

# OPUNTIA 21



[Editor's remarks in square brackets]

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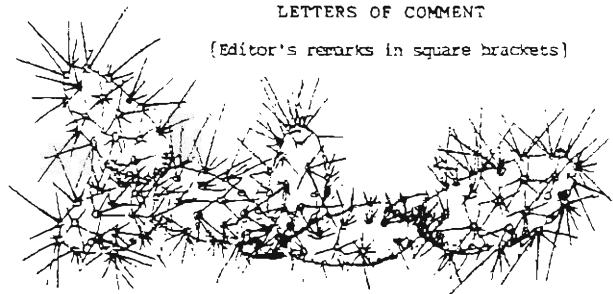
ART CREDIT: The cover art was done by Franz Miklis, A-5151 Nussdorf 64, Austria.

EDITORIAL: This issue was typed up two days after returning from ConAdian, the 52nd World Science Fiction Convention in Winnipeg. I enjoyed every moment of my stay in Winnipeg. The WorldCon was very well run, and those who have attended other WorldCons tell me Winnipeg will rank among the best.

There seems to be a sudden surge in interest in the history of SF fandom. Both in Canada and the USA, groups are working to preserve the artifacts and documents of fans. This should not be confused with the older interest in the history of SF per se, the pro side. One hopes that something practical will come out of all this.

I brought home a stack of material that will take me a month or two to read. Not all of the stuff will be reviewed in this zine, but a lot of it can be expected to show up in these pages.

I will be on the Old Age Pension when the next Canadian WorldCon takes place, assuming the normal 25-year lapse between them. ConAdian Chairman John Mansfield mentioned that when Winnipeg first bid for a WorldCon, his son was in Grade 6. Now he is a first-year university student.



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

1994-6-2

The illuminating comments about fanzines and apas highlight OPUNTIA #19, but Sam Moskowitz's comments about Allis Villette was most fascinating for me. I was a subscriber to fanzines in which 'her' letters appeared, and the Canadian address led me to wonder why the name did not appear in the CANADIAN FAN DIRECTORY published in the early 1950s.

FROM: Harry Andruschak  
Box 5309  
Torrance, California 90510-5309

1994-6-2

O wow! What a rush of nostalgia to reread "In Plain Brown Wrappers". We do have the NEW MOON DIRECTORY of apas and you can get a copy from Eric Watts, 346 Carpenter Drive #51, Atlanta, Georgia 30328-5030. It costs \$4.25 a copy and is well worth it. It is as complete a list of current apas as can be managed. There is a listing for CANADADAPA but Eric has had no contact since 1992. The last contact with GALACTIUS was in 1991. MIXED COMPANY has

[continued next page]

Janet Wilson listed as OE but no further information. If Canadian apas die out, it may be their own fault for not trying to get out information about themselves. I hope any Canadian fans reading this will send Eric information on the apas they are in. He needs it.

FROM: Murray Moore  
377 Manly Street  
Midland, Ontario L4R 3E2

1994-6-23

Tara Wayne's information about Canadapa was accurate, especially considering he was a non-participant in it. Canadapa was Vaughn Fraser's creation. The first of the bimonthly mailings is dated June 1972. Vaughn was Central Mailer for the first three mailings. His brother Rod was CM for mailings #4 to #11. Vaughn stepped in at a crisis and was CM until #20. A third brother, Ken, was responsible for contributions that I particularly liked.

I was interested to read that Harland Ronning was Canadapa's second last CM. Harland was another founding member and, I speculate, likely the only member who appeared in every mailing. I have copies of mailings #1 to #21, #30, #38, and #48, and the CANADATA (official organ) for #22. Harland contributed to each mailing.

Canadapa began as a fairly even mix of fans drawn from comic fandom and from SF fandom. The SF representatives included Rosemary Ulliyot, John Douglas, Susan Glicksohn, Mike Glicksohn, Richard Labonte, and Jim Allan. Richard lived in Ottawa, all the rest of the above in Toronto.

Vaughn, in a letter to apa members announcing he was picking up the fallen reins from brother Rod (dated May 4, 1974), in part said: "For, indeed, despite the unfortunate screw-up at present, Canadapa has grown. In less than two years it has drawn 47 people into its ranks; it has actively involved 33 Canadians from five different provinces and made great progress in drawing Canadian Fandom

together. It has united both comics and Science Fiction fans and become familiar through Canadian Fandom. As well, we have had 14 foreign members from four different countries and gained wide recognition throughout American and Australian fandoms. Our mailings are on file in a major metropolis's public library. We have seen several members blossom into first rate fanzine publishers through their work here and we have most recently seen the birth of a second Canadian apa on a basis established through Canadapa."

The union of comic and SF fandoms had dissolved, Vaughn's review of the first two years notwithstanding. Of the SF fans I named, only Jim Allan was contributing after the seventh mailing. His last contribution was included in mailing #13, the mailing following Canadapa's second anniversary mailing. The motion that a copy of each Canadapa mailing be sent to the Spaced Out Library in Toronto was mine. A majority of the members who voted were in favour. The second Canadian apa to which Vaughn refers is PAPA (Protean Amateur Press Association). PAPA produced three mailings: January 1, 1974, April 4, 1974, and February 2, 1975.

PAPA was an invitational apa with a short life. The contributors to at least one of the three mailings were Australians John Bangsund and Leigh Edmunds, and Canadians Will Straw, Vaughn Fraser, Daniel Say, Jim Allan, Bob Macaulay, Ken Fraser, Richard Labonte, Susan Wood Glicksohn, Mike Glicksohn, and Barbara Przeklasa Fraser. As the papa of PAPA, I contributed to each mailing. PAPA was my reaction to the disappearance from Canadapa, to my mind, of its most interesting members.

