

WARP 64

Spring 2006 ♦ Volume 20 ♦ 02

Featuring MonSFFAN Authors!

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- * KEITH BRAITHWAITE
- * GEORGES DODDS
- * NICK KRIMP
- * BARBARA SILVERMAN

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All members in good standing! Please
help us plan our activities!

On the Cover
"Homeward Bound"

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A 3D illustration based on events described
in the film "When Worlds Collide".
To see the illustration in full colour (without
any of the body text) please surf to:
<http://homepage.mac.com/breischl> and enter
the Illustration portfolio page.

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MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Except where noted, all MonSFFA meetings are held
Sundays at 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
at the Days Inn, St-François Room,
1005 Guy Street, corner René Lévesque.

Programming is subject to change.

June 11, 2006

Sequel to a previous panel: Literacy in SF
Why are people reading less and watching more TV?

Sequels, Remakes & Revisitations - Why Bother?

July 30, 2006

MonSFFA BBQ
(rain date, Sunday August 6)

August 20, 2006

Everything but the Kitchen Sink – A Hands-on Workshop in model making, beading,
woodworking, computer graphics, costuming, etc.

September 17, 2006

Auction, garage sale

Science Fiction Art

October 29, 2006

Game – Hosted by Keith

Star Wars En Direct

November 19, 2006

Fan Films Revisited

Fandom as a Subculture - You are Not Alone

December 9, 2006

MonSFFA Xmas Dinner & Party

See our web page for complete schedule of events!

www.monsffa.com



The Real Fine Print: WARP is published quarterly by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA), a non-profit organization of fans interested in sharing their love of science fiction and fantasy. The opinions expressed in WARP are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of MonSFFA or the editor. To reprint any article, please contact the writer, or ask the editor to pass on your request. The use of copyrighted material is generally discouraged, but it's hard to talk about Star Wars without stepping on toes; our apologies to the copyright holders, no serious infringement is intended. This is an amateur production, your tolerance is appreciated by your fans.

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MONSFANDOM

January 2006 to March, 2006 / 28



Dear MonSFFen:

Let's look at my excuse file...heavy work load, family commitments, job hunt, working on several conventions at once, they all look good. If I could add in something about my dog eating my homework, I would. But, I am extremely late in getting in a response to Warp 63, and I hope I'm not too late.

My loc...I have decided not to do the national newsletter. I think it would cater more to my background in journalism and publishing than it would cater to Canadian fandom, as fragmented as it is. I would have to wonder if the trading of club newsletters back and forth does a lot of the job, and if fans in other cities

wanted to communicate with fans elsewhere in the country, they would have done so by now. Even with some awareness of fandom elsewhere, I think fandom for many people exists only in their local community, for reasons of interest and money.

I think Keith Braithwaite may have taken his title for his article on fanzines from an essay by the late Robert Bloch called The Seven Ages of Fan. (It's from a great book entitled The Eighth Stage of Fandom by Robert Bloch, published by Wildside Press.) In this essay, the Fourth Age is the discovery of fanzines. Bloch said that once this Fourth Age was discovered by the average fan, he went directly into the Fifth Age, which is creating your own fanzines. Last year, I wrote a grand total of 250 letters of comment, much like this one, and they came from many fans who are enjoying their own Fifth Age. I don't think fanzines are dying so much as they are evolving. Warp is still quite unique in that it is still printed on paper, and thank you to the membership for financing my copies all these years. However, in future years, you may have to do what OSFS does, and .pdf your zine so it can be received electronically, much as how you send out Impulse. If anyone would like to see the greatest selection of electronic fanzines

available, go to eFanzines.com, and you'll see literally hundreds if not thousands of fanzines.

Fanzines, in some ways, are being supplanted by Yahoo! Groups, by LiveJournals and other blogs, and by mailing lists. Zines build community, which is at the heart of what we want from fandom. I prefer the more permanent paper of the fanzine, but understand the economics of doing away with printing and postage costs. People being who they are, once they join a club, they want something physical in exchange for the membership money they pay. A club pin, a membership card, a club newsletter or fanzine, all make people they are getting fair value. Most people can do without a pin or card, but they want at least a publication to keep them informed. Whether it's paper or electronic, I don't think they care much any more. With so many clubs going away, people want to communicate in some way, and do it through Usenet, blogs and bulletin boards. These build community, but not much, especially if we cannot meet, and if we do not even know each others' names, what with most bloggers using pseudonyms.

I've been making the announcement here and there, and I'll make it here, too. Yvonne and I made

the decision a couple of months before Ad Astra, and we informed the committee that we have decided to retire from SF convention running. We have been on the Ad Astra committee since we started attending initial meetings for Ad Astra II in 1981, so that makes it 25 years, and that's enough. We've also been on the committee for conventions in Montreal, Ottawa, Buffalo and Rochester, as well as various Worldcon bids and conventions. Yvonne wants to get on with getting her pilot's license, and I want to write more for fanzines, and see where that will take me. Some thought we were gafiating, but no way; we just want to attend conventions and have a good time. I think that after 25 years, we've earned it, and we are looking forward to it.

Speaking of Ad Astra, I hope to see Ad Astra reports in the next issue. Looks like we had high attendance, and almost unanimous good times at the con. We tried new things, like the info desk, and we kept people busy and intrigued. Given that we were the first convention of the season, lots of folks shook off cabin fever from this winter, and indulged in a little spring fever. The guests were great, and they had a good time, too. Great to see Cathy, Tamu and Yolande there, as well as Phil and Chris. Maybe we can party together next year!

Take care, folks, and see you next issue.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

Hi, Lloyd!

Glad to hear you *aren't* gafiating! Whew! Canadian fandom would sorely miss you and Yvonne. I do hope one of the cons you plan to enjoy is Con*Cept.

Thank you for the URL to eFanzines.com. You can get lost in there!! Keith is currently working on reviews of the fanzines we receive in trade. Unfortunately, as you point out, a lot are now going on line, making it impossible to bring the trades to our meetings. While poking around the net looking for 'zines, I stumbled across Web rings dedicated to 'zines and fanfic.

<http://dir.webring.com/rw>

Click through: Entertainment & Arts > Humanities > Books and Writing > Fan Fiction.

We had a good time at Ad Astra, but no one submitted pics or reviews for WARP. The Info Desk was an excellent idea, and I hope somebody keeps it going in the future.

In our e-mail discussions, Garth and I moved on from fanzines to trading views on conventions. It seems cons can be defined in more ways than I thought possible! You've seen a lot of cons in your time, Lloyd, any thoughts on the subject that you would like to share?

Yours in fandom,

Cathy

Dear Cathy,

About categories of conventions (and this could be part of an article in Warp) ... You wrote:

*... We tend to think of 3 kinds of con: the pro cons like Creation, the pro-con but fan-friendly cons, and the fan-run like our Con*Cept or Toronto Trek. The latter may be big or small, but they are all run by fans in their spare time.*

Gevalt, he said impolitely.

The perspective I built up, over the last quarter-century or so, was that conventions came in various sizes and flavours and focuses. I could characterize the varieties this way: "general" conventions, which try to feature something for everyone, no matter what size they are; "fannish" conventions, for fans who still focus on fandom itself, fanzines and other fan activities; "literary" conventions, meaning those which focus mostly on written, published SF and fantasy, featuring writers and editors and publishers as GoHs; "media" conventions, focusing on Star Trek, Star Wars, or other film and television series, featuring actors as GoHs, and costumers inspired by characters in the media series; and specialty conventions for anime, comics, gamers, costumers, filkers - and conrunners. The vast

majority are run by and for fans. Only a very few conventions are "pro" cons as media fans seem to define them; and by my lights, they're hardly conventions at all.

Of course I'm displaying my own biases and prejudices. Come to think of it, fans generally define conventions according to the biases and prejudices of their subfandom. Mine are based on an old-fashioned idea of "fannish" fandom, a geographically-dispersed community of fans who prefer playing with ideas and language and imagination in the company of other fans.

Short digression: In over twenty years I have never gotten past the feeling that fandom was supposed to be fannish fandom. Talk about imprinting. But I am forced to acknowledge that other fans get imprinted with a partial, distorted, incomplete image of fandom, too. There used to be an impression that this subculture was *one* subculture, with much the same outlook and terms of reference; including the terms of reference about conventions. But the community and the terms kept changing, as the published histories of fandom show; and in the 1970s, when media fandom multiplied the population of fans in the subculture ... it became several subcultures.

Where this leads us back to conventions is that, as far as I could work it out, fandom is now too big to be unified. By the time I came along, it was too late for the same meanings for "fanzine" or "convention" to be communicated, and shared, between literary /and/ sercon /and/ fannish /and/ media /and/ gaming /and/ anime fans. Each of them redefines things their way.

