

SPACE CADET



(Or: The Aging Old Fhart Nostalgic Time Waster Gazette) ^{no.} 15

TRYING SOMETHING DIFFERENT

I used to set my zines up like mini-magazines, complete with tables of content, set articles, in a format that was anything but free and easy. Have to complete this. Have to complete that. One deadline after another. Unless I was in top form, hard to finish one segment and motivate myself to move on to the next.

Well, screw that, at least for this zine. SPACE CADET is meant to be my perzine. I'm transforming it into a very personal perzine reflecting my typical state of mind, i.e. meandering musings, drifting thoughts, short attention span and all the rest. I'll just pour some text in whenever I feel like it. As soon as I figure I've got enough pages, I'll end abruptly, email this issue off, and start on the next one.

In a way, turning SPACE CADET into a continuous loc to myself, a kind of diary in other words, or perhaps more accurately, a log book.

Who is to blame? Dale Speirs for one. He works continuously a little bit at a time, and as soon as he's filled the requisite number of pages for a given issue, off it goes, with nary a break in his steady writing schedule. Blame Mike Glicksohn, who pointed out long ago he wasn't competing with Time Magazine. Blame Jack Kerouac, who boasted of non-stop stream of consciousness writing without bothering to read anything till the entire novel was finished.

Mind you, I won't go as far as William Burroughs, cause that would mean cutting out snippets of text from other people's perzines and randomly joining the snippets together into one long, incomprehensible text. Fun idea, but not the sort of thing I want to read, much less do.

In short, think of it as a paper blog. All in aid of getting Space Cadet published quickly and often.

THOUGHTS ON RETIREMENT

Roughly 1,900 years ago, Pliny the Younger wrote:

"To Pomponius Bassus"

"I was delighted to hear from our mutual friends that you are showing your natural wisdom in planning and spending your retirement. You live in a lovely spot, you can take exercise on the shore and in the sea, and have no lack of conversation or books to read and have read to you, so that every day you can add something to your store of knowledge. This is the right way to grow old for a man who has held the highest civil offices, commanded armies, and devoted himself entirely to the service of the state as long as it was proper to do so. It is our duty to give up our youth and manhood to our country, but our last years are our own; this the law itself suggests in permitting the old to retire. I wonder when this will be permitted me – when shall I reach the honourable age which will allow me to follow your example of a graceful retirement, when my withdrawal will not be termed laziness but rather a desire for peace?"

Alas for Pliny, he died at the age of 55 while serving on a special commission in Bithynia and Pontus.

Well, at least I've outlived Pliny, though I've not done as much for my country as he did for his. (Though I did swear an oath of allegiance to the Queen and worked in Canada Customs for a year...) Point is, I've put in forty plus years in the workforce and genuinely believe *"our last years are our own."*

Pliny, being moderately wealthy, and owning perhaps a dozen villas scattered up and down the Italian coast, would occasionally bugger off to one and pretend he was retired, at least for as long as his self-declared vacation lasted. He quite enjoyed these moments of freedom.

"I have been spending the last few days amongst my notes and papers [at one of his country villas] in most welcome peace. How could I – in the city? The races were on, a type of spectacle which has never had the slightest attraction for me. I can find nothing new or different in them: once seen is enough, so it surprises me all the more that so many thousands of adult men have such a childish passion for watching galloping horses and drivers standing in chariots, over and over again... When I think how this futile, tedious, monotonous business can keep them sitting endlessly in their seats, I take pleasure in the fact that their pleasure is not mine. And I have been very glad to fill my idle hours with literary work during these

days which others have wasted in the idlest of occupations."

I can identify with this. I have no desire to partake in modern spectacles like the recent Vancouver Olympics, or car races, horse races, concerts, street festivals and the like. I'm not bored. I don't crave excitement, adrenalin rushes, loud music, thrills, kicks, etc. In fact, I never did. I used to go to nightclubs and concerts because I thought I was supposed to, because that's what adults did. I was striving to be just like everyone else. Trying to fit in. But eventually I grasped I was behaving as if I was living inside a TV commercial, so I stopped, and was all the better for it.

Recently I commented elsewhere on this phenomenon of people living according to the hype thrust at them by advertisers, as if booze guarantees happiness, toothpaste good sex, and a line of credit complete personal freedom. All lies. Our culture is based on lies. Knowing this makes it easier to go my own way. With age comes wisdom... sorta...