I and eight other people were dropped from the Canadapa roster as of mailing #22. New CM Ralph Alfonso's summary of the situation, in CANADATA for mailing #22, was: "Well, I told you it would happen and it has, half your goofs are finally out of the apa for sheer stupidity, boredom and lack of enthusiasm on YOUR part. A thumb on

the nose to you." Ralph Alfonso was gone from Canadapa by late 1978. Vaughn had become involved in it again, having moved from Oakville, Ontario, to Richmond, British Columbia. Vaughn mentioned in a letter to me: "When I did get back into Canadapa (about the time we started FANTA-RAMA) I found Ralph Alfonso to be in limbo. ... We do, however, have some very good members. Mike Hall and Garth Danielson from Winnipeg, for instance. You may or may not know that the big stuff happening in Canadian fandom now is all out west. Vancouver, Edmonton, and Winnipeg are the big centres in that order."

I can share current information about TAPA. I helped the TAPA Official Editor, Howard Scrimgeour, collate mailing #166 during Ad Astra 14, last weekend. Michael Wallis and his address are featured prominently in the Official Natter, under the heading "Pounder and Scapegoat Emeritus". TAPA #166 comprises 44 pages from eight members. Total membership is 12, TAPA has enjoyed stability in its OEs, either Wallis or Scrimgeour, for 166 mailings. For a sample mailing, write Howard Scrimgeour, 302 College Avenue West, Unit 20, Guelph, Ontario N1G 4T6.

FROM: Michael McKenny 1994-6-29  
424 Cambridge Street South  
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 4H5

[Regarding the apahistory, an] addition for Ottawa is our contribution to LILAPA. This was founded July 1, 1965. Norman Clarke was a founder; I believe Georgina Ellis (Georgina Clarke for a time) may have been too. She certainly has been a member and, I believe, still is. LILAPA is still being published. A daughter of these two fans, Jennifer Clarke Wilkes, has had a long involvement in fandom here.

Material on early Ottawa fandom will begin to appear with the July 1994 issue of OSFS STATEMENT.

FROM: Henry Welch 1994-6-27  
1525 - 16 Avenue  
Grafton, Wisconsin 53024-2017

Garth Spencer puts an interesting spin on trends and fandom by relating them to active versus passive entertainment. I guess it must be my mother's fault for not letting me watch too much TV during my younger years. I'll have to keep this in mind with [my child] Connor and the new one we are expecting.

[I watched a lot of television when I was young but lost the habit when I was a university student unable to afford a TV set. After graduating and finding work, I never got around to buying a set and have remained television free since. 22 years without TV! I recently saw an article which said the critical time for children is when they are pre-schoolers. If exposed to too much TV, they fail to develop an imagination and become passive. This explained a lot to me why I was able to give up TV, because most of my viewing was in my grade-school days. As a pre-schooler, the local TV station had nothing on of interest in the rural area where I grew up; no American sitcoms, no CBC, basically just hockey and gawdawful local programming. So we seldom watched it.]

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Ned Brooks, Garth Spencer, Buck Coulson, Harry Warner, Lloyd Penney, Joseph Major, Jacqui Disler, Franz Miklis, John Thiel, Walt Willis, and Rodney Leighton.

I wanted to run at least three letters from out of the above, but my account of ConAdian not only bumped locs, it also bumped my report of ConVersion, which now goes into the next .5 issue.

My main interest in SFdom is the literary side and zines, and I am not much of a congoer. I attend a few local cons out of loyalty. I don't like to travel, but ConAdiangave me a chance to go to a WorldCon without the hassles of Customs officers or converting money to a foreign currency. ConAdian was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see a WorldCon in Canada, as it seems to be 25 years between them here.

Booked my vacation around the Labour Day weekend, which caused quite a stir in the office, since the last fifteen years I've always booked the month of February. I was forced to explain my unusual behaviour, which resulted in the inevitable remarks such as "So what do you do, dress up as Klingons and watch Star Trek movies?". When I take February off, I just go, as we have only permanent staff on pruning and they are easily shifted to another pruning crew. But at the end of August, I have three maintenance crews, four mowing machines, a fuel truck, two water tankers, and all the paperwork that goes with them. I had to spend a day briefing my relief. To maximize the chaos, he will only be relieving part of my vacation and will hand off to another relief halfway through, which person is currently on vacation and will come back to my job unbriefed. In addition, we lay off a few of our seasonals at Labour Day as the workload declines. (We hire in four stages in spring as the workload increases, and layoff in four stages in autumn as the grass stops growing.) The layoffs are by citywide seniority, not just my district, so there are transfers between districts to balance the crews.

My Air Canada flight left Calgary International at 10h00 on August 31. Passengers are required to check in an hour ahead of time, but I was not bored by the wait. I had a good window seat in the Departures Lounge, and enjoyed watching the bustle out on the tarmac as the planes came and went. I was sitting directly in front of where my

plane would dock. On the tarmac were lines marked '747', 'DC10'. 'L50', and 'DC9', to show the pilot where to stop. Our DC9 nosed in, and I watched the catering truck reload the galleys and the fuel truck pump in Jet Fuel A-1.

I had booked a window seat. On boarding I found the seat was conveniently next to the emergency portal. Tuning out the stewardesses announcements (everything was repeated in French as well), I looked around at my fellow passengers. Several, I subsequently discovered, were going to ConAdian. One couple from Connecticut had been in Vancouver and were wending their way back east via Winnipeg. Lots of university students, some reading University of Winnipeg course calendars.

The green space between runways at Calgary International is not wasted. Hay bales were everywhere, and as we taxied along the runway, I saw a horizontal-drilling rig going for oil. (Calgary is the petroleum capital of Canada.) The plane flight gave me good views of the prairies looking southward, with scattered clouds. I had joked with my crews that if they saw an Air Canada jetgo overhead while they were on their morning coffee break, that would be me waving at the window. The plane was travelling too fast at takeoff for me to locate my depot. Just as I spotted the freeway interchange next to the depot, the plane banked eastward, and the depot blocked from view by the wing. For the next hour, the prairies crawled by underneath. Checkerboard farms, the Trans-Canada highway, irrigation canals, dissected badlands, glacial meltwater valleys, centre-pivot irrigation circles, dryland strip farms, and black patches of burnt rangeland, Lake Diefenbaker (Saskatchewan), unrecognizable towns. Occasionally we passed over clouds in solid sheets that reminded me of ice floes on a lake during spring breakup. From the ground, clouds look flat to me but in the air I could appreciate their 3-D shapes, especially cumulus and the little fluffy cotton balls, with scraps of prairie visible in between.

As we landed at Winnipeg, I was impressed by how absolutely flat the farms were, compared with Alberta which is reasonably level but heavily dissected by coulees, knob-and-kettle hills, and moraines. I can see why they have so much trouble with flooding in southern Manitoba.

After settling in at the Charter House Hotel and a quick change of clothes, I went out for a walk. I had the idea from looking at a street map that St. Boniface was a taxi ride from my hotel, but after going only a few blocks I saw it on the other side of the Red River. I walked over Pont Provencher; the whole trip was only twenty minutes on foot. I inspected the shell of the St. Boniface Basilica, which loomed over the city. This cathedral burned out a couple of decades ago. The towering stone walls were left standing and used as a courtyard for the new church built on the rear wall. The new church looks like any suburban church you've seen. It was quite impressive to walk into the shell of the Basilica and find myself in a huge forecourt with the new church huddled at the back end. The graveyard in front of the Basilica is filled with the elaborate tombstones of the 1800s. I saw Louis Riel's grave, my reason for walking over. His monument is a large bronze bust on a limestone pedestal, the eyes staring sadly across the Red River. The inscription was "RIEL 1844-1885". No other words and none needed. I wondered what thoughts went through Riel's mind as he stood on the gallows in Regina, Saskatchewan, on November 16, 1885, waiting for the hangman to pull the trapdoor lever. Riel won his first rebellion in 1869/70 and is recognized as a Father of Confederation for his part in the creation of Manitoba. He lost his second rebellion in 1885 in Saskatchewan, and was hanged as a traitor.

I walked around St. Boniface for a while. Going back over the Pont Provencher, I saw a decal stuck on a bollard, proclaiming "Francophonie Albertaine". The Winnipeg downtown district surprised me. I am used to Calgary's downtown, which is solidly skyscrapers. Winnipeg has some skyscrapers but not that many relative to the size of the

downtown core. Most buildings were low rise. Winnipeg is more like a small town in feel, rather than the large metro area that it is.

In the evening I went to the Convention Centre to get my badge. I hit the lineups at maximum peak but even so I only had a thirty-minute wait; had I come later in the evening it would have been five minutes. Registration at the con was quick and efficient. Once I got to the front desk, I was cleared in about two minutes. Standing in the line for 'S' surnames, we were joking that this line was all a bunch of esses. The goodie bag handed out with the badges included a special edition of PRAIRIE FIRE, a small-press magazine which devoted a 250-page issue to Canadian SF on the occasion of ConAdian. The edition for us had a special cover not the same as the edition going to regular subscribers. I'll review it in a later issue of OPUNTIA. Exiting the Centre, I met Don Fitch (and was to see him again in the fanzine room). We had a chat and he filled me in about Fanhistoricon earlier this year in Maryland.

In the evening I was cruising the bid parties, meeting Benoit Girard in the elevator on the way to the San Antonio in 97 party. The party had a centerpiece on the food table of a barrel cactus with grapes and carrots on the spines to make a face. Benoit and I got to talking with an American. We started off explaining our zine titles OPUNTIA and THE FROZEN FROG. That last one got us on Québec politics and we tried to explain Québec and Canadian politics to him. The St. Louis party was at the other end of the hall from San Antonio, so I went to check it out. I told the bouncer at the S.A. party that I was going to check out his competition; he told me to bring him some chocolate from there if I came back. As it happened, St. Louis was a rather boring party, their selling point being huge slabs of chocolate. But chocolate has been done to death, so I took an extra piece for the bouncer and went back to S.A. in 97 (who won the bid at the convention, doubling the vote over St. Louis).

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From here on, I'll try to write up ConAdian by activity, as a straight chronological account would jump around too much. I don't see how anyone could possibly complain the seating at the ceremonies was poor. This is the first con I've been to where the seating was arena-style, not the usual ballroom-style where people are craning to see what was going on. For those in the nosebleed seats or who refuse to admit that they need glasses, there was a large screen video. You could tell the experienced WorldCon visitors, because they lined up at the door hours ahead of time, thinking they would have to rush for the good seats. Instead, the doors were opened well ahead of time and one could, as I did, amble in a half-hour before the ceremony and still get a good seat. I sat halfway up from the stage in the centre seats. Everyone had an excellent view of the events.

The Opening Ceremonies began with a film on the large screen reviewing the history of WorldCons. When the stage lights came back up after the film, there was an aboriginal hoop dancer. He put on an incredible performance, manipulating dozens of hoops into shapes of birds and such, all the while dancing to the drumbeat of tribal music. He was followed by the Vitraz Ukrainian Dancers, whose robust leaps around the stage had me exhausted just looking at them. I had been worried that ConAdian would try to put on an amateur theatrical as past cons have done. Instead we had these professionals, who put on an excellent show.

The usual speechmaking. Barry Longyear did a good job as Toastmaster. Susan Thompson, the Mayor of Winnipeg, did the welcoming honours. She enjoyed the WorldCon so much, she came back later as a private citizen to take in the events. The Opening Ceremonies concluded with a brief film clip of the DC-X Delta Clipper in its test flight, the one where it shed bits and pieces of its fuselage but still successfully took off and landed. (And the shout

from the audience "So that's what happened to my luggage.")

The Hugos were awarded Saturday night, which ensured better coverage of the WorldCon in the press. I was sitting next to a past WorldCon goer who seemed offended by this. "But they always been given out on Sunday", he was whining. This only confirmed my belief that most fans can be separated from mundanes by the fact that a fan is more reactionary and unable to deal with change. I walked in just before the Hugos started. The minor awards should, in my opinion, be deleted from future Hugo ceremonies and lumped together into their own event. While I am the first to recognize the importance of history in SF, I found the First Fandom award, Big Heart award, Japanese Hugo, and such to be boring. Even the Hugos are no different than any other award, and only the prestige built up over four decades makes them news. I didn't keep track but it seemed that about half the Hugo winners didn't show up for the hardware. There was one interesting anecdote about the Hugos. Pro Artist winner Bob Eggleton wasn't there to accept, but when he was notified by telephone that he won, he was so excited that he rushed out and booked a plane in the middle of the night. Just prior to the Masquerade, he was presented with his rocket, having spent Sunday in transit to Winnipeg. The fan award Hugo winners are to be commended for their ceaseless propagandizing at the microphone, urging the audience to get involved in zinedom.

The Masquerade was Sunday night and had a larger audience than the Hugos. I got my usual centre seat at the usual time, but at the intermission went to the overflow room downstairs. The overflow room was a huge ballroom with closed-circuit TVs scattered around the room, such that those at the tables had a good view. The room was crowded even though the people could have been accommodated in the arena seats. The advantage was that the room had bar and food service, so we could sit at a table and eat.

The crowd waiting for the Masquerade was entertained by computer animations on the large screen. The event was late getting underway. At the Gripe Session after the con, the Masquerade comchair said that the complexity of the event was such that it would have had to start 16h00 to be done on time.

The one that the audience seemed to enjoy the most was a series of skits about the "Fan Who Never Returned". It began with a neo, who works his way up in succeeding skits to WorldCon Chair. There was a UFO which kept showing up and kidnapping the contestants, a running joke through the Masquerade. Another skit had the 19th Century League of Futurists re-enacting a part of 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA as if it were a movie trailer shown before the main play. Captain Nemo battled a giant squid; in the credits were "Robbie Cantor as the Squid". Andruschak would have been pleased.

At the end of the Masquerade, Forry Ackerman was presented with a plaque by the International Costumers Guild for starting the idea of costumes at SF cons.

The Closing Ceremonies came too soon. Where did the time go? While waiting for it to start, the audience played volleyball with dozens of helium balloons. Speeches, the passing of the gavel to Glasgow, which hosts the 1995 WorldCon. Then in marched a Highlander pipe-and-drum band of the Camerons, to provide a segue to Glasgow.

#### FANZINE ROOM

Well situated on the main floor by the entrance, it was at the head of a hallway to the meeting rooms and washrooms, so there was lots of pedestrian traffic by it. The cash bar located inside the fanzine room (run by the Convention Centre) was a magnet to BOFs and neos alike. I came to Winnipeg with a half-empty suitcase and went back home with it jammed solid with zines I picked up in the

fanzine room. At one end of the room were freebies and at the other were the ones for sale. Lloyd and Yvonne Penney presided over the room and did an excellent job. In fact, the fanzine room was more popular than the con suite, which was in another hotel on a side hall.

I contributed two zines to WOOFAPA #19, which was collated on Sunday. One zine was simply a modified version of OPUNTIA #20 in 8½ x 11 format, the other was WINNIPEG BLEEDS HISTORY, a oneshot about Louis Riel and the General Strike of 1919 in Winnipeg. WOOF is "WorldCon Order of Faneditors" and is run by Victoria Smith. She and a fan whose name I didn't get stapled while Andrew Murdoch and I collated.

The fanzine room was the place to come and go, get and leave messages, or just sit around and wait for people to show up. I met the Welches (KNARLY KNEWS), the Lynches (MITMOSA), and many others. Chatting with Alexis Gilliland, I wondered out loud if he might do an OPUNTIA cover for me. He said he would if I'd buy him a beer. I did and he did. This was used as the cover for issue #20.2, the index issue.

#### DEALER ROOM AND ART SHOW

The only problem I had with the dealer bourse was that I have not yet won the lottery and thus could not buy all that I wanted. I did manage to drop \$120 on books and will try to review some for future OPUNTIAS.

I didn't buy anything from the Art Show, not wanting to lug some grand painting back to the hotel, then spend the rest of the con trying to think how to get it home on the plane.

In between the dealer bourse and art show was an area of park benches and temporary landscaping where one could rest, and which became an informal meeting place.

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## PANELS

At ConAdian I reversed my usual procedure and spent less time at the panels and more at parties meeting people. A lot of the panels weren't of interest to me; not their fault, as I either had seen them before at other cons or just wasn't interested.

Society for the Preservation of SF: This panel was an outgrowth of FanHistoricon, and was hosted by Peggy Rae Pavlet. The emphasis is on the actual physical preservation of fannish materials. About a dozen people turned up for some serious talk and networking. One traditional method, donating stuff to a museum or library, is not recommended where the collection is peripheral to the purpose of the museum. The present curator might be enthusiastic about the collection, but the next curator might chuck it. Fred Lerner mentioned his collection is specified in his will. On other topics, colour photos do not last well, and are better replaced by B&W photos with descriptions or shot through colour filters for use as colour separations. FANCYCLOPAEDIA 3 has become too much work for one individual. Indeed modern fanhistories are beyond reach unless subdivided into specialties. Harry Warner may be the last one who could have done a history of an entire decade worldwide. Attempts at a 1960s et seq history would either be a monstrous book no one could read or else sadly incomplete.

Coming up at Smofcon 12 will be FanHistoricon 2, held in conjunction. The theme will be preserving conrunning history. Smofcon is December 2 to 4, 1994; details from Box 8442, Van Nuys, California 91409.

Soviet Space Disasters: According to one panelist, the #1 Soviet disaster was the end of the Cold War, since it resulted in the panelist being laid off from his job in the aerospace industry. (Another panelist was late to the panel; the moderator introduced him by pointing to the

empty chair and introducing him as a Virtual Panelist.) A videotape was shown of various Soviet rockets blowing up, including one scene where a technician fleeing the scene burst into flames simply from the radiant heat. The Russians lacked knowledge of spacecraft autonomy, particularly software. One panelist said humans would die everywhere in the solar system; that is part of the risk.

Star Trek parody: Okay, I admit it. I went to a Trek panel. I'm not proud of it, but I was bored, the zine room was closed, but the bid parties wouldn't start for another hour. The panel was actually a performance by a stage group that did not treat ST:TNG with the reverence some think it deserves. Before the play got underway, the M.C. warmed up the audience by having us do a few exercises while singing "Singing In The Rain". They were working without benefit of microphones, and between not hearing half and not understanding the other half, I left early.

1995 National Library SF Exhibit: Next year the National Library of Canada will host a major display on SF&F. It will not travel unless an angel can be found with money, but it will have a side exhibit at the Merril Library in Toronto. The panelists discussed the exhibit. Hugh Spencer, audiovideo curator, played a sample of what he has compiled, such as a CBC radio play of STRANGE MANUSCRIPT FOUND IN A COPPER CYLINDER, a 1973 adaptation of an 1800s story that is considered to be Canada's first SF. Allan Weiss (literary curator) remarked that early Canuck SF was mostly utopian, and later became concerned with political issues (invasion by USA, separatism) more than individual concerns. The exhibit will feature book material such as novels and anthologies but excludes short stories due to workload constraints. It is hoped to premiere the exhibit at CanCon 95 in Ottawa, the next Convention.

Post-Soviet Fandom: Yuri Savtchenko gave a brief talk

on the history of Soviet SFdom. Nobody like the official approved ideological SF; they preferred "wrong SF" which did not postulate utopian communist societies. Since the breakup of the USSR, people have been too busy struggling to survive to indulge in hobbies. While Savtchenko was talking, someone handed out flyers for a Klingon tour of Russia. I hope this is a hoax in such aspects as meeting with Russian trade officials to discuss importation of dilithium crystals. The tour leaves Minneapolis on December 22 and supposedly includes items as laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

One Language For The World?: This panel brought the Canadians in force. ANALOG editor Stanley Schmidt was basically thrown to the wolves when he suggested every country should have one universal language. Joel Champetier said that there was no need for one language since different cultures such as Québec don't need them. There is no point in learning another language if it won't be used frequently, and the learning will soon be lost. Since it is quite possible to live one's entire life quite well in a minority language, Québécois mostly don't bother about English. He didn't say it, but I'll add that is why most anglophone Canucks don't speak French. Most of us learned it in school, but lost it for want of use.

Another question was what the universal language would be. English is the most common language for a variety of reasons. Someone made the point that languages hospitable to borrowing words (ex. English) are more likely to spread since they are friendlier to non-speakers trying to learn it. It was mentioned that the European Community has so many languages to translate that some suggest Latin be brought back as a universal language. Not a bad thought. Artificial languages such as Esperanto and Loglan have no chance of being accepted. On that topic, Fred Lerner remarked: "Why would a planned language work any better than a planned economy?"

Studying a different language is not just a matter of

learning the technical details, it also provides an insight into other cultures and (insert obligatory SF content here) gives an idea how to invent aliens for a story.

Small Press Publishing: Small press publications offer a way to preserve classics that mass-market publishers won't do. The biggest barrier to small presses is distribution. Chain stores generally don't deal with them, but once the specialty stores opened, small presses had outlets. Panelist Jack Nimersheim said one problem in financing small presses is that venture capitalists are not interested in small \$75,000 deals as they are used to dealing in startups of millions of dollars.

#### PARTY TIME!

Best food: Kansas City in 2000 had roast turkey or beef sandwiches, sliced thick.

Best party atmosphere: Dead Dragon Inn, which was a hospitality suite converted into a medieval tavern, live bands.

Most of the parties were bid parties. There were a few like Frefan, for libertarians. I am not one, but I like arguing politics or, in this case, explaining Canadian politics to Americans. With help from another Canuck, we tried to explain the CSIS scandal.

At the Australia in 99 party, the great sport was watching people who didn't believe Dick Smith when he told them that vegemite should be spread thinly on the cracker. I'm told that vegemite is an acquired taste, and I agree absolutely. Also sampled a nice Australian candy called Violet Crumble, a chocolate-covered honeycomb.

The FOSFAX party was at a Chinese restaurant in the convention centre. The usual gang of suspects, such as Tim

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Lane, Martin Wooster, and assorted names I didn't catch. Anticipating having to explain Canadian politics again, I was caught off guard when asked to explain Canadian postal codes instead. (We borrowed them from the British, if you must know.)

A wait at some elevators, but every con has that problem, especially when fans try to crowd on twenty at a time. A standard procedure was to go to the top floor where there was a party, then take the stairs down to the other parties. I learned a long time ago to always specify a low floor when booking a room; I was on the second floor at the Charter House Hotel. One elevator host (they kept the lifts from becoming too crowded) was fond of telling fans getting off the elevator "Thank you for flying Place Louis Riel". At the gripe session, ConAdian staff said they tried to convince parties to stay on lower floors, but many chose higher floors. The hotels were within two blocks of each other, excepting a few for late-bookers. A fan who admitted he had booked late complained at the gripe session that he ended up in a hotel that was three whole blocks away from the convention centre, to which the audience gave him a sarcastic AAAAAAwwwwwww. For the truly lazy, there were rickshaws for hire everywhere. It was quite safe to walk the sidewalks of Winnipeg late at night; no homeless or muggers to be seen.

One neat idea at ConAdian was a passport, to be stamped with a sticker at bid parties or con events. Many put the stickers on their badges instead.

#### CANVENTION

This was a convention within ConAdian, or perhaps a better way to put it is to say it was outside ConAdian, as its business was done at the Winnipeg Public Library, three whole blocks away from the convention centre. I was at the CSFFA business meeting. The usual type of motions were or were not ratified, nothing you'd care to hear of.

Andrea Paradis, of the National Library of Canada, presented a brief on behalf of James Botte to have the next Convention in Ottawa at CanCon 95. This con would host a preview of the NLC's blockbuster exhibit on SF, not to mention the Aurora Awards. Theme of CanCon 95 is the history of Canadian SF, GoH is Dave Duncan, and the date is May 12 to 14, 1995, at the Talisman Hotel, Ottawa. A membership is \$15 from CanCon, Box 5752, Nepean, Ontario, K2C 3M1.

The Aurora Awards were presented in the gardens outside the Winnipeg Public Library. Breezy but mild, lots and lots of wasps buzzing around. Robert Runté, Fan GoH of ConAdian, presented the three fannish Auroras. He told the audience that he had a cold. He said he mentioned this because if he looked at a trophy before announcing the winner and suddenly started coughing, it was not to be construed as an editorial comment. The two Auroras for the novels category were presented at the Hugo ceremony that evening.

We nominees sat up on the stage. I had proposed to the others in the fanzine category that when the winner was announced, the losers should stand up, scream "YOU SON OF A BITCH!", and give him a one-armed Sicilian salute. It would have made a nice fannish legend, but in the actual event we just sat there smiling nicely and tried to remind ourselves that it was an honour just to be nominated. As physical awards, the Auroras are much better than the Hugos. The Aurora is a work of sculpture. From the top, the rippling sheets of metal spell out 'SF'. At side level, there is a cutout in the metal in the shape of a maple leaf, and the three-quarter view looks like the aurora borealis (northern lights).

The ribbons for Aurora nominees were black, the same as the ribbons worn by Hugo nominees, so we impressed a lot of congoers, at least until they read the print. The inscription read "Prix Aurora Awards", a typical method of bilingualism used in Canada, where French and English

words are run together in the same phrase or sentence. It was easy to spot the unilinguals, who would ask "What's a pricks Aurora?". Resisting temptation to come back with a snappy answer was the hardest task I have ever had. I noticed too that a lot of outlanders mispronounced the name of one con hotel as "Plays Louis Reel".

#### THE NEWS MEDIA

ConAdian was the largest convention in Manitoba, and it got tremendous coverage in the newspapers and television. Much of it was the usual type of coverage every SF con gets: the Klingons eating at a hotdog stand, an interview with a UFO-naut. What surprised me though was that there was a fair bit of coverage from the economic angle. The injection of several million dollars into the Winnipeg economy by money-burning outlanders did not go unnoticed or unreported. I stayed a night after the con was over, and while watching the late news on TV, saw a detailed and lengthy report on the benefits of the con to Winnipeggers. The locals may have been amused by our antics, but they were impressed by our spending.

#### LAUNDRYCON

1994-9-5

The Dead Dog party in the consuite at Place Louis Riel was rather dull to me. As I was walking down the hallway in the hotel, I happened to glance into the laundry room and saw Lloyd and Yvonne Penney doing their laundry. Going in, I also met up with Andrew Murdoch, who was one of the other fanzine Aurora nominees (for ZX), and several other people whose names escape me. We chatted for a while and some of us made occasional runs to the consuite to stock up on food and drink. I think we had a better group than the consuite.

#### NEWSLETTER

There was a twice-daily newsletter at ConAdian, although it seldom came out at the promised times. Someone could have made book by running a betting pool on when it would appear. Titled VOYAGEUR, it was afflicted with problems in the printing process. Photocopiers tend to fry if run fast and long, as several print shops discovered. But the final product made good reading.

#### AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

For the Hugos:

Fanzine - MIMOSA  
 Fan Writer - Dave Langford  
 Fan Artist - Brad Foster  
 Semi-Prozine - SF CHRONICLE  
 Dramatic - JURASSIC PARK  
 Original Artwork - USPS Space Fantasy booklet stamps  
 Pro Artist - Art Eggleton  
 Pro Editor - Kristine Kathryn Rusch  
 Non-Fiction - ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF (Clute and Nicholls)  
 Short Story - Connie Willis "Death On The Nile"  
 Novelette - Charles Sheffield "Georgia On My Mind"  
 Novella - Harry Turtledove "Down In The Bottomlands"  
 Novel - Kim Stanley Robinson GREEN MARS

For the Auroras:

Fanzine - UNDER THE OZONE HOLE  
 Fan (Organizational) - Lloyd Penney  
 Fan (Other) - Jean-Louis Trudel  
 Artist - Robert Pasternak  
 Best Other Work in English - PRISONERS OF GRAVITY  
 Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre) - LES 42,210  
 UNIVERS DE LA SCIENCE-FICTION  
 Best Short-Form Work in English - Robert Sawyer  
 "Just Like Old Times"

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Meilleure nouvelle en français - Yves Meynard  
"La Merveilleuse machine du Johann Havel"  
Best Long-Form Work in English - Sean Stewart  
NOBODY'S SON  
Meilleur livre en français - Daniel Serpine  
CHRONOREG

AFTER THE CON

1994-9-5

On Monday afternoon, I did a bit more tourist stuff, and went for a stroll over to The Forks, a park where the Red River and Assiniboine River meet. The park was very busy as it was the holiday Monday, and the farmer's market was packed. On the spur of the moment, I bought a tour on a water bus. It was impressive to see huge cabin cruisers on the rivers. You must understand that I have spent all my life living near Alberta rivers that are seldom more than a metre deep outside the spring floods, and which cannot support any boat beyond a canoe or jet boat. To see the big boats on a river the same width as the Bow in Calgary was astounding to me. As the water bus passed under the bridges, I noticed lines painted on the bridge supports, the highest about 10 m above the water. The bus driver told me they marked past floods.

CALGARY UBER ALLES

1994-9-6

My return flight to Calgary was filled with German tourists. I had the same window seat as on my way in to Winnipeg, which meant that this time I had a view looking to the north instead of the south. Instead of hay bales and oil rigs between the runways, Winnipeg International had purple asters and a row of Canadian Armed Forces Hercules transports. After takeoff, I saw Lake Manitoba and countless meandering streams and oxbow lakes of the southern Manitoba floodplain. Once the in-flight meal was served and half-eaten (typical airline food again), the Germans began roaming up and down the aisles, chatting

with each other and leaning over to take photos out the window. When Lake Diefenbaker hove into view and this was announced by their tour guide, there was a sensation and every camera clicked away. Since the lake is not a particularly unusual lake, I can only surmise it was due to the name. John Diefenbaker, born in Canada of German stock, was Prime Minister from 1956 to 1963.

After the lake came a series of brine ponds as we flew across Saskatchewan. The rusty red-brown colour of the ponds was fringed by a brilliant white streak of salt around the shoreline. Saskatchewan is one of the world's largest producers of brine shrimp, sold as aquarium fish food either freeze-dried or frozen. The Germans got another sensation when the badlands came into view. The badlands around Drumheller, Alberta, are grey-white. I could recognize that town not only by its shape but the bright red splash of the red-shale mine. Red shale is used for parks pathways and playgrounds; we use quite a bit of it at work, although our supply comes from Lethbridge.

Yet another sensation as the plane approached Calgary. The German seated behind me shouted "Sulphur!", and he pointed out the window at the sulphur mountain just north of Calgary. Natural gas in the Calgary area is sour, that is, it contains a high percentage of hydrogen sulphide. This is extracted by a processing plant north of the city. When sulphur prices are high, it is shipped directly to market by railcar. When prices are low, the molten sulphur is sprayed out on a storage area, where it solidifies. A flat-topped hill of sulphur tens of metres high soon arises. If prices rise, it is remelted and sent to market. The longer prices slump, the higher the sulphur mountain. One can tell the state of the economy just by seeing how high the mountain is.

I smiled condescendingly at the Germans marvelling over the sulphur mountain. Then I remembered my own reaction to a river in Winnipeg deep enough to hold a cabin cruiser. And on that note, we landed.

## ONE FAN'S BEGINNINGS

by Chester Cuthbert

My father subscribed to ARGOSY-ALLSTORY WEEKLY which published action stories of every variety. Murray Leinster, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Erle Stanley Gardner, and A. Merritt were among the most imaginative writers whose 'different' stories (as they were called before Gernsback categorized them as 'scientifiction') enthralled me and convinced me that imagination is the most wonderful human faculty.

Burroughs was my favourite author until I read Merritt's THE SHIP OF ISHTAR in 1924 when I was twelve years old. Merritt overwhelmed me; this book is still my favourite novel and Merritt my favourite author. My best friend bought BLUE BOOK magazine, and we traded for reading purposes, though we each retained our own collections after reading the other's. Only one bookshop specialized in SF and fantasy. I asked the proprietor why he could not find Merritt books for me. He told me they were all in the hands of collectors. I began to hate collectors even though I was becoming one because I realized that good books are always difficult to find.

I quit school in 1926 just before my fourteenth birthday and became a truck driver's helper at \$25 per month, so had little time or money for reading. Noticing a copy of WEIRD TALES magazine on the stands, I discovered it had published a story by Merritt which it intended to reprint so I began purchasing it in anticipation. This led me to the SF magazines and to secondhand bookshops in search of hardcover books.

For fiscal reasons the Canadian government banned importation of pulp magazines in the mid-1930s, the early World War Two years, and from January 1948 to March 1951. It was necessary to obtain from American dealers the missing issues after the bans were lifted. Since there were few SF books published, weeks might pass before I could find one I had not read. I wrote to people whose letters had

been published in the readers' columns of the magazines, hoping to trade reading material by mail. I had never entered a public library because I wished to build a personal collection of my favourite books.

One fan responded to my letters. Bill Parks was a telegraph operator for the railway in a small village in rural Manitoba, and had attempted writing fiction inspired by Ray Cummings. I had tried mundane fiction without success. I described our attempt at collaboration in the fanzine SCIENCE FANTASY CORRESPONDENT, which published the first part of Bill's story after mine had been accepted by Hornig for WONDER STORIES. Inflation of today will make it difficult for modern fans to understand that I considered cancelling my subscription to fanzines costing 15¢ because I could purchase a professional magazine for a dime.

My sole reason for writing was to earn money. In 1934, the failure of Gernsback to pay writers led me to join Wollheim and others in hiring a lawyer who succeeded in collecting, but charged a fee of 25%. Being the main support of my father's family as the only one with full-time employment, I decided that writing was too precarious financially as a career and that managing on a steady paycheck was preferable.

In the early 1950s, Jack Bowie-Reed, a publicist for the Progressive Conservative party and an SF fan, came to Winnipeg. He gathered together through newspaper announcements a few SF fans and persuaded them to form the Winnipeg Science Fiction Society. A university student was elected President and I was made Librarian-Treasurer. Meetings were held mainly in my home on Friday evenings because I was babysitting our first two children while my wife attended choir practices. Jack had tried to get several eastern Canada clubs to operate the Canadian Science Fiction Association, but these had languished and he asked us to assume its functions. I was elected President and we contracted to publish Alastair Cameron's

[continued next page]

CUTHBERTCON  
by Dale Speirs

FANTASY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM, five hundred copies of which were eventually distributed. This exhausted our funds and a projected newsletter was never issued. The CANADIAN FAN DIRECTORY, although nearly completed, was discovered to be obsolete because fans had moved from the addresses we had, so was never distributed.

