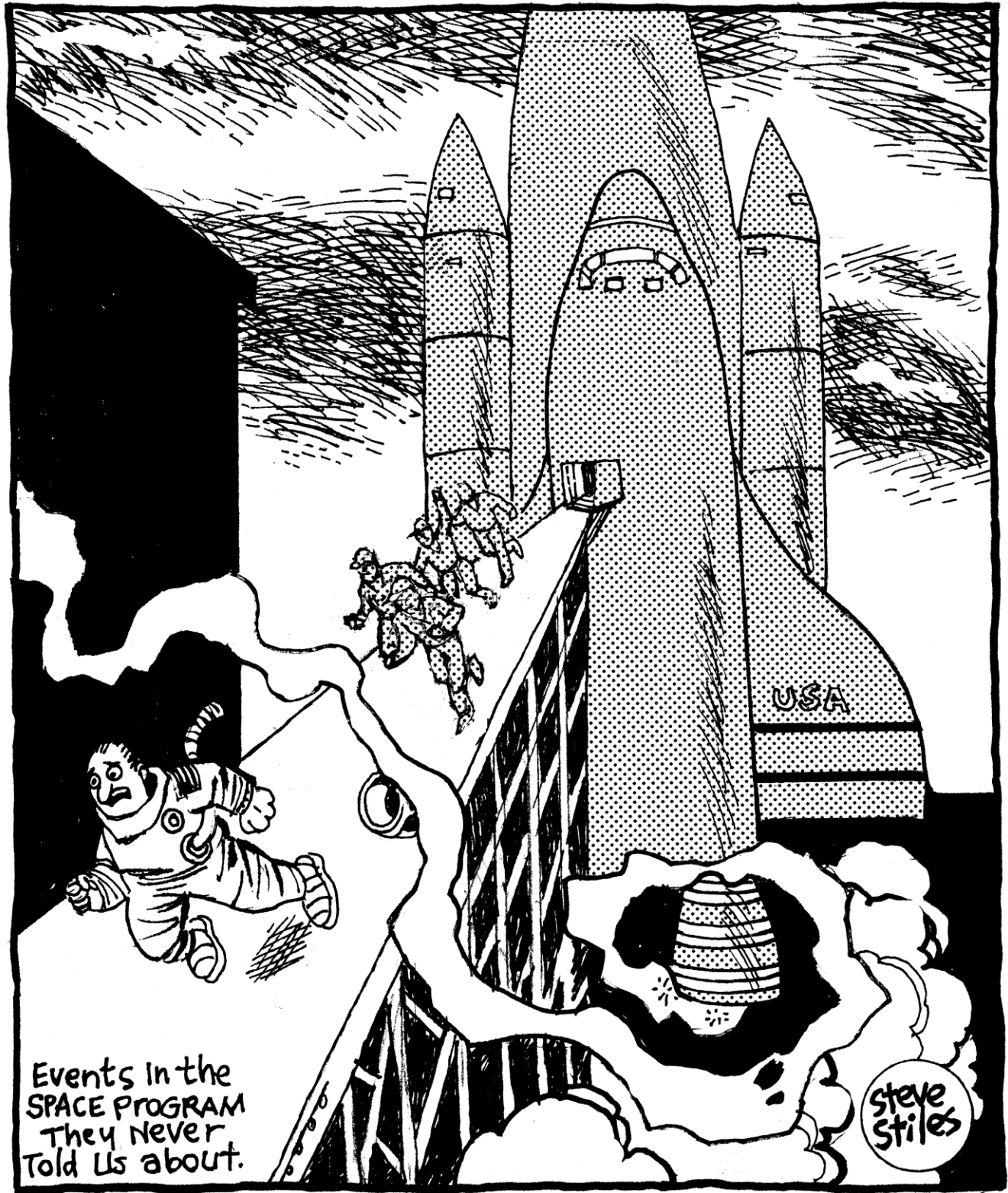


# SPACE CADET

#21

( OR: THE AGING OLD FHART NOSTALGIC TIME WASTER GAZETTE )



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## POOR EXCUSE FOR AN EDITORIAL

Apart from Delerium Time, Taral's coin article and the LoC column, I was having a hard time trying to figure what I should write about for this issue. Assorted random bits suggested themselves, but nothing major, nothing distinctive, nothing that would make this issue special. Figured I'd have to wait for inspiration to strike. Figured I could be a long time a'waiting.

Then Diane Lacey contacted me and asked if I'd like to publish her 2010 CUFF trip report. Would I? Huzzah! As a former CUFF winner I was absolutely delighted to say yes. And here it is!

## WHAT? 2013 ALREADY? HOW'D THAT HAPPEN?

(aka, an actual CUFF trip report from  
Diane Lacey, first published as part of WOOF  
at Chicon 7.)

### Prologue

I was the 2010 CUFF delegate representing Eastern Canadian fandom at Keycon and it seems about time that I wrote up some kind of trip report for that, no? Three years seems a fair bit of time but not, I think, a record for this kind of thing. Not that I was actually going for the record. As I'm sure most of those reading this are aware, CUFF is the Canadian Unity Fan Fund. The fund sponsors a fan to travel from opposite sides of the country to attend Convention. Convention, as a rule, alternates from locations in Eastern and Western Canada so each year a fan is chosen from the other side. This particular year it was a fan from Eastern Canada (me!) travelling to Winnipeg. The following year a fan from Western Canada was chosen to attend the 2011 Convention. As it turned out that fan chosen was Kent Pollard of Saskatchewan, a very good choice, and the Convention was SFContario 2, a convention at which I served as head of programming. Last year it was SFContario's own Debra Yeung that had the honour.

But I should really start at the beginning. I hadn't thought of it myself, I don't think I ever would have, but Terry Fong pulled me aside at Rob Sawyer's fan party in January and asked if I would

consider running for CUFF. Me? Why no... I haven't been in fandom for several decades yet. How could I possibly run?<sup>(1)</sup> Then I thought about it for... oh maybe a nanosecond or two, "Run for CUFF. Sure I will. Why not?"<sup>(2)</sup> This exchange was followed by a couple of weeks of tracking down nominators in the east and west and the next thing I knew I was in the race. I was very glad to learn that it *was* a race too. Competition is good for the fan fund, as well as for Canadian fandom in general, and, near as I could determine at the time this was the first it had been contested. Later, however, Colin Hinz told me that it had been a three-way contest in 2003 when he administered the fund and winner Lyndie Bright attended Torcon 3. I subsequently found out that the late 1980's/early 1990's had been positively rife with competition with a race in 1989, that I will talk more about later, and a race in 1990 between Paul Valcour and Keith Soltys and in 1991 between David Panchyk and Linda Ross-Mansfield. So while races were not as unusual as I had thought, it'd been a while since we had one.

So why did I, an upstart who couldn't legitimately claim to have been in fandom for more than a decade, run for CUFF? Well, the short answer is because somebody suggested I should and I thought it would be fun. The slightly longer answer is because, having attended conventions in LA, Boston, Minneapolis and Austin, amongst other US locations, it struck me as slightly ridiculous that I had not *yet* attended a Canadian convention west of Toronto. Now, to be fair, it can be *expensive* to travel within the country. It costs me much less to travel to Minneapolis than it would cost me to get to Winnipeg. But I felt I was missing something in not getting to more conventions in Canada and this was the perfect solution to that. Also, there was talk of a one-day conrunner's convention being held the day after Keycon that I really wanted to attend.<sup>(3)</sup> To top it off, if chosen as the CUFF delegate I would get to go to Winnipeg, and Manitoba is one of the three Canadian provinces I had not yet stayed overnight in.<sup>(4)</sup> So it's all good.

(1) I don't know why my mental picture of the typical fan fund delegate was that of an elder statesperson. I've met several and none of them actually fit that profile. Although come to think of it, many *had* been in fandom for decades, presumably having started in the womb.

(2) I never said I wasn't easy.

(3) Although, as it turned out, that convention never happened.

(4) For the record, the other two are PEI and Newfoundland. I have been through Manitoba in the past, returning from trips further west.

## A Brief(ish) History of CUFF

| Past CUFF Delegates |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Date                | Delegate             |
| 1981                | Mike Hall            |
| 1988                | Taral Wayne          |
| 1989                | Robert Runte         |
| 1990                | Paul Valcour         |
| 1991                | Linda Ross-Mansfield |
| 1996                | Rene Walling         |
| 1997                | R. Graeme Cameron    |
| 1998                | Lloyd Penney         |
| 1998                | Yvonne Penney        |
| 1999                | Garth Spencer        |
| 2000                | Sherry Neufeld       |
| 2001                | Murray Moore         |
| 2002                | Colin Hinz           |
| 2003                | Lyndie Bright        |
| 2005                | Brian Davis          |
| 2006                | Michael Skeet (?)    |
| 2007                | Peter Jarvis         |
| 2008                | Lance Sibley         |
| 2009                | LeAmber Kensley      |
| 2010                | Diane Lacey          |
| 2011                | Kent Pollard         |
| 2012                | Debra Yeung          |

But before we get into it all – a history of CUFF for the uninitiated. Much of what follows is with sincere thanks to R Graeme Cameron and his Canadian Fancyclopedia.

( <http://efanzines.com/CanFan/> )

Any errors are in my interpretation and not due to his writings in any way.

