like a hunter’s recent kill, was an umbrella.

“Dryer, what’s this woman’s name?”

“She’s May Senter, Detective. She has already written out a statement for me, but she said there was something you needed to see.”

Lawrence went to her as she pointed up.

“You can hear, can’t you, Miss Senter?”

She nodded strongly.

“When did this umbrella arrive? How many nights ago?”

She slowly held up two fingers. Looking around the roof area, there were several spots where chalk drawings had been washed away by various rains. Lawrence had not seen these marking on any other roof and so assumed that this would have been the location for the children to play. Lawrence searched and saw that there was no ladder, but a long pole with a catch that the ladies must have used to pin the clothes up to take advantage of the drying wind of the higher points.

Taking the pole in his hands, Lawrence worked to remove the umbrella. When he got it to the level where they stood, the slashes of blood and perhaps a piece of skin became evident.

“Did you know of this young man Jesse?”

Lawrence asked Senter.

She nodded in reply.

“Is this his umbrella?”

Again, a strong nod. Lawrence looked it over, saw that it was obviously been used in play as evidenced by the worn spots, the chalk that marred the handle and the



fabric near the spike. This clue was nothing that could help them, but it did say that they'd not find young Jesse alive.

The papers ran the story in the masthead:
No child should be allowed alone on roof top.

Detective Lawrence had given answers to questions, had formed simple scenarios where a single gentleman, a mad man like London's Jack, had gone from roof top to roof top, finding children and dragging them to their death. But this was quite impossible. No man could have climbed to that clothesline and no man could have gathered a child so far quickly away without a sound. No, this was not a single man. This was something else.

He spent days looking over evidence: the photos of the footprints, the blood smear, the umbrella. He had searched the umbrella over and again, and something had struck him as off with one rip that he had associated with damage from excessive play. It was long, ragged, as if something had snagged it, torn away fast. It also corresponded with the some splash of blood. If young Jesse had tried to defend himself from the knife, this might have been the result, though it was too ragged, as if a hook used for fishing had snagged and been pulling so quickly down.

Or a claw.

Lawrence had asked Dryer to join him at the Academy of Sciences. He had brought the umbrella with him, since a biologist would be as unwelcome at a police station as a pack of police officers would be at a museum. They had set a meeting for noon with Dr. Harvey Dennison, a specialist in reptiles. Arriving, the Doctor seemed to be more scattered than ever Dryer had imagined he would be.

"Welcome, Detective Lawrence, Officer Dryer. I'm so glad to have you here. You said you have a question about a claw-mark?"

Lawrence noticed that Dennison had a series of long claw marks along one forearm.

"Here, on this umbrella." Lawrence handed it to him. "The long rip towards the handle. My guess is it's a claw that made it."

The doctor took the umbrella and walked across to his station where a magnifying glass stood on a tripod. He examined it, tracing it from the start

by running the magnifying glass along the length, then tracing it back.

"Well, it does seem to be reptilian, but not of any practical reptile." The herpatologist responded.

"Why is that?"

"The claws of a reptile are very distinct from those of a mammal such as a bear or a puma. See, this is a slice as opposed to a tear. Very precise, just what a reptile's claw are meant to do, though seldom can they make such perfect cuts."

"They can't?"

Because they walk on their claws, they get worn. This took almost no effort to enter, meaning they were razor sharp, but no walking reptile, nor any of those that swim, I'd imagine, would be able to do this so cleanly."

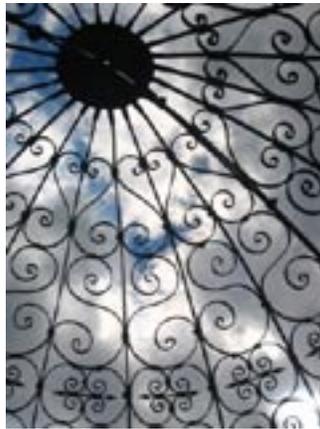
"Might it have been some scissor, or perhaps a meat hook?"

"Never. This is absolutely a reptile scratching."

Dryer and Lawrence sat and went over scratch patterns that the good doctor had saved over the years. After an hour, the two left with voluminous thanks proffered to the master of repiles.

No hints of future progress came to them as they worked towards finding the killer. No further ideas, and no further takings. Staring at the iron work of the dome of the police headquarters, he imagined a Flying Crocodile preying on children. A ridiculous piece of imagination, he knew, but that would make a little sense. Looking back down to the map of the incidents, something struck him odd at the placement. It would have seemed that the centre of the circle they described was the building two over from the tower where the umbrella had been found, but that was abandoned and had been under near constant surveillance. Lawrence looked at the map, then over the reports. The photos showed nothing of interest, except for one small detail.

In each photo, save for the one of the building where the umbrella had been found, a window could be seen. A single window that seemed to look into a darkened room. Or rather a room that was of dark wood, perhaps. He knew the window, he knew he had seen it from one side or the other. On that, he returned to the tower of building that surrounded that fine wooded room.



Arriving at the home, he found Miss Senter arranging flowers in vases. She looked horrible, as if she hadn't eaten in days.

"Hello, Miss Senter" he said as he pushed open the door. She made no kind of greeting. "I only need a moment to look around at your window."

She stared at him and shook her head violently.

"Why may I not investigate your window, Miss Senter."

She did not answer, she only put down the flowers and then stood on the line between the window and Detective Lawrence.

The Detective was about to throw a dozen questions at her, he even prepared to get the pad from his inner breast pocket when he looked at the wallpaper near the window.

Tears, perfect and short, as if torn by perfect and short reptilian claws. These rips were as immaculate as those on the umbrella, the umbrella that the mute woman had pointed out to them. The Umbrella that she knew belonged to little boy Jesse.

He took her by the arms and moved her aside, seeing that there were more claw marks on the sill, that there were signs that the window frame, though nailed down presently, had been ripped open, pulling nails with it, more than once.

"Jesus, God!" He said, turning to the mute woman. "What has gone on here?"

She seemed near tears, but kept as much of herself near to the window.

"Answer me,

I know you must have some thought of what has happened to these children."

He pulled out the pad and a pencil, but the young Miss Senter went into a fit, a fast jerk, then a slow falling. Detective Lawrence, keen to keep her from hitting her head, lunged and grabbed her before she made it to the floor. He lowered her slowly so that she might convulse in relative comfort. He watched as he throat seemed to seize, then expand, then seize again. Remembering what he had been taught of seizures in the academy, Detective Lawrence went for a spoon, but was grabbed as he could hear Miss Senter talking through her teeth.

"Run." She said, he teeth tightly clenched together.

"I'll help you, ma'am." He said "I just need you to open your mouth."

She would do no such thing, but Detective Lawrence could tell that she was losing a battle for consciousness. After a few more seconds, she slumped completely against the ground, still, save for her throat, which seemed to ripple.

"In Heaven's name?" The Detective said as he saw the lower jaw forced open and a scalpel claw come forward.

Miss Mary Senter returned to the window, fresh and full of new life. She fixed the flowers which had gone into an unexpected disarray and then went to the window which had been forced open. She got the hammers and nails and pinned it shut again, saying the silent prayer that would allow her to keep her mouth shut and perhaps allow the rest of the world to live.



