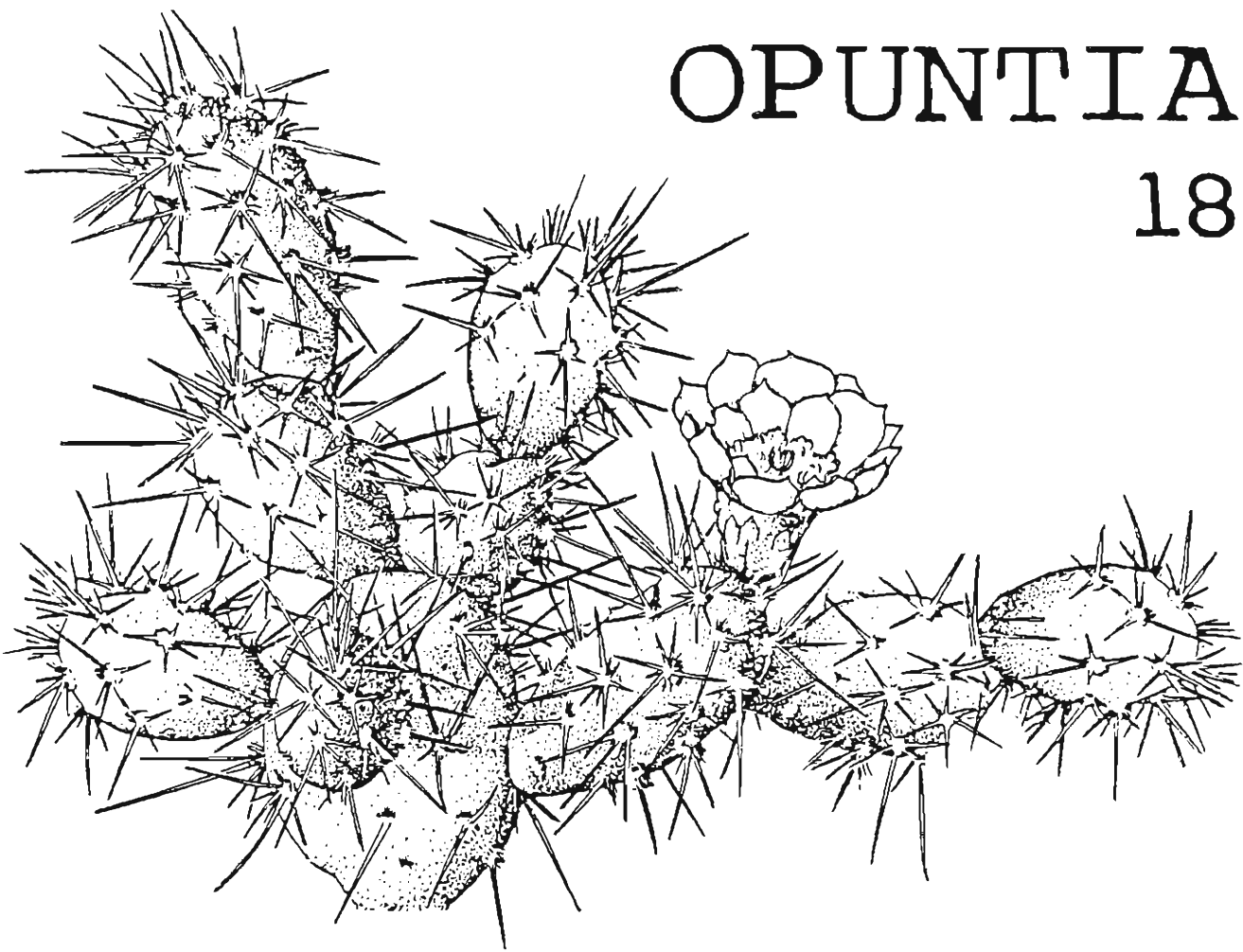


# OPUNTIA

18



OPUNTIA #18

March 1994

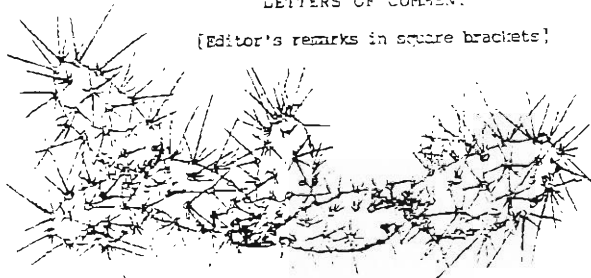
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CONADIAN Progress Report #5 appeared in February. This is the one that most have been waiting for. It contains the hotel booking forms, Masquerade rules and entry form, child care form, and handicap access form. Once you've rushed all them into the post, you can sit back and read the various background articles and notices of programs. ConAdian membership as of press date was 3541, of whom 606 are Canucks, 2805 are Americans, and the rest from overseas (plus 2 from 'Lost').

## LETTERS OF COMMENT

[Editor's remarks in square brackets]



FROM: Buck Coulson  
2677W-500N  
Hartford City, Indiana 47348

1994-2-10

Garth Spencer may be right about fandom splitting more

than it has already into separate groups, with separate conventions. It's wrong about this negatively affecting Worldcons, however. Fandom has already started separate conventions: Star Trek cons, fanzine cons, filk cons, that are attended by fans of that particular branch of fandom. But Worldcons are as big as ever, because they can afford to run separate programs for separate groups, and there's overlap in the groups. Except possible for fanzine fans, very few people in fandom have interests restricted to just one branch of the field.