What's the problem with this? My problem, and I think it's everyone else's problem too, is that a few times each decade, some /obstinately/ naive fans inevitably show up. I mean fans who want to do things with cons that just won't work; who cling to some delusions they got God-knows-where; who are easily taken by grifters and Creation Con organizers and, well, con artists. I ran into this in the early 1980s, in the form of characters who wouldn't settle for anything less than a bigger, more

glamorous media convention than Victoria could support - the /first/ time they set out to run a convention; who thought they could finance the convention just on preregistrations; who thought if they could just hype Constellation Con hard enough, it would succeed.

It didn't.

But I /kept/ running into reality-disabled fans, over the years; and not all of them were underinformed about fandom and its practices. I could tell you stories. I don't quite understand what they mean.

Yours,

Garth

Hi, Garth!

I never actually thought of conventions actually focussed on fandom itself, it sounds rather like navel-gazing.

It's hardly surprising that conventions have become as fractured as the fandoms that spawned them, but it is disappointing that so many fans never reach beyond their own narrow interests. SFF has so much potential to stimulate the imagination and creativity, it is a pity to limit it to just one media style, or even more limiting - one TV show.

However, I question whether we can call a gaming or animé con an SFF convention. While the themes of SFF may be the dominant feature of a lot of animé and RPGs, they are not *just* SFF.

The message is getting confused with the medium used to promulgate it.

Con-artists? Reality-disabled fans? LOL! It's true that con-runners have way too much optimism, and sometimes we do have to be con-artists, too, but you have to believe in what you do or no one else will, either. And the notion that if we build it, they will come, does qualify as fantasy, at least!

Yours in fandom,

Cathy

*Guy H. Lillian III who edits **Challenger**, an oft Hugo nominated zine, wrote a glowing review for WARP 62, the autumn issue, in Zine Dump #11. He has a few comments of his own to add to our discussion of fandom and zines.*

Warp 62 / Cathy Palmer-Lister, MonSFFA, / cathypl@sympatico.ca / One of the most creative and energetic clubzines going, Warp opens each issue with a parody cover - this time, Astounding Stories (of Warped Science).

After noting the demise of actor and conger Michael Sheard (whom we met at a Memphis convention), Cathy presents her lettercol - and perhaps the most interesting discussion in any fanzine reviewed in this Zine Dump. Responding to one of Palmer-Lister's editorials, Garth Spencer issues a plaint about "the much reduced motivation among contemporary fans" - to publish, to attend club meetings and cons, even to read. He lays the blame for this change on the growth of fringe fandoms, "each with their [sic] own terms of reference" - and (like Lilian Edwards in Floss!) wonders what's to be done. Fanzine fandom knows this problem well, but in our case the nemesis is obvious: technology is making the printed word obsolete. Electronic communications is the voice of the hour. Blogs and websites are on the upsurge, just as are conventions devoted to games and specific media, and we who have found our niche in a slower, more ponderous, but more permanent and aesthetic fandom find ourselves stranded in the fading past. See how many fewer genzines I here review as opposed to Zine Dumps of yore? Well, such is the fate of flesh, to age and wither and crumble into neglected dust, so, so be it. The dust of Warp is still entertaining.

This issue is mostly fan-authored fiction - Les Lupien's is at least R-rated (where do I meet Lulu?) - but there's also a cool article on weaponry in the classic pulps, some club photos, and a good bit of club news.

- Guy H. Lillian III, quoted from Zine Dump 11

Hello, Guy!

What a fabulous cover you have for Challenger 23! Thank you for sending the paper copy. We collect our trade zines into binders to share with our members at club meetings. I would certainly pay for paper copies myself, but am not sure how to pay for them. Would you be able to cash a cheque from Canada? Would a postal money order be better? And of course, how much for 4 or five issues?

I quite enjoyed the variety of articles in Challenger 23, from politics to bathrooms, to the flood in New Orleans. The tribute to Cynthia was very touching. I was very interested in the article about Gustavus Pope. I suspect Richard Dengrove and our own Georges Dodds would get on like a house on fire. Georges is really getting into the human ape angle these days, but he has written copiously on SF history and introduced me to some very off the beaten track stuff. Your review of Floss! 5 touched on issues we have been debating here, too. What is fandom, and where is it going? Or is it even going anywhere -- are we stagnating?

I want to thank you for the very positive reviews you have written of MonSFFA's WARP. When I first took on WARP, I knew nothing about putting out a zine. Your comments are very reassuring.

You should have received WARP 63 by now, and will notice I have dropped the spoof covers. It was fun, but I was running out of ideas! And now that the artists in MonSFFA are finally getting into the frame (wink) I thought I should get a "real" look for them. We have some really good authors in MonSFFA as well, so expect more fiction.. Georges is still writing his ape stories, and is now looking for someone to translate from German! Keith Braithwaite is picking up the threads of the conversation I was having with Garth Spencer and is writing about zines, the 4th age of fanac. I think you'll enjoy those articles.

Yours in fandom,

Cathy

The Other Jawa

Barbara Silverman

To Star Wars' fans Jawa refers to that wonderful race of scavengers who lived on the somewhere planet of Tatooine. Surprise....others of the human race refer to Jawaitees who lived in the ancient town of Jawa located in what is now known as Jordan.

For those of you who wish to do a little archaeological digging, Jawa was located in Northeastern Jordan, on the eastern margins of the Fertile Crescent in the area bordering between the steppe and arable land. To be precise: 32°20'N, 37°0'E. Be sure to wear a hat and bring lots of sun screen.

Jawa was first established late in the 4th millennium BC. during the period known as the Early Bronze Age c.3200-1950 BC. The town, consisting of an upper and lower section, covered 9 hectares/22 acres and had a highly organized population of around two thousand. The site which was well fortified stood on a rocky island between the main gorge of Wadi Rajil and a tributary valley entering the main gorge from the west.

The houses, partly built into the ground, were generally round in shape with new houses just added on whenever a new dwelling was required. The spaces between the expanding clusters eventually became streets. The dwellings were constructed of stone and mud-brick with floors of packed clay. Roofs consisted of mud and straw placed on timber beams. The rooms were cell-like with each livingroom containing a small doorway leading into a smaller rounded space. This small area is believed to have been bee-shaped silos.

There was limited cultural achievements with most of the tools and household implements functional in nature. Items were either made locally or transported over a great distance. Their pottery reflected Palestinian and Syrian influence.

Massive fortifications following the edge of the rock scarp protected the upper portion of the settlement. The entrance was located on the west side. This large chambered gateway was unique in that it consisted of two chambers, a design unparalleled in the Ancient Near East until late 3rd millennium BC.

Also enclosed by an outer wall, the lower section of Jawa was established along the slopes of the hill. The main entrance was located on the southern side of the enclosure with posterns or small gateways positioned at various places allowing for limited access.

Jawa's most amazing feature was its complex and elaborate water-harvesting system consisting of earth-stone dams, stone gravity canals, embankments, sluices and reservoirs. Today only 8 km/5 miles of this astonishing network remains.

It was carefully designed and constructed to draw the winter runoff from Wadi Rajil which drains southward from the volcanic peak of Jebel-al-Druze in southern Syria. The water was diverted into canals at three points then into a main reservoir west of Jawa. Overflow was directed to a secondary system which led to pools farther downstream. These seven pools were located behind the dam built in the wadi below the city. The total capacity is estimated to have been 22,000 cubic meters of water.

After only a few decades Jawa was completely abandoned. The exact reason is unknown, however since the town was completely dependent on this water collection system most probably the population outgrew the water supply.

It was re-occupied for another short period at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age c.1950-1550 BC. This time the town was built within the upper fortification of the original site with a citadel in the center. This citadel, rectangular in shape, was divided into a series of interconnecting cells with basalt slabs on stone piers. Surrounding this construction was a ring of rectangular courtyard houses constructed of stone and roofed with basalt slabs.

Why Jawa was originally built is not known. Its location made for very difficult living conditions and most probably at times unpleasant. Jawa's existence might have been short but their water system was marvelous for that time period. This achievement and the people who accomplished such a feat should not be forgotten in the dry, dusty sands of time.

References:

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East, Oxford University Press, 1997.

Civilizations in the Ancient Near East, MacMillan Library Reference USA, Simon and Schuster MacMillan NY, 1995.

