

MISTILY

No 6

meandering

Written & published by Fred Patten on the LASFS Rex Rotary, October 14, 1963. Intended for the Spectator Amateur Press Society, 65th Mailing, October 1963. Address: 5156 Chesley Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90043. Phone: AX 1-1310. Art credits: cover by Bernie Zuber; p. 4 by Steve Stiles; p. 8 by Jim Cawthorn; p. 11 by Don Simpson. Steve stencilled his own; the rest is photostencilled.

PACIFICON II in 1964!

Salamander Press no. 32.

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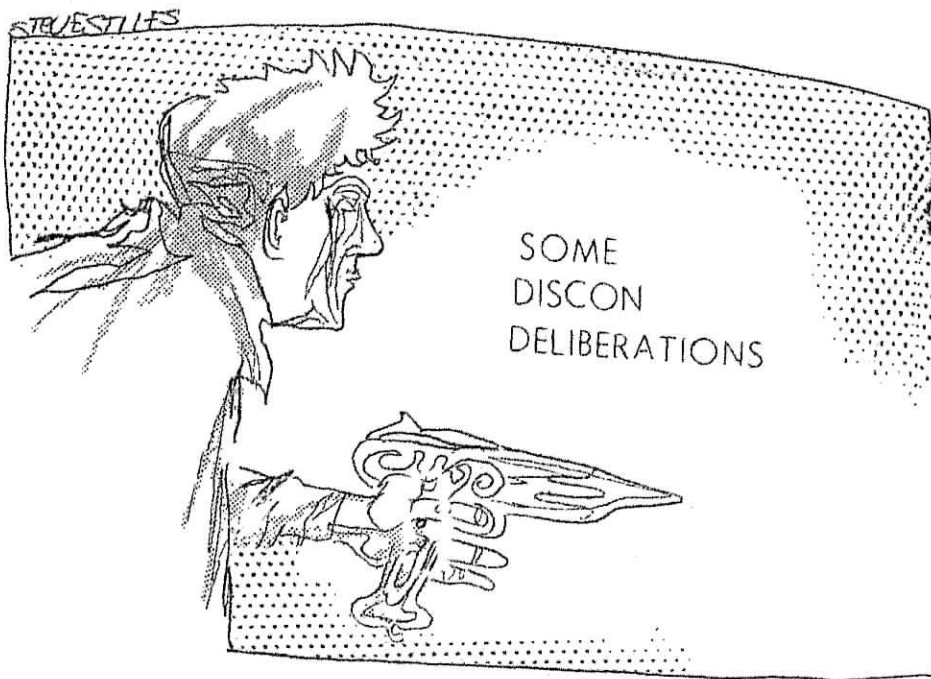
Since I am primarily a science fiction fan, one of the things about the Dis- authors and learn their plans for future stories, or hear small stories connected with the writing of some of their works, etc. Here are what I considered some of the more memorable of these:

When Robert Heinlein was building his house in Colorado Springs, he camped out at night in the uncompleted structure. An overly friendly cat living nearby had the maddening habit of coming over after dark when Heinlein was asleep on the floor, and curling up on his face. The cat could not be discouraged, and putting it out did no good, because it would soon find an uncompleted section of wall or a window that hadn't been fitted into its frame yet, and be back on Heinlein's face in a short while. Heinlein later wrote this into The Rolling Stones.

Ted Johnstone noted that the last two written stories in the Future History series are out in England, and wondered when they'd come out here. Heinlein said he didn't know; he was considering writing some new material to go with them after all this time, but probably would never get around to it. In answer to Ted's question of what Dr. Capo (the parenthesized last title on the Future History chart) was supposed to cover, Heinlein said that this novel would almost definitely never be written; though if it is, he'll change the title to Lazarus Long, since Lazarus will be the central figure. Heinlein also noted that his next work (following Glory Road) consists of 500 tightly written manuscript pages, which his publisher wants edited down to more manageable size. He didn't say what it's about, though.

Andre Norton has a contract to write 3 hardbound novels a year. She likes the covers that Ed Emsh does for her stories, but she doesn't care much for Richard Powers' abstract work. She was considerably surprised when Don Wollheim reprinted Huon of the Horn as an adult paperback; she'd written it for an 8 to 11 year old readership. It seems to be selling as an adult book, though.

My first meeting with Isaac Asimov came when I asked him if Doubleday's re- printing of his Foundation books meant that Gnome Press was defunct. His answer: "I hope so; Greenberg never paid anybody what he owed 'em. Say, did anybody ever tell you you look like Paul Newman? I think that's a dirty shame; I want to look like Paul Newman!" And he walked away.



First of all, I better warn you that this con report is being written strictly from memory about a month after the events described occurred, and that it consists primarily of personal opinions of the people, places, and events I encountered. Bruce, Dian, and Ted were all taking notes for their reports, so you can check with them for the exact dates and times we arrived at places and did things. The big thing about this DisCon jaunt for me is the view I got of the U.S.A. It was the first time I was ever very far East of the Mississippi, and my ChiCon trip last year was the first time I was ever very far East of Los Angeles. The result of all this is that right now, I'm more interested in jotting down my impressions of scenery and people than I am in recording bits of fannish minutiae for future fan historians to check against other DisCon reports. I realize that you can probably get more competent descriptions of America from any professionally-written travelogue book, but these are my impressions, so I hope you'll bear with me.

Though we didn't return to California by the Southern route as had originally been planned, I still saw more of America than I've ever seen before. Our route took us through the semiarid areas of Southern California and the southern tip of Nevada, up into the plateau lands and mountain forests of Utah and western Colorado, across the plains of eastern Colorado and Nebraska into the cornfields of Iowa, then into the lush, green fields and forests of Minnesota and the states Eastward. On our homeward trip, we returned through the green states of Ohio, Indiana, and others, until we recrossed the Mississippi and swung down onto Highway 66, driving into the dry Western states of New Mexico and Arizona. On this trip, I rode over an eastern tollway, visited a Howard Johnson's, entered Canada, experienced the New York subway system, and saw our nation's capital, all for the first time. I met people (mostly fans, naturally) that I've wanted to meet for years and hope to meet again, missed a few I wanted to meet and hope I don't run into again. The whole excursion was what Calvin Demmon would probably call an Enlightening Experience. I don't expect the '64 Con to provide anything as great, since the trip to San Francisco is a short one, but I have hopes that London in '65 will result in something similar.

Of all the country that I saw, I liked the area around eastern Utah and western Colorado the most. This is an area of wilderness, of mountains, rivers, and pine forests. In Colorado, the land is a high plateau, cut into by deep canyons and gorges. The Continental Divide cuts through here. Specific scenic areas abound; we

I don't have to introduce Ruth Berman to you. I'm glad to say, though, that her whole family is just as pleasant. During the day that our tire was being replaced, we spent the time chatting and playing Hearts; and Ruth's mother kept us supplied with potato chips, pickles, and other snacks between a large breakfast and a larger lunch. The preceding evening, Ruth took us to a student production of "Camille" on an old showboat moored on the Mississippi by the University. We, in turn, talked Ruth into coming to the convention. I hope she had as splendid a time there as we did at her house.

In Detroit, we spent brief periods of time with Jerry Bails, Howard Devore, and Roger Sims. Our stop at Jerry's was somewhat unexpected, but we were made welcome, and we all spent an hour or so going over his collection of comics and discussing Comic Fandom. We spent a couple of hours at Big-Hearted Howard's looking at his collection and talking over more fannish matters, then we all went over to Teddy Bear Sims', where we were supposed to spend the night. Fred Prophet and Jim Broderick were already there, and quite a bull session got under way; Bruce, Dian, Ted & I were so tired that we flaked out in the middle of it, about 3 a.m. We had to leave early the next morning, so I didn't get to become nearly as acquainted with Detroit fandom as I would've liked. With luck, I'll have another chance to meet with everybody again sometime.

Our schedule called for us to deliver the Invisible Little Man Award, awarded to Andre Norton at the Westercon, to Miss Norton on our trip. We'd notified Miss Norton of this, and she'd invited us to dinner when we came by. This was another of the highest spots on our journey. Andre Norton is a very active and pleasant person, living in an old, neat frame house in Cleveland with her mother, whom she takes care of. Though she likes people individually, she dislikes crowds intensely, which would unfortunately rule out the possibility of having her as guest of honor at any worldcon. She's been writing all her life - her first book, The Prince Commands (1934), appeared before she was 21. We saw her large reference library of books on archaeology, primitive cultures, history of witchcraft, and other subjects she weaves into her books; then spent the rest of the evening looking through her collection of fiction and fantasy, recommending books to each other. We finally had to tear ourselves away in order to get to Ted's grandparents' home, where we were expected for the evening.

Ted's grandparents weren't fannish, but they did provide us with a welcome reception, giving us a chance to get a good rest from our travel weariness. From here, we went on to New York City, where we spent three days touring the city, and meeting New York fandom (or a part of it) at parties at Terry Carr's and Esther Davis'; plus being invited out to dinner by Jock Root and Adrienne Martine. Many thanks to Ted White for letting us use his house as a base of operations for the three days, and for letting me loose in his stock of comic books.

At the con, I was supposed to share a room with Ron Ellick; but unfortunately, he wasn't registering until the day following our arrival. Dick Eney very kindly invited me to stay that night at his home in Alexandria. This was really appreciated - and needed; I got a better night's sleep than any I had at the con hotel. And the breakfast Dick's mother served the next morning was one of the best meals I had on the whole trip; about the equivalent of a full-sized dinner elsewhere.

We stayed at George Scithers' home Tuesday night after the con, before starting home. George has a wonderful house for any sf fan, with plenty of room for book cases, hi-fi equipment, a fan den for his publishing equipment, wall space for framed pro-zine artwork, etc. I certainly hope he won't have to give this up now that he's being transferred overseas.

I'm also glad I had the chance to meet the Tacketts for the first time, as we spent a night in Albuquerque. Unfortunately, we got in early in the morning and collapsed almost immediately, and by the time we'd awoken, Roy had left for work. I hope to meet him, and Chrystal, and all the splendid people mentioned here, again soon.