Originally SF fans were fans of science fiction, and read and discussed the professionally published material. A lot of them still are, and go to large conventions to meet their favourite authors. Then in the late 1950s and early 1960s a group of people entered fandom who were fans of fanzines. Some of them read the professional SF, some of them went on to sell it as well, but a lot of them had no particular interest in it. They were interested in the fanzines and in making friends in fandom. Nothing wrong in that, but a lot of complaints about changes in fandom are coming from them. Fandom has always been subject to change, like everything else in the world, but some fans can't accept that and want it to stay exactly like it was when they entered. It seems a narrow outlook on life.

If a concon doesn't know the basic procedures for running a convention, then let them fail. That's known as free enterprise, and all too many people, fans and non-fans alike, are in favour of it for everybody but themselves. Fandom can be a learning process.

[If a con is botched and only the concon is affected, I see no problem. But if they ruin peoples' weekends because of stupid mistakes that could have been avoided, then it isn't fair to the congoers. A breach of contract if you will, because they implicitly promised a good time.]

FROM: Rodney Leighton  
R.R. 3  
Pugwash, Nova Scotia BOK ILO

1994-2-6

I would think that Mike Diana should be admired for standing up for his convictions rather than chided for not being willing to sneak around and hide behind pseudonyms. Having said that, I guess I'd better revert to using my own name in the new zine devoted to porn.

Of which, certain SFers would never admit that a publication devoted primarily to pornographic films and various sexual topics could be labelled a fanzine. The fact is that any publication, whether devoted to SF, comics, pro wrestling, porno, or dish washing, if it is basically self-published, on the small side and has a relatively small circulation is definitely a fanzine or zine.

The economy and the recession are the main reason for the lack of zine traders. Eight or so years ago, when I was doing a lot of small-press stuff and receiving and reading every issue of FACTSHEET FIVE, there were hundreds upon hundreds of zines available for trade. Since I can no longer afford much activity, I no longer read FF but I did get an issue last year. I was really amazed, in scanning over it, the number of zines which did not trade. I am pretty sure it's finances.

FROM: Ned Brooks  
713 Paul Street  
Newport News, Virginia 23605

1994-2-5

Your mention is the first I had heard of Mike Diana and BOILED ANGEL, but I don't agree with your cavalier dismissal of his persecution by the state of Florida. The state (any state) has no taste and no right to judge or try to suppress literature; the fact that in this particular instance you don't like the thing is irrelevant. If they can come for Mike today, they can come for you or me tomorrow. The state of Virginia almost elected as Attor-

ney General a lawyer who had represented people who believe that THE WIZARD OF OZ is satanic and should be suppressed. That's where we will wind up if the state is granted the power to control literature. Nor do I care for your notion that if Mike wanted to produce something he thought the state might frown on, he should use a pseudonym and a fake address. In the first place, there is no way to predict what may excite the bureaucrats if they have the power to persecute publishers. In the second place, the fact that he was willing to publish BOILED ANGEL openly indicates that he did not think it was anything to be ashamed of; what business is it of the state to secondguess this opinion?

[It is easy to predict that bureaucrats will be excited (in the legal sense, I hasten to add) by comics of a man and a dog in the 69 position, a priest sodomizing a boy, and a woman with an amputated penis stuffed in her mouth and a crucifix through one eye and out the other. If such is to be published, the artist shouldn't complain and act the martyr and innocent publisher. He knowingly took a chance. It would be like a Jew publishing a diatribe against Hitler, then being astonished because the Gestapo came for him.]

FROM: Garth Spencer  
Box 15335  
Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 5B1

1994-2-5

History has already repeated with fanzine fandom what happened to fandom at large. Mainly this was the same subcultural turnover at the same time for the same reasons; as the general population in fandom suddenly ballooned with a lot of younger, more media/visually-oriented fans, they formed their own clubs, started their own zines, formed their own expectations of fanzines as of conventions. The way I bumped my nose into this was I kept running into people who defined fanzine to mean fictionzine, sold these amateur writing/publishing products rather than trading for them, didn't take the gen-

zine or personalzine as their model. Didn't know about it or didn't care to know about it. I resisted admitting for some time that there were more models of fanac. One of the things that got me over that was FACTSHEET FIVE, which itself has changed, appearing not only online but on newsstands. 'fanzine' and 'zine' have gone outside the SF interest group, and the micropress has been exposed in the media. I imagine this will be both good and bad. Okay. There are different models going around, but not everyone accepts or acknowledges this.

Mike Diana is not the first to take a self-defeating model for his activity. There was Elessar Tetramariner, to use his fan name, who got shopped for his photographic services at cons. Those services included nude or semi-nude pictures. You could pose as, say, fantasy barbarian characters. The clients were underage. Now notice, the problem wasn't sexual advances (he didn't). The photo subjects were chaperoned, and both subjects and chaperone were consenting. The sticking point was that his photos were sent through the U.S. mail, were discovered, and for that reason the photographer went to the slammer. Mike Diana's model of fanzine publishing is not real smart. Common sense is not common.

FROM: Harry Andruschak 1994-2-1  
Box 5309  
Torrance, California 90510-5309

Yes, I am sticking mostly to Corflu and Ditto as my cons of choice. I will be at this year's Westercon, but only because it is being held in Los Angeles. Yes, there are now cons exclusively for filking, for costumes, and for other fringes, as well as gaming and media cons galore. For my part, not only have I drifted away from SF cons, it has been a year since I bothered with LASFS. I expressed my contempt for the takeover of the club by media and comics fans, and as a reward Robbie Cantor and her friends are paying money to the LASFS building fund to

give me the LASFS Nigger of the Year Award.