For more information:

http://simscience.org/cracks/advanced/grav_hist1.html

Art Imitates Life With Discovery of Jurassic Beaver

Keith Braithwaite

In a scene from Beavra, MonSFFA's parody of 1950s monster movies, a military officer peruses a book on prehistoric life that depicts an enormous beaver next to a huge sauropod dinosaur. When I wrote Beavra in 2003, the best scientific evidence available was that prehistoric beavers evolved about 35-40 million years ago, well after the last of the dinosaurs had gone extinct. But as it turns out, I was somewhat prescient in placing early beavers in the time of dinosaurs.

A recent fossil find in China puts prehistoric beavers squarely in the mid-Jurassic period, some 120 million years earlier than previously believed. This find has rewritten the book on early mammals, say scientists.

Though *Castorocauda lutrasimilis* may not be directly related to modern beavers, its remains indicate that it was a fur-bearing animal with webbed hind limbs and a broad, flat tail, like a beaver's. It was also described as having characteristics similar to otters, opossums, and platypuses. Paleontologists speculate that *Castorocauda* dog-paddled about, feeding on aquatic animals and insects, and nested in burrows it dug along the banks of lakes or rivers. It thus becomes the first early mammal known to have swum, and at about the size of a house cat, the largest known to have lived in the era of giant dinosaurs like *Apatosaurus* and *Diplodocus*.

The mammoth size of my invented prehistoric beaver notwithstanding, the club's award-winning fan film can now

be viewed as, yes, scientifically accurate!

I am reminded of the fuss over Jurassic Park's portrayal of Velociraptors, the veracity of which was questioned. According to the fossil record, Velociraptors were, at most, only half the size of those featured in the movie said critics at the time, forgetting altogether about something called dramatic license. But within a year of the film's release, some of the wind was taken out of their sails with the description in scientific journals of *Utahraptor*, a larger cousin of Velociraptor from the same dromaeosaurid family. *Utahraptor*'s size matched that of the terrifying Raptors seen in Jurassic Park.

And so now we know that prehistoric beavers did, in fact, live in the age of dinosaurs. Perhaps subsequent fossil discoveries will yield the skeleton of a variety as gargantuan as *Beavra*. Maybe, just maybe, my imaginary *Bigus castoris rodentia* will turn out to be as real as little *Castorocauda lutrasimilis*.

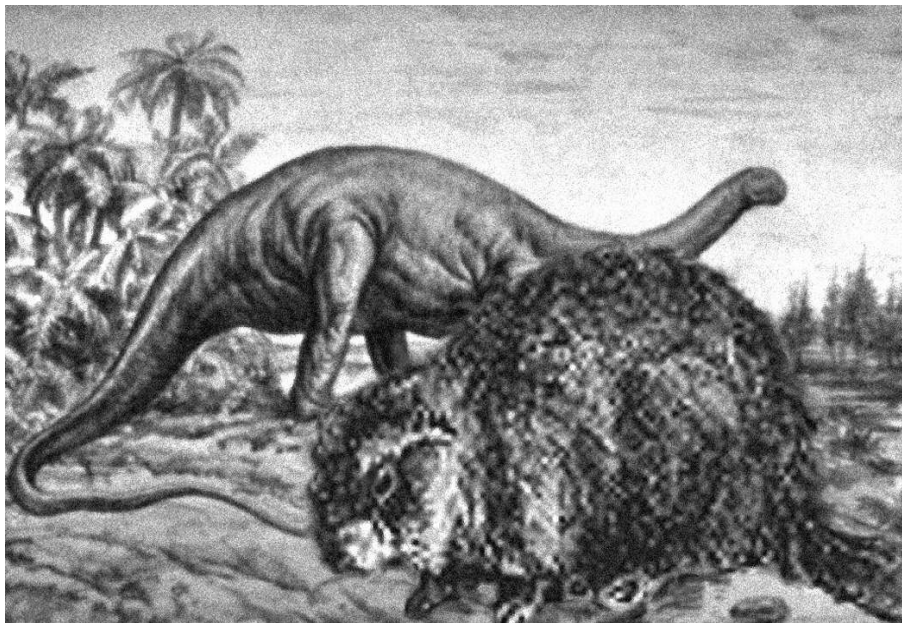


Illustration of "Bigus castoris rodentia" viewed by military officer in *Beavra*: MonSFFA fan film prophetically places prehistoric beaver in time of dinosaurs



Castorocauda lutrasimilis, as portrayed on the cover of the February 24, 2006 issue of *Science* by Mark A. Klingler/CMNH



A descendent of *Bigus castoris rodentia*, as portrayed by Keith Braithwaite in award-winning film, *Beavra*!

Original press release and images of the fossils can be found here:
<http://www.carnegiemnh.org/news/06-jan-mar/022306caud.htm>

The Last Mage: The Dragon's Mouth

Nikolai Krimp

Jennifer Wells works for a bio-hazard lab located deep inside a mountain just south of Seattle, Washington. Following a car accident during a mysterious storm, she awakes in a world where a new friend informs her that "We live by the sword and bow. If you cannot defend yourself, you die."

Chapter 2

They marched all day stopping only to rest for short periods. They were eager to put as much distance as possible between them and the dwarfs. Being midsummer, they gorged themselves on the many different berries that grew along the forest path and by late afternoon, they decided to stop for the night. Leaving the path, they found a small clearing in which they made camp. It was decided that no fire would be made in case they were still being pursued. The hobbit suggested that someone should backtrack a ways to see if they were being followed. Roma, being the only one who knew this part of the country, opted to go, leaving Treymane with Jen.

In the fading daylight Jenny could feel the hobbit's eyes burning the nape of her neck. She knew why, so she turned and spoke.

"Why are you staring at me?" she asked.

"You're not the person you say you are," he replied.

Jen stood and went in search of some firewood, so when Roma returned and gave the all-clear, they could get some sleep. She also didn't want to face the hobbit's questions; not until her friend returned, but Treymane didn't give up so easily. He followed her and repeated the question. Again Jen tried to move away from him, but this time he blocked her way.

"Answer me!" he asked in a loud whisper. "Who are you?"

Angered, the elf girl turned and glared at him, forcing him back a few feet.

"I'll answer your question when the time is right!" she spoke in a harsh whisper, "but for now you'll just have to trust me. I can tell you this; I'm not here to harm you or steal from you. I'm here for a completely different reason."

This seemed to ease the hobbit's mind for now and he backed away from the girl. Treymane would find out soon enough for he would keep up the pressure until he was satisfied.

Just then Roma appeared. "Will you keep your voices down! I can hear you all the way to the river." She spoke firmly.

Her sudden appearance sent the other two grasping for their weapons. Breathing a sigh of relief as they recognized their friend stepping out of the bushes, the two began to laugh.

Roma hushed them up quickly, explaining that a party of dwarfs was camped on the other side of the river. She wasn't sure if these were the same ones who were hunting them. So to be on the safe side, Roma also told them that there would be no fire tonight for hot beverages. Berries and cold water would have to do, for at least this night. Each took their turn standing guard. The morning found the three up and gone before the first light hit the eastern horizon.

They pushed on for most of the day stopping only for a handful of berries and water. As mid-afternoon drew closer, the forest began to thin out. This, explained Roma, was due to the

lack of good soil around the Black Hole. Twice during the day they had to stop for fear that mounted Dwarven patrols on the other side of the river would spot them and sound the alarm, for the three could not outrun the dwarfs' ponies. By twilight the little party reached the edge of the forest. In the distance they could hear the roaring sound of water cascading down into the black abyss.

"Legend says that the Black Hole supplies the underdark with the only supply of water," said Roma breaking the silence.

Jenny was about to say something when the sound of horses could be heard. The three rushed back to the cover of the trees and waited. It didn't take long before six mounted Grey Dwarfs rode past.

"They sure are a determined lot," whispered Jenny.

"Yes, but these are not the same ones," answered her friend.

"Look at them. They're soldiers. Not like the ones we left at the gorge."

Treymane agreed, these were not the same. "But why are they hunting us?"

Roma's eyes grew large as she realized what had happened. "Maybe Malodor senses we are here. He must have felt the magic that brought you..." She stopped, realizing she had said too much. Now the hobbit would not stop with the questions. Looking at Jenny, Roma's eyes told her that she would have to explain the situation to him. She still did not know if the hobbit could be trusted. Most halflings follow their pocket, rather than their heart. In their world, the more they owned, the more respect they commanded.

Huddled in a small grove of trees, the three waited until dark. Just after dusk, the patrol headed back up the trail.

"Now's a good time to head out onto the plain," said Roma. "If we keep going all night, we'll make the forest before dawn. This will give us a good head start, before the patrol returns."

"Wait!" Treymane stopped them. "Before we go, I want to know what is going on. Who is she?" he demanded, pointing at Jenny. "Since my life is also on the line here, I think I have a right to know."