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund was established in 1981, by members of the Ontario SF Club (OSFiC) in Toronto, in an effort to bring Canadian fans closer

together. Bob Webber proposed it first, and donated \$25 to the fund that was then matched by OSFiC. Robert Runte, the 1989 delegate, was originally declared the delegate, but was unable to attend the convention. The first CUFF delegate therefore, was Mike Hall, who attended Torque 2, held in Toronto in July 1981. Rumour has it that Mike was declared the CUFF winner out of the blue while attending the convention and the \$50 fund was pushed into his hand. According to Graeme, Mike Hall was “one of the members of the Edmonton SF and Comic Art Society well-known in the 1970s and 1980s as fan publishers. ESFCAS members started several APAs and personal fanzines, the clubzine *Neology*, the collective fanzine *The Monthly Monthly*, and the Alberta regional convention, NonCon. Mike published Robert Runte’s Canadian newszine *New Canadian Fandom* and, for a time, Garth Spencer’s *Maple Leaf Rag*. His trip report appeared in *New Canadian Fandom* #1:2/3, June-Sept. 1981.” It was Mike that started the rather erratic tradition of publishing a trip report detailing a CUFF delegate’s adventures that I’m trying, somewhat belatedly, to continue with this report.

As the table shows there were no further candidates until 1987 when Mike Wallis, then chair of Ad Astra, announced an initiative to revive CUFF and connect it with Canvention. It was also decided that Canventions would alternate, year by year, between Eastern and Western Canadian cons, meaning that CUFF nominees would travel from the opposite side of the country, alternating in the other direction.

The next CUFF delegate, Taral Wayne, traveled from Toronto to Keycon 5/Canvention 8 in 1988. Taral, in comment on File 770, said he recalls writing a trip report, but not where it was published. A copy of a speech written for the occasion by Taral appeared in Michael Skeet's MLR #13 in mid 1989.

Robert Runte from Alberta attended PineKone II/Canvention 9 as the 1989 CUFF delegate. His trip report appeared as an issue of his perzine, *I'm Not Boring You Am I?* (#7, Fall 1989). This was the first time that the CUFF delegate had been elected. In what was probably the most polite race of all time, Robert’s opponent, Steve Forty, actually endorsed Robert. To quote Michael Skeet in MLR #13:

*“Runte won the CUFF over Vancouver's Steve Forty in a race that was so quintessentially Canadian one wouldn't be surprised to discover that both candidates had maple leaves tattooed on*



*their butts. It was so polite that each spent more time campaigning for the other than himself. That being the case, the final vote count -- 18 for Runte, two for Forty, and two ballots spoiled -- could arguably be considered a victory as much for Forty's logic as for Runte. This is not to impugn Runte's win, but the score would doubtless have been closer had Forty not told everyone who'd listen that he was going to go to Convention anyway, something Runte couldn't afford without CUFF."*

Next came Paul Valcour in 1990 and Linda Ross-Mansfield in 1991. Paul published a report in his perzine Long Distance Voyeur, (Dec. 1990). Linda did not publish a trip report but she did publish a very informative essay in the con-newszone ConTRACT (Jul-Aug 1995), part of which is excerpted below:

"We have used as our guide, the rules of both other existing fan funds (ie. TAFF & DUFF), but since CUFF is still in its infancy, and has a smaller financial base than its sister funds, it does not run an election until funds have reached a reasonable quantity to cover the cost of airfare and some accommodation. It usually takes a couple of years to build the fund up again to such a point."

So perhaps this explains why there was not another CUFF delegate until 1996 when Rene Walling, (co-chair of Anticipation and one of my nominators<sup>(1)</sup>), travelled to Convention 96/Con-Version XIII in Calgary.

The next CUFF delegate, was R Graeme Cameron, another of my nominators,<sup>(2)</sup> who traveled to Primedia/Convention 1997 in Markham Ontario and wrote about it in Issue #10 of his perzine SPACE CADET in October 1998.

For the following year, breaking the East-West tradition Convention was held in Montreal and as a result administrator R Graeme Cameron opened up nominations nationwide. Stepping up to the plate were Toronto's own Lloyd and Yvonne Penney, making the long trek to Montreal for Con\*cept98/Boreal98/Convention 18. A very entertaining report entitled Penneys Up The River and other CUFF Stories' was published in December of 2000. To raise funds for CUFF numbered and signed copies were sold.

Next up in 1999 was British Columbia fan writer Garth Spencer, who published a trip report entitled 'What I Did On My October Vacation' in

which he says he "conducted a last-minute online campaign, and obtained more than enough nominations, from both East and West, in less than two weeks." That reminds me strongly of my own late entry into the CUFF race. Garth attended inCONsequential II/Convention 19 in Fredericton, New Brunswick as the CUFF delegate.

In 2000 the delegate was Sherry Neufeld and in 2001 it was Murray Moore, also one of my nominators.<sup>(3)</sup> Murray attended VCON 26/Convention 21 in 2001 and published his account in 'A Trip Report Found in a Plain Manila Envelope' describing both the convention, and a subsequent trip to visit fans in Seattle. The detail in the report reveals the copious notes Murray must have been taking during the trip, a fact borne out when he quotes one of his hosts saying "Hey, don't you know you're supposed to make up the writing, but talk while you're here?"<sup>(4)</sup>

Subsequent winners are given in the table above, but Murray's 2001 account is the last time, until now, a CUFF report has been published. When I pointed this out to him in email Murray responded, "I announced subsequent to being the CUFF delegate that I would donate \$50 to CUFF for each published trip report by a successor delegate. I haven't been obliged to make that donation. Yet."<sup>(5)</sup>

## I won! Now what?

Nominations for the 2010 race closed on January 31st, and two people, myself and Rob Uhrig, were in the running. Because of a delay in getting the ballot online the original balloting period was extended to March 13<sup>th</sup>. On March 18<sup>th</sup> after leaving sufficient time for late arriving mail in ballots, administrator LeAmber Kensley announced that I had won. She said the race was close and that 40 people had voted, many of them donating more than the minimum. I would have expected more people than that to vote in a contested race, but we had managed to get CUFF talked about and to garner some publicity from it, including several mentions on Mike Glyér's File 770. Rob was very gracious in congratulating me and I would like to personally thank him again for running.

(1) Thanks Rene!

(2) Thanks Graeme!

(3) Thanks Murray! (Okay, I'll stop that now.)

(4) No point in asking me to what extent I took this advice to heart while writing this report. I won't tell.

(5) Pay up Murray.

So, two months until Keycon and much to do. As a further complication, and one I was of course aware of when I ran, I was committed to attending ConQuest in Kansas City the weekend following Keycon. I had been promising Jeff Orth for years that I would attend ConQuest and always coming up with a reason that I couldn't. This year, two of the guests of honour, Geri Sullivan and Michael Swanwick, were, coincidentally, going to be guests of SFContario, for which I was programming head. And I had been put on the programming team for ConQuest as well. There would obviously be no excuses this year. I would have to find my way from Winnipeg to Kansas City. And let me say, in case this is coming across as an onerous task, that it categorically wasn't. I was not just committed to going to ConQuest, but I was madly looking forward to it. So, flying to Winnipeg, attending Keycon and spending a few days hanging out with local fandom, then using air miles to fly from Winnipeg to Kansas City and back seemed like the best choice. Winnipeg was closer to Kansas City than Toronto, and therefore fewer miles were needed. No luck though, no air mile flights left from Winnipeg to that destination. I ended up booking a flight from Toronto to Kansas City departing the day of my return flight from Winnipeg. If this was to be the biggest complication that I faced then I was good with that.

Then there were the fundraising responsibilities that came along with being a CUFF delegate that needed to be dealt with. There would be a fundraising auction at Keycon and I needed items to auction. The absolutely wonderful Geri Sullivan, on hearing that I was the delegate, offered me a Baggiecon promotional costume from the Baggiecon party at Valleycon the year before Baggiecon 1 to auction off in Winnipeg. As you know Bob, Baggiecon is the SF fan gathering at the Winnipeg Folk Festival run by Dave Clement and others. From the many reports I've heard, a great time is always had by all. One year I may even attend it for myself. I could think of a few things of my own that would be worth donating, and LeAmber had a few items left over from her term as administrator, but I would need more. Unfortunately because of unforeseen circumstances Geri's Baggiecon poncho didn't arrive in time, but later she donated some fantastic items for the auction at SFContario 1.

A quick email to John Scalzi and he graciously offered a signed novel and even agreed to deliver it to me personally during his upcoming April appearance at the Merril collection in Toronto. To my absolute delight he brought a limited edition copy of his novel, the Hugo nominated *The Last Colony*. There are only 400 numbered and 15 lettered editions in print and this was one of the lettered editions. I parted with signed first editions of Ben Bova and Christopher Moore novels from my own collection and Catherine Crockett came back from Corflu that year with candies and Cadbury chocolate straight from the UK and a couple of Sue Mason illos. Taral Wayne donated a drawing along with several other items. Murray Moore contributed a couple of copies, one soft-cover and one hard-cover, of *The Night Sessions*, a Ken McLeod novel that was never released in North America. I decided to save the hard-cover for the SFContario auction, since Murray wanted the opportunity to bid on it himself, but I felt I had enough for the auction. So it was off to Winnipeg.

I'd booked an early flight, a ridiculously early flight actually, in order to get the best deal on price. My partner Cliff dropped me off at the Toronto airport at ohgodo'clock in the morning, and no doubt went directly home for a nap, assuming he didn't take a pre-nap snooze at the side of the road. I certainly wouldn't have blamed him. I checked my luggage (Free on Air Canada! That was a treat.) went through security and stood in front of Tim Horton's staring blankly, trying to determine if I should have breakfast (NO! My stomach said decidedly. It's too early for food) and settled on a coffee. (It's never too early for coffee.)

The flight was bumpy for a while, but uneventful otherwise, and I landed in Winnipeg at 9:30 AM. I was met at the luggage carousel by LeAmber Kensley, the previous CUFF delegate during Anticipation and chair of Keycon that year. I had told LeAmber in email that I knew how busy the con-chair was going to be the day before the con was to begin and that I was quite happy to make my own way to the hotel, particularly given how early I was arriving, but she wouldn't hear of it and insisted on meeting me anyway, which was very nice of her.

I should probably explain a little about Canvention. Canvention is the Canadian national science fiction convention, where the Prix Aurora

Awards are presented each year. It is usually hosted by another convention which is determined at the previous year's AGM. The host convention has two main duties. That is to hold an AGM and hold a ceremony for the Auroras, the annual Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Association Awards, essentially Canada's version of the Hugos. Last year it was at Anticipation in Montreal, this year it was at Keycon, and next year's location was to be determined at Sunday morning's AGM. (These things always scheduled on Sunday mornings. Why is that?)

Given that it was so early in the day I couldn't yet check into my room in the hotel so LeAmber dropped me off at her house, which was lovely. It sat on a gorgeous tree-lined street ("All the streets in Winnipeg are tree-lined." LeAmber said when I commented on it.) and had a huge picture window looking out on it all. LeAmber had a lot to do, naturally, and left to run some errands. So I sat and read my email and got caught up on a few things while I waited to be able to check in. After a couple hours LeAmber took me over to the hotel and checked me in. The room was great, with two double beds and a great view of the city that looked out over the Forks, which are located at the confluence of the Red River and the Assiniboine River, and a traditional meeting place. Keycon generously paid for the room for me, not something that's required of the Convention host, saving the fund quite a bit for which I'm very thankful. (The current Convention, When Words Collide in Calgary, refused to even comp the CUFF delegate's membership.) And this was the first time I'd had a room to myself at a convention. I could certainly get used to this, but probably won't have the opportunity to do so. It was late afternoon by this time, and my stomach, no longer as reticent as it had been earlier, was in fact demanding food. I ventured out to find some dinner. It didn't take much wandering to find a nearby mall with a convenient food court and, too hungry to look any further, I settled on a burger.

After that it was back to the hotel to register and rest for awhile. I finally managed to connect up with Cliff Stornel. Cliff was the programming head for Keycon. We'd emailed back and forth and planned to get together when I arrived in Winnipeg. Cliff had offered me a walking tour of downtown Winnipeg on arrival and we'd been playing phone

tag all afternoon. It was a little late for a walking tour but I met up with Cliff and his wife Alex in the hotel bar for a drink and we got acquainted. While there we ran into Julie Czerneda and Steve Stirling and chatted for awhile but the early start to my day caught up with me hard and I begged off to get some much needed sleep. Cliff and I arranged to have my walking tour the next afternoon.

The next afternoon I met Cliff in the lobby and off we went to see some of the sights. Winnipeg is a really beautiful city with a particularly lovely downtown. They have maintained an impressive amount of their heritage buildings in the core. Now, you'll see some preserved buildings and store fronts wandering around downtown Toronto, including some very striking ones, but nothing even approaching this. Where Toronto has maybe kept no more than 10% of it's early architecture intact in some way, Winnipeg seems to have saved something approaching 90% of theirs. It's really something to see and has served as the backdrop for many movies, including the The Assassination of Jessie James by the Coward Robert Ford.



*Burton Cummings Theatre, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

One of the more memorable buildings was the Burton Cummings theatre, obviously named after the original singer and keyboardist for the Guess Who and a Winnipeg native. In the past it's been known as the Odeon theatre, the name still emblazoned across the side of the building, and the Walker theatre. On this site in January 1914 suffragette Nellie McClung and the political equality league organized a mock "Women's Parliament" in an attempt to get the people of the

province laughing at the absurdity of denying women the right to vote. It's a familiar story to most Canadians due to its being featured in a series of Canadian historical vignettes shown repeatedly (and I do mean *repeatedly*) on Canadian television.

After returning to the hotel I headed up to the hotel restaurant for food. I'd been planning on going out for Dim Sum earlier with LeAmber but she was unable to make it, due to chair duties, and had been without her phone for a few hours so she was unable to let me know, or to pick up the message I had asked Cliff Stornel to leave for her. Another missed breakfast resulted but the hotel restaurant served a pretty good burger, much better than my food court burger of the previous evening, even if they wouldn't cook it medium rare for me. It's a point of contention with me that most restaurants in Canada will not cook a hamburger anything less than medium well. In Ontario it's a health code violation and it may be in other places, I don't know. But guess what? I'm a grown up, and I know how I like my burgers cooked. I'm willing to assume the risk to life and limb inherent in eating a medium rare burger dammit! But I digress. Anyway, at less than \$10 for burger and fries before tip it was reasonable price, particularly for a hotel restaurant. After eating I went back to my room to prepare for opening ceremonies and panels.



*Following opening ceremonies, Nalo Hopkinson serves up ice cream to the members of Keycon. S.M. Stirling is at the end of the row checking out the vanilla, and that's Cliff Stornel on the right.*

Opening ceremonies was enjoyable but long, lasting over an hour and a half. Liana K was the

Mistress of Ceremonies and she's always pretty entertaining and very good in front of a crowd. Reading the list of guests from the program book did lead to one faux pas though, as one of the author guests, Steve Stirling, was passed over until pointed out by the audience. Nobody's perfect. There was an ice cream social to follow in which all of the guests served ice cream to the members. A brilliant idea but with so many guests there was no room behind the ice cream counter for me, so I hung back and snapped pictures instead, and may have eaten some ice cream.

At some point here I should probably break off and talk about programming at the con and this seems as good a time as any. Cliff and Alex were wonderful people and they were so very welcoming and hospitable to me during my visit that I feel a bit ungrateful writing this. They were almost certainly on a bit of a learning curve with this, never having done programming before, and they worked very hard. When I learned that I was going to be the CUFF delegate I contacted programming at Keycon, (which would be Cliff and Alex), and sent them several ideas for panels, expecting they might like to use a few of them. My ideas were hardly dripping with brilliance or anything, but I know, having done programming myself, that ideas from participants are always welcome. To my surprise they used all but one, which was gratifying and not without a certain amount of egoboo. The week before Keycon I went to the website to determine my schedule and to my surprise, and slight horror, I discovered that with one exception I had been put on all of these panels by myself. They were specifically sent as panel ideas, not as presentations, and while I can go on at length, (as you're no doubt currently discovering), I wasn't comfortable with the idea of speaking for an entire hour by myself on each of these topics. Looking over the schedule in the programming book it appeared that I wasn't the only person this had happened to. The vast majority of the items had a single panellist. Near as I could tell they seemed to have used almost every program idea sent to them, while programming only the person who had sent it to be on the panel. So a week before con I'm scrambling, writing people I know will be there, and trying to find more people for my panels. (Actually I believe begging might be a more accurate description.)

My first panel was scheduled for Friday night, in the main room. It was a panel dealing with



conrunning and was to follow a concert by Devo Spice, which followed the opening ceremonies. The opening ceremonies had run a half an hour late and another concert by Worm Quartet was to follow this panel. Scheduling what can be expected to be a fairly low interest panel in the main room between two concerts was somewhat baffling, to say the least. Fannish panels attract less attendees in my experience and even most people inclined to attend fannish panels probably care little about conrunning. I'd recruited Kirsten Morrell, a good friend from Calgary and a former chair of Con-Version to sit on the panel with me. As we sat in the room watching the first concert go a half hour overtime because of the late start it was very apparent that nobody in that room had any interest in conrunning. I went up to Worm Quartet (who, despite the misleading name, is actually one person) and told him he might as well just play through. Then Kirsten and I took off to join the parties. Seemed like a good idea at the time, and it still does actually.

Speaking of parties, hospitality is something Keycon does very well. A lot better than most Canadian regional conventions in my opinion. The highlight for me on Friday was the Aurora nominees party. Good food, good drink and so much wonderful company. I spent time talking with too many people to mention, chief amongst them was Kirsten herself, who I actually didn't really know that well at all before the convention, having only come across her on a few mutual mailing lists. I came away from the convention thinking of her as a good friend and that, after all, is exactly what CUFF is all about. (At one point, I believe it was on Saturday sometime, Rob Sawyer, who is a good friend of Kirsten's came across us talking animatedly in the dealer's room. He took one look at the two of us and said, happily, "You two are bonding aren't you? I *knew* it would happen.") I was also able to catch up with Liz Westbrook-Trenholm, (who is fantastic), and her husband Hayden Trenholm, (ditto). I got to know Barb Galler-Smith, who's really lovely, better as well. All so very gratifying, and it made me very happy that I had decided to run for CUFF.

While we're on the subject of hospitality, the Keycon consuite was completely awesome, the best I've ever seen at a Canadian regional and I hoped we'd do as well at SFContario 1 the following November. (And with Catherine Crockett running it, I absolutely believe SFContario met this goal.)

Unfortunately, in my experience, a lot of Canadian regional cons see a consuite not as the social center of the convention that it should be, but as a place where all those freeloading members are scarfing free food. I kid you not, I'm barely paraphrasing things that other conrunners have said. This year the Keycon consuite had an Egyptian theme. Past themes apparently have included space suits made out of duct tape. (I honestly can't think of a single thing that *screams* Canadian fandom quite like a spacesuit made out of duct tape.) On Friday night the consuite was host to a book launch for The Aurora Awards: Thirty Years of Canadian Science Fiction. This collection was the second collection from the Montreal small press Nanopress. It was a good party and I spent some time chatting and catching up with people, including Linda Ross-Mansfield who was behind the bar, and whom I probably hadn't seen since Torcon 3 in 2003. At some point I was introduced to Lyndie Bright, the CUFF delegate who had travelled to Torcon 3. All in all, it was a great evening. Eventually I decided that since it was probably about midnight I would be responsible and get a good night's sleep so I didn't burn myself out too early in the con and could put in a good showing at the next day's panels. I said my good nights and headed up to my room only to find to my astonishment that it was after 2 AM. Time does fly when you're having fun, doesn't it?



*Unidentified fellow (entire audience of Canadian Fandom Panel) trying to escape an empty room. Note the deer-in-the-headlights expression. Remember this kids, be very careful which panel rooms you enter.*



Somehow I still managed to get up the next morning in time for my 10 AM panel, which because of a mix up in the program grid actually turned out to be an 11 AM panel. I really could've used that extra hour sleep. I'd recruited Rene Walling to join me on this one and the topic was Canadian fandom, apparently not a hugely popular topic as not one single person showed up to hear it. I would like to point out that the unofficial rules state that we could've in fact continued the panel in the bar, but we didn't. In fact we stayed and talked about Canadian Fandom, CUFF, fanzines, conventions etc. We actually had a rather good, completely on-topic panel for an invisible audience. About half way through the hour one person did show up, looking for a different panel, poor lost soul. We trapped him there, still talking about Canadian fandom, he tried to escape, really he did. But there was just no getting away.

The next hour was the "Why re-read?" panel that I had suggested. Thankfully Julie Czerneda volunteered to join this panel because she liked the topic. This time we were actually out-numbered by the four people in the audience for this panel so the bar option was off the table. In fact it really was a very enjoyable panel, a great discussion of the topic with lots of audience participation, the kind of panel that makes me love participating in programming.

After this I had a free hour, which was spent wandering through the dealer's room and the art show. Art show is another thing that Keycon did very well. The art shown was well displayed with a lot of variety and the show itself was huge compared to others I'd seen in Eastern Canada. Great job all around. The artist GOH was Kari-Ann Anderson, a local artist, and her work was stunning. The Egyptian themed cover of the program book looked marvellous.

Next up was my panel on the 2010 Hugo Awards, a discussion of this year's nominees. Again, I had roped Rene Walling into doing the panel with me and, likely due to a combination of the topic and the later hour, we actually had an audience, as much as 6 people at one point which, let's face it, was practically a *horde* compared to the rest of my panels. It was a good panel and between the two of us we were able to cover the topic pretty well. He knew the categories, graphic novel for example, that I was unfamiliar with, and with the always welcome audience participation, we were able to touch on

pretty much every nominee over the course of the hour. At the end of the panel Robbie Bourget joined us for the "Looking back at Anticipation" panel. This was the one panel I hadn't originally been scheduled to do alone. It was mainly memories and reminiscing. I had done double duty at Anticipation. I was a member of the Hugo committee and co-ran the consuite. Both areas seemed to go well and I really had a very good time. It was by far my best Worldcon experience at the time, so spending an hour talking about it, along with the con-chairs was really enjoyable. Alas, there were only two people in the audience, the kidnap victim from our earlier panel and one other, but they stayed throughout the hour. (Although for our kidnap victim that may just have been a case of Stockholm Syndrome.) In some ways it seemed very much like a Smofcon panel, which is neither good nor bad, just different. So here it was, 4 PM on a Saturday and my panels were finished, and in case you hadn't noticed, except for a very quick nosh in the consuite, I still hadn't eaten. So I hit the hotel restaurant again for their burger and fries (breakfast of champions, clearly this was not a foodie vacation) and went up to my room for some quiet time.

Saturday night was the Masquerade. Liana K and Julie Czerneda shared hosting duties and they were great together and seemed to really enjoy it. Afterwards was the dance, something I don't normally go to at cons, but this time I wanted to check it out. The DJ, Mark Dagopher Dobres (AKA DJ Gopher), was very good. I stuck around a while and enjoyed it but the dance really isn't my thing. I decided I'd rather spend the time socializing at the parties and in the consuite. While in the consuite I was approached by Rob Sawyer and Cliff Samuels. There are a lot of Cliffs in this report. I can see it might be hard to keep them all straight. This particular Cliff was (and still is) a member of the Aurora committee. It had been expected that Polaris, a Toronto area con with a media focus (you may know it as the former Toronto Trek) would be bidding to host Canvention 2011. Indeed, some of their concom had expressed an interest. However now they had apparently changed their mind, and right before the AGM. There were no other bidders. Rob and Cliff asked me to bid for SFCOntario to become the Canvention host. Now generally this is the kind of thing that couldn't be done unless first discussed by the committee but, as it happens, we had discussed what we thought was the remote

possibility of this happening at a previous committee meeting. The general consensus was that it would be rather hubristic of us to bid for a Convention when as yet we hadn't even had our inaugural convention, and the preference was to wait until next time, (in 2013), but, should it come about that nobody else was bidding we felt capable to hold the Convention in 2011 and would be willing to step up to the plate. I had even confirmed this position with our con-chair, Alex Von Thorn, a couple of days earlier. I really hadn't expected it to happen but that was the scenario that seemed to be playing out, so I agreed that SFCOntario would be willing to put in a bid to hold the next Convention at the following day's AGM. Sunday was going to be an early day with the Convention AGM schedule for 9 AM, and now all of a sudden it seemed I'd be bidding for Convention, so I headed off to get some rest.

9 AM comes rather early on the Sunday morning of a con,<sup>(1)</sup> and I got up even earlier in order to be there ahead of time. I wanted to talk to the chair, Clint Budd, about volunteering help with the Aurora Award committee. I felt that my experience with Hugo administration could be of use. So it was another day, another skipped breakfast, but Clint seemed amenable to my being on the committee and asked that I put my name forward during the meeting. Somehow, I honestly don't know how, I ended up sitting up front at the meeting and taking minutes, which was not something I'd really considered to be part of my skill set then or now. It seemed well attended. I didn't know what the usual numbers for these meetings might be but there were probably about 15 or so people in attendance, which struck me as pretty good for early Sunday morning. (Although the following year, at SFCOntario 2, the numbers were much larger even though scheduled at the same time) The Board of Directors was elected by acclamation, and included representation from several regions of Canada. (Consisting of myself, Cliff Samuels, Clint Budd, Jane Garthson, Jean-Louis Trudel, Kent Pollard, LeAmber Kensley, and Randy McCharles.) I presented a bid for SFCOntario which, there being no other bids, carried. Some wholly understandable concern regarding the fact that SFCOntario 1 had not yet happened was raised but those in attendance were reassured by the depth of experience on the committee, (which I have to admit was pretty good.)

In one odd occurrence John Mansfield expressed his disappointment at SFCOntario's choice of Fan guest of honour. I happen to think we had a wonderful Fan guest of honour in Geri Sullivan, (and the rest of the committee enthusiastically agreed, and, really, I don't fully understand why John even cared). I'm not even sure how it came about as I was busily catching up with taking down the minutes, but I looked up and John seemed rather perturbed over our choice. Odd. I was taken aback for half a second and then, in little more than a knee-jerk reaction, I said "But John, Geri was fan guest at Keycon." Keycon being John's home con and one he's chaired multiple times.

John replied "No she wasn't"

LeAmber, who was sitting in the chair in front of him looked back and said "Yes, she was. Keycon 7."

"Oh okay, never mind." was all he could say. Very odd exchange.

Anyway, the meeting adjourned at 11:15, a little over two hours later, which isn't really that bad for an AGM, and SFCOntario had itself a Convention.

After that I went up to the consuite for some lunch and retrieved the CUFF auction items from my room. Next up was the art auction, which would precede the CUFF auction. The art auction actually took quite awhile. There were a lot of items that went to auction from the art show. Which was really not surprising, given the quality of the art at Keycon. Eventually they got to my items. I described some of them, where necessary, but didn't actually conduct the auction myself. The Keycon people, including LeAmber, took care of that and did it very well. In the end more than \$200 was raised for CUFF and that, combined with the \$250 donation from Anticipation, meant that I had already raised more than I had spent. (And this was again fully due to Keycon's generosity in providing me with a room for the convention.) With the auction over I met with the rest of the newly elected Aurora board of directors to assemble the awards before returning to my room to get ready for the Aurora Award ceremony.

As I said earlier one of the requirements of hosting Convention is to hold the Aurora ceremony.

<sup>(1)</sup> Yeah, I know. 9 o'clock comes at 9 o'clock but it feels a lot earlier when it's 9 o'clock on a Sunday.

An Aurora Award dinner is not required under the rules but it is customary and generally expected. Keycon scheduled theirs for Sunday evening. I thought this was a pretty good idea as it doesn't take function space away from Saturday night events, and the Monday was a Canadian holiday. Dinner was really good, I had the bison and it was cooked perfectly. I sat at a table with Jane Garthson and Dave & Elizabeth Clement, amongst others, so the company was certainly top rate. To the annoyance of many the award ceremony started about an hour late but once started it was a good ceremony with Liana K serving as host. (Favourite quote of the evening, from Liana: "At other award ceremonies the winners always thank God. Here all the winners thank Rob Sawyer. I'm not sure what that means.")



*Presenting at the Auroras, looking nowhere near as nervous as I feel, while Liana K stands by with the award. Photo credit: Kirsten Morrell*

The ceremony, once it got started, really went very well. I was really pleased when Graeme Cameron, one of my CUFF nominators, won for Fan Accomplishment (Fanzine). And again when Rob Sawyer won for best novel. Rob practically needs a second apartment to keep all of his awards in by now, but it had been over 10 years since he last won the Aurora for best novel, and he was genuinely pleased by the win. So it was good to see. My role was to present the award for Fan Accomplishment (Other). I'm in most cases a very nervous public speaker but I'd spoken onstage before, notably at the Hugos the previous summer, and at other times. Generally I don't show nervousness too much. So leading up to the

category I wasn't feeling the nerves too bad but when my name was called I suddenly came over very nervous. (Liana said afterwards that it was due to adrenalin, she's probably right about that.) Up on stage I found that my poor overtired and middle aged eyes could barely read the nominees names, which didn't help. (I really should have foreseen that and written the names in large print for myself ahead of time. Lesson definitely learned for next time.) But I got through it and sat down. Kirsten Morrell used my camera to take pictures and surprisingly I don't look at all like I'm about to toss my cookies in any of them.

So nerve-wracking ceremony over with, I headed off to the dead dog which was as lively and enjoyable as all of the parties had been all weekend long. I've said it before but it bears repeating, Keycon really excels at hospitality and the dead dog was no exception. I stayed up way too late talking to more people than I can remember, LeAmber, Liana, Kirsten, so many others...no idea how we all still had enough energy at the end of the weekend but we did. I finally crashed at some late hour. I'd had a great time at Keycon and still had several days to spend amongst the fans in Winnipeg before travelling to ConQuesT the following Thursday. That week was a total blur really. A fabulous, enjoyable blur. LeAmber was a wonderful host. I spent a lot of time exploring Winnipeg. I had lunch with Tim Hogue at a great Vegan place at which I'd unwittingly worn my "Meat is murder. Tasty, tasty murder." t-shirt, much to my amusement. Although no doubt the proprietors were less amused. Cliff Stornel hosted a backyard barbeque which was really good but made me resent my Southern Ontario "but it's past Victoria day weekend, why on Earth would I possibly need a jacket?" attitude. Also Cliff has the cutest cats on the planet, bar none. (Mine are a close second.) And I finally managed to get Dim Sum on the Monday following the con with John Mansfield, Linda Ross-Mansfield, and Robbie Bourget, and I was really amused to find that Winnipeg had what they called "Chinese perogies" at Dim Sum. I still haven't found their equivalent in Toronto.

Good times, good times. If you're thinking of running for a fan fund, by all means go for it. It's an awesome experience!



## DELERIUM TIME

### A recent dream:

I've entered a moderately crowded Skytrain station. I'm the first in the crowd to step onto an up escalator. Everything seems normal, though the lighting is poor and the corridor very dark. I'm wondering if they've cut back on maintenance.

A concrete panel slides from the ceiling to block the escalator, leaving only a few inches of clearance above the moving steps. I instantly envision being crushed against the panel, or worse, torn to pieces as I'm pulled through the narrow slit of an opening at the bottom.

Frantically I turn and try to run down the escalator, yelling at people to get out of the way (evidently not bothering to warn them of the danger). Somehow I make it safely back on to the Skytrain platform. All the lighting has failed but for moonlight filtering through a dirty skylight. I appear to be alone. I conclude I'm locked in till the morning. Damn. Trapped in an empty skytrain station for the night.

Fortunately there's a ratty old caramel-coloured couch sitting on the platform and I plop down on to it to catch a bit of sleep. It smells of must and is thoroughly uncomfortable, but undoubtedly softer than the station platform, so it will have to do. I attempt to fall asleep.

No sooner do I close my eyes when I hear a train coming. I open my eyes and note the oncoming train's brilliantly lit front viewing window. No sign of people. Obviously shunting empty trains to their parking positions throughout the system. I close my eyes.

Then I sit up bolt upright and wide-eyed. Wait a second! The train isn't approaching along the tracks, it's hurtling straight at me along the platform itself!

I jump up, shove the couch against the wall, then leap onto the couch as the Skytrain roars past, missing me by inches. As I collapse, stretched prone, my heart pounding, I can scarcely comprehend what just happened. Then things get worse.

A lugubrious disembodied head with snaggly teeth, bulging eyes, and parchment-like skin stretched tight over its skull drifts past the end of the couch like a macabre balloon, then turns to fix me with its dull gaze.

Comes a dry, wispy voice. "*What are you doing here?*"

I am barely able to croak an answer, so great is my terror. "*I live here.*"

"*Not any more.*"

At this point, my wife, late coming to bed, wakes me up. Good thing too. I fall back asleep and dream:

### The following dream:

I'm back in 1981 still participating in my University of B.C. course/guided tour of ancient Mayan ruins. It's a soft, cool evening in the jungle, and I'm happily following other students along a darkened path, catching glimpses of broken ruins all around and a marvelous tapestry of brilliant stars shining through gaps in the foliage above. There's a constant hum of insects nearly loud enough to drown out conversation. I feel great.

We emerge into a typical Lowland Maya palace quadrangle. This side is mere rubble, on which we find places to perch, but the façade of the far side is intact and its shadowed sculptures impressive in the gloom. A projected photo materializes on a relatively blank section of limestone masonry still coated with original plaster. The slide show begins.

For some reason I have difficulty concentrating on the droning voice of the professor, find it hard to make out what he is saying. I gather it has something to do with the iconography of Mayan art depicting sacrifice. Too dark to take notes, I decide to ignore the lecture and immerse myself in the pleasant ambience of the scene around me.

A young Mayan girl in an embroidered dress comes along with a bundle of sticks, hands me one. I stare down at it. Looks like a short length of

knotty bamboo, rather dirty, with a frayed stump at both ends. What am I supposed to do with it?

Ah, of course, we're to replicate the preparations of the priest conducting the sacrifice. Obviously rub the frayed ends against the rubble till the wood is softened, then nibble at the stick till one's mouth is full of soft fragments. I proceed to rub and nibble. Wind up with a mouth full of soft wood, wondering what deep and mystical symbolism is involved.

For some reason the professor's words come through loud and clear. *"Once the wood is softened, and exuding oil, smear a streak above each eyebrow. This represents the sacred mountain of the underworld opening its maw to engulf the rising Jaguar-Sun-Maize-God."*

It does? Oh bugger, maybe this stuff is poisonous. I surreptitiously spit the wad of moistened wood on to the ground and scrape dirt over it with my foot, hoping no one has noticed my scholarly *faux pas*.

Then, as I quickly apply the stick oil to my forehead, I am delighted to notice the presence of thousands of fireflies dancing along the roof of the ruin. Magnificent sight. Reluctantly I lower my gaze to check out the latest slide.

It depicts a Mayan stele, probably from Tikal, featuring a frontal full figure carving of a priest resplendent in feathered headdress and a jade pectoral. His left arm is folded across the upper part of his chest, his right arm, hand clutching an obsidian knife, is held against his belly. Ah, I think, getting ready to strike out at the almost willing sacrificial victim.

*"And then we found this..."* drones the Professor, clicking up the next slide.

A gasp of horror issues from the assembled students. Different stele, identical figure in identical stance, but this time with the obsidian knife in the left hand with blade firmly pressed against the throat.

*"Our first evidence of auto sacrifice,"* says the Professor. *"We never expected this."*

I am stunned. Unbelievable.

At this point memory fails. I have a vague impression we students were released after the lecture to wander through the ruins and see if we could make sense of the layout in the darkness, but the scene shifted as dreams are wont to do and I do not remember what happened next.

As for the origin of the dreams, I have no explanation for the first one, but figure the second was triggered by memories of my 1981 course. It pretty much offered a different ruined city every day, sometimes two or three, and was immensely stimulating and exciting, one of the highlights of my life. As I recall, I climbed to the top of more than forty pyramids in the course of that wonderful trip.

Speaking of pyramids, I saw a recent news item about a group of tourists being fined for damaging the steps of one of the pyramids in Tikal, part of the fine being earned for the mere act of climbing said steps, something tourists are *no longer allowed to do*, according to the article. Son of a gun. We were all over those pyramids like monkeys back in 1981.

Puts me in mind of my guided tour through the Golden House of Nero in Rome back in 1970, *something which is no longer possible*, as those particular ruins have been closed for years due to imminent danger of collapse. I also note that currently tourists wandering the Roman Forum must stick to fenced paths. Not back in 1970. You could wander all over the place, explore every nook and cranny, picnic atop fallen pillars. It's the damndest things, ruins keep a'ruining.

Sometimes, timing is everything when it comes to accessing the past.

## **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!*



An as was worth a quarter of a sestertius and was struck from bronze. In most cases it was a bit smaller, and the bust faced left rather than right, but not invariably so. (As was pronounced not "ass", but "oz".) Claudius of course is one of the best known emperors, thanks to Robert Graves' two "autobiographical" books and the famous BBC series based on them. Probably Claudius wasn't quite as modern in his sensibilities as Graves and the BBC suggest. Contemporaries describe him as uncouth and foolish, but there are reasons to think the writers were biased. The truth was probably somewhere between, perhaps a little closer to our understanding. After all, the empire was run *well*, and Claudius did rule for something like 14 years. Had he been a bad emperor, it is unlikely he would have been tolerated so long. He was unquestionably a man with physical challenges though -- he was partly lame and by some accounts stuttered and even drooled. But it is also unquestioned that he was bookish, and even wrote a now lost study of the Etruscan language. His portraits show a man who in middle age was weak-chinned, jug-eared, and rather ugly. These bronzes tend to make the best of it, but silver coins I've seen are less forgiving. This particular sample is rather worn and graded VG-F, very good to fine. As a result, it didn't go for the premium that a better bronze as might have. It was still \$75. The face reads Tiberius Claudius Caesar

Augustus, Pontifex Maximus (chief priest), Tribunicia Potestate (power of the civil tribune), Imperator (military commander), Patriae Pater (father of his country). The reverse personifies Liberty. SC (Senatus Consultum) is usual on imperial bronzes up until about the middle of the second century, and signifies the authority of the senate.

## LETTERS OF COMMENT:

### OOK, OOK, SLOBBER DROOL!

**Note: I missed publishing this loc last ish. Oops! Apologies to Jinnie.**

**From: JINNIE CRACKNELL, Aug 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of QUANTUM BOLLOCKS**

Hi again!

I said I was catching up on LOCing, didn't I? I wonder what the record is for longest amount of time between receiving a fanzine and sending a LOC? I'm tempted now to ask people to send me scanned versions of zines from decades ago so that I can LOC them, although that's probably cheating as I didn't get them at the time they were sent... hmm I seem to be digressing here...

**[ Loccing decades-old zines is a brilliant idea, though in most cases the locs would have to be published in a zine of their own... Hmmm. I believe there are one or two zines averaging once a decade publication. Can't think of their names at the moment. ]**

I hope your hernia scar is healing well and the pain is going away. I'm sorry to hear that FanExpo was so crowded. I love hearing about dreams, especially ones that follow a narrative. Mine are nearly always disjointed and strange, for example

*"The Greek hero Perseus and the Seven Dwarves are trying to go camping and I ask them if they all have their important items that will remind them of who they really are but then Medea shows up and takes her sunglasses off and her eyes are full of spiders and I'm in CERN being showed round and I have to give them back their special gloves*



*with the name embroidered on the cuff only everyone has started singing and dancing to "Sexy and I know it" by LMFAO and I want to join in."*

**[ Sounds quite a bit like a typical British holiday weekend... ]**

Jinnie the Perky Goth

**FROM: GUY LILLIAN Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of CHALLENGER**

Glad ol' man D missed you!

**[ Me too! ]**

**From: JEAN-PIERRE NORMAND,**  
**December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 - Aurora winning Artist**

Thank you Graeme for this issue! Quite a story!  
Take good care of you and long life to hobbies!

Hope you had a great VCON this year.  
JP

**[ Yep! Still working on the next WCSFAzine in which I describe VCON 36 where you were Artist GoH. I swear I'll get it done soonest! ]**

**From: MIKE BAILEY, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of THE LONG GOODBYE**  
**A founder of BCSFA & Co-chair of VCON 1**

Interesting story. It's all news to me as I seldom interact with fans anymore. I still read the stuff (right now struggling through a Stephen King Dark Tower novel which seems too long).

I had a similar medical experience about 10 years ago. After ignoring symptoms for too long, I went to my doctor and was sent to a specialist for an instant appointment, then to emergency and ended up with 5 tubes stuck in me. Type 1 Diabetes ("Juvenile" - I'm finally growing up).

Later the doctor told me I was about 1 or 2 days from death. Luckily there is instant treatment. Insulin. Initially my blood sugar level was so high, the meters could not get a reading. After a couple of

hours on an insulin drip, I was "down" to 32. (normal is between 4 and 6). The next day I got down to 17. In total I was in the hospital for only 5 days.

Meanwhile my brother was diagnosed with lung cancer this past year.

Like you, I was surprised by the speed of the treatment. Ditto for my brother, who at 83 is now cured. I checked in on Friday and on Sunday was kicked out of the bed in emergency. On Wednesday I was sent home, feeling much better. 4 injections a day for about 10 years - closing in on 15,000 injections. But unlike Type II diabetes, I can eat anything as long as I take the right amount of insulin.

**[ Good that it is still under control. Diabetes runs in my family but so far I seem to have avoided it. ]**

Regarding "books", I am currently puzzling over the vastness of free downloads sitting on the internet. Certainly digital books take up less space than "real" books. What is amazing to me is the number of pulps available. AMAZING STORIES back to 1926; UNKNOWN WORLDS, etc. Lots of "Spicy" pulps too. Most pulps are JPEG scans with the covers included. I use SumatraPDF to read these (free program).

I bought a RAID server recently and can store just about anything now. Oodles of space. Time, though... I don't know if I can ever get through all this stuff.

I spent much time photographing birds these days. Carry heavy equipment around for miles (sometimes). Exercise and the fun of the hunt wherein I "shoot" the denizens, but they live to enjoy another day.

**[ Sounds like a lot of fun. Exercise AND the reward of a perpetually growing album of photos... ]**

**From: JOHN PURCELL, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of ASKANCE**

I read your medical account last night, Graeme. Your near-death tale makes me glad you did not bite the bullet. All I can say is, you told it very well with a lot more humour than I would have used. A very scary brush with the Grim Reaper. Plus, the health care you mentioned makes me want to move to Canada.

**[ Indeed, most basics are covered. I could have signed up for additional Blue Cross coverage through my union when I retired, but the monthly premium would have reduced my budget to a standard of living too low to justify retiring. Bit of a risk gamble my decision, and I may regret it down the road, but the fact is continuing to work would have killed me in any number of ways (physically, emotionally, spiritually, etc). But for most unforeseen difficulties I have the security of knowing I'll be able to walk in and out of hospital without paying any bills. ]**

In fact, your article would have fit in beautifully in Guy Lillian's *Challenger* #35, the medical issue. Then again, it's a good thing it didn't: that zine's length would have been increased by quite a few pages. Of course, when your health went down-hill and you finally got around to writing about the experience, Guy's deadline for submissions was probably well past. No matter what, I really enjoyed reading your medical tale and consider it one of the better things you've written in the last few years. Well done, sir!

**[Yes, it took me so long to write that I missed Guy's deadline. Thank you for your compliments. ]**

I really don't have much else to say right now, but maybe to pass along the word about my fanzine, *Askance*. It will be on publishing hiatus until next summer most likely while I complete the writing of my dissertation. In fact, right behind me on the dining room table are stacks of texts about curriculum theory, reading motivation, and literacy - 26 books, to be exact. That does not take into account the dozens of research articles stored on my Nook, either, so I have a load of work to do. So be it. That, though, is the reason for *Askance* taking a publication break. It shall return, that I guarantee.

**[ I do hope that you enjoy your dissertation task, that it gives you pleasure. Personally I found the minor task of achieving a BA in Fine Arts a combination of satisfaction and terror. I'm not good with deadlines. ]**

With that, I shall sign off here and look forward to your next fannish publication. See you in San Antonio? Hope so.

All the best, John

**From: CATHY PALMER-LISTER,  
Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 - Faned of WARP**

Wonderful that you were able to write about such a harrowing experience with good humour! Our medicare is wonderful indeed. Sometimes the wait times can be too long, but I think this has a lot to do with an aging population.

**[ And the Provincial Government's reluctance to increase Medical funding every year enough to keep pace with rising costs. That said, I experienced zero waiting time. They did everything to me as soon as they decided to do it. ]**

**From: DAVE HAREN, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Renowned Loc Hack**

Hi Graeme,

I'm just small fry compared to Penney. I do read enough zines to keep up with the worst of fandoms teapot tempests, but can't bear to LOC them all. Having once had a horse ruined by what they call pigeon fever, you have my sympathies. It is truly filthy stuff.

**[ You keep tab on the teapot tempests? That's more than I do... Yes, I love birds, but they and the allergies they can provoke are filthier than most people realise. ]**

I also wish the vampire jokes about hospitals were jokes, every time I dozed off there was another apologetic nursie to get more blood for the vampire coven in the hospital basement.

I am truly glad you recovered. It is hard to describe the attitude if you have no fear of death. I saw a lot of people when I was in who were afraid, I'd say it was their religion that had unkindly ruined what life they had left. I was just waiting for Bifrost to form, but all I got was weird morphine induced vines of purple and gold growing out of the walls.

**[ Death I don't fear. It's the dying part I don't look forward to... Vines of purple and gold? Sounds lovely. I didn't get to experience the same or equivalent since I wasn't in any pain, I was just drowning on the inside. ]**

The first Raven was about 14 inches tall and had banged up a leg, a couple of days later we found a second one about 12 inches tall. After a few days on a raw meat diet they were eager to depart. Turned them loose in the back and fed them there one last time. They flew off to do what they do best. Around here it is scrounging for food and harassing any airborne predators.

**[ The crows we look after are usually fledglings kicked out of the nest. They aren't ready to be released for a good two months or more. ]**

The seamier side of the world seems to be any side you look at these days. The site I mentioned has been down since Hurricane Sandy ruined the New York area, or maybe someone noticed that they were critical of our overlords....GRIN

**[ I used to be a news junky. Not anymore. I'd rather have peace of mind. ]**

I've been following Slavoj Zizek's lectures on YouTube, European Graduate School channel. As an innocent country boy, I used to read the kind of people they talk about in class, Hegel, Kierkegaard, et al. I consider most of it as horse manure but it is an informed opinion, not the usual knee jerk response of today's post modern nitwits.

**[ Cicero, Pliny the Younger, Marcus Aurelius, Voltaire, and Montaigne are the biggest influences on such philosophy as I profess. Stoicism and common sense are what they possess in common. I was never into the philosophy of angst. Mind you, I did enjoy**

**reading Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, but Plato was a right twit. Double for Sarte.]**

Most of my GHQ lead is 1/285th scale micro armor and aircraft, but it was cheaper then. A lot of it can be used to play OGRE miniatures. Steve Jackson is doing a re-issue of the original microgame for the 1977 price, this one should be a must have for every SF gamer. OGRE is asymmetrical warfare at it's best and can go either way to a nail-biting finish. you can finish a game in less than 30 minutes and it fits in your pocket.

**[ Funny thing, I bought a bunch of GHQ micro armour back in the seventies, and they are very plain compared to the highly detailed GHQ miniatures I am currently adding to my collection... In fact I am collecting *more* than GHQ offers, in that I built up a Turkish fleet using British, German and American ships *similar* to what the Turks had, or for another example, a Croatian army, since they used French, German and Czech tanks. ]**

The Designers Edition on the other hand is something else altogether, it was a great kickstarter success, suggested retail is \$100 USD, and it will weigh in at some ridiculous poundage. When I asked Steve for a new edition this wasn't exactly what I had in mind.

You're right about the young'uns, they can't tell you whether Joseph Goebbels was in the first or second Nixon administration. It's like the nationwide ban on "assault weapons" in USA, called the Sullivan Act, it went into law in 1934 and is still in effect. The technological illiterate ignore this in the mad rush to do something about things they don't understand. Sullivan wound up in the nuthouse later. It's probably just a coincidence.

**[ Cheap shot, but I'm beginning to think the United States is a nut house. But then there are only about, what, forty million Canadians? Get as big as the States in population and no doubt we'll go bonkers too. Already experiencing drive by shootings. In good things and bad, we tend to be about a decade behind US trends. ]**

Keep the hospital jokes going when you get a chance, there's far too many serious types hanging around those places....GRIN

Thanks for Space Cadet #20

Warmest Regards, Dave Haren

**From: ERIC MAYER, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of REVENANT**

Graeme,

I'll have to try not to repeat whatever it was I said when I read the shortened version of your hospital horror story in your e-APA zine. Which may be difficult unless I go and look up my comments. More and more I find I repeat myself, as if I were an old man. (Why would that be?) It's best for me to avoid commenting more than once to an ongoing discussion in a fanzine loccol because I tend to come up with the same observations I came up with in the previous issue's loccol. Then again, given the age of many faneds, they probably don't notice either.

**[ You speak of one of the advantages of aging. The great thing about being ignored when you speak is you get to issue all sorts of curmudgeonly insults without repercussion or retaliation. ]**

Don't think I object to re-purposing material. Years ago I was shy about doing it but I've gradually realized that readership is spread out on the Internet and few people will look for my writing in more than once place. So I will publish an essay on my blog, in my e-APA zine and in Revenant. Given the intimate nature of e-APA I never publish anything in Revenant though before it appears in Egregious Tales. (Provided I can remember) So far as I know only about three fans read my blog, and one of them doesn't read my zines, so I think it works okay. And if I get, typically 5 or 6 comments on the blog, 3 or 4 locs on Revenant and 4 or 5 mailing comments via e-APA then I have a pretty fair amount of response which makes the effort more enjoyable.

**Getting a bit tired of the ephemeral nature of Facebook and am contemplating taking up loc writing again (in addition to the reviews published in my rather rarely published THE FRENETIC FANAC REVIEW. I makes no promises, but I am a'thinking about it. ]**

Having said that, your hospital stay was far from enjoyable. Terrifying actually. Maybe you are calmer than I am or perhaps as you seem to imply you didn't quite grasp the gravity of the situation until later. Just going to visit someone in the hospital practically puts me into a panic. Horrid places. I've only been interred in hospital twice, when I was a kid, once for a broken leg and once -- believe it or not -- to check me over because I was too skinny. Try checking a patient in for that today with American insurers. (And no, I shall refrain from starting in about worthless, bloodsucking parasites except to observe that the physicians creed is "First do no harm" whereas insurance companies essentially make their profit harming people by withholding treatment.)

**[ I was oblivious to my peril as much as I could manage. 'Positive denial' I call it. Concentrated instead on being fascinated with all that was going on around me. Busy places, hospitals. It did cross my mind from time to time that I might not be going home, so I mentally reviewed the contents of the 'In event of my death' envelope wherein I provide as much financial and insurance info as I can to my wife Alyx, but generally speaking I spent most of my time day dreaming rather than worrying. ]**

I am glad that you not only survived but emerged without some chronic condition to deal with. Once we hit sixty I suppose we can't help but await with bated breath the almost sure to arrive health problems. Or me at any rate, although I have thus far been remarkably fortunate health-wise. I did just have to start taking cholesterol lowering pills in addition to the blood pressure meds I've been on for more than thirty years.

**[ I too take anti-cholesterol pills, but I'm lucky, I have normal blood pressure. Being over sixty I always take note of any new set of pains that show up. Usually my doctor listens, examines me, then says something like "You're getting old. Transient pain is normal for someone your age. Don't worry about it." If you say so, Doc. ]**

Did this ill wind blow good for your birds? It sounds as if the aviary might please them, although I'd imagine it would be a loss not having them in the house. Can you interact with them at all or must you



keep your distance? Strange that such a violent allergy could occur so suddenly after so long but I have been told that's the case with allergies. People who rolled around in poison ivy as kids without effect can years later have a terrible reaction to it. I was advised of this when I used to casually stroll through poison ivy up to my waist because it had never bothered me.

**[ So far the birds seem to be doing well outside. Vincent the Crow has developed a rather resplendent blue sheen to his plumage. However, if I step into the back yard I have to wear a facemask of Hepa filter standards. I spend most of my time in my den where a Hepa level machine filters the air constantly. Got one in the bed room too. ]**

Anyway I found your account fascinating and readable and was abundantly thankful it wasn't me.

Best, Eric

**From: BRAD FOSTER, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Hugo & Rotsler Awards-winning Artist**

Damn, looks like I definitely owe you an email! Cleaning out the files here, found a number of emails from you for the various zines you've pubbed this year. Couldn't figure why I let all that sit there so long, then clicking back through, I think that when you sent the file for SC#19, I was waiting to get a print copy as usual before sending a response. Nothing came, and things just kind of stacked up and got forgotten.

Then got in the file for SC#20 today, and looking back in records saw the other illo, and – kind- of remembered it being used... so had to go back through everything to figure it out.

Soooo... today is catch up day!!

First, looks like you have indeed run through the last of the pieces of art I've sent. And I'm flattered that you'd like to continue to use my weird little toons for covers for Space Cadet. So, I've attached two new items here for your consideration if you'd like to use them. One of my "usual" goofy toons, and the other a slightly different thing, a sketch I

did at a convention recently that I think turned out nicely, and wouldn't mind letting it be seen wider.

**[ I love using your toons! Will use everything you send me sooner or later... I have a simple system of keeping track of artwork for my zines. I have folders labeled by artist's name (your's, Taral, Steve Stiles, Rotsler, etc. All wonderful stuff.) containing every piece not yet used. I browse through them when looking for a new cover or for a new fillo, pick one, and immediately transfer the art into a 'used' file under the artist's name. Simplicity itself. ]**

Regarding this 20th issue: That was some scary stuff in your opening comments regarding all of your medical adventures! Like a good action novel, you had me moving through there breathlessly, wondering what was going to happen to our hero next!

**[ Aha! I spotted the pun! ]**

I'm with you on having a cheerful attitude when I'm in a doctor's office or the hospital. Hey, these people are supposed to be helping me, and I want to make sure they are my friends—and if they have several patients to look after, maybe it's the more entertaining one who cracks jokes that will get looked in on more often!

**[ Best not to be the patient whom the hospital staff is reluctant to visit as in "Oh man, do I have to? Bummer." ]**

*"We're going to give you the walrus."* Those are words I never thought would be uttered in a hospital, or at least, not in that order!

**[The words in question may possibly also be uttered in seedy nightclubs, but I'm not positive on that... ]**

Just amazed at all you went through, think they put you in every room and ran every type of test they had on hand. Maybe they were using you to give the whole hospital an exam, rather than the other way around?

**[ St. Paul's is a teaching hospital. Bit disconcerting at times. The assembled interns often seem young enough to want to go back to**

**their finger painting class. On the other hand, they possess lots of stamina and enthusiasm, reminding me of when my world was young. Best of all, they're sitting ducks for old guy advice whether they want to hear any or not. Great fun. ]**

And the punchline at the end of the article about the costs of all that made me want to go out and punch a few of the local Republicans, but I have managed to keep that urge down. (Plus I'm a non-violent type, will just resort to mocking rather than physical violence to try to get my points across.)

**[ For most of history (and in most of the world today) people lived in knowledge that if they became ill or were injured they would most probably die. Only the rich could afford whatever passed for professional medical care in the day. For some reason the rich always seem to believe this is the normal scheme of things, the way it should be. I think society is more stable, progressive, and civilized when people don't have to worry about paying for medical care. Silly me. ]**

So, sorry for the long delay in response. I'm working to get caught up on –all- things fannish today, and promise to try to keep up better in the new year!

stay happy~ BradR.

**From: LLOYD PENNEY, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Aurora & Faned Awards-winning Loc Hack**

Dear Graeme:

Christmas is past, the presents are unwrapped and marveled over, and I think we outdid ourselves when it comes to getting some great gifts. I got a men's jewelry box, and a candlestick phone. We're both happy, and these good times have got to come to an end some time soon. The last of the time off will be taken up with writing, and here's some comments on Space Cadet 20.

Brad Foster's art cover is more true than perhaps we know. The latest US election showed us that. I believe in freedom of the press, but not the freedom to distribute anything ranging from

disinformation to complete bullshit. The UK is looking into press reforms, I am sure the US wouldn't even think of it. Here? I don't think it is needed, mostly because Sun News is available to most television viewers as part of a more expensive special package of channels. If it was on the main dial, they could spew their own form of right-wing hatred, and so many more weak minds would start believing it.

**[ Much press coverage is living proof that life is turning into a spectator sport. Myself I prefer the old journalism creed that "News is the art of telling you what the powers-that-be *don't* want you to know." Evidently they don't teach this in journalism school these days. ]**

My only medical adventure was going for my colonoscopy this past summer. I had been procrastinating about it, but when my mother died of colon cancer this past June, I thought I'd better get it done. All clear, flying colours, the whole bit. Now to get the weight and blood pressure down, and I should be good. Christmas is not the best time to do this, so party on, and buckle down in January.

**[ Hmm, I've been putting off having a colonoscopy for years. Having a hernia was my latest excuse, but now that that's been fixed... ]**

I hear of hospital adventures so often, and the indignities suffered by both patient and health care worker. So far to 53, and nothing really embarrassing or uncomfortable, except perhaps for the eye operation a few years ago, and waking up in the middle of it. I've scared enough people with that story, and Dave Langford recently had the same operation, so I figure the shock value is mostly gone.

I know I have passed a landmark of age when some people have no idea what I'm talking about. The Hindenberg, for example. It has passed out of the general consciousness, mostly because of time itself, and partially because of the shortening of the attention span. When Yvonne was looking for the candlestick phone she got me for [Christmas](#), she said the guys at The Telephone Booth had no idea what she was on about. She found a place in Richmond Hill that stocks items by Crosley, which makes reproduction vintage phones and record players.

**[ I find that the longer I live, the less informational background I share with the current generation. In a way I find this refreshing. I have become a living treasure, a guru of ancient lore. Mind you, I'm alone on my mountain top, nobody ever struggles up the difficult path to my summit to seek my knowledge, but that's okay, the view is pretty good, watching the clouds drift by, etc. ]**

In many ways, you have paid for your hospital bill through taxes, health care premiums (I remember OHIP premiums, I think employers pay that now), and other levels of taxation to make the hospital available and affordable for everyone. Guess we're all a pack of damned socialists, and thank Ghod for that.

**[ True, the cost of treatment is born by taxation, but it's not an equivalent transaction. Everybody is taxed something, and most never need any of it back (so to speak) for years, but when you need it, the accumulated general taxation is enough to cover your costs. I don't mind paying a small amount of tax every year (and a monthly premium) knowing that my money is most likely going to help someone else, because I also know that, in the eventuality of needing treatment, I won't suddenly be confronted by a lump sum payment demand that'll put me in debt for the rest of my life. The burden of Medicare is shared by all, and god damn it, that is the way it should be in any society striving to be civilized. The alternative is a reversion to the traditional system of punishing the poor for being poor. ]**

Dream fragments...and I thought Chris Garcia had weird dreams. I can't recall any dreams I have, so I live vicariously through the nightmares of others.

**[ Really, no memory of any dreams at all? Ask Yvonne to wake you up multiple times in the middle of the night. Chances are you'll be torn out of a dream as it is 'projecting' in your head, and you should retain, at least momentarily, a vivid recollection of what you were just 'seeing'. Hmm, on second thought, never mind.... ]**

The local...I still enjoy conventions, but may be loathe to travel too far for them. We used to go to

conventions in Montréal, Ottawa and Buffalo, but the travel part is either too expensive or too strenuous for Yvonne, seeing she's the only driver here. I haven't heard anything more about conventions in Montréal, but I will keep asking. Con\*cept may yet return, but it will have changed greatly, I think.

Leslie Turek was indeed the editor of The Mad 3 Party for the Boston in '89 Worldcon bid. No one does that kind of thing anymore. Leslie is happily retired, and she is often on Facebook.

Well, the jewelry box has been filled with my little gold and silver trinkets, like tieclips and cufflinks and another watch, and the candlestick phone has been plugged in and is ringing tinnily with each call. We had Yvonne's mother over here for dinner yesterday; it was a great Christmas, one I hope we shall recall with fondness. I have to get ready for work in the morning...there's always something that has to spoil the good times, hm?

I have taken my swipe at this zine, and other judges will have to decide how I did. Off it goes into the chasm of reality, with luck making its etheric way to your in box. Hope you and Alyx had a stellar time, and see you in 2013 with more zines and letters.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

## **RANDOM MEANDERINGS**

Let's see, just finished reading THE TIDE AT SUNRISE: A HISTORY OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR 1904-1905 by Denis & Peggy Warner, 1974, Frank Cass Publishers.

Not only the best book on the subject I've ever read, but one of the best history books I've ever read, crammed with lively detail and so damned interesting it's hard to put the book down. Modern readers might be a bit surprised to learn that England and Japan were allies at the time, with every ship in the Japanese fleet British designed and built. Also of fascinating interest, the difficulties encountered by the Russian Baltic fleet sailing to the Pacific via Atlantic and Indian Ocean only to be sunk or captured the day it arrived. Not to mention mistaking British fishing boats at Dogger Bank in

the North Sea for Japanese torpedo boats and opening fire on said boats, killing many British fishermen. The sheer level of incompetence in the entire Russian Imperial hierarchy is breath taking. No wonder the Japanese won that war. This book highly recommended.

Am currently reading WALKING IN ROMAN CULTURE by Timothy M. O'Sullivan, 2011, Cambridge University Press.

As you might expect, a book for academics written by an academic. Very dry, but fascinating all the same. Walking in public was a form of political one-upmanship, at least for members of the upperclass (and aped by the *nouveau riche*). To walk quickly was frowned upon, because that's how slaves carried about their business. To walk slowly was considered effeminate. What was needed was a sedate stride exuding confidence and manly power.

Above all, the more powerful and influential you were, the greater the number of lesser folk accompanying you. This was very sophisticated, or at least elaborated. The eager chaps who showed up to greet you at your mansion every morning were known as *Salutatores*, those who accompanied you as you walked to the Forum to conduct your daily business were called *Deductores*, and those who escorted you at other times of the day were named *Adsectatores*. I'm not talking slaves or servants, but rather lesser Senators, leading intellectuals, poets and the like. The rich sometimes envied the poor for their freedom to walk alone through the streets of Rome whenever they felt like it.

And speaking of Rome, am working my way through a travel guide titled ROME 2012 by Rick Steves, Avalon Travel.

This guide is useful enough I suppose, but the author appears to assume the reader knows nothing about Rome and, to my mind, writes down to them. For example, here's what he says about Caligula:

*"Caligula was not a nice person. He tortured enemies, stole senators' wives, and parked his chariot in handicap spaces."*

It is to laugh. I guess Steves is trying a 'light' approach to amuse rather than inform, anything to avoid being perceived as one of those horrid

textbook-like history books. Sort of like the difference between the modern concept of news as entertainment rather than the journalist practices of old.

One thing did rather strike me. When I was in Rome in 1970 the most you had to worry about were pesky vendors offering to sell you slides of the ruins. Nowadays said ruins are swarming with pick pockets. Steves even goes so far as to recommend certain bus routes as the perfect venue for watching pick pockets in action! He also recommends *never* carrying anything in your pockets because it *will* be stolen. Instead, wear a money belt.

One fact he doesn't mention, however, is that the pick pockets are mostly Roma (gypsy) immigrants and refugees from Romania and Albania. It's not politically correct to mention this.

Which puts in mind of a ploy utilized by one Roma family in Vancouver years ago. Having scouted a neighborhood to figure out which houses were inhabited by elderly solitary men, the women would knock on the front door, expose their breasts when the old codger appeared, grab his hands and force him to fondle their breasts. Needless to say, their victims were rather flustered and confused. Meanwhile the men in the family entered the house by the back door for a quick looting. Happened dozens of times. They were never caught. Of course very few Roma are criminals but, like the rest of us, not all of them are saints either.

## COLOPHON

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