A note to Buck Coulson. Richard Geiss' SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW also made money for him, in spite of his willingness to trade. But in addition to his trades he had quite a subscription list. Nowadays his zine would probably be considered a semiprozine.

FROM: Chester Cuthbert 1994-2-1  
1104 Mulvey Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 1J5

Garth Spencer's article reinforced my longtime decision to have nothing to do with conventions. I prefer one-on-one conversations or small groups of friendly people with similar interests. Conventions do enthrall others, and I have no objections; I even enjoy reading about them.

THE NEW PLEASURE by John Gloag is an old novel advocating Technocracy as a future state, brought about not by the collapse of the economic system but because people's senses of smell were enhanced by a drug and they could not bear filthiness. Edward Bellamy in LOOKING BACKWARD suggested that a socialist state could, in return for guaranteeing a living, require all citizens to perform needed work for a portion of each year. This is the same idea used for compulsory military service, which hopefully would no longer be a consideration in a world where poverty would not drive people to violence.

FROM: David Drew 1994-2-11  
207 Lake Lucerne Way SE  
Calgary, Alberta T2J 3J5

I've been trying to give some thought to the Economy of Abundance and how to implement it. I started by thinking that the first step would be the propagation of ideas by writing letters, magazines, maybe run for Mayor. But

[continued next page]

this led me to realize that this would only affect a very small percentage of people. To implement these ideas on a large scale, one would have to be in control of a major bank, media, or corporation. Okay, how do you do that? Perhaps one way to dismantle the present system is to work it with the sole object of acquiring profits to use in the cause of dismantling the present system. I was mulling this over when I suddenly realized, "Wait a minute, isn't implementation inherent in the system?" If you are doing your work for free, are you not implementing the system? I've seen the Economy of Abundance work marvelously on a small scale but on a large scale ... I don't know. I do know there are people who are happiest while cleaning, and they don't seem to mind about toilets. Is the Priceless Economic System even the best solution? I've heard of others, such as depreciating economic systems, personalized economic systems, and they all sound good to me. A change is bound to come around; our present system is outdated and starting to cause problems.

FROM: Joseph Major 1994-2-16  
4701 Taylor Boulevard #8  
Louisville, Kentucky 40215-2343

Another point about Garth Spencer's comments. Back in the thirties and forties everyone read the same magazines. In the fifties and sixties everyone was at least acquainted with the same books, there being few enough that one could read all the important ones. There was a common body of background information to base a community on. By contrast, today there is no such common body. Mediafen stick to their own shows, costumers have nothing in common with those who know nothing of the price of taffeta, gamers disdain those who think dice only have six sides. Your prediction of the coming divergence may come to pass soon, but I recall that such was made ten years ago.

FROM: Brian Earl Brown 1994-2-10  
11675 Beaconsfield  
Detroit, Michigan 48224

The theory of Numbered Fandom dates from the age when fans tended to make mountains out of molehills, which is best demonstrated by noting that the six fandoms listed only covered 15 to 20 years; by that reckoning we're in about 20th fandom. I don't think so. The major movements in fandom have been first a Sercon phase lasting from the beginnings through the mid to late 1930s, after which Tucker discovered Sex (actually humour but he prefers to call it sex) and things changed. For a time Sercon and Humour travelled side by side but around 1950 the Fannish style began to emerge and increasingly fanzine distribution for The Usual rather than by subscription. Growing acceptance of SF by the mainstream brought stresses to fandom. The Breendoggle in the early 1960s reminded a lot of people that fandom was large enough now that it had to pay attention to mainstream mores. Specifically it was about a crusade to ban a suspected pederast from Worldcon, but the blatant politics of the situation turned off a lot of people who enjoyed being a fan because it was so devoid of the usual politics of other, more organized hobbies. Then a few years later Star Trek brought a new level of popularity and respectability to SF, and a vast influx of fans. Video fans aren't the same as print fans. They were, foremost, television fans and only secondly SF fans. History for them was the history of TV, tradition was what they saw on TV. Following that, fandom continued to grow in size as SF became a popular, even bestselling genre, creating a new generation of fans who get together but not out of the same longing for the company of their own kind that drove the older generation of fans. This newer generation of fans is, like the society they come out of, largely post-literate. Reading is not high on their list of activities, nor is

learning the history of earlier generations. I see four major changes in fandom, from Sercon to Fannish to Pop Cult to Balkanized. I don't think the theory of Numbered Fandoms has anything to offer in understanding where fandom has come from or is going to.

Buck Coulson's comments about running his fanzine on a subscription basis forgets the amount of publicity it undoubtedly got from the fanzine review columns that appeared in so many of the prozines of the 1950s and 1960s, which made it possible for people to find out that such a fanzine exists. Today finding out that fanzines exist or that any particular zine exists is much more difficult.

FROM: John Thiel 1994-2-11  
30 North 19th Street  
Lafayette, Indiana 47904

I find I've more or less memorized the configuration of cactus that appears on your cover, not that there is no variation in it. But does it indicate a dearth of art, of which you're wanting some, or what? You don't live in Texas.