Jenny looked at Roma and said. "I think Roma's the best one to explain to you about what is happening and who I really am."

After a moment of silence, Roma began to explain, starting with the magical blue light, which exchanged Jennifer's mind with Shannon's, right up to the time when they met him in the laboratory. "From there on you know the rest," she concluded.

Seemingly satisfied, the hobbit stood up and said, "Well, let's get on with it."

Leaving the grove, they moved to the edge of the tree line, where Jenny with her enhanced vision looked about and saw that

all was clear. Not a movement anywhere. Then making as little sound as possible, the three trotted out onto a rocky plain. Treymane had cut a couple of boughs from a low-hanging pine tree and followed behind, erasing their tracks.

After some three to four hundred paces he gave it up and rejoined the others. They kept on going for most of the night with only a few short rests whenever they felt safe enough to do so. A little after midnight the rocky plain began to slope downward, so they had to slow their pace, or the loose stones would have sent them rolling down the hill. Now, here and there small shrubs poked out of the ground, but nothing large enough to hide behind, so the little party had to keep on going until they reached the safety of the forest still a few hours away. As they hurried, Jenny began to think of Shannon. What is she doing? Is she all right? How is she coping in her world? It was then that she realized Shannon probably wouldn't know how to drive her car, since there were none here in this one. Jen hoped that the girl wouldn't be put into an asylum because of her lack of knowledge of the modern, or as Roma put it, ancient ways.

They were still out in the open when dawn broke. Fearing detection, they quickened their pace and ran the last piece, reaching the tree line, as the morning shadows grew long. A small stream trickled out from the ground, bubbling happily and growing as it met the lower forest. Today they would chance a small fire and brew some hot tea. One of them would hunt. A fat rabbit would taste good after days of just berries and cold water, but first a good cup of hot tea.

Sipping his tea, Treymane turned to the elf girl. "What's it like in your world?" he asked.

"Well," she started, "my world is a lot different from this. The mountains there are vacation spots... you know... skiing... tobogganing..." The others were totally confused. This was not going to be easy, she thought. "Let me start again. We have machines that take us where we want to go. Like your horses, only we called them autos. They move without animals pulling them. In these we can travel great distances in a very short time. We also have flying machines."

With that last statement the hobbit fell over laughing. "Next you'll tell us that you fly without the aid of a Roc," he said.

"What's a Roc?" Jen asked.

The little man stopped his laughing and continued sipping his tea.

"Anyway," continued Jen, a little angered at the halfling, "we have great big cities where millions of people live together. In the country there are mostly farms because all the jobs to be had are in these cities. We call them concrete jungles. Also people don't walk around with bows and arrows. There may be handguns there, but not these types. Maybe once I get home we may find a way to bring the two of you back with me so you can see for yourselves."

She smiled as the two shook their heads. They weren't going to go with her after what she had just told them.

Roma stood and said that she would try her luck at some fresh meat and walked out of camp. Jenny and Treymane gathered firewood and by the time Roma returned with a large jackrabbit, she found a real cooking fire, complete with spit, waiting for her. As soon as the rabbit was ready, they sat down and each enthusiastically devoured their share.

"You couldn't have gotten a younger member of his family,

could you?" teased the hobbit. "I think this one has been around as long as Teagan has."

Roma almost choked as she tried to swallow and laugh at the same time. "Would you prefer more berries?" she teased back.

The day had passed so quickly that no one had noticed that the sun had set and darkness was starting to shroud the forest.

The little fire had burned down when Roma stood and stretched. "I'll take the first watch," she said and walked out of camp.

Jenny lay down and covered herself with her cloak. She watched the hobbit light his corn pipe and then put another small piece of wood on the fire. She closed her eyes.

Jenny woke, and sat up in her bed with a start. There on the edge sat a young girl, with long blonde hair and amber eyes.

"I know you," said Jen. "I've seen you somewhere."

"Yes, you have," answered the girl. "Now you must listen to me carefully, for I don't know if I'll be able to contact you again. Right now I'm speaking to you in your dream. You are in my world and I in yours."

"What are you talking about!" interrupted Jenny. "This is my room and this is my bed..."

"Please listen," the girl repeated. "This is only a dream. You must get that box you found to my mother as quickly as you can. You are in grave danger. Once there, she will ask you some questions and then we can reverse the spell and get you home. Please hurry." The last part Jenny couldn't make out for the scene faded when she felt a gentle hand touch her arm.

"It's your turn," the hobbit whispered.

The fire had gone out much earlier and its embers were now cold when the first streaks of daylight seeped through the upper forest canopy. She could hear the gentle breathing of her friend Roma and the soft snoring of the hobbit. It was a shame to wake them as they all were exhausted from the night before, but they had to get to the village where Shannon's mother lived, so she woke the two and began to ready herself for another day.

Before leaving, Jenny told the two about her strange dream and the urgency behind it. Everyone agreed they had to move as quickly as they could.

The little bubbling brook grew as they followed it deeper into the woods. Soon it became a stream and by midday a full blown river.

The forest was alive here; crickets, frogs and cicadas played their symphony for them as they passed. They were talking quietly amongst themselves, when Roma suddenly stopped.

"Do you hear that?" she asked.

Everyone strained to listen, but shook their heads.

"That's just it," she continued.

Again they listened and still didn't hear anything. Suddenly it dawned on them. The forest was quiet, deathly still. Even the frogs down by the river stopped their serenade. Drawing weapons, they stood in a protective circle with their backs to each other.

Out from the thickest part of the brush walked the biggest mountain cat any of them had ever seen. It strolled towards them as if it didn't notice them. "Jen, it's time to use you bow," Roma urged, "and please don't miss for we won't get a second chance."

The sweat ran down her forehead as she notched an arrow. Could a puny projectile bring down such a huge beast? she thought as she took aim.

It seemed like an eternity, for the Marsh Cat and Jen just stared at one another, each waiting for the other to make their move. The cat moved back and forth not knowing whether its quarry would turn and run. This was not the first human it had ever encountered, but this one was different. It didn't run like all the rest. Confused, the huge beast continued its pacing, always keeping a sharp bead on Jenny and the others. The war of nerves went on, when suddenly the cat made its move. Drawing on all of its power from its heavily muscled hind legs, the big cat sprang. What happened next, Jenny didn't remember, for it happened so fast. The arrow flew and the animal landed in a dead heap on top of her. Its sheer weight snapped her bow and drove the splintered end deep into her left shoulder. By the time the other two had pulled the dead cat off the girl, Jenny had passed out.

Treymane examined the unconscious girl's wound and said, "It's deeper than it looks. No wonder she passed out."

"Look, we can't stay here," Roma interrupted. "Who knows what attention we attracted. Let's dress her wound and get out of here."

The hobbit agreed and bent over the elf girl. Gently he pulled the fragmented bow from her shoulder and dressed the wound with strips of cloth torn from his colorful robe. Meanwhile Roma cut some larger branches from an old sugar tree. Using some of the rope they carried, she lashed the wooden poles together to form a travois. With smaller twigs she made a soft bedding for Jenny to lie on. The remainder of the rope was used to fashion a harness that would help to pull it along. After laying the elf girl on the crude wheelless cart, Roma hitched herself into the harness and slowly pulled her injured friend along. Treymane followed behind guarding their rear and keeping an eye on Jenny.

Shortly before sundown Roma turned from the path and entered the trees towards the river. Here the going was tough and the hobbit had to help so that the travois didn't flip over as it banged against the trees. When they reached the river they stopped. The three had covered only about one third of the distance they had wanted to, but pulling the girl had slowed them down. Lowering her end gently onto the ground, Roma flopped down beside the nearest tree. The hobbit checked on Jen.

"I think she is running a fever," he whispered, as he placed his tiny hand upon her forehead. Standing, he removed his robe, threw it at Roma and called back over his shoulder, "Here, tear this into strips, while I fetch some water."

When he returned, Roma had a few ready for him. Folding the strips, he then soaked them and placed the cold compress on the feverish girl's forehead.

"I think the fever will get worse tonight," said Roma, "so we'll take turns watching her. There's an old hunter's shack about three days march from here. When we get her there, one of us can go for help. The hut isn't much, but it'll offer more protection than out here in the open."

That night the fever increased, making Jenny hallucinate. She spoke of her family and why she couldn't visit. She had to help someone, but as soon as she could, she would be there. They tried to keep her as quiet as possible. No sense letting any

other cats or bears know that they were there, for without Jenny's bow they would have to fight in close combat, which no one wanted. Twice more Jenny cried out in the night, before the fever broke. By morning she was in and out of consciousness. She sipped on some tea whenever awake, but she had lost a lot of blood and wouldn't be up and around for a few days.

