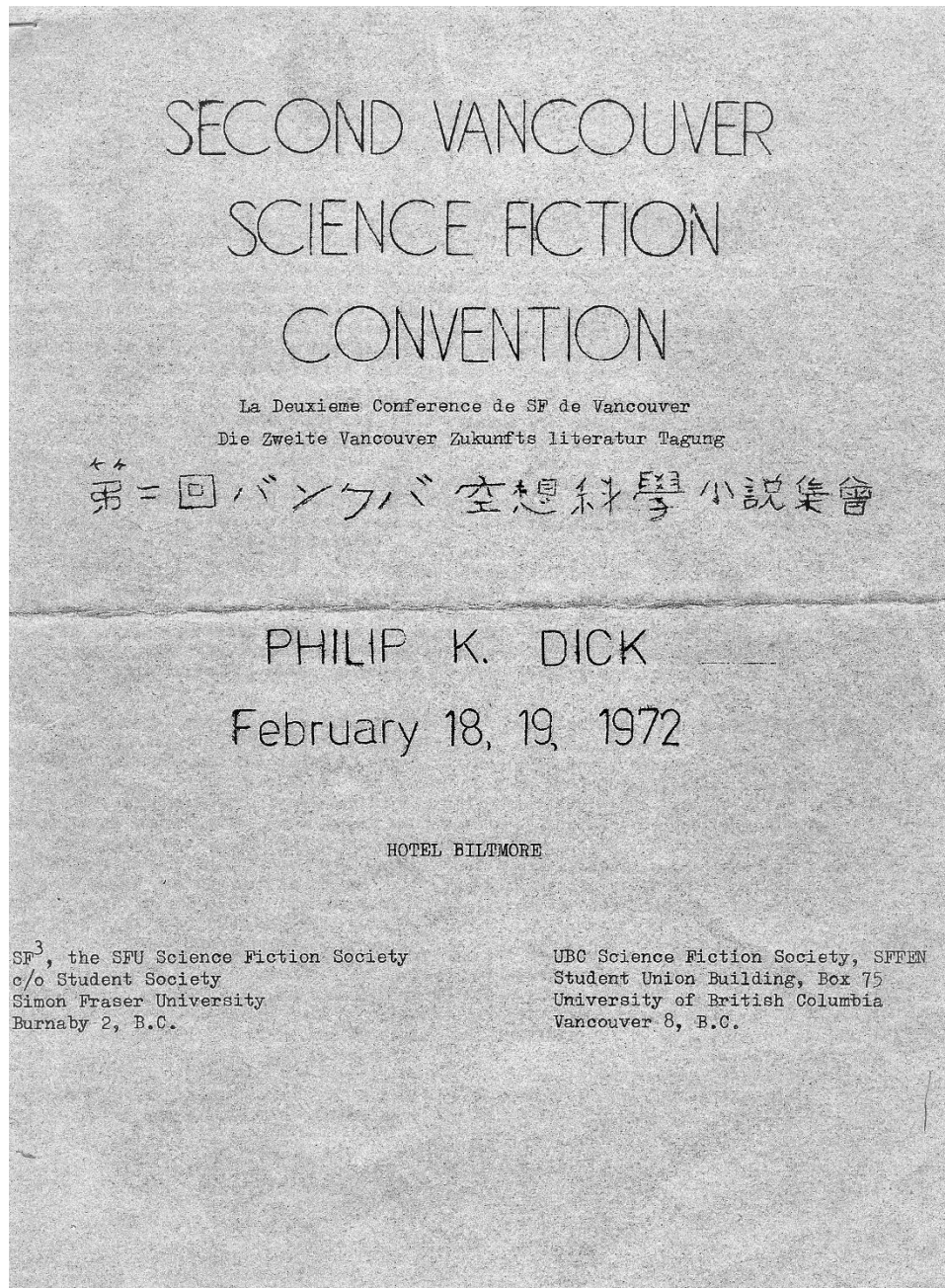


# BCSFAZINE

## Newsletter of the West Coast Science Fiction Association

(Formerly the Clubzine of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, the Social Branch of WCSFA)

(Issue #552 – April 2023)



Cover of the "VCON Two" Program Book

## **CURRENT WCSFA EXECUTIVE**

President: Joseph Bardsley  
Vice-President: Divya Kohli  
Treasurer: Kathleen Moore  
Organizing Secretary: Katherine Shadwick  
*Members at Large:*  
Scott Betson  
Jenni Merrifield  
Marcie Lynn Tentchoff  
Kona Lynn Sankey

## **NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBER VOLUNTEERS From BCSFA, the Social Branch of WCSFA**

BCSFazine Editor: R. Graeme Cameron  
VCON Ambassador for Life: Steve Forty  
Keeper of the Book of F.R.E.D.: Ryan Hawe  
*Life-time Members:*  
Tim Hammell  
Al Betz (deceased)  
Fran Skene  
Steve Forty

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**EDITORIAL: THE GOD-EDITOR SPEAKS!**

My master plan is simple. Reprint a bunch of old stuff to show how much fun being an active member of organized fandom can be. This, to attract members of current fandom (whomever they are and whatever it is) into WCSFA, at the very least as interested parties willing to participate in anything which sounds interesting and, hopefully, as enthusiasts willing to share their enthusiasms with others by supporting and helping run fun events SF fans will enjoy.

Toward this end I have also been beefing up the BC Sf Association website to aid people in understanding what a cornucopia of delights traditional fandom has produced in the past. I figure anyone who enjoys reading, say 1930s pulp fiction, or 1940s fiction—the New Wave BEFORE the New Wave—will enjoy exploring the mindset of fans back in the day by perusing a selection of downloadable fanzines dating from the 1940s/50s and later.

Fact is Canadian fandom has a rich heritage! I figure the inclusion of my Canadian Fancyclopedia, or “Canfancyclopedia,” will illustrate this more or less conclusively. There’s a lot to be proud of. Given that fans of yore had to type out their zines with typewriters, when “pounding the keys” really meant something in terms of physical pain, when printing was a time-consuming and messy process, distribution in the form of snail-mail subject to government censorship, and inter-fan “communication” entirely by paper letters (no-one could afford inter-city telephone rates), what was achieved, both a surprisingly voluminous output and the establishment of a sense of community between isolated individuals, was nothing short of a miracle! And a fascinating history for us “then-future” folks to study.

To be sure, as one contemporary teenager once told me, “We’re not interested in that twentieth-century junk,” it’s futile to expect a renaissance of past attitudes and practices. I’m not trying to turn the clock back. I’m attempting to inspire people to push the clock forward, to actively participate in celebrating today’s SF&F and anticipating what is to come. Not by being isolated individuals texting into the void, equivalent to poor Nils Helmer Frome back in the 1930s who thought he was the ONLY Sf fan in the Vancouver region—though there was at least one other local fan who must have thought the same, because he (his identity lost to posterity) titled his fanzine “THE CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION FAN” (emphasis on “The”)—but by extensive interaction with fellow fans sharing the same interests, interaction both electronic and personal, interaction leading to a commitment to accomplish fanac (fan activity) and fan events as part of a cohesive and forward-looking community.

Can it be done? First, there has to be something to do. At the moment WCSFA is offering monthly lunch meetups at Mall Food courts. It’s a start. Anything beyond that is up to the WCSFA Board. Hopefully ideas are being tossed around at these

meetups and something more party-like and socially fun will emerge.

In my opinion, not enough to focus on arranging a fund-raising event. Fund-raising for what? An abstract concept of a group? Better to aim at something that will bring people together to spontaneously adhere as a community of its own. Fandom isn't about groups or organizations. Fandom is about people. It is people who make the organizations and events possible, who create and maintain everything fandom is capable of being. What we need is a core group of people who enjoy getting together and working toward common goals. That has to be the priority. Without people, WCSFA is nothing, VCON is nothing. People will bring WCSFA and VCON to life. Only people can do that.

How do we attract people? With fun events that are exhilarating and inspiring. What sort of events? I'm probably too old to know, too old even to guess. It would really help if we could attract young people with fresh ideas that appeal to young people. Sounds silly, but unless we get current, contemporary fandom on board, I can't see how a bunch of people old enough to be grandparents can possibly interest, let alone inspire, anyone younger than ourselves.

So what? Well, I had a great time at Corflu 39, but no-one there was younger than 50. If that is not remedied, once the older generation has died off that will be the end of traditional fandom. Fresh blood is needed, to the point where the older generation passing away makes no difference to the ongoing fun and activity of fandom in action.

How is it possible to do this? I wish I knew.

I'm hoping many of you will come up with the answer.

But, enough whining. The fate of WCSFA and VCON is in the lap of Ghu.

Hmm, that suggests a possible solution, but I dare not propose it. Hmm...

Cheers! The Graeme

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**To submit articles, artwork, or letters of comment**, contact God-Editor R. Graeme Cameron at: < [The Graeme](#) >



**If you have any inquiries or questions on any club matter**, contact The Graeme at: < [wcsfa.bcsfa.vcon.information\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:wcsfa.bcsfa.vcon.information(at)gmail.com) > and I will pass the inquiry on to the appropriate Board Director for a response.

**Interested in current/back issues of BCSFAzine**, go to < <https://bcsciencefictionassociation.ca/> >

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## **GUEST-EDITORIAL: THE PRESIDENT OF WCSFA SPEAKS!**

*By Joseph Bardsley*

### **The Needs of the Many vs. The Needs of the Few New WCSFA Board President Seeks Your Advice and Ideas**

Greetings!

British Columbia boasts a long history of engaged and involved science fiction fans and fandom. As someone who has been part of that fandom for the past 15 years—and as someone who has been a *fan*, in general, all of my life, with particularly deep ties to the Star Trek, Transformers, and V fandoms—it has been an inspiration and real joy to see evidence of that fandom’s past life, almost like the circular growth rings of a well-aged tree. Stories of old conventions. Gatherings. Social clubs like BCSFA, and—yes—WCSFA. Second and third-hand recollections that endure and linger.

What happened?

From the perspective of someone who arrived in Vancouver around the turn of the century, and has seen the city go through many social, economic, cultural, and creative changes since, it seems like a lot of this momentum has shifted direction and ebbed away in recent years. Gone are the days of planned or spontaneous activities like this.

There are many evident reasons for it, both explicit and implicit—shifting tastes in how (or if) people consume content, changing demographics, rising costs of living, and increased competition for limited discretionary time, money, and energy these days. By many objective measures, life has gotten more complicated and difficult for many—especially in the continued wake of the pandemic.

**What does the future hold for sci-fi fandom—both organized and impromptu, media-based and otherwise—in BC?** What kinds of stories and concepts inspire people from all walks of life to gather, to exchange ideas, to dream bigger, and to build community? What does fandom look like in a pandemic-era 21st century, where experiences are more mediated by technology than ever before? Is there a way for fandom—and organizations like WCSFA and its ilk—to meaningfully evolve?

I'm interested in finding out, and I'm hoping that at least a few others reading this are, too.

I've been a casual participant in BCSFA since 2012 and have had some past VCON experience as an attendee. This past Fall, I put my name forward as acting President of the former body, and functional President of the latter. As their collective energy and resources—human, informational, and financial—have become scant in recent years, it feels simplest to amalgamate all of the remaining energy associated with these three organizations into one effort, encompassing BCSFA, WCSFA, and the hope of some form of future VCON to be presented by or both in a future year. We continue to gather facts and details. We don't have all (or any) of the answers.

WCSFA has a functional Board and is working toward a regular meeting schedule. There have been two informal, small-scale meetups in local (Metro Vancouver) food courts, with an eye to raising visibility and engaging new audiences.

We've tested our capacities and abilities, keeping intentionally grassroots and modest. Now, we're seeking the elusive and critical mass of people, plans, and an idea to chart a scalable course forward. Reflecting on the past is an instructive exercise, but we are also interested in what forces might enable WCSFA, specifically, to chart its future.

Of course, the specifics of that course forward depend on the interests, will, and ideas of everyone reading this.

I'd appreciate if readers could share their thoughts on these questions with me:

**What do current readers wish WCSFA did more of? Less of?**

**What is the single biggest barrier to active participation you're currently experiencing? (For that matter, do you want to be actively involved in any way?)**

**What would success for WCSFA, for the BCSFA, and a future VCON look like for you?**

**What kind of activity could you see yourself participating in moving forward?**

**Is there anything else you'd like the current WCSFA Board to know?**

Based on responses to these questions, I'm interested in continuing to work with other WCSFA Board members to develop and refine future activities and events that suit the evolving needs and interests of the community. Groups like this exist at the behest of and FOR their members, and your input makes all the difference.

**I am not interested in developing ideas or plans alone. Hands-on effort and involvement—commitment to showing up, in whatever form works for you—will be what determines the path forward.**

By virtue of your reading this, it can be inferred that you care at least a bit about how the future of BC's organized sci-fi fandom might evolve in keeping with shifting eras and changing times.

Can you spare some of that time to share your thoughts with us?

Send me your ideas. Share your thoughts. If you feel like WCSFA, the BCSFA, VCON, and organized fandom in general is worth preserving for future participants, I'd love to work with you around ideas encompassing their sustainable future.

with thanks,

Joseph Bardsley

**To send your ideas and thoughts in response to Joseph's request**, contact him at: < [wcsfa.bcsfa.vcon.information\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:wcsfa.bcsfa.vcon.information(at)gmail.com) >. He eagerly awaits your views and will share them with the Board of Directors for due consideration, the result of which he may well report or comment on in his next guest-editorial.

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# CANADIAN FANDOM OLDER THAN YOU THINK

(First published in AD ASTRA APA Mailing #1 April 2014)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

## LET'S BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

Ah, yes, the laborious and mind-numbing task of defining (in a definitive manner I might add) a precise definition of what fandom is definitely all about and what a fan (as defined by a defineator) really is...

Screw it. You're a fan. You know what you are. So, let's cut to the chase...

## A FALSE START? A HUMBLE ONE AT LEAST...

The first authenticated sighting of a Canadian fanzine editor took place in the spring of 1936.

American Donald Wollheim (then a mere fan, later a famous author and publisher) wrote about it in issue #7 of "The Science Fiction Review" published in June of that year, saying he'd received a fanzine titled **The Canadian Science Fiction Fan** from:

*"...a chap in Vancouver, B.C., where we least expected a fan to live! A fair little fanzine."*

Huh! Do you suppose the editor thought he was the *only* SF fan in Canada, hence the title of his zine?

So, who was this guy (or gal) anyway?

Nobody knows. Wollheim neglected to mention the editor's name. No copy of the zine is known to exist (though I suspect Wollheim's copy wound up in Australia, but that's another article in the making). No second issue ever appeared. No-one ever stepped forward to claim the glory and fame of being Canada's first SF fanzine and publisher.

Double huh! How Canadian is that? An achievement without boasting or recognition? Typically Canadian.

For this reason, whenever I can, I raise a toast to **The Unknown Faned**. (Well, it's

an excuse to have a drink...)

In 2011 the “unknown Faned” was inducted into the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Award Society Hall of Fame. The CFFAS also hands out awards known as “Faneds.” Nobody has heard of them either, so the CFFAS Hall of Fame seems an appropriate resting place for “The Unknown Faned.”

## THE TRUE, TRUE NORTH BEGINNING!

This time we know the guy’s name!

Nils Helmer Frome... easily as famous as the Unknown Faned. Of that I’m sure.



Frome lived in Fraser Mills, a company village on the shore of the Fraser River, south of Vancouver, B.C., in what is now Coquitlam. Worst of all, like most fans of the 1930s, Frome was a teenager. He grew out of it.

Circa 1934/35 he made quite a nuisance of himself mailing crabbed, hand-written missives (he did not own a typewriter) to fans and authors throughout North America under the pen name “Herkanos.” People like noted fan James Blish (later a famous author) and Sam Moskowitz (later a famous fan). Amazingly, they wrote back.

Not a good thing. It just made him all excited. He got ambitious.



Awash in enthusiasm, he purchased a used multigraph printing press sort of thingy from a slightly used San Francisco fan sometime in 1936 and immediately set about gathering material for his zine **Supramundane Stories**. Took him many months.

The first issue finally appeared in January of 1937...

Note: Most fan historians cite the 1952 Pavlat/Evans Fanzine Index as evidence Frome first published in October of 1936. This is incorrect. On some copies the date each page was published is printed. In some cases, October, some in December, and at least one in January.

Ergo, the collated edition could not be released till January at the earliest. Now you know. Thrilling, what?

I've been feuding with my fellow fan historians for years about this. Nobody cares. Not even me. That about sums up the importance of fan historians.

Frome made creative use of his lack of resources (evidently he didn't own a stapler either) by using his mother's sewing machine to stitch together the pages of his sewing machine. Seventy copies no less. I'll bet mom was delighted.

The most bizarre aspect of *Supramundane* stories was an artifact of the limitations of his multigraph. You had to set blocks of type in the darn thing to get it to print text, but there was no way to configure it to reproduce art.

Consequently, each illustration was individually hand drawn! Per copy! This leaves modern collectors very frustrated since, each individual copy being unique, it is impossible to own a complete set unless you own the entire print run! (I love exclamation points!)

Frome commented on this repetitive task thusly:

*"I got bored doing the same drawing over many, many times, almost line for line. Try it yourself. I'll bet it will get under your skin, too."*



The second, and last, issue of **Supramundane Stories** came out in the Spring of 1938. Once again, all interior illustrations were hand drawn, but this time the cover, by Frome of course, was hectographed (reproduced from a bed of jelly) by American fan Bill Miller. Limitations of a printing press made of jelly imply a maximum print run of thirty to forty copies. Not bad, since this is slightly more than average (twenty-five to thirty copies) of a typical American fanzine of the day.

The importance of **Supramundane** is that it was the first Canadian fanzine (apart from the TCSFF which only Wollheim seems to have seen), the first Canadian fanzine to receive widespread recognition in North American fandom (which makes sense, as Frome himself was already well-known by virtue of his eye-squintingly unreadable letters flung about the continent), and the first Canadian fanzine to print articles by legendary horror author H.P. Lovecraft.

Yes. You read that right. Lovecraft.

And J. Harvey Haggard and Clark Ashton Smith.

How did he get those professional authors to contribute?

He asked.

Balls of adamantine steel had Frome, methinks.

Lovecraft sent his short story “Nyarlathotep” and an essay “Notes on Weird Fiction Writing—the ‘why’ and ‘How.’” Both published in issue two.

From the above it is no doubt clear to you **Supramundane** was an amateur “prozine” replete with fiction, poems, and “serious” essays, including examples of each by Frome himself.

A third issue was planned but World War Two broke out and spoiled everything, to put it mildly.

By 1939 Frome worked as a cook in various B.C. Lumber camps. Because of the war, the federal government classified all lumber industry jobs as an essential service, which meant he was stuck for the duration in the company of guys whose conversation seldom dealt with SF or art. As a result, Frome’s fannish career slowed to a crawl during the war, only to revive afterwards (as I will explain later if I remember to do so).

Needless to say (you can tell I like to say needless things needlessly), Nils Helmer Frome was inducted into the CFFAS Hall of Fame in 2012.

### **“THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE CRUDZINES.”**



The above is a quote by American fan Harry Warner Jr. who was the greatest Letter of Comment writer of all time. For about sixty years it was acknowledged that no one could claim to be a genuine fanzine editor unless they had LoCs from Harry to display in their zines. (Today, Canada’s Lloyd “Ubiquitous” Penney has taken on that role.)

The quote refers to **Light**, a very personal fanzine published by Leslie A. Croutch from 1937 to 1961. Harry Warner liked **Light** very much, considering it “*as scruffy and comfortable as an old pair of slippers.*” Don’t know what Croutch thought about that opinion, but he probably didn’t care. He was very much the centre of his own universe, and I don’t mean that in a bad way.

In fact, Croutch started off at the centre of a fannish universe little larger than himself, the earliest version of **Light** titled **Croutch Market News** being a short list of books he was willing to sell or trade which went out to just a few fans whose addresses were listed in the letter columns of professional SF magazines.

As fandom expanded (coincidentally Croutch expanded too, or as Canadian Fan Fred Hurter Jr. wrote, *"First impression of Croutch, there's a lot of him,"*) **Light** evolved into a monthly hodgepodge of musings on politics, films, fandom and much else interspersed with articles and art contributed by numerous Canadian, American and British fans.

Interesting to note that he traded **Light** for other zines, letters of comment, articles and artwork. This trade concept, known as "the usual," though not original to Croutch, was independently invented by him, and he was the first to actively promote it and inspire widespread use. (Prior to this, circa 1942, fans demanded paid subscriptions.) If you disagree, don't blame me, I'm just telling you Harry Warner's opinion, and he had a pretty good handle on this sort of thing, so he's probably right. So, there.

Croutch earned his 1940s reputation as Canada's premiere fan by being a prolific writer of articles for other zines as well as his own, as well as being a major letterhack. Of his fanac he wrote (in 1942):



*"For myself, I think I am doing my share in upholding Canadian fandom. In the past I have appeared (articles, news, fiction) in the following U.S. fanzines: MSA BULLETIN, SPACEWAYS, VOICE OF THE IMAGINATION, LE ZOMBI (cartoon). In England in TIN TICKS and FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST. I have material coming up in America's SPACEWAYS, VOICE OF THE IMAGINATION, TELLUS, FAN-ACTIC, and plenty of other material going the rounds..."*

He also wrote a large amount of fiction, most of which appeared in his or others' fanzines, but some of it was professionally published. For a while Forrest J Ackerman (frequently voted "the Number One Fan" in the 1940s) served as his agent. AMAZING STORIES published his "The Day the Bomb Fell" in its Nov 1950 issue, and his most famous, a post-holocaust story titled "Eeman Grows up," appeared earlier in the June 1948 issue of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES.



Yet, for all his fannish fame, Croutch remained firmly grounded in the reality of living all his teenage and adult life in his parent's home in Parry Sound, Ontario. He was self-employed, operating "Croutch Radio Service" out of his bedroom for a while, and then out of a workshop he built onto the house. To his local friends and neighbours he was the bluff, straight-forward repair-guy whose only eccentricity was a habit of going to movies twice a week. His fannish life he kept secret.

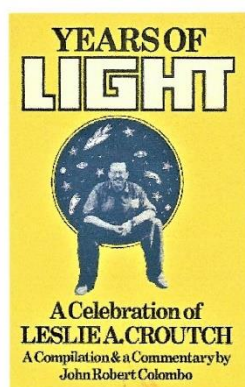
Not because he was trying to hide anything. It's simply that publishing *Light* and keeping up his correspondence with other fen was a pleasant, private hobby he shared with no-one locally because he took for granted he was the only fan in town.

Today it is his per/genzine *Light* for which he is best remembered. As Harry Warner Jr. wrote in **New Canadian Fandom** #6 (Jan 1963):

*"Les was one of my favourite fans of all time... there's a vitality to everything he wrote, an enthusiasm and joie de vivre that makes them better than the more polished output of the famous fans of the period who wrote dearly dull stuff."*

Alas, Croutch remained true to his chatty, informal punning style, and gradually began to seem dated to new generations of fans. This led to a falling off from his fanac, till he gafiated in 1961 (two years before dying in a typically Canadian fashion, a heart attack while shoveling snow).

But there's no doubt that at his height he beat the drum for Canadian zinedom and Canfanac, inspiring many to fanac on their own, and was much beloved by Canfandom for his efforts. He deserves to be remembered.



And he certainly was. In 1982 Hounslow Press of Toronto published an entire book devoted to him titled *YEARS OF LIGHT*, by John Robert Colombo. Now out of print, it is well worth getting a hold of if you can. It not only puts together a compelling story of Croutch's life, interests and achievements, it is also a great survey of Canadian Fandom in the 1940s and '50s.

More recently, in 2013 Leslie A. Croutch was inducted into the CFFAS Hall of Fame. (Bet you didn't see that coming!)

## **THE REST OF THE USELESS BOUNDERS**

Since I'm running out of room (only five pages maximum allowed in this APA) I'll



pile up the remainder of 1940s fen (= plural of fan) in a disjointed, confusing mess. What fun!

Even more exciting, I'm going to leave out a whole bunch of fanac (= fan activity) and just concentrate on what I think are the Highlights. Prepare to be subjected to my idiosyncratic choices!

## THE ONTARIO SCIENCEERS

This was the first SF club formed in Canada. According to Harry Warner Jr., it disbanded in 1941 when its President, Ted White, joined the Canadian armed forces.



True enough, but Cpl. E.R. White himself, contributing an article to Issue #123 of **Light**, December 1942, titled "The Birth of Ontario Fandom," elaborates further:

*"One day in March 1940, I got the bright idea to start a snf club, and so started my fan career. (If you call it that. There have been rumblings of another nature.) Correspondents numbered one, then two, and so on until about 15 had had the good grace to answer my letters and say they were interested in seeing a club started but, alas, offering no help in the venture. Three fellows did offer any help they could, and they were Leslie Croutch, John Mason and Heaton. The club was started. It flopped."*

Sporadic attempts were made to jumpstart the club:

*"Croutch, being a good fan, a good fellow and, I suspect, on the watch for more subscribers for the **Croutch News**, offered to allow space for club news. I accepted hastily, fearing a change of heart on the part of the amiable Croutch, and we had news, syllabuses and pleas for help and memberships printed. Everything went well for a short while but then, again, we found the response was not anywhere near what had been expected."*

In June 1941, Croutch and Mason, among others, held a meeting on the veranda of White's house in North Toronto. Reviving the club and launching a club newsletter were the topics of discussion. White announced he had permission to use a printing press where he worked. Even the use of a large amount of paper. All very exciting but apparently no clubzine or club activity appeared afterwards. Seems it was a non-starter.

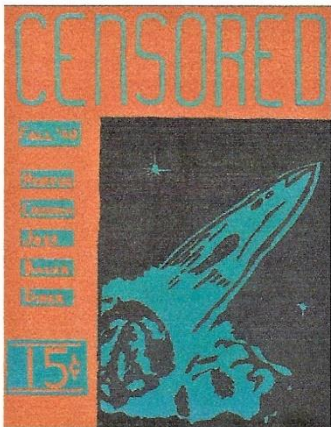
White joined the Canadian army in July 1941 and was sent overseas. He attempted to maintain contact via mail with Canadian fandom, but found that other, more pressing matters, tended to occupy his time. Such is war, and life.

## CENSORED



**Censored** was founded and edited by Fred Hurter Jr. The first issue was published out of Aurora, Ontario, while Hurter was attending the St. Andrews College for boys, in June 1941. He was originally going to call it Rocket, but when he found out (after he printed the first issue's cover) that there was an American zine of the same name, he stamped the cover "censored" which then became its title for all subsequent issues.

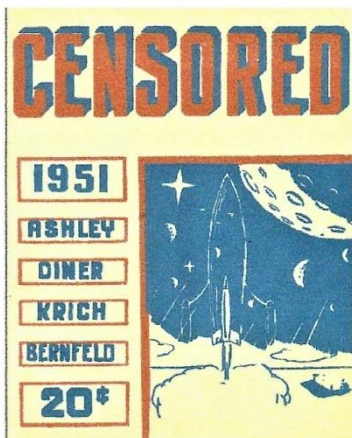
There were 6 issues in all published between 1941 and 1951. The last two, Hurter having moved, were under the auspices of the Montreal SF Society (the second club to be formed in Canada, founded November 1946).



According to John Robert Columbo, **Censored** was:

*"...a stylish and substantial publication. Particularly appealing were the silk=screened covers (by Ron Smith)... The most arresting and attractive covers of any fanzine in the country... These were art-decoish in design and set such impossibly high standards that no other Canadian fanzine attempted to match them."*

Censored was a genzine containing both non-fiction articles and fiction by the likes of Leslie A. Crouth, who also appeared in a column titled "Thoughts While Shaving."



In 1942 Crouth wrote: "Canadian fandom has two accepted fanzines... my **Light** is one, Fred Hurter's **Censored** is the other. The latter is a full-fledged subscription affair that ranks easily among the better rank and file of foreign zines."

Also in 1942, a comment by Hurter was printed in **Light**:

*"Personally, I'm getting a bit worried about so-called Canadian fandom! There doesn't seem to be any, if my*

*circulation figures are correct. 30 copies at most go to Canadian subscribers, about 10 to England, and over 100 to the USA. Seems sort of funny for a Canadian fanzine to sell almost completely in the United States!"*

Sigh. It was ever thus. Even today, when Canadian zines are available for "the usual." More fanzine fans needed! More Canadian fanzines, too! Why not start one on your own? Join us!

## RON CONIUM



This guy never published a fanzine, but he lived on Morrison Avenue in Toronto and I have reason to believe he was active in Canadian fandom. Despite his low key fanac, in 1942 Ron Conium became a fannish celebrity.

Why? Because it was revealed he was the only fan known to possess a copy of every single SF magazine ever published in North America up to that time.



Every copy of the American AMAZING STORIES, SCIENCE WONDER STORIES, ASTOUNDING, THRILLING WONDER STORIES, WEIRD TALES, etc., and presumably the Canadian pulp magazines EERIE TALES and UNCANNY TALES. Without a doubt Conium briefly became the most envied (and therefore hated) SF collector/fan in at least two countries and possibly more. I wonder what happened to his collection?

## MEPHISTO



Can't help but question if Vancouver fan Alan Child was inspired by Frome's **Supramundane Stories** to produce **Mephisto** as both were fiction magazines masquerading as professional magazines. **Mephisto** wasn't a combination of science fiction and weird fantasy like Frome's zine, though; it was strictly weird horror fiction. Contributing authors included Nils Helmer Frome, Leslie A. Crutch, and Alan Child himself.

There were two issues, in January and September of 1943. I know of only one surviving copy, in the hands of a prominent American collector who is also a genuine BNF (Big Name Fan). I wonder if it will ever see the light of day?

## CANADIAN FANDOM

Joseph "Beak" Taylor started Canadian Fandom in February 1943 while a



student at St. Andrews in Aurora, Ontario (he had apprenticed on Hurter's **Censored**). In 1949 he passed his editorship to Edward "Ned" McKeown, who in turn presented it to Gerald A. Steward in 1953, and finally to William D. Grant in 1955. There were 37 issues in all, the last in 1958. (Note: the first three issues were titled **8-Ball**.)

This long-lived zine grew in importance with every issue, eventually eclipsing Croutch's *Light* to become the most renowned Canadian genzine (= multiple contributors) of its era. It was very well mimeographed and illustrated, with a maximum print run of 200. Affectionately known by its readers by the shortened name **Canfan**. Legendary U.S. fan Art Widner once called it "*still the biggest nickel's worth in fandom*" back when a nickel was worth something.

A frequent LoC contributor was Leslie A. Croutch. In *Canfan* #15 (May 1948) he wrote (in the "Maelstrom" LoC column):

*"I like the byline 'Published for Canadians by Canadians.' Why not? For far too long Canadians have acted as though they were ashamed to be Canadians. Why shouldn't we brag about our nationality? We've got just as much, if not more, on the ball than others."*

The Canadian National Inferiority complex long being part of what defines being Canadian, of course. Good for us.

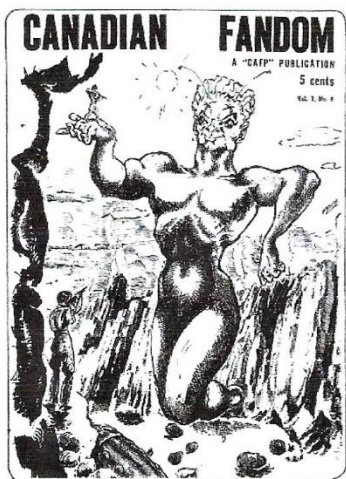


Croutch also contributed a column called "Light Flashes" which on at least one occasion was rated by readers as the best article in the issue (#4 – September 1943). Such short fiction of his as "The Moth" and "The Mouse in the Stocking" also appeared. Fiction by other Canadian fans, including Shirley K. Peck of Vancouver and Nils Helmer Frome out in the woods somewhere, was printed in **Canfan** as well. The majority of articles were non-fiction essays, columns, convention reports, and reviews, almost all quite interesting.

The first cover I chose to reproduce (bottom-left, from issue #7, 1944) is by Frome, possibly a self-portrait. It depicts a square-jawed young man's face lit from below, as impersonal as a cult statue, with piercing, frightening eyes. ("He never could draw eyes," claimed his relatives.)

According to Sam Moskowitz: "*The drawing, approaching professional quality, was*





*photo offset. This cover received mixed reviews, ranging from praise to condemnation.”*

The second Frome cover (left) is just plain silly, but fun.

### **SLAP DASH IDIOTIC ENDING**

Out of room. Left out a ton of good stuff. Tough.

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**To read many of the zines described in the article above,  
see the links in the article below.**

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## **HISTORIC CANADIAN FANZINES YOU CAN DOWNLOAD (As posted in Fanac.org website)**

[à Bas](#) - **Boyd Raeburn** - 12 issues, 324 pages – 1954 to 1959

[Alta-Ego](#) - **Randy Thomas** - 3 issues, 58 pages – 1971 to 1972

[Amor](#) - **Susan Wood** (Susan Glicksohn) - 22 issues, 237 pages – 1973 to 1979

[Aspidistra](#) - **Susan Wood** (Susan Glicksohn) - 5 issues, 196 pages – 1971 to 1973

[Baloobius, The](#) - **Taral Wayne** - 10 issues, 119 pages – 2019 to 2022

[Broken Toys](#) - **Taral Wayne** - 51 issues, 1328 pages – 2012 to 2016

[Canadian Fandom](#) - **Beak Taylor, Gerald Steward, Bill Grant** - 17 issues – 1943/55

[Censored](#) - **Fred Hurter Jr.** - 5 issues, 96 pages – 1941 to 1954

[Descant](#) - **Norm Clarke, Gina Ellis Clarke** - 9 issues, 146 pages – 1961 to 1971

[Differential](#) - **S. W. Paul Wyszowski** - 9 issues, 18 pages – 1962 to 1963

[DNQ](#) - **Taral Wayne, Victoria Vayne** - 44 issues, 524 pages – 1978 to 1984

Down With! - **Victoria Vayne** - 3 issues, 7 pages - 1978

EightBall - **Beak Taylor** - 1 issue, 16 pages - 1943

Energumen - **Mike Glicksohn, Susan Wood** - 20 issues, 933 pages - 1970 to 1981

Genre Plat - **Allyn Cardogan, Bill Gibson, Grant Canfield** - 6 issues - 1977 to 1983

Glass Houses - **Taral Wayne** - 2 issues, 21 pages - 1982 to 1983

Gobrin Gazette - **Eli Cohen** - 2 issues, 4 pages - 1975 to 1976

Great Nor'Western News - **Randy Thomas** - 3 issues, 58 pages - 1971

Kratophany - **Eli Cohen** - 14 issues, 420 pages - 1971 to 1981

Light - **Leslie A. Croutch** - 67 issues, 882 pages - 1941 to 1961

Lost Toys - **Taral Wayne** - 10 issues, 79 pages - 1941

Lowdown - **Richard Labonte** - 3 issues, 103 pages - 1968 to 1971

New Canadian Fandom - **Robert Runte** - 7 issues, 228 pages - 1981 to 1985

Opuntia - **Dale Speirs** - 544 issues, 10,507 pages - 1991 to 2023

OSFIC Quarterly - **John Douglas, Gordon Van Toen** - 3 issues, 98 pages - 1978/98

Rat Sass - **Taral Wayne** - 12 issues, 224 pages - 2016 to 2019

Short Enough To Be Interesting - **Eli Cohen** - 4 issues, 8 pages - 1975 to 1976

Simulacrum - **Victoria Vayne** - 7 issues, 475 pages - 1975 to 1978

State of the Art - **Taral Wayne** - 8 issues, 64 pages - 1984 to 1988

Warm Champagne - **Susan Wood** - 10 issues, 37 pages - 1975 to 1978

Xenium - **Mike Glicksohn** - 15 issues, 451 pages - 1973 to 1990



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**(As posted in the BC Science Fiction Association Website)**

By going to the following link, you can read all the zines by R. Graeme Cameron listed below: [Space Cadet & other zines by R. Graeme Cameron | BC Science Fiction Association](http://www.bcsfassociation.com/zines/R_Graeme_Cameron_zines.htm)

**Auroran Lights** – 18 issues – *2011 to 2016*

**Beloved Binema** – 1 issue - *2012*

**Entropy Blues** – 1 issue - *1986*

**The Fanactical Fanctivist** – 11 issues – *2011 to 2013*

**The Frenetic Fanac Review** – 2 issues - *2012*

**Great Galloping Ghu!** – 1 issue - *2022*

**OBIR Magazine** – 5 issues – *2015 to 2017*

**The Pleasure of Ruins** – 3 issues – *2014/15*

**Space Cadet** – 22 issues – *1994 to 2014*

**WCSFAzine** – 22 issues – *1994 to 2014*

And at the link below, a complete run of:

[Under the Ozone Hole](http://www.bcsfassociation.com/zines/Under_the_Ozone_Hole.htm) – **John H. Willcox & Karl Johanson** - 19 issues – 1992 to 2007

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**ALL ABOUT THE 1948 WORLDCON IN TORONTO**

(First published in WCSFAzine #11 July 2008)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

I'll begin by casually mentioning I won my second Aurora Award in 2010. It was for "Fan Achievement Fanzine: WCSFAzine." I published 22 issues in all between September 2007 and April 2011. It began as a fannish newszine but rapidly evolved

into a zine devoted to Canadian fannish history. I am particularly proud of issue #11 as it is entirely devoted to all the con reports and info I could track down about TORCON, the first Worldcon held outside the USA and the first Worldcon to be held in Canada.

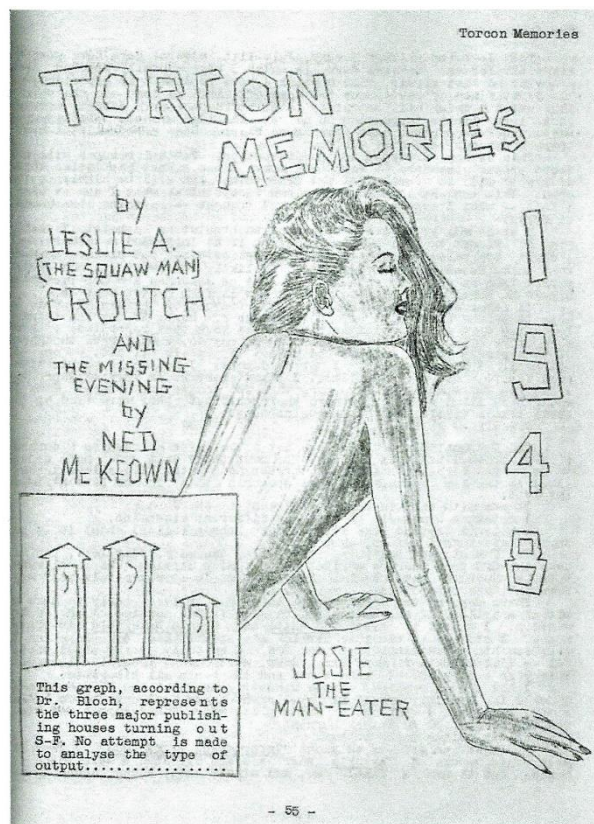


ILLUSTRATION BEGINNING 1948 TORONTO WORLDCON SECTION WITHIN CANADIAN FANDOM ISSUE #33a, FEBRUARY 1957, ARTIST: LESLIE A. CROUTCH

The Table of contents for issue #11 is as follows:

- 01..... Cover art: Leslie A. Croutch
- 02..... Important Stuff.
- 03..... Contents & Editorial.
- 04..... Torcon Memories:
  - CANADIAN FANDOM #33a & Leslie A. Croutch.
- 05..... The 1948 World Convention by Leslie A. Croutch.
- 16..... The 'Missing' Evening by Ed. McKeown.
- 19..... Fantasy and Psychology by Robert Bloch.
- 20..... Zap! Zap! – Atomic Ray is Passe with Fiends! - George Bain.
- 21..... Toronto Daily Star article - July 5, 1948.
- 23..... Torcon Factoids.
- 23..... Torcon Movie.

- 23..... Torcon as Described by Harry Warner Jr.
- 26..... Torcon as Described by Richard 'Dick' Eney.
- 27..... Torcon as Described by John Robert Colombo.
- 28..... Torcon Confirmed Attendees List by The Graeme.
- 28..... Torcon Report.
- 29..... Le Zombie at Torcon by Bob Tucker.
- 32..... Adverts.

Note: All unaccredited articles are by the Ghod-Editor.

Sound intriguing? Then click on the link below and read all about Torcon!

[TORCON: The 1948 Toronto Worldcon](#)

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# FANNISH NEWS AND RESOURCES

*By Garth Spencer and R. Graeme Cameron*

**CUFF 2023 News release #3** By: Fran Skene (CUFF 2019 Delegate to CAN\*CON in Ottawa) Email: [fskene\(at\)shaw.ca](mailto:fskene(at)shaw.ca)

Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF) nominations are now closed for selecting a fan delegate to Pemmi-Con (the 2023 NASFiC) in Winnipeg this July 20th through 23rd, 2023. We had one nominee\*, Garth Spencer, who now becomes the delegate. Congratulations, Garth!

\*People who would like to support his trip can help with a donation of \$10 or more to the fan fund. Send by PayPal or Interac e-transfer to Fran Skene at [fskene\(at\)shaw.ca](mailto:fskene(at)shaw.ca)

Garth has sent us his bio. Scroll down for an entertaining read!

The primary responsibilities of the delegate are to:

- Attend the convention, take part in programming, and report back to fellow fans on the event.
- Assist in raising funds for the next year's delegate.
- Administer (with the assistance of other Canadian fans) the process to select the next year's fan delegate.
- Promote Canadian genre-related media and fan activities.

Click on <https://fancyclopedia.org/CUFF> for a little historical info on this fan fund.

As information on Garth's schedule and his program participation becomes available, I will relay this in news releases. Fran

## **Who is Garth Spencer?**

Well, Garth is just this guy, you know... Back in 1980, Garth joined a small SF club in Victoria B.C., and quickly discovered they had a library of fanzines—which meant, any small periodical a fan or club produced. At the time that was a major activity among fans. Within a few years (to the detriment of his post-secondary education) he was producing club newsletters and his own fanzines and, eventually, THE MAPLE LEAF RAG—a newszine by and for Canadian fans, which succeeded

Robert Runté's famous NEW CANADIAN FANDOM—with contributions from almost the whole country. His friends joked that he was a one-man threat to Canada's forests.

Part of Garth's thing, back then, was to clear up the unawareness and misconceptions some fans had about other fan groups and about convention practices. Another part was to find out what the Canadian SF and Fantasy Awards were. In 1985, Fran Skene in Vancouver asked Garth to handle the nominating and voting ballots for the Awards (dubbed the Caspers at that time; more info in <https://www.csffa.ca/>) at Convention 6/ VCON 14 in Vancouver the next year. Then he had to step down because he became a nominee in the first fanzine category award. He won for THE MAPLE LEAF RAG. The next year, he moved to Vancouver and became an active part of the B.C. Science Fiction Association.

The MAPLE LEAF RAG also uncovered the Canadian Unity Fan Fund. In 1987, the Convention hosted by Ad Astra in Toronto revived it. In 1999, Garth was the delegate to that year's Convention in Fredericton, New Brunswick; he titled his CUFF newsletter OR SOMETHING, and his trip report WHAT I DID ON MY OCTOBER VACATION. In 2006 he won the same award, now-named Prix Aurora, for Best Fan Publication again, for THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE.

Garth served as editor of BCSFAzine, during its changeover from hardcopy to online publication. He has continued to issue his own personalzines—variously titled SCUTTLEBUTT, THE WORLD ACCORDING TOGARTH, SERCON POPCULT LITCRIT FANMAG, THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE, THE ART OF GARTHNESS, and more recently, THE OBDURATE EYE—and has joined APAs (Amateur Publishing Associations) based in Canada and in the United States. He has also produced an anthology of fannish articles, stories and humour, CONFABULATION, which is available on his website (<https://www.vcn.bc.ca/~garth2/>).

Today, Garth Spencer is 66 years old, but he still dresses the way he did in the 1980s (unless he decides to show you the Royal Swiss Navy field uniform). He still doesn't know what to be when he grows up.

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### **CUFF funds report as of March 28, 2023:**

Balance after CAN\*CON in Ottawa, 2019: \$455 CAD  
Auction at 2020 Boscone (Murray Moore): \$132 CAD  
Turkey Readings at Corflu Pangloss, 2022: \$120 CAD

Donation (Heath Row): \$28 CAD  
Bond from Garth Spencer: \$20 CAD  
Donation from Robin Webber: \$275 CAD  
Donation from Richard Graeme Cameron: \$100 CAD  
Donation from John Edward Bartley III: \$69 CAD  
Total (rounded): \$1,200 CAD

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### **Writers Guild of America Statement on AI**

Note: The WGA is the guild of Screenwriters. This is what they, as professionals, are saying about AI from a legal perspective protecting their professional rights.

“The WGA’s proposal to regulate use of material produced using artificial intelligence or similar technologies ensures the Companies can’t use AI to undermine writers’ working standards including compensation, residuals, separated rights and credits. AI can’t be used as source material, to create MBA-covered writing or rewrite MBA-covered work, and AI-generated text cannot be considered in determining writing credits.

Our proposal is that writers may not be assigned AI-generated material to adapt, nor may AI software generate covered literary material. In the same way that a studio may point to a Wikipedia article, or other research material, and ask the writer to refer to it, they can make the writer aware of AI-generated content. But, like all research material, it has no role in guild-covered work, nor in the chain of title in the intellectual property.

It is important to note that AI software does not create anything. It generates a regurgitation of what it’s fed. If it’s been fed both copyright-protected and public domain content, it cannot distinguish between the two. Its output is not eligible for copyright protection, nor can an AI software program sign a certificate of authorship. To the contrary, plagiarism is a feature of the AI process.”

God-Ed: There is an enormous amount of speculation in social media today on the future impact of the rise of AI. Much of it is uninformed and based on fear or anticipation. The above reflects the sober view of professionals concerned AI may undercut their livelihood. They are moving to safeguard their profession with practical legislation. The glib may state “advancing tech destroys jobs and creates jobs so they shouldn’t complain and instead should set about acquiring skills to compete for the new jobs.” I, however, applaud their pre-emptive strike. Well done.



## An Event in Kiev (Kyiv)



Boris Sidyuk (Borys Sydiuk), formerly of the Zoryany Shlyah Club of Kiev with which BCSFAzine used to correspond in the early 1990s, posted an interesting news item online, namely photographs taken March 25, 2023, showing Max Kidruk, “a rising star of Ukrainian Science Fiction,” presenting his new novel “New Dark Ages: Colony in Kyiv” to Ukrainian fandom.

The author, Max Kidruk. He looks very happy and enthusiastic. I wonder why?



No wonder Max is happy! Look at the size of his audience! Hundreds of people! Look at the size of the Venue!

Shows not even the ongoing threat of Russian drones and missiles can keep people away.

Perhaps, in wartime, people hunger for culture all the more.



And look at the size of that lineup! Not even at Fan Expo have I ever seen an author’s lineup that huge.

Every author I know can only dream of such a lineup. It’s extraordinary, at least by Canadian standards.

In Canada, fannish apathy rules. The Ukraine makes us look provincial. Still, I know for a fact there are plenty of people like me who read each and every day. It’s people like those shown in the Kidruk



lineup, some of them quite young, I note, who probably exist in Canada, in British Columbia, in Vancouver, who are the future of WCSFA and VCON.

I hope some day to see similar photos to these in future VCON post-con reports. I mean, look at that enthusiasm! Reader enthusiasm!

I genuinely believe people who like to read science fiction and fantasy literature are the cornerstone foundation of a revived VCON. Movies are one keystone. Cosplay another. But the fundamental origin and most widespread expression of science fiction is SF literature, and while the percentage of Canadians who habitually read is small, they never give up, it's their life-long passion, and we must learn to take advantage of that!

Hmm... I wonder if an English language version of Kidruk's book is being planned. I'd love to read it.

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### **Pemmi-con Releases Progress Report #1**

You can read it by clicking on the link below.

Two things of interest I note:

Train tickets from Vancouver to Winnipeg for the appropriate dates are sold out. You'll have to drive or fly. (Or walk, if you're crazy enough.)

There'll be a Fan Fund Auction, but not just for CUFF but for TAFF and GUFF as well. Garth Spencer, the CUFF winner, should bear in mind this is not a Canadian convention with Canvention offering some room for the CUFF winner, but an alternate Worldcon in which the primary Fan Fund interest of most attendees will probably be TAFF.

I propose to Garth that he liaison with whomever is responsible for programming the fan fund programming, and also with whomever represents the other two funds (perhaps the current administrators if they are attending) so that all three can reinforce and support each other. Doesn't mean they can't have their own programming. Just means I think they should promote fan fundom as a whole and not wind up being perceived as being in competition with each other.

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### **Nominations for 2023 Aurora Awards still open!**

You can nominate anyone from the official CSFFA Eligibility Lists, up to five people for each of the 10 categories: Best Novel, Best YA Novel, Best Novelette-Novella, Best Short Story, Best Poem/Song, Best Graphic Novel/Comic, Best Cover Art/Interior Illustration, Best Related Work, Best Fan Writing and Publication and Best Fan Related Work.

You can nominate till 11:59 EDT 22 April 2023. The CSFFA Annual General Meeting will take place in early June. 19 Voting will begin June 17 and Close 11:59 EDT 29 July 2023. The Aurora Awards ceremony will take place online in Early August.

To join and become a member (cost \$10.00 CAD annual fee – Canadians only) or, if already a member and you wish to nominate, go to: The Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (CSFFA) – Home of the Prix Aurora Awards and CSFFA Hall of Fame: <https://www.csffa.ca/>

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### **“When Words Collide” Registration Closed.**

It's official. Registration for "When Words Collide," 125 days in advance of the convention, is now closed. They have reached their cap of 800 (as dictated by the Fire Marshal).

There is a waiting list. Should there be any cancellations, the first few people on the list stand a chance of getting registered. I expect the list to grow fast. Best to add your name as soon as you can.

To get on the list, go to: [WWC 2023 - Home \(whenwordscollide.org\)](http://www.whenwordscollide.org)

Fortunately, I purchased my membership several years ago. I even have a banquet registration! Since this will be the last “When Words Collide,” I am looking forward to it. For one thing, I will be moderating a panel I proposed, namely “What’s wrong with Magazine Editors?” Should be fun.

# YOUR MONTHLY CORUSCATING CONUNDRUM

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

*Mr. PQ of Coquitlam, B.C., asks:*

DOES THE METHANE IN THE MARTIAN ATMOSPHERE PROVE THERE'S LIFE ON MARS?

**Mr. Guess-It-All:** Scientists claim the methane is a product either of bacteria deep beneath the Martian surface or of volcanic activity at roughly the same depth. This very convenient theorizing on the part of said scientists will require decades of government grants and increasingly sophisticated space probes to prove or disprove, thus providing employment for generations of scientists.

However, the origin of the methane has nothing to do with whatever is or is not happening beneath the Martian surface. The methane in question originates on Earth. Canadian muskeg is now defrosting because of global warming and as a result is releasing methane in prodigious quantity in the form of supersonic jets ejecting methane so far beyond the pull of Earth's gravity that the gravity of Mars sucks it down into the Martian atmosphere.

If we could but harness these jets, we could safely travel to Mars by balloon. This requires divers government grants to determine the level of feasibility. I have already sent in my application.

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## A LOOK BACK AT "VCON TWO" – 1973

(Source: The Canfancylopedia)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

**1972 - (Feb 18-19) - VCON 2:** ( Actually just called 2nd annual Vancouver Science Fiction Convention ).

**Guest of Honour:** **PHILIP K. DICK**. Toast Master: **MIKE HORVAT**. Venue: Biltmore Hotel, Vancouver. Attending: "Fewer than 100".

**CONCOM:** Co-Chairmen - Mike Bailey & Daniel Say; Treasurer - Mike Bailey; Operations - Mike Bailey; Films - Ed Hutchings; Guest Liaison - Mike Bailey. ( *Elron Awards* not presented. )

Sponsored jointly by the Simon Fraser University Science Fiction Society ( SF3 ), & the University of B.C. Science Fiction Society ( UBC SFFEN ). At this point BCSFA was dormant but would revive in 1973. Two days of single-track programming in the hotel ballroom. Probably display room and hospitality suite also, but unknown to me.

**FRIDAY (Feb 18/72 – Vcon 2)** began at 5:00 pm with:

- a "CASH BAR PARTY - 75¢ a drink",
- a MASQUERADE CONTEST won by Bill & Bubbles Broxon as mad scientist & victim,
- and a series of probably 16mm films including H.G. Wells THINGS TOCOME.

**SATURDAY (Feb 19/72 – Vcon 2)** started:

- with a talk by Prof. Mason Harris on H.G. WELLS' TIME MACHINE: THE FOURTH DIMENSION AS PROPHECY,
- followed by a THINGS TO COME film panel moderated by John Wilson, with Mason Harris, John Park, Susan Walsh & Ed Hutchings.
- Then a lunch break, with more films being shown.
- Next, a talk on BELYAIEV: THE RUSSIAN JULES VERNE by Murray Shoolbraid,
- and a panel on SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES with Marian Vaughn, Melez Massey, David Etter, Marilyn Wool & Jack Schofield.
- Philip K. Dick then delivered the KEYNOTE SPEECH "THE HUMAN AND THE ANDROID: A CONTRAST BETWEEN THE AUTHENTIC PERSON AND REFLEX MACHINE" in which he suggested that scientists, instead of studying machines to gain insight into human behaviour, should study humans to gain insight into machine behaviour.

There was to be a banquet, but it was cancelled due to lack of ticket sales. No Elrons awarded due to criticism of the previous year's awards as mean-spirited and frivolous. After the dinner break Mike Bailey gave a talk on FORGOTTEN HEROES OF SWORD & SORCERY, ending with a cash bar party that closed at midnight ( in essence a Dead Dog Party, but not named as such ).

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## A LOOK BACK AT THE VANCOUVER SF SOCIETY 1951/53

(Source: The Canfancylopedia)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

## City club imagines what future holds

**A** SELECT group in Vancouver has been peering into the far future. They are seriously trying to understand what the universe will be like when space has been annihilated and inter-stellar communication is an everyday affair.

With Norman G. Browne as president, and Curt Lang as secretary, a club was formed for the study of what is known as Science Fiction. This is a weird conglomeration of imaginary achievements which are assumed to be based on present or future possibilities, and where the impossible is accepted as a potential reality.

The Vancouver group started life with a notice on the Vancouver Public Library Bulletin Board. The circular announced that the members would study flying saucers, comet ships, extra-territorial activities, planetary disturbances, thought transference, and like matters.

The Vancouver Science-Fiction Society includes among its members Arthur W. Purdy, who writes quite a bit of poetry; George M. Kerr, a writer whose stories are not set in the Science-Fiction world; Orville W. Mosher, G. M. Carr, and Frank Stephens, 5548 Fleming, who is now president.

Interpretative art work is produced by Bill Gallienne, Vic Miller and Curt Lang.

Norman Brown has moved to Edmonton, but maintains his membership in the local group. He started a magazine, "Vanations," a name made up

This is a new twist on the fishing stories about the big one that got away — only in this case, it DIDN'T get away. And Gordon Shaw of Kelowna told the Kelowna Courier it's true. Mr. Shaw says that he hooked a DEER while fly-casting from the shore at Cyama Lake this past summer. After he had cast his line, the doe jumped into the water, swam over the line and was caught by the hook. When Game Warden Don Ellis heard about it, he laughed and said: "Well, it's a good thing Gordon didn't land THAT one. . . I'd have had to pinch him for taking a deer out of season!"

of "Van(couver Public)ations," and he is aiming at a circulation of 500.

"Vanatons" is hard reading for the outsider. The pages are filled with the jargon of the fans, and the semantic meaning of many of the words is difficult to grasp. "Fanzine" can be guessed to mean "Fan Magazine," and a reader with access to a big dictionary can learn that "Dianetics" is the science of the mind, and "Cybernetics" is the technical work of mechanical calculators. These are true scientific words.

When expressions pop out like "Bern," "ego-boo," "crud," "prozine," "Dwimc," or "Astf" the outsider is hopelessly lost. Experts interpret "Be-m" to be a "bug-eyed-monster," but "ego-boo" doesn't mean anything but ego-boo. "Crud" is "poor writing," probably derived from "crude." "Prozine" is a professional magazine. "Dwimc" is five words in one: "death wrapper in mint condition," and "Astf" stands for "Astounding Fiction."

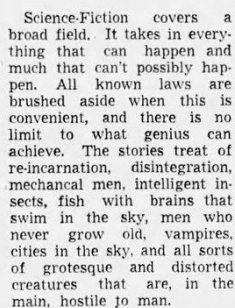
The Science Fiction fans held their ninth annual convention in 1951 and are holding one in Chicago this winter. These are known as "Nolacon" and "Chicon," from the words abbreviated, "New Orleans" and "Chicago Convention."

No outstanding Canadian writer contributes to the Science Fiction magazines, but Theodore Roosevelt, son of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has, an occasional piece published in United States. Winston Churchill and Lord Dunsany have both appeared in British S.F. magazines.

Not counting "fanzines," of which there are scores, about twenty-five Science - Fiction magazines are published in the United States.

There are about fifteen Science-Fiction clubs in the Dominion, with individual memberships from fifty down. All have been visited, at some time or other, by Jack Bowie Reed, whose travels as political organizer of the Conservative Party take him across the Dominion three or four times a year. He has written extensively on Political Economics and plans to make his home in Vancouver.

An industrial sociologist who is keenly interested in the local group is Don McLaren of Berkeley, California. He gave a talk recently in Vancouver on "Atomic Reaction of Engines on Rocket Ships," and this is understood to have included important quasi-secret information.



Insanity is not accepted as a plot solution by orthodox magazines, but the Science-Fiction editors are not so choosy. If the heroes go crazy it is all right with them. It probably doesn't surprise the readers one bit, the stories being what they are.

Although no British Columbian has ever set out on a rocket ship for a trip to the moon, there have been men willing to go in the past. Twenty-six years ago Sam McFee, former champion welter-weight boxer of the British navy, announced himself as a volunteer for a rocket flight into space. The start was to be made from Victoria, with Herr Professor Franz Vallier in charge.

A giant rocket was to be loaded with sixteen tons of nitro-cellulose, and the passenger-carrying arrangements were to be the responsibility of Olaf Peterson of East Soke.

No fewer than fifty applications were received for the privilege of going up and up. Two of these came from Vancouver, and ten from New Westminster. Mr. McFee, be-

ing on the spot near Sooke, was considered to be the favorite.

The old welterweight boxer was canny, though. He was willing to go to the moon, but he wanted to know how he was to get back.

## By KEN SHEPPARD

**A**S a young naval lieutenant serving in the Far East, Oswald Denry promised himself a visit to the Swiss Alps when the war was over. But in Singapore he contracted infantile paralysis and in 1945, at the age of 21, he was faced with a "no cure" verdict for waist-down paralysis.

Denry decided that useless legs would not halt his ambition. With an invalid tricycle given to him by the British Ministry of pensions, plus unlimited determination, he overcame all the difficulties of shipping across the Channel, and spent a pleasant ten days touring the Swiss Alps.

So great was the publicity his feat received, and so many were the letters from similar sufferers whose "outings" had been confined to the daily trip to work, that he decided to form a touring association.

"I want a guarantee left with the wife before I start," he warned.

Nobody put up a guarantee, and the sixteen tons of nitrocellulose never started the rocket on its inter-stellar trip in 1926 ●

Planned at first on a local scale, it drew such a response that it had to be done on a national scale.

Today Denly, besides being a highly skilled hospital administrator, is chairman of the Invalid Tricycle Association which has 46 branches all over Britain, a membership of 3,000 (growing at the rate of 500 a year), its own quarterly magazine *The Magic Carpet*, and a full-time secretary and staff.

To the 3,000 full members who pay five shillings (75 cents) annual subscription "and no extras", the association has opened up a new life of activity and enjoyment.

Visits abroad, tours of Britain, rallies, and social events are now commonplace. Sports events have given a new zest to those who thought their sporting days were over when they became crippled. And the women members, about 40 per cent of the total, are as en-

Founded by Norman G. Browne in December of 1951. According to Harry Warner Jr., *"Vancouver got a local fan club for an odd reason. The unknown Norman G. Browne of that city had gone all the way to Nolacon,"* (the 1951 Worldcon in New Orleans) *"where he saw nobody he knew. This sense of being an outsider left him upon his return with a determination to become a real part of fandom. So he organized the Vancouver Science Fiction Society before he learned about the existence of CSFA"* – the latter being the Canadian Science Fiction Association, which the Vancouver SF Society joined in 1952 and was still affiliated with in early 1953, so we know the club lasted at least that long.

Here is what Browne himself wrote about the founding of the club, excerpted from his 'NORMAN G. BROWNE: FAN' article in VANATIONS #4:

*"I left the Nolacon with an overwhelming desire to become a fan.... My first act when I got home from the Nolacon was to organize a S-F club. This took considerable time due to the fact that I had no knowledge or experience in fandom or stf and knew nothing about organizing clubs. But by dint of sheer work and luck, the club was organized and had its first meeting in December of that same year (1951). At a later meeting I was installed as President of the club."*

*"As President of the Vancouver SF Society I pushed stf (Scientifiction) and my club as hard and strong as I could in my immediate area. Thus, from an utter unknown, I had made myself known and had created a sphere of influence to cover the Vancouver area. Gradually, I extended this sphere of influence to cover the whole of British Columbia."*

*"As President of this club, I became contact man with outside fandom. Through a prozine letter-column, I learned of the existence of the Canadian S-F Association and contacted them. Also, through the same medium, I learned of the existence of the Seattle SF Society 100 miles to the South of us and got in touch with them..."*

Browne informally called the club THE HIBITED MEN, presumably based on a short story of the same title by L. Sprague de Camp. Members met in Browne's home, and presumably at each other's as well. At one club meeting Browne and Curt Lang *"got into quite an argument over the relative merits of certain comic books. Curt has taken fencing lessons and I own two swords..."*

Because members referred to themselves as THE HIBITED MEN, the Vancouver SF Society newsletter was titled HIBITED HAPPENINGS. In explaining how the first nine months of his fan activity after Nolacon brought him to the point of feeling qualified enough to start work on his perzine VANATIONS, Browne wrote: *"I had spent*



*nine months studying and learning about fandom. I had learned about fan publishing and editing by studying fanzines and by editing a club newsletter....*" Thus he was both President AND Newsletter Editor for the Vancouver SF Society. However, after issue #3 of HIBITED HAPPENINGS he moved to Edmonton, and Frank Stephens took over as club newsletter editor.

What is clear about the Vancouver SF Society's involvement with VANATIONS is that the members of the club early on devoted their resources to helping Browne produce his first issue. They contributed art, articles, and a cover which was printed in Vancouver. The issue was actually mailed from Edmonton, where Browne had moved, in June of 1952. In #2 he commented: *"The planning for the first issue of VANATIONS covered a period of four months. The actual construction and work was done over a period of another three months."* This would appear to indicate he started planning the zine the very month he formed the club, and that fellow members contributed by April, if not earlier.

As to who belonged to the club, Norman G. Browne, Alfred W. Purdy (later a famous poet), Victor Samoila, Frank Stephens, Jim (James) Wills & Curt Lang are known members. Close reading of issues of VANATIONS suggests other prospects, some probable, others merely possible. Of the probable members I include 2 Vancouver fans in touch with Browne: Vic Miller & Bill Galliene, 3 Vancouver fans known across Canada: Alan Child, Gordon Peck & Shirley K. Peck, & 2 fans located outside Vancouver but who contributed to VANATIONS & may well have belonged to the club: Terence Barker (of Westview, B.C.), & L. Lockhart Layton (of Prince Rupert, B.C.).

Of other possible club members, I quote from the CANADIAN FAN DIRECTORY (donated to the B.C.S.F.A. archive by Chester D. Cuthbert) published by the Canadian Science Fiction Association in Fall of 1952. This includes the names & addresses of Vancouver fans who were members of the Vancouver SF Society, which was affiliated with the CSFA, single members of CSFA not involved with the VSFS, and well-known fans not members of either organization. Unfortunately, the directory does not indicate their status. Consequently, the following list merely consists of Vancouver fans contemporary with the VSFS, but since the basic source material used to compile the CANADIAN FAN DIRECTORY was undoubtedly the membership of the affiliated organizations, it is highly likely that most of the following persons named belonged to the Vancouver Science Fiction Society. Especially since Norman G. Browne himself was the primary source of information for the B.C. listings. He must have known, or known of, all of the following fans:

Allen Baratelli, M.S. Barnett, P.L. Booke, Robert H. Bowman, Edward Bowser, Mary Brock, E.J. Broome, H.O. Clarke, Yvonne Cooper, B. Creer, Roy Davidson, Peter Duncan, Donald Foster, Rose Frew, Gordon Futch, Gordon Gibson Jr., Terry Graham, Peter Grant, Gordon Hackett, Rose Hafley, Arthur Harris, Terence W. Hibbert, James Hill, James C. Hinds, Brian Hurst, George M. Kerr, C.R. Mackenzie, Don Maclaren, Claude Mayes, S. McIntyre, Tom McKitch, G. McPherson, Barry Nelson, J.W. O'Connell, Otto Pfeifer, Jim Polson, S.R. Price, Ralph Redden, Gordon W. Rix, Eric Rogerson, Tom Rosenberg, Helen Smith, Charles Stephens, George Stephens, Peter Whalley, R. White, & Bob Wilson.

(Note; the names I listed as 'known' & 'probable' members of the VSFS are also listed in the CANADIAN FAN DIRECTORY, with the exceptions of Victor Samoila & Shirley K. Peck.)

In sum, I have listed 60 fans who, if not all members of the VSFS, were known active fans, most of them from Vancouver. I haven't even mentioned the fans living in Victoria, Squamish, Penticton, Kelowna & elsewhere in B. C., some of whom may also have been members, given Browne's statement he "extended this sphere of influence to cover the whole of British Columbia." From the numbers it appears Science Fiction fandom was alive and thriving in B.C. in 1952!

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## **A LOOK BACK AT NORMAN G. BROWNE THE FOUNDER OF THE VANCOUVER SF SOCIETY**

(Source: The Canfancylopedia)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

One of the most prominent Canadian fans of the first half of the 1950s.

In 1951, at the age of 18, having been advised by Ted Sturgeon to do so, he attended Nolocon, the 9th World Convention held in New Orleans. He had hitchhiked to the con, a feat which impressed everyone greatly. As Harry B. Moore, Chairman of Nolacon put it: *"It is an exceedingly rare thing to find a fan with guts, self-respect, tenacity, responsibility, dependability, or honour. Your feat of hitchhiking... stands out astonishingly amidst such a morass of pseudo-persons..."* (It's a wonder the rest of the congoers didn't take this as an insult!)

Feted & celebrated beyond all reasonable expectations, Browne later wrote: *"For 5 years I had read STF, but had no knowledge that fandom existed, and had never met*

*anyone who even read STF. On Aug 31st at 3:00 PM, 1951, I walked into the lobby of the St. Charles hotel in New Orleans and met my first fan. I consider that date & time as my entrance into fandom."*

*All the same, he experienced some difficulty: "At the Nolacon, I was an outsider, an onlooker; I knew nobody and nothing. I felt strangely set apart from these people who were fans. They talked and acted beyond the powers of my comprehension and understanding. They talked about people, places, and events of which I had no knowledge. To me they seemed to be talking on a higher plane; a plane far, far beyond my reach. Knowing so much about what they discussed, they seemed to be combining telepathy and speech in their conversation. It was interesting -- in a tantalizing sort of way."*

*"I left the Nolacon with an overwhelming desire to become a fan; to become one of them, to talk with them in their own language, to understand what they understood, to enjoy what they enjoyed."*

As soon as he returned to Vancouver, B.C., he feverishly set about single-handedly creating a club, formally titled "The Vancouver SF Society" (tho often referred to as "The Hibited Men"). This was in existence by December of 1951. It was the first organized fandom on the West coast of Canada. Browne served as its first President & also its first clubzine editor. He made sure it affiliated with the Canadian SF Association. There were at least a dozen members, maybe more.

Then by summer of 1952 he had moved to Edmonton, Alberta. From there he produced 6 issues of his well-regarded fanzine VANATIONS (Jun 1952 to Jul 1953). Highlights included articles by Robert Bloch, Harlan Ellison, & Marion Zimmer Bradley. VANATIONS was noted for Browne's innovative PAR system of payment.

The Fall 1952 Fan Directory of the Canadian Science Fiction Association listed Browne at his Edmonton address.

While in Edmonton, sometime in 1953, he co-edited (with 'Art Wesley', actually Dean Grennell, of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin) a one-shot titled FILLER, consisting of 527 numbered "filler" items, most of them interlineations, the idea being that faneds, in order to save space, would type in the appropriate number and leave it to the readers to look up the actual "filler" in FILLER. This concept proved very popular.

In May 1953 he attended HEcon (Harlan Ellison con) in the Cleveland home of Harlan Ellison, a gathering whose purpose was to establish 7th Fandom.

I do not know if Browne was part of the Seventh Fandomite contingent invading the fourth Midwestcon where Seventh Fandom (& the red birdbath) was first unveiled to a disbelieving fannish world, but Browne did attend Philcon II, the 11th Worldcon, held in Philadelphia in Sept 1953. There he was photographed with Harlan Ellison, a drawing based on this photo appearing in CANADIAN FANDOM #19 (Dec 1953). No doubt he took part in any & all merry pranks, as he was, according to Rich Brown, “one of the leading lights of Seventh Fandom.”

However, Browne soon got on Ellison’s nerves. While Ellison took Seventh Fandom somewhat seriously, believing it had great potential, Browne seems to have been possessed by a crusading zeal which Ellison found too confrontational (hard to believe, given Ellison’s reputation, but apparently true). That Browne wanted the 7th Fandomites to deify Dean Grennell was harmless enough, but his plot to infiltrate FAPA with 7th Fandomites to the point of taking over through sheer numbers struck Ellison as likely to give 7th Fandom a bad reputation. Harlan also didn’t like some of the 7th Fandom broadsheets Browne had written & distributed. At some point, in reaction to all the flak he was getting, Browne quit the movement in anger.

By December 1953 Browne had moved to Wilson Heights in or near Toronto, Ontario. Throughout 1954 he remained active, writing for CANADIAN FANDOM, attempting to put out a second issue of FILLER, and contributing his FAPazine DAMN! to FAPA, where he got into a bit of trouble regarding his CONCUPISCENT TALES/PAPA hoax. He was a member of FAPA from August 1953 to February 1956.

Then Browne dropped off the fandom map, apparently gafiated. I can find no references to him subsequent to 1956.

A key to the reasons for his gafiation may possibly be found in some comments he made in VANATIONS #4 (Feb 1953):

*“With the issuance of VANATIONS, I pushed myself considerably higher up the ladder of fandom and at the same time forced the fact of my existence before a considerable number of fans, I had arrived.”*

*“My original ambition was to become a fan—a relatively simple goal. But, although that ambition has been realized, my final ambition has not. For as I progressed into fandom, as I studied & learned, as I matured, my final goal raised accordingly.”*

*“In my first year I progressed from a non-fan to a fringe-fan, to a neophan, & finally to a master-fan. Who knows how far I will go in my second year? Would anyone deny me the ambition of becoming a BNF or a super-fan?”*

Browne would appear to have possessed a healthy dose of ego. Perhaps he did not realize that the status of BNF is an accolade, & not just some sort of prize you reach out & grab. It may be significant that one of his loccers in the same issue chided him, saying: *"You say your interest in STF is 10%, and your interest in fandom is 90%. Translation: interest in STF & fandom 10%, interest in egoboo 90%."*

It may be that Browne ultimately was bitterly disappointed that his long-term effort "to force the fact" of his existence generated resistance & negative reaction, & so he decided to chuck it in.

Any & all info regarding Norman G. Browne is eagerly sought.

Addendum: In 2005 I was contacted by Norman's sister Wenda. She informed me Norman had continued to live in Toronto, editing some community newspapers and a weekly newspaper. Eventually he sank into poverty. She recalls seeing a half-page article about him in the Edmonton Journal (perhaps it was syndicated Canada wide? Or was he now in Edmonton?) in which he revealed how he managed to live on just \$10.00 a day. (Dire necessity or lifestyle choice?) The last time she saw him, in Toronto circa 1990, he had been unemployed for quite some time. She suspects he has since passed away.

Early BC fandom seems to be unlucky. The identity of the Vancouver fan who in 1936 produced THE CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION FAN, Canada's FIRST Science Fiction fanzine, remains unknown. Nils Helmer Frome of Fraser Mills who produced Canada's second SF fanzine SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES in early 1937, died penniless in Wales in 1962. And now it seems that Norman's youthful enthusiasm and promise just faded away as time went on, as happens to so many of us fans.

But I will let Wenda have the last word:

*"I do know that the Vancouver club was the best of all his endeavours. He was so happy then and his mind was so active and imaginative. He knew so many people and so many knew him or of him...."*

**(Sources: Norman G. Browne, Dick Eney, Harry Warner Jr. & Richard Brown.)**

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# A LOOK BACK AT ZORYANY SHLYAH SPEAKS!

(Published in BCSFAzine #210 November 1991)

*By Alexander Vasilkovsky*

(Reprinted in solidarity with the Ukrainians today resisting the Russian Invasion)

From: Zoryany Shlyah SF Club  
Alexander V. Vasilkovsky  
8 Zankovetskaya St., Apt. 13  
252001, Kiev-1, Ukraine, USSR  
16<sup>th</sup> August, 1990

Dear Graeme, Greetings,

Thank you for your letter of June 11 and especially for books and fanzines. I received them after more than 2 months in transit. The box was somewhat damaged, but all its contents were intact. As far as I know, it's safe now to send anything here from the Western countries. All will arrive OK. But it's better to send letters separately from the books, so they will arrive sooner. A letter from Canada or USA can be in transit to Kiev for 3 or 4 weeks.

I looked thru the fanzines and found them excellent. I read some articles and book reviews. Very good quality of criticism for a fanzine. I've met some fanzines before, but BCSFAzine is the best of what I've seen. Only cover art (I'm sorry) might be better. And our club can help you to improve it. Denis Martynets, a member of our club, recently won fandom Directory prize for his graphics. He's one of the best fan artists in Kiev, maybe the best, because the previous best is now a professional. Our yet-to-be-born clubzine will, of course, use some of his art. And as far as I know, he'll agree to send some of his works to you. And he's also an excellent sculptor. His main subject in sculpture are monsters of all kinds. He started with dinosaurs and Chinese dragons. Then he began to create his own monsters and multifigure compositions. I think, an article about his art will be published in our zine.

As for the works of our members, it's hard to say can we be useful for your club. You see, our fan writers write in Ukrainian or Russian. And our English is enough to read SF books as well as any fiction, but it's not enough to translate fiction into English. Some of us have tried to translate their stories into English. The result was horrible. To translate works of fiction into English one can think in English and have an enormous active vocabulary. But where can we get that active vocabulary almost not having oral practice?

I've already passed your zines to Boris Sidyuk who is an editor of our clubzine. He'll write you about his opinion of BCSFAzine in details.

What else can I write you about our club members and their opinions on the questions you've asked? First of all I have to say that almost all the club members are now on their vacations, so 2 weeks ago we had to put off all the activities until September. And about mission to Mars. Now I'm reading July '91 issue of OMNI where Mars is the main subject. Of course, this mission has to be international and not because of the prestige of being the first. Working on such big, expensive and complicated project all participating nations had better understand each other and they will be able to feel themselves as the parts of united mankind. I think, only mankind, not the single states, will be able to come out into outer space. And such project as the international mission to Mars is a good step toward that great goal.

All the club members have their own interests, but my<sup>7</sup> personal interests in SF are the books and bibliography. Others prefer to write their own SF and try to publish it. Some of us have published several stories each. But there's no organization like SFWA here, and the Writer's Union (which has SF section) is very conservative and fearful monster very far from the problems of SF and SF writers. So young SF authors do not want to join it. I think in the coming years an organization for SF professionals will be created here, but it depends only on activity of those professionals, not fans.

And at last about the books. Those books were really great. I understand, you're proud that William Gibson, one of the BCSFA, have reached the top of SF. By the way, if you'd like to send us some books, please, let there be another books by Gibson, and let at least one of them be signed.

Great thanks for BLADE RUNNER as well. I've not seen the film yet, but there are a lot of its copies in Kiev. I'd like to read the book first. For the same reason I've not seen Dune. I have the book, but no time to read it among other books.

As for the third book you sent me, I understand that it is humorous SF and the first person in the club who will read it will be one of those who like to read funny SF. There are some of them among us. You see, in 1986, just after the Chernobyl disaster, Kiev became "a capital of humour" in the USSR. It seemed as if a volcano of black humour began to erupt in Kiev. The eruption have long ago stopped, but the taste to black humour remains among the Kiev inhabitants. But all humour, not only black, is welcome.

About films. You see, all films on video tape in the USSR are pirate copies. And

the usual delay between the appearance of a film in the USA and its appearance here with parallel Russian text is almost two years. The copies of more recent films without Russian text are rare, having almost no commercial among most p[people (who doesn't know English). So, the most recent films we have here are BIG, BEETLEJUICE, ALIEN NATION, THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK and HARD TO BE A GOD. The title of the last one may differ in the English version. It is the film version of the famous Strugatsky brothers' novel of German/Soviet co-production. The film was made originally in English so you may have already seen it.

As for the books you may send us, we have already compiled the list of the books we need at the first place. But in my first letter I've written that you may send the books of your own choice. So let them be of your own choice. But, you see, we can get the books by the most popular writers in some or other way. But there are some special writers who write excellent SF, but their style and/or language is somewhat complicated, so their works are not so easy to read to a common reader. So they are less popular in spite of quality of their works. And it is almost unreal to get their books here. So sooner or later sending us the books, please, put your attention on such names as Lewis Shiner, Rudy Rucker, Ian McDonald, Lucius Shephard. You may continue the list.

Well, maybe that's all for now. Thank you for your writing and especially for the books and zines and I hope to hear from you again. Boris will also write you about BCSFAzine and about our club activities.

Best wishes to all, Alexander

#### THE GOD-EDITOR REPLIES:

I am greatly relieved that the package of books and zines did in fact arrive. I now look forward to regular contact between our two clubs. In your first letter you stated your planned Clubzine will be in English. If that is so, we are eager to receive it once you begin publication. We shall continue to send you every issue of BCSFAzine. Letters from yourself, Boris, and any other members of your club will also be greatly appreciated. At the very least, I will include excerpts from such letters in BCSFAzine (if I have not room to run them in full) so that the views and opinions of your members will be read by all those who receive our zine. I hope this will stimulate others to write to you.

In the near future I will send you a letter, and by separate mail, the following books:

- 1) HYPERION – by Dan Simmons.
- 2) THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE – by Philip K. Dick.
- 3) A CASE OF CONSCIENCE – by James Blish.

I encourage BCSFAns to send additional books, but ask that they let me know which titles have been sent so I can keep a record other people can consult before sending anything and in this way prevent duplications.

I am extremely pleased to have heard from you and am quite delighted at the prospect of continued communication.

– The Humble God-Editor

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## THE ETHER PATROL VS. THE GOD-EDITOR

(Published in BCSFAzine #245 October 1993)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

8 SEPTEMBER 1993

*Adam Charlesworth was kind enough to invite me to appear on Ether Patrol to speak about the future of BCSFA. The building housing the Co-op radio facilities is located in Gastown. To enter you have to walk through Pigeon Park (a tiny corner park with sufficient drug dealers, drunks and deadbeats to raise my level of paranoia higher than Hunter S. Thompson's) and stand nervously in front of a battered metal door ringing a buzzer and shouting "Ether Patrol! Ether Patrol!" Once let in, you ascend an incredibly steep spiral staircase to a warren of small rooms crammed with old furniture, ancient electronics, and numerous bookcases overburdened with a fantastic record collection. Taking care not to step on the scurrying mice, you are led along the hall to a corner studio with a comfy couch, more records, a table with headsets and microphones, and a breath-taking view of Pigeon Park.*

*All volunteer, Adam and his crew more than make up for limited equipment with unlimited enthusiasm, sound effects, musical bits, news items, off-the-cuff quips and sheer zaniness, albeit SF oriented. One show might feature an interview with the likes of Spider Robinson or Don. H. DeBrandt, movie reviews, SF plays, both old radio shows and live on-the-air drama (such as Adam's current SF playlet series "The Sons of Kirk!") or anything you care to suggest! Phone-in callers are keenly sought after.*

*Here, for your edification, is the bulk of the interview. As I transcribed it, I was horrified to discover that I spoke in run-on sentences! Rather than try to “tidy” things up, I’ve left the dialogue intact so you can capture the flavour of it.*

Interviewer: ADAM CHARLESWORTH

Guest: R. GRAEME CAMERON

Director: STEWART

Tech: PURPLE

OPENING BANTER (Several minutes worth.)

ADAM: Well, uh, to each their own, I can’t stand poparts, I find them just awful. Now, R. Graeme Cameron, you’re going to say hello to the people out there in radio land?

GRAEME: Well, greetings.

ADAM: There he is.

GRAEME: As I understand it, we’re going to talk about the future of our collapse.

ADAM: Right, the future of the collapse of Science Fiction. Well, Science Fiction fandom in British Columbia facing at the moment a crux... it’s come to the point where, what they’ve been doing for the past few years as Science Fiction fans has been putting on a convention more or less, that’s all they’ve been doing, as a club activity, and the convention is VCON, and uh, throughout the years, the last few years we’ve been getting fewer and fewer people going and it’s been burning out more and more people who’ve been putting on the convention. Um, begging the question of the Science Fiction club, um, you know, chicken or the egg, what are we about here? Are we about putting on the club? Or putting on the convention? Or are we about being a Science Fiction club and doing Science Fiction club activities? And the questions are being addressed, what exactly are Science Fiction club activities? And should we stop putting on this convention, and this is where R. Graeme Cameron comes in.

GRAEME: Well, okay, first I should mention that the club dates back quite a way, we were founded in 1970 as an offshoot of the UBC club and one of the first things we did was hold “The First Annual Science Fiction Convention”—as it was called then—in 1971, which lost money. And another one in 1972, which lost money. But I think we made a profit with the third one in 1974. And we’ve had our ups and downs

in terms of profits, but generally speaking VCON has always been quite successful except that we did lose quite a bit of money with our Westercon/VCON joint venture, and that, uh...

ADAM: That was just a few years ago, wasn't it? 1991?

GRAEME: Yeah, I think so, that was VCON 19 as well as Westercon 44 and consequently a lot of what we had to do with the club was of course to raise funds to pay off the debts. And I think that created a mood in the club that was less than a party atmosphere, you might say. We've since had two successful conventions, 19.5 and the last one, VCON 20 was a lot of fun, and full marks to Steve Forty for running it. So, that was good, but in terms of what the club actually does with the people in the club right now, we're looking for new activities that will regenerate us as fans and... you see, when we went into Westercon we had a backup of several thousand dollars we had made in profits from previous conventions, now we don't have that luxury, and so every convention is a potential risk because we don't have the money for up-front purposes or for paying debts and, what we're hoping to do now is break VCON down and spread it out over the course of the year in a series of events that won't burn out a lot of people at the same time because, particular people have particular interests, and if a few people would get together with the support of the club to work on a particular item, uh, a small, well, for example we're contemplating a gallery showing of Science Fiction art and making that a special media event and getting the general public involved. We think that could be fun. Uhmmm, a small relaxicon, for example, just a sort of partycon... uhmmm, club events that don't take the entire resources of the club all at once and lead to a burn-out that lasts for the rest of the year.

ADAM: Now, up to this point, how do you get new members into the club? I mean, what has been happening? Do people who go to the conventions then decide they want to become part of the club? Conventions are just one point in the year, and then the club has regular meetings, once a month?

GRAEME: We have, uh, an official meeting once a month, and then we have a weekly social gathering called a FRED—Forget Reality, Everybody Drink—which is just a social...

PURPLE: (Snickers.)

GRAEME: Well, that's the polite version. It's uh, uh, it's not really a club function in that you don't have to belong to the club to show up, but it is a place where people



get together and meet, and we get some new people out of that. We always make a drive for getting people at VCON. We usually get a dozen or so. And the trick of course is to keep people. Our current membership is about average. We have about 110 people right now. But to keep people involved... Now we have a writers group which is going gung ho, it's quite full, people like Don DeBrandt, uh, have come out of it. His novel THE QUICKSILVER SCREEN was first workshopped through our writers group, for example. Uh, let's see, there are some people involved whose names escape me at the moment because this is live radio. Uh, Lisa Cohen, for example, has published some short stories she's worked through the group.

ADAM: Is Barbara Delaplace involved with that workshop?

GRAEME: I don't know. I don't know because I haven't myself been involved with the workshop for a couple of years now because I've been concentrating on BCSFAzine rather than uh, the fiction writing I'm supposed to be doing to establish myself as a Pro, uh, so the workshop is quite successful, and BCSFAzine itself, is successful I think, in that it gets writings from people in the group. But it's essentially a passive activity of course.

ADAM: What do you think, uh, is fandom worth saving? What is it about Science Fiction fandom that makes it worthwhile? If someone is listening out there, is listening to the radio show who's never actually considered himself a science fiction fan in that he has never been to a fannish event, what makes fandom good?

GRAEME: I think the main thing—course, you have to remember my age, I was a kid growing up in the fifties and sixties, to have people you can talk to seriously about Science Fiction and not be laughed at was certainly a major factor in fandom when I first approached it. I suddenly realized I could talk about comparing, uh, I don't know, Edgar Rice Burroughs with Ralph Milne Farley and people not go blank, or, or, you know, "Why on Earth are you wasting time on that stuff?" It's a place where uh, a nice thing about Science Fiction fans is that they're usually not interested in just science fiction but in darn near everything, so that in terms of conversational opportunities, meeting with fans can be a lot of fun. Almost any interest you have you're bound to find somebody willing to talk about it. Ummm, so the social aspect, I think, is very important.

ADAM: I would agree, but, okay now, I'm going to interject and play devil's advocate here... I don't see British Columbia science fiction fannish societies being a forum for what you just said, as a thing that makes fandom important. I see VCON as a party, and, uhm, FRED, frankly speaking, is not a place to go and talk about science fiction, it's a place to go and talk about drinking.

GRAEME: Well, uh heh, I'm a non-drinker myself, uh, I nevertheless go to FRED and have some coke or coffee or something, and I talk, uh, I obviously don't talk about drinking, there's a limited number of people willing to listen to me talk about drinking coffee.

ADAM: (Snickers.)

GRAEME: Ummm, usually we talk, when I think about it, my own interests are B movies, or science fiction history, or the early days of science fiction, or the space program and the current state of disrepair it's in, things that still mean things to me. We also get Star Trek club people showing up, for example. It's not just our own club, so there's interaction between people from different clubs, but I agree it is not necessarily about science fiction unless you push for it.

ADAM: Okay, I'm going to remind people that we are accepting phone calls. The number is \_\_\_-\_\_\_, that's \_\_\_-\_\_\_, if anyone has a call for R. Graeme Cameron or myself about science fiction fandom and what they think about it, if any of you would like to call in at any time, I would appreciate it. It's always embarrassing if you say calling and no one calls in, it's like me jumping up after the show and no one calls in...

GRAEME: Well, that's when you say that there are so many people calling in that the lines are completely jammed, and you can't operate the equipment.

ADAM: That's right. A technical error. We're talking before about something and I wanted to jump in again but I stopped and then Stewart waved his phone at me and I can't get my train of thought, still boarding at the station it seems...

GRAEME: Well, perhaps I can say that I am one of a group of people in the club who want to try and organise more science fiction events, the science fiction element...

ADAM: My dream... I grew up in Edmonton, and went to the Science Fiction club there, and the club there died after, well, mainly the people there moved to Vancouver and didn't get involved in the club here, but it was, ummm, a weekly meeting in the centre of the city at the university, and it was free to go to and to talk and they got about 35 to 40 people solidly every week talking about science fiction, and, uh, it was fabulous. I mean, it was... you could go and talk, it was a social club, you were friends, you did things, and at the same time you could exchange ideas and thoughts and talks, and that's where writers' groups got together and did their work,

and other people... I was involved with a film and amateur video society who came in and wanted to meet all those weirdo people and get their nifty ideas.

GRAEME: Well, that's what we hope to promote, that kind of thing.

ADAM: Now that's the kind of thing that I think is necessary, and my dream, what the British Columbia Science Fiction needs is a place to meet, uh, a solid place to meet every week, somewhere where people can get to, uhmm, you know, downtown, the centre of the city in Vancouver, not at UBC, you know, at the far end, not in Port Moody or Port Coquitlam, or any place like that.

GRAEME: Well, of course, we're not as wealthy—to put it mildly—as, say, the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society who actually own their own clubhouse...

ADAM: Ah, they're trying to sell it...

GRAEME: Well, that's true. Ah, but we... We've always faced the problem of having a place to meet, uh, generally speaking our meetings are on a rotating basis at various member's homes. And of course...

ADAM: That's very intimidating for new members.

GRAEME: I agree.

ADAM: You agree? If people are interested, you know, and I'm saying come to so and so's house I immediately feel this awesome kind of... I'm scared... I don't want to go there. Everyone obviously knows these people except me.

GRAEME: Well, when I first joined in 1971 I had the same feelings, I felt out of place, uh, partly because I wasn't reading science fiction at the time, because I didn't like the New Wave, and thought of myself as a bit of a hypocrite for even showing up, but, uh, you have to persevere with what facilities are available. We would love a permanent meeting place of some kind or an arrangement that would allow us a useful, uh, even a room this size would be terrific. In fact, there must be times when you don't use this room, Adam, uh...

ADAM: (Laughing) No way, Graeme. Back off! Radio station alert! Radio station alert! We're being suborned here. Now let's get... I'm going to mention it, the telephone number for people to phone in is \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_, now please call in right now and uh, ask us a question. Stew? Stew has something to say.

STEWART: Well, I was just going to say, you're sounding awfully fawning there...

ADAM: Oh...

STEWART: Don't make people feel like, you know, you're forcing them to call.

ADAM: Okay, you WANT to call in. You want to call \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_.

GRAEME: Well, they do get a prize of course, guaranteed immortality, if they phone in.

PURPLE: (Mechanical laughter from recorder.)

ADAM: Oh, that's right. I'd like to mention also at this time that Purple is with us in the studio with his sampler. I don't know whose laugh that was. Probably mine.

PURPLE: I'm going through the change of voice again. It's this cold...

ADAM: It's a late adolescence for Purple, uh...

GRAEME: Quite common for Martians.

ADAM: His voice is breaking.

PURPLE: This is a B movie itself, isn't it?

ADAM: (Laughs) We are planning on having, uh, uh, Graeme back on the show because he's a B movie expert. Maybe we should mention at this time that if anyone has a question about any B movie ever made...

GRAEME: If you haven't seen THE GIANT CLAW, you haven't lived.

PURPLE: (Laughs)

ADAM: You can call in with a question for R. Graeme Cameron about any B movie ever made...

STEWART: What about ROBOT MONSTER?

GRAEME: That's just about my favourite one, I think.

ADAM: Okay!

STEWART: Or TOBOR THE GREAT?

ADAM: TOBOR THE GREAT. ROBOT MONSTER. Give us a brief sample of this, this is what you can learn by coming to a science fiction club meeting...

GRAEME: Well, of course, the monster in ROBOT MONSTER was supposed to be a robot, but it was in actual fact George Barrows—who weighed about 300 pounds—wearing a gorilla costume, uh, and a fish bowl with a cloth over his face, with TV antennae. And the reason they chose this was because he was the only one who could provide a gorilla costume for about fifteen dollars a day rental and was willing to wear it as well.

ADAM: Uh, oh, we got a call, so let's go to the phone there on line one.

FIRST CALLER: Hello. Love your show.

ADAM: Oh, you love our show?

FIRST CALLER: It's great.

ADAM: You have a question tonight?

FIRST CALLER: Well, yeah, uh, I'd like to ask you, uhmm, what alternatives are there for B.C. fans?

ADAM: Alternatives to BCSFA, the fan club? Well, that's a very good question. Although...

GRAEME: Plug the opposition.

ADAM: Ahuh, well, BCSFAzine, or, the BCSFA club at the moment is suffering, uh...

GRAEME: I wouldn't say suffering.

ADAM: Well...

GRAEME: Resting on our laurels a little.

ADAM: On its heels a bit. A lot of other clubs are doing very, very well. There are things like Star Trek clubs, constant media input is boosting specific clubs quite a lot, but the traditional, er, the traditional literary clubs of science fiction, or the clubs that were built around reading and science fiction...

GRAEME: Well, you might say that the ones that are doing really well are aimed at specific, very tightly focused concepts like Star Trek, or Dr. Who. Uh, our club, of course, is general interest science fiction and there's always something nebulous about it. It is to encompass everything, but how to create a sense of purpose, and how to create a sense of... well, being, when you are trying to incorporate everything about science fiction, is an ongoing problem. Always has been.

ADAM: Well, there are these alternatives, if you're interested in science fictional particular aspect, like Star Trek, or what else is there? Time Trax, uh...

GRAEME: Uh, let's see. There's the Starwolves, who are a registered society, they raise money for charity, they are a security group basically for conventions, a roving security group, they're organizing a reading series at the Planetarium, people like Spider Robinson, Eileen Kernaghan, you might want to check that out.

ADAM: Okay, thanks for calling.

STEWART: I think there's other alternatives as well, uh, things like bulletin boards, for people who are computer users, they're taking a big chunk out, and then there's things like—I don't want to toot my own horn—but the Ether Patrol where every week they can hear something science fiction, they don't have to leave their house. A lot of people are really, they're the TV generation, they stay home. Listen, stuff like that.

GRAEME: I'd like to plug the fact that Ether Patrol was originally started by people in BCSFA, Jo-Anne McBride, Evelyn Beheshti...

STEWART: Absolutely. Back in 1984.

ADAM: A long time ago, but definitely science fiction. This is what can happen from a science fiction club, and that's why we're concerned, or at least I'm concerned, about seeing the club at this crisis point, where they're deciding what to do. And I'd like to see them... oh, we have another call. We want to go right to that because we are running out of time here. Hello, you are on the air.



SECOND CALLER: I just have one question. Is science fiction fandom actually dying in B.C.?

GRAEME: Uh, well, it's... No. I don't think so, in the sense that it has always been dying. Uh, science fiction fandom is something separate from science fiction enthusiasts, uh, science fiction enthusiasts are the people who buy the thousands and thousands of books and go to the movies on mass and so forth, fans have always tended to be separate from that. Sometimes deliberately too much so. More emphasis on being a fan rather than on science fiction. Ummm, a happy medium, of course, is what is desired. Uh, fandom used to be a form of escapism. Well, I was telling you earlier that the term "gafiate," which now means "to get away from it all," to get away from fandom, originally meant in the early days to get away from mundania and join fandom. For example, "The Royal and Benevolent Order of Gafiates" which dates from 1949. But escapism today exists in so many forms, video games, computer games, uh, the role-playing societies...

ADAM: That's right.

GRAEME: So, there are many more options. The question of... is fandom dying? Or is it just that there's always a certain number of people who are attracted to general interest science fiction and it always remains the same number. Uh, that's a question. I don't actually know if it is dying.

ADAM: So, there you go. We think it is. But thank you for calling in. Do you have any other questions?

SECOND CALLER: No. Thanks.

ADAM: Okay. What a nice person to phone in. It's nice they call in. Not that I'm fawning over them or anything like that.

STEWART: You are, but that's all right.

PURPLE: Heavens, no.

STEWART: We want you to be you.

ADAM: Okay, that's right. I'm a fawner. I love you guys for calling in. I invite them over for dinner, you know. I do everything I can.

GRAEME: Say, BCSFA is going merrily its own way, on its own momentum, what

we're trying to do is expand in new directions and accomplish more things.

ADAM: Okay, we have another call here. We'll try that one out. Hello, you are on the air.

THIRD CALLER: Hi there, there are just a couple of other things, or fan-type activities, you can do. One of them is the science fiction club at the university.

ADAM: That's right.

THIRD CALLER: The university of British Columbia, and another place is science fiction writers' groups for people who are interested, and also there's kind of an informal community of people who drop in and talk about science fiction as they catch one another at White Dwarf book store.

ADAM: Um, that's right. There's a bulletin board at White Dwarf Books where often people put up notices and, uhm, and talk to each other that way. In fact, I think it's a good point to mention that on Genie and all these networks how they have huge rooms where people get together and talk specifically about science fiction. I think science fiction fans don't need to meet face to face anymore, they seem to be meeting on these big link network bulletin boards.

GRAEME: Although, that does lead to the traditional concept that fans are not very good at relating socially with other human beings. I certainly find meeting people and looking them in the eye and talking to them is one of the joys.

Adam: Well, a Joy, yes, and potentially you get to marry them and things...

GRAEME: Yes. Yes.

ADAM: Well, thank you everyone for calling in, and probably we ran a little overtime already, and, uhmm, well, Stew says...

STEWART: Yeah, yeah, but it's a good show.

ADAM: So, uhmm, maybe we should give one last chance to anyone who wants to call in... you have like seconds to call in with a final question for R. Graeme Cameron about science fiction fandom, we have him in the studio.

GRAEME: Throw in a piece of trivia here?

ADAM: Okay.

GRAEME: BCSFAzine was named BCSFAzine by William Gibson back when he was a fan and a member of our club.

ADAM: That's right. He used to do doodles for it.

GRAEME: Yep. Artwork. Covers. Articles. Yep.

ADAM: Yeah. Wow! Anyway, you missed your chance there to talk to Graeme, and now we go on to the rest of the show, all of seven minutes left of it...

PURPLE: Before we go on here there's... I was just wondering something. This is just, you know, something that's on my mind, but it fits into the wonder of the week.

ADAM: Okay.

PURPLE: You know this chaos theory thing? Butterfly beats its wing and you've got a storm in South Africa or something like that, right? You've heard this?

ADAM: Yes. Confucius.

PURPLE: Now what really gets me about that is that, I mean, I don't know which side of the fence to stand on, but if that were true, then what the heck happens when all these people have colds and stuff like that and begin sneezing?

GRAEME: Entire universes come to an end.

PURPLE: I mean, I mean, would that really be happening? I mean, where does all this... okay, if this is so destructive where do we get something positive out of that, where do we get something like somebody sneezes and the universe is created, or somebody breaks wind and, like, another god is born, or something. Well, that, I wondered about that.

ADAM: Well, that's interesting to wonder about. Remember, Athena did jump out of Zeus's head. That was an example of how a headache can bring about a new god, uh...

GRAEME: But for people who are on power trips but are unlikely to become Emperor of Canada, just the thought that by tapping the table with your fingers you can destroy entire universes is, I think, very good therapy.

STEWART: I better watch what I sample. Anyway, there's more of The Ether Patrol after this.

VARIOUS PROMOS.

PROMO: "This is Spider Robinson." "And Jeanne Robinson." "And you're listening to Ether Patrol. And in the immortal words of Hunter S. Thompson, 'ether-heads are the lowest of all.'"

STEWART: I love that one.

ASSORTED BANTER & NEWS & RUMOURS.

God-Ed notes: Back in 1993, the year of the interview, you could catch Ether Patrol every Wednesday Night 9:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Co-Op Radio 102.7 FM. About 5 or 6 years ago I was a guest again, along with Stan G. Hyde, Eric Chu, and phone-ins Spider Robinson and Robert J. Sawyer. I have no idea if Ether Patrol still exists.

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## **JUST IMAGINE – 1930 – MOVIE REVIEW**

(Previously published in BCSFazine #206 July 1990)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

Just imagine there exists a 1930 film portraying the future world of 1980, a future where people no longer have names, but have numbers instead, like J21, LN18, etc. In this film, the state decrees who marries whom, according to its assessment of the relative worth of individuals, consequently the plot revolves around true love forbidden by the state (shades of 1984! Premonitions of 1984!—and don't forget, 1984 was written over 20 years later). In the film a man is rejected by the state as a poor choice for a particular woman, a stolid good citizen being preferred. At first the man contemplates suicide, but by a miracle is given a chance to prove himself first among equals by piloting the first rocketship to Mars! There he discovers a bizarrely alien yet human civilization. And just imagine the film making extravagant use of special effects, including an elaborate model of a futuristic New York city which costs \$250,000 to make (a fortune in 1930). Doesn't it sound like a classic masterpiece of filmmaking? Wouldn't you KILL to see it?

There IS such a film. It's called JUST IMAGINE.

I've wanted to see it for decades. Imagine, just imagine my delight when Al Betz chose to include it in the video program at VCON 18. I had to work that Saturday but managed to arrive just in time to sit down during the opening credits. Imagine me settling back to enjoy this grim spectacle of one man's frantic search for...

Well, actually it's a musical comedy.

Okay, no problem. No doubt it's a sophisticated (but grim) musical satire warning of the horrors of a future age of technological triumph, an intelligent American response to METROPOLIS, more realistic, yet enlivened with subtle humour...

Well, actually it's a sequel of sorts to the hit 1929 musical SUNNYSIDE UP, except that JUST IMAGINE bombed at the box office.

Still, no doubt it's the intellectual thrill of a lifetime, too sophisticated for its day, a masterful film well worth all those years I've waited and waited...

No, it's a mindbogglingly inept paean to vaudeville, alcoholism, the last gasp of low-IQ burlesque, and nothing less than a cacophony of conflicting musical styles. In short, the tears began cascading down my cheeks within nano-seconds of the film beginning. Do you know how hard it is to find a WONDERFULLY BAD FILM? This is the find of a LIFETIME! It's excruciatingly awful! The perfect film! Thank Ghu I lived long enough to see it!

How to describe it? Well, let's start with the burlesque and the alcoholism.

The subplot has to do with an "ordinary" man the contemporary audience was supposed to identify with (but only if they're sub-morons). Having been struck dead by a golf ball in 1930, he's brought back to life in 1980. The laboratory is quite beautiful, full of giant, fluid-filled vacuum tubes, monstrous electric gizmos and such, and the scene has a certain chilling mood to it. The mad scientist responsible for bringing the poor fellow back to life did it only to prove it could be done. Having done it, he has no further use for the subject of the experiment. When the latter complains, the scientist replies, "Well, we can always kill you," or words to that effect. Fortunately, the hero, J21, and his party-animal buddy RT42, decide to look after the 1930 goofball, partly out of pity, but mainly for a lark. It seems people in 1980 are not big on altruism.

Anyway, Mr. 1930 is assigned the name "Single-0" and the role of eternal-idiot-sidekick for the remainder of the film. Single-) is played by a burlesque comedian by the name of EL BRENDDEL (I kid you not) whose main claim to fame is "the happy

malapropic Swede” persona. In this future all food consists of pills, and all “drink” consists of pills. Single-0 rapidly acquires bottles of pills for every pocket and remains forever after well and fairly soused. This is meant to be hilarious. Other characters are happy to follow his example.

The numerous jokes hinging on references to the Volstead act put everything into perspective. Prohibition began in 1920. It was still in effect in 1930, though to disastrous effect. Insurance companies revealed in 1930 that the death-by-alcoholism rate had increased 600% since prohibition had been introduced. This was a factor in the repeal of prohibition in 1932.

The 1930 audience was full of law-abiding non-drinkers who regularly drank themselves blotto in the numerous “Speak Easy” clubs dotting the cityscapes. Though, for some reason, they didn’t find El Brendel funny. Maybe it had something to do with the crash of the stock market a few months before the film was released, as that certainly sobered many people quite a bit. Mind you, eventually the hardships of the depression would drive people to seek escape in flight, fluffy comedies, but the timing for JUST IMAGINE was apparently wrong and people weren’t in the mood. Besides, a lot of the humour was incredibly lame, even by today’s standards.

As for the music! On the one hand, you have sappy-crooner-type ballads sung by male tenors (I hate that kind of music), and on the other hand, a plethora of elaborate musical numbers reflecting the tail-end of the Flapper era. Some of the latter aren’t bad, but some are just plain weird, like the duet performed in a nightclub aboard a trans-Atlantic dirigible, being a song devoted to the sex life of flies! (Sung by RT42 and the heroine’s female sidekick, whose number I forget but who does an excellent live imitation of Betty Boop.) And there’s a drinking song whose choreography will have your eyes bugging out like a Martian.

Speaking of Martians, there are two kingdoms on Mars, one ruled by Queen Lou Lou, the other by her evil twin Queen Boo Boo (this gives you some idea of the incredible depth of sophistication to be found in the script). In fact, every Martian has an evil twin, which makes for interesting wars between the two kingdoms, as no-one seems to have any trouble finding their doppelgangers in crowded battle scenes.

Some interesting efforts are made to have the Martians—who are human in appearance—move in oddly stylistic ways, but the effect is peculiar.

Both queens have identical sidekicks, played by a big, hairy fellow wearing a metallic-print bikini and a jerkin sprouting enormous spikes and lightning bolts. His first appearance beside the Queen occasions the only good line from El Brendel,



“She’s not the Queen of Mars... HE IS!” Nevertheless, Single-O becomes quite taken with the pair of thugs and kidnaps the evil one to take him back to Earth. Hmmm...

As for the futuristic technology exhibited in the film, much of it is quite charming. Everyone has their personal hovercraft, of course, essentially cloth-covered monoplanes with horizontal propellers (but no visible motors). I particularly enjoyed the scene when a stream of such craft were halted by a floating traffic signal and J21 pulled alongside LN18 to clamber nonchalantly from his cockpit onto her wing to chat her up. Two-way television/phone hook-ups were a hoot, given that the user has to focus the screen every time he receives a call, and that what first swims into focus is the caller fiddling with the focus on HIS set. A foot-wide column of light springing ceiling-high from a tabletop is certainly the most unusual idea for a “doorbell” that I’ve ever come across. Air-blower hand dryers are prophetic, and it’s interesting to see doors that whisk quietly aside on your approach which predate the doors in STAR TREK by over 3 decades.

Yet there is a curious lack of imagination evident in the take-off of the Mars-bound rocketship. Looking very phallic (and virtually copied for the FLASH GORDON serial 6 years later—though the later FLESH GORDON rocket is perhaps closer in design), the Mars ship leaps into the sky with lots of smoke and very little flame (fortunately for the heroine, who is standing 2 feet behind a rocket-port yelling for J21 not to go—it’s a bit surprising she’s not burned to a crisp), but most annoying of all, takes off to the sound of a child’s pinwheel fire-cracker instead of the mighty, thunderous roar a modern viewer would expect.

Most of the futuristic gimmicks are displayed for laughs early in the film, and once the heroes get to Mars all pretense at futurism is thrown aside for boffo yuks. Mars turns out to resemble a jolly expensive nightclub act more than anything else. (Not such a bad thing, really.)

JUST IMAGINE gets full marks for guts. But its 1930s-style “silly” adult humour. While staggering and mindgibbling, just doesn’t cut it, even by the standards of the time. And its emphasis on the joys of out-and-out boozing is positively embarrassing. Still, it’s worth seeing. You’ll be amazed.

Note: El Brendel (real name: Elmer Goodfellow Brendel) made a comeback of sorts in the 1956 Roger Corman/AIP production of THE SHE CREATURE, in which he had a minor role as Olof the butler.

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## BLAZING AMAZING:

(Source: Amazing Stories (online) Magazine – Sept 28, 2013)

*By R. Graeme Cameron*

### WHY FREDERIK POHL THOUGHT I WAS A LUNATIC OR: HOW NOT TO TREAT A GUEST OF HONOUR

When my friends found out I had been invited to be a weekly blogger for Amazing Stories, their reaction was one of universal horror.

“Are you INSANE? You can’t even stand the stress of waiting for paint to dry. What makes you think you’ll be able to withstand the torment of a weekly deadline?”

I smiled a smug and cunning smile. For I am a Faned. I know things.

What was it Churchill said? “Never have so few been conceived by so many to be so many fewer than previously thought?” Something like that.

Sad to relate, my thirty years of written fanac has been read by very few. I am convinced recycling my old articles through Amazing will generate a few more, maybe more than a few. I want to reach as many ‘few’ as possible, for in sum they will add up to ‘some,’ and that is a mighty egoboo beyond measure. Besides, in adopting this policy I free myself from original thought, and what a stress free pleasure that is. The whole point of being a Faned!

Consequently, for the sake of peace of mind, I choose to reprint an article written in 1986 for my first fanzine “ENTROPY BLUES.”

Apart from spending endless hours going over every paragraph in a desperate attempt to edit out meaningless verbiage and tighten the prose into a gem of precise clarity and sparkling wit, producing this column was easy. Next week will be hard. I may actually have to think. I hope not.

Now, on to topic:

Recently Fredrick Pohl passed away. I was very fond of him. One of my favorite authors. I thank Ghu and Foo Foo and all the other Fannish ghods that I was privileged to meet him at VCON 14 in May of 1986. Trouble is, I don’t believe he felt privileged to meet me, and therein lies the tale:

I am desperate to meet the Master, Author Frederik Pohl, member of the infamous Futurian fan club in the 1930s, legendary editor and writer ever since, author of the classics 'The Space Merchants' and 'The HeeChee Saga.' I enter the Salish Lounge for the **'Semi-Pro VS Full Time Writing'** panel. There he is! I race up to him before he can take his seat.

"Mind if I take pictures?"

He sighs. "Of course not."

I rush it in quick, tripping over my words as I babble.

"I gotta 80,000 word novel at DEL REY under serious consideration, I know it's true cause they told me, and I wonder if you could tell me anything about the editor, Shelly Shapiro, how she thinks and all like that?"

Pohl stares at me as if wondering where people like me come from.

"I'm afraid not, I only met her once."

I back away offering profuse thanks, then sit down in the front row not five feet from his table, staring at him constantly and snapping pictures every thirty seconds or so. Make him feel comfortable...

Next he takes part in the **How To Get Started As A Writer Of SF** panel. I absorb every word, eyes blinking with hero worship, drooling with happiness. Pohl seems uneasy.

QUESTION PERIOD! I leap to my feet screaming.

"Mr. Pohl! I have a book at DEL REY! I was wondering what the process of revision is like. How do you work with an editor? Please enlighten me! Please! Please!"

I have the odd sensation Pohl is looking at me as if I were some sort of pest. He decides to give me a stock answer.

"Of course, you don't want to antagonize an editor, so learn to accept their suggestions."

After a few more questions from other fans. he turns to leave.

“Mr. Pohl! Mr. Pohl!” I thrust a tattered paperback into his unwilling hands. “Could you autograph this for me?”

He stares at the cover for the longest time, as if thinking ‘Slave Ship? I wrote this thirty years ago. Hasn’t this twit bought any of my recent work?’ He begins to write.

I blurt out the first thought that comes to mind.

“Mr. Pohl! I just want to say, I’ve always admired your satire, the deft way you fool around with everyday concepts, like in ‘Space Merchants.’”

He hands the book back to me, saying “Oh gosh, you make me feel sooo good. Well, I must be off...” and runs out the door.

Now it is time for his reading to take place in the Salish Lounge. Resolved: being sensitive and perceptive, it finally dawns on me I’ve been pushing myself on Pohl in an unseemly manner, so have decided to sit in the back row and be quiet.

Halfway through the reading I become aware of a small bee hovering beside my right ear. Unfortunately, I have a phobia about stinging insects...

ARRGH! I leap to my feet and shuffle quickly sideways, pushing my right arm frantically at the tiny, and I dare say as far as Pohl is concerned, INVISIBLE bee.

Startled, Pohl glances up from the pages of his book and stares. From the look on his face he’s thinking ‘Holy Christ! It’s him! And HE’S GONE BERSERK!’

I bound clumsily in circles waving both arms furiously. Since I’m at the back, no one other than Pohl can see me, no one other than Pohl knows a deranged lunatic has been unleashed. His eyes drop back to his book and he resumes reading, but this time in an excessively pleasant, reassuring voice, evidently hoping I’ll calm down listening to his soothing tones. The audience is puzzled.

Eventually the bee drifts out the open window and leaves me standing drenched in perspiration and embarrassment. Oh God, this is not my day.

As for the novel I sent to Del Rey, they sent it back. The most memorable line in the rejection letter?

“We don’t like your main character and we don’t think anyone else will either.”

In short, disaster all around. But at least I got an article out of it. Can't complain.

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## UPCOMING CONVENTIONS AND EVENTS

*By Garth Spencer*

### APRIL 2023

April 1-2: **Washington State Toy Show** at Puyallup, WA – see <https://www.watoyshow.com/>

April 6-9: **Norwescon 2023** at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport Seattle, WA: [Norwescon 2023](https://www.norwescon.org) For more information, see [www.norwescon.org](https://www.norwescon.org)

April 7-9: **Sakura-Con** at the Washington State Convention Centre in Seattle, WA – see <http://sakuracon.org/>

April 14-16: **Trumpeter Salute Tabletop Gaming Convention** at the Bonsor Recreation centre (second floor), **Burnaby**, B.C. near the Metrotown Skytrain Station. <https://trumpetergaming.weebly.com/trumpetersalute2023.html?fbclid=IwAR0YDMDx2J-3ykcybjeGK0-SccAJnWVrqM0URXweDFlFv4wCo6qiYf2fpmY>

April 20-23: **BrickCan** at the River Rock Casino Resort in **Richmond**, BC – see <https://brickcan.com/>

April 27-30: **Calgary Expo 2023** at the Stampede Park, Calgary, Alberta, Canada [Calgary Expo 2023](https://calgaryexpo2023.com/)

### MAY 2023

May 12-14: **Sage Fen Maker Fest 1** at the Red Lion Hotel in Pasco, WA – see <https://sagefencon.org/>

May 13-14: **Bricks Cascade 11** at the Oregon Convention Center, Portland, OR - <https://www.brickscascade.com/>

May 13-14: **Renton City Retro** in Renton Pavilion Center, Renton, WA – see <https://www.rentoncityretro.com/>

May 19-21: **Otafest 2023** at the Calgary Telus Convention Centre, Calgary, AB – see <https://otafest.com/>

May 26-28: **Enfilade!** in Olympia Hotel at Capitol Lake, Olympia, WA – see <https://nhmgs.com/enfilade/>

May 26-28: **Furlandia 2023** at the Sheraton Portland Airport in Portland, OR – see <https://furlandia.org/2023/>

May 26-28: **Paizocon 2023** – online/virtual – see [https://www.reddit.com/r/Pathfinder2e/comments/yw7izf/paizocon\\_2023\\_will\\_be\\_on\\_memorial\\_day\\_weekend\\_may/](https://www.reddit.com/r/Pathfinder2e/comments/yw7izf/paizocon_2023_will_be_on_memorial_day_weekend_may/)

## **JUNE 2023**

June 2-4: **NW Pinball and Arcade Show** in Tacoma, WA – see <https://www.nwpinballshow.com/>

June 3-4: **Mid Valley Comic Art Expo 2023** at Oregon State Fairgrounds, Salem, OR – see <https://mvcae.com/>

June 16-18: **Brass Screw Consortium** in Pt. Townsend, WA – see <https://brass-screw.org/>

June 23-25: **Washington State Summer Con** - Puyallup, WA – see <https://www.wasummercon.com/>

June 24: **Vancouver Retro Gaming Expo**, a celebration of retro gaming, Anvil Centre, 777 Columbia St, **New Westminster**, BC. This all-ages licensed event celebrates retro gaming, complete with numerous vendors, tournaments, guests, music, panels, gaming, and more. We can be reached at [vancouvergamingexpo@gmail.com](mailto:vancouvergamingexpo@gmail.com). More information at <https://www.vancouvergamingexpo.com/>.

June 23-25: **Fairyblossom Festival: Midsummer Games** - Pe Ell, WA see <https://fairyblossomfestival.com/>

June 24-25: **All's Faire** (family-oriented medieval recreation) at Thurston County Fairgrounds, Lacey, WA – see <https://allsfaire.org/>

## **JULY 2023**

July 7-9: **KuroNekoCon** in Spokane, WA. See <https://kuronekocon.com/>

*July 20-23:* **NASFiC 2023/Pemmi-Con** will be held in the Delta Hotels Winnipeg and the RBC Convention Centre, in Winnipeg, MB, since Worldcon is overseas. Guests of Honour will be Julie Czerneda, **Waubgeshig Rice** (an author and journalist originally from Wasauksing First Nation), **Nisi Shawl** (a writer, editor, and journalist, and author of the novel *Everfair* in 2016), John Mansfield (Fan Guest of Honour), Philip Currie (Canadian palaeontologist and museum curator), Lorna Toolis (Ghost Guest of Honour), **katherena Vermette** (a Red River Métis (Michif) writer who has worked in poetry, novels, children's literature, and film), and Toastmaster Tanya Huff. \* Contact via <https://main.pemmi-con.ca>; **Pemmi-Con**, 73 Worthington Ave, WINNIPEG, Manitoba, CANADA R2M 1R6, **US Agent**, Pemmi-Con, 11614 S Mulberry Lane, Jenks, OK 74037, USA.

## **AUGUST 2023**

*Aug. 4-6:* **When Words Collide 2023**, Calgary, AB – the **last** When Words Collide – see <https://www.whenwordscollide.org> NOTE: Registration is closed. The cap of 800 has been reached. But there is a waiting list in case of cancellations.

*Aug. 11-13:* **Everfree Northwest 2023** in Bellevue, WA. See <https://everfreenw.com/>

*Aug. 12-13:* **Ani-Medford 2023** at The Expo (Jackson County Fairgrounds), Central Point, OR (NEW LOCATION!); see [www.ani-medford.com](http://www.ani-medford.com), [www.facebook.com/animedford](https://www.facebook.com/animedford), or Instagram @ani\_medford

*Aug. 18-20:* **Anime Revolution** at the **Vancouver** Convention Centre. Anime convention. See <https://summer.animerevolution.ca/>

## **SEPTEMBER 2023**

*September 15-17:* **Edmonton Expo 2023** at the Edmonton Expo Centre, Edmonton, Alberta: [Edmonton Expo 2023](https://edmontonexpo2023.com)

## **OCTOBER 2023**

*Oct. 7:* **Meadowlark Comic Con** in Grants Pass, OR. See <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/meadowlark-comic-con-2023-tickets-474857480507>

*Oct. 13-15:* **Portland Retro Game Fest** in Portland, OR. See <https://retrogamingexpo.com/>

## **NOVEMBER 2023**

*Nov. 10-12:* **Orycon 43** returning to the Holiday Inn Portland-Columbia Riverfront; see <https://www.facebook.com/orycon/> (rather than [www.orycon.org](http://www.orycon.org))

## OOK! OOK! SLOBBER! DROOL! (LETTERS OF COMMENT)

**Note:** Annoying comments by God-Editor [*are in brackets*] immediately after introduction of topic in question. This, a feeble attempt to create the illusion of a conversation in a fanzine lounge or a hospitality suite in the interests of conviviality.

**Note:** On the basis of fannish tradition, any comment sent by email will be interpreted as Letter of Comment material and may be excerpted in this LoC column.

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From: **Clint Budd** – (March 17, 2023)

Good stuff !! I like the new look.

All the best, Clint

Dear

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From: **Spider Robinson** – (March 17, 2023)

I was glad I could come up with something for the historic event!

—S

[ *You are always welcome in these pages.* ] – *The Graeme*

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From: **Kermit Woodall** – (March 17, 2023)

Man, this takes me back to my fanzine efforts in the early 80s! Thanks for sharing.

Kermit Woodall  
AmazingStories.com

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From: **Joseph Bardsley** – (March 17, 2023)

Thank you for crafting a “state of the union” piece for the March issue. I'll be glad to review and respond publicly in some form.

warmly, and with respect, Joseph  
President: WCSFA

*[ And, of course, you did! With the ‘Guest-Editorial.’ Be terrific if you can make it a regular feature. ] – The Graeme*

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From: **John Bartley** – (March 17, 2023)

Simple good. You get my ten greenbacks.

*[ Ah, but an annual membership for WCSFA is simply a proposal of mine under consideration by the Board. I have no idea if it will carry. So, for the time being, you can hold on to your money... ] – The Graeme*

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From: **Steve Forty** – (March 18, 2023)

Graeme, the introduction of the two famous authors took place at the San Antonio World convention, not Orycon (although that is where I first met Lionel, I only met John Norman at the Worldcon). I always liked the retort from Lionel Fanthorpe, he said to say that he and John were going to combine to write a book together (as a joke). Lionel had a very good sense of humor, and told me the strange endings of his books came about because his publisher said he had so many pages for his novel and to finish it in one more page, or sometimes he was told he needed so many more pages after he had finished his book and would go to a thesaurus and pad the descriptions in the novel until he had enough pages.

S.40

*[ Between 1954 and 1966 Fanthorpe wrote 168 books for Badger Books, all in his spare time! To quote Debbie Cross:*

*“The process began with the cover art which would be sent to him. He would return*

*the art with several alternate titles and a cover blurb. He then wrote the story [ novel, anthology with multiple pen names, whatever ] usually in less than a week, by dictating into a battery of tape recorders. He would often do this huddled under a blanket to enhance concentration. The tapes would then be transcribed by a team of typists who would notify him when the required page length was near.*

*This process often led to the notable characteristics of the Fanthorpe Badgers. these include both abrupt endings with improbable resolutions to the plot, and seemingly endless padding to obtain the required length. Padding was accomplished in several ways. The one I find most amusing, is the descriptive prose repeating the same thing, over and over, using different words, phrases, or just rearranging the order of words...”*

*I enthusiastically recommend Debbie’s book DOWN THE BADGER HOLE, R. LIONEL FANTHORPE: THE BADGER YEARS,” consisting largely of quotations, as one of the funniest books you will ever read. It is an incredible compilation of mindboggling quotes that will have you in stitches. ] – The Graeme*

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From: **Steve Fahnstalk** – (March 19, 2023)

Hey, Graeme—

Browsing through your Canfancyclopedia—

"Contraterrene" was what they called antimatter back in The Day. Jack Williamson called it "SeeTee" (from its initials) and wrote two novels about it; one was "Seetee Shock." I forget what the other was. But you can look it up.

Steve

*[ “Seetee Shock” (1950) and then “Seetee Ship.” (1951) Both based on a whole series of SeeTee stories he wrote in the 1940s. I used to have his “Wonder’s Child: My Life in Science Fiction” (1984) autobiography but, alas, it is one of the books that have gone missing from my collection over the years.*

*Anyway, thanks for letting me know Contraterrene means “anti-matter.” I will correct my entry but, since the computer files include everything under a given letter, I will probably make multiple corrections of one kind or another under “C” before uploading a new version. May take a while. ] – The Graeme*

From: **Garth Spencer** – (March 19, 2023)

Dear Graeme:

Congratulations on reviving *BCSFazine*! I hope and trust that you will continue to receive as much varied, interesting material as you have in this issue.

*[ Thank you. ]*

I also hope and trust that when the VCON trademark is renewed, it will be in the name of WCSFA (perhaps “doing business as BCSFA”).

*[ It’s complicated, and expensive. It’s one fee to renew, and another to switch ownership. Though, if allowed to lapse, I suppose both could be combined in a “brand new” application. It would probably be simplest to do so solely in the name of WCSFA. They’re the people currently responsible for VCON, after all. In any case, up to the WCSFA Board of Directors when the time comes. ]*

Your feature about the 1950s UFO club in Vancouver came as a surprise. Should I include it in the fanhistory, do you think? Seems just a bit outside fandom *per se*.

*[Personally, I view the cult of belief in UFOs as spaceships from other worlds as entirely separate from science fiction, which treats it merely as a fictional possibility. Trouble is that more people belief in UFOS as proof of alien visitation than read science fiction. I get so tired of hearing people say to me, “Oh? You like science fiction? Then you know UFOs are from other planets. Me, too!” It is to arrgh. And yet, and yet, UFOS, or at least flying saucers, have always been part of the mindset of traditional fen, though usually as themes in fiction. Still, I seem to recall at least one Canadian fanzine from the 1970s (?) that was primarily about UFOs as genuine alien craft. An Alberta publication, I think. Might even be listed in my Canfancylopedia, but I can’t remember the title or identity of faned. No matter. Pretty sure the Vancouver UFO society had no contact with local fandom, but it might merit a footnote in your history as an example of public interest in something associated with science fiction. Your call. ]*

You wrote:

*I would argue it is not necessary to know everything or define everything at once before fen begin developing the collegiality you speak of. ...*

\*Sigh\* Did I say “everything”? No, I said “all the information that they can get.” If I can’t gather everything, I hardly expect anyone else to, either. Of course, I expect WCSFA to take gradual steps. Obviously.

You wrote:

*Another way of putting it, WCSFA and VCON's fate doesn't depend at all on developing contacts with fandom at large.*

Did I say "fandom at large"? I don't think so. Granted, when I give people information I tend to err on the side of including everything – so they can *select* what they need or want. Obviously.

You wrote:

*Being a fan historian, your "Olympian" viewpoint assessing fandom overall, in practical terms, wasn't all that practical when it came to local planning. Back then your perspective was skewed away from what was needful.*

I'm adrift: what are you talking about? At that point in my LoC, I was talking about BCSFA's relations with other fandoms in town, and VCON's reputation with other conventions, or potential attraction to congoers out of town. Obviously.

(Yes, I know about 90% of the fans attending a convention come from the local area – say, within a radius of 160 kilometres – but there are still some congoers who go out of town, or out of their province/state. Which is why I sent you the convention calendar I did.)

*[ Re: the points you make above. I firmly believe effective communication is much more than a string of flat statements. Like most people, I read between the lines and consider all possible implications. This is the very basis of my book critiques in Amazing Stories. I don't review what authors say, I discuss what they are getting at, what they actually mean. Or, to put it another way, no reputable journalist takes a politician's statement at face value. Instead, they interpret the statement in terms of what is being hinted at, or not being said, in order to understand the underlying message. That's pretty much how all communication works.*

*Be that as it may, I used your original letter as an excuse to layout my policy concerning BCSFAzine, which is to target local fandom and not fandom at large. Whereas you tend, whether you realize it or not, to view fandom as a whole.*

*This, by the way, makes you the PERFECT candidate for the Canadian Unity Fan Fund (congratulations on winning). If anybody can stir up interest in traditional fandom among fen from all over the country, you're the guy! The combination of your vast knowledge of fandom's history and evolution, your continuous advocacy of fanac, and your off-beat sense of humour, will impress many potential converts. The way I see it, if*

*you approach NASFiC the same way you did Corflu 39, you'll convince many others how and why traditional fandom is a wonderful hobby well-worth pursuing and, at the very least, have a good time making new contacts and spreading the word. ]*

I should be sending you more CUFF information as it develops. Feel free to reprint any news you care to from *The Obdurate Eye*.

*[ Thank you. As stated in the last issue, I intend to rely on you for all sorts of up-to-date info on interesting fannish news. ] – The Graeme*

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From: **Lloyd Penney** – (March 26, 2023)

Dear Graeme:

Ah, I still have this zine! It hasn't disappeared into the æther! Many thanks for brining BCSFAzine back, and especially for this issue, 551. Now to see what you've gathered for us all...

*[ BCSFAzine is back to see if BCSFA/WCSFA/VCON can be revived. Should be clear by the end of the year if that is going to happen. So, if something, BCSFAzine may continue into 2024. If nothing, December may be the last issue. ]*

We say "Tradition!" more than the Fiddler on the Roof ever did! (Vale Chaim Topol.) Squashed troll? I suspect it goes well with fava beans and a nice Chianti. Beware of what you ask for, you might just get it. These days, Fandom is what I can do when I have the time.

How BCSFAzine is made? Is there reference to the dungeon of fanwriters who churn it out regularly? Ah, thought it might. Igor's hump is where the extra corflu is kept, that's why he's handy to keep around.

It always comes down to money, and there are few fan organizations with much money these days. It would be great to have VCON return... there's been some mention of an Ad Astra revival here, but the board of directors has been hibernating the last few years, and they have been quiet. I hope the mutterings continue, it may be the only way of getting anything resembling a convention going again.

*[ WCSFA currently has no income of any kind. Hence my proposal for an annual membership fee. ]*

I see there was an event at the City Square Mall yesterday. How did that go? I hope some new folks arrived to find out what's going on. If attendance wasn't great, the website Meetup.com might be able to help you.

*[ I don't know how it went. I live in Nanaimo, on the other side of the Salish sea. Haven't heard anything from those who attended. ]*

I believe this coming weekend is Corflu Craic in Belfast, and FANAC.org should have some presence there. I am not sure what I could do to help them, and I probably wouldn't have the time to do a decent job. Pemmi-Con would be fun, but it's not in my finances. I hope Garth, our newest CUFF delegate, will have a spiffing time in Winnipeg. Deadline for the Auroras is coming up in about four weeks, but I know so little about what deserves which award these days.

*[ Pemmi-con is guaranteeing Garth a free hotel room, and fund-raising for his trip is going well. Doesn't look like there will be any problems... As for the Auroras, my writing book reviews for Amazing gives me some insights. I've already made my nominations. ]*

The 90s were when Yvonne and I did go to Worldcons, and we went to a lot of them, but ConFrancisco was one Worldcon we couldn't get to because we could save our dollars fast enough to go. I gather it was a great time. I don't see much from Alex Vasilkovsky anymore, but I do see writings on Facebook from Boris Sidyuk.

*[ I've never been to a Worldcon... Boris (Borys) is currently living in Kiev and, all things considered, seems to be doing well. ]*

The locol! Well, such as it is. Slings and arrows, and outrageous smoffing, all the good stuff. The Internet made fandom redundant a long time ago, we just didn't notice, or we were so much into the habit, we didn't want to give it up. Sleeping dogs do lie, and lying dogs are usually waiting for a bellyrub. Fran is right, this revival should have been printed on a Gestetner with twiltone paper. My letter...after all the warnings of lots of noise, the owners of our building ripped off the railings, and have left the balconies for right now, utterly useless and dangerous, just in time for the nice weather to come.

A note to Rhea Rose... I hope the devouring of the BCSFAzine didn't cause an upset stomach. I certainly understand making sure you get your fibre, but this is beyond the pale. Grand greetings to Spider! And Rob Sawyer, too. I can send in a long string of letters, but getting them in the right order is sometimes beyond me. That's when a nap comes in handy.

A page, and I am done. Just about supper time, anyway. Thank you for all of this, and I hope you can produce enough content to comment on. (We shall see, Mr. Cameron, we shall see...) In the meantime, relax a little, spring must be on the island by now, go enjoy, and we shall see you the next time you commit zine. See ya!

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

*[ Thanks for your LoC. I look forward to the next. ] – The Graeme*

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From: **Paul Carpentier** – (March 28, 2023)

Thank you for all, and for pointing out that 30 years ago I wasn't a terrible writer. Turns out, I did go to Winnipeg, Glasgow, and 25 other Worldcons after ConFrancisco. Memory Lane is often not a bad address. Since 1993, I found out Larry Niven made up my last name, Terry Pratchett is the first person I met in San Francisco, and Julie McGalliard and I are still, 36 years later, together.

It is unlikely I'll go to China, which saddens me, as I want to vote for a Seattle Worldcon. I was heavily involved with the NASFiC here, and the Spokane Worldcon. I, along with Larry Baker, brought Westercon to, well, turned out, Bellevue, but we tried for Seattle. I ran the World Horror Con in Seattle (well, SeaTac). Seems Seattle is a tough shell to break.

*[ Still a strong community of SF Fen active in Seattle area, including yourself. I assume it is well within the realm of possibility you and the others will succeed in bringing a Worldcon to Seattle. ]*

If BCSFAzine is reruns, I'm okay with that. Thank you for re-rerunning me.

Paul

*[ I don't have time to do much original writing for BCSFAzine, but I figure taking a break now and then to retype an old article for the new incarnation of the zine will do a good job of conveying how much fun being part of organized fandom can be (it certainly was back in the day). Hoping this will inspire newcomers to join. ] – The Graeme*

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From: **Felicity Walker** – (March 29, 2023)

Shock! Disbelief! 'New /BCSFazine/'?! What's next? New Mexico? The New Monkees?? New Coke??? And just when I was about to start /BCSFazine/, the monthly newsletter of the BC Salmon Fishing Association. It was going to be our special Dagon appreciation issue, with an excerpt from Gorton R. Fishstick's "Dorsal!" series, for those who came expecting some of that crazy "Buck Rogers" stuff. <sup>[1]</sup>

Well, too late now. Might as well write a LOC.

Cover: I still like the Chiller font for the masthead. That's a nice program book cover!

"Editorial": Excellent 1980s-style logo by... Tim Hammell IIRC. (Can't read the signature.)

*[ Yep. Tim Hammell did this logo a long time ago. I've always liked it. That be the Lions Gate Bridge underneath the Griffin. ]*

"Behind the Scenes at BCSFazine": Cute and likeable!

"Fannish News & Resources": Parking at City Centre is pay parking, which is moot anyway since I'm still self-quarantining until there are no new COVID cases or variants. But I like that location. I briefly worked there in early 1996, and it hasn't changed since then, so it has a nostalgic appearance. You can still find a pay phone in the hallway leading from the food court to the bathroom! It costs more than a quarter now, but it exists! It was also where I parked and ate every time before performing at Yuk Yuk's, back before it closed, so there's another layer of nostalgia. And the food court there has a good teriyaki restaurant!

"A Look Back at VCON One": Kudos to Michael Walsh for the smart write-up!

*[ Yes, it was quite handy to have a member of the club be a prominent journalist and critic in the Province Newspaper. He always gave a good account of us. Till their publishing policy changed and local cultural events were considered non-newsworthy. Their bean-counters came to believe Vancouverites craved gossip about American and British celebrities only. For a number of years reference to Vancouver talent was forbidden. The Georgia Straight compensated somewhat, but even they drifted away from us eventually. And I remember the time the UBC student newspaper interviewed me and Michael Walsh for a solid two hours, recording everything on cassette. We told every funny reminiscence we could think of. Result? A single paragraph mentioning a bunch of fans got together and held a science fiction convention. Overall, we've never*



*had much luck dealing with the media. ]*

“A Look Back at the Vancouver Area Flying Saucer Club”: Why were there so many flying saucers back then and so few now? Did the aliens lose interest in us? It sounds like a pleasant club, though. Taking the subject seriously and working systematically, but without being as strict as the later MUFON. (At their mid-1990s presentation at the Planetarium they sternly warned us that amateurs need not apply, as they were only interested in true scientists. Sighting reports required complicated paperwork involving math.)

*[ I strongly suspect the sightings back then consisted of every single airplane light that passed within vision. Heck, recently an American morning talk-show excitedly showed footage of “massed formations” of UFOs filmed at night near the Paris airport. Even I, with my poor eyes, could see the outline of the aircraft forming the perimeter around their standard-issue beacon-lights. Appeared to be mostly 747 and Airbus types.*

*For a hilarious compilation of UFO gullibility, I recommend SAUCER ATTACK! POP CULTURE IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF FLYING SAUCERS by Eric Nesheim and Lief Nesheim. To quote Ozark Mountain farmer Buck Nelson, who wrote an article “I Visited Mars, Venus and the Moon!” for the December 1956 issue of SEARCH MAGAZINE, “I couldn’t see the Sun because it was very dark in Space.”*

*I remain deeply sceptical about UFOs being alien spacecraft, to the point of believing that the current US military “admission” they’re investigating UFOs is some kind of cover-up campaign to distract people from their latest technological experimentation. I have NEVER seen or heard anything that convinces me we are being visited. And it still bugs the hell out of me when people say to me “Oh, you’re a science fiction nut? Then you must believe in UFOs, too!” No. I don’t. ]*

“‘Surf Nazis Must Die!’—Movie Review”: The first time I saw this was in 1992 when I was working the graveyard shift at 7-Eleven and had nothing to do on my lonely nights off except rent movies from the nearby Blockbuster Video. It was before I learned to appreciate B-movies and so, like you, I was disappointed that the movie was dull compared to the title. It was also yet another lesson in how a post-apocalyptic setting can make a movie look and feel cheaper, not just be cheaper to film. Eleanor Washington’s revenge was the enjoyable part that kept me going through the movie.

*[ I think the biggest flaw is that the guy playing the imitation-Hitler isn’t especially frightening, but then... he IS supposed to be a no-talent, goofy poseur, and he does*

*come across like that rather well. ]*

Fast-forward to 2019 when my psychiatrist put me in touch with another patient who was selling part of his VHS collection. “Surf Nazis” was one of the tapes I bought. (I’ll try to review some of the others in “Felicity’s Collecting VHS” later.) It might even be the exact same copy I rented in 1992—there’s a Blockbuster sticker on the cassette, and the previous owner lives across the street from where that Blockbuster used to be. Inspired by you mentioning your Blu-Ray of it at the recent Zoom meeting, I’ve started watching my VHS copy.

I’m about a third of the way through (the Nazis haven’t killed Leroy yet), and so far so good. Having seen it before and, having developed a taste for B-movies in the last 30 years, my expectations are adjusted. It’s something to watch while I eat, and when I’m done eating I stop the tape and go walk off my food. I’m watching it in 15-minute chunks, before it has a chance to get boring.

“A Look Back at ConFrancisco WorldCon—1993”: This is an arbitrary thing to focus on, but I was just thinking about “So I Married an Axe Murderer” the other day. It was hipsterish before that was a pejorative, with the main character somehow earning a middle-class living as an occasional beat poet, and the soundtrack being hyped in the trailers (“With songs by Toad the Wet Sprocket and Ned’s Atomic Dustbin!”).

“A Look Back at Zoryany Shlyah Speaks!”: Did you ever find out if they received the books you sent?

*[ Yes, indeed, as per the letter printed in this issue. I think all of our packages arrived, but after incredibly long transit-times. ]*

“Blazing Amazing: My Old Columns”: It blew my mind when someone explained to me how to make an eight-page booklet by tearing and folding one piece of letter-sized paper. I bought a long-stapler, but it never worked properly, so I had to send my mini-comics out sans staple. Oh well, I tried. I met the universe halfway and it did not reciprocate. I think I gave the stapler away to Kathleen Moore in hopes that she could make it work.

“Ook! Ook! Slobber! Drool! (Letters of Comment)”: Oh, you’ve already used the rough draft of the pretend-outrage part of my LOC. I continued to work on it and punch it up as seen at the top of this LOC, but I was too slow!

I like the Piet-Mondrian-style bus from “The Partridge Family”! Did

you know “Vansploitation” is a subgenre of movie?

The other day I realised that Garth’s initial impression of fandom being formed from zines he found in university only to find that when he arrived in fandom it had changed is like the light from stars being very old by the time it reaches us so that we see the star only as it was in the distant past.

*[ Valid perception, I do believe. Time often adds a lustre not necessarily 100% justified. For example, do war gamers realise the majority of serving soldiers in this or that campaign prior to the twentieth century died from disease? And do SF Fen realise that throughout publishing history SF magazine publishers knew that organized fandom was an insignificant percentage of their customers, that they played up to them with letter columns and supporting conventions simply for the sake of cheap and easy publicity? The world is full of illusions. ]*

[Footnote 1: The phrase “that crazy ‘Buck Rogers’ stuff” is © and ™ The Dille Family Trust.]

*[ To what end, I wonder? Not a common phrase nowadays... Anyway, thank you for your letter. I look forward to receiving them on a regular basis, and I especially look forward to you contributing movie reviews! ] – The Graeme*

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From: **Jo McBride** – (March 31, 2023)

Hi Graeme,

It’s been a long time since I’ve seen a BCSFAzine! And wow! This is an amazingly rich issue, lots to read here!

I really enjoyed a look back at Vaughn’s comic, and I remember how Barbara had to type each line twice and how it was a pain.

As for Vcon One, that was before my time, and I am sorry I missed it.

Your ideas about WCSFA/BCSFA/Vcon seem very practical to me. There are few enough fans that spreading them out over 3 names was confusing. While I will always be a BCSFAian, it would be great to belong to the one umbrella club that is home to all the names, trademarks, material, etc.

*[ This is what I be advocating. The version of the Tim Hammell-created logo above my editorial sums it up nicely. Truth is, being in Nanaimo, the printed page is about all I can contribute. The future of the club is entirely up to the local fen (of the Vancouver region) and what they'd like to accomplish. They're the boots on the ground, so to speak. ]*

The Flying Saucer club makes me laugh, as people are still seeing UFOs and being abducted by little grey men. Still no clear photo of one, though. The Generi-con report reminded me of how sweet Smokey was and how that was surely a great time.

"Your Surf Nazis Must Die" review was laughable enough that I might seek it out. After all, I did watch the movie about a secret Nazi settlement on the moon! The movie about the sharks on the moon was not a classic, either.

*[ I believe the first "Nazi SF" film you refer to is "Iron Sky" (2012) which later had a sequel "Iron Sky: The Coming race" (2019), both of which were Norwegian fan-funded amateur films with stunning production values and great fun to watch, and the second, "The Shark Side of the Moon" (2022), an Asylum production with okay CGI, a self-consciously silly plot, and an annoying character spouting the kind of criticisms the audience is shouting at the screen. Nowhere near as good as the "Iron Sky" films but loads of fun to viewers in the right mood. I have the first two in my collection, but I don't think I'll bother with "The Shark Side of the Moon." Full marks for a gutsy title, though. ]*

Paul's report on Confrancisco was a good piece of nostalgia. A worldcon hotel at \$110 is only a distant memory. Sigh.

The list of upcoming events was really nice to see. While I won't be going to the Calgary Expo, I will be attending When Words Collide. Moving to Calgary has had its drawbacks and benefits, and going to WWC is definitely on the plus side!

*[ This will be the last "When Words Collide" because the organizers are getting burned out and decided to make this one their last hurrah. However, they are on record expressing the hope that local fen "newbies" attending will enjoy it so much they will be inspired to come together to produce a new ongoing convention along similar lines. Even different lines, such as a general-interest SF Con, will do. However, I don't know the state of local Calgary SF fandom, and have no idea if the concept is at all feasible. Still, you never know. ]*

All in all, a packed issue with lots to read and many memories evoked. I know it will never be like it was in the 70s and 80s, but fannish fandom was a very big part of my life, and I've made many life-long friends through it.

Jo.

*[ That is one of the truisms of fandom, many a life-long friendship or acquaintanceship established, such that getting together even after a long separation is like old times. Mind you, a few enemies gathered up as well, some fan feuds last forever, but that's par for life as well so no big deal. Virtually my entire social life was predicated by fandom. Without it, well, I might have gravitated toward academia as a means of remaining sane, or perhaps struggled to become an unsuccessful actor or a boring teacher. Who knows where ambition would have taken me? There would have been fewer nude hot-tub parties, methinks. Fannish fandom may be a form of escapism or a substitute for a "productive life doing something useful," but it's a great way to avoid serfdom and establish one's own identity. All in all, not a bad way to live. ]*  
– The Graeme

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## **EVEN OOKIER SLOBBER DROOL! (AS REVIEWED IN THE FANNISH PRESS)**

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From: **Guy Lillian III** – (March 19, 2023) quoted from SPARTACUS issue #64

Declaring that "The Phoenix has risen!", Graeme Cameron has brought forth BCSFAzine #551, the semi-official clubzine of British Columbia's SF Associa- ... Excuse me, the West Coast Science Fiction Association. So why does the zine keep its original title? Well, because Graeme is the self-dubbed "God-Editor," and he says "tradition" so declares. Also traditional is his call for contributions on any subject the donor wishes, though his promise to weed out nasty responses in the lettercol sounds new to me. Vaughn Fraser's 'toon from a 1985 issue takes us "Behind the Scenes at BCSFAzine" – hey, that almost rhymes – is hilarious, despite a hideous caricature of a pretty female editor in one panel. I envy BCSFAzine its Igor. The God-Editor opines on how to revive the club and announces a food court sit-down to promote same, adds news about the Canadian Unity Fan Fund, the Aurora Awards, a look-back at defunct local cons and a good letter column, including notes from Spider Robinson and Robert Sawyer. Rise, Phoenix, rise.

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From: **Nic Farey** – (March 25, 2023) quoted from THIS HERE issue #63:

“BCSFAZINE #551 (R Graeme Cameron) - A honkin’ 60-page relaunch of the venerable title, enlivened in part by The Graeme’s pre-publication request for locs before the ish had been seen. Many oblige...”

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

**If you have any inquiries or questions on any club matter**, contact The Graeme at: < [wcsfa.bcsfa.vcon.information\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:wcsfa.bcsfa.vcon.information(at)gmail.com) > and I will pass the inquiry on to the appropriate Board Director for a response.

**To submit articles or letters of comment**, contact God-Editor R. Graeme Cameron at: < [The Graeme](#) >

**Interested in tons of back issues**, go to: < <https://efanzines.com/BCSFA/> > or to < <https://bcsciencefictionassociation.ca/> >

**For news about VCON** go to: < [VCON Facebook Page](#) > & < [Help Keep VCON Alive!](#) >

**For news about BCSFA** go to: < [BCSFA Facebook Page](#) >

**For news about WCSFA** go to: < [WCSFA Facebook Page](#) > but bear in mind it has been inactive since 2021. It may be revived soon.

**For the Discord site about VCON** go to: < [VCON Discord Page](#) > or < [The Ghost of VCON Discord Page](#) >

**For the Discord site about BCSFA** go to: < [BCSFA Discord Page](#) >

**For the Discord site about WCSFA** go to: < [WCSFA Discord Page](#) >

## FINAL THOUGHT

Fandom is worthwhile.  
Organized fandom is better.  
Organized traditional fannish fandom is best of all.  
So, do it already!