MY 5 FAVORITE HISTORICAL ODDITIES by Frank Wu

History isn't boring! It's filled with all sorts of wonder and weirdness. Look here:

1. John Glenn slips in the bathtub

In 1962, astronaut John Glenn became a national hero, the first American to orbit the earth. This was a triumphant contrast to the previous flight, which had ended with the loss of the spacecraft and the near-drowning of the astronaut. Glenn shortly retired from NASA to embark on what seemed like an unstoppable political career. He was handsome, heroic, articulate, kind, and church-going in a non-annoying way. He had just begun a 1964 campaign to run for Senate in Ohio, when he slipped in the bathtub, hurting himself so badly that he had to withdraw from the race. He had been adjusting a heavy mirror, when it fell on him, and he hit his head on the bathtub. He received a concussion and inner ear trauma for his trouble. He eventually did get elected Senator (in 1974) and clearly had presidential ambitions (he ran for VP in 1976 and Prez in 1984, when the film version of "The Right Stuff" came out, spurring a newsweekly to ask on its cover, Can a Movie Make a President?). But by then his rocket-powered political momentum had faded.

But... if he hadn't slipped in the bathtub in 1964, he might have won his Senate seat earlier, and maybe he might have been President when the decision was made to stop sending men to the moon. Maybe he could have spurred the country onto continuing the lunar flights - perhaps in memory of his late pal, astronaut Gus Grissom - and then today we would be having this little conversation on the moon.

2. Hubert Humphrey gets his diagnosis earlier

The men who would be President also feature in our next story. 1968 is a fascinating year, one rife

with possibilities for alternative history writers. The Viet Nam war was raging, JFK had been shot in the head a couple years before, and his successor, Lyndon Johnson, despite his best efforts,

was losing control of the ship of state amidst storms of social and economic sea changes, while sinking in the quagmire of Viet Nam. After LBJ (thankfully) withdrew from running for re-election, the Democrats' best shot was JFK's brother Bobby, but that campaign ended with, well, Sirhan Sirhan's



best shot. The Democrats settled for VP Hubert Humphrey, who eventually lost the Presidential election to Richard Nixon, back from the dead.

Very few knew this at the time, but ... in 1968, Hubert Humphrey had already noticed some blood in his urine. Doctors checked for cancer, but decided to watch and wait. This diagnosis - bladder cancer - wouldn't come until after the election. But if he had known he had cancer in 1968 (which eventually killed him after chemo, radiation and surgery failed to help), Humphrey would not have run for President. [Reference: New England Journal of Medicine,

April 27, 1994]

Then who would have been the Democrat's nominee? Who was left? Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern. Both were anti-war candidates. Maybe both would have lost to Nixon (McGovern did in 1972, but by then everything was different), but what if one of them had won it all? Or... If Glenn hadn't slipped in the bathtub and had won his 1964 senate campaign, maybe he could have run for President. In any case, if a Democrat had been



elected President in 1968, the war might have ended earlier, and Nixon's Watergate scandal would not have happened.

For me the Watergate scandal has, for this country, deeper significance than the first war we lost. Watergate proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the government - then still generally trusted - couldn't be respected as an authority figure, and politicians became free game for any hotshot reporter looking for a name-making scandal, and maybe the conspiracy theorists had a point after all. It was an end of innocence, an explosive destruction of our belief in higher authorities whose reverberations are still felt today.

And it might not have happened if Humphrey's doctors were just a little bit more on the ball.

3. Someone realizes that a comma is not a hyphen

Our next item is also a fun story about politics and government, but more about their proper functioning than cults of personality.

I am pleased to see the success of "Eats Shoots and Leaves", Lynn Truss' surprise bestseller about, of all things, punctuation. People really do care if you can spell and punctuate correctly. While blogging is encouraging more people than ever to write, it also propagates errors at an alarming rate. Wouldn't it be great if everyone just spent an hour trolling through the Wikipedia correcting all the its/it's errors? Together, we could clean up that mess.

OK, people listen up.

"It's" is a contraction of "it is," as "he's" is a shortening of "he is."

"Its" is a possessive, like "his" or "hers."

Thus, if speaking of Godzilla, "its back" would refer to the decorative but functional plates on



Godzilla's backside that glow red hot before he unleashes his deadly radioactive fire breath. "It's back" would mean that the Big G has returned, not as dead as we were led to believe, and apparently having survived the flesh-melting effects of Dr. Serizawa's oxygen destroyer.

OK, end of diatribe.

No, I'm not done yet.

Improper punctuation can cost you millions of dollars.

To quote Irving Wallace (the only primary source I could find of this story), "An unidentified congressional clerk was instructed to write: 'All foreign fruit-plants are free from duty.' Instead he wrote: 'All foreign fruit, plants are free from duty.' It cost the U.S. government \$2 million before a new session of Congress could rectify the error." [The source for this is "The Book of Lists," 1977, by Wallechinsky et al., under "20 Wonderful Boners," but I've been thoroughly unable to get any more detail or verification of this story.]

So be careful out there, OK?

4. O Lucky Man

Poorly used punctuation can not only cost you money, but also that currency of the modern age, brand reputation and loyalty, which applies on a personal as well as corporate level. Yes, sometimes spelling things a particular way can brand you as a cool "rebel" or gangsta or member of the 133t class, which might be good ... or bad grammar could brand you as an imbecile or dumb-wad.

The latter happened to Timothy Dexter (1747-1806). Dexter, the Forrest Gump of the business world, was a semi-literate farmer and leather worker who married above his station, taking a rich widow for his wife. To tweak the noses of those who thought him an uneducated buffoon, he had a book with absolutely no punctuation and with atrocious spelling published at a vanity press. This mocked those who mocked him, while simultaneously proving their point. To carry the jest a step further, the second edition of the book had a page at the end with nothing but punctuation, and a note that readers could use these marks to salt and pepper the text to their own liking.

;!?.,;!?.,;!?.,;!?.,;!?

The most notable oddity of Dexter's career - and the reason he is actually included in this brief discussion - is that he is the one who brought coals to Newcastle. Newcastle, England, being a great coal-mining center, and bringing coals there being the height of stupidity and redundancy. One of the aforementioned jealous rich folk suggested as a joke that Dexter do this. Gullible and not very good at research, Dexter complied, filling scores of ships with soft Virginia coal and sending them off. It just so happened that when they arrived, the coalminers of Newcastle were on strike, and all his coal was sold at a premium. He wound up twice as rich as he had been before.

An earlier attempt to trick Dexter also failed due to his incredibly good luck. He was told that the tropical West Indies needed warming pans, mittens and Bibles. Again, not doing any research, he fell for the rouse. But... Just as his shipments arrived, a huge religious revival was occurring, and his Bibles were snatched up at 100% profit. Russian ships happened by and bought all the mittens. The warming pans, their covers removed, were used in skimming molasses.

Dexter was far from the smartest businessman - or most literate - but certainly the luckiest.

5. Molasses, Molasses everywhere

The molasses that helped make the lucky Timothy Dexter richer figures in our next story.

Today food manufacturers put sugar in EVERYTHING, so most of the people now reading this will get diabetes one day. (Hint: regular exercise is good for staving off diabetes, so turn off your computer right now and go to the gym.) A couple centuries ago, the default sweetener wasn't crystallized sucrose, but molasses, derived from sugar cane or sugar beet. Molasses production was single-handedly responsibility for the enslavement of millions of Africans brought to the Caribbean, Mexico and Brazil in chains. Some estimate that two-thirds of all slaves were used for making molasses. And the molasses itself was used to make rum, which filled the ships on their way back to Africa... to get more slaves. (As

noted in the 1776 Song Molasses to Rum to Slaves)

A wholly remarkable thing in the history of molasses happened in Boston on January 15, 1919, the day before the ratification of the 18th amendment, which prohibited the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages - including the production of rum from molasses. A 2.5-million gallon molasses tank in the North End neighborhood of Boston collapsed. The tank had been leaking for a long time, and painted brown - instead of being repaired - to disguise that fact. On that fateful day, possibly due to a sudden rise in temperature, the tank collapsed, unleashing a killing wall eight to fifteen feet tall of deadly... molasses. Cold molasses is sticky and slow, but hot molasses, especially in a huge mass, is fast, really fast. It moved an estimated 35 mph, faster than men - or horse-drawn carriages - could run. Surrounding buildings were destroyed, and a train was lifted off its tracks. 150 were injured, and 21 died - many asphyxiated in molasses. Clean-up took six months, and the harbor ran brown through the summer, and some say that on hot days the streets - with a baseball field where the tank once stood at 529 Commercial Street - still smell like molasses to this day.