"How do you feel?" asked Roma.

"Yes, how do you feel?" Treymane pushed his way in front of the tall red headed girl.

A slight smile crossed Jenny's face and she was gone again.

The next few days passed ever so slowly. Roma and Treymane took turns pulling their injured friend and by the evening of the third day, the three reached the hunting cabin. In the fading light one could see that it wasn't much to look at, but if it kept them dry, it would be enough.

Once they were sure that the cabin was unoccupied, Roma and the little man lifted Jenny and placed her on one of the sleeping bunks. While the hobbit fetched more fresh water from the river, Roma lit a fire in the large hearth. She then searched the cabin for anything that could be of use to them, but Roma found nothing except a small bag of salt. The last group of hunters that stayed here left no food behind...only a good supply of dry wood. When Treymane returned, Roma explained that they would have to feed Jen so her strength would return, but hunting at night was not a wise thing to do.

The hobbit thought a moment and then said. "I could try my luck down by the river again. Maybe there's some more fish in it."

Roma agreed to remain in the cabin while he tried his luck.

During an afternoon rest, before reaching the cabin, Roma picked some wild chamomile blossoms, which now she made into a tea and fed to Jenny. She was more awake now and slowly gaining back some of her strength.

The little man sat down on the bank and from one of his pockets pulled out a long piece of string with a hook attached. With one of his daggers he dug up a couple of worms. That done, he flung the baited hook out towards the middle of the river. Now all he had to do was sit back and wait. Soon Treymane's thoughts were of his village up in the Hillshire. How uncomplicated life was there, but he had to follow his uncle Ruffus' ways. He remembered the stories that were told at the table or by the light of the hearth fire. Treymane remembered the journeys his uncle had with Teagan and her friend Duncan the dwarf and how they fought against all odds; the stories of the victory parties and of the wealth his uncle amassed. He recalled one in particular; the time when the three along with a Roglandter, called Olin, nearly got themselves killed, trying to find a magical item deep in the cavern of Mount Capston, high in the Northern Divide. If it weren't for Teagan's powerful magic, which teleported them out when the huge chamber caved in, they would have died there. He had asked his uncle if it was worth the danger and his reply was simply "Yes." He would do it all over again, but that was his uncle. Treymane enjoyed adventuring, but the danger he could do without. He smiled at that thought. Look at him now. Just then he felt a little tug on the line. His smile grew larger.

Sometime later in the evening the hobbit entered the hut, with a smile beaming from ear to ear. In his hand, on a small string hung four good-sized fish.

It didn't take long and the meal was eaten. Jenny ate a small piece and the other two ate the rest. Roma was happy that Jenny drank the tea. This alone would make her stronger in the days to come. Since the elf girl was improving faster than she had anticipated, Roma decided not to run on ahead for help, but stay and wait for her friend to get back on her feet.

During the next four days, Jenny got up and took a few steps before collapsing again. Putting the long wait to good use, Roma cut a branch from an old hickory tree and with her knife fashioned a new bow. She had saved the old string and arrows. Now at least they could hunt. Though Roma was a fair shot with a bow, she was not as deadly as her friend was. So for now, she, or the hobbit, would have to do their best, when it came to mealtime.

He had sent word ahead to prepare his ship for departure the moment he arrived. His trip through some of the roughest parts of the Cragmores took only a few days. The roads were too narrow for his favorite carriage, so horseback it had to be. Once Malodor and his personal guard reached the Bay Gall River, they were loaded onto huge rafts and floated down towards the Saradan Sea. Over the next two days the orcs poled their way down river; Malodor and his personal guard on one raft and the horses, with all the supplies, on another. The dark druid's raft was equipped with a tent, in which he spent most of the trip. The other was corralled and strewn with hay for the animals. It was a boring trip, for as far as one could see, the river ran straight through the largest marsh on the continent. When they reached the mouth of the river, two catamarans, as large as the river rafts, were waiting to transfer them to the biggest of the three islands, which hid the delta.

Soon they were out in the open. The sea was not calm for the wind blew quite strongly, forcing many a guardsman to bend over the side. The boats were almost half way to the island when from around one of the smaller islands sailed what looked like a small fishing sloop. It soon became obvious to them that this was no ordinary fishing boat. So the alarm went up. Malodor came up on deck to see what all the commotion was about. Looking toward the approaching vessel, one could clearly make out the flag it was flying. It was that of the skull and crossbones. Sweetwater pirates they were. Some of the fiercest buccaneers to sail any of the known seas. They were also not known to take prisoners. Bearing down on the lead catamaran, the pirates' sloop dropped half of its sails and prepared to ram into them, hoping to pierce a hole into one of the floats and then board the vessel. Malodor knew what was going to happen and had his archers ready to skewer any pirate that showed himself. Behind the kneeling archers, stood another row of orc pikemen, ready to repel any boarding party. As the sloop closed in, a yell from the marauders rang out and the flash of polished steel from their swords and axes glistened as they prepared their attack. A volley of arrows flew, but only a few hit their mark.

Suddenly the sloop lurched to port. From the deck of Malodor's ship the orcs could see the sloop's captain trying desperately to steer his ship. He fought the wheel as hard as he could but to no avail; it didn't budge. From behind they saw a huge black-painted and black-sailed Carrack bearing down on their attackers. From its decks, catapults launched boulder after boulder at the doomed sloop. Some of the pirates jumped

overboard, while others tried to climb the rigging, to let out its sails, only to be cut down by Malodor's archers. It was a futile attempt, for all they would have succeeded in achieving was to hasten their demise, for the sloop was heading for the rocky shoals of the smaller island. Just before the small ship hit the rocks, Malodor threw a fireball at it, hitting the boat's mid-deck. With a loud thunderous crack, the vessel broke up on the rocks, sending the remaining sailors to a watery grave.

As soon as Malodor and his entourage was onboard the Midnight, the ship turned and headed out to sea.

A week after their arrival at the cabin, Jenny was up and about helping with small chores. Her shoulder still hurt, but at least she would be able to travel. So the night before departure, Roma and the hobbit stacked a good supply of firewood for the next inhabitants. They were not going to leave the place as they found it. They divided Jenny's backpack amongst themselves, so her shoulder could continue to heal, and in the morning they set out for Storr.

Looking up, Roma mentioned that it would rain pretty soon and that it did. They were a few hours from the cabin when the sky opened up. It wasn't long before they were soaked and seeking shelter. They found some comfort under a tall pine tree, but its branches could not stave off the rain. Huddling together for warmth, the three stayed there for most of the morning until the rain let up. Only then did they continue.

Three days they marched through the valley without meeting a soul, but on the fourth day things changed. The three were spread out on both sides of the path, hunting, for they had not eaten meat for a couple of days. From farther down the path, loud laughter could be heard. It was coming towards them. There was only time to scramble to the nearest bush or up into a pine tree and wait. Moments later, a group of orcs appeared. They were laughing and talking. Jenny didn't understand, so she kept still. They were almost past them, when one of the orcs turned and sniffed the air. The party stopped and turned. Two others began to sniff and then burst out in laughter.

"You smell humans everywhere," he said, slapping the first one on the back.

Shrugging his shoulders, he looked around once more and continued along the path catching up with the others.

The hobbit was the first one back on the path once it was safe to continue.

"I don't like this," he said softly as the other two reached him. "Orcs this far west... could mean trouble."

"We should see more patrols from Enderby, once we pass The Devil's Pass," Roma stated. "It should become safer, but I have to agree with you, Treymane, they are very far from home."

With all thoughts of hunting gone from their minds, the three continued quietly, stopping only briefly to rest. By late afternoon they stopped and chanced making a camp near the river. The hobbit tried his luck again, but this time caught only two fish.

"I guess it'll have to do," said Jenny as she cleaned and slowly cooked them over a small fire. After the meal the fire was put out and they moved farther into the forest, taking refuge under an old willow tree, whose branches bent all the way to the ground. From there they could not be seen, but they had a clear view up and down the path.

Two weeks had passed since Jenny's injury and three days since the encounter with the orcs, when they ran into a patrol from Montrose, the capital of Enderby. They explained their close call with the orcs. The soldiers said that they knew of the raiding party and thanked the three for their latest information. Then the patrol continued on their way up the valley.

"Now that we have some of our soldiers between us and the orcs, I think we can breathe a little easier tonight," stated Roma.

That night they ate well on a pheasant that Roma had killed. Treymane had dug up some wild roots that, when roasted, tasted just like potatoes. For desert, there was a hat full of raspberries, which grew along the path. The meal ended with everyone sitting around the fire, drinking cups of fresh brewed tea. Tonight they would let the fire burn to keep them warm.