[I'm not sure what you mean by that last sentence so I'll let it pass. I was wondering how long it would take before someone noticed the Opuntia fragilis on the cover is actively growing. It's an experiment I wanted to try out as I've never seen it done anywhere else; sort of a very slow-motion animation of a cactus growing, with a month between each frame instead of a split-second. As I have picked up a number of new readers over the last year, I should mention what the philosophy is behind OPUNTIA. The pagination is limited to sixteen pages; small but frequent is the idea. This does mean that I often do violence to letters of comment in order to squeeze everything in, but if I went to bigger issues the frequency would decline. I believe a large part of the fun in zine pubbing is rapid appearance and locating thereby. Text is primary in this

zine. I don't agree with the idea that artwork is needed in the interior to brighten up the pages. No one criticizes a novel or paperback just because it is not illustrated. One word is worth a thousand pictures. While the text is primary, I will unbend far enough to use cover art that is something more than a rocketship or pinup female elf. The review issues of OPUNTIA will mostly be about fanzines or older books that deserve fresh attention. There are enough places to read reviews of the latest bestsellers; one can always subscribe to LOCUS.]

FROM: Harry Warner 1994-2-7  
423 Summit Avenue  
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Since Garth Spencer brings up the references in my fan histories to numbered fandoms, I should point out what I explained therein. I have never been able to detect the existence of all those numbered fandoms. I wrote about them only because others brought up the matter and because Seventh Fandom became a battle cry which caused some fans to react as if they were a bunch of terrorists. If fandoms must be numbered, I would do it on a broader basis. First Fandom would be everything that preceded the first real fanzines, Second Fandom would be fanzine fandom from the 1930s through the period just after the century's halfway mark when satellites and other scientific development made SF more respectable and books began to replace prozines as favoured sources of SF, Third Fandom would run from then until Star Trek and other non-print forms of SF began to attract the barbarians into our midst, Fourth Fandom would be everything from then until now. However, while we're fretting over the fragmentation of fandom, the decline of fanzine fandom, and so on, I think it's important to keep in mind the possibility that it isn't our fault at all, but rather changing younger generations. A report of the U.S. Education Dept. said individuals between 21 and 25 have literacy skills 11 to 14 % points lower than for 1985.

## MARCHING TO VICTORIA (Part II)

by Garth Spencer

On February 20th, 1983, Constellation was held as a one-day event in the Jaycee Hall on Quadra Street (which might hold 200 people, tops, if you forced them in with a shoehorn). Memberships were still \$25 each, but the special-guest list and programming were almost eliminated. Hearsay reports indicate maybe 100 people were present (including 30 concom members). Vonda MacIntyre was said to be there. So was Mac. So was the Constellation core group.

Bernie and Paula, who had been in Alberta for a while, had just returned to Victoria. Paula reports riding by the hall that day and seeing some very disappointed-looking teenagers coming out.

I thought all the while that nobody was out to get Constellation; they just insisted on shooting themselves in the foot (and discrediting all SF fans in Victoria in the process). Bernie Klassen has a different take on what happened:

Constellation (not the Worldcon, but our own disaster) brought out the worst in many of us. In others, it was already on the surface. The message to us was clear: "You don't know dick about fandom, conventions, and how to organize a 'good' event." After putting on two reasonably successful conventions, producing fanzines, and organizing clubs, we (the locals, the Old Guard before it was named, etc.) got a trifle pissed. When we were told that we could be gophers if we wanted, we were

angered. So when we saw that this was probably going to be the disaster to end all disasters, and the good will and recognition that had built up in the community was about to be destroyed, well, we reacted like a mongoose confronted by the biggest damn cobra you ever saw: stay out of the way that you don't get crushed by the sheer weight of the thing, and fight tooth and nail when the opportunity presents itself.

When it was mentioned that 95% of the attendees would be from out of the country, we smiled. But when talk was of a sizable contingent from overseas, the scope of potential disaster became apparent. There was wishful thinking about phone taps, "just to know what's being said!", but the closest that could be achieved was to call up the telephone company and say "Hi! I was wondering if you could tell me what I owe on my phone bill? My number is ... " Sleazoid? You bet! Worthwhile? Not really, except to be able to smugly giggle "do you know what their phone bill is up to?", and being smug with a certain foreknowledge of doom seems to be, in retrospect at least, what this was all about.

Or being invited to sit in on a conference call to Robert Runté after his piece on the fiasco-in-the-making in *New Canadian Fandom*, and agreeing, hooking the phone through the stereo system and inviting several other people to sit in (and then taping the call for future reference, though it has now been destroyed). Or talking to the manager of the hotel that the concom had booked and not really saying anything, but the

manager being nervous enough afterwards to find a reason to back out of the deal. You wonder why the Conconcom was paranoid? They had reason to be. There were people out to get them. Although in 99% of the cases where the older fans were blamed for having done something nasty, it was the committee's own foul-up or their ability to convince people that they were insane that did them in.

It should be noted, however, that this wasn't all one-sided. Hard-core comic-collector Dan Cawsey had his apartment and collection paint-bombed on one occasion. The carpet was a write-off, but the paint only splashed the bagged comics. The cops never nabbed the villain, although Dan did, when the culprit bragged (unknowingly) to Dan's cousin when the two were at work. Victoria is a small city, and has a very effective jungle telegraph.

But the year of Constellation almost destroyed Victoria fandom. The Old Guard felt (for the most part) that everyone should be bitter and angry, should ostracize the Constellation group. SFVA was split three ways on the issue: those who were neutral, those who disliked the Constellation people for any number of reasons (I want to get so-and-so into bed, and s/he is actively anti-Concon, etc.), and those who thought that the idea of Concon was lousy. The UFCST was much simpler. As a rule, they were solidly anti-Concon. Not because they disliked the idea of Concon, but there were some feelings of betrayal and of loyalty to the betrayed. ...

