

SPACE CADET

#11

(or: The Aging Old Fhart Nostalgic Time Waster Gazette)



Lighting the Candles at the Cameron/Shaw Wiccan Wedding.



Saluting the Four Winds

The Space Cadet Gazette #11

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Oops!

I Mean:

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(2 to 3 times a year)

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(who no longer lives at)
86 Warrick Street
Coquitlam, B.C., Canada,
V3K 5L4

E Version Address as of 2008:
Apt 72G, 13315 104th Ave
Surrey, B.C. V3T 1V5

The Graeme can no longer be reached at:
Email: < rgraeme@home.com >

But as of 2008 can be contacted at:
< rgraeme@shaw.ca >

The Space Cadet Gazette is available for THE USUAL (i.e. in trade for your zine or in trade for your letters of comment), but I will accept cash at the subscription rate of \$2.00 per issue (U.S. or Cdn.).

Note: SC is now only available via free download from Bill Burn's excellent < <http://efanzines.com> > site.

SCG is open to submissions. I will consider anything which stirs my sense of wonder. No payment but lots of egoboo. Copyright reverts to contributors upon publication. I reserve the right to edit any and all contributions, and that includes LoCs.

EDITORIAL

Has it really been more than two years since I last attempted to pub my ish?

My last issue (#10) came out in October 1998. At 38 pages it was my largest SC to date. My 1997 CUFF trip report filled 10 pages, my LOC column 11 pages.

Big plans were afoot. Issue #5 of my zine CANFANDOM was complete and ready to be mailed. My research for my proposed GUIDE TO 20TH CENTURY CANADIAN FANZINES was proceeding apace. I was really booming along.

Then my world fell apart. My mother passed away in September 98 after a decade of physical and mental decline. What stove in my ability to cope was the realization that the depression I'd been experiencing for years was independent of my mother's illness. What I thought was the primary cause of my depression turned out to be a rationalization to justify it. I had done my best to help her. Now I suddenly realized I didn't know how to help myself. I was in deep trouble.

I gafiated immediately. I virtually shut down my mental processes in an effort to avoid any stimulus that might push me over the edge into a break down. I drifted.

Then I read in a fanzine how one person had removed the colour grey from her spectrum by going on Prozac. I went to my doctor and begged to be put on the drug.

Nothing happened for three weeks. Then, all of a sudden, little things no longer bothered me. I began to cope. I began to live.

In fact, I began to rethink my life, re-examine my priorities, decide what I could and should do.

To make a long story short, I quit taking Prozac, chaired VCON 25 in May of 2000, moved to a bigger place in July of 2000, got married (!) in September, and am currently giving a monthly series of lectures on various aspects of SF cinema at the Vancouver Planetarium. In short, I got a life,

Now I finally have the energy to tackle fanac again. I made a false start several months back, begging people to send me their ish so I could LoC them, but my request was premature. Apologies to all concerned.

So what finally moved me to return to zinedom at this time? Reading #7 of Andrew C. Murdoch's COVERT COMMUNICATIONS FROM ZETA CORVI. Suddenly I was reminded how much fun it is to be a Faned. The LoC column in particular washed over me with waves of nostalgia. I faunched.

So here I am.

Cheers! The Graeme

P.S. So what about issue #5 of CANFANDOM? It was ready, but then I noticed I'd printed an article complete with a DNQ section. Have to redo that page before I can send #5 out. It'll seem like something from another century.

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OUR WICCAN WEDDING

by R. Graeme Cameron



Bride Alyx dancing with Dinosaur

Yes. I proposed over the phone. I admit it. Not that I was scared of anything, you understand. It's just that I wanted to give Alyx my mother's wedding ring but I couldn't find it. I had put it in a 'safe' place. And I... uhmmm...

All right. I was scared. Besides, I had decided on a Thursday to ask the question and I couldn't wait until the weekend to do it. I just had to know right way. Besides, that would give me time to find the ring. My mother had given it to me before she passed away, told me to present it to the right woman at the right time. So I did.

I proposed Thursday July 29th, 1999. Alyx was somewhat taken aback, but after a moment of shocked silence, she said yes. On Saturday, not having found my mother's wedding ring as yet, I gave Alyx a ruby ring of my mother's as a token of my love. It turned out

to be her favourite gem, which I took as a good omen. The following Saturday I presented her with my mother's diamond wedding ring.

There was much to plan. She lived in Surrey and I in Vancouver, both in small apartments crammed with all the stuff each had collected over the years. Simply moving into a place twice as big as either's apartment would not be good enough, as we'd wind up just as cramped for living space. We needed a house. We needed to be able to afford a house. We needed to be able to afford to move. This was our first priority. We decided to put off getting married till September of next year, in the hope that would give us plenty of time.

Since Alyx's son Matthew would be living with us, we needed a three bedroom house. Such palaces went for \$1,400 per month on average, more than we could afford. But luck was with us. A friend of ours was moving to England for four years and needed tenants in her house she could trust. She was willing to let us rent her 1,300 square foot house for \$800, a sum within our budget. We eagerly accepted.

And so we came to live in South East Coquitlam on the slope of a hill overlooking Surrey and the American Volcano Mount Baker looming above the horizon. (If it ever blows up we'll have a splendid view.)



Groom plotting escape

Alyx moved in July 22nd 2000, and I joined her the next day. Bit of a tale in that. The truck the movers brought had a four ton capacity. Unfortunately, my personal goods, what with hundreds of National Geographics, hundreds of books and magazines, not to mention three filing cabinets and the BC Science Fiction Association archives, weighed in at about seven tons, or so they estimated. The truck was more than an hour late in arriving as it couldn't manage more than twenty klicks per hour along the Lougheed Highway. One would expect the movers to utter cries of joy upon arriving. Not so.

There was the little matter of our driveway. Apparently it is designed for cable cars.



Alyx displaying wings

Nothing else can get up it. Certainly not a moving van. The drive is about 70 feet high (and 'high', rather than 'long', is the more appropriate word). Very steep it is.



Imperial Wedding Puppy Jessie

The movers had to unload everything at the foot of the drive and dolly it all up into the garage and then up a steep dogleg set of stairs specifically designed to give them hernias. I, with my heart condition, could not of course assist physically, but I did my best to spur them on, reclining on a lounge chair in the shade of the garage and uttering cries of encouragement as they sweated up the slope. For some reason this seemed to darken their mood. They expressed concern at the thought we would be moving again in four years and indicated we should hire someone else when the time came. I thought this was very generous of them.

Good lads.

When all was said and done, the disgruntled movers having taken their leave, Alyx and I broke open a bottle of wine to celebrate our living in 'sin', since we weren't going to get married till Sunday September 3rd.

Round about late August it occurred to me the government would want a hand in this and I picked up a marriage license on August 25th, 10 days before the ceremony. Good thing I remembered.

I was never a great fan of the traditional church wedding, and not being religious, wanted something more personal. Alyx is Wiccan, and the Provincial Government certifies Wiccan Marriage ceremonies, so this is the path we would follow.

In addition, it was Alyx's desire to hold the wedding outdoors in Warner Loat Park in Burnaby where she had often attended SCA events. So I rented the park for the occasion. Only \$96.50.



Alyx, Graeme, Matthew & the Puppy



Celtic Accountant

Alyx contacted Wiccan High Priestess Maureen and Wiccan High Priest Todd to perform the ceremony. Alyx's friend Michael would supply the anvil required and beat upon it at appropriate moments.

What to wear? I mentioned that I had always believed that, as a member of the Cameron clan, I should wear a kilt at least once in my life. So Alyx insisted I wear one for the wedding. I had no money to rent or purchase one, but Alyx had another friend, name of Barry, who had a great Kilt, no less, from Clan Costco (or at least that's where he got the material from). Plus a Celtic clasp to go with it. Great! I'd be adding my Cameron Clan crest badge as well.

Alyx's sister Laura Clairmont helped her pick out the material for her wedding dress, which Laura would transform into a stylized dragon beautiful to behold. The body is forest green satin, with liquid gold fabric for the front and wings of gold organza trailing from the back. Red satin eyes lined with green sequin scales and a

long tongue of red and gold sequins down the front complete the image of the dragon. A unique and wonderful wedding dress. I'll never forget the moment Alyx walked into the living room wearing the dress in my presence for the first time just before we left for the wedding. One of many moments that day I'll cherish as long as I live.

As for my outfit, I wore a Scottish tunic of unbleached cotton underneath the kilt. The extraordinary thing is that Alyx made the tunic the night before the wedding. For awhile, I just wore the tunic. A great kilt needs more than an hour of pleating before it is ready. So Alyx spent much of the wedding morning ironing pleats into my kilt. To put it on, one must lie down upon the kilt and allow it to be rolled and tucked about one's body. The Scottish equivalent of formal wear, I guess.

But I had no appropriate footwear to go with it.

"You're not going to go barefoot to your own wedding?" gasped my Mother-in-law-to-be Clara.

"Why not?", I replied. "Most of my ancestors were too poor to own shoes, or socks. Might as well be authentic."

And that was the final wee matter to consider. What was I going to wear neath my kilt? Underwear? Or would I be going 'regimental'?



Niece Ivy crowning Alyx with Ivy



Priestess Maureen explaining Birds & Bees to Priest Todd

At the last moment, just before we set off by car to the park, I zipped into the bedroom and slipped off my underbriefs. So now you know what's worn under the kilt...nothing.

Mind you, a Great Kilt is a heavy and elaborate affair. For one thing, it's folded double over the belt which carries it. There's very little chance a wind will lift it. It was with utmost confidence, and a high degree of unaccustomed comfort, that I set off for the wedding.

It was a short convoy of cars carrying a small but merry group of friends and relatives to the park. Others would be meeting us there.

Along the way I noticed a two-story house whose side was painted with a house-high full-length portrait of Elvis. An omen! But what kind of omen? The spirit of Elvis watches over us. As a baby boomer who remembers when Elvis first burst upon the scene I felt curiously comforted.

I was very happy to note that the park looked like a grassy meadow surrounded by tall trees. The sky was overcast but bright, and the mossy grass cool beneath my feet.

Mind you, first my bare feet had to endure the pebbly gravel of the parking lot, which reminded why I had not gone barefoot since I was a small child, but the grass was cool and soothing.



Bride & Groom demonstrate for Priest Todd

There was a circle of stones about a pit of earth. Michael laid the anvil upon one rock, and the closest rock, covered with a blue cloth, became an altar bearing candles and pewter chalices. This became the focal point at one end of a circle formed by those attending. Alyx stood outside the circle to one side, I to the other.

The High Priest & Priestess went round the circle anointing the forehead of each guest in blessing. Next all held hands to complete the circle as a short prayer was uttered. Then, as Michael beat the anvil (signifying the forging of our relationship) to call us in, Alyx and I stepped in to the circle and came together before the altar.

It was now our turn to be blessed and anointed with Goddess oil (a blend of various plant extracts). Alyx's niece Ivy had fashioned two wreaths for us and she came forward to place them on our heads. I was surprised at how luxuriant and lush the wreaths were. I had always assumed classic wreaths were somewhat scraggly things, but not these wreaths. I began to see the attraction of this ancient European custom and regret that it is no longer common.



**Bride waiting to inform Groom
Mother is moving in**

I clasped Alyx's left hand with my right as Maureen invoked the Gods, calling on them to witness and sanctify our union. Michael began beating on the anvil, crying out: "This gold was created aeons ago, now I forge this gold anew!" This to symbolize the imminent creation of our union. We then placed our rings on each other's finger and kissed.

We pledged our vows to one another. Oddly enough, we have both forgotten what we said. I guess we were both in a kind of a daze at the fact our wedding was finally taking place and that it was real. The moment overwhelming us, our at least our memory cells. I remember saying something about our hearts speaking our vows for us, and above all I recall nearly bursting with happiness as I looked at Alyx when she stated her vows. The intensity of my emotion surprised me. I had expected to feel good, to feel happy, but I never expected to come close to losing my selfcontrol and shed tears of joy. I had forgotten that such joy was possible. I was so incredibly happy and proud to be marrying Alyx. I am a notorious cynic, and my appreciation of most things tends to be cerebral rather than emotional, but not on this occasion! It was a surge of intense joy which welled up from the depths of my emotions and flooded over me. I may have twitched and shook a little. Alyx may have suspected nerves, but it was just me trying to

remain dignified, calm, cool and collected. I nearly cut a caper, to use an old expression, but now was not the time to cavort, we still had a ceremony to get through.

We took a woven goldcoloured rope and tied it about our clasped hands, a symbol of our permanent and long-lasting union (6 months and counting!). It dangled halfway to the ground. I felt there should be a good-luck plumbob on the end but hadn't thought to bring such a thing.

Next High Priestess Maureen poured a measure of apple wine into one of the pewter chalices. She took a sip, passed it to Alyx to sip, in turn to me, then to High Priest Todd, and back to Maureen to complete the circle.

She then poured the remainder upon the earth as a libation to the Horse Goddess Epona, the deity which Alyx personally worships.

Next we leaned forward over the clothcovered rock altar to pick up lighted candles, I the one on the left, Alyx the one on the right, to jointly add our flame to the candle in the centre. This is what is happening in the upper picture on the cover. Note that High Priest Todd is taking advantage of the lull in his participation to study his lines. This was in fact his very first Wiccan wedding as officiating Priest and he was doing his very best not flub his lines. (And I'm glad to say he did very well.)

Both Maureen and Todd had numerous lines to speak throughout the wedding, invocations to the Gods, declarations of spirituality, instructions to those attending, admonitions to the bride and groom, etc., etc. Unfortunately we forgot to ask for a copy of the 'script', and what remains most vivid in my mind are my emotions and my visual impressions, so I am not able to recite the liturgy of the occasion. But I remember I felt fully comfortable and at home within the ceremony. This is only natural, given my belief that all religions are equally valid explorations of spirituality, and also my background in classical studies and ancient history. Plus I always considered formal church weddings to be somewhat sterile and remote. Standing in bare feet on grass, surrounded by trees and the open air, felt far more natural and personal to me. I am not a Wiccan. Indeed, I am basically an atheist (though not a militant one), but nevertheless this ceremony struck an atavistic chord deep within me, perhaps stirring long-buried ancestral memories. It felt so very right. And I felt thoroughly content. There was nothing weird or alien to the ceremony. It all flowed very naturally.

But of course, most of the people present (the majority of which were Christian of one sect or another -- one friend a Unitarian, another a Quaker, etc.) could not help but wonder what was going on. One young girl, for instance, was curious what we had drunk from the chalice, of which more later.

Our having lit the centre candle, High Priestess Maureen now declared us husband and wife. To celebrate this, and to signify the bride and groom crossing over the threshold into a new life together, our next task was to turn and stride across the grass to the opposite end of the circle and jump over the besom (or broom) of natural wood and straw which lay upon the ground. I wanted to run and take a flying leap, but Alyx (possibly mindful of how my kilt might behave) held me back to a rapid stride. We made the jump successfully to the applause of those gathered.

When we turned to walk back to the altar, Alyx's Borzoi Jessie (Russian Wolfhound, a critter that can look me in the eye when she stands on her hind legs) could contain herself no longer and, jumping over the besom (why not? She's family too!) hurled herself on Alyx. Bouncing up on her rear legs, Jessie accidentally bonked Alyx in the nose, breaking it and releasing a gush of blood. Matthew strode forward in his magnificent Italian renaissance falconer's robe (made by Alyx) to wrestle the puppy away, but the damage was done. Someone gave Alyx some kleenex, and she did her best to stem the flow and prevent blood from getting on her dress, but some blood wound up on her hands.

We returned to the altar, to stand before it with Maureen and Todd, to invoke the Gods once again, this time facing the four directions one by one, each time raising our hand in salute in honour of the four winds, a ritual



Bride instructing Groom as to his husbandly duties

which I interpreted to represent the formal placing of ourselves in the centre of our new reality, our new life together.

It was at this point that Kristi, the young girl I previously mentioned, noticed the blood on Alyx's hand and, inspired no doubt by Hollywood movies and other such misinformed sources concerning Wicca, immediately jumped to the conclusion that Maureen had earlier slit Alyx's wrist to fill the chalice with her blood, that her blood was what we had sipped, and that Alyx was still bleeding from the wound. She promptly informed everyone else, which resulted in a puzzled Alyx being approached by many people after the ceremony was over inquiring whether or not that was her own blood which had been served in the chalice. I doubt very many modern brides have ever had to deny drinking their own blood at their wedding. It renders our wedding all the more unique me thinks. But just to set minds at ease, t'was apple wine and nothing more.



'Biker Mice From Mars' Wedding cake

It consisted of a single layer with white icing ringed with golden roses and topped, not with the usual bride and groom figures, but with three of the characters from BIKER MICE FROM MARS, Alyx's favourite cartoon series. The brown mouse Throttle represented Alyx, the grey mouse Modo me, and the white mouse Vinnie was Matthew. I suppose you could consider this another unique aspect of our wedding. I doubt anyone else on this planet has ever had a BIKER MICE FROM MARS wedding cake! Thought it was pretty nifty myself. Glad Alyx thought of it.

The reception spilled on to our front balcony. I remember a group of neighbourhood children gathering at the foot of our lawn (70 feet below us. Remember how steep our driveway?) and shouting questions up at us like: "What's going on? Where did you get all the neat costumes?"

I recall leaning over the railing and shouting down an explanation, that it was a wedding party and that everyone had made their costumes themselves (which wasn't true, but it takes a lot to impress kids nowadays).

Joining us on the balcony were five members of the medieval band AD NAUSEUM who proceeded to sing with the addition of flutes and celtic drums. Very beautiful and harmonious music which wafted over the neighbourhood rooftops, no doubt to the sore confusion of many an occupant. I harbour the secret dream that it offended many a rap music aficionado who ranted "when will they cease that bloody noise", but I digress.

Meanwhile, on the deck beside our house, my good friends from university days, Stan & Katie Hyde, Brian Casillio and David Jones, sat with numerous new in-laws of mine and regaled them with tales of my habits and

There remained only the untying of the cord which bound us together (and which Alyx promptly draped around her neck), and the signing of the official documents to be sent off to the Ministry Division of Vital Statistics in the Provincial Capital Victoria to legally register our marriage. That done, we and everyone else spent some time posing for pictures, then piled back into our cars to return to our house for our wedding reception.

Twenty-five bottles of Michael's homemade wine awaited us, along with a feast prepared by Alyx's mother and sisters. At 8:35 pm (I know because a clock is visible in the photograph) I brought out the wedding cake from the



Sharkey aged 17

behaviour from when they knew me at UBC. To this day I have no idea what they told these good people, but I do remember all of them turning to look upon me with wide eyes when I ventured out on the deck. "I'm innocent!" I declared, but I don't know if anyone believed me.

I was determined to relax and enjoy myself, and as part of that consumed a goodly amount of wine meself. The last few hours of the reception are consequently a bit fuzzy in my memory (but then, so is everything else. I used to worry about it, till I realized I've always been like this).



**Bride finds large object
in Groom's kilt**

But I remember Alyx having a very good time putting on the music from THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW on our record player and dancing enthusiastically to THE TIME WARP with her good friend Craig.

I also seem to recall our pet Pleco 'Seth' leaping out of the fish tank on to the floor, probably wanting to dance, but when Alyx picked him up and examined him closely, he somehow wound up adhering his algae-sucking lips to hers. Bit of a problem that.

And circa 10:00 pm a horde of medieval drunks decided they wanted to meet our pet crow 'Rosen'. We woke him up and took him out of his cage to pass him around, very much to his annoyance. Crows are very grumpy when they're rudely awakened. But after a sip of wine he seemed to join in the fun. He stole a beakful of red from one person's glass, gave his head a shake, then dove his beak into another person's white, which he evidently much preferred. No one offered wine to him. He simply took it, which is the custom of crows, especially when grumpy.

Come to think of it, there were a lot of unique aspects to our Wiccan wedding, everything and everybody conspiring to make it a most joyous and memorable occasion. I shall never forget it as long as I live.

One sometimes hears of weddings spoiled by some heart-rending disaster or another, but ours was well-nigh perfect. Whatever life offers us, we shall always share this moment.

1939 WORLDCON

Recently an ad appeared on E-Bay for the Program Book for the 1939 Worldcon (the first worldcon!). The highest bid to that point was \$5 US. Under the name 'Sci-Fi Faan' I bid, as I recall, up to \$50 US. But in the closing minutes of the auction it went well past that figure, to something like \$160 US. Oh well. I couldn't really afford \$50 anyway. Still, it would have been neat and nifty to add the program to the B.C.S.F.A. archive's collection. Our oldest thus far is the 1956 Worldcon program.

The 1939 program book had a gold-coloured textured cover with three blue stripes descending from the left and another three ascending from the right. In between the words: World Science Fiction Convention

In the ad the actual program was reproduced. It's so much fun to compare then with now that I copied it down and repeat it here in the expectation it will be of considerable interest and fascination to you.

WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION
SUNDAY JULY SECOND (1939)
MORNING SESSION 0.00 AM TO 12.00 NOON

1. Informal gathering at convention hall.
2. Luncheon recess.

AFTERNOON SESSION 2.00 PM TO 7:00 PM

1. Registration in foyer.
2. Official opening of the convention.
3. minutes of the First National Science Fiction convention.
4. Address of welcome by Sam Moskowitz.
5. "Science Fiction and New Fandom" by William S. Sykora.
6. "Science Fiction, The Spirit of Youth" by Frank R. Paul.
7. Motion picture - "Metropolis", a scientific fantasy of the future.
8. Recess for refreshments (30 minutes).
9. "The Changing Science Fiction" by John W. Campbell, Jr.
10. "Men of Science Fiction" by Mort Weisinger.
11. "Science Fiction Personalities" – general introductions and discussions.
12. Supper recess.

EVENING SESSION 8.30 TO 10.00 PM

1. The Science Fiction auction. Science Fiction rarities contributed by famous fans, authors & editors, to be sold at public auction.
2. Adjournment to Monday, July third.

MONDAY JULY THIRD
AFTERNOON SESSION 2.00 to 7.00 PM

1. Call to order.
2. Reading of minutes of previous day.
3. "The Fan World of the Future" by Sam Moskowitz.
4. "Science and Science Fiction" by William S. Sykora.
5. "Seeing the Universe", lecture and motion picture, by Ruroy Sibley.
6. Recess for refreshments.
7. Science Discussions.
8. Dinner recess.

EVENING SESSION 8.30 PM to MIDNIGHT

1. The Science Fiction Dinner, in honor of Frank R. Paul, the best known and best liked Science Fiction artist.
2. Adjournment to Tuesday, July Fourth, Independence Day.

TUESDAY JULY FOURTH
AFTERNOON SESSION 1.00 TO 7.00 PM

1. The Science Fiction softball game. "Science Fiction Professionals" vs. "Science Fiction Fans", and adjournment to World's Fair grounds.

EVENING SESSION: 8.30 PM TO 10.00 PM

1. Independence day fireworks at New York World's Fair.
2. Final adjournment and --- Farewell.

This convention was held at Caravan hall on East 59th street in mid-Manhattan and about 200 attended. It was originally the brainstorm of Donald Wollheim of the New York SF club 'The Futurians', but he and others of the club, Johnny Michel, Bob Lowndes, Jack Gillispie and Frederik Pohl were victims of the infamous (among fans) "Exclusion Act" in which William S. Sykora, Jimmy Taurasi and Sam Moskowitz conspired to prevent them from attending. Why? Let me quote Frederik Pohl from his memoir THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS (1978):

"To be truthful, we pretty nearly had it coming.... Politics had something to do with the struggle, but not actually very much. Although we Communist Futurians maintained a high profile, we were never a majority in the Futurians (and actually, there were one or two lefties on the other side). What we Futurians made very clear to the rest of New York Fandom was that we thought we were better than they were. For some reason that annoyed them."

People who did attend included Forrest J. Ackerman and friend Morojo (Myrtle R. Jones), both of them wearing futuristic costumes, the first worn at any SF convention, still-just-a-fan Ray Bradbury, and writers Jack Williamson, Ray Cummings, Isaac Asimov, Otto Binder, Ross Rocklynne, and L. Sprague de Camp.

Also present were Julius Schwartz and Mort Weisinger who had published the first major SF fanzine THE TIME TRAVELLER beginning in 1932. At the time of the convention they ran Solar Sales Service, the first literary agency dealing exclusively in SF.

Attending as well was Charles D. Hornig who sent Hugo Gernsback a copy of his fanzine THE FANTASY FAN and was rewarded with the job of editing WONDER STORIES, at 17 becoming the youngest ever editor of a professional SF magazine. He was also the founder of the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE. At the time of the convention he was editor of three SF magazines, SCIENCE FICTION, FUTURE FICTION, and SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY.

Considering all the above, you could say that the Worldcon tradition of providing a point of personal contact (and self-promotion) for writers and editors began with the very first Worldcon!

GoH Frank R. Paul was indeed the most famous SF artist of the day, having painted more than 150 magazine covers for assorted Gernsback magazines and 12 for Hornig's. His significance, according to Artist Vincent Di Fate, is:

"He established the legitimacy of such (SF) subjects as a way of visually identifying the field at a time when SF was not yet a fully established form of specialized literature."

Attendees at the 1939 Worldcon pictured below are:

Standing left to right: Morojo, Julius Schwartz, Otto Binder, Mort Weisinger, & Jack Darrow.

Sitting left to right: Forrest J. Ackerman, Ross Rocklynne, Charles D. Hornig, & Ray Bradbury.



Photo Source:
"Alternate Worlds, The Illustrated History of Science Fiction" by James Gunn. Prentice Hall 1975.

'URBAN LEGENDS'

by Mary Frances Hill

"My purpose is not to ram the history of science fiction down people's throats, but to entertain."
R. Graeme Cameron (pictured)



A 'Sputnik baby' eyes other worlds

Who: R. Graeme Cameron

What: President of the B.C. Science Fiction Association and an avid lifelong science fiction hobbyist. Cameron gives monthly talks on *The History of 20th Century Science Fiction Cinema*, including video clips on historic and humorous contemporary science fiction lore at the H. R. Macmillan Space Centre to June 16th. The series continues March 17 when he speaks on *Robots in Science Fiction Films*. The April 21 talk focuses on *Visions of Mars in Science Fiction Films*, followed May 19 by *The Way the Future Should Have Been: What Hollywood Thought We'd Be Like Today*, ending with the June 16 presentation *Teenagers From Outer Space*.

Roots: Born and raised in Ottawa and Toronto, one of two sons of an Air Force Family.

Moved to Vancouver to study creative writing at UBC. "You can tell I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts because I work in a warehouse." First-ever sci-fi book was the one in the *Terry Corbett, Space Cadet* series by Carey Lowell. The book's first line: 'Stand to, you rocket wash!'

Spaced out:

"I consider myself a Sputnik baby. When Sputnik went up in October 1957, we were out in our front lawn watching. You can see satellites as pink dots drifting across the sky. I charged my friends 25 cents a peek through my little telescope, until my father caught me and told me to stop."

Kinda like the Grammys:

The last talk in the series is called *Teens From Outer Space*. "There's a movie called *Teenagers From Outer Space* and it's quite bad. The flying saucer (in the film) is made of plywood, the teenagers wore jumpsuits and running shoes, their ray-gun was essentially a flashlight pointed at the camera. The monster was made from the shadow of a lobster. It's a bad example of teen exploitation films, because the characters were such obvious geeks and teens couldn't empathize. In sci-fi there were films made for the teen market, like *I was a Teenage Zombie*, *I was a Teenage Werewolf*. In *The Giant Heli-Monster*, a teenager in a hot-rod with nitroglycerine destroys the monster... If you lower your expectations enough, you can have a really good time."

Otherworldly subversives:

"H.G. Wells was a socialist. He wrote *War of the Worlds* because he was disturbed by the oppression in several African kingdoms by the British army, so he turned the tables and wrote a story to show Victorian England what it would be like to be at the receiving end of overwhelming technology. But nobody picked up on that. They just thought it was a great yarn. *The First Man on the Moon* was about class structure. In *The Time Machine*, the workers evolved into a separate race, and the upper class was useless."

Dickens redux:

Cameron first caught the sci-fi bug when he was a child and regularly sat through three movies in a row, for 25 cents, at the Rialto, a fourth-run movie house in Ottawa. "It was over-run with nine and ten-year-old juvenile delinquents, smoking up a storm. I saw my first rat and my first bat in that theatre. It'd be really noisy with all those kids. We were lucky to get out alive."

Ed Wood, take note:

Some of the silliest sci-fi movies names include *Prehistoric Poultry*, *Biker Chicks Come to Zombietown*, *The Nymphoid and the Dinosaur*, *The Giant Claw*, *Robot Monster* ("they couldn't afford a robot suit so they used a gorilla suit"), *The Puppet Bird Marionette Attacks New York City*, *Attack of the Giant Leeches*, and *The Killer Shrews* (they were actually German Shepherds in masks)."

Onward and upward:

"My purpose is not to ram the history of science fiction down people's throats, but to entertain. The very best science fiction is really about today. You're making a comment today but extrapolating it forward a little bit in order to make a point."

The above appeared in the March 1-7, 2001 edition of the WESTENDER, a community newspaper serving the most densely populated section of Vancouver. I thought the reporter did a pretty good job of condensing her hour long interview with me and making it palatable to her readers. Just a few errors ;

- 'Terry Corbett' should be 'Tom Corbett'.

- 'Carey Lowell' should be 'Carey Rockwell'.

- 'satellites as pink (?) dots... never said 'pink'.
- 'Giant Heli-Monster' should be 'Giant Gila Monster'.
- 'The First Man on the Moon' should be 'First Men in the Moon',
- 'The Puppet Bird Marionette Attacks New York City' was simply my capsule description of 'The Giant Claw.'

I've been on CBC radio four times & CBC TV once. This was my first experience with a newspaper reporter. All in all, it came off OK.

OOK OOK, SLOBBER DROOL

From: RODNEY LEIGHTON

Editor of EAST COAST CRANK, & THE LEIGHTON LOOK

29 October, 1998

RR#3, Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, Canada, B0K

1V0

Thanks for sending the Aurora ballot. I was interested in seeing the ballot but wouldn't have done anything with it. If I had voted, it would have been for you. But I doubt doing so would have been fair. SC is not only the only Fanzine in that category (Fan Achievement, Fanzine) I have seen, it is almost the only one I have heard of. In the other category (Fan Achievement, Other), I have heard of Lloyd, of course, but I question awarding anyone an award for writing letters. Never heard of any of the rest of the candidates in that category. Or anyone else in any of the other categories... except ON SPEC. I dunno what this says about me, if anything.

(--Two years later of course you know quite a bit more by now. As for questioning letter writing for being worthy of an award, you know the answer by now. Nominated both you and Lloyd as letter hacks for this year's Auroras. Hope you both make it on to the ballot--)

On to SC#10 which arrived. Looks really good. Congratulations on the full size format. The photos were nice; too bad you couldn't manage colour.

I dreamt up this notion about a special get well card for Walt Willis, with various artists contributing signed art; letterhacks providing short signed letters and everyone providing photos and me collating the whole shebang. Figured, hell, given the time factors and the fact this is Fandom... It sequed into a sort of possible winter project but it seems too Fannish for me to undertake.

(--This was a wonderful idea. But alas Walter passed away not long after suffering his stroke. Still, a worthy thought--)

Uh, Graeme... surely you know better than to try to beat out a fire. Smother the thing. That said, you did a good job saving old bill. Not too certain you did him any favors but I suppose that is a difference between someone like you who considers any vestige of life valuable and someone like me who wants to die the minute I lose any major limb or function.

Hey, a Fan Fund winner trip report. Be damn, someone actually wrote one. Quite interesting. I enjoyed the photos and your reports of things and events.

I was amused at your anecdote about the chubby truck driver and the comment about all female fans being ample. Good choice of words. I used to have that belief. Then I saw pictures of Peggy Ranson and Paula Johanson and... Perhaps a fairly small percentage of female fans are willo-the-wisp types.

Judith and Joseph sent me a copy of the first ish of IRG. I don't understand Joseph lecturing you on how to do a letter column since Judith does theirs. I like the way she does it. But I like your way better. And Tom Sadler does it differently still and I like that the best.

I was most interested in Taral's HUGO comments. Methinks he qualifies as a BNF, no? Nice to see a BNF expressing my own thoughts. I don't agree (with your idea) that HUGO winners should be eligible only once. I do think that winners should emulate Teddy Harvia and withdraw their names from contention after winning once or twice. Skip a year or two.

From: CHESTER D. CUTHBERT

5 November 1998
1104 Mulvey Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba,
Canada, R3M 1J5

SPACE CADET #10 was indeed a jumbo issue; I hope it has not completely exhausted you.

(--It did, I'm afraid. Along with other things. Getting better now--)

The gulf between academia and fandom makes me wonder to what extent your collection possesses the reference books, many of which are published by university presses. These are expensive because the editions are usually small, but they are often more accurate than fan publications because they have benefitted from earlier work by fans and have had the financial resources to research more carefully. For instance, do you have copies of Everett Bleiler's recent books about the pulp era?

(--No, but I have Lee Server's excellent "DANGER IS MY BUSINESS: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE FABULOUS PULP MAGAZINES 1896-1953" which I recommend, and Paul A. Carter's "THE CREATION OF TOMORROW: FIFTY YEARS OF MAGAZINE SCIENCE FICTION" which is also quite good--)

Although I found SC#10 fascinating to read, I did not take notes and the days that have passed mean that I cannot remember whether there was anything I might contribute.

Congratulations on all your wonderful Productions.

From: ROBERT 'BUCK' COULSON

10 November 1998
2677 W. 500 N., Hartford City, IN 47348-9575
USA

SPACE CADET #10 produced a fair number of checkmarks, as well as a note to the effect that \$2.23 postage seems awfully high. Makes me happy that Juanita and I have become convention fans.

I never worry about panels; it's up to the concom to inform me about them. If they don't do that, I spend the time partying, which is more fun anyway. Though I suppose if I spent a lot of time preparing for them, which I don't, I'd dislike the waste of effort. It took a while for me to open a conversation with strange Fans -- I didn't talk to anyone at the first con I attended -- but after 46 years in Fandom it no longer bothers me.

Agreed with Barnaby Rapaport on Ed Hamilton, though I liked his wife's writing even better (she was Leigh Brackett). They lived in Ohio and used to come to Midwestcons back in the 1950s and 1960s. Ed bought a copy of one of my books and demanded that I autograph it for him, which was sort of overwhelming to a new writer.

Disagree with Taral on the Hugos. They're awarded on the same basis that we elect our rulers, which has proven to be the best method available. A select committee awards on the basis of its own decisions of quality, which probably aren't mine. To hell with decisions by the selfstyled elite.

Also agreed with you and Danner on legibility of reading material. And with you on hoping for the recovery of Walt Willis.

Otherwise, Juanita and I are planning for our last 2 conventions of the year; Windycon in Chicago and Chambanacon in Champaign, IL. It will make 13 for the year; a good lucky number. Our Fanzine is long gone; conventions have replaced it.

Right now there's wind and a cold rain outside and a leak in the kitchen roof that several repair efforts haven't stopped. At least, snow is quiet.

(--Alas, Robert has since passed away. He is noted for having won a Hugo for his longrunning and very popular zine YANDRO. He is sorely missed by all who knew him--)

From: MADELEINE WILLIS

19 August 1998

Dear Fellow Fans,

I am awaiting a visit from a consultant in geriatrics to hear what is happening to Walter... It seems to me he has had a stroke... You will understand if you do not hear from him or me... At the moment it looks like "Goodbye Fandom."

Dear Graeme,

I'm sure Walter would be pleased to read your fanzine but unfortunately he is at present recuperating.... Best wishes for your endeavours and also thanks for your appreciation for what Walter had to say about fandom...

(--Walt Willis, one of the great legendary fans of all time, former editor of SLANT, coauthor (with Bob Shaw) of THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, has also left us. He leaves behind a wonderful legacy, especially to be noted his collected works in the 28th issue of WARHOON. It was very kind of Madeleine to write a personal note to all the concerned fans who wrote to her. Bob Shaw has recently passed away as well. AndMae Strelkov...all since my last ish. Sig

E VERSION AFTERWORDS

Even if you are a long time reader of Space Cadet, this is the very first time you have seen this issue #11. At the time I prepared it, I was in the throes of a bankruptcy and every spare penny had to go to creditors. The realization I was not able to afford to print and mail this issue effectively put a halt to any further issues.

Incidentally, here in British Columbia, declaring bankruptcy legally prevents your creditors from harassing you, but does not mean you are 100% let off the hook. First, it costs money to declare bankruptcy. If you're completely broke, you can't do it. Secondly, your bankruptcy overlord (I forget what they're actually called), after much arcane ritual and consultation with the Gods, probably with Hades and Pluto in particular, announces your personal formula for salvation, ie: the percentage of money owing and how many months you have to acquire it and fork it over. If you fail to meet the amount required, all bets are off and the creditors can take you to court and demand more. In fact, even if you DO meet the requirements, they can STILL take you to court and demand more. It is to arrgh!

However, in my case the amount of money was a molehill to my creditors (though Olympus Mons to me!), and my case was deemed "through no fault of your own". In short, the family income had experienced an unexpected and permanent downturn, with the consequence I could no longer pay my bills AND lower my debt. I was suddenly faced with one or the other, but could no longer do both. The fact that not much money was involved (or so I was told), that I was not one of those unscrupulous greedoids who sets up a bankruptcy in order to walk off with scads of ill-gotten gains (I've never possessed scads of gains, ill-gotten or otherwise), and above all, the fact that I paid off every penny required and on time to boot, spoke well in my favour. My final time in court took only minutes, and I wasn't even present. It was a simple declaration by my overlord before a judge, and a rubber stamp approval of my debt free status and removal of my creditor's rights to recoup.

Problem is, you then have no credit rating for seven years. Can't get a bank loan. Can't get a credit card. Try being a 21st century kind of guy and yet restrict yourself to living off your income. Almost impossible to do! And this was BEFORE the world wide credit crunch! So I lived from pay cheque to pay cheque, but at least not incurring any new debts.

And then I got mugged in April of this year (2008). Got punched and kicked in the head and chest at least a dozen times (stopped counting after a while), and lost all most of my ID. Didn't lose any money though, didn't have any. And no credit card lost either, didn't have any. I now hate living in my neighbourhood, but no need to repeat myself, I covered all this in a WCSFAzine article.

The plus side is, while at my bank picking up a new debit card (I cancelled the old one even before the police arrived in response to my 911 call) I hazarded a request to apply for a credit card, not realizing that sufficient time had elapsed since my bankruptcy discharge as to allow them to give me one. Huzzah! I can now reserve a room at VCON. As a result of having a credit card, I'm in a bit of debt most of the time, but so far I'm adhering to my policy of paying off the card 100% each and every month. So, given my income, I never owe all that much, the card being reserved mostly for emergencies. Mind you, the hotel bill for VCON 33 will disrupt my financial planning as it will take several months to pay it off, but it will be worth it. A credit card does represent a certain 'freedom', providing you don't abuse it. Now if I could just figure out how to actually SAVE money...

Please feel free to LoC this and previous issues at this site. I intend to publish SPACE CADET #12 before the end of the year and resume my former quarterly schedule. WCSFAzine I do for fun, yes, but it's in essence a clubzine. SPACE CADET I will do for personal, leisurely fun, for relaxation.

Cheers! The Graeme, who is happy to receive LoCs at < rgraeme@shaw.ca > Sept 14, 2008