Over the next couple of days the little party made its way through the forest following the river south, until it turned into a lake. Small farms sprung up here and there. Civilization at last, thought Jenny. It was good to see more humans. For a time she was beginning to think that they, along with the animals and orcs, were the only ones left on this planet. Other thoughts filled her mind; a hot bath, a home-cooked meal, not like the campfire ones. Yes and especially, a comfortable, soft bed to sleep in.

As they rounded the lake the tiny hamlet came into view. Roma picked up the pace as they drew closer to home. People tending their gardens or doing chores looked up and waved as they passed. Jenny with a big smile on her face waved back, although she hadn't a clue who she was waving at. All she could do was follow Roma's lead. Soon she found herself standing in front of a quaint little house with a thatched roof. At the door stood a rather large woman of about fifty years, motioning them to come inside.

"Is this your home?" asked Jen.

"No, it's yours," Roma replied. "We'd better get inside and meet your mother. I think she's waiting for us."

Entering the front door, Jen found herself standing in what looked like a kitchen. One wall was built of fieldstone, which housed a large hearth with something cooking, for the place smelled good. Another wall had cupboards and shelves standing free. In the middle of the room stood a long oak table with eight chairs around it. Jen gathered that most of the guests were entertained here.

Annabelle offered them a chair and asked if they were hungry. She was making a stew. No one said no and minutes later each had a bowl in front of them. Jenny, almost embarrassed, asked if they had any beer in this world.

All three broke out in laughter. "What do you think we drink here?" asked Annabelle. "We have beers, wine and other spirits in this world. But I must caution you, elves mostly drink wine. Shannon did like beer, but preferred tea or wine."

"Well this elf," added Jenny, "likes the taste of beer."

Annabelle left the room and returned a few minutes later with a large pitcher of ale. She poured each a flagon and watched Jenny's eyes start to tear, as she took a good swig.

"What is this stuff?" she asked, gasping for air.

"Some of the finest dwarven ale ever made," answered the hobbit.

"You'll get used to the taste," added Roma. "It takes a while."

When the meal was concluded, Roma excused herself and left, promising to return later. Annabelle asked the hobbit to go out and chop some wood. At first he didn't want to go, because hobbits are not very fond of work, but with the promise of an extra piece of blackberry pie, he went to fetch the wood.

"Now that I have you alone," began Annabelle, "I must ask you if you have found the box." Jenny nodded that she had and the woman continued, "The three of you must get it to your aunt in Caldor. I'm afraid you can't stay here, because Malodor is on his way to Enderby and I'm sure he plans to come looking for you here. I will give you some money so you can buy passage on one of the merchant vessels at Water's Edge. From there you will go to Sweetwood and meet Duncan, a dwarf, at the Red Dragon Inn. He will take you to Teagan, your aunt. Be very careful and don't use your magic, for Malodor can sense it and know where you are."

"Shannon is a very brave person," Jenny said, "to take on such a dangerous quest. In my world she will be completely lost, because people there have become so dependent on things like electricity, that without it most would die."

"That's another thing, girl," the woman said. "We also have to hurry, because Shannon can't remain in your world. She must return."

"And so must I," said Jenny. "I've figured out why I'm here, but can you tell me what I'm supposed to do with this box, so I can go home?"

Annabelle checked the wound on Jenny's shoulder and put a hot compress on it. This seemed to take some of the pain away. Jenny was assured that by the time she left, the pain would be greatly reduced.

"I can't tell you that," answered the old woman, "but Teagan will explain everything when you get there."

Moments later Treymane entered with an armful of wood, which he placed in a box next to the hearth. Smiling, he sat down, as Annabelle served him up another piece of pie as promised.

Roma arrived shortly after this. She had gone to see her father to explain that she might not be home for the harvest. Annabelle had already spoken to him, so he had known and said he didn't mind. Some of the boys from the village had offered to help with the crops. Her mind at ease, Roma returned to Shannon's house.

Gathering around the table, Annabelle laid out their plans for the weeks to come. They would leave Storj just after midnight when everyone was asleep. Their packs would be filled with food and other necessary items for the trip. Horses would be provided to take them out of the valley. After that, their trek would be on foot, for the animals would be needed for the plows and wagons. They would have extra pieces of silver so they could purchase whatever they would need. Also, if they were lucky, they could hitch up with a passing merchant for added protection.

Then Annabelle sent them to bed; the two girls in one room and the hobbit in another. "Ahhh," sighed Jenny as her head hit the feathered pillow. Finally, a soft, comfortable bed. *

The Last Mage continues in WARP 65.

THE STOP-MOTION ANIMATION ARTISTRY OF RAY HARRY HAUSEN

Keith Braithwaite

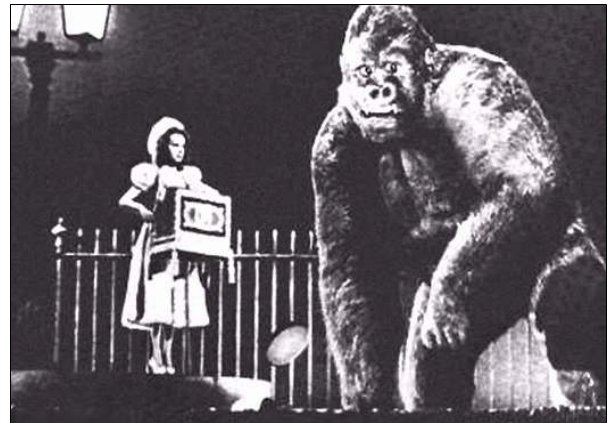
Keith Braithwaite has prepared for Warp an abridged print version of the presentation he gave at MonSFFA's March 26 meeting on stop-motion master Ray Harryhausen's career.

Still from *Evolution*: The original *King Kong* (1933) inspired a 13-year old Ray Harryhausen to his life's work. While his earliest experiments in stop-motion animation were crude, his innate talent for the craft was apparent and before long, he was turning out impressive footage like the test reels he produced for *Evolution*, his ambitious but ultimately unrealised project chronicling the evolution of life on Earth. Kong's striking Skull Island visuals—brightly lit, atmospheric backgrounds and medium middle planes juxtaposed against dark foreground elements—were inspired by the illustrations of Gustave Doré, an artist whose work Harryhausen much admired. This Doré/Kong style strongly influenced the visual design of Harryhausen's own films. There is much of Kong echoed in his work.



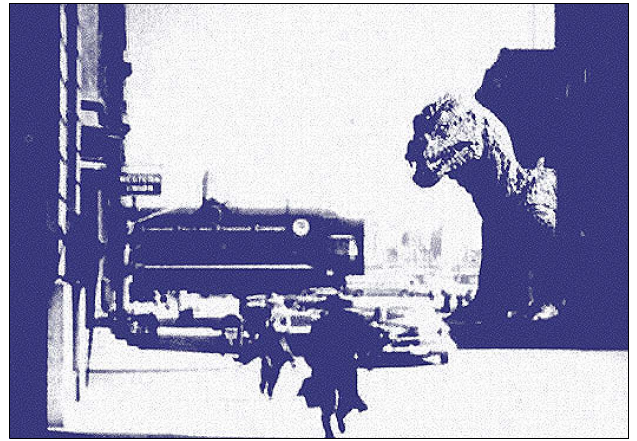
Harryhausen With Fairy Tales Models: Throughout the 1940s and early 1950s, Harryhausen produced, among others projects, numerous short subjects for children. He worked for a time on George Pal's *Madcap Models* series (later called *Puppetoons*) and with help from his parents, produced his own *Mother Goose Stories* and *Fairy Tales*, honing cinematic techniques in the process that would serve him well in later feature film work.

Another Big Gorilla: Kong animator Willis O'Brien, who had become a mentor to Harryhausen, gave the young animator his first job in features. Harryhausen was hired as "first technician" on *Mighty Joe Young* (1949) and ended up handling about 80 percent of the animation on the project. The film won an Oscar for its special effects.