NEXT TIME: Even more oddities! I got a million of 'em.

Christopher J. Garcia's Notes on the Molasses Flood

When I lived in Boston, I used to pass by one of the plaques that was dedicated to those who were lost in the flood of 1919 on the way to class from my regular walks over to that part of Boston. There was a children's book about it (one of the first of the disaster children's books I can remember) and I was interested. I once walked to all of the major areas effected and discovered something: the area does not smell of molasses in the heat of the summer, as people claim, but of trash and the harbor and the strange people who wander around that area.

And I think that's sad because I really love the smell of molasses!

History Saved Our Lives

By Judith and SaBean Morel



picture by Celesse

Judith Mariam Morel- Born June the 7th, 1969

For the matter of clarity, I'll give you a basic understanding of my family. My father, James Highwater Kennedy Morel (born September 11th, 1925-died June 9th, 1990) had four children with two different women: SaBean (July 19th, 1970) and me with Janine Hartman Morel (nee Findermann, June 1st, 1940), Lillian (October 4th, 1958-died October 22nd, 1990) and Kathryn (March 10th, 1960) with Shawna Laison Morel (Born in Spring 1933, according to a memory of Birthday Cakes-died February 12, 2005). His father was Steven Patrick Morel (Born in June 1881-died March 13th, 1974), who was twice thrown out of the Army for crimes that were black-market financial in nature. My grandmother lived into her hundreds, dying on March the 4th, 1993 at the age of 106, though dates are hard to pin down, most likely January of 1887.

Neither SaBean nor I ever heard her speak. That ability had long since left her. She is the one who really saved the two of us. Well, she had nothing to do with it, but her story did.

High School was rough for me and SaBean. I'm a little more than a year older, SaBean is far smarter and always has been, despite the business cards we carry saying otherwise according to job title. She entered kindergarten when she was 4. I was 5. We had a wonderful time in elementary school, but we drifted apart a lot in middle school. Our Dad's first bout with life-threatening illness made us bitter in the summer of 1985. By that fall, we were barely speaking. SaBean had discovered H, I had discovered men. Neither of us were interested in what the other had to present. We graduated in 1987, and neither of us wanted to do anything but live in the style we had become accustomed. I got a job at a record store where one of my rotating boy-friends worked. I enrolled in the local JC, studying communications, I claimed. SaBean did something, though I've never been given the official word as to what it was that kept her away from home on holidays.



Picture by Nikolai Koenig

SaBean Carla MoreL- Born July 19th, 1970

I hated Judith. I really really hated her. I blamed her, I guess, for the first few issues I had with my Mother in the mid-1980s. Dad was sick and she ratted me out to Mom for smoking pot at a party. She only knew because she could smell

it while she was fucking some low-life who I wouldn't have touched for a score. I hated her for it, though I later realized that it was her only chance to get away with whatever fuck-up she had made.

Eventually, I got over it.

When I was 18, I had issues. Drugs. Money. Money for Drugs. You know, those kinds of issues. I did odd jobs for a local dealer, though I never consciously carried drugs to anyone. I mostly picked up cash, sometimes made a money-drop or found myself driving a new girl in from the bus station. I was an employee, and I was paid half in smack and half in tips from the pipeline on the other end. They'd give me a hundred dollars and tell me to pick up something from the store. I'd get it for them and keep the change. I got an apartment with a girlfriend of mine who was a student. It was perfect.

That year, I didn't go to school. I didn't have a real job, either. I just had the errands I'd run and the shit I'd shoot and the guys I'd control with body and vice into doing what I would. It's what happens. The next few years I actually got myself together a bit, started going to school for an arts degree, ended up in San Francisco, Oded and tried suicide. Ended up back home, and then in Boston starting in 1992.

And that BITCH Judith was there too, studying at Emerson as a junior while I was only a freshman at BU. The thing is, Dad was dead, having died in 1990, the money he left us paid for school, but only tuition and books and not a place to live. Neither of us had the time for a real job, and I was a junky, albeit a highly functioning junky. Judith met me at Fuddruckers and said we should share an apartment. I agreed, stupidly.

The two of us fought constantly, and she was no fan of coming home and taking care of me when I'd had too much. I was tired of her parade of men, though I complained less some the shit meant that I didn't have much anger left. After a few years, we were both in terrible positions. I'd nearly died so many times, and had dropped out twice, that I didn't know what to do next. She had complications from her lifestyle that left her unwell on a grand scale. She was in a bad way when I made a discovery.

Mom had sent us a package of things that had belonged to Dad. They were mostly photos and letters of Dad and a few of Dad and his first wife. There was a photo though, an old photo of a

woman with a man. Even though we'd both only known Grandma as a woman who had sunk into her wheelchair and could no longer speak, that was obviously her. The man was tall and most certainly not our Grandpa. I turned over the photo and read the scratch of a hand that must have been clawed in on itself.

Charles and Me in 1933



Judith

I had never known Dad's side of the family. They were all far older than Mother's family. I had seen Grandma at every family event since SaBean's birth, but I know nothing of her. I saw this photo, thinking that maybe it was a man she was to marry before some terrible accident. But this wasn't that kind of photo. He might have been a brother, but it wasn't that kind of photo either. It was almost as if this was taken at some event and the man was someone that you'd want to have a reminder of when you were gone.

SaBean had no idea who it was. Neither did I. Neither did Mother when we showed it to her.

The two of us had looked at the picture and wondered who could the other guy be. We stopped fighting long enough to decide that it was important that we figure it out.

Unlike your storied editor, neither SaBean nor I are historians, and so knowing where to search was the key. We looked in encyclopedias, in family albums, in all the books that made any sense to us. We searched and searched and found nothing that gave us any clue. The two of us stayed up nights trying to come up with who this chump, this old guy with wrinkles, was standing with our Grandmother. We worked around the clock a few times, with SaBean relieving me so that I could get some sleep while she went through old newspapers. She found one photo, a guy who had done a lot of inventing, who might have been it. But we still weren't sure. The guy's name was Charles Kittering.



ing.

He was a great inventor, the one who invented things like the electric started, Freon, a bunch of weapon improvements that helped us in WWI and WWII. He was a celebrity, but what did he have to do with my Grandmother?

SaBean

I can't think of a time when Judith and I got along. We would fight over crayons as kids and we'd knock over each others milk and blame the other who was crying too hard to defend herself. I guess that's why I was so confused by those few weeks. We were talking, in polite terms. I think the only time a 'fuck' flew between us was when we'd reach another dead-end. This Kittering person was the type of genius that you'd want to have a photo taken with, but we had no idea where it would have been. We thought that Grandma had lived in Hagerstown and outside Chicago, but Kittering was an Ohio boy. If the photo was 1933, where was Kittering.

We started making calls. Our goddamn phone bill was nearly 100 dollars that month. We called all of the possible research libraries we could find that had Kittering collections. Finally, we found a guy at the Dayton Public Library who answered our question before we really asked it.

"We have a photo of Charles Kittering." I said into the phone.

"From 1933?" the guy asked with a combi-

nation of boredom and contempt.

"How'd you know..."

"Mr. Kittering was photographed more than a thousand times at the Ohio State Fair that year. He appeared for three straight days. We get the same request every week or so."

He gave us a few more details, but it didn't really matter. We knew who it was and where the picture came from. We thought a minute about why Grandma would have been in Ohio. She had never been anywhere, Dad claimed. She liked to stay home and only moved when she married. That would tend to say that this must have been someone else. Dad always claimed to have never gone on vacation with his mother, that they'd leave her home and he'd go off with his Dad to a secret fishing spot, or to Los Angeles or to see the Alamo. Mother would stay home.

Or would she?

Judith

SaBean made a point that I would have screamed at her for just a month or so prior. 'What if Grandma was not so well-behaved as we were led to think?' she said. I nearly gasped, but what if?



What if she had left Illinois and taken a journey to Ohio for the state faire? What if she had a series of adventures that she didn't want to share with Grandpa or Dad, or Uncle Peter or Aunt Myra or Uncle Joseph or Aunt Jean? What if it was all a secret that she kept for herself and left her Grandkids with only one possible clue: a photo of her with a celebrity.

Now we had a reason. We were ill-tempered women because our Grandmother was an ill-tempered, secretive, solitary woman. It was genes not our poor attitudes. If we hadn't found out that Grandma was a sneak-thief together, SaBean and I would have had to murder one another following an escalating series of reprisals for imagined slights made real. So, Grandma saved our lives and we managed to live together until our worlds fell apart again

And that all started the day our Grandma died.

Who Will Be Remembered: Fandom in the Future

I think about what some of the people in fandom today will be remembered as. It concerns me that some have an inflated sense of their place and others seem to pass by unaware of what they mean. I've thought about it a lot and here are some brief notes.

-Ted White. It's hard to know. Ted's a guy who has had a great influence and involvement as a fan writer, FanEd, ProEd and conchair. He's also got a Hugo to his name and several FAAn awards as I understand it. It's safe to say he'll be remembered, but I guess it really matters who writes the definitive history of the 1960s and 70s. Ted's had several well-known feuds with several well-known fans, including the best known one with Dick Eney. The interpretation of those matters will determine the level of esteem he's held in.

-rich brown. Another somewhat controversial guy, but I also think that unlike Ted, he's got a strong following of different folks and far fewer enemies in some areas, not to say he doesn't have enemies. I think his production will end up giving him a posi-

tive, though perhaps not glowing, memory in the future.

- Cheryl Morgan. This is an interesting one. I think she'll be held in the same esteem as Dave Langford, who I'm sure will be long-remembered for more than his long streak of wins at Best Fan Writer. Cheryl has put out one of the most interesting fanzines...sorry, semi-pros, in ages, has worked on a great many cons, has gone forward with the cause of SerCon (though I'm sure she'd not be happy to hear me use those words) and she also managed to make a few enemies and start a bit of trouble here and there. It happens. There won't be a lot of fans from the 1990s who will be widely remembered, but I believe that Cheryl will be one of them.

- Arnie Katz. Joyce is an easy answer: she'll be remembered as one of the top FemmeFans of all time. Arnie is an interesting question. Despite everything else that the Good Man has done, I really believe that his greatest achievement will be considered that he really launched the PDFzine revolution. In 20 years, when I'm the last representative of this generation still regularly pubbing my ish, I'm certain that the majority of fen will know of Arnie as the Father of netZines. That may be going a little far, but he's easily the most visible netZine creator and one of the true pioneers in that field.

- Frank Wu. Too Soon to Tell.

-Geneva Melzack. Too Soon to Tell.

-Claire Brialey. This one is strange. I don't think anyone will over-look her because of the times in which she lived. Being a star during a period when things are in an ebb (and things are kinda in an ebb as far as the over-all scene goes, though it is getting better) means that you often don't get the respect you deserve. That said, she's got a streak of Novas that I think she'll keep up (until Geneva takes one from her) and Banana Wings continues to be the kind of zine that people will want to collect years and years along.

- Richard Bergeron. This one may be most important right now as many figure he's already passed away. Most folks tend to believe that he was the one who sent fandom into a steep decline during the

1980s because he went nuts and opened a massive can of worms. I don't fully agree, but I can say this: Warhoon was a fantastic zine from what everyone I've ever asked has said (including my Pops) and Warhoon 28 is probably the most important single issue of any fanzine ever done for collecting the writings of Walt Willis. No question, he should be better remembered for those things he did in the 1950-70s than for TAFF Wars.

- Lloyd Penney. Not as widely-known as Harry Warner, he's also an interesting point. He's one of the smallish number that take eZines as seriously as paper zines. Robert Lichtman also falls into category. He'll probably be remembered as the second Harry Warner, but there's more. He should be considered one of the great proponents of ezines and their acceptance. Him and Bill Burns, who should also be the Cock of the Walk in the Future!

-Christopher J. Garcia. Will be long remembered for his spit takes at various convention.

Lost and Found Again: A Look At More Lost Things That We Want Rediscovered

The issue where Frank wrote about things that ended up being found and things that were still lost got me thinking: what else is out there that's still gone. I've got a new batch of films that I want found in all sorts of areas, and a couple of things that have been found.

- Lost: Bob Newhart's Herman Hollerith film.

This will sound weird, so you may want to remain seated while you read it.

Bob Newhart used to be funny. That is to say, he's still funny, just not to my generation. He did a bit many times where you'd only hear one half of the conversation. One of those he



did as a bit for IBM in the 1950s. It was called Hermann Hollerith and it was supposed to be the funniest thing ever associated with IBM (other than management choices).

Basically, he played the role of a patent clerk when Hermann called in trying to patent the Punched Card Process. It was played for laughs and apparently it was damn funny. I first heard about it from an old IBMer who was wondering if we had it. We don't. I called IBM archives, and they don't have it. Neither did Ephemeral Films or any of the other Usual Suspects. I found a reference that you could get it from IBM Film Rentals in 1985, but since then, nothing.

- Found: X-Rays, the early silent film.

There's not a lot of early film left, probably less than ten percent, but everytime they find a new something that they thought was lost, I get happy. X-Rays was an early trick film.

Now, Melies had been doing his trick films for a year or so in 1897, but some Brit took it on himself to do one of the earliest British ones by having a scientist turn on an X-Ray machine which a couple was in there, showing their skeletons embracing. It's a sweet little film, and one of the early ones where you see a couple in a position that would be considered scandalous. There were a lot of those in the 1890s.

-Lost: The Slackers Demo Tape.

This one is probably known, but I lost my favourite Slackers Demo tape, the best ska tape I ever bought, and I'd like to find another copy.

-Also Lost: The Cactus Club's Nirvana Footage

Since I've started working with Lon Lopez on the Cactus Club Documentary, I've been hearing

about one thing: Nirvana playing the Cactus. We know that there's a ton of footage of other bands, like No Doubt, Pearl Jam, Henry Rollins Band, and others, but Nirvana, playing in front of maybe 50 people in 1989, is the Holy Grail.

And we know it was taped.

Someone taped the show, both audio and video, and there were a couple of people who I know who have told me that

they've seen it (though only one, Craig, who was at the show) but the name of the guy who shot it remains a mystery. There is no record of it in anything I've found, and there was debate until very recently that the show even took place.

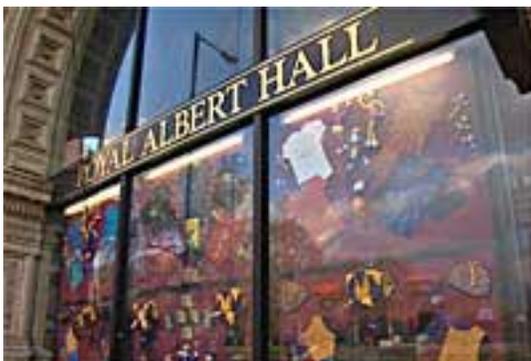
Nirvana only played San Jose four times before Smells Like Teen Spirit broke in 1991. Those shows were two at Marsugi's, neither of which were taped, one at FX, which was taped and has been seen in the last year, and the Cactus show, which was also taped.

One thing that I've heard is that someone went around looking to buy all rights and actual footage of early Nirvana shows, which may be where it headed off to. A shame, as it would really help us illustrate our point that the Cactus really was a launching pad for bands who were just on the cusp of breaking.

-Found: The Beatles Playing The Royal Albert Hall in 1963

The Beatles in Concert were recorded a lot of times, but strangely, while there is film of many (including the last of their public concerts at Candlestick Park) there's not a lot of complete concert audio recordings that aired on radio. There's at least one new one though, a BBC production of them playing the Royal Albert Hall. I've been told that the home radio recording is the only surviving audio or video recording of the concert left.

The BBC put out a call to find many of the old recordings. They found 60 that they deemed important, including Gregory Peck playing the Piano and an early Eric Idle thing that was almost Pythonesque.



-Lost: The First Video Game Joysticks

I think I should note that this one is not my fault.

In the early 1960s, a dude name Steven Slug Russell invented the Computer Game on a computer named the Programmable Data Processor, or PDP-1. It was SpaceWar, and it's amazingly well preserved, with even the original paper tapes remaining in the collection of the Computer History Museum, along with the original PDP-1 that is was written on in running condition! The game was originally played with switches on the front panel, but that could let someone cheat by 'accidentally' hitting the off button. The solution? Joysticks.

Well, they weren't what we think of as joysticks, they were boxes with a couple of switches, but the concept was there. They were actually closer-related to the original Nintendo controllers than the Atari 2600 joysticks that I always think of when I hear the word Joystick.

The problem is, they're gone.

Now, they were never in the collection of the Computer Museum when it was in Boston, but Russell and his friends, Shag Graetz and Alan Kotok, got the machine up and working and then ran SpaceWar! again. They had the original joysticks,



but then they got lost and replaced by the mock-ups that you see in the photo above. No one seems to know where the originals are, but Sellam Ismael, the head of The Vintage Computer Faire, has made some very accurate reconstructions using the original plans!

-Found: A Couple of Minutes of Orson Welles' All-Black MacBeth

Orson, that lovable scamp, was always trying to make interesting theatre while he was working for the Works Progress Association (WPA) during the 1930s. At the age of 21, he was already well-known as the voice of the Shadow and a great radio actor and writer (his Radio Programmes are all over the place). His most ambitious piece was a production of MacBeth with an All-Black cast. Set in the Caribbean, the play had to be changed a fair deal, but it was more true to the Bard's text than

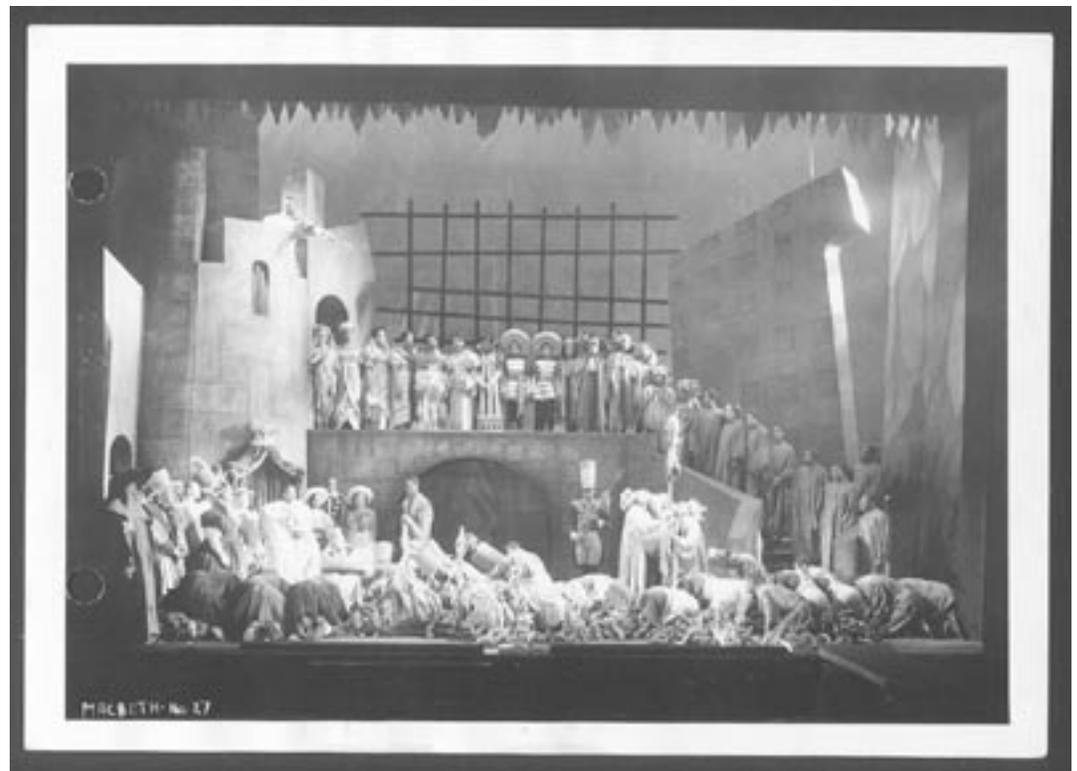
most productions were being at the time. It's impressive that they even had it filmed, in whole, as a part of the WPA's arts programme.

Only, that film is completely lost and documented as having been destroyed by a fire.

The WPA was always trying to make itself sound good, so they made various newsreels showing off their works. One of them featured a couple

of minutes of Orson's MacBeth, the only known surviving footage. It's on the Treasures of American Film Archives set, which is well-worth buying, and it's just a snippet of the ending, which is the best of it.

Following MacBeth, Orson directed a play called The Cradle Will Rock, which caused a giant uproar and will, someday, be the subject of a long article in The Drink Tank.



Who Will Be Remembered: Prodom in the Future

It's highly probable that some of the people we think of today as great big shining stars will be completely forgotten. There are a few who will certainly be remembered no matter what happens...short of a Nuke destroying us all. I don't think that JK Rowling has anything to worry about. The same goes with Terry Pratchett and Piers Anthony. There are a few people on the fence though.

-Rudy Rucker. There are a great many people who would say that Rudy is the equal, and in some cases the better, of William Gibson. But, the Ruckster never did a ground-breaking book like *Neuromancer*. It's hard for me to think that Rudy won't be thought of as a Cordwainer Smith-type who is forgotten by much of the SF reading community. CyberPunk will be long-remembered (to my chagrin) but I really think that Rudy won't be.

-Robert J. Sawyer. Here's one that I thought about for a long time. I love Bobby J's work, but I'm fairly certain that we're going to see him thought of as a Michael Crichton-type of big-selling SF writer. He's good, far better than most of MC's works, but they sometimes feel like they are written as Big-Selling SF Sensations.

-Cory Doctorow. An interesting, and young, writer who has the potential to be long-remembered. Sadly, I don't think he will be unless he latches on to a movement. You see, Cory's stuff is great, and so were Keith Laumer's and Christopher Priest's, and when was the last time you heard someone talking about them?

-China Mieville. Here, I'm fairly certain what will be thought of this wonderful (or icky) writer. I really do believe that if he stays on track (that is if he doesn't take my advice and become the next Roald Dahl) he'll end up as my generation's Lovecraft. He's going to have that much impact on the world of Dark Fantasy.

-Steven Brust. It's hard to tell what he'll be remembered as. I think he's got a lot of long-term readability, but I think since he's never been one of

the really big names, he'll sorta be shuffled off to the side.

-Connie Willis. I honestly believe she will be better remembered for her interactions with fandom than for her writing. She's a really good writer, but honestly, all those Hugos come from the fact that she's the favorite of fandom and not because she's the greatest writer of the time. Still, she'll long be remembered.



A History of Ska Dancing by Jay Crasdan

Chris loves ska, so I figured that it was time to write the article that explains how one should dance to the music of Jamaica that doesn't suck. Of course, with it being an article for Chris, it'll start with a history lesson.

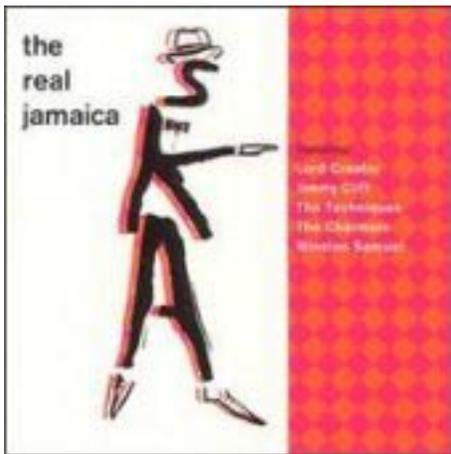
In 1964, the Jamaican government wanted to show off their new culture to the US at the World's Fair in Flushing Meadows. They sent Jimmy Cliff and a backing band and a few 'Jamaican' dancers, who weren't actually Jamaican and weren't actually dancing dances that were regularly seen at Kingston Ska shows. They were dances that were done at times, or by the showier people on the floor, but mostly the traditional ska dances were the Pogo and

the Skank. The dances they introduced were called The Ska, a sorta side to jumping thing, The ride, which is a lot like a side-to-side version of The Pony, and of course, The Ska Row, which is basically a light-bounce skank with rowing arm motions.

The skank is pretty simple, in fact it's a lot like the 1980s dance The Running Man. It's a bound and step while pulling the other foot back. It's hard to miss if you've ever been to a ska show.

When ska came to the UK, the Skinheads picked up on it and added a new dance called the Moonstomp. It's a lot like skanking, only in reverse. It's not unusual to see a ton of skins in a circle doing the Moonstomp to this very day.

Two Tone Ska basically introduced the UK and US to ska all over again. With Punk having just started to fade away, the Pogo and the Skank were still the two big ones, with Pogging really taking the cake. Those two are still the choice of most ska Kids today, though with the popularity of Swing Dancing back in the late 1990s, it's not too rare to see a couple of crazy kids cutting it like it was 1939.



MY TAKE ON ALFRED THE GREAT: A SHORT PIECE BY M LLOYD

Aptly named, and often forgotten, Alfred the Great, arguably the first real King of England, was a straight-shooter and a bad ass who'll forever be the only Brit King with the title The Great.

And hasn't anyone made a movie about the dude? I think it's because he's one of those guys who never really did more fighting than he had to. A lot of the Latin literature was translated into

what passed for English during the reign of Alfred, but you don't hear a lot about that now, do you? I mean the guy took England back from the Danes. What's more movie worthy than that?

There's a story that Alfred was in retreat and he hid with a woman in the marshes. She asked him to watch some cakes that she was cooking while she ran off. He was busy thinking about the battle and the war with the Danes and he let the cakes burn. When the woman got back, she saw that he let the cakes burn and she ripped into him until she realized that he was Alfred The Great, when she started apologizing. Alfred said that she was in the right and apologized for not performing properly. That was a real novel concept for a King to do in those days.

Alfred was probably the most important king to the way that British Law and Rule and Military history is done. He is really the founder of the British Navy. He should be celebrated far more than he is by far more people.

Originally written for Mr. Bogder's 8th Grade History Class.

Letter Graded Mail
Emailed Words of Comment
sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my Gentle Readers

We open with John Purcell!

Chris,

I hate to inform you of this, but your fanpubbing frequency is disgustingly unfaanish. Don't get me wrong, though; I love reading your zines, fmz in general, and would pub more frequently myself if I had the time, so my question for you is this: how much time on your hands do you have? I mean, is working at a museum *faunch* a real job? (Side note here: If you haven't written about the daily minutiae of your job duties, I would be quite curious as to what they are.)

Here's a typical day at the Computer History Museum. 7:15- Wander in, still reeking of booze and cigars from the night before. 7:20- Arrive at my desk and stare at the computer screen for half-an-hour or so. 7:30- start working on various fanzines or LoCs to other fanzines. 8:30- get up and stretch my legs, inform my Boss that my email is down so I can't work on that project he

gave me last week. 10:30- Lunch. 1:30- Back from lunch. 2:00- start doing actual work. 3:00- Go home.

OK, it's not quite like that...most days, but I do a lot of multi-tasking where I'll do research and write personal stuff too. I'll be doing a brief article on my job in the future, but not quite yet.

I spent some time a couple days ago perusing some of your other pubs on efanazines.com, and man, have I got to tell you that you run in some strange company. Visually interesting company, too, I must add. "Party on, Wayne!" "Party on, Garth!" (Which reminds me, I want to write something for Garth Spencer some time before the year is out.) *They're strange folks, but god people. I love when the whole of us get together because they bring all the girls and guys over and me and Judith get the scraps from the pretty people.*

Hey, in case you're interested, there are some mighty fine looking ladies that are my age (51) and older. Granted, some of them can afford to look that good - Tina Turner, Ann Margret, Racquel Welch, Sophia Loren, and Dame Edna leap to mind - but down here in College Station, there are a lot of attractive 50 and 60-something women who obviously have been doing a great job of taking care of themselves. But in any case, it sounds like that Palm Springs Follies show was still a lot of fun. I for one am a big fan of Vaudeville, show tunes, and big-ass (figuratively, not literally) Busby Berkley-type productions. Fun stuff.

There are several hot 50+ chicks out there. My favourite is Rene Russo (51) though Dame Edna's right up there too.

Your ghost encounter is suitably spooky for Halloween night re-tellings. I have never encountered one in my life, and I really don't believe in them. Even so, I take a great deal of pleasure in heckling the show Most Haunted, which is on the Travel Channel on our cable system. What a bunch of hooley! Such a scam. That show is proof that if you put a bunch of like-minded susceptible to suggestion people in a creepy setting, they will believe anything you say is happening.

I love Most Haunted. In fact, I just wrote a big ole article about it for an APA I'm in called The Everlasting Club. I think I'd like it more if it were a complete fraud than if it were real. I mean, that would take real balls to present something as that serious and be totally fake.

Whow! I got a loc pubbed! Y'know, that's the

first loc of mine that's appeared in someone else's fanzine since 1988. Thanks. So BASFA has a pun tax? Well, I have a couple ideas for that "100" zine you're putting together, so better start up a running tab for me... Consider yourself warned.

Wow, breaking a twenty year off by LoCing to The Drink Tank. That's bold. I got your 100 words and I'm excited. It'll be out in January and it'll be interesting that's for sure.

Recently I have been listening to some oddball music, too. Nothing like the Horrorpops - and you're right; that singer Patricia IS hot! - but Deveran Banhart and Tom Waits, both of whom make my singing sound like Pavarotti. I'm writing up a little music review piece on these guys for a future ish of my zine, and they are truly different sounding. Waits I am sure you've heard before. Banhart's music is best described as alternative cosmic folk. Check out his CD Cripple Crow sometime and let me know what you think.

Tom Waits is a passionate singer and a great actor. He's one of the things I like best about Jim Jarmusch movies.

Are those real pictures of the girls you've banged...I mean, dated in the last five years or so? If so, I am disgustingly in awe of you. Then again, it's so easy to import images off the Internet that you probably got these pics from a couple on-line dating services for lonely, aging guys who are used to only having an intimate relationship with Rosy Palmer and her five-fingered friend.

I asked Mike if those were real pictures of girls he dated, and he said that one or two of them were (notably the foreign girl and the really skinny chick) and the others were girls he knew who wouldn't mind being pictured. My girlfriends have all been cute, but only two (one who works for NPR now and the other an Actress on the NY Stage) have been really hot.

Mike, who makes me look like the Loch Ness Monster, is always nailing...I mean dating, lovely young things.

Ah, Loscon. Never been to one. My last true con was Minicon in 1992. Some year...

If you only go to one con, make it WorldCon. Two cons, make it WorldCon and BayCon. LosCon would be Number Three on my list.

Thanks for another enjoyable read. I'll get those little 100-word pieces done and shipped off to you.

Hope you'll keep readin' because I'll keep writin'

All the best,
John Purcell

And of course...Lloyd Penney!

Dear Chris:

Still catching up, and I'm finding the best time to catch up is this time of year when few faneds are actually writing up their zines. I still have to go out and do some Christmas shopping, but in the meantime, there's still time to write. Here's something written about issues 54 and 55 of The Drink Tank.

54...I don't remember much of the 70s...I remember some of the music, like the Beatles and the Stones, but the 70s was when I was in high school, and I got through it as best as I could. I got my junior and senior letter in high school without any involvement in athletics, which was almost unheard of, and I worked hard to get through high school and graduated. It was a lonely time, I was still living at home, I was planning to go to university in Toronto, and I had few prospects for employment. And then, the family moved to the Canadian west coast, to Vancouver Island, and life radically changed for me, for the better. First job, first girlfriend, first post-secondary education at a local community college, lots of firsts. First contact with fandom, too.

Must have been a heady time following your move to VI. It's better than what I was doing in the 1970s: though I did go to the zoo, watched Soul Train and Solid Gold, played peek-a-boo...

All my High School stories take place in the 1990s, and the world had changed so much by then that there's no similarity to any previous era. While a lot of my friends who were in high school in the 1970s (like my Mom and Dad for instance), they say that Dazed & Confused pretty much sums it up. For me, it's a combo of 10 Things I Hate About You and Get Over It.

Not sure I'd want to go to Russia; it's still quite dangerous to go there. My mother-in-law was there some years when it was still the USSR; there are areas they let the tourists into, they are few. There's all kinds of people trying to make business run in Russia, and the rules are so different. What's crime here is just standard operating procedures here.

Exactly. It's a lot like the North End in Boston. The fact that M has armed her way into the hearts of the Russian Mob (and a coming story will tell of how she was greeted one morning with a giant Russian version of a Clam Bake thrown by local mobsters) is a

testament to her large inheritance and lovability. She's also said that they're having a great time in Finland it may mean St. Pete's is out and Helsinki is in.

Space Sex, I am sure, has already happened. Mixed teams on the shuttle or space station have probably accomplished this feat, with no reports to NASA, that's for sure. We may never find out for sure until someone decided to publish their memoirs, and fesses up. The Sectarian Wave project I worked on a couple of years ago had a ship as a character, a ship that was programmed and equipped to meet the resident Sectarian's every need, nudge, nudge, wink, wink. I wish SF could do away with the idea of a rocket pack on someone's back...if you're not careful, you're going to seriously roast your buns.

Oh, that's quite true, though I guess it beats having it strapped to your stomach. I'm fairly certain it hasn't happened on any of the NASA flights. There are log tapes of all the goings-on in the various areas. A lot of them are really interesting as you can watch them working their experiments.

So many people have now heard of The Flying Giant Spaghetti Monster, reaching out to touch you with His Noodly Appendage, it's become better known, IMHO, than the Church of the Sub-Genius. To tell the truth, it makes more sense than does Intelligent Design, which just shows that some Christian fundamentalists are desperate to do away with evolution.

The strange thing is that a majority of Christians in the US believe in evolution, which you'd never get because of all the battles over ID. The Church of the Sub-Genius will always be near and dear my heart as I increase my slack.

TorFlu...well, Colin and Catherine have their website up now at www.corflu.org, but there's no list of who's already signed up for the con. I sent in my cheque a while ago, and I hope to see something else about the con RSN.

I'm just waiting to hear back as to what the email for PayPal is and I'll have my money there too. Since Me and Gen are on hiatus for the time being, I'm able to make plans much easier for the next few months.

I heard a little more about the death of Eddie Guererro, something about performance-enhancing drugs like steroids. WWE management has made an announcement about drug-testing before bouts, but I'll believe it when I see it. *This one'll actually stick. They're testing everyone on*

a cycle of once every other month. They don't have to be clean for one year, but the levels of steroids and other drugs in their systems must show marked drops between each testing or they'll be suspended. Some drugs, like Heroin and Cocaine, will not be tolerated, but almost none of the boys are on either.

Subways are the same everywhere...I think the TTC subway is a little more polite than other places, but you still have to assert yourself to get in and out on crowded cars. Worst problem right now are kids and others with massive backpacks; they swing around and smack people sitting down, and they don't see they've done anything wrong. Last jerk to do that to me, I grabbed his backpack, and pushed him over with the sheer weight. Naughty me, but I smiled and smiled...

I hate when I have to travel with a backpack (like if I'm going to SF for the night) and I always just end up using the single-file method and taking an extra seat for the bag, which means no one trips over it, but there is one less seat.

Hey, this year, we had both Thanksgivings! We had our own with some friends, and then friends from the New Jersey area came up to party with us here. Any excuse to chow down on a turkey dinner with trimmings.

Well Played!

55...is that young nubile someone's Christmas present? Well, we all like unwrapping gifts... This year, the media's early over-reaction to Christmas is driving me up the wall. Some radio stations were playing all Christmas, all the time from the middle of November. I try my best to ignore it all, although I do like the Christmas lights. Still, I'll go out soon and buy Yvonne some gifts (she's given me her list, which I do follow), and we'll enjoy the season, and then it'll be done, and frankly, hurray! The season would be wonderful if it wasn't so overhyped.

Pastafarianism split into the alfredoites and redsauceites...only the power of the almighty Bread of Garlic will every heal this horrific rift. A little power of Parmesan, and the two shall be as one.

Christmas and I get along OK. My Mom is a massive decorator. She puts up Christmas stuff all over her house, complete with lights and other fun thingeas. It's kinda scary, but she does the same thing for Easter and Halloween too.

The Flying Spaghetti Monster has a holiday too, but I'm not sure what the appropriate decorations would be. Probably just boil a big pot of Spag and

hang it all over a tree. I know what would be under that tree: The Flying Spaghetti Monster doll I ordered for Evelyn.

Subways again...last time I spent time in Montreal, I rode the subway. The cars are smaller than Toronto's and the cars ride on rubber tires instead of wheels and rails. Yet, it's very squealy. *I remember hearing that and not noticing any different except for a smoother ride. This was a while back though. Still, much nicer than what I'm used to (Boston's T and DC's Metro along with BART)*

I've been there for a few Con*cepts, and also for the World Fantasy Convention in 2000. Great city, and Yvonne is fluently bilingual, so we get around there great. Favorite place to go is a sports bar not far away from where the Canadiens play, called La Cage aux Sports. For Kelly Green, it's Kansas City and Montreal going for the 2009 Worldcon, and as much as I know the folks running the Montreal bid, I think Kansas City has the edge, given they've been bidding for various years for a while now, and any Canadian bid will suffer from the Torcon factor.

As much as I love the Montreal bid, it will take a little something extra for them to beat KC. My guess is that it'll be close, but they're getting voted on in Japan, which could easily mean it goes the other way. Next year's gonna be a wild WorldCon. The only dangerous thing about Montreal is that I'll gain about 10 pounds since I know of a great Smoked Meat place and there's nothing like Poutine and Beer to get the heart pumping...until it's completely blocked.

Loscon sounds like a blast. Wanna go! Wish the coasts were a little closer together so I could.

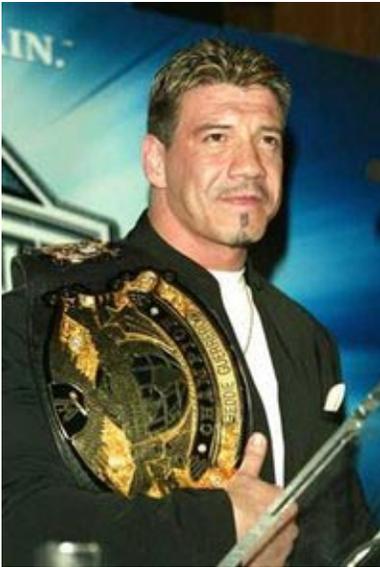
Fan GoH for rent, I'm cheap and housebroken, almost...Great picture of you at the end, Chris...

Yes, that's my face trying to emerge from that GIANT mop of hair that I keep atop my head. I really do mean to get it cut, but I've not had a chance. As far as being GoH for Rent, that's a GREAT Idea! I could steal it and offer myself out too. Will Toastmaster for Food...and drink...and free membership...and hopefully a room...and...

Almost time for lunch, so I'll fire this off and let you peruse it at your leisure in your busy office. Take care, and if I find out anything new about the Toronto Corflu, I'll pass it on to you. Working another Drink Tank? Looking forward to it.

Yep, and it's done not an hour after you sent your LoC!
Yours, Lloyd Penney.

THE PARTING GLASS



It's been a rough month. A really rough month at times. Since since November, people who I have always admired and respected have been passing away and it sucks. The guy to the left shouldn't come as any surprise that his death rocked me, so I'll talk about that later, but there were a

couple that flat-out bowled me over too.

No matter how expected, when a star you actually have met and have a truck load of respect for passes, you take it kinda hard. Wendie Jo Sperber had been dying for almost a decade. She had breast cancer and eventually it killed her. She was never a big star, but she should have been. She was talented and had good turns in the TV series *Bosom Buddies* (with Peter Scolari and some jackass who did a movie called *Joe Vs. The Volcano*) and in the movies *Back to the Future*, *Used Cars* and *I Wanna Hold Your Hand*.

The real reason I was such a big fan was that once she found out that she had Breast Cancer (1997) she became one of the biggest advocates of Cancer Research and Fundraising. Since that's a thing that's near and dear to my heart (my two charity Casi-



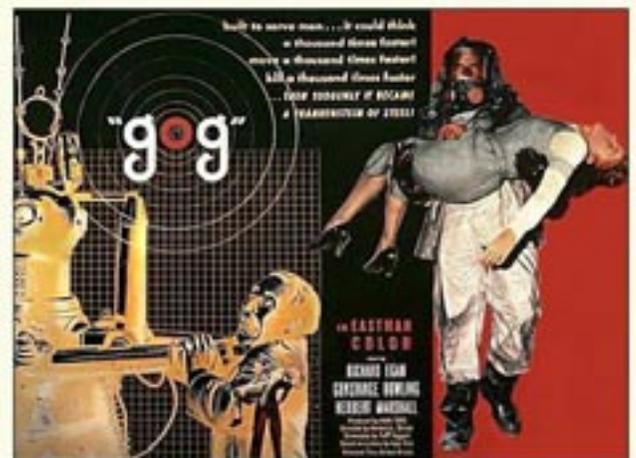
no wins both went to the American Cancer Society) I got to meet her and she was so wonderful, though you could tell that she was getting tired from all the treatments. She was only 47.

Another death that really sucked it out of me was of one of my favourite memories from childhood. Stan Berenstain, along with his wife, created the lovable Berenstain Bears. They were my third favourite when I was little, right after *Babar* (who is my All-Time Fave) and *Curious George*.



Those bears had so many zany adventures, but they also taught valuable lessons that kids could carry away. When I studied Children's Writing in College, they were held up as an example of what you can do with a simple concept to teach simple values. It worked, as I'm a decent person, and it's all due to those bears.

One of the other deaths of late is of someone you've probably never heard of. Herbert L. Strock was a director of TV and Films. No, he wasn't a genius. In fact, I'd say he was slightly below average, but he did some important work when it comes to my vision of film. He was a B-Director after having done a lot of TV directing in the 1940s and 50s. He even directed *Sea Hunt*, an important series when it comes to TV direction becoming a



real discipline.

Strock directed films like Gog and Blood of Dracula, but even after he was in his 80s was directing films like How to Make a Monster. He was 87 when he passed.

And that brings me to Eddie.

Eddie Guerrero was my favourite wrestler. If you were to look at my list of Faves All-Time, he'd ride right below the Unmovable Three: Freddie Blassie, Ray The Crippler Stevens and Nick Bockwinkel. He was a hell of a worker and a great interview. In fact, over the last year, he was probably the only thing worthwhile on SmackDown!

But more than that, he was a survivor and a fighter.

It's pretty well known that all the people in my life, and even



myself, have had one thing or another to get clean from, and we know it's hard, and Eddie had an addiction to painkillers, which you have to take after all the punish-

ment that wrestling puts on you. He nearly died a couple of times and he lost his family at one point, but he came back and was clean and sober.

But the damage had been done.

He died of Heart Failure and it was a sudden and painless death. He just slumped over the sink as he was about to brush his teeth. There was still toothpaste on the brush.

Eddie Guerrero will be missed, certainly by his fans and more so by his friends. He was a well-loved wrestler and an even better loved person.



OK, That's all!!!

Ok, That was the longest issue of The Drink Tank ever! I wanna thank Lloyd and John Purcell, and of course the loyal cadre of supporters for all their stuff.

Frank Wu, who is, as of this moment, the first official Patron Saint of The Drink Tank, and his article is what inspired this edition and I'm glad to be able to run it.

So, what's next? Some time off. I'll be back next Thursday or Friday with an issue. Until then, it's Science Fiction/San Francisco on Wednesday or Thursday, then there's an issue of Claims Department coming out shortly too.

The Drink Tank Issue 56 was written by Christopher J. Garcia, Mike Swan, SaBean and Judith MoreL, M Lloyd, Jay Crasdan, and Frank Wu. The art was by those listed, plus Kyme-chan (that image over there <-- and Louuu (the Cover)

Everything reverts to the authors, unless Chris or M or Jay wrote it. All that's in the public domain.

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