The WSFS held formal meetings with a secretary taking minutes but the formality discouraged attendance, and the club became little more than a social gathering and finally a book collectors' clique. But for 25 years I functioned as Librarian, making deals with publishers and dealers for discounts on behalf of our members. My own collection was largest. I purchased for \$500 the entire stock of fantasy and SF of the one bookshop and established the first club library on a sale or rental basis in a bookshop which received a percentage of income in exchange for servicing the library. Insufficient income from the library caused the proprietor to discontinue the arrangement, and I had to move the books and magazines to my home. Since reading tastes differed, I had to maintain a large selection, but was able to buy small collections and expand my own collection as well as the duplicates which the members were allowed to trade for or buy.

Dwindling attendance, Customs problems, and time taken to mail books to members who had moved from Winnipeg culminated in deciding me to discontinue the WSFS around 1978. I had retired after 38 years in the insurance business. I devoted several years to reading and compiling a list of fantasy and SF books by Canadian authors, which I turned over to John Bell, who was assembling a second edition of CANADIAN SF & F. I have since spent most of my time reading. Inflation has made my collection valuable, but it has taken over most of the space in my home.

On the Thursday morning of ConAdian (which officially opened in the afternoon), I took a taxi out to the house on 1104 Mulvey to visit Chester Cuthbert. He and wife Muriel showed me great hospitality, and I count my visit as one of the high points of the Winnipeg WorldCon. He did not come out to the WorldCon himself, being Canada's answer to Harry Warner Jr., but was 'at home' for people to drop by on the weekend. While I was there his son Ray happened to stop by as well. Ray has taken over some of Chester's collection and was also a ConAdian member.

Chester started off by showing me part of his collection of books. Stack after stack of cardboard boxes filled the second floor (there were more books in the basement) and lined the staircase. Countless books, many of which were stuff that most fans can only dream of owning.

Back downstairs in the living room, Chester showed me a selection of records of Confandom from the 1940s through the 1950s. Jack Bowie-Reed, the Tory publicist, travelled extensively across Canada in the course of his job and founded many SF clubs along the way. Chester told me that if Jack knew he would be in town for a few days, he would place an ad in the newspaper inviting SF fans to meet and consider starting a club. Most of the clubs later died as the fans were more interested in reading SF rather than organizing. To name one sample of the records from Chester's collection, I saw the correspondence of the Lakehead SF Society, circa 1949 and based in Hamilton, Ontario.

Chester has done a lot in preparing lists and compilations about SF, most of which was done for others. He said he viewed his part in SF as assisting others with data, rather than taking an active part himself.

## CARL BRANDON AND FRIENDS

by Dale Speirs

I recently finished reading WARHOON 28. For those who think FOSFAX is a touch longish at 60 or so pages, consider a 600-page zine called WARHOON 28, collecting the works of Walt Willis and in the process providing a good fanhistory of the 1950s. Along the way, page 290 infact, is the account of a hoax put over by Berkeley fandom, who created a supposed fan named Carl Brandon. I don't intend to dwell on the actual hoax, but rather on something Willis wrote.

" ... I think Carl Brandon is too good to lose. ... Don't let Carl Brandon die! ... I appeal to you all to believe in Carl Brandon. Carl Brandon does not exist: very well, it is necessary to create him. Faneds! When you can't remember the author of a good quotation, credit it to Carl. Let him take the place of those old men Anon and Trad. Fan authors! When you write an article anonymously and it's good, byline it Brandon! Convention reporters! When somebody does or says something wonderful and you can't say just who it was, say it was Carl Brandon! And everyone, when you want to quote something good you say yourself, put it in Brandon's mouth! (A very useful way, I might point out, of avoiding such awkward phrases as "I said a rather brilliant thing the other day ...") And of course, when you contribute money anonymously to TAFF or some other good cause, have them publicly thank Brandon. Between us we will build up Carl Brandon to even greater heights and make him a living symbol of all that is best in fandom. All that is fine and good in us will be personified in Brandon; we will make him our ideal, our idol, our ghod. As we march into fandom's bright future with this living legend at our head, let our cry be "CARL BRANDON LIVES ON!".

This diatribe put me in mind of Karen Eliot, a collective pseudonym used by at least 100 people, probably more, as no permission was required to use the name. Karen Eliot's

writings will no doubt be indexed by some future graduate student doing a thesis on the underground art movement of the 1980s, and who will marvel at the wide range of opinions she held, from every part of the political spectrum. Karen Eliot is associated with a large cluster of zines that cannot be neatly lumped into a group as can be done with SF zines. Mail art, detournement, Art Strike, photocopy collages, and the Plagiarism bunch do not admit to a single coherent philosophy, and neither does Karen Eliot. She is not a hoax in the way that Carl Brandon was, nor do people hide behind her name in fear of the secret police. She is part of a movement wishing to eliminate the influence of a copyrighted world of Art with a capital 'A', where ego and money take precedence over creativity. Karen was 'born' in 1985, and despite the majority of underground zine writers wanting egoboo still quickly collected a large number of writers who were not interested in byline credit. Those taking the Karen Eliot approach are certainly not publishing for egoboo or money. They may be publishing under that name out of fear of libel suits or police arrest, or because they want their work considered without the influence of reputation (or lack of it) distorting the reader's and critic's views. Any Sfers who want to jump on this bandwagon, or perhaps Mike Diana, can just go ahead and use the name Karen Eliot, although I prefer not to receive locs from her. At least, not unless she has something really, really interesting to say that is printable.

Karen Eliot has not shown much interest in SF, but this could change. She might simultaneously publish one-shot zines denouncing cultural imperialism, praising Robert Heinlein, calling for public health insurance in the USA, and condemning governments for gun control.

[WARHOON 28 is a wonderful compilation of Walt Willis' articles and conreports, which have lost nothing in the passage of time. Look for it from secondhand book dealers specializing in SF books by mail. Price about C\$45.]