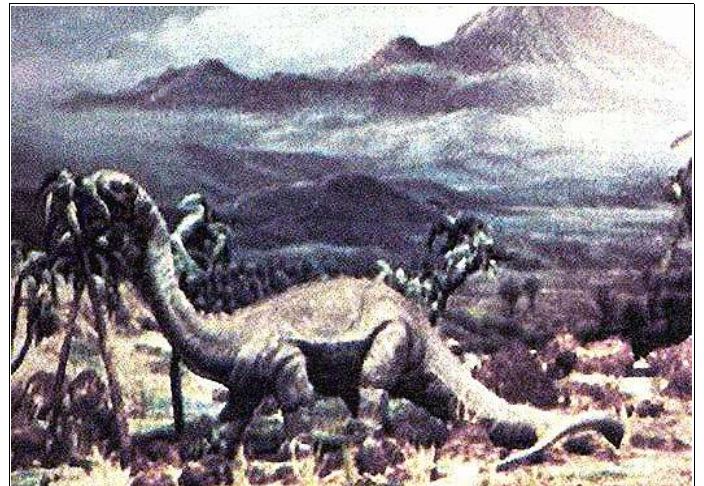
Martian Invader: Following his work on *Joe*, Harryhausen produced a few minutes of test footage for his proposed adaptation of H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, which he shopped around, eventually approaching George Pal, who was already preparing his own version of the story. Harryhausen's *War of the Worlds* concept was never picked up.

Beast in the Streets: Loosely based on his friend Ray Bradbury's short story "The Fog Horn," *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* (1952) was Harryhausen's first solo feature and a monster hit. He used rear-projection, mattes and counter-mattes, and two-pass photography to "sandwich" his model "Rhedosaurus" between the rear and foreground elements of live-action shots. This technique is sometimes referred to as a "reality sandwich."



Golden Gate Bridge Attacked: The giant octopus of *It Came From Beneath the Sea* (1955) was, in fact, a "sixtopus." The film's tight budget did not permit Harryhausen the time to animate a full set of eight undulating tentacles, so the creature was given a frugal six. Split-screen allows the sixtopus to appear to rise from the bay and attack the bridge, the closer support of which is a miniature. *It Came From Beneath the Sea* marked the beginning of Harryhausen's association with producer Charles H. Schneer.

Prehistoric Vista: Harryhausen joined Willis O'Brien once more for *The Animal World* (1956). They produced about 15 minutes of footage depicting prehistoric life for this feature film documentary similar in concept to Harryhausen's *Evolution*. Irwin Allen was producer. Harryhausen would not again have the opportunity to collaborate with "Obie," who passed away in 1962.



Capital Destruction: The flying saucer flap of the 1950s provided the subject matter of Harryhausen's next film, *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (1956). The stop-motion spinning of his alien saucers produced a distinctive strobing effect that enhanced the otherworldly appearance of the craft. Harryhausen's stop-motion destruction of Washington, D.C. was achieved through false perspective with a combination of miniatures, photographic enlargements of city landmarks, and intricate aerial-braced wire work. Each piece of crumbling debris was deftly manipulated, frame by frame.



Rampage in Rome: A Venusian creature is brought back to Earth aboard a rocket. It soon grows to enormous size and rampages through the streets of Rome. *20 Million Miles to Earth* (1957) featured Harryhausen's reptilian Ymir—never actually so named in the film—in a tale resembling *Kong*'s. Like the famous monster ape, the Ymir is taken from his home by man and brought to the big city, where he escapes and goes on a tear through town. Rome's Coliseum is the Ymir's Empire State Building—he is brought down by the military after having scaled the ancient ruin, as Kong was after having climbed to the top of the Empire State Building.



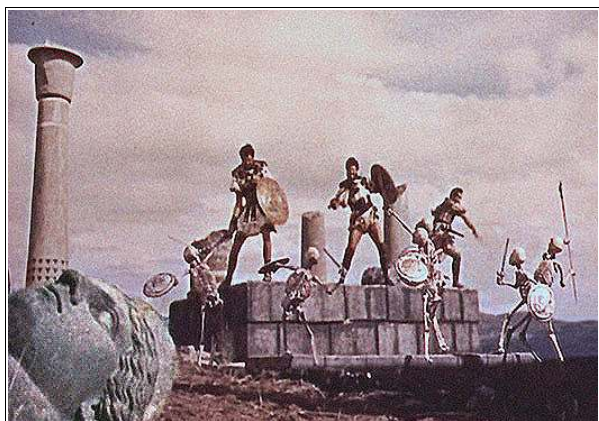
Cyclops Makes an Entrance: In one of fantasy cinema's most memorable scenes, Harryhausen's Cyclops strides out of his cave to face Sinbad and crew in *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (1958). Accompanied by Bernard Hermann's dramatic score, the monster's threatening stance and signature bellow sets moviegoers on the edge of their seats. And the excitement is just beginning! Sinbad is soon battling a giant, two-headed bird and crossing swords with a living skeleton. In the film's climatic finale, Sinbad rescues his princess as a fire-breathing dragon and Cyclops fight to the death in a clash of titans no doubt influenced by the wrestling match between Kong and a Tyrannosaurus rex Harryhausen had thrilled to as a boy watching *King Kong*. Emblematic of Harryhausen's oeuvre is the superb design, sculpt, and detailing of his animation models, as evidenced by the creatures populating *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*, which saw his dimensional animation technique dubbed "Dynamation."



Gulliver on Lilliputian Beach: The clever use of forced perspective in some shots, travelling mattes in others, allowed "tiny" and "giant" actors to appear together in the same scene. Gulliver's fight with a Brobdingnagian pet alligator is one of only two animation sequences in *The 3 Worlds of Gulliver* (1959). Harryhausen considers the sequence to be among his best work.



Facing Danger on Mysterious Island: An old-fashioned science fiction adventure, *Mysterious Island* (1961) finds a group of castaways in a land of gigantic flora and fauna, the result of experiments by Jules Verne's Captain Nemo. Harryhausen animated several exciting encounters with oversized beasts, including a crab and this honeybee.



Children of the Hydra's Teeth: A highlight of both *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963) and Harryhausen's career was the exhilarating sword fight between Jason and two of his soldiers, and seven magically resurrected skeletons, the so-called Children of the Hydra's Teeth. The scene remains, to this day, one of the finest and most complex 3-D animation sequences ever committed to film. Harryhausen took four and a half months to complete the scene, often realising but a few seconds of footage per day. Other spectacular stop-motion action featured in the movie includes Jason's slaying of the seven-headed serpentine Hydra, and the attack on the Argonauts of the 100-foot tall "living" bronze statue of Talos.

Mooncalf: *The First Men in the Moon* (1964) wrapped a modern frame around the Victorian-era H.G. Wells source material. Harryhausen designed as miniature sets many of the movie's underground caverns and chambers, and the beautifully exotic Grand Lunar's palace. The decision to film in Panavision proved problematic, however, with regard to Harryhausen's rear-projection process and time constraints did not permit him to work out a solution. The blue-screen method was therefore employed to shoot elements later to be matted into a scene. Animation sequences were limited; one scene featured the immense, caterpillar-like Mooncalf pictured.



Raquel Welch Snatched: *One Million Years B.C.* (1966) featured sexy starlet Raquel Welch clad in an animal-skin bikini, and plenty of stop-motion dinosaur action, like Welch's seizure by a Pterodactyl, shown here in a publicity still. Harryhausen had been a dinosaur enthusiast since boyhood and returned in the latter half of the 1960s to the prehistoric animals that had been the subjects of his first stop-motion experiments. He has credited the lively paintings of famed paleontological artist Charles R. Knight with inspiring his dinosaur models, dating back to early projects like *Evolution*.

Roping Gwangi: *The Valley of Gwangi* (1969) dusted off an unrealised 1941 project of Obie's that sent cowboys to a lost valley in pursuit of dinosaurs. Harryhausen's roping of Gwangi is a terrific bit of stop-motion. He animated miniature lassos (copper wire) ensnaring his Gwangi model and in long shot, aligned these miniature ropes with real lassos wielded by the cowboys in a live-action rear-projection plate. Like the Ymir, Gwangi's story mirrored Kong's.

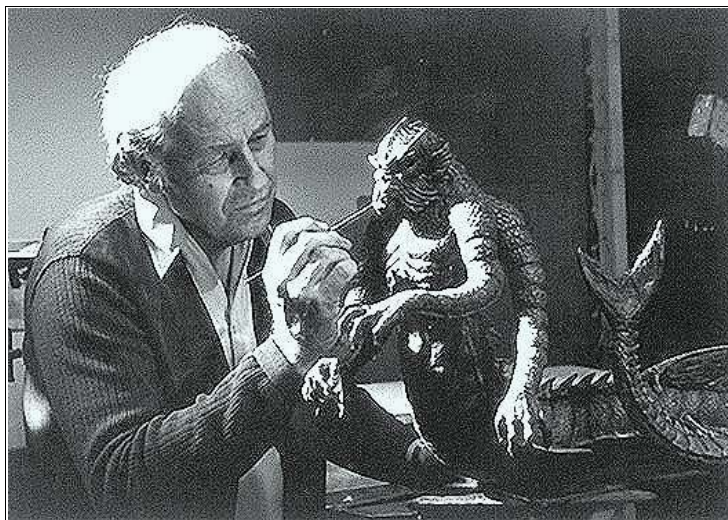


Armed Combat: The 1970s saw two *7th Voyage of Sinbad* sequels produced, *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973) being the first. Harryhausen staged a memorable sword fight for the film, pitting Sinbad and his men against a statue of the six-armed goddess Kali that Koura, the story's evil sorcerer, had imbued with "life," Talos-like. Koura had worked the same dark magic on the wooden figurehead of Sinbad's ship in an earlier scene. The closing minutes of the movie featured a huge, one-eyed Centaur squaring off against the mythological Gryphon in another of Harryhausen's many variations on the Kong/T-rex fight that had so awed him as a youngster.



