

CAPTAIN FLASHBACK

A fanzine composed for the 397th distribution of the Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association, from the joint membership of Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, residing at 11032 30th Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125. E-mail Andy at fanmailaph@aol.com, and you may reach Carrie at carrieroot49@yahoo.com. This is a Drag Bunt Press Production, completed on 7/22/2019.

CAPTAIN FLASHBACK is devoted to old fanzines, monster movies, garage bands and other fascinating phenomena of the 20th Century. Issue #8 begins with “Thots While Moleholing,” an editorial that traces a winding path from the 1969 moon landing to Bluetooth-capable beer coolers.

And after the usual robust comments on the previous mailing, the **I REMEMBER ENTROPY** Department presents a look at a convention of the year 2006, written by Dennis Tucker for the Leeds Group fanzine **ORBIT** #3 in 1954, with annotation by British fan historian Rob Hansen. And #8 winds down with a few letters of comment from readers.

Thots While Moleholing An Editorial by Andy Hooper

This weekend has seen the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first manned mission to the moon. And while the world remembers the journey of Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins, and the many thousands of people who worked to put them on the moon, Carrie and I have been dealing with a series of craters in our own back yard. An enterprising mole, or perhaps a crew of them, have taken up residence in our lawn, and we’ve been greeted with new mounds of excavated earth every morning for the past two weeks.

The mole’s activities do very little real damage to the lawn, and their aggressive pursuit of insects and other subterranean creatures is largely beneficial. The problem is, they spread the contents of their tunnels around on the surface of the lawn like little brown cow pies.

But our recent run of sunny weather has dried them out into sandy little clods, which can be scooped and raked out of the grass, leaving only a little evidence that they were ever there. These small divots could be caused by any reasonably strenuous game of wiffle-ball, but one still can’t say they improve the aesthetic impression of the yard.

No one seems to have any good ideas on how to effectively discourage them. Carrie seized on the possibility that moles are irritated by powdered chile peppers and spread several cups of superfluous Sandia Red around in the shallow craters under their spoil heaps. But I question how effective this can be,

[Continued on Page 6]



On the Mole Patrol

Issue #8, July 2019

Comments on Turbo-Apa #396:

THINGS THAT BEGIN WITH M, Jim Hudson & Diane Martin: I was delighted to read that Jim might be willing to serve as the Official Editor of Turbo-Apa! While I would also be very willing to do the work, it would be far better if the OE actually resides in Madison and would have some small advantage in recruiting new members from there. I've written at some length about the way that contemporary technology ought to make the Editor's job much easier. If you take the job, I hope you will find a kind of "Official Copy Shop" where members can have their .pdfs turned into paper zines, and take the US Post Office completely out of the submissions process. Marilyn Holt's recent difficulties show that this would be a very useful change.

I'm so glad that you enjoyed your experience at Wiscon this year. The Tiptree Award seems to be one anchor that connects all generations of Wiscon citizens together, where everyone can agree on something they value and respect. I wonder where the convention would be if Pat Murphy and Karen Joy Fowler had never suggested it? Maybe in the dustbin of regional cons.

AN WISCONZINE, Greg Rihn: We've been talking about "mounted infantry" in mid-19th Century warfare. I find it interesting that "dragoons" were always willing to dismount and fight in North America, while a lot of European cavalry continued to try to fight on horseback right up to the first world war. I assume that it has something to do with the wide distances covered during campaigns in the Civil War, putting "straight-leg" infantry at a major disadvantage. But it may be that American horsemen were just less aristocratic than their European counterparts, and more willing to treat their horses as battlefield taxis. And it's clear that these distinctions disappeared when troops started riding to the front in motor vehicles, which had none of the status of riding a horse.

I would have predicted that you would agree with Dick Lupoff's positive assessment of

"Gonna Roll the Bones" by Fritz Leiber, because I vividly remember your dramatic reading of the story from at least one midwestern convention of some 35 years ago. Although I had read the story before that, your interpretation was so memorable that decades later, I cannot think of the story without seeing and hearing your performance in my mind. I count myself privileged to have been there.

OCCAM'S WHISKERS, Georgie Schnobrich: We've been talking about artists and their reactions to the processes of the natural world, and you introduced me to the art of Roy Staab, whose work is just the kind of natural "installation" that I have often imagined doing myself. While sawing up dead trees and limbs that collect in our yard, I often imagine trying to "do something" with all that wood, and my imaginary installations look something what Staab actually creates. We encounter that sort of thing in certain parks around Seattle – piles of stones, or bundles of wood that suggest miniature structures. Some of them are prototypes of erosion control systems created by the parks department, but others have something approaching a ceremonial function. And some are actual pieces of art commissioned by the department. I'll try to get some images of all these over in the Magnuson Park area and share them in a future photo feature. The shots of Staab's work that you shared were beautiful.

ALPHABET OBSESSION, Jae Leslie Adams: I was certainly glad to read that you have continued to work with Alden the trainer, and that you eventually came out to him as a fan. It was just a little surprising that you had to explain fandom to him, since virtually everyone seems to already be part of fandom these days. San Diego is about to host the 50th annual Comic con, and to judge from the throngs expected there, fandom truly has conquered the world. And walking 2 and one-half miles per day is impressive. Of course, these are Madison miles, which almost inevitably contain less elevation change than I get by walking two blocks to the corner gas station, but I don't have to do my

walking in ninety-degree heat, so it probably evens out.

