



JUNE

1979

Friends and neighbors,

It's been nearly two years since Carolyn had the idea of starting the OSFW, which just goes to prove that even high rollers sometimes misfire. The really incredible thing to me is that the group has managed to hold together as long as it has. When I offered to do this for Loretta (who, even as I type, is propagating the species) I had no idea in my mind exactly what form this newsletter would take, but as soon as she gave me the folder containing all the back issues, letters, bank statements, etc., the old hundred watt lit up over my head. I realized that now,

the eve of the second anniversary of the OSFW, would be the perfect time for a GPIC retrospective issue. Those market reports that we all love so much, and those witty sayings by Asimov, et al, and all those little funky drawings that gave GPIC the white space that David Thayer hated so much -- all that is going out the window this time. You people don't understand. You've unleashed a monster on these pages, and now you're stuck with the consequences.

EUTHANASIA

This is the only issue that I'm going to do. And at this point in time, I'm convinced that it will be that last GPIC -- at least in a form that we understand it. It's unbelievable what time can do. Two years ago, when I heard that the group was forming, I thought that this was going to be the greatest thing in the free world. Just think, a writing group made up of s/f people, the great free thinking futurians of all time. Imagine my surprise when I walked into a charter meeting of the Carolyn Cherryh fan club. And on top of that, all the great free thinkers turned out to be narrow minded, narrow interested bigots. It's not Carolyn's fault either. She was as surprised as I was by the entire turn of events. That's why she had the good sense to stop coming to the meetings.

Anyway, I did the newsletter. In my innocence I figured that an in house paper for a writers group would be a great place for the exchange of ideas and (yes, Virginia even disagreements. I envisioned a letters column, and guest columnists, and tons of crazy mail coming in. What I got was nothing. I take that back. David Thayer used to send me letters condemning the GPIC as a fanzine disguising itself as a newsletter.

Where were you? Where?

Honest to God, folks, I'd spend a week out of my writing month putting together an eight page monster that spent most of its time trying to reach you knuckleheads. And what did it get me? More letters from David Thayer wondering what happened to all the money that I was receiving.

After eight issues I began to understand. Dianne Derk, who had been the only regular contributor to GPIC, kindly offered to take over as editor. I tried to tell her what a debilitating job it was mentally, but I don't think she believed me. Dianne was a trooper. She worked hard on the paper, and did a damn good job. And when she quit half a year later, she said it was because she had to go back to work full time. You didn't fool me Dianne. Not for a minute. In going through the letters, I found this one from DD to Loretta: "Hehe, he, he, ha, ho, ho. Now you know how much work

GPIC is. Astounding how much postage and printing is, yes? Astonishing how little feedback you get, right? Amazing how no one believes this when you try to tell them, agreed? Ready to resign yet?" Apparently Loretta did agree; she lasted exactly three issues.

A lot of you people call yourselves writers, and yet you don't write. I guess that's the cutting edge. That's what bothers me so much. The next person who tells me that they don't have time to write is going to get strangled, no questions asked. Hell, nobody has time to write. I don't have time to be doing this stupid newsletter, yet here I am banging on my Olivetti, trying my damndest to antagonize each and every one of you. And even that won't work. Nobody's going to write the GPIC, because everybody's "too busy". Bullshit.

ODE TO TULSA

I have this little fantasy. In it I get in my orange car and drive up to Tulsa to sit in on one of their meetings. As if in a dream, I float up a flagstone sidewalk, past a stand of cheerful holly bushes, and push the buzzer on a big oak door. The door opens and there stands Steve Kimmel, smiling, gregarious, a can of Colt 45 malt liquor in his hand, a wicked gleam in his eye. "Come in," he says, "we've just been reading some manuscripts."

Heart pounding like a jackhammer on a cobblestone street, I move into a house furnished in dark stained Mediterranean. Fifteen people (I count them) are sitting around casually in the living room, manila envelopes sitting next to them on the floor, pen and paper in hand to write comments on what was just read. "I like your imagery," a dark haired woman is saying, "but the pacing seems a trifle choppy to me."

"This is a small meeting," Kimmel whispers to me. "Everyone's on vacation."

Come on Steve; tell the truth. Do you guys really have writers meetings, or do you just jack around like we do down here? I've got to know the truth. Is sci-fi alive and well in Oklahoma, or has Glen Larson zapped us all out of existence?

Oh well. We've done it to death, haven't we? The OKC - Tulsa feud was fun while it lasted. Now, there's not even any contact between the groups. Que sera, sera. And OKON is coming up in a month. Semi annual meeting time. Will there be a meeting? Will anyone show up? Does anyone even care? Will we be able to survive this issue of the GPIC without a financial report?

THE FUNNY PART

Here's the funny part: for anyone out there who was really serious about writing, the OSFW was the opportunity to pick up advice and mechanical help from real pro's. We're talking Campbell winners, we're talking Hugo's, we're talking workshops that could teach us in a day what we'd have to stumble around for three years discovering on our own. The real funny part is that the funny part is also the sad part. And that's unfortunate.