So how did Pliny spend his pseudo-retirement days? Here's his account of a typical day:

"To Fuscus Salinator"

"You want to know how I spend the summer days in Tuscany? I wake when I like, usually about sunrise, often earlier but rarely later. My shutters stay closed, for in the stillness and darkness I feel myself surprisingly detached from any distractions and left to myself in freedom... If I have anything on hand I work it out in my head, choosing and correcting the wording... then I call my secretary, the shutters are opened, and I dictate what I have put into shape,,,"

"Three or four hours after I first wake I betake myself according to the weather either to the terrace or the covered walk, work out the rest of my subject, and dictate it."

"I go for a drive... after a short sleep and another walk I read a Greek or Latin speech aloud

and with emphasis, not so much for the sake of my voice as for my digestion..."

"Then I have another walk, am oiled, take exercise, and have a bath. If I am dining alone with my wife or a few friends, a book is read aloud during the meal, and afterwards we listen to a comedy or some music."

"Then I walk again with the members of my household, some of whom are well educated. Thus the evening is prolonged with varied conversation, and, when the days are at their longest, comes to a satisfying end."

He adds that another reason he loved staying at his Tuscany villa was *"I need never wear a formal toga"* which, while a dignified mode of dress, was very heavy and uncomfortable. I know what he means. I shall never wear a tie again, not even for a funeral. I've thrown out all my ties.



And here's some further comments on retirement from Dale Speirs recently communicated to me in a loc to Fanactical Fanactivist #1:

"Having retired in August 2010, the minute I was eligible, I now find myself in a new world where I get out of bed when I feel like it, work on projects that I enjoy doing instead of being ordered to, and watch the world hustle by while I toddle along the footpath. My greatest pleasure is lying in bed in the morning with the radio on and listening to the traffic report, especially during blizzards or if a major freeway is completely blocked by a traffic accident. LOL, or as we used to say, "Laugh, I thought I'd die." You're retired now, so you know what I mean."

Yes, indeed I do.

MY PLINY-LIKE RETIREMENT

When I wake up, I like to doze back to sleep. Nothing I enjoy more than the sensation of falling asleep.

When next I wake up, usually around 9:00 am, being careful not to disturb my wife (who is a night owl staying up late into the wee hours of the morning working on her writings), I slip on boxer shorts and a t-shirt, let our idiot (but extremely cute) dove out of her cage, grab a coffee, and sit down before our living room computer (the only one connected to the internet).

I peruse the BBC online news while I sip my coffee. Then I turn my attention to my personal email, and after that to my VCON ConCom Gmail. Until recently there was usually something to be included in the VCON 36 program book, so I worked on that for a while. Now that 36 is over and done with, I must start thinking about the VCON 37 program book.

Then the dog comes prancing out of the bed room and I take her for a walk. She's cute, but being a Shih-tzu, is very stubborn. If she wants to sniff every lamppost, bush and fire hydrant, there's nothing I can do to stop her. Nothing I can do to hurry her up. I generally spend twice as much time as I intend on these walks. I keep telling myself it's a zen meditation exercise.

Once home it's time to let the flightless crow out of his cage, and he has to share his treats with the cat. And the rat. But at least the tarantula doesn't require feeding most days.

I grab another coffee, or maybe some orange juice, and continue working at the computer.

Round about noon Alyx is up and about, so I abandon the computer to her for the rest of the day, taking what I need with the aid of a memory stick and transferring it to my den computer, or at least I used to till my den computer died. Now I transfer to my laptop sitting on my den table.

Next I have a long relaxing bath, and get dressed for the day. It's time for chores. Sometimes I do laundry in the building's facilities, or go to the nearest supermarket & get food for supper.

Occasionally I look at the budget and decide it's time to purchase some goodies. I might walk over to Future Shop or Best Buy and look for any nifty DVDs or Blu-rays that have come in. Or hop the Skytrain to the Metrotown Shopping Centre to check

out Virgin records for same and also explore Chapters Books to see if I can find anything interesting. Or I might walk half a block to the new Surrey Library which currently has a small but growing selection of books.

When I'm feeling especially frisky I may choose to ride the Skytrain all the way into Richmond and visit Imperial Hobbies. The last time I did this I bought four Osprey booklets with titles like "Japanese Fortified Temples and Monasteries AD 710-1602" & "The Fortifications of Gibraltar 1068-1945." I like looking at the illustrations. Most of the books I buy these days have lots of photos and illustrations. I figure as my eyes get older and the text gets harder to read, I can still relax for a while just by perusing the illustrations without unduly taxing my eyes. Call it an old man rationalization.

I also picked up a few more sets of Airfix HO scale soldiers and a couple of ready-made HO scale buildings. I'm steadily building up quite a selection. Eventually I'll get back into solo table-top miniature wargaming, the hobby of my youth.