I'm still slowly tunneling my way through all the boxes of fanzines we got out of your basement last year. There is still more than half of it left, even after ten months of aggressive liquidation. I'm still occasionally stumped by the people to whom the fanzines were originally addressed. It's easy to imagine how a fanzine addressed to Laura Spiess or Phil Davenport might have found its way into the collection, but how do I explain items addressed to Will Sirois in Austin or Sarah Prince in Massachusetts? My own activities at "freebie tables" of the past are partially to blame for some of these, but it's impossible to reconstruct that provenance now. This is another reason why the process is so perpetually entertaining....

MADISON FOURSQUARE #32, Scott Custis & Jeanne Gomoll: I really have not been to too many "great" funerals, but Vonda McIntyre's memorial was at or near the top of that short list. Thank you for your part in organizing it. I have always liked and admired Vonda, and the experience of workshoping one of her novels is a highlight of my life as a science fiction fan and writer. But I honestly had no real appreciation for just how many people thought of her as a friend and mentor; and so my sense of wonder was working full time when I asked everyone who had been helped by knowing Vonda to raise their hand. It was a large proportion of the people in the room, but I felt there were probably just as many who were not able to attend. When we were talking at the pub after the service, I found myself considering that Vonda had been part of my life as a fan from its beginning at Wiscon 2 in 1978, and her central position in the Seattle fan community was a significant part of why moving here seemed so attractive to me. The space left by her departure seems to echo like the inside of the Mountaineers Hall.

It was also kind of comforting to know that even Ursula Le Guin had worried about Vonda's solitary habits. As people in long-term

partnerships, I think we tend to look at the lives of single friends and family members with some projected regret. I found myself thinking and feeling this a lot after Randy Byers died, and it took real effort to imagine being comfortable with some of the realities of his life. Some parts of Vonda's life were a bit of a mystery to me, and there had been less published work and occasions to interact after she began her long effort at screenwriting.

At the memorial, walking around the room and eavesdropping on conversations, I suddenly had a flash of Vonda's life as a vast iceberg of positive affect, only the smallest portion of which protruded above the surface of the publishing sea. I had not been aware that she had started Clarion West the year immediately following her involvement in the original Clarion workshop in Pennsylvania. She had eventually taken some years off, but when local fans, including some in this apa, restarted the workshop, she threw her efforts into it again without hesitation.

The number of people touched by this – those that became professional writers, but also those that just became better readers, critics and editors through the workshop – is well above 500. Seeing all those people who felt so strongly about her, the idea of a "distributed intimacy" suddenly made some sense to me. Vonda was, truth be told, a rather happy hermit, content with books and the Internet and sea creatures, because people who truly, deeply loved her, always lived just a few doors away. And there were more a few blocks away; dozens within a few miles; and a legion of hundreds radiating out from Seattle to Australia. Randy and Vonda had the gift of being solitary people without being noticeably lonely. I hope my friendship helped to make that a reality, as it certainly had that effect on me.

Jeanne, you expressed pleased surprise at the advent of a "first-person present-day travelogue by Andy Hooper." I'm glad you enjoyed the

[Comments continue next page.]

And you'll all bow down to me.

We asked for Mojo Nixon/They said, 'He don't work here.'

Comments on Turbo-Apa #396, continued:

MADISON FOURSQUARE #32, Scott Custis & Jeanne Gomoll, continued:

Brooklyn vignette, but I still feel like the shorter such pieces are, the more appealing they are to the reader. Too many of my travel stories have been as exhausting as the trip itself; but I always appreciate positive reinforcement.

Scott: I know what going through those bins left from your Dad's attic must be like, but the scale of the task is intimidating. I have had little slices of that experience by retrieving old photos and papers on various visits to Madison and Detroit, bringing back sacks of ephemera from my grandparents and their families. Now my parents are emptying their house in Monona and taking up residence in a condominium in West Middleton, and many packages of books, documents and my own fanzines are likely on the way here soon.



AFTERWORDS #32, Lisa Freitag: The question from your "Ethics Interview," asking what you had done to stand up for someone else, and what had it cost you, would probably challenge most people. Born in the 1960s, I suspect I grew up thinking that people were confronted with the need to resist oppression on a daily basis and when life proved to be far less revolutionary, a lot of us were probably disappointed. When I was in 10th grade, a young woman was sexually assaulted in a stairwell at my high school, and the judge hearing the case made some kind of asinine remark about the way that she had been dressed, and Madison had one of its finest hours in recalling him from the bench.

During this process, I went out and joined a protest on the street in front of the school, carrying a sign and trudging around in a narrow oval while we waited for a local tv crew to appear. My history teacher, Walter Wartolec, one of the few instructors who showed much interest in me, was scandalized; he and fellow history kid Joe Oliva razed me mercilessly and characterized me as some sort of anarchist for the remainder of my high school career. Looking back, it was another part of the process that seemed to separate me from most of my peer group and left me ripe for recruitment into fandom. And I've no idea what the ethical implication of that might be.

SONOVA QUARK, Steven Vincent Johnson: First off, this was an absolutely exemplary fanzine, Steve, one of the best pieces of work I've ever seen in a "bound" apa (apas that send "bundles" of fanzines, rather than stapling them in the manner of TURBO sometimes contain actual books, so that's a different order of work). I was so impressed by the story of your Uncle Archie's life, the magnificent pictures of him as a boy and a young US Navy sailor, the honest way you portrayed his interactions with his wife and those between other family members...very much the kind of work I have tried to do in researching my own family, but much tidier and somehow more personal than my work. It was

poignant that Archie lost Shea nine years ago, but the dementia you cited probably ameliorated her loss in some ways. And then, the little paranormal coda was perfect for your apa-voice. Your dream about Archie reminded me of dreams I've had about my grandparents; in them, I am somehow staying at their house in Florida more than 40 years ago. Because I watched the Watergate hearings on TV in their house in the summer of 1973, Sam Ervin and John Dean are always on the screen in the dream version of their home.

A TURBULENT APA-RITION, F. J. Bergman: Okay, so THANK YOU for being the only reader to comment on both the incredibly creepy passage from Brian Aldiss' story "The Night All Time Broke Out" in Dangerous Visions, and Richard Lupoff's somewhat lackadaisical response to its implication of pedophilia, as reprinted in **CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #6**, etc. I found it very interesting that Dick glossed over Aldiss' notions in favor of counting coup on Ted Sturgeon's "If All Men Were Brothers, Would You Let One Marry Your Sister?" When I first read Sturgeon's story, the title, which Aldiss called "cutesy" rather telegraphed the punchline; that was also several years later, when I had recently read several latter-day works by Robert Heinlein. Sturgeon's story felt like a clairvoyant pastiche of Heinlein's inter-family attractions; the rather pompous voice also felt like faux-Heinlein to me. So, I never took it very seriously. The manipulation in Aldiss' story comes across as more matter-of-fact; that the protagonist's partner doesn't have a more violent reaction to the suggestion was particularly chilling, as if he was far from the first to suggest such a thing.

One can certainly understand why the stories were considered "unpublishable" by other editors at the time. While I can argue for the right of such works to exist, the idea of deriving genuine entertainment from reading them is a bit distant at this point. And, as I write elsewhere in this issue, speculation should be made with care;

once spoken aloud, even the most ridiculous ideas can find their way into being.

Your verse is always beguiling; I particularly enjoyed "A Report" in #396.

KN, Kim & Kathi Nash: Oh, very sad to read of the demise of Keeko, Cat of the New Millennium. Reading about her imperial habits and strong leadership, I was reminded of similarly forceful black cats of my own acquaintance, like "Black Jack Pershing," who was renamed "Blackie" when she delivered the first of numerous litters of kittens. And there was "Vanya," who lived with us at "Slan Shack West" in the very early 1980s, who had an unpredictable habit of rolling onto his back, sinking in claws on all four paws and biting an unwary arm. They are still predators, after all.

So, in Keeko's honor, and as part of my quest to expand the content of my comments to you, I offer this excerpt from Chapter 13 of Swords of Lankhmar by Fritz Leiber:

"Their work done, the War Cats regathered at the place where Fahrd had summoned them and there faded away even as they had earlier materialized. They were still thirteen, although they had lost one if their company, for the black kitten faded away with them, comporting himself like an apprentice member of their company. It was ever after believed by most Lankhmarts, that the War Cats and the white skeletons as well had been summoned by the Gods of Lankhmar, whose reputation for horrid powers and dire activities was thereby bolstered, despite some" guilty recollections of the temporary defeat by the rats."

Overall: Having recently gained some insight into the general health of most Amateur Press Associations in 2019, I'm more convinced of the overall viability of the Turbo-Apa than ever. Even the more minac-prone members of Turbo produce a page or two worth reading, and we have a very strong dialogue going between members and their fanzines. As we approach the 400th mailing, this group still presents me with just about as much entertainment and correspondence every month as anyone could handle.

We said if you don't got Mojo Nixon then your store could use some fixin'

A Key to Linos published in June in CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #7:

Page 2: "At this point I am going to abandon the plot, which already has as many knots as a gill-net."

William Atheling Junior (James Blish) writing about Robert Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land in 1961

Page 3: "Invisibility is another subject which used to be standard fare in science fiction, and which has now itself vanished." Excerpt from "Ah, Things Still to Come" by William Atheling Junior (James Blish), 1964

Page 4: "It grieves us to announce that we have found the first disloyalty in our organization."

& Page 5: "The ISA is attempting to seize control of fandom itself."

Editor Charles D. Hornig writing in *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, as quoted by Sam Moskowitz in The Immortal Storm.

Page 7: "Victory has no charms for men when purchased at such cost."

General George Brinton McClellan, as quoted by author Scott McGaugh in Surgeon in Blue (2013).

Page 8: "Danish Gambit" is a story based entirely on chess; ostensibly it is about nothing else."

Excerpt from "The Issue at Hand" by William Atheling Junior (James Blish), 1953

Page 9: "I think you mean 'Checkmate.' You really need to learn how to play chess."

Captain Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher), *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* S1, Ep6. "Halloween"

Page 10: "You would think he had a great deal more intelligence than he possessed."

Charles A. Dana, speaking of General Ambrose Burnside.

Page 11: "They came forward with a rush, and how our men did yell, 'Come on, Johnny, come on!'"

Rufus Robinson Dawes 91838-1899) writing of Pickett's Charge in Service in the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry.

Page 12. "The Fanzine of Celestial Insurgency"

Interlineation from issue #10 of PONG, edited by Dan Steffan and Ted White, March 2nd, 1981

Page 13, "I'm not a girl. I'm a genius."

Attributed to author Joanna Russ (1937-2011)

Page 14, "The Fanzine of Applied Pogo."

Interlineation from issue #18 of PONG, edited by Dan Steffan and Ted White, June 29th, 1981

Thots While Moleholing

[Continued from page one]

since they are not likely to return to the same spot on the surface. The received wisdom of the Internet also suggests that they find loud and rhythmic noises disturbing, not unlike residents of Boca Raton. While spading up their most recent tipples Saturday morning, I took time out to bang the shovel repeatedly on the concrete patio apron and followed this up by mowing the entire lawn while stomping on the grass like Boris Karloff. And perhaps it is a coincidence, but today's tunnel spill was far, far away from the patio, at the opposite end of the lawn. So, I'm taking a break from composing this to bang on the concrete with a steel pipe. I've yet to decide if this is less annoying than the moles.

Editorial Impulses

After the mowing and clanking had run their course, the afternoon mail arrived, bringing with it the 288th quarterly mailing of the **Spectator Amateur Press Society**, known universally as **SAPS**. Following recent conversations in the pages of **CAPTAIN FLASHBACK**, I was resolved to help our fellow Seattle fan Elinor Busby resume contributing to **SAPS**, where she

has been a member for more than 60 years. It seemed only right that if I was going to assist Elinor in keeping her membership, I ought to join **SAPS** as well. And learning that the current copy count was a wraith-like 10, I was ever more resolved to join. Now the copy count has risen to 11.

SAPS is the second-oldest fannish APA in operation, having come into being in 1947. Only **FAPA** (1937) and **VAPA**, the long-defunct **Vanguard Amateur Press Association**, begun by James Blish and other members of the New York Futurians in March, of 1945, predate **SAPS**. It was begun by members of a New Jersey fan club known as "The Spectators," characterized by early member Joe Kennedy as "a kind of New Jersey version of the Futurian Society, only without the social consciousness." One assumes this meant they were emphatically less serious than the Eastern Science Fiction Association, also active in New Jersey at the time. Besides Kennedy, founding members of **SAPS** included Lloyd Alpaugh, Ron Christenson and George Fox. The first editor, Lee Maddox,

served in that capacity for just one mailing before moving to Ethiopia.

SAPS members have, at times, taken on the role of Loyal Opposition to **FAPA**, but the rivalry was largely one-sided and fell out of currency after 1960. During that decade and into the early 1970s, **SAPS** had a remarkable roster of active fans, and included some very popular and well-read fanzines distributed to a wider audience beyond the membership. (**WARHOON**, Richard Bergeron; **ORNITHOPTER**, Leigh Edmonds; **WHO KILLED SCIENCE FICTION**, Earl Kemp.) In the 1980s, the roster dwindled; Art and Nancy Share Rapp became editors, and recruited many older fans to join, making **SAPS** just as much of a “Dinosaur’s Graveyard” as **FAPA** could ever claim to be.

There was a preponderance of **SAPS** members in the Seattle area across a significant portion of its history, and collations were once major social occasions for many survivors of “The Nameless Ones,” Seattle’s great fan club of the 1950s and 1960s. Current editor Burnett Toskey moved to the Los Angeles area in 2012, and now **SAPS** members appear to communicate entirely through the mailings. I strongly suspect that I am, at age 56, the youngest current SAP.

Joining this venerable company sent me through all the stages of creating a new fanzine. The title came with relative ease; as Elinor’s editorial factotum, it seemed almost unavoidable that my fanzine would be called **HENCHMAN**. And since I didn’t even have access to the previous **SAPS** mailing, I couldn’t fill the fanzine up with mailing comments, and had to summon some amount of editorial material. I brought back an old editorial title “Don’t Start Me Talking,” used for columns in several previous fanzines. And I did the usual APA-introduction thing, including a pretty complete tour of the fanzines I have published over the past 35 years, a list that begins to leave even me a bit glassy-eyed.

I also considered several echoes of fannish classics, including such variations on this column’s title as “Thoughts While Composting”

or “Moleish Thots.” The latter recalls classics from the prolific Ted White, including the habitual “Uffish Thots” and variations like “Grunchish Thots.” I was always rather partial to “Thoughts While Typing,” a title first used by Rick Sneary in Len and June Moffat’s **FAPA** fanzine **MOONSHINE**, then adopted by Greg Benford for a column in Bill Bowers’ **OUTWORLDS**. I rather like “Thoughts on the Way to a Beginning” by Stephen Leigh, used in issue #40 of **LAN’S LANTERN**, and “Thoughts from the Wilderness” by Roy Rowland Johnson, which appeared in issue #3 of J. Michael Rosenblum’s **THE NEW FUTURIAN** in 1954.

Several fan writers have chosen the title “Idle Thoughts,” while Mike Scantlebury adopted “BAD Thoughts” for his editorial in the British club fanzine **BADINAGE**. Thomas Cook wrote a column titled “Second Thoughts” for issue #5 of Kip Williams’ and Cathy Doyle’s **NEW PALS MAGAZINE**. Martin Tudor’s usual editorial for his general-interest fanzine **EMPTIES** was titled “Empty Thoughts.” Owen Hannifen published an entire fanzine titled **GREEN THOUGHTS**. But Hannifen was an admitted eccentric; a native of Burlington, Vermont, he was so fascinated by reading the meeting minutes of the LASFS that he moved to Los Angeles.

I was also seriously tempted by “Revolving Thoughts from a Somewhat Befuddled Editor,” composed by the late “Blotto” Otto Pfeiffer, once a **SAPS** regular, for a 1968 issue of **WRR**. And I like the broad appeal of “Stray Thoughts and Eternal Questions,” and was crushed to discover it was used as a closing editorial by Ed Cagle, in his **FAPA** fanzine **KWALHIOQUA #1**. I’m reasonably certain that “Thoughts While Bandsawing” and “Thoughts While Lawnmowing” have also seen the light of fannish day. But “Thots While Moleholing” is, to the best of my knowledge, unique. The lengths to which the modern fanzine editor must go....

[“Thots While Moleholing continues next page.]

Before long in the story line, Pompadoodle is imprisoned within a bass drum and replaced with the unassuming Pogo.

They hope to intimidate us by starving themselves to death. The cowards.

Thots While Moleholing

[Continued from page seven]

Third Order Stories

So, back to the moon, and Apollo 11. In July, 1969, I was still not quite 7 years old, and had followed the previous missions of the program with increasing excitement and awareness. I very vividly recall my mother telling me about the three astronauts killed in the AST-204 fire and feeling a great anxiety that this might lead to the demise of the whole idea of going to the moon. Hands down my favorite toys were Mattel's "Major Matt Mason" lunar action figures, and I would extinguish the basement light to increase the impact of the flashing directional beacons and the dim blue light of the television bathed the scene in a pale lunar glow.

I was also keenly aware of the differences between science fiction and the halting steps of science in the real world and was desperately impatient for the latter to keep pace with the former. The *USS Enterprise* encountered a different planet of Roman gladiators or living rock creatures every week. The delicate Lunar Excursion Module would clearly not stand up to a good kick from Klingons like Michael Ansara

or John Colicos; heck, it was made of aluminum, and about as thick-skinned as a boy scout canteen.

Despite the rickety nature of the whole operation, the Eagle landed and returned to orbit successfully; most of humanity celebrated shamelessly, while a certain percentage began a life-long process of denying that it ever happened. It was a fascinating, exhilarating event, and the technical viability of space travel served to endorse science fiction like nothing since and including the atomic bomb. Sputnik and discoveries like the Van Allen belt were difficult for the average person to grasp; but the idea of human beings standing on the moon and looking back at the Earth was an image that everyone could understand. The moment when Armstrong stepped into the powdery grey dust of the moon on July 20th, it was suddenly and irrevocably clear that one discounted science fiction at one's peril.

As is almost always the case, we drew the wrong conclusion from this. Because voyages through outer space were the oldest and fondest convention of science fiction, we began to believe that science fiction had the power to *predict* the future, to anticipate events that would eventually come to pass. But when President Kennedy – John Fitzgerald Kennedy, not Joe Kennedy the **SAPS** member, also known as a poet under the name X. J. Kennedy – promised that Americans would stand on the moon before the end of the decade, he was not predicting that it would happen, but effectively demanding it.

Science fiction works the same way; it doesn't so much predict what the future will be like as much as it tries to bully our fantasies and notions into existence. And the best science fiction extrapolates beyond the brute moment of change, to explain the consequences of innovation, and the ways that human beings react to them. In workshop days, we referred to our goal as the "third order story," trying to show more complicated outcomes of change and invention. The classic example was that it was



easy to imagine the automobile from the invention of the internal combustion engine, but less obvious that it would lead to the Interstate Highway System, and probably quite difficult to anticipate that it would result in the drive-in movie theater.

I am not, admittedly, any kind of adept at this process, which may be why I have failed to write a lot of original science fiction of my own. But I am an avid seeker of the “third order story” in my reading and viewing of science fiction and fantasy. And the fantastic thing about living in the far future world of 2019 is that third order stories are happening all around us. Plenty of science fiction writers have predicted that we would master the human genetic code and learn to manipulate it; no one, to the best of my knowledge, ever predicted that genotyping yourself would become a popular recreational pastime. Outfits like “23 and Me” have given a lot of people insight into an unsuspected history, but I find it impossible to shake the feeling that they might also be gathering information for an impending invasion of the Earth by the Sontaran empire.

The way that space-related technology has trickled down into many other applications is a familiar tale; back in the day, we drank *Tang*, the instant breakfast drink the astronauts took to the moon, on our canoeing trips into the Canadian border wilderness. It was delicious mixed with Grapenuts cereal and either milk or water. In 1969, most computers filled a large room; the Apollo command module went to space with one about the size and weight of a dormitory refrigerator, and engineers all over the world marveled as it crashed and rebooted repeatedly thousands of miles away from the Earth. That this information processing technology would one day fit inside a chip laminated to the inside of a greeting card is perhaps a fifth- or sixth-order story.

Promenading about at Lowe’s, a home improvement chain store, another third order invention was casually splayed out on a table full of seasonal summer tackle. A large blue and

white bag, it was designed to serve as a portable cooler for beer and other beverages – just pop some ice inside the waterproof interior, and your suds stay cold for hours. But wait – there’s so much more! The bag is also equipped with electronics that allow it to act as an *external speaker* for your ipod or smart phone, dispensing both frosty drinks and tasty tunes. And this is all accomplished wirelessly, with no physical connection between the musical device and the Cooler/Speaker.

I observed to Carrie that I had read stories with computers that could be wadded up and stuffed in your pocket, and others spread out in a thin film that perpetually absorbed solar energy, but no one had ever proposed a computer that doubled as an ice chest. I wondered if a pony keg would fit inside, or possibly Hall and Oates.

I went away from this encounter reflecting on how important it was to be careful what we wish for. Science fiction predicted something not dissimilar from a modern smart phone no later than Dick Tracy comics in the 1930s, but relatively few writers – John Brunner? -- ever predicted the way that interconnection could potentially lead us into isolation. When writers predicted our enslavement by computers, it was always a big central pulsing brain as big as a basketball court. No one seems to have worried about the mesmeric quality of having the whole world available to you through a lens that fits in the palm of your hand. But all mirrors have the potential to entrap an unwary Narcissus.

Perhaps the most disquieting truth about technology, prediction and invention, is that we generally do not get to go back if we find that we have made a mistake. The plastic drinking straw has proven to be as much a liability as a convenience; but even as various progressive bodies strive to ban them, the American President’s re-election campaign promises to hand them out by the thousands, allowing his followers to spitwad their way into the rising global tide.

[“Thots While Moleholing concludes next page.]

For Mexicans, Turkey is Becoming More Than ‘The Mole Bird.’

I'd rather work all night and sleep all day – perhaps I was a mole in my last incarnation.

Thots While Moleholing

[Continued from page nine]

It is tempting to opt out of this process; fandom has certainly had plenty of examples of this, and our passion for outdated technology is just as powerful as our attraction for the latest thing. I cite the mimeograph, the player piano and the semi-prozine as examples of outmoded tech to which fandom has retained a lingering and sometimes irrational affection.

I've done my best to throw my appendages out and grapple for the frozen surface as I slide into the abyss, hoping that an "ice arrest" can keep me teetering indefinitely at the edge of change. But sometimes the ground comes up to meet you. I've resolutely clung to the wires connecting my computer to its sundry peripheral components, still booting out a 1970s-level of bass from the aged Pro-Tech speakers, still receiving a signal through an avocado-colored RCA jack. Over time, the connection to the printers, and the other computers in the house, lost their hard-wire connection, but the speakers still made that satisfying buzz when you jacked

them into the back of the monitor, like Hendrix plugging in a Telecaster! I knew this arrangement was on borrowed time; I expressed a desire to jump before being pushed, but 48 hours later, the mouse cursor and other elements froze up, and could not be freed. Professional examination suggested an impending hard drive failure; fortunately, all data was safely retrieved, and moved from its old box to a shiny new silver home. The new machine asked for only the most cursory permissions before connecting to the network wirelessly, as the old fiber-optic connector lay useless on the floor. The new machine, however, does not seem to understand the old-fashioned language of the avocado-colored RCA jack; if its tinny integral speakers are insufficient, wireless boosters are available. Ice and Coors Light sold separately.



I am particularly fond of that most Lovecraftian of mammals, the star-nosed mole and tend to choose it for online icons and avatars.

[This issue's reprint comes from **ORBIT** #3, a fanzine published in the 1950s for the Leeds Science Fiction Association. **George Gibson** was the editor, and six issues were published between October of 1953 and December of 1954, with a 7th and final number appearing in January of 1956. Issue #3 also included work by **Pete Baillie**, **Eric Bentcliffe**, **Ron Bennett**, **Terry Jeeves**, **J. Michael Rosenblum** and **Jack Smilie** plus **Dennis Cowan's** review of *It Came From Outer Space*. Also included exclusively with this reprint are footnotes provided by British fan historian **Rob Hansen**. – APH]

I REMEMBER ENTROPY DEPARTMENT

"Convention 2006"

By **Dennis Tucker**

Feeling completely fed-up with things in general the other day, I made up my mind to pay a visit to a science fiction convention of the future. You may well wonder how I intended to achieve this so I will describe my modus operandi. (LATIN: Operation for Appendicitis.) --- (This use of foreign phrases is a well-known device employed by writers who don't know enough big words in

English; it is calculated to impress. I hope you are.)

Now the information I am about to disclose is not generally known, so I must ask you to keep it strictly sub rosa. (LATIN: Lend Rose a quid, pro quo.) Well, about half-way along Fleet St. on the left-hand side is a narrow alley called – dare I say it? – Alley Oop. On the right-hand side of the alley you will find a number of caves. Most of them are to let, but the fifth cave along, called the "Cave

Canem” – (at least that’s what it says on a large notice outside) – is occupied by one of the most powerful wizards in London; or, for that matter, in the whole wide world. He is known as the Wizard Prangg, and he naturally deals only in first-class spells.

So one bright morning I strolled along to see the wizard. He is a tall, thin man with an air of authority and a general joie-de-vivre. (FRENCH: The pen of my aunt.) On this occasion he was dressed in a black coat and striped trousers and when I entered his office, he was glaring at some papers on his desk and uttering the most foul oaths. I gathered that he was laying a potent curse on the local inspector of taxes.

When I told him of my mission he grinned evilly over the top of his pince-nez and roared: “You’ll have to take a powder!” I had reached the outer door before he caught up with me and explained his meaning. He went into the inner office and returned with a small bottle containing a bright green powder which he tipped into a glass; he added water and stirred briskly, “This powder,” he explained, “is bona fide (LATIN: A bone for the dog.) dehydrated bats’ wing. Picture in your mind the destination and date, swallow this and it will get you there. After two hours have passed you will return here automatically.”

He paused dramatically, produced a legal-looking document from his inside pocket, and added, with a positively villainous leer, “Before you go, though, there is the usual contract to sign, - heh, heh!”

NOTICE TO READERS. THIS GETS CORNIER. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

He called in a couple of clerks as witnesses and produced a bottle of blood plasma from his desk, and obtained my signature in duplicate. When the formalities were over I closed my eyes, drank the concoction and visualized the year of 2006 and a science-fiction convention. I reopened my eyes and was there; it was as simple as that!

I looked around with interest and found I was standing outside a futuristic version of Earls Court.^[1] Blazoned across the front, over the main entrance, were the words “70th World Science Fiction Convention.” I heaved a sigh of relief, delighted that some genius had at last discovered that the “World” is not synonymous with “America.”^[2]

People were flocking in through the great doors and I observed that their dress was also a little futuristic but not enough so to make me feel out of place. I mingled with the crowd and listened intently to scraps of conversation as I made my way in..... “...just landed in the strato from Belfast. Been to the Willis Shrine...” --- “...Clarke? Oh yes, they buried him up there...” --- “Did you listen to the 2,756th installment of “Journey into Space?”^[3] --- “...some say James White wrote it all, every issue...” --- “...and we’re going to call it “The British Fantasy Society.”^[4] --- “...NEW WORLDS? Yes, No. 23 is just out...”^[5] --- “I work in the new Operation Fantast^[6] building on East 42nd

[APH: I have asked Rob Hansen, the author of several works on science fiction fan history, and compiler of the UK Fanzine Bibliography, to provide a few footnotes on some of the more distant or obscure references in “Convention 2006.” Take it away, Rob:]

[1]: Earl’s Court refers to Earl’s Court Exhibition Centre. At one point the largest in the country, it was still in use in 2006 but somewhat controversially was demolished in 2014/15.

[2]: I heaved a sigh of relief, delighted that some genius had at last discovered that the “World” is not synonymous with “America.” Given that the first non-NA Worldcon was only three years later in 1957, this comment dated fast.

[3]: Journey into Space was a radio-serial then being broadcast by the BBC. It was a pretty big deal at the time: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Journey_into_Space

Street.” --- “...seen “ORBIT” No. 315?” ...and so on, ad infinitum. (LATIN: A high-class advertisement.)

As I walked in, a gold-braided flunkey handed me an official programme some three inches thick and bound in vellum. I glanced eagerly through it and found, amongst other things, that Britain has 824 weeklies and 54 dailies in the fantasy field... Vargo Statten ^[7] is busier than ever... 4e Ackerman III is guest of honour.....Liquid food is available on the premises.....

I gathered from the programme that over 1,000 exhibitors were displaying their fantasy wares: the great hall was packed with visitors and I slowly made my way from stand to stand, examining all the latest books and magazines Most were printed on glossy art paper with gold ink, with 3-D illustrations. Occasionally, when I passed one of the many bars, I had to climb over a pile of drunks, but this was never unusual.

When I asked about buying some of the exhibits, I was given carte-blanche to help myself. Visitors gazed at me with rather odd expressions when they saw me pushing this little white barrow around, loading it with books, However, I soon tired of this, and wandered into the adjoining hall where an

auction was in progress. There was a terrific clamor as bids were shouted. Some interesting items were knocked down: a Willis duplicator ...a White water pistol... a tattered army uniform said to have been worn by – THE CAPTAIN.

But the item which most interested me was an incredibly ancient copy of Astounding containing the last part of a serial by Smith. As I had never been able to get that copy, I excitedly took part in the bidding. It was quite brisk for a while but, suffice it to say, the magazine was eventually knocked down to me for a fabulous sum.

“Thank you, sir,” I shouted to the auctioneer, “I’ve always wanted to read the last part of

That was where I made my great mistake The crowd drew away from me, leaving me in the centre of a large, clear space. Women fainted; strong men turned White. The auctioneer looked down on me, his face a study in naked, fearful horror. He found difficulty in speaking: “You mean,” he gasped, “You really mean --- you read the stuff!”

Then they threw me out

[4]: The original British Fantasy Society ran 1942-46. In 1971, Darroll & Ro Pardoe, Keith Walker, and Phil Spencer created the British Weird Fantasy Society, a name later shortened to British Fantasy Society which still exists today. So, yes, this was around in 2006, a prediction Tucker got right.

[5]: NEW WORLDS? Yes, No. 23 is just out! A comment on how erratic publication had been.

[6]: Ken Slater's OPERATION FANTAST got UK fandom going again after the war, and the idea it would be a multinational concern with a New York address by 2006 is an amusing one. Captain K.F. Slater ran this while a serving officer with the British Army of the Rhine, his being the "tattered army uniform worn by THE CAPTAIN". We lost Ken in 2008, sadly.

[7]: Before there was ISAAC ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE there was VARGO STATTEN'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE, Vargo Statten being a pseudonym for John Russell Fearn (1908-1960). It saw nineteen issues between 1954 and 1956. Alistair Paterson was its editor for the first seven issues, and he was replaced by Fearn for issues eight through nineteen. Familiar British writers including Barrington Bayley, Ken Bulmer and E. C. Tubb made frequent appearances, albeit usually under one of their habitual pseudonyms. Vince Clarke wrote the 'Inquisitor' fan column for the magazine, and here's an article on how that came about, “1954: The Year that Gestetner Discovered Fandom.” <http://www.fiawol.org.uk/fanstuff/THEN%20Archive/duper/duper1.htm>. A collected edition of these columns was published by Mark Plummer and Claire Brialey through the Fishlifter Press in 2000.

**Fanmail From Some Flounder Department:
Letters to CAPTAIN FLASHBACK**

Robert Lichtman (robertlichtman@yahoo.com)

(Continuing a letter submitted to issue #7, where the first part may be found.)

I cheered in reading (in #5) your opposition to "temporary delays" in mailing to somehow be integrated into a floating schedule, with eventual loss of a possible additional mailing if a fixed schedule is maintained. Yes, SAPS and FAPA have held to unwavering mailing deadlines for ages, but of course it's a little less critical since they're quarterly and being a week or so late sending out a mailing (as actually just happened with the May FAPA mailing, now under a new OE -- Ken Forman replacing Steve & Vicki Ogden because Steve died) isn't the end of the world in terms of plenty of run-up to the next deadline. Even L'Apassemblance, which is monthly, successfully sticks with its schedule -- helped by having a series of very competent OEs (or "Goats," as is the term in the group) who are seldom late.

[APH – We appear to have tabled the possibility of a floating deadline in TURBO for now. But I am saddened to read of the passing of FAPA co-OE Steve Ogden. He was a recurring buyer in my eBay fanzine auctions, with a particular interest in 1950s and 1960s fanzines and material from LASFS members.]