FUSSIN AND FEUDIN

The most interesting aspect of the OSFW over the last two years has been the number of personal wars that have developed between its members. And you bet, I'm going to name the names. First, was the obvious fun feud between OKC and Tulsa, which amazingly enough, has apparently developed into a real feud. There was the basic fan versus writer feud that has essentially torn the OSFW (at least in OKC) to pieces. There was the political fighting, mostly involving myself and several of our more right leaning members, most notably Floyd Wolf. Floyd is no longer with us. There is the Al Gechter controversy. Al has managed somehow to endear himself negatively to several of the members -- an interesting on-going debate, the end of which is still not in sight. There was the David Thayer - Mike McQuay extra inning ball game revolving around my (in)ability to put together a newsletter. David's fanzine came into play here also since, at the time, the newsletter had greater circulation. That one was called on account of darkness; David moved out of town. There was the Anne Silas - telephone company feud which resulted in a no-win situation for Anne. That one was pre ordained. And, of course, there is the Nigel Sellars - Mike McQuay fifteen rounder. Let's get it out in the open. Nigel stepped in after Thayer left -- almost like a tag team match.

Nigel thinks that I'm a lousy writer. Well, lousy doesn't really state Nigel's case properly. Nigel thinks that I write my stuff on toilet paper. I first met Nigel in 1975 in San Diego. He was telling everyone who would listen that he was going to win the Campbell award that year. I don't remember who actually did win that year, but his last name wasn't Sellars. That's right, buddy, I'm finally taking the opportunity to boost my own ego a bit, and respond to all the inane, asshole criticism that you've been levelling at me this last year. Nigel likes to try and impress everyone with his intelligence. Unfortunately, he is unable to impress them with any depth of feeling, which is the font from which all fiction springs. Maybe that's why his writing has failed so miserably for so many years. I don't know. As for myself, I've sold a novel and its sequel to Avon, who also has optioned two of my other books. Just a week ago, I signed a four book contract with Bantam for my Matt Swain series, the advances on which alone will bring me over twenty thousand this year. You bet I'm bragging. And if that's lousy writing, I'm going to continue writing lousy and let Nigel in all his wisdom sit on his unpublished ass. Saying these things is the single most unprofessional thing I've ever done, and I won't ever do it again; but I'll tell you the truth: for once it feels good.

OH, BY THE WAY

Next meeting is this Saturday, June 9th, 6 o'clock at the home of Donna Davis. the address is: 1137 NW 102nd St. in OKC. That's just on the West side of Western, near Carolyn's house. For more specific directions, give Donna a call in the evenings or Saturday afternoon -- 751 5175.

I assume that the next meeting will be at OKON in July.

AND SPEAKING OF FAMOUS WRITERS

R.A. Lafferty has a new book due for July publication. The title is ARCHIPELAGO and it's being published in hardcover by: Manuscript Press c/o PDA Enterprises, box 8010, New Orleans, La 70182. The price is \$12.95 prepaid. Order several, they make dandy paperweights. And won't the other kids on the block be impressed.

THE SON OF IT, THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE

or

IN THE THEATRE, EVERYONE HEARS YOU SCREAM

by Sid Howard

Mike McQuay is a real jerk, you know. He knows me. He knows everything about me and since he's lazy and permanently unemployable, he sits around and thinks of ways to mess with my mind. That's how he came up with the brilliant idea of dragging me off to see ALIEN the other day. He came over with beer on his breath and he shoved me into that orange monster he calls a car and stuck me in a half full theatre at 3:30 in the afternoon. So there I was, pop corn between my legs, a coke in my hand, still recovering from a venereal disease, watching Yaphet Kotto say things like, "I'm gonna kill that sonofabitch."

Well, nice try Yaphet.

You see, McQuay knows that I hate things with dark corners -- movies where they say things to that poor sap, whoever the poor sap happens to be, "Hey Charlie, go check the horses," or "You two go down there for absolutely no reason at all and I'll meet you in the shuttle craft in five minutes." You see, he knows I get involved with movies. I mean, I become emotionally involved and it all becomes real to me. What's going on up on the big screen is really what's going on.

With that in mind, always keep that in mind, you can understand perfectly well my next statement. That statement is this: the movie scared the fuck out of me.

It really did.

ALIEN paralleled, in many ways, a couple of my all time favorites. The situation of the crew of Nostromo was basically the same as in the Marshall Thompson epic, IT, THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE -- a title which is totally misleading seeings how IT wasn't actually from beyond space at all. The nasty little booger was from Mars, which is sort of like living in the apartment across the pool in the entire scheme of things. Be that as it may, the situation was the same. We're talking about panic in the halls and no place to run. We're talking miles and miles of air shafts and characters who are as disposable as paper plates.