(Bernie Klassen, TCG, Dec. 1985)

By this time, the clubs were exhausted, both from trying to disassociate themselves from the Constellation mediots, and from fending off actual attacks. Concept had folded. UVicSFA folded soon. Most of the Old Guard dropped out of the clubs.

Dave Gordon-MacDonald summed it up pretty well:

The most damaging effect of Constellation Con was its effect on local fen. The most active and highly visible, the ones who had been involved in two previous minicons, were subject to harassment ... Such were the feelings of anger, bitterness, fatigue, and in the odd case, personal betrayal, that gafia claimed the active fans in Victoria almost without exception during 1982.

(David Gordon-MacDonald, June 1985)

Why (I kept asking, for at least the next year and a half) was the convention concept so ... grandiose? I think that the Constellation organizers knew nothing else but grandiose. They had no other models.

Jon Gustafson of Moscow, Idaho, wrote me later:

I had a couple of opportunities to talk to some of the concom of (Constellation), with the intention of offering my aid ... the net result was that I was ignored ... Other people, I know, also approached the concom with the honest desire to help, and were equally ignored or rebuffed. The concom of Constellation seemed to feel that any effort to offer assistance was in reality an effort to take over the con. They didn't seem to understand. I think, myself, that they took offers of assistance to imply that they were screwing up ... What they failed to



realize is that fandom is interconnected and their success or failure would reflect on other Northwest cons ...

The story is simply that nothing like this had happened before in Victoria, and nothing like it had cropped up before in our fanish correspondence. Similar events, however, have shown up before and since.

### The Reality Principle

Let's go back to SFAV, and May of 1982.

I had thought that organized fandom in general — SFAV, for example — was about *doing* activities. I didn't notice that Paul Delaney was doing or trying to do everything in SFAV, and practically nobody (outside of a small circle) was initiating anything. Due to reading too many fanzines, I had acquired the notion that fans were, by definition, actifans, only too self-assertive — I was seeing a concentration of their product.

When I talked to SFAV about *FTA/Phoenix*, when I asked for contributions, I asked them as a group; also, I wasn't specific, I was general. I asked, "what do you want to contribute?" No responses resulted. I was told repeatedly that SFAVians would accept whatever I served up.

When Bernie and I started *The Central Ganglion* in May, trying to start inter-club communications and expose SFAV and other clubs to each other's fanac, we assumed that fans would participate, put stuff in, take it out. TCG folded in 1983, after Bernie and Paula returned from Alberta.

In the October '82 *FTA/Phoenix*, I decided that maybe SFAVians just had a horror of rules, of over-organization.

I *did*, after all, keep saying "Let's get organized here." I editorialized about hitting a happy medium between under-organization (like SFAV's) and over-organization (like UFCST's). I ran the entire constitution of VISFCSC, the Vancouver Island SF Con Steering Committee. I ran Bernie's article criticizing the small size, lack of recruiting effort, of local clubs. As he saw it, our fan community was remarkably small, even for Victoria, but generated a respectable quantity of fanac. He saw a clear and present danger that this small group would shrink and disappear due to attrition and exhaustion; he urged an ongoing, *not* sporadic, recruitment effort to sustain our activity.

No-one responded, as far as I know.

*FTA/Phoenix* disappeared in Dec. 1983, for two reasons. For one thing, I felt someone else ought to have a chance at it (I expected, if you please, that I would be accused of hogging the thing). For another, as Kris Snyder blithely informed me, I had exhausted SFAV's clubs funds by Dec. '83 on *FTA*. The next editor had to wait until the club funds were built up again. I expected to catch hell for exhausting the treasury, even though I had tried to limit my expenditures. But oddly, no-one minded (or cared). Frankly, I expected to be blamed, when *they* hadn't told *me* how much to spend.

I had expected to play faned, with a dynamic, creative team. I found everybody ... just disappearing, going limp on me.

One of the few SFAV meetings I attended after hanging over my several offices was in Jan. 8, 1984. I dragged in a complaint that I had received no editorial direction. To judge from the minutes, the members thought "*SFAV* money is for *FTA/Phoenix* — you'll be

told if we decide otherwise," "The fanzine is what the contributors make of it," "The rest is the editor's initiative". The SFAV members felt that stuff went without saying, and didn't want to set it down on paper — where I *needed* such a statement. The president added that he kept hearing three things from members — "We want to remain a social club," "Why don't we talk about SF books/films/stuff anymore?," "Why are we always talking about business?" I decided I had had enough.

Other fanzines had replaced TCG in Garth's life by this time anyway. The short-lived *Enter the Lists*, and the still extant *The World According to Garth*. When he edited and produced *FTA/Phoenix*, Garth became quite proficient at ditto reproduction, and he has carried that knowledge into his present publications. It is not unusual to see three and four colours on a single page; headings, borders, illustrations, and text each different from the other.

In 1983, Garth began publishing *The Maple Leaf Rag*, the Canadian national newszine. MLR (or the *Rag*) grew quickly into a cleanly produced (after BeFlatte/Mike Hall took over the printing), well-laid-out fanzine. There is a definite Western Canada bias, but this is more due to a low level of eastern response than an inherent bigotry. The *Rag* is filling a distinct niche in Canadian fandom — even if this need was perhaps more perceived in the mid-seventies than the mid-eighties.

The only other fanzines that have come out in Victoria are *What I.F.S.* and *World of I.F.S.*

(clubzines of the Imaginative Fiction Society, the reborn University club).

(Bernie Klassen, TCG, Dec. 1985)

I did the sensible thing, I guess, by picking up my marbles and going home. Where I continued to put out fanzines: mainly, *The World According to Garth*, and *The Maple Leaf Rag* — dedicated to truth, justice, and (I dreamed) helping fans avoid any more Constellation Affairs. Seriously! Half the reason for MLR was to show anyone ~~remotely like the Constellation chair~~ that there is a fandom to talk to, in Canada. The other half was to discover and report Canadian fanac, and what fans do that maintains their fan activities. (Read: "yes, there *are* so too some policies and procedures you have to observe, in order to make things like cons work.")

### Hey, Kids, Let's Put On a Worldcon!

After 1983 or 84, the Old Guard (still putting out personalzines) started up the great Worldcon '89 at Myles' House campaign. Myles Bos, the innocent butt of this joke, has a family with a house and a goat farm in Sidney, near the Victoria International Airport. So alienated had we become to big cons that we decided to bid for a Worldcon — to be held in Myles' house. This became an international hoax bid and went over rather well. At least, it got 9 whole votes at the '89 site selection in 1986.

My recollection on the start of this thing is hazy. I think Bernie and Karl were talking one day and Bernie came up with the idea of Worldcon in Sooke. At a later discussion (probably around a

table at Mac's with Karl, Steph, Bernie, Paula, Jono, Dan, and Myles), I think I came up with the notion of Worldcon at Myles's House in 1989 (though don't quote me on that, I'm not 100% on the origin).

The original idea was just to do a silly flyer to take to Norwescon as a spoof of Worldcon bids that promise you the world, and the best of fannish activities. Naturally, we promised just the opposite: goats and tents. Anything fannish that Mylescon was offering was meant to be an afterthought. The inspiration for this madness was a piece of farm property that Myles's family owned up the Saanich Peninsula near the airport. They had a goat.

The problem with our silly bid was that everyone loved it and wanted to attend. With each progress report we did (four in all), the thing just snowballed like crazy. We literally got letters from every continent on the planet. We have no idea how these people heard of us. We never once asked for money, and yet cheques kept arriving (except for Lloyd's). If we had pursued this, we could have retired rich men in 1989! Groups around Canada and the U.S. copied our flyers, made their own buttons, held their own bid parties, and spread the word. We had no choice but to look into the cost of renting a tent and borrowing farm animals.

Mylescon fizzled out for a number of reasons, one being that Myles got religion and was, I think, increasingly uncomfortable with the notion of his being a fannish icon.

The result of it all was 8 votes when the 1989 Worldcon site was chosen. Lloyd Penney tells us that many American BNFs he's talked to cite Mylescon as one of the best spoof bids ever. We obviously touched a nerve somewhere (probably the funny bone).

(John Herbert, February 1993)

By 1984 many of the Victoria actifen opted out of the clubs, and reduced their fanac. Bernie put out zines sporadically, and his apahacking became more and more erratic. Paula had twins and eventually became more and more interested in SF writing. Dan pursued his graphic art; in recent years he dropped that for studies in criminology. Karl Johanson and Stephanie Lightbody got married. Bev Cooke and Al Hargreaves married and more or less gafiated.

Oh, others do become involved from time to time, contributing, or going so far as to put out a one-shot, or a couple of apazines. But fanzines fans are few and far between.

(Bernie Klassen)

A new crowd filtered into the clubs. SFAV was basically an entirely new group; only Paul Gerber (pres. after 1984) and J.D. Waryk had any knowledge of fan activity before, or elsewhere. UVicSFA had folded; David Gordon-MacDonald, one of the Clan's peripheral members, had set up the IFS (Imaginative Fiction Society) in its place, in Oct. 1983. The UFCST was silent.

I have a five-page "president's report" from The Imaginative Fiction Society, dated Dec. 1, 1984, describing

various club activities — a film festival, a Clubs Day display table, sales of T-shirts and Bjo Trimble's *On The Good Ship Enterprise*, affiliation with the Dr. Who Information Network, a joint Hallowe'en party with SFAV. Some of the members at the time were Carla Luna, Jeff Taylor (a graphic artist) and Dave Moncrieff.

Eventually Paul, David and J.D. Waryk banded together to hold open houses called Alternate Realities Days.

I got a few surprises. Turns out that AR Days were sponsored by a confederal group, the Alternate Realities Society, incorporating over a dozen new and used clubs. J.D. Waryk, one of the refugees from the Constellation committee, first joined SFAV, then formed his own Cygnus Science Society, then the AR Society. Both ARS and Cygnus were very promotion-minded, like J.D.; and both had a fairly clear intention of someday mounting a real con, using the glorified open houses as a training ground. For a while, it seemed as if ARS incorporated both VISFCSC and a new convention steering committee in its table of organization. Also, one Terry Wyatt, who set up a "shuttle" (chapter) called the U.S.S. Resolution, knew only of the Starfleet organization.

As David put it:

What we wanted was a co-ordinating body so that all the clubs could take part in certain events working in the most efficient manner possible. The secondary purpose was for the meetings of representatives to serve as a clearinghouse of information on what every club was doing, allowing conflicts to be averted, and the return of that information through each club rep.

... In order to make it easier to stage Open Houses and Cons, we decided to make the A.R.S. an actual registered society under the B.C. Society Act. This automatically forestalls a host of legal, financial and taxation worries ...

Naturally, an activity which any group of fen have in mind when they want to plan large-scale fanac is a con. ... However, before jumping in headlong we decided to get in a little practice. If we were to sponsor a con, it would be in late summer, 1986, at the earliest. In the intervening time, we have planned several smaller events, such as large open-house or SF fairs ...

(David Gordon-MacDonald, June 1985)

Bernie wrote:

[T]he paper principles look[ed] good (or at least right in tune with modern fandom-at-large), to provide an umbrella group for all the different local organizations involved with sf, fantasy, RPGs, and the like. The present membership includes the local SCA shire, the SFAV, revived IFS (under David Gordon-MacDonald), the Tesla society, and such groups as the Bardic Union (a poet's workshop and joint-admiration society), gamers such as the Brotherhood of the Scarlet Rogue and the University Strategy and Tactics club, the Univ. Medieval club, and the like. The principal occupation of the ARSe, from what anyone outside of the executive can see, is to raise money. If it can be done while publicizing the member groups, fine. To this end, the ARSe has held two Alternate Realities Days. Both have been pretend-cons based

on the talents of the member groups to raise \$\$\$. Both have failed. The first through bad bar practices (losing between \$100 and \$200), the second through a money-losing dance that drew a maximum 35 people on an estimated 125. Even with their tentative links to fandom through the SFAV and IFS, this group is most definitely not fanish. Perhaps it is because their drive towards excessive organization is not counterbalanced by a drive towards anarchy. Or that their bad management of events is not balanced by sheer enthusiasm and blind luck. Or perhaps that the only visible drive behind the ARSe is the acquisition of bucks (with no fanishly grandiose plans on how to spend it — other than paying members of the executive). Whatever the reason, the flavour's wrong, and the smell's gone off.

(Bernie Klassen, TCG, Dec. 1985)

The Second Victoria International Cartoon Festival was announced for April 11-13, 1986, at the Empress Hotel and the Crystal Gardens. Curiously, I can recall nothing about it, and have no record of it but the announcement in MLR (March 1986).

### Loose Threads

Other things were going on in Victoria in the late 80's. In the fall of 1987 I folded *Maple Leaf Rag* and moved to Vancouver. My newszine was followed by Michael Skeel's zine, *MLR*. Comic artist Paul Young, featured in my MLR, announced a comic and animation magazine, *Animangl* (then at 3217 Shelley St., Victoria, B.C. V8P 4A6).

MLR reported in issue 3 and 4 (1988) that SFAV was alive and well, still publishing, and using print and broadcast advertisements to increase membership. Still, the club remained small, and president Tami Hayes produced two issues of *FTA/Phoenix* in 1988, not six as expected. (SFAV has since disappeared, as far as I can tell.) Terry Wyatt was still editing *Atavachron* as a clubzine/fictionzine.

### The U.S.S. Resolution

Andrew Murdoch writes:

1985 saw the formation of the U.S.S. Resolution, Victoria's second Star Trek fan club. (The first was the United Federation of Canadian Star Trekkers, which folded in the early eighties.) The club had actually existed for several months beforehand, as a "shuttle" club of the U.S.S. Kestral, based in Vancouver. Terry Wyatt, now living in Washington [state], was the founder and first president of the club. Within three years of its formation, the Resolution was the largest Star Trek fan club in Canada, with over two hundred members.

The name "Resolution" was chosen for the club as it was the name of the flagship of British explorer Capt. James Cook, who was the first to explore Vancouver Island and the we(s)t coast before sailing to Tahiti.

In 1989, Resolution Vice-President Veronica Hipsey assumed the presidency. She remained President until November, 1991, when she resigned/gafiated. Colin Scheidl, then Vice-President, is the current President of the Resolution. I, Andrew C. Murdoch, am the current

Vice-President, and Marty Moser (who is also a member of the Science Fiction Association of Victoria) is Second Vice-President.

Since the club's formation, the Resolution has been the parent club to two other Star Trek fan clubs: The Vancouver-based U.S.S. S'Harien and Nanaimo's U.S.S. Malaspina.

The Resolution currently has approximately 60 members. Its quarterly fanzine, *Atavachron*, has won several awards from Atlanta-based Starfleet for its art and content. (However, the Resolution ceased to be a Starfleet-affiliated chapter in 1990.) The Resolution holds monthly meetings, an annual general meeting/anniversary/picnic/competition every September. (Veronica Hipsey's Jello-Suck, which has competitors try to suck dry a cup of jello through a straw, is now a traditional event, and one which Veronica herself will not soon forget when competitors slimed her with the lime-green dessert at the September, 1988 bash.) Recently, events have also been planned as joint ventures between the Resolution and the Science Fiction Association of Victoria (SFAV). Above all, the U.S.S. Resolution is renowned across the local convention circuit for the traditional room party hosted at every V-Con. In addition to the usual loud music and non-stop dancing, the Resolution serves up its deadly Spock's Blood, a green, glowing, steaming, utterly intoxicating punch. (Resolution member Paul Vander Heiden frequently recalls the Resolution party at V-Con 18, in 1990, where he woke up at 7 a.m. and met

people going back to their rooms from the Resolution's party.

(Andrew C. Murdoch, March 1993)

Since writing that missive, Andrew has become president of the Resolution.

John Herbert writes of the U.S.S. Resolution:

I joined the Resolution in early 1988. At the time, it was Canada's largest ST club, something like 150-200 members. Soon, I was to become embroiled in the joys of club politics.

The captain was Terry Wyatt and Terry held all the strings in the club ... Terry ran the show, which was probably okay while the club was small, but by the time I joined, the club was three years old and a large, growing concern. And people in the club wanted more responsibility, and more say in how the club was run, but Terry refused to relinquish any control to the exec., which now had become populated by many interested members (myself included).