Or I might decide to hit the Book & Comic Emporium on Broadway to buy some ancient pocket books to add to the collection I've been building since the sixties. On my last visit I purchased several of the Fafhrd and Gray Mouser sagas by Fritz Leiber, as well as the complete Mike Mars series by Donald Wollheim.

Or I might head up to the end of Broadway to check out White Dwarf Books and Walter & Jill's selection of current SF&F novels.

And of course, if I can buy goodies when the budget allows it, Alyx can too. Though she usually prefers to order stuff on-line. That plus the incredible number of goodies her fans send her (home-made dolls based on the characters in her novels, art work based on same, etc.) means there's almost always something being delivered by the posties to her every day. It's really quite amazing.

Once I'm back home, say by 4:00 pm, I usually take a nap for a couple of hours.

Then comes the evening. Most often I sit in my den working on various projects, taking time off for supper with Alyx and watching TV while we eat.

Mostly history channel stuff, or something on the Turner movie channel. Then back to the laptop.

Or I might decide to spend a couple of hours reading.

Every once and a while I declare a DO NOTHING day. I don't check my email. I don't touch the computer. I just watch TV or plug in a DVD (Most recently, ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE), and/or read, often selecting a book I've read before but I know I'll enjoy reading once again. (I have my favourites. I read WAR OF THE WORLDS about once every three years I think.)

Often, on these DO NOTHING days, I'll ride the Skytrain downtown or to some other section of the Lower Mainland for some fresh air and a change of scene, putting in a long walk for exercise. All the hustle & bustle I witness convinces me I made the right decision to retire now rather than wait till I'm dead. Yesiree bob.

But at the end of the day, I know there's another one coming, and go to sleep circa 11:00 pm without much if any stress or worry to prevent me from dozing off.

My warehouse job? Couldn't go back to it even if I had to. I've already forgotten everything necessary to the job. Quite deliberately too. I is happy as I is.

The above is a typical day. Boring to many, but quite satisfying to me. About as stress-free an existence as I can manage.

There are atypical days of course, visiting friends, visiting relatives, online CSFFA conferences, VCON ConCom meetings, BCSFA meetings, anything else that crops up. So there is actually a fair variety to my life, something different every day. Point is, it's MY life now. I don't owe my soul to the company store any more. I do what I want (within the limits of my budget) and if I don't feel like doing anything at all, I don't. Perfectly happy to vegetate when the mood strikes me. Sometimes stretching out on the couch and just staring at the cat staring at the ceiling offers all the joy in the world.

I love being retired!



ONE MAN CRUSADE

As those of you who read the pages of my zine 'The Fanactical Fanactivist' are aware, I have successfully (sorta) launched the 'Faneds' or 'The Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards', the first presentation being at VCON 36. Certificates (designed by Taral Wayne) have already been mailed to the winners, and Monster Attack Team Canada member Lawrence Prime is busily sculpting the actual 'Faned', a six inch figure of an astronaut blasting Superman-style into space by virtue of the thrust of a pen-nib rocket-pack on his back. It looks great! Can't wait till it's finished.

Only problem is, I need to make numerous copies in order to mail them off to the winners this year and the years to come. My own efforts at making molds failed miserably. I need a cheap, reliable method resulting in an award people can be proud to own, one that captures every detail of the master copy. If anybody has any idea how this can be done, please let me know.

Currently I am altering the rules of the British Nova Awards to suit the needs of the 'Faned' Awards. With any luck the CFF Awards will be a peer-vote institution within a year or two. We shall see.

Anyone interested in the continuing evolution of the 'Faneds' and how they are shaping up I encourage to check out 'The Fanactical Fanactivist' at Bill Burns efanzines.com.

PLETHORA OF ZINES

I've been accused of going crazy. Currently I am writing and publishing seven separate zines:

SPACE CADET: My perzine, in the new format you see here. Fifteen issues to date.

CORUSCATING CONUNDRUMS: A humourzine, consisting of the collected ‘Ask Mr. Guess-It-All’ columns I’ve written for a number of zines. Only two issues so far, as the death of my father put a crimp in my sense of humour, but I’m hoping to get back into the silliness early in the new year.

WCSFAZINE: A society zine, for which I won a Fan Achievement (Fanzine) Aurora last year. Published on behalf of The West Coast Science Fiction Association, the registered society which sponsors and hosts VCON, the annual Vancouver and Lower Mainland general interest science fiction convention. VCON 37 coming up next year.

WCSFAzine used to be loaded with articles on Canadian fannish history, as well as news re British Columbia Authors and SF Clubs, but the total effort got to be a huge grind and now it is primarily devoted to promoting VCON, while retaining a limited fannish history focus, namely one devoted to the history of Cdn. SF conventions. Convention trip reports always welcome in its pages. Twenty-two issues thus far.

AURORAN LIGHTS: Another society zine, this one representing the interests of CSFFA (Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association), a federally registered society which ‘operates’ the Auroras, Canada’s National SF Awards (very similar to the American Hugos).

This is the zine I now use to discuss Canadian fannish history, or at least the fanzine side of it. The Auroras consist of both fannish and professional categories. The professional awards deserve their own zine, one with the latest news re assorted authors & the Canadian book publishing industry in general – a trade zine in effect – but I don’t have the energy, or the skill, to handle something so important to the interests of professionals.

In AURORAN LIGHTS I give the latest news pertaining to the Auroras, but the rest of the material has to do with Cdn. fandom at large & fanzines in particular. An uneasy mix perhaps. I need to branch out more. Include articles on Filking, for instance (especially since filkers have their own Aurora category as of this year).

THE FANACTICAL FANACTIVIST: yet another society zine, this one for the non-existent Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards Society (non-existent because so far I am the only member – hopefully this will change in the near future). Six issues in four months. One of the reasons it comes out oftener than my other zines is my policy of restricting it to a mere six pages including the cover. A bit of news, an article, some letters of comment, and ‘Presto!’, a frequent and lively zine shaping the course of the ‘Faneds’. Been much fun to do. Keep those locs coming!

THE FRENETIC FANAC REVIEW: a review zine strictly devoted to fanzine reviews. Taking my new ‘write a bit at a time till you got enough to pub’ method the idea is to write reviews as I read the zines in question and publish as often as possible. I haven’t actually started yet but I hope to get the first issue out by the end of the year.

By restricting zine reviews to this zine, I speed up production of other zines where I used to place reviews. That’s the theory, at least.

THE CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION FAN:

This is for e-APA, which is distributed online at the first of each month. Maximum contributions are limited to 500 KB. There are currently 13 members, which is a goodly number. I have no problems filling 6 pages, usually a short essay to begin with and then 5 pages of comments. Only one issue published, with another done for the next mailing. Then I will learn what the other members think of my first contribution. Hopefully they won’t demand I be evicted.

My tone is conversational, with sage observations and wry asides (or perhaps just utter tosh), but what makes my contributions a bit different from my usual fannish writing is the occasional dark tone when commenting on political trends or historical matters brought up by other members in the previous issue. Sometimes I feel a deep pessimism about the way things are going, and I’ve decided e-APA will be my venue for the were-troll aspect of my thoughts and opinions. Not often mind you, only now and again depending on what’s being discussed. In general I aim to be amusing, or if not amusing, at least interesting.

I used to belong to FAPA, and might join up again some day (I lapsed due to matters more pressing, not for any dissatisfaction with FAPA itself)

but meanwhile e-APA is a simple way to acquire a bunch of enthusiastic pen pals.

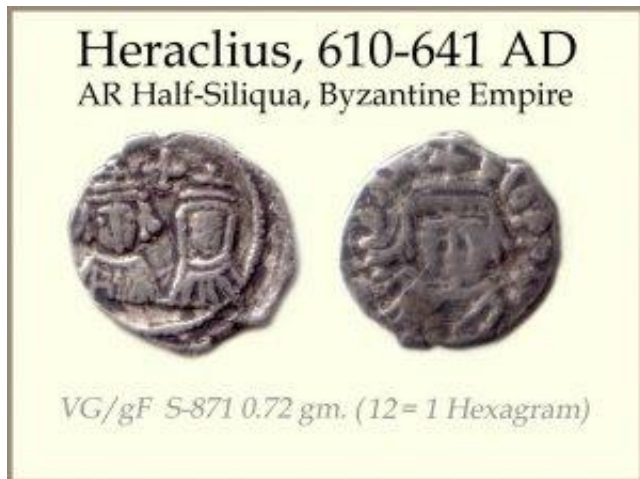
TO SUM UP: Yes, I am crazy. I'm even considering pubbing yet another zine, one devoted to my love of science fiction films and old monster movies. But not just yet.

A POCKET FULL OF HISTORIES: COIN NOTES

By Taral Wayne

(Editor's note: though I've decided to make SPACE CADET much more of a perzine, I continue to include Taral's articles on ancient coins cause I likes ancient coins.)

The coins illustrated in these short written pieces are all from my collection. I've scanned each one, and drawn on my own knowledge to describe the coin, the Kings, the Queens, the Emperors, and the times. Certain statements are my opinions only, even guesswork, but that's alright. After more than 2,000 years in some cases, there's nobody around to sue!



Heraclius was the son of the governor of North Africa, who revolted against the Byzantine emperor Phocas. After two years of dreadful fighting he assumed the purple himself. His reign was an eventful one. On his watch, the mighty Persian empire came to an end, and the hungry Arab empire filled the void, eventually taking Syria, Egypt and Palestine from the Byzantines. In time, the invading Muslims would take more and more until there was nothing left. While that was more than 800 years in the future, it began with Heraclius.

The emperor made many changes in how the empire ran, but the one perhaps he should be most noted for was abolishing Latin as the official language, and replacing it with Greek. Heraclius was no longer called Augustus or Imperator, the old Roman titles, but Basileus, which is Greek. In a manner of speaking, this is the end of Roman history as Augustus, or Marcus Aurelius, or even Constantine would have known it.

The coin has another interesting tale to tell. What, pray tell, is a half-siliqua? The siliqua was a Constantinian replacement for the ailing denarius, which was no longer struck by the end of the third century AD. A new coin, the argenteus, only survived a brief while, perhaps because as a relatively large coin and fairly pure silver, it was too valuable.

The siliqua was about 2 gms. and highly successful. All the same, inflation led in the 330's to a "reduced" siliqua of about two-thirds the weight. This interested me because at that weight, instead of there being 24 of the old siliqua to a pound of silver, there would be 36 of the new siliqua. It made perfect sense in view of the circulation of another, heavier silver coin called the hexagram. Six hexagram were valued the same as one gold solidus. If 36 siliqua were worth one solidus, then 6 siliqua must be worth one hexagram. It all fit together in my head, and when I asked an expert I knew, I was told I had deduced correctly.

That's the wonderful thing about coin collecting. You always have more to learn, and you can make many of the discoveries through your own detective work and inference.

LETTERS OF COMMENT:

OOK OOK, SLOBBER DROOL!

(Note: Ghod-Editor's comments are in red. I reserve the right to edit LoCs as I see fit.)

From: **ED BEAUREGARD**, July 21st, 2011
(One of the founders of the B.C. SF Association.)

Hi Graeme,

Great issue - I really enjoyed the articles.

The Atlas space station kit I was writing about was the Hawk #513 Convair Atlas Space Station. You might want to check out this website which has a pretty extensive list of space models (plastic, paper and flying):

http://www.ninfinger.org/models/space_models.html

Here's a picture of the model itself:



If your father went overseas in the middle of the war, that is when my father was being invalidated out. From mid '42 to mid '43 he was with 458 (Australian) squadron in the Middle East - I actually ordered a squadron history from a bookstore in Australia and found my father's name in the list of members. While in the desert, he came down with a very severe case of dysentery, which resulted in his being sent back to Canada. Naturally, the bureaucrats in Ottawa refused him a disability pension, claiming the dysentery was a "pre-existing condition". And we wonder why Americans don't want government officials managing their healthcare!

The only thing worse than government managing healthcare is free enterprise managing healthcare.

The BCATP was the first step into what was a most amazing organization - the WW2 Commonwealth air forces. That was a truly international force, with squadrons having a mix of people from all over the "Empire" (as it was known then). My father, throughout his time overseas, never actually served with a Canadian formation. His brother Charles (who was killed in a raid on Dortmund in May 1944) was with 101 Squadron, the RAF unit that flew radio counter-measures aircraft. Not bad for two boys who didn't even learn English until they were in their late teens.

I have only a rough idea of what my father did during the war. He never talked about it. I do have a

teeny photo of him he mailed to my mother waving from the cockpit of his Wellington bomber. And when I visited London in 1970 it turns out the 'Red Windmill' (I think it was called) strip club in Piccadilly Circus was the same club he'd frequented during the war when on leave. But of his actual combat experience, not a word. Too painful.

Now that you have some time, take a look at the DVD's of Vcon I gave you a few years back. It is almost hilarious to see what we looked like thirty years ago.

For a while I was thinking that visually I've been improving with age, developing character, looking more mature and so forth. But now I seem to be sliding toward the curmudgeon/gargoyle category of appearance and am beginning to feel a bit wistful about the way I used to look.

But as for other people, yes indeed, quite hilarious (some of them even now for that matter).

From: **ERIC MAYER**, January 23rd, 2011
(Famed Faned of 'GROGGY' and 'e-DITTO')

Graeme,

After pretty much burning out I'm trying to get back to loccking. Your front cover photo kind of illustrates how I was feeling myself, faanishly.

Congratulations on your retirement. Yes, I agree that forty years of hard labor is more than enough for anyone. I know what you mean about crunching the numbers repeatedly as one approaches possible retirement. I've been doing it sporadically for a couple years. Unfortunately, I always get the same answer -- no retirement in the foreseeable future. Of course I was never any good at arithmetic so after a time I try again in case I added wrong. Maybe I forgot to carry a two or something.

My union pension and Canada pension alone would not have been enough. Once I figured that out I never bothered crunching the numbers, it was too depressing. The annuity I purchased makes all the difference.

By the way, one thing I've noticed about the Canada pension is that people assume they will get

the maximum amount when they retire. But it depends how much you pay into it. If, like me, you paid in over forty years but out of a relatively low income level, you don't get anywhere near the maximum. Financial advisors often leave that detail out for some reason. Working fulltime all your life isn't enough to earn the maximum. It has to be fulltime with a damn good salary.

I was going over our financial situation last week since I turned sixty-one and am within a year of collecting reduced benefits. Of course, as I'm sure you're aware the United States has one of the worst retirement systems and stingiest benefits in the industrialized world. I won't qualify for Medicare until I'm sixty-five and even then we still have to pay hefty insurance premiums. The one positive thing is that Mary and I could probably manage to live, barely, on Social Security, if our work dried up. It wouldn't be easy or pleasant, and probably we couldn't manage indefinitely, but it is nice to know there is some cushion there, finally, after a lifetime of living right on the edge. I don't worry so much now about the work vanishing.

An adult B.C. citizen of any age can apply for Provincial government Medicare (including family care covering the kids). Coverage for my wife and myself costs only \$109 a month. For that we get tremendous value. My hernia operation won't cost a penny. My doctor's visits cost nothing. My wife's gall bladder operation cost nothing. Heck of a good system.

Granted, many things do cost extra nowadays (the government keeps reducing spending), a private room in hospital, for example, costs about \$100 a day, but you pay nothing if you stay in a ward. The basics are covered. Not a perfect system, in some ways flawed, but excellent service for a minimum cost. Frankly, I think our system is way better than yours.

However, my situation is not as dire as yours was. Back in 1994 I was laid off and have been self-employed since. Thank goodness for the layoff. I think I'd probably be dead by now if I'd kept working in that corporate hell hole. And I am not kidding either. I know what it feels like to stagger home at the end of the work too beat up to do a thing. So although I need to work I do so from home and while I would love to have no deadlines and spend 100% of my time doing what I want, I still have a pretty decent

situation compared to most. I have been very, very lucky.

I hope your luck continues, gets better and better, in fact taking you further and further away from living on the edge.

Delightful story about your first job. Well, amusing to read, not so wonderful to experience. Who knows, maybe you could have become a porn magnate if you'd stuck to it. I fear that I have no anecdotes to share, however, about such establishments. I'm not saying I have lived such a sheltered life as to never have ventured into one but what is there to say?

I once went into a porn store looking for a 'gag' item to get a co-worker. I noticed one middle-aged chap staring at a glass shelf displaying numerous upright vibrator dildos of impressive (and not very true-to-life) size. He absently reached forward and pushed an 'on' switch. With a hornet-like buzzing the dildo began clattering all over the shelf, knocking dormant dildos onto the floor. With face turned crimson red he flailed his arms attempting to corral the rogue dildo and switch it off. Took him several minutes. Found this quite amusing I did.

And then there was the time I was walking along Granville street and a thief came running out of a porno store earnestly clutching a three foot long dildo to his chest. He took off down the sidewalk pursued by two of the store's employees. What the hell was he thinking? He got away though.

I loved the article on Basho, of whom I have never heard. My meager knowledge of history is confined to that of the West. You put your finger on what I like most about history -- the alternate reality (albeit a real reality!) the sense of wonder, a glimpse of different ways of seeing the world. You quoted some excerpts about ancient monuments encountered hundreds of years ago. When reading history I am often struck by just how long history is. A traveler, a thousand years ago, marvels at a ruin ancient even then.

There is just as much sense of wonder to be found in history as there is in science fiction, which is why I've always enjoyed both. Ancient ruins always very evocative to me, be they Roman or Martian.

There is a short text written during the 9th century which seems to have been a sort of tourist guide to Constantinople at the time. It lists the endless monuments and statues which still fill the city, many neglected during this period of decline. Although many of the monuments are identifiable, if only because they are inscribed with the names of emperors and their families, in other cases the chroniclers have no idea what a given statute or monument represents, who placed it where it stood, or why, or when. They attributed supernatural powers to some of the ancient Greek statutes of gods and goddesses. The people of the city lived and moved through relics of a past they had largely forgotten. And that was over a thousand years ago and the society a sophisticated one.

Once artifacts of the past are no longer meaningful, society having changed, new meanings are ascribed to them, often the only reason they get to be preserved a bit longer. For example, the magnificent life-sized bronze equestrian statue of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius survived only because Christians thought it was the Emperor Constantine, the first Christian Emperor. If they'd known it was Marcus they would have melted it down. (Mind you, medieval Popes at the Lateran Palace threw parties with wine continuously flowing from the nostrils of the horse, so their respect for the statue wasn't entirely spiritual.)

Needless to say I also enjoyed Taral's article on Roman coins. Like him, when I see such artifacts I wonder who held them and what was purchased with them. He says the siliqua in question was minted in Arles. One wonders how far from there it traveled.

Well, from Arles to Toronto for starters, but what places in-between? In whose pouch?

Best, Eric

From: **BRAD W. FOSTER**, January 30th, 2011
Hugo Award & Rotsler Award Winning Fan Artist.

Greetings Graeme

Been a while since issue #13 back in June of 2009. Your email along with it noted that it would now "...become much more frequent." That clearly didn't happen, BUT this issue certainly explains why!

Looks like that was a hell of a lot of numbers to crunch to get, in the end, to some good news! We've got no pensions or savings of any kind, and the screwy health care system here means it would cost us a fortune to try to keep coverage right when we need it, so I don't think I'm ever going to be able to retire, per se. Ah well, life, we'll see how it goes. At least I'm enjoying what I do a hell of a lot more than you did. Congrats on being able to get out from under that, and find a way to get some enjoyment again.

It is like being freed after forty years in prison. You can tell I'm not much on 'the dignity of labour'. I much prefer 'the dignity of leisure.'

And considering what your first job (well, does it count as a first job if you didn't actually work there?), things definitely got better, even if it was all dragging at the end. For \$1 an hour I'm supposed to start a knife fight with a biker? How come that wasn't in the initial job description? Or maybe it was, and the folks at Manpower just thought it was a hilarious joke to send people to that job.

The job description read 'Book Store Clerk.' That was it. No further details.

In your accompanying email this time, you asked about fillos and covers. I've got two things attached here. One is the old "Cuboid" toon that has been floating around with you for a while. I'm going to keep sending this until you either find a home for him, or actually break down and admit you don't care for it, and that's why you've not used it yet. So there!

Hah! I used the 'Cuboid toon' on page 2 of issue 2 of AURORAN LIGHTS last March! So there!

The other one is a recent portrait done for a guy who does Pirate-stuff at one of those renaissance festival things. I thought it was a nice drawing and would love to see it get out a bit more, so thought I'd send it your way. Interested in using it for a cover? Maybe as a pirate he could be considered a "retro-Space Cadet", or am I getting too far out in left field?

It will be the cover of the next issue of SPACE CADET. I plan to publish SC more frequently and would dearly love to feature more covers by you, so if you are of a mind, feel free to drop more covers my way. Will publish within two months I swear!

Anyway, congrats on the retirement, and hope this means SC now WILL be showing up more often to inform and entertain!

Been ten months since #14. Now that I am trying this new form of zine writing, I hope to publish SC six times a year. In fact, I plan to publish #16 next month! I is reformed!

stay happy~ Brad

From: **DAVE HAREN**, January 30th, 2011

Hi Graeme,

I found the Moon bus at Hobbylinc.com.

I thought it looked familiar for some reason.

The stock number is MOE 2001-1 from Moebius Models and the blurb says they tried to duplicate the Aurora packaging as well.

Yep! Originally an Aurora model. They did all kinds of movie & TV tie-ins. The first to do Star Trek, for instance. (Spock vs giant snake.)

If you're looking for a movie to review, you can't go wrong with the archive.org copy of "Maniac". Hmm, there may be a better way to phrase that.

I have the sinister cinema video version of that 1934 film. Badly acted, with a couple of uncomfortable scenes involving possible cruelty to animals, but otherwise weirdly different, even delirious. By the same couple who made 'How to Undress in front of your Husband'. Strictly 1930s exploitation fare. Worth seeing at least once.

Amazon is now selling more e-books than paperbacks. So on this one the future has arrived and paper publishing is on its way to the type of obscurity that used to be called vanity press. In a way it is quite an irony that all of the power of the comp and the example of the rest of the world never penetrated to them. Economies of scale only work if you increase your output of each item, and lower the price per. So what did they do? Decreased the size of print runs, jacked up the prices, and turned themselves into an obscure side show. All of this in an era when more people are reading more than at any time in history.

For the comp savvy it might be interesting to see what happens with LibreOffice versus OpenOffice. The open source community has been a mover and shaker in the world for a long time and has done more to advance computer science than any corporate entity. One possible exception being Xerox Parc project for R&D, if you think of Apple as a valid comp set of ideas.

The one thing you can be sure of is the end user and person who wants to learn the trade is not going to suffer from the split. Open source lets you implement those "wouldn't it be nice if" ideas, or at least learn a lot trying.

I still have a hellish time just trying to get page numbers for a word file (you'll note this ish numbering starts on page 3 – couldn't get page 2 number to show up – this after three hours of trying!), so it goes without saying the above two paragraphs, while no doubt making completely valid points, have nothing to do with the world I live in.

I have a mad scheme on the burner to convert "Struggle for the Galactic Empire, into "creation of the Galactic Empire" with minimal mods so you can play the Terran expansion beyond their home sector. Things like this are the reason why hard core SF gamers are in no danger of getting a life.

If you are looking for an easy entry into SF board gaming, you can snag a copy of Grav Armor and Outpost Gamma from the Net for free, print a copy out and see what it is all about.

First I played table top miniatures, then Avalon Hill board games, and then console games (I still have my Coleco). Next I got into the first three Combat Mission Computer Games (which I play solo). I haven't played board games for at least two decades.

The only game I currently play on a regular basis is Electronic Arts' cartoony 'Battlefield Heroes'. I have six customized characters, but my favourite is 'BoxcarBilly'. He has the face and hands of a zombie, the chest and legs of a werewolf, a WWI helmet with goggles, an open Blue trench coat, a blue kilt, and army boots.

Since my reflexes are slow, I charge straight at the enemy firing with my heavy machinegun, pass

right through him, and turn into him as he turns toward me. Victory depends on who can turn the fastest. My opponents hate me.

I also like nothing better than sniping from a distance with a tank's cannon.

In general I 'die' more often than my team mates (who sometimes text nasty words at me for 'losing' their battle, but I rack up points slowly but steadily). Main thing is, I have mindless fun.

I've tried more 'realistic' games, but dislike them for that very reason. Too intense. Battlefield Heroes is simple, goofy fun, like an interactive cartoon. Definitely my style.

I'm looking forward to a FrontPage picture of the happily retired unwrinkled laid back SF guru who is enjoying life after work....GRIN

I will publish such, as soon as I lose the thirty pounds I put on since I stopped running around in a warehouse. Extra weight does help smooth out the wrinkles though...

Warm Regards Dave Haren

From: **LLOYD PENNEY**, February 8th, 2011
(Aurora & Faned award winning Loc Hack)

Dear Graeme,

Now for comments on Space Cadet 14. Turn that frown upside down, retirement seems to be agreeing with you.

Gafiation? No. Retirement? Yes. If you gafiate, you may not have enough to do during your retirement. I'm getting to the point that I could use a retirement package, but the most likely source of retirement funds is Lotto 6/49. Pretty bad... I doubt there'll be much to inherit when my folks go, so I'd better find a source of funds soon. Should I ever retire, and have the funds I need, I'd like to have some fannish projects to focus on.

At least publishing e-zines online or contributing e-locs on line is quite inexpensive, providing you've got a computer and access infrastructure in place.

I rarely found that Canada Manpower ever helped me with job finding...if anything, they provided more of a hindrance than a help.

I knew of OSFiC in my early fannish days in Toronto, but I was told that one needed to be invited to become a member. I was never invited because I was so new, and there was a lot of hostility towards anyone new, so I was never a member. A few of those newsletters are in my collection, anyway. Lots of familiar names and early friends in that list, plus some I never knew that were connected with OSFiC.

OSFiC certainly had a very odd recruitment policy. First I've heard of it. Any idea what their criteria was? I'm curious.

The BCSFA archive has a number of OSFiC publications, but not, apparently, the better ones. For those reading SC for the first time, I printed a complete list of their publications, drawn up by Taral, in the last issue #14.

Afterwords...I am looking at that photograph of Frankenstein's monster, and I can't help but think that it's 4SJ, in heavy makeup. I'd bet he was having a hard time not smiling or laughing there.

Congrats! You are correct! T'was indeed the legendary Forrest J Ackerman.

Yours,
Lloyd Penney.

COLOPHON

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