Sabretooth Tiger Eyes Sinbad: The cast of creatures in *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977) included a trio of cadaverous ghouls, a gargantuan walrus, a towering mechanical brute known as the Minaton, and a Goliath-like caveman dubbed Trog. Harryhausen scrutinised the subtle movements of tigers, augmenting his observations with a study of house cats, in preparation for his animation of the masterfully crafted sabretooth tiger model featured in the climatic moments of the film.

"Joan Crawford Lighting": Flickering fire-light, ominous shadows, silhouettes, and what Harryhausen called "Joan Crawford lighting" about the eyes of his wonderfully grotesque model lend an eerie atmosphere to one of the master animator's best sequences, Medusa's stalking of Perseus and his men in *Clash of the Titans* (1981).



Harryhausen Animates Kraken: Harryhausen injured his hand while animating the Kraken seen in the finale of *Clash of the Titans*. The sequence was completed by Steve Archer, who along with Jim Danforth, had been brought in to help put the production back on schedule after technical problems had caused delays. This marked the first and only time Harryhausen engaged assistant animators on one of his films. *Titans* would prove to be Harryhausen's last picture; he retired a couple of years after the film's release. The motion picture business was changing. It was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the solo approach to his work that he was accustomed to. And, the industry was on

the verge of great technological advances. CGI would soon supplant stop-motion as the favoured means of bringing fantastic creatures of fantasy to life on screen and Harryhausen had not the passion for this new method that he had for stop-motion. Ten years after the release of *Titans*, Harryhausen received a special Oscar—presented to him by life-long friend Ray Bradbury—in recognition of "a lifetime of technical excellence" in motion pictures. ✱

This is a bit longer, but an excellent story as it presents well the Church's anti-evolutionary stance -- at least at the time..

Brother Levrai's Strange Adventure

from Joe Trimborn (1913)

also p. 73-87 in *La Belgique fantastique avant et après Jean Ray*
(1975, Verviers, Belgium: André Gerard)

To my friend Brother Levrai,
among the incurables at the public lunatic asylum.

Sleep-walkers interest us; we flee from the insane. Nevertheless, the mysterious kingdoms of their subconscious are remarkably similar to one another.

As for me, I have always been keenly curious about certain forms of insanity and I remain the last friend of the poor brother who was locked up at Petites-Maisons.

This is his story.

I tell it as a composite of several talks we had together. If I do not present the story in the teller's own voice it is that I had to put some order amongst certain details and place in chronological order generally disjointed and episodic facts and remembrances, such as poor lunatics generally provide.

The words may be different, but I have maintained intact the meaning and intention, which represent the understanding of a story. One may complain that the story is full of crazy and improbable things. How could it be otherwise?

Besides, wisdom can draw more than one lesson from lunacy, just as the man of wit discovers, in his neighbour, what makes him an idiot and from which he only differs in that he avoids allowing others the same perspective.

Rome had not yet admitted as orthodox the theory of evolution. She reserved judgment, in her obliging attention to all that relates to knowledge, and closed her eyes on the battles raging around the great principle.

Without having given safe haven to the working hypothesis that God had perhaps contented himself in creating the first cell, leaving in its care the perfection of his work, it neither encouraged nor discouraged anyone. Like a mother watching over her children's gambols, if ready to intervene at the first sign of danger, she measured the risks incurred, in such intellectual games, to those of hers who were following the new doctrine.

She was conscious of her authority and that she would know, at the appropriate time, to either draw them back to a respect of the doctrine or make it conform to scientific necessities, if the clear interests of the church required such a sacrifice.

In the favoured shadow of this maternal tolerance, brother Levrai had given himself, body and soul, to questions of anthropology, and later, tempted by the example of the glorious adventurers who had exiled themselves to India in the hope of finding the vestiges of the putative ancestor, he had exchanged his secular priests cassock for the earnest missionaris frock and had shipped out to the mysterious lands of the Malay archipelago.

Driven by his hankering for knowledge – to experience, as he stated, Truth fulfilled – strong in the priests vocational sacrifice which extends to the sacrifice of ones life, he

scornfully ignored the already explored regions of Borneo to rush off, enraptured in faith and science, into the most fearful jungles of a fearful land.

To say that in his scientists soul he had forgotten God, would be to misrepresent the sincerity of his faith, but it would be equally true to state that he did not choose the most inhabitable regions, when other regions could have, with greater likelihood, been presumed to house tribes in need of conversion. When the scientist and the believer are at odds over things which are so closely related, it is very rare that one does not come to lead the other on.

Furthermore, having met with truly isolated troglodytic races, consumers of raw roots and meat, which supplanted the less and less numerous hordes of Dayaks and Papous; having descended step by step the scales of barbarity, the brother had eventually lost all traces of humanity.

The mystery of the jungles deepened along with the rising dangers associated with wild beasts, these as much to be feared as were men. But Nature beautified herself so solemnly; the vegetation transformed the earth into a marvellous world; the interlaced lianas and flowers formed such wild and fantastic arabesques; the clearings which suddenly opened up into fairyland chambers were the site of such fascinating silence that all notion of fear, all instinct of self-preservation was extinguished under the intoxicating influence to share in the multifaceted life of dominant and virginal Nature. And the brother had ever pressed forward, towards the heart of the mystery, untouched by any other emotion, living off the few

roots which science helped him identify as being able to satisfy his hunger.

Only night was worrisome, for then the monkeys would chase him, their numbers growing daily, accumulating in living garlands hanging from the trees to the left and right of his path, advancing with him and only stopping at night, no doubt curious of his sudden stop, and then only to burst out in such a racket that sleep would not close his tired eyelids.

It was thus an extraordinary existence for many days in which even his consciousness dwindled as he distanced himself from humanity, as he left it behind, as he thought, much as one leaves a country behind.

Amidst this prodigious and incredible vegetation, he soon no longer conceived of his individuality from the rest of Nature. He ended up seeing himself, in a conceptualization that was only in part under his control, as only one more unit in this bewildering profusion of wildlife and vegetation.

Like his inferior fellows, did he not live at the whim of the Unknown? Like them, had he not lost his sense of self-preservation, only to find it again when suddenly face to face with impending danger? Yes indeed, it was their awe and wide-eyed surprise before all things, their continuous ecstatic state, softly slipping into an underlying unconsciousness, pushing him towards blissful animality.

On occasion he would remember his mission, which he somewhat neglected; but in absolving himself he reasoned that perhaps God would one day show him the marvellous things which bear within them the science behind all creation. Then, having beheld such a thing face to face, he would draw from his soul lyrics worthy of the loveliest hymn to God, words which would proclaim his Truth.

This one thought, almost a hope, was enough to retemper his will; he would move on again fresh and renewed, like the greatest seekers of knowledge, against all odds, even ready to undergo a missionary's martyrdom, for, in the end, were he not the one to bring truth to others, but rather he who seeks it unto death, would he be any less a missionary of Truth?

Thus discovering in his passion the very justification for his passion, he once again considered the other goal of his mission: to find the mysterious link which ties man to his unknown ancestor, the pithecoïd, in a word, that which represents the Holy Grail of the anthropologists science, the yet inviolate tabernacle of revealed truth.

The brother, lifting his eyes to those accompanying him on his way, cried out: "A bit more than you, a wee bit more! I couldn't even express what, but, well...that something, that nothing which nonetheless differentiates you from us..."

Upon this, the monkeys afforded him their sympathy and forgot their nightly carousing. Who knows, he thought, perhaps they are angels which the Lord has sent me to lead me as he once did Toby; they are perhaps to me what the star was to the Wise Men! In his simplicity, it had never occurred to the brother that he would have guessed so accurately.

A few days later, as he proceeded on his way, following his supernatural guides, these – as the Wise Mens star did when they were in sight of Bethlehem – suddenly stopped; their raucous cries were muffled; soon there was only a great

whispering, as if the wind, unknown in this thick jungle, had begun to blow the reeds and palms.

The brother stopped. What did his angels want? