



CORFLU COBALT PROGRAMME BOOK
WINCHESTER, 19-21 MARCH 2010

THE CO-OPERATIVE COBALT: SANDRA BOND

Welcome to Winchester, if you're reading this programme book at Corflu as Ghod and nature intended.

On the other hand, if you're finally opening this publication after your return home as so many people do, welcome home from Winchester.

In either case, we hope you will have – are having – had – will be have having had – (Good grief, this is as bad as trying to write a story about time travel) a good time. No, scrub that; there are lots of conventions where one can have a good time, but there's only one Corflu a year, and we think and hope you should be about to have, or having, or... (eight more hypothetical future perfects and past future indefinites deleted) a *superb* time. A Corflu time.

Many of you are Corflu regulars; either North American fans who are regulars at Corflu in its more usual habitat of your continent, or British fans who regularly make the journey across the Atlantic, taking advantage of our scientifically shrunk planet of nowadays to go all that way just for a convention.

Others will be British fans who may only have been to the one previous British Corflu, or to none at all.

What we've organised here is an event which we are confident will satisfy you all, whether you've been to every Corflu ever like Ted White or whether it's your very first like David Haddock, whether you're a seasoned old campaigner like Art Widner or a young shaver like John Coxon.

Because Corflu is the fanzine fan's Worldcon, as has been observed by many more than one commentator, and as such it's only right that we should – while eschewing the huge media circus that the Worldcon has become over the years – focus on the subject which has brought us all together, namely science fiction fandom's fanzines, just as the Worldcon focuses on science fiction in general; while at the same time attempting to ensure that there's something there for everyone attending, from those who wish to engage in Serious Debate about the future of fanzines as an art form to those who want to play silly games and drink beer in congenial company. Not that those two extremes aren't combined in the same people quite frequently – your scribe, for one.

I think it's fair to say that, notwithstanding the inevitable occasional bloop and blip that cannot help but arise when more than one person combine their strengths to organise any event in the field of fandom or out of it, all of us involved in running Corflu have had a tremendous time doing so. We expected we would when we first got together to begin plotting, and we've been proved right; like Edward Lear's pelicans, we think so then and we thought so still.

Whether fandom be a way of life or just a goddamn hobby, it is, as has been observed, a goddamn *good* hobby. And by the same token, Corflu is a goddamn *good* tradition. If it weren't, it wouldn't have been running for twenty-seven years. We have every confidence that news of a twenty-eighth in the series will be announced this weekend; keep your ears open.

It only remains for me to sign off this page – not forgetting to thank **D WEST** for cartoons herein, **HARRY BELL** for the front cover and **PAT MEARA** for the back – and urge you to enjoy everything about the convention – the hotel, the panels, the fanthology, the DVD, the beautiful city of Winchester, and even the rest of this programme book.

It's been a blast.

– Sandra Bond

on behalf of: Rob Jackson, Graham Charnock, Pat Charnock, John Hall, Ian Maule, Linda Krawecka, Claire Brialey, Mark Plummer, Robert Lichtman and Mike Meara

FANZINE FANDOM: THE CURVING TIMELINE BY ROB JACKSON

We can cope with thinking of the future. In fact we should be past masters at it. Are we not slans? So a bit of what-if thinking and timebinding about how fanzine fandom is going to evolve might be worthwhile.

But first, let's take a brief backward look at what has gone by, some of it not to return.....

Bye-bye to zines in ditto, in hecto, or in hand-composed letterpress. Bye-bye, certainly, to zines typed with thick wedges of carbon paper so that you could just about manage 6 copies of each page. Bye-bye to round-robin postal exchanges of letters or zines or articles or stories.

Bye-bye, almost certainly, to techniques which were state-of-the art when a lot of members of this Corflu, and many of the con committee, were young fans. Bye-bye to mimeo, to cutting up electrostencils and sticking them into the main stencil with Sellotape. Bye-bye to slipsheets and to gloriously inky fingers. (Don't lick them.) And bye-bye to Corflu itself!

Bye-bye to photolithography – though not everyone has yet said bye-bye to cutting up retyped articles or LoCs into bits of typed sheets sometimes only a couple of lines high, jigsawing them with artwork, and getting rather high on Cow Gum vapour before using Sno-Pake or Tippex to stop the scissor lines showing when the camera copy is processed. If you get your zine photocopied, maybe you still do all this.

Bye-bye to only being able to keep routinely in touch by letter or fanzine, and to the days when a transatlantic phone call was a hugely expensive luxury, or an emergency. Only twenty years ago, the very act of dialling a transatlantic phone number was so exciting that it would give me palpitations.

And when the FAAn Awards first started in 1977 – not to mention Corflu in 1984 – the idea of a category for Best Fan Website would have brought the question: what's a website? Emails then were strange futuristic things only mentioned by sf writers, or in military or university research departments.

But now, of course, anyone in any kind of professional or office setting finds their job unworkable if they don't keep up with their emails. A few years back, emails gradually made the transition from just being Really Useful to being compulsory. I used to say to Luddite medical colleagues at my work that saying "Sorry – I don't read emails" was like saying "Sorry, I don't believe in phones; you'll have to send me a letter." Might as well insist on a carrier pigeon. Though where it is not part of one's job, there are still one or two who prefer the traditional ways – fans are ~~strange~~ individuals.

And the ways we do things in fandom have transformed in parallel. Where are we now? I won't go on in detail about all the different types of electronic chat; whether you are on a few e-lists, do a blog, keep up via LiveJournal, Twitter, Facebook, other IM services or individual emails is in a way irrelevant. One way or the other, we are on a merry-go-round of chat that sometimes spins round like a Catherine wheel. Until, that is, we hop off for a few hours' rest. (At first I mistyped that as reset – maybe I was right the first time.) Compared with 30 years ago, life, and our knowledge of our fannish friends, is almost instant. John Brunner was here or hereabouts when he wrote *The Shockwave Rider*.

In the midst of this social and intellectual whirl, why are we still celebrating the fanzine?

Yeah, I know, the fanzine is a form of publication which started out by discussing, supporting, celebrating and helping to develop a form of literature which almost uniquely marries science and art and trains our best and most adaptable minds to cope more flexibly, imaginatively and creatively with whatever the future might throw at us. And yeah, I know that out of that grew a brilliantly friendly and supportive social scene that helped many of us here make sense of our lives and even meet our life partners. No small achievement.

But everything happens so much faster now. We can discuss sf, keep in touch with our friends and meet new ones, including even life partners, online. What good does it do to maintain "The Fanzine" as a form of publication or an art form?

We are starting here to ask the same question as is puzzling all magazine and newspaper publishers and editors who can also distribute the information, wit and wisdom (oh all right then, unreasonable rants and ignorant prejudices) of their writers and the beauty and visual drama produced by their artists and photographers onto computer screens around the world instantly, instead of printing and distributing lots of paper, using up lots of petroleum products in the process.

What is the difference?

Paper publications are discrete objects, and are (relatively) permanent – a lifetime of years, maybe. Their material is in a set sequence (they are called pages, natch) – so the editor can lead his/her readers in a series of different directions if he/she so wishes. If you post them to a recipient, they either read them and maybe store them, or make a conscious decision not to bother, and maybe to throw the thing away. (What a lot of newspaper supplements pass through the Jackson household unread! It's good for the recycling industry, at least.)

Online publications don't have to be any of the above. They can be cheerfully shapeless (or at least non-linear) and ephemeral. Which may not be new – is a blog with comments really any different from a personalzine with LoCs, or an apazine with mailing comments? But they can be made to be just as structured and just as permanent as paper publications; that depends on the vision of the editor and the persistence and technical support of the webmaster.

Fanzines are well on the way in their migration to the next format – the paperless fanzine. The best known ones within fannish sf fanzine fandom are *el*, *The Drink Tank*, and the various recent Arnie Katz/Vegant publications, *Vegas Fandom Weekly/Home Kookin'*. But these are the ones whose editors think of them as fanzines, and call them by that name – they have all grown out of the fanzine scene that has been celebrated for the past 30 years or so by the FAAn Awards and by Corflu. Their acceptance was confirmed last year by *el*'s well-deserved win of the FAAn Award for Best Fanzine; the voters – or at least a majority of them – were obviously not bothered at all by the fact that *el* only sees print if its online readers choose to run the thing off themselves.

But these are the publications that are called fanzines, and are structured something like a paper fanzine. Are we, as fanzine fans, going to continue to support and nurture only this sort of thing, a structured publication with a defined (even if sometimes irregular) schedule? Or, as the online scene continues its inevitable diversification, are we going to broaden our horizons?

I am daydreaming about some new FAAn Award categories. Best Blog. Best E-List. Best IM Service. Maybe we will eventually need to nod to the traditionalists amongst us with a separate award for Best Paper Fanzine, as more and more fanzines are purely published online. It is just as well that the Best Letterhack award has been renamed the Harry Warner Jr. Memorial Award for Best Fan Correspondent, as paper LoCs have almost disappeared.

So where is the fanzine scene that we celebrate going to go, how is it going to develop? Just at the moment, in the UK at least, there is a resurgence of paper fanzines (or paper-first fanzines) published by fans of a Certain Age. These are also available online for the most part, which is just as well. If they are to sow the seeds of their own successors it must surely be an online development, as this is now where most new sf enthusiasts make their discovery of the social scene of which we are part. Some come to cons and discover fanzines there as paper publications – but the online scene is so vast, and so fast, that there is no comparison between the outreach potential of the two formats. Fans who come to fandom this way will probably think of the word fanzine as like a blog, but on paper.