In #6, I encountered your comment to Scott & Jeanne:

"I'm really looking forward to the new edition of the Carl Brandon collection, which I imagine is going to arrive in the next two or three days, per your recent email. Other books with collections of writing originally published in fanzines are popping up all over the place. I've been daydreaming about people who deserve to have their work published in new collections...like Susan Wood (and Mike Glicksohn!), Mae Strelkov, Abi Frost, Redd Boggs and many others. I hope we see a wave of such collections."

I certainly agree about Abigail and suggest that Dave Langford would be a good editorial choice for a collection of her work. I have a lot of her fanzines, including the ones she did in '83/'84 for the Frank's Apa, but she appeared in a lot of other places and I suspect I don't have them all, every one.

As for Redd, I've long held the fantasy that a good collection of his writing -- though by no means complete, but still representative and excellent -- would be to print all 76 issues of his perzine SPIROCHETE, which began in Apa L in 1964, had an 8-year gap from 1974 to 1982, at which point it ended up in FAPA, the final issue dated May 1996, the month of his death. I have a complete set, perhaps the only one, by virtue of having assembled it from what he left behind. (Jeanne Bowman, Don Herron, Dave Rike and I cleaned out his little apartment in Sonoma -- I kept all the fanzines.) But I don't know if I have the energy to scan over 300 pages. (But it occurs to me that I still have duplicates of many of the FAPA issues and wonder if you would like me to send you a set for your collection.)

[APH – I've been slowly collecting all of Redd's fanzines for years, although most issues of SKYHOOK are fragile enough that I read them very carefully and then pass them on to other collectors and let them worry about their inevitable evolution into book dust. His personal fanzines, including DISCORD and SPIROCHETE, tend to come to me in much better condition, and I am quite enthused at the idea of expanding that collection. Perhaps in CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #9, I'll publish a list of what I've got and we can talk about the gaps in the list! Now armed with the knowledge that early issues were in APA-L, my chance of getting a complete run is much greater than before you told me.]

Still on the above, I'm wondering what "other books" you're referring to. My thoughts turn to the reissue of Fandom Harvest and its sequel, Fandom Harvest II (which I had a lot of involvement in, living as I do with the person who gave permission for it to happen), and

In today's world, everything seems like some sort of long audition.

The energy doesn't end with the hands. I want such intensity that it feels like light is streaming from every finger.

further back to Breiding's Rose Motel. But perhaps there's more. (And not to pick too fine a nit, but Jeanne's "Cacher" book isn't exactly "a new Carl Brandon collection," having just the one piece.) (Also, although the new edition is welcome, it having the imprint of the Carl Brandon Society is to me slightly dissonant. I mean, it's always struck me as more than a little strange that a group wanting to promote writing by authors of color -- a laudable effort -- would choose to name it for a fictional black person created by a group of white men -- and reprint a story about a young, rebellious white college drop-out. But perhaps that's just me.)

[APH – Your last point is reasonable, but I am still waiting for some person of color to raise the same objection. I think Carl Brandon's imaginary nature and the way that fandom reacted to him – as if they had been waiting for him to arrive -- helps illustrate the absence of real fans and writers of color in fandom. In their introduction to Carl Brandon, Nisi Shawl and Tempest Bradford write: “We named the Organization after the imaginary fan of color, a god spirited hoax perpetrated by Terry Carr and Pete Graham, that same Carl Brandon whose putative writings fill this volume, whose creation pointed out what science fiction has historically lacked, our widespread visible presence.”

And as to the “other books” on fanzines, I was thinking most proximally of The Fanzine Reader: Focal Points, 1930-1960, edited by Luis Ortiz, and now listed on Amazon at \$39.95. Initial reaction by fanzine fans within my earshot has been positive.]

William Breiding (wmbreiding@gmail.com)

Thanks for the.pdf! Looks great, esp., Cheryl's. That will be a fun reread. BUT! Cheryl Cline is not “the late”—she is alive and well, and I've been badgering her to write something for the next ish of PORTABLE STORAGE (keeping fingers Xd). She and Lynn Kuehl own the last surviving “real” bookstore in Contra Costa county, after the demise of Half Price Books. (There is an Amazon

“bookstore” in Walnut Creek that Lynn says just carries a few bestseller titles.)

Finished up #7. I can see why you liked Cheryl's piece, since it gets right to the heart of what you are doing with CAPTAIN FLASHBACK and your eBay offerings. The tone was beautifully balanced, amused, with just the right amount of sercon.

Perversely, I have always enjoyed reading mailing comments in apazines of which I know absolutely nothing. Your comment about mailing comments being desirable, and a necessary grease of an apa, but not required, is very true. Apa-50 has had several golden ages over its forty-five year existence and during these periods of high productivity there were always several members who would go on tirades about the lack of mailing comments, specifically mailing comments to them. I think ever shall it be thus with apas.

Enjoyed the write up of the visit to Harry's town and civil war meadows. The photos were actually *quite* good.

[APH – I won't bother defending my error or throw the others who confirmed my misapprehension under the hoverbus. Hopefully, the mistake was corrected before most online readers saw or noticed it. Meanwhile, Cheryl checks in to prove she's still with us, and happy to receive fanzines:]

Cheryl Cline (Cheryl@bershire-books.com)

Hi Andy,
I'm having flashbacks! Wow!

That was a really interesting article, especially since I didn't remember it at all. I remember writing it, vaguely, but as I re-read it just now, it was almost like reading it for the first time (I did remember the bit about Ted White's zine, heh).

Of course you can reprint it. I'd love to get a copy of your zine -- Captain Flashback is a perfect title. Send it to the bookshop: Berkshire Books, 3480 Clayton Road, Concord, CA 94519. Thanks much!

Original art by Ulrika O'Brien (page 4) and Bill Rotsler (page 8)