The exec. soon discovered, for instance, that Terry (who also doubled as club Treasurer) had no idea what the financial assets of the club were. The exec. forced a Treasurer on Terry, and she finally got into the books was appalled at what she found. There were no records of any income. There were few, if any, receipts for expenses, and many expenses were for expenditures not approved, or even known about, by the exec. Because Terry was a one-man show, many areas in the club suffered. Terry also tripled as membership secretary, yet he could not provide a membership list. When, after

repeated demands from the exec., a list was provided, it was wildly inaccurate (the 150+ membership we were supposed to have was only half that). The exec. was resolved to get rid of him: he had never been opposed in club elections but the election in 1989 was to be different. The exec. united behind the candidacy of Susan Wright, a former Trek club exec. from Australia. Terry saw the writing on the wall, and did not seek re-election and Susan became club President in September, 1989. (I became zine editor.)

The eighteen months of politics to give Terry the heave-ho was bad for the club. The exec. was focused for so long on Terry, and then on rebuilding the club, that the actual operation of the club suffered. A new constitution was planned, new membership kits, etc. but attendance and membership continued dropping. Susan resigned soon after taking command because she and her husband were moving back to Australia. Veronica Hipsey assumed the awesome mantle of responsibility. And there was still Terry. He hadn't, as he claimed, returned all club property in his possession and so once again the exec. found itself mired in another battle with Terry (compounded by I-Con troubles). ...

(John Herbert, February 1993)

John Herbert resigned from the Resolution in spring 1991. Veronica Hipsey resigned later in the same year, and was replaced as editor by Colin Schiedl, the club's president at the time. At last report, David Gordon-MacDonald edited the Resolution publication.

## I-Con

A short-lived convention, I-Con, was held in Victoria in August 1990 and again in October 1991.

The first I-Con was held August 3-5, 1990 at the new Ramada Inn. Author GoH was Michael Coney; Artist GoH was Donna Barr (The Desert Peach); TM was Nichelle Nichols. This first-time con featured multi-track programming, 24-hour gaming, an artshow, a dealers' room, two 24-hour video tracks, a Diplomatic Reception and two dances. Memberships were \$30 up to the door.

As I've been able to piece it together:

I guess in early 1990, Terry [Wyatt], almost an outcast from the club, decided to try and put on a con in Victoria. The first group of people who gathered to join the Concom were mostly Resolution people (myself included) but many felt Terry was up to his old tricks and quickly departed. I remember Dave G-M worried that it might turn into another Constellation and Victoria fen had better wash their hands of Terry and I-Con pretty damn quick. It did turn out better than that, but future I-Cons haven't been able to pay for I-Con 1 yet.

(John Herbert, February 1993)

In some ways the planning for I-Con reminded John uncomfortably of Constellation.

When I briefly served on the I-Con 1 concom, way back when, I suggested Robert Charles Wilson for our GoH. He met all the qualifications for a perfect guest for a Canadian con as far as I was concerned: he was (still is) a great writer, he lived in Canada

(Nanaimo at the time), and would probably come cheap! The problem was that I was the only concom member who had ever heard of him, so it was not to be. (Also, the conchair [Terry Wyatt] insisted the con needed a "name" media guest; they *don't* come cheap.)

(John Herbert, *Under the Ozone Hole #2*, Nov. 1992)

I wrote in BCAPA:

I-Con itself was an "eh-eh" sort of con. Let's say it was a fair first start. Victoria may, like Calgary, not have a lot of the hotels that would be optimum for a con, with the necessary function space, yet within a reasonable budget. I noticed more some other things, like a) how crowded and hot and airless the Ramada Inn got that weekend, with that crowd; b) how unhelpful the hotel night staff was (I was supposed to be able to crash in the Westercon suite; I only pulled in about 1:00 a.m. Friday night; the Westercon chair told me specifically there would be a room key with my name attached waiting at the hotel desk — and the [night] staff knew nothing about it. Obviously I survived, but equally obviously there was a lack of communication between staff); c) the con was, perhaps understandably, a bit far from town centre (hey, I missed seeing my favourite haunts); d) like Conversion, the hotel started folding its tents and stealing away in midafternoon — there was no Dead Gnome Party, as advertised, and after sitting up with a deliriously sick friend, I needed the party.

It may or may not have been relevant that I-Con was held on the Canadian, not American, long weekend in August. Next year it's being held in September (same weekend as In-Con in Spokane).

(Garth Spencer, BCAPA, ca. 1990)

I was wrong. I-Con 2 was held October 1991 in a different hotel ... the Harbour Towers. (Remember the Harbour Towers?) This is rather a high-toned, classy hotel in the well-heeled James Bay area of Victoria. GoHs were Spider and Jeanne Robinson; ArtGoH was William R. Warren Jr.; FanGoH was Lita Smith-Gharet. Memberships were again \$30 up to the door.

While this was an excellent site for a convention, I kept wondering whether an SF convention was good enough for the hotel, in the eyes of the Harbour Tower staff.

Apparently it was. I-Con 3 was at first supposed to be held October 1992 at the Harbour Towers. I was told the Harbour Towers was willing to wait for their business.

Later, according to the cry of it, I-Con 3 was held over to October 1993, due to I-Con 2 revenue falling short of expenses. However (as one zen faulkes phoned me, in late '92), I-Con was finally cancelled. Andrew Murdoch tells me this was due to lack of advance memberships.

(to be continued)