In Corflu Cobalt's third Progress Report, we reprinted Bob Shaw's brilliant and prescient piece about the development of fandom, *When Fandoms Collide*. He concluded with the wise words that fandom started as a village but had turned into a city by the time he wrote. He was writing in 1981. If he were alive now, nearly 30 years later, I am sure he would have allowed us to extend the metaphor: fandom is now a small country.

So where are we in this country? Are we going to continue to call our communications about sf fanzines?

Or are some of them going to be blogs about sf, fandom and fans? Some of them may be blogs that are called fanzines, or blogzines. Will we who attend and organise Corflus continue to be the main supporters of this literary endeavour, or will another sub-fandom, called sf blog fandom, arise and move into this territory? If we really are slans, I for one am very hopeful we will continue to move with the times – but we continue to need the new fanzine fans, blog fans, call them who you will.

Oh, and talking about blogs, mine's a blog. Do you think the barman knows the recipe?

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REPRINT FEATURE: INTRODUCED BY SANDRA BOND

Of course, Corfu Cobalt has sponsored the production of a fanthology of British fanwriting of the last fifteen years, and it's a cracking piece of work. But as you all know, SF fanzines in Britain date back as far as the 1930s – the 1920s, if like Ken Forman you class Walter Gillings' school magazine as one...

We've presented in our Progress Reports three superb pieces of the art which date from before the period from which the Corflu fanthology draws its material, by Roy Kettle, Rob Holdstock and Bob Shaw respectively.

Now for the programme book we look still further back, to the year of 1954. Fifty-six years ago.

Before you plunge into the piece on the next page, stop and think a moment. How different were things then?

Nowadays, many British fans reading probably think little or nothing of boarding a plane to take them over to Corflu or the Worldcon in the USA – maybe even both in one year. It was, of course, not always thus.

In 1954, even though science fiction fans turned their eyes on the skies and dreamt of routine travel between planets or galaxies then as now, in Britain travel was a different matter. The first British motorway was still five years in the future. There were, of course, railways – in those days before the Beeching axe, there were many more than there are now – but travel on them was not inexpensive. And as Bob Shaw pointed out in "When Fandoms Collide" back in our final PR, most fans of that day were not blessed with a large disposable income.

It begins, then, to become a little clearer why the decision to hold the 1954 annual British SF convention in Manchester rather than in London like its several immediate predecessors was a controversial one, and one which a good many London and south-east fans were not wholly pleased about. Never mind that the Manchester fans had a reputation for being serious, constructive and dull, and that they had no track record of organising any event so large as a weekend convention; how were the London fans to get there in the first place?

Fans being fans, they clubbed together and found a way. What follows is the story – no, the saga, it deserves no lesser description – of a bunch of fans, two cars, a taxi, a motorbike, and a twelve-hour convoy of mishaps and misadventures.

Next time you board a plane to a convention, or even drive your car down a well-maintained motorway with ease and relaxation with a con hotel as your destination, remember these pioneers.

I need hardly introduce Vince Clarke, the author of this piece, as one of the best-respected and most fondly remembered of British fans from 1948 to 1960 and again from 1982 to his death in 1998. Vince, during those two fannish eras, did just about everything it was possible to do as a fan, and did it with an unswerving love for science fiction, for fandom, and for fans. He was, I might add, directly responsible for my recruitment to the world of fanzines and my ongoing involvement therewith. An archive of his fanzine SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS – fascinating reading – may be found online at <http://www.gostak.org.uk/sfn/index.htm>.

SOME NOTES UPON THE LONDON FANTHROPOLOGICAL EXPEDITION, 1954... BY VINCE CLARKE

I) THE PARTY ASSEMBLES

I arrived at the Base Camp, located in a rather lofty neighbourhood to the South of the Park of Hyde, and received a warm welcome from Professor Stuart Mackenzie, EX.ST.; the Professor was in the midst of duplicating passports for members of the expedition, had broken the socket of an electric light, and asked me to hold a bulb against the bare contacts until he had finished. I received a third-degree burn on the thumb and index finger of my right hand, but a liberal application of tannin (internally) from the Professor's charming wife alleviated the pain, and I was soon welcoming and being welcomed by other members.

It seemed wise to take the minds of some of our younger members from the rigours ahead, so whilst Professor Gillings was left to guard the equipment and arrange for constant supplies of refreshments I organised a small working party to staple the first number of this journal. We had in fact completed it the previous weekend (at an all-night session the previous Sunday) but Doctor Charles Harris had objected to the back cover on the grounds that it was rude, and not wishing to trespass on the worthy Doctor's special field we had re-cut it.

By ten o'clock the atmosphere could have been cut with an ice-axe. Flight-Lieutenant Brunner and Pilot Officer Peter Taylor were assisting with EYE, encouraged by Sir Norman Wansborough who had looked in to wish the Expedition ghod-speed before following an independent trail to the North in the tracks of some fool-hardy mid-nineteenth century railway engineers; Professor Mackenzie was writing out passports which were bring assembled by Doctors Shirley Marriot and Cathie Youden; Sir Edward Carnell was seated at a portable typewriter writing one of his Johnsonian essays under the nom de plume of "John Carnell"; Professor Tubb sprawling in a rather undignified position on the carpet perusing a large map; Sir James Ratigan, the noted artist, was questioning Judge Newman regarding the liquor position... Sir James *worries* about such things, but he was reassured. There was some slight concern over other members of the party, and a taxi which we were to have used was still being renovated in a garage, but in the present mood of the expedition we were quite prepared to trek to the outback on foot.

However, by eleven-thirty Lt.-Colonel Buckmaster and his wife had arrived with Lord Bulmer, Chairman of the governing board of NIRVANA and *his* wife in the Colonel's limousine, and the taxi had arrived with several people who had come to wish us Ghu-speed. Last to arrive was Prof. Campbell, fcs, frhs, msci, fbis, etc, on a two-wheeled vehicle; and we began to carry piles of equipment outside and tie them to the roof of the taxi... all except the bottles, which Professor Tubb made his particular charge. I donned a kit lent to me by Mr. Brian Varley (an ex-editor of SPACE TIMES), causing shrieks of innocent mirth amongst the other members. I looked to the North, and a chill of apprehension swept over me. How soon would this laughter be changed to tight-lipped solemnity in the face of the overwhelming dangers that confronted us!

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Okay, that's just to demonstrate how I *could* have written it. But this is quicker...

Pete Taylor finished tying the luggage on top of the taxi and the passengers started to get in. Vandy (the driver), a friend of hers (a non-fan, Steve), Cyril Fleisher, BIS-sf enthusiast through whose kindness we were borrowing the cab, *and* his fiancée, Dave Newman, Shirley Marriot, Walt Gillings, John Brunner and Cathie Youden got in. Also Pete Taylor, who was being given a lift to the station. We all looked at the taxi. We wondered if it had an extension in the fourth dimension. It was only carrying 7 on the trip itself, but with all the luggage... It was an ex-London Taxi, which meant that it had probably been on the road for 20 years and

doing 5 miles a day during that time. We marked down the convoy speed from a possible 35mph to a probable 25mph.

It was now half past midnight. Everyone was milling around on the pavement and lights were going on all over the square, and people were waving goodbye from the windows. At least, I *think* they were waving goodbye. Of course, they might have been catching moths. It seemed to be time to go. I got on Bert's bike, clutched at the beard, the thing whined and moved (the bike, not the beard) and we were off for the first rendezvous, on the Northern outskirts of London. It seemed incredible; an utterly fannish thing actually happening.

I'd never ridden on a motor-bike before, but it didn't seem too bad once I was used to leaning with the curves instead of into them as I do on a cycle. We went through one red light but that was only because we couldn't be bothered to wait for it to turn green, and not because Bert is a bad cyclist. We all separated on the way and reached the rendezvous individually. The taxi was a poor last, confirming our darkest suspicions. But... what the hell. It was carrying fans to a convention. We set off again, leaving London behind, the headlights sweeping between hedge-bordered fields. The stars began to show instead of the neon-light glow, and it became colder. I had a tendency to slip backwards every five or six miles, but the rush of cold air was waking me up. I actually began to look forward to partaking in the Con.

We rendezvoused at an all-night cafe, an incredibly tattered place in, I believe, St Albans, with a ceiling that looked as if someone had been swatting flies with a pick-axe. Someone made a sixth-fandom crack about it looking like an Epicentre ceiling. We compared notes. Ted Tubb's car was going well, the taxi had been chugging along peacefully, the Buckmasters' car had a weak spring in its rear axle and had also been slowly suffocating its occupants with puffs of blue smoke drifting up through the floor but was all right, and the motor-cycle, only 125cc, had been showing itself slower than expected, with two on board. We set the next rendezvous, and Bert and I swept off.

It became colder. When I looked over my shoulder to watch for the others I'd see Mars shining brilliantly in the southern sky. I thought feelingly of the men who'd be crossing outer space to get there. At least the trip was going to give us some local atmosphere for writing stories. We chugged on, diving through mist-filled hollows, passing the occasional village. The huge lorry convoys that had been rushing past us earlier slackened; there seemed to be more vehicles in 'lay-by's on the side of the road and clustered around all-night cafes than actually moving. We went on; a pale light shone in the eastern sky and I quoted Omar on the 'phantom of false morning' to Bert. He grunted. Then he cursed. The bike engine stopped and we coasted to a standstill. Out of petrol. Using more than Bert had expected. Luckily, we were still ahead of the rest. We waited, and they came up one by one and stopped. Ron had a can of petrol; we filled up, exchanged notes, and were off again.

Another cafe; we gulped coffee and exchanged backchat with hardened drivers who'd been on the road for the last 20 years, every night. Ted Tubb was worried about our rate of progress, urged greater speed, and suggested that the next rendezvous be 60 miles ahead. This was a mistake, as it turned out, but nothing had gone wrong so far. Maybe Ghu was smiling on us. Of course, everybody was expecting something to go wrong. The situation hadn't changed from the last stop except that the occupants of the Buckmasters' car were turning slightly green owing to the carbon monoxide they were inhaling. The taxi had been chugging on steadily. We looked respectfully at Vandy. She looked rather like a slightly plump and imperturbable Betty Grable. If she'd been chewing gum she'd have looked exactly like a gangster's-car driver from an early cops'n'robbers film. She had the same sort of passengers too.

Bert and I swept off again, speeding down hills and chugging up them. The mist over the fields became thicker, the sky grew lighter. One by one the other vehicles rushed past, people making rude gestures. Ted... or someone... was setting the pace, and it was a hard one. We fell further behind. We suddenly slowed, the engine choked and stopped, and we glided to a halt. "I think the engine has seized up," said Bert, dispassionately. He made various gestures with the brakes, the kick-starter, tried wheeling it, poked in the tank. "If only I'd taken on oil with that petrol..." I looked around. The road was lined with tall, aloof poplars that faded into the mist on each side. The sky was pearly-grey. There wasn't a house in sight. It was one of the goddamnedest pieces of static scenery I've ever had the mis-fortune to see. "What do we do?" I asked. "Wait for the engine to cool – it might free itself." We waited. We and the engine got cool, but it didn't free

itself. "Only one thing to do," said Bert. "You thumb a lift, try and catch up with the convoy and tell them what's happened, and get some help here." He made out an RAC form (the RAC and AA are internal-combustion-engine fan's societies, US readers – very serious and constructive). "Find one of their phone-boxes or a garage with their sign," said Bert, "and they'll send help to get the bike brought in."

"Is it a very big job?"

"The last time it took 3 months."

"Oh."

We stood at the roadside, handkerchieves wrapped around our hands to make them clearer, and waved at passing lorries. Once again the great brotherhood of the road sprang to attention. The tenth vehicle, a petrol tanker, stopped, and I clambered aboard. At that time my chief fear was that we'd pass the rest of the convoy coming *back*, before I could stop them. But we rolled on, mile after mile. An occasional house. A garage – closed. "There's a police station in the village ahead," said the driver. "Ummm," I said. I'd heard about country police, but it seemed the best bet. We reached the village, seven or eight miles from Bert. There was a fork there; as we rolled up the one that wasn't to Manchester, preparatory to stopping, Ron and Daphne Buckmaster walked across the road from the other turning.

I shouted to the driver and waved to Ron. The tanker stopped; Ron came running up with a horror-stricken look. He thought there'd been an accident. I reassured him that Bert was all right, thanked the good samaritan at the wheel of the tanker, and he boomed off into the dawn. The Buckmaster car had missed us, and stopped to wait, and Ron had been meaning to ask drivers if they had seen us. The taxi and Ted's car were still ahead. We spoke feelingly of the foolishness of being in a convoy without keeping in touch, and had a council of war. The car spring, the weak one, would really sag with me aboard; if we picked up Bert as well... And then there was the problem of the bike. We hastily decided to press on at speed, try and catch the convoy, send the car or taxi back, and try and find mechanical help for the bike.

We were all Londoners, which meant we were used to an environment, in England anyway, that always contained a phone-box within a few hundred yards, a garage within half-a-mile, houses, everywhere. The countryside dismayed us. We went on, mile after mile, without seeing anything except trees, hedges, and the early rising cow... and there were mighty few of those. At last we did come to a garage, attached to a country pub. We rang the bell at intervals for 10 minutes or so. No answer. We thought of Bert shivering back by the cycle, and pressed on again.

A few more miles. I was finding out about the monoxide too. Every now and again the puff of blue smoke would drift up, and we'd hastily let down the window and let some freezing air in. But, at last, we came across a brightly-painted phone box... A.A., but the principle was the same, and Ron's key opened it.

We started phoning. And soon a grim realisation came. No one was interested in us. The garages listed in the phone-box, scattered for thirty miles around, couldn't care less. "A motor-bike? Oh no, we don't touch motor-bikes." "Sorry, we don't open –yawn-- till 8 o'clock." "Sorry, all my men are working." "No, we don't do motor-bikes. Wait till 8 o'clock and try X's." That was the theme. We tried over half a dozen, then rang the police at the village where I'd been picked up. No news. We couldn't even get *them* interested. After all, it was only a motor-bike and a stranded traveller. Even if he had a beard, that didn't make him important. We came out of the box and muttered in the cold morning air. Two motor-cyclists, looking extremely efficient, halted by the kerb and chatted about something. Ron talked to them, I wrote a note telling Bert to leave the cycle and make for the police station and we'd phone there later; the cyclists took the note and roared off Londonwards. We slammed the phone-box door, got back into the car, and chugged off after the convoy. The blue smoke puffed.

Time and the miles passed by, and there was still no sign of the convoy. Not even the taxi. Maybe they were waiting around the next corner... but no. We found another phone-box, an RAC one, and phoned some more garages. "Try so-and-so's... they do motor-cycles. But they don't open till eight o'clock." I phoned the county police headquarters. No, they couldn't help. The police station at Weedon, the village where I'd been picked up, again. No, no news. We muttered about 'bloody provincials' in dead earnest. It wasn't much use

going back now; Bert must have realised by this time that we couldn't get help through some cause. He was probably thumbing his way along, having left the cycle. It was useless anyway, being seized-up. We went on, coughing in the blue smoke, looking for the convoy. No convoy. It was morning now, though, and some of the earlier garages were showing signs of life. We swung into the first one that was definitely open, and bought some oil. Ken poured it into the engine, and it promptly poured out again around the sides of the cylinder-head gasket. Oil had been dripping from the badly-seated gasket and onto the exhaust all night, and the origin of the blue smoke was explained. It didn't make us feel any more alive.

We propped up the bonnet, took off the top of the engine, took out the gasket. Ron wiped it tenderly – the garage didn't sell that type. It broke. Ron looked at Daphne and Pamela, stalked around to the back of the garage and explained his feelings to Ghu in army language. We stood around and thought of Bert, breakfast, and the rest of the convoy.

At the end of an hour the gasket had been manoeuvred on and surrounded by a sealing paste totally unsuited for it according to the manufacturers' instructions, the engine top had been put back, the bonnet replaced, the spanners counted, and we were off into a sunny morning. We'd kept an eye on the vehicles coming from the direction of London, in case Bert had obtained a lift, but hadn't seen him.

We kept on going North. We knew we were going North because owing to the dynamo overcharging Ron was keeping all his lights on (how different from Burgess!), and the number of obliging people who shouted and gestured at us definitely slackened as the morning passed. Hard people, these Northerners. We sped along reasonably fast, talking about Bert and breakfast in hushed voices, and eventually reached the rendezvous, a huge cross-roads with an elliptical grass sward in the centre. We orbited it, looking for chalked messages. No sign. The only thing to do was to press on alone.

At about half-past nine we came to a fairly large town, and the sight of well-breakfasted Northerners doing their Saturday morning shopping made us realise how hungry we were. We couldn't afford to pay town prices for the size of breakfast we wanted, but at the first transport cafe the other side of the place, we drove in. This was an odd joint, an ex-RAF mess hall by the look of it, converted into a civvy cafe by installing a couple of pin-ball machines and a juke-box. We sat down in an immensity of tables and forms and engulfed a huge bacon-and-egg breakfast... all except one fried egg, which, swimming in a little pool of fat, was left by someone with a too-vivid memory of that blue smoke. We looked at the thing, and it reminded me of something. Amongst the props we had brought from Town was a realistic rubber fried egg. We had, as far as I can recall, no very clear idea of why we brought it; it just seemed a Good Thing To Have Along. Refreshed with breakfast, we began to think again. If we could work something with the rubber egg, then substitute a real one for it for a Northerner to grab... We found a newspaper and wrapped the egg up in it, and went out. We felt a lot better. The car started and moved to the gate, and another car came past on the road from London, and someone yelled "That's Ted's car!" "You're dreaming!" "No, I recognise the EYES in the back"..... the issues of No. 1 had been arranged tastefully around the windows in case we could sell any en route.

Ron put his foot on the accelerator and we surged forward, but it seemed hopeless. Ted's car was much faster. We cursed stopping for that egg. But luck was with us; there was a hill ahead and a string of vehicles crawling up it, and we managed to get behind Ted's. A frantic tattoo on the horn; heads swung around and jaws dropped.....

Five minutes later, in a roadside cafe, eight of us swapped our terrible experiences, and we heard about the taxi. Vandy had her instructions... drive straight to the rendezvous. So she had drove. Ted, getting worried about the absence of Bert and the Buckmasters' car, had tried to catch her up... and *couldn't*. Vandy had been averaging 45mph at least, which meant she'd been hitting 60 for periods. We found out later that they thought the speedo was broken... Vandy had been told not to rely on it. (It was probably registering about 5mph out.) However, she waited about 10 miles short of the rendezvous, Ted caught it up, and the party had waited for a couple of hours and breakfasted. Then, very worried, Ted had unloaded Jim Ratigan into the taxi to make room for Bert and/or myself in his car, sent the taxi on, and travelled back at high speed. He must have passed the garage where we were fiddling with the gasket without either of us noticing the other. He'd gone an incredible way... about 40 miles, I think, and must have turned towards Manchester again about 10 miles short of Bert.

We considered phoning again, but for all we knew Bert might have arrived at Manchester by this time, or at least sent a message to the Grosvenor, and we were feeling too dead to do anything but press on like a herd of lemmings. We went on, though slowed down by the morning traffic; the two vehicles were separated on the outskirts of Manchester again, but it didn't matter now. We found ourselves in streets marked on the AA large-scale map of the city, then in the streets marked on the Convention map, and at 12.30 or so someone raised the cry of "There's the Grosvenor!" We swept past it and around the nearest convenient corner and parked. Feeling light-headed with fatigue we went into the hotel, and for 48 hours relaxed under the pleasantly soothing and friendly hospitality of Northern fandom (see HYPHEN 9), starting back on Monday morning without Bert, of whom we'd had no word, and without Walt Gillings, casualty of a late-night Sunday party at Harry Turner's. I took his place in the fabulous taxi, and we proceeded to make the journey back even fabulouser. Nothing broke down, we kept in touch, and we got quote-taking drunk.

The contents of the taxi consisted of Pamela Bulmer, Daphne Buckmaster, John Brunner, myself, and the bottom half of Dave Newman, who was standing on the seat most of the way. The top half was leaning out of the roof, blaring at passing traffic with a hand-operated klaxon, keeping the cars in sight, and occasionally shouting something quotable down to us. The cars were taking notes too, but we had most of the talent:

The perfect fanzine would duplicate itself – you'd take two copies and leave them together in a dark room

I had to lower my mind to understand him

They're going to call their house 'Ill Repute'

There's a Conservative fete down there; that's a fete worse than death

You can use your prehensile toes now; I've finished with them

The garage attendant wanted to know if we needed petrol or whether we used a charcoal burner

It's quite clean but it's funny

He's got a very fine streak in his character

I'm coming to the conclusion that I am an introvert who was meant to be an extrovert

We should have a less conspicuous vehicle, such as a hearse

This is the Fanarmada playing ducks and drakes with the traffic

Offer to mend his windscreen wiper for a copy of NIRVANA

There's a flying saucer in front marked 'Left tentacle drive'

I wonder why so many of these quotes are sexy?

She said something clean – throw her out

Bad to worse to Convention

I thought we'd hit something then – it's all right,
it's only a band playing 'The World is Waiting for the Sunrise'

That pipe's so foul you can see the nicotine coming out of the welts of his shoes

The trouble with interlineations is that it's such a job to find text to put them between

I weigh nine stone two, but I don't tell anybody

This Con has put 5 years on my appearance, but inside I've sloughed off 15

She was a woman of tender years – her year-rings were too heavy

You can reduce this Con Report to a series of key-words... 'sex'...'sex'...'sex'

There's an appalling mess of arms and legs in the back of that taxi

Someone pinned a badge on Chuck's seat and for the next half-hour everyone was telling him he was a bum secretary

I came up to a hotel porter listening in the corridor at two o'clock and he said "I'm going in there – they're breaking things"

And many more (how I can sympathise with the Lord Chamberlain now...) We had fine weather most of the way back... we were able to stroll around Lichfield and look at the Cathedral and a fair, but it was raining as we went into London... a properly suitable melancholy end. We'd enquired about Bert on the way back, found he'd reported to police *back* along the route, and, finding a suitable hitch handy, had gone back to town. Poor Bert... he thought it was going to be an organised Con, I think.

Reprinted from EYE #2, October 1954, ed. Vince Clarke, Ted Tubb and Stuart Mackenzie

Modern-Day Notes: It's not an easy task to calculate who was in what vehicle for that epic ride, but from Vince's piece and other reports in EYE 2 this is my best bet:

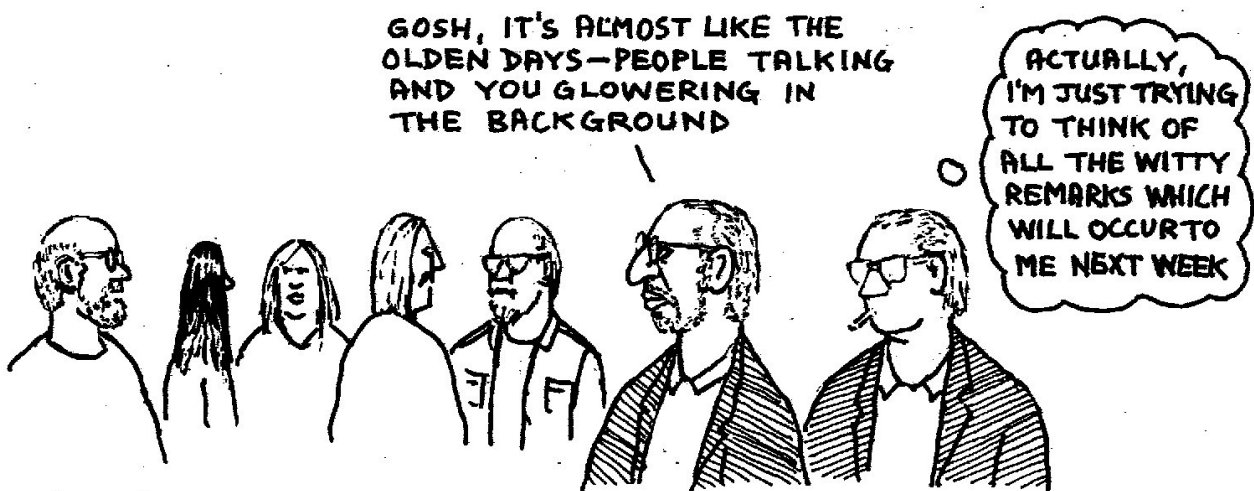
MOTORBIKE: Bert Campbell, Vince Clarke

BUCKMASTERS' CAR: Ron and Daphne Buckmaster, Ken and Pamela Bulmer

TAXI: Perm 7 (if you believe Vince) or 6 (according to another report in EYE 2) from Vandy, Steve, Cyril Fleisher, his fiancée, Dave Newman, Shirley Marriot, Walter Gillings, John Brunner and Cathie Youden

TUBB'S CAR: Ted Tubb, James Ratigan for sure; presumably Ted Carnell and Stu Mackenzie, otherwise unaccounted for.

There may even have been more – was Jim Ratigan yet married to Dot Ratigan in 1954, and if so would she have been with the Tubb car too? I leave such matters to Peter Weston to dig into. No time for me to do so; I've a convention to help run here...



a year in fandom:

1967 was the year of my majority, the year I turned 21, but that wasn't until the end of the year, in November to be precise. So for most of 1967 I was 20. I was working at an advertising agency, my first job from school.

I had come into contact with fandom perhaps a year or six months earlier by subscribing to Peter Weston's Zenith (as it was then) through links in the back pages of science fiction magazines. I can date this because the first issue of my first fanzine, Phile, was printed by the guys in the print room of the agency, Horniblow Cox-Freeman. They weren't too clued up on the idea of double-sided printing, since most of the stuff they did was memos and reports, and money and paper was no object, so the fanzine ended up that way too. It also featured some material by a colleague at the agency, and some make-weight material I would today have gleaned from the internet, if we had had it in those days. It was frankly crap, but fandom being fandom some people were sympathetic, including the likes of Graham Hall, Charles Platt, Dicky Howett and good old Chris Priest, and when I met them in real life they seemed to accept me as somebody who was not too embarrassing to be around, mainly I think because they mistook my mask of non-committal shyness as evidence of a certain intellectual rigour (something which has stood me in good stead over many years).

When I met Chris Priest both he and I were living at our parents' homes, in Brentwood and Alperton respectively. We hung out a lot together, probably far more than was healthy, I now realize. We were both at that age when young men seek some kind of independence and it was Chris's idea to share a flat together. So in 1967 he found a two-bedroomed flat in Fulham. Two bedrooms meant four people could split the rent if they weren't too discriminating about matters of privacy and personal hygiene. So I recruited a media-buyer called John Lavery who worked with me at my agency, and Chris recruited an ex-boyfriend of his sister's called John Marshall, who worked in administration in an NHS hospital (back in the good old days when there was an NHS). This arrangement worked out for all of about a couple of months, with me and Chris sharing a room and the two Johns sharing. John Lavery had some pretty basic social problems including body odour, but it was not this, I think, that broke the back of John Marshall, but rather a feeling that he was being excluded from the intimacy that Chris and I enjoyed in our shared bedroom, which in fact mostly consisted of me lying in bed listening to Chris fart. Whatever, he left. At this point John Lavery had quit the agency and was becoming involved in the distribution of Time Out magazine, as was an individual named whom I will call Freddie, who you should know is now one of the richest people in the UK, according to any list available. In those days he was selling the magazine on the street, but nothing could stop his relentless rise to fame when he went on to be in charge of the print budget for an infamous alternative culture magazine. John enlisted Freddie as the fourth member of our tiny commune.

The reasons why Freddie is a millionaire today and I am not, pretty much devolved from our shared experience in Walsingham Mansion. Freddie was an energetic and charismatic crook with absolutely no moral values except those that were expedient to the moment in which he lived. He was immense fun on one level, capable of racing down to a telephone booth in his underpants four hundred yards down the road on the whim of a bet one minute, and then pulling a knife and threatening to kill Chris Priest the next after a trivial argument in defence of his buddy, John.

1967 of course was also the year in which the Beatles released SERGEANT PEPPER. My copy was first played in Walsingham Mansions on our shared Dansette Portable, with Chris and I sitting round it earnestly listening, nodding and forming the judgement that it was the best thing we had ever heard, even better in Chris's view than Status Quo's MA KELLY'S GREASY SPOON. Later at Christmas/New Year we shared the experience of hearing ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE broadcast live for the first time from Abbey Road.

What has any of this experience got to do with fandom in general in 1967 as we all know it? Well, very little obviously except in demonstrating what was surrounding a fan as he was growing up and becoming increasingly fannish. I suppose I must have gone to Bristol for Briscon in 1967 but I honestly have no memory of it. But I have an eidetic memory of walking down Kings Road on the way to work one day in bright summer sunshine and diverting into the gardens of the Chelsea Pensioner's Hospital, and that will have to do as a reminder that sometimes a fan's life was not entirely about fandom.

1967

.....by Graham Charnock

a year in fandom:

NINETEEN SIXTY-NINE was the year I married Eileen after a whirlwind 18-month courtship. We did the deed on a cold Saturday in March and as we came out of church a little boy across the road shouted, "You've got a nice one there, Mister!" I certainly had.

We honeymooned in the Cotswolds, only slightly burdened by the 500-page hardback of *STAND ON ZANZIBAR*, a review copy of which had arrived that very Saturday morning from *Books & Bookmen* with a demand for '1000 words within the next seven days, please'. On the Tuesday we went into Oxford and walked past the Randolph, where the Eastercon would be held just a few weeks later. The hotel looked expensive and we decided to give it a miss. We were buying a house and were extremely hard-up, even though it wasn't finished on time and we had to rent a flat for three months.

However, the week before Easter Rog Peyton (also newly-married) and I decided we simply *couldn't* stay away and came up with a cunning plan to find a b-&-b place for just the Saturday night. Perhaps it wasn't the ideal choice – we nicknamed it 'Castle Drac' and our brides were NOT impressed!

But the con was great fun. I remember walking into the bar and being swept up in a whirl of people, old friends and total strangers. I met Tom Clareson who edited the scholarly *Extrapolation*, and the thought entered my head that for him it was a part of his full-time (no doubt well-paid) job with someone else picking up the bills, whereas I was producing *Speculation* on a shoe-string in odd moments, fuelled by fannish enthusiasm. Not exactly a level playing-field as you'll agree, but Tom was very nice about it and forgave me for getting all the best material.

Because 1969 was a very good year for *Speculation*; five issues published with another right after the New Year despite having a house to decorate and a garden to dig; I could never have managed without Vernon Brown's little band of dutiful slaves at Aston University who did my collating on the blood-stained benches of the Biology Lab for the price of a chat about SF and a pint of bitter.

It had columns by Chris Priest and Mike Moorcock, letters from people like Samuel R. Delany and Fritz Leiber, and the 24th issue was a star-studded tribute to Heinlein on the thirtieth anniversary of his first published story. As I wrote somewhere else, the fanzine "had finally attained those 'bright sunlit uplands', that plateau beyond the clouds where all problems melt away. All I had to do was keep on pubbing and anything was possible – why, one day I might even win a Hugo!"

I never did, of course, but got something much more useful at the end of the year when I finally bought my own Gestetner 260 for £30.00 from an Indian in Southall (since our monthly mortgage was £28.00 per month I probably over-paid him). Until then I'd begged, borrowed or stolen time on a variety of machines belonging to employers, colleges, and the Boy Scouts!

In June I visited George Hay's 'Environmental Consortium' (which turned out to be a table in an architect's office), in August I was abducted by Jack Cohen and in September I saw a poster for something called 'An Afternoon in Middle Earth' at the Midlands Arts Centre which set me to organising the first *Speculation* Conference for the following Spring.

Oh, and in July the first man landed on the Moon. Yes, 1969 was a VERY good year indeed!

1969by Peter Weston

a year in fandom:

1976 started predictably on January 1st. but not much was happening in London fandom. Greg Pickersgill wasn't doing fanzines, Roy Kettle wasn't doing fanzines, John Brosnan wasn't doing fanzines and John Hall had gafiated and wasn't doing *anything*. The one hope was the Charnox in far off Notting Hill - they were doing a fanzine, WRINKLED SHREW, and a fine one it was too, but nothing was actually *happening* in the fandom around me. You can probably tell this was the case as the CHECKPOINTS I was editing around this time were a bit lacking in fannish news but it was nowhere near just a "list of published books" that Roberts later accused me of (so there!).

Something did happen in February: Graham Boak organized the first World Faan Convention in Blackpool. Many London fans avoided the convention but a few braved the bracing climate of Blackpool in Winter and joined the likes of Bob Shaw, Mike & Pat Meara, Rob Jackson and Harry Bell in a totally non-programmed convention that relied on fans just talking to each other. Someone called Janice Wiles sat on my knee at a room party (more about Miss Wiles later).

Mancon 5, the Eastercon that year, proved to be the disaster some had predicted but it didn't stop the usual suspects having the usual fun time, getting drunk and falling about in heaps. Looking back all I remember of the convention is meeting Walt Willis for the one and only time and being tongue-tied; a particularly drunken Scandinavian room party in the Owen's Park tower block; and discovering two well known London fans hiding in the bushes at 7 in the morning. Discretion prevents me from naming them.

Come the Spring and Pickersgill produced the first issue of STOP BREAKING DOWN, Kettle produced TRUE RAT 7 and local Ealing fan Dave Griffiths was publishing and I was duplicating AFTER THE FLOOD for what seemed to be a mainly Swedish audience. And there was Brian Parker and his PARKER'S PATCH. Brian was from Bradford but a frequent visitor to London where he'd stay with John Piggott and me.

During the long hot Summer of '76 Brian arrived again but this time with the stencils for the third issue of his fanzine that I'd promised to print for him on my Gestetner. Owing to the hot weather the oil and black pigment in the duper ink had begun to separate and keeping it in the fridge seemed to be the only way to stop it happening. Unfortunately to actually duplicate anything we needed to take it *out* of the fridge... It was a long, sweaty, frustrating day, trying to produce something readable but only succeeding in creating an ever increasing mound of slip sheets. Brian has lately reminded me that after only a few hours I gave up and left him to carry on alone while Piggott and I went down the pub, sods that we were.

During the summer Miss Wiles (I told you I'd mention her again) and I started seeing each other on a regular basis thanks to Gerald 'Boris' Lawrence, a young fan from Eltham, South London who'd left home at an early age to make his way in the world, who indirectly brought Miss Wiles and I together on a permanent basis when he more or less pushed us together at one of the Orange Tree meetings in Richmond (If you see Jim Linwood at Corflu sit him down buy him a pint and get him to tell you all about these meetings – Rob Hansen's THEN is strangely silent on the matter.)

This naturally had an effect on the almost non-existent CHECKPOINT publishing schedule. I was so distracted at one point that Piggott managed to insert a bogus entry in the CHECKPOINT list of published books (oh, shit, I *did* publish lists!). If you look at Mr. Langford's CHECKPOINT archive and look very, very carefully at issue 70 you'll see that Mayflower Books were due to publish THE PROCRASTINATOR AWAKES in July 1976 – the closest I've ever come to being a real SF writer. In September, Janice (Miss Wiles) and I became engaged and I moved away from the bright lights and fannish hotbed of London to live in deepest Surrey.

November was Novacon time again but, more importantly to me, Janice and I got married on November 20th. Harry Bell was my Best Man and assorted fans including Dave & Hazel Langford, Rob Jackson, Greg Pickersgill, John Piggott, Joseph Nicholas and a host too many to mention were invited to the celebrations in Dorset. It was like a small one day mini-con with the village disco taking the place of Graham Charnock's band The Burlingtons in the noise-making department. If you see Joseph Nicholas at Corflu sit him down, buy him a pint and get him to tell you about the Disco.

1976 ended on a high at Dave Langford's New Year's party, predictably on December 31st

1976by Ian Maule

a year in fandom:

Many things began in 1976, including dear old Uncle Peter Weston's *Andromeda* anthologies, *Galileo* magazine, Greg Pickersgill's *Stop Breaking Down*, and Sean Wallace (born on 1 January, later to publish much 21st-century Langfordiana at Cosmos Books/Wildside Press). So much for other people: it's time to quell my natural reticence, adjust the bushel to full transparency, and sear you with the coruscating radiance of egotism.

1976, my first leap year in fandom, is remembered (if only by me) for the launch of my debut fanzines. Kevin Smith and I had been hatching our genzine *Drilkjis* for months, and finally achieved the first ink-spattered issue in March. The looming presence of a stack of rejected *Drilkjis* covers goaded me to print a personalzine on their blank backs: *Twll-Ddu*, of which it was later said but always hotly denied. *Drilkjis* 1 contained worthy things like a George Hay interview and determinedly serious book reviews (though my first published review feature had appeared a month earlier, in the newsletter of an Establishment with Atomic in its name, which eight years later would be fictionalized as Leaky). *Twll-Ddu* 1 consisted of desperately ephemeral wittering, and got more feedback than *Drilkjis* because fans seized the obvious comment hook to make telling points like "This wittering is desperately ephemeral."

Thus Eastercon 1976 was the first con at which I enjoyed the supreme egoboo of handing out fanzines. No doubt Peter Weston fixed me with his glittering eye and intoned that doing so was terribly bad form, the act of a rank neo, and no one would respond. This was the legendary Mancon 5, still fabled for its classic mix of woodlouse-brained organization with a dire university venue staffed by instinctive fan-haters, resulting in my first con report:

"I found the convention in Manchester very interesting but a little surprising. There were many interesting Science-Fiction events such as the B.S.F.A. annual general meeting, but few of the attendees seemed to take them seriously. In fact some people seemed to spend all their time in the bar, and I think it would be a good idea if this were closed during programme items at future conventions. To continue my complaints, the Guest of Honour [Bob Silverberg] did not speak about Science Fiction as I expected, but instead read some odd experimental literature which was very disappointing. And Mr. Robert Shaw's scientific talk was completely spoilt by antisocial people who laughed at his proposals." (*Twll-Ddu* 2, May 1976)

Enough; it's all on line at ansible.co.uk. Among other 1976 firsts, I underwent the D. West Experience and joined the Astral Leauge; or did it join me? My first articles for other peoples' fanzines appeared, in Dave Rowe's and Bernie Peek's *K*. One was slagged off for pretentiousness in a *Cynic* review by the legendary (at least according to the Leauge) Graham Boak, who was distributing that very issue all through Mancon but whenever I drew near courageously pretended he'd run out. Had I ... arrived?

Late in the year came two fits of insanity. One was induced by promises of egoboo during Novacon 6 in Birmingham: they shanghaied me on to the Novacon 7 committee as master of the publications, priceless artefacts of their time which fandom has mercifully forgotten. The other unwise act, brought on by the still unfathomable enthusiasm of Dave Bridges, was to join Britain's long-moribund apa OMPA with my third debut fanzine of that fateful twelvemonth: *Cloud Chamber*.

Perhaps because it was relatively pronounceable, CC still persists -- #160 appeared in December 2009 -- while *Drilkjis* folded at #6 in 1982, *Twll-Ddu* at #20 in 1983, and I swore off con publications after the debilitating excesses of daily newsletters for two Eastercons and a Mexican in 1993/1994.

What else in that dark backward and abysm of time? Hazel and I bought our first house in 1976 and held many fan-infested parties during six years of residence. In June, taking a little time off from all the above pioneering, we got married. I am quietly smug that this enterprise, at least, continues.

The same cannot be said of another intended life partner to whom I bonded in 1976 or just possibly 1977. She was faithful but I was fickle, and over the years she became erratic and smelly, so around 1990 a local charity was persuaded to take that Roneo electric duplicator off my hands. We'd had great times between the slipsheets, but a man must move on. The fannish guilt still lingers.

1976by Dave Langford

a year in fandom:

It was the best of times, it was the busiest of times.

Ann and I had been married just over a year, I'd survived chairing Novacon 14 (even if the closing ceremony would return to haunt me and I chose to skip its immediate successor in favour of Grovecon, a tiny gathering in rural Oxfordshire) and my (reluctant) decision to quit newspaper journalism in mid-1984 meant we were actually getting to spend quality time together at our home in south Birmingham.

The Solihull SF Group had finally burned out, but the Brum Group was going through its 'fannish renaissance' and had launched Apa-B (later The Organisation). Meanwhile, the MiSFiTs – short for Mercian SF Triangle – was a hothouse of fannish activity, with every month seeing new publications and solicitations for same, as well as a conveyor belt of guests dropping by the infamous General Wolfe for a pint and a chat (I particularly remember Lucy Huntzinger staying with Ann and myself, a gesture she and John Bartelt returned when I visited San Francisco last summer).

I was still more than two years away from the mad evening when Martin Tudor and I decided to collaborate on *Critical Wave*, so had the time and pocket money to produce a 50pp issue of *Sounding the Ritual Echo*, my biggest genzine to date (or since).

At the genial insistence of Sweden's Ahrvid Engholm, I also stood for SEFF, the Scandinavian-European Fan Fund, eventually losing to Jim Barker; fortunately, I was a little luckier when I stood for TAFF twenty-four years later.

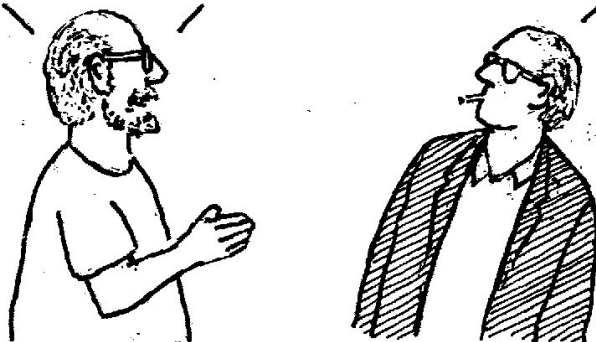
Looking back through a quarter-century of late night conversations and fevered creativity, I cannot see 1985 as anything other than a personal golden age, when ambitions had yet to be dragged down to earth and dreams still had possibility. It was a good year to be a fan.

1985by Steve Green

HI THERE!
WE MEET
AT LAST!

I'VE HEARD
SO MUCH
ABOUT YOU!

WELL, JUST
REMEMBER
THEY CAN'T
PROVE A THING



a year in fandom:

When I was five years old, I knew that, all being well, I would live to see the year 2000, and that when it came I would be 35; impossibly old. I believed I would travel on Concorde, and to the moon. So when it actually came to New Year's Eve 1999, I was surprised to find that I was 34, that I was firmly stuck on earth, and that most of my fannish friends believed, completely at odds with the rest of the world, that the new Millennium would not start for another year. I spent the night on the Embankment with the *Plokta* cabal, who had been fannish partners in crime for a decade at that point, and three million of our closest friends.

2000 was a good year for *Plokta*; we ran our first convention with the then bleeding edge and now quaint name of <plokta.con>. The con featured Ken MacLeod, the nascent bid for the Next Bloody British Bloody Worldcon, and Tobes in a dress. And a CD-rom stuffed with fanzines, photos and art; which, gratifyingly, fan editors are still using a decade later.

It was also the year I went to a US Corflu, Corflatch in Seattle. The auspices were not good; I was newly pregnant and unable to tolerate the smell of either coffee or tobacco. And we had underestimated the difficulty of undertaking fanac in North America with small children, where the local population were horrified that we might wish to evilly corrupt our daughter by taking her into a bar. Despite that, we arrived blearily off the plane and straight into the Potlatch collating party, and basically had a fine old time for a fortnight, meeting many fanzine fans for the first time, doing a fanzine in an hour as allegedly iron fanned, acquiring and piercing an inflatable cow, watching Ken Forman's legendary GoH dance and learning first hand about the Smoking ConSuite, compared to which the heady fog of the Novacon bar was but a gentle mist. Arnie Katz later documented this convention in a 25,000 word *tour de force*, but I mostly remember it for agreeable conversations and a slight sense of fannish culture shock.

Corflus are always lightly programmed, but Eastercons not so much. The main gripe about 2Kon was a shortage of programme; what there was was good but the abundance of spare time forced hordes of fans into the local leather shop. The one item that everyone spoke about involved blowing things up; sadly not including the Central Hotel, now a pale shadow of its glory years.

Sue Mason won TAFF that year, much to my delight, and headed for Chicon. She returned, months later, with tales of butter pats shaped like moose, hat racks shaped like moose, and fans shaped like moose. Meanwhile, I did my bit for the future of fandom by producing Jonathan, who instantly gained fannish notoriety a couple of months later at Novacon. I kept him with me late at night in the bar, tucked up in his buggy, as I chatted away to the Usual Suspects and everyone else drifted away one at a time. "Don't leave your baby in the bar," said Sue, cheerily, as she tottered off to sleep. Eventually, Michael Abbott and I were the last left standing, and ambled over to the lifts. "Aren't you forgetting something?" he asked. Luckily, Jonathan had slept through his thirty-second abandonment and seems no worse for the experience.

2000by Alison Scott

THE CORFLU FIFTY

In February 2007, just after Corflu Quire in Austin, Rich Coad set up an email list inviting fanzine fans to join “a group of donors, each willing to donate \$25 or £15 per year, for the express purpose of bringing persons to Corflu who otherwise could not attend.

“This idea grew out of the successful funds to bring Bruce Gillespie and William Breiding to Corflu Titanium and to bring Harry Bell to Corflu Quire. At Corflu Quire additional names were mentioned for fans we would like to see at Corflu but who are unable to attend for a variety of reasons.”

(The quote is from Rich’s initial invitation – it sometimes pays not to delete old emails!)

This list is called the Corflu Fifty. Those on the list have been very faithful in donating cash to support travel by deserving fans to each of the three Corflus held since. The target has been \$1250 each year, to help a fanzine fan who has earned the respect of their peers and who would really be welcome at that year’s Corflu. Though we don’t actually have fifty members (yet!), we have achieved that target through both the core donations and extra fund-raising efforts.

In 2008, the first beneficiary was Steve Stiles, who came across the USA to Corflu Silver in Las Vegas. Then last year in 2009, Curt Phillips came from the East Coast to Corflu Zed in Seattle. This year, as you’ll see in Nic Farey’s introduction to Earl, we are welcoming Earl Kemp to Winchester. Those names give you an idea of the calibre of fan we have helped so far. And surely someone equally worthy will be given a leg-up to get to next year’s Corflu. Two recipients so far have been from the opposite coast of the USA, but as we have shown this year, it is possible for the Corflu Fifty to support transatlantic travel, so in the light of that we can have a think about who gets the group’s support next year.

The Corflu Fifty’s recipients are chosen through (mostly!) amicable chat on the group’s email list – the_corflu_fifty@yahoogroups.com – of which Rich Coad is Moderator. (Note that there are underlines in the middle of that name.) Rich also collects the cash together from all of us about six months in advance of the trip, and I collect the cash from UK members as UK Agent. (I’m writing this little bit in my capacity as UK Agent for the Corflu Fifty, which is a completely separate role from me chairing this year’s con, by the way.)

If you want to help out financially, and to help influence who gets the group’s support, we’d love to hear from you! Go to: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/the_corflu_fifty/ where there should be a Join This Group option. (If you join, you do commit yourself to paying up.)

For more details, email Rich at: richcoad at gmail dot com, or me, Rob Jackson, at: jacksonshambrook at tiscali dot co dot uk. Or just donate, or sell fanzines at auction, or buy fanzines at auction, or buy T-shirts, or support us any way you like....

-- Rob Jackson, March 2010

Your editor would like to note that the Corflu Fifty serves an extra and most valuable purpose, namely that of solving the problem of Corflu programme book editors who are unable to call upon the usual centrepiece of SF convention publications, namely an article praising the Guest of Honour, because as ever at Corflu we don't know who that is yet! Luckily, that gap can now be filled instead by an article praising the current beneficiary of the Corflu Fifty:

EARL KEMP

BY NIC FAREY

Among his many and varied accomplishments, Earl Kemp is neither a former governor of Louisiana (an understandable mistake since that notorious scion also dubbed himself “the last of the red-hot poppas”), nor the inspiration for a lowlife TV comedy series (an understandable mistake since the title character is said to be based on that of Nicolas Cage in the movie *Raising Arizona*), nor an Asheville, NC middle school teacher (an understandable mistake since the teacher is currently charged with a misdemeanor and three felonies).

“Raising Arizona” is not a descriptor of the increase in the average IQ and congeniality of that state since Earl Kemp moved there, though perhaps it should be.

Despite the obvious resemblances, Earl Kemp is probably not related to Ted White, J.M. Coetzee, Ross Chamberlain or Yvonne Rowse.

A pioneer in the publishing of gay fiction, Earl Kemp is known as a resolute heterosexual, although he has worked closely with Gay Talese (who is not gay) and Victor J. Banis (who is as gay as a handbag full of rainbows).

Earl Kemp is no kin to members of Spandau Ballet, and in fact has probably never even heard of them. Nor is he a mime.

His clerihehew reads thus:

Earl Kemp:
An apologist for hemp,
And if you are a Corflu singer
He may well give you the finger

His limerick might read thus:

An old fan down in Arizona
Woke up with a helluva boner.
But, ignoring this
He just took a piss
And opened a new box of toner.

The word “legendary” gets bandied about so much, that like many other overused superlatives its true meaning becomes devalued, if not trite. But like true legends, for example Hank Aaron, Johnny Carson or Danny Blanchflower, Earl’s achievements speak for themselves. Not many people can claim to be the cause of a Hugo Award rule change, as did the fanzine “Who Killed Science Fiction?” after its 1961 win, since many felt (erroneously) that this was a single-issue zine, prompting the rule change specifically preventing one-offs from consideration. This landmark of zine publishing has also been thoroughly updated, with the full original text and much additional material in Earl’s *el* #29, available at efanzines.com and recommended, if not required reading, especially since *el* scooped last year’s best fanzine FAAN award.

The publication in 1970 of 'The Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography', lavishly illustrated with the types of photographs the commission had been poring over, was an act of delightful subversion, and finally landed Kemp and his employer, Greenleaf Classics publisher William Hamling one-year sentences on a more-or-less trumped-up charge. Although both ended up serving the federal minimum (three months and a day), it's another one-up on those of us who only did our time in county jails, more extensive though that may have been.

Earl chaired the 1962 (20th) Chicago Worldcon, and what a luminary event that must have been, with Guest of Honor Ted Sturgeon and Toastmaster Bob Tucker! 'Stranger in a Strange Land' won the Hugo for best novel and 'Warhoon' best fanzine. The following year Advent:Publishers (co-founded by Earl in the late 50s) issued 'The Proceedings: Chicon III', a full transcript of the panels and speeches, also containing many, many photographs from the event, once again setting a high standard for those who would follow.

On a personal level I've found Earl to be wry, friendly and encouraging, even in prosaic matters such as tramping round various bits of Arizona desert with us to give his informed and considered opinion on the suitability of the various self-sufficiency devices with which many dwellings there (including his) are now accoutred. His genial and avuncular exterior conceals a tenacious memory and fannish dedication, as well as a steel trap mind.

Buy him a drink, why don't you. He'll like that.



*(photo: Earl Kemp greets Nic Farey, Corflu Silver, 2008.
Photographer: Gary Mattingly.)*

OUR 132 MEMBERS...

Jay Kinney (A)	Brian Parker (A)	Peter Weston (A)
Ted White (A)	Bridget Bradshaw (A)	Eileen Weston (A)
Frank Lunney (A)	Elaine Stiles (A)	Linda Krawecka (A)
Elinor Busby (A)	Steve Stiles (A)	Roy Kettle (A)
Claire Brialey (A)	Earl Kemp (A)	Keith Walker (S)
Mark Plummer (A)	Mike Meara (A)	Linda Deneroff (A)
James Bacon (A)	Pat Meara (A)	Teresa Cochran (A)
Pat Virzi (A)	Joseph Nicholas (A)	James Taylor (A)
Geri Sullivan (A)	Judith Hanna (A)	Jack Calvert (S)
Allyn Cadogan (A)	Rich Coad (A)	Curt Phillips (S)
Hope Leibowitz (S)	Stacy Scott (A)	Martin Hoare (A)
Murray Moore (A)	Randy Byers (S)	Rob Hansen (A)
Mary Ellen Moore (A)	Mike Scott (A)	Avedon Carol (A)
Jerry Kaufman (A)	Flick (A)	Paul Skelton (A)
Suzle Tompkins (A)	Sandra Bond (A)	Cas Skelton (A)
Art Widner (A)	Jim Caughran (A)	Clarrie O'Callaghan (A)
Nic Farey (A)	Janet Carrington (A)	Timothy Maguire (A)
Bobbie Farey (A)	Alison Scott (A)	R-Laurraine Tutihasi (S)
Ian Maule (A)	Steven Cain (A)	Jeff Schalles (S)
Janice Maule (A)	Marianne Cain (A)	Anne KG Murphy (A)
Marion Linwood (A)	Jonathan Cain (A)	Brian M. Gray (A)
Jim Linwood (A)	John Dallman (A)	Lilian Edwards (A)
Steve Green (A)	Steve Davies (A)	Julia Daly (A)
Graham Charnock (A)	Giulia De Cesare (A)	Douglas Spencer (A)
Pat Charnock (A)	Tony Berry (A)	Sue Mason (A)
John Hall (A)	Julian Headlong (A)	Dave Hicks (A)
Audrey Hall (A)	Ian Sorensen (A)	David Haddock (A)
Rob Jackson (A)	Yvonne Rowse (A)	Alan Dorey (A)
Dave Langford (A)	Doug Bell (A)	Rochelle Dorey (A)
Harry Bell (A)	Christina Lake (A)	John D. Berry (A)
Robert Lichtman (S)	Bill Burns (A)	David Bratman (S)
Bruce Townley (A)	Mary Burns (A)	Hazel Ashworth (A)
Peter Sullivan (A)	Dixie Tracy-Kinney (A)	D West (A)
A. Sullivan (A)	Steve Jeffery (A)	Colin Hinz (A)
Pat Mailer (A)	Vikki Lee France (A)	Catherine Crockett (A)
Jeanne Bowman (A)	Caroline Mullan (A)	Tony Keen (A)
Alan Rosenthal (A)	David Redd (S)	Karen Babich (S)
Tracy Benton (A)	Ritchie Smith (A)	Mary K Kare (A)
Bill Bodden (A)	Jim Mowatt (A)	John Hertz (S)
Sneerpout (A)	Carrie Mowatt (A)	Tobes Valois (A)
Ang Rosin (A)	Katrina Templeton (S)	John Purcell (S)
Wendy Freeman (A)	Vincent Docherty (S)	John Coxon (A)
Keith Freeman (A)	Margaret Austin (A)	Malcolm Edwards (A)
	Martin Easterbrook (A)	Alun Harries (A)

SO WHAT DO YOU
THINK OF THE
BADGE DESIGN?



WELL, IF THE
NAME IS LEGIBLE
IT DOES THE JOB



YOU KNOW, LIKE
TOE TAGS IN A
MORTUARY

SOUND AND VISION

You'll have noticed that along with all the other goodies in your membership packs, you have a bright and shiny DVD.

This is the text from the DVD cover produced by Rob Hansen. Members can download and print their own copy of the DVD cover by going to Rob's website at <http://www.fiawol.org.uk/FanStuff/dvd.htm>

"The material on these discs was videotaped at the 1987 Brighton Worldcon, Conspiracy. The taping was done for a rather poorly-handled Fan Room project, and even though I was Fanroom Manager during the convention I have no idea of who the people involved were, though you can see one of them in the first sequence doing a piece to camera. The idea, as I remember it, was that the crew would roam the convention taping 'interesting things' and the results would be shown on a monitor in the Fanroom every evening. I have no memory of these showings happening at all, although in the final sequence on Disc 2 you can see that it actually did occur, even if only once!

In reality not much footage was shot - the entirety of it is on these discs. There were originally six 1-hour tapes (most only partially used), and this transcription is direct from those originals. I have had these tapes for over 20 years and they have rarely been seen; in fact few people seemed to show any interest in them at all.

In recent times I have had the kit to make vhs-to-dvd transfer, but because of that perceived lack of interest never seemed to get on with doing anything with the Conspiracy Tapes. However, on the basis of getting it done before the tape deteriorates or everyone who might have some interest is dead (which would come first?) I've done it as quickly and simply as possible, just straightforward dubs, linking the separate sequences together and trimming off dead space, but leaving the rough edges for the sake of true documentary effect. No chaptering, even. If anyone wants to take the time to produce a better result then please go to it.

Copy these discs and pass them on to anyone who may be interested, but please include this explanatory note or its basic details in each instance."

Greg Pickersgill - May 2009. (gregory@gostak.demon.co.uk)

Above are the original sleeve notes accompanying the two DVDs worth of material Greg sent out to various potentially interested parties last year. I've subsequently edited down this mass of material into what I hope is a somewhat more watchable single disc for your TV viewing entertainment. It's nothing fancy - I just used the editing capabilities on my DVR to pare the footage down and reorganise it a bit. I've retained only 19 minutes of the original 90 minutes of the first disc but rather more of the second which, since it contained the Hugo ceremony, had more of an internal structure to it. I've also, as it happens, edited out the two specific bits Greg refers to.

I've added chapter marks to every sequence so that you can skip ahead if you're not interested in a particular bit. Those in the Hugo sequences have been placed at the start of each individual award. I have of course edited this from my perspective as a fanzine fan. There's probably an equally valid DVD to be made incorporating the material I discarded, particularly from the first disc.

The photo on the sleeve is one of a set I took on a visit to Brighton in 2008 and is, I think, nicely dystopian.

Rob Hansen - February 2010 (rob@fiawol.demon.co.uk)

FAN ROOM & BOOK ROOM	5:28
PROS	2:58
DOWN TO THE FAN ROOM	10:25
HUGO CEREMONY part 1	51:34
HUGO CEREMONY part 2	17:24
AFTER THE FIREWORKS	0:50
THE FAN ROOM (& OTHERS)	5:48
Total Running Time	94:27

SOME CORFLU FACTS:A pot-pourri largely drawn from Tracy Benton's history at www.corflu.org.

PREVIOUS CORFLUS:

- 1: 1984, Berkeley, CA (GOH: Pascal Thomas)
- 2: 1985, Napa, CA (GOH: Allen Baum)
- 3: 1986, Tysons Corner, VA (GOH: Teresa Nielsen Hayden)
- 4: 1987, Cincinnati, OH (GOH: Joel Zakem)
- 5: 1988, Seattle, WA (GOH: Gary Farber)
- 6: 1989, Minneapolis, MN (GOH: Stu Shiffman)
- 7: 1990, New York, NY (GOH: Barnaby Rapoport)
- 8 (Corflu Ocho): 1991, El Paso, TX (GOH: Dick Smith)
- 9: 1992, Los Angeles, CA (GOH: Linda Bushyager)
- 10: 1993, Madison, WI (GOH: Jae Leslie Adams)
- 11 (Corflu Nova): 1994, Crystal City, VA (GOH: John Bartelt)
- 12 (Corflu Vegas): 1995, Las Vegas, NV (GOH: Gary Hubbard)
- 13 (Corflu Nashville): 1996, Nashville, TN (GOH: Gary Hunnewell)
- 14 (Corflu Wave): 1997, Walnut Creek, CA (GOH: Victor Gonzalez)
- 15 (Corflu UK): 1998, Leeds, Yorkshire (GOH: John D Rickett)
- 16 (Corflu Sunsplash): 1999, Panama City, FL (GOH: Art Widner)
- 17 (Corflatch): 2000, Seattle, WA (GOH: Ken Forman)
- 18 (Corflu New England): 2001, Boston, MA (GOH: Nic Farey)
- 19 (Corflu Valentine): 2002, Annapolis, MD (GOH: Moshe Feder)
- 20 (Corflu Badger): 2003, Madison, WI (GOH: Dan Steffan)
- 21 (Corflu Blackjack): 2004, Las Vegas, NV (GOH: Ted White)
- 22 (Corflu Titanium): 2005, San Francisco, CA (GOH: Murray Moore)
- 23 (Corflu Toronto): 2006, Toronto, Ontario (GOH: Hope Leibowitz)
- 24 (Corflu Quire): 2007, Austin, TX (GOH: Colin Hinz)
- 25 (Corflu Silver): 2008, Las Vegas, NV (GOH: Andy Hooper)
- 26 (Corflu Zed): 2009, Seattle, WA (GOH: Elinor Busby)

1984: Corflu's first Guest of Honour is the only non-native English speaker to be chosen thus far.

1985: "Fans In Ferment" read the con t-shirt. I wonder if they're ready to be drunk by now?

1986: The remarkable Corflu which was organised by several items of office furniture.

1987: "Hello! My name is Richard Bergeron!" read every single name badge...

1988: The Guest of Honour is hailed by an impromptu human pyramid. (Don't try this at home.)

1989: Chuck and Sue Harris are special guests and a collection of Chuck's work is published by Corflu.

1990: An unseen thief steals almost the entire stock of Corflu's T-shirts before they can be put on sale.

1991: First Corflu to draw the Guest of Honour's name from the now-traditional hat.

1992: William Rotsler ("the dishwasher's friend") draws on many hotel plates, which become fan souvenirs.

1993: Bob Tucker is Special Guest and an anthology of his work is produced.

1994: GoH speech demonstrates the motion of subatomic particles (it says here).

1995: Held at Jackie Gaughan's Plaza hotel. (No, not Jack Gaughan's.) (Pity.)

1996: The first Corflu to allow the nervous to buy themselves out of the GoH lottery.

1997: The Corflu which proved that, in the words of Little Britain, "we all like a bit of cake".

1998: A giant cardboard D West strikes stark horror into every Corflu attendee (except perhaps D West).

1999: Smallest Corflu to date, with a mere 20 people or so splashing in the Florida sun.

2000: US and UK teams of faneditors compete in an "Iron Faned" contest.

2001: Art Widner almost gets to be the only repeat GoH in Corflu's history...

2002: Ian Sorensen surpasses himself with his production of "The Booze Brothers".

2003: The GoH hat was a visor in the shape of a red foam crab with dangling legs and claws. (Honest!)

2004: Because badgers are the totem animal of Madison, all right?

2005: "When dinosaurs fight penguins, we all win."

2006: The year that Banana Wings was not the best fanzine currently being published.

2007: Michael Moorcock returns from prolonged gafia to attend his first Corflu.

2008: Andy Hooper proves that too much fanac makes your eyes go funny, but soldiers on as GoH.

2009: Curt Philips arrives as a Southron soldier. Jerry Kaufman wrestles Andy Hooper. We all win (again).

2010: Small earthquake in Winchester collapses con hotel. End of fanzine fandom as we know it.



Your committee. From left to right, top row:

Sandra Bond (Procrastinations, Excuses)
 Robert Lichtman (Overseas Editor)
 Never mind the ballots, here's Mike Meara
 Pat Charnock (Winner of the PETER POOT AWARD for Excellence)
 John Nielsen Hall (A little touch of Nielsen in the afternoon)
 Mark Plummer (Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain)
 Claire... Brialey? Briarley? Briarly? Brearley? Oh sod it.

Bottom row:

Linda Krawecke (Provider of VW microbus, shovels, rakes, implements of destruction)
 Ian Maule (Huge Ever Growing Pulsating Brain That Rules from the Center of the Website)
 Rob Jackson (Handcrafted Lecterns While 'U' Wait)
 Graham (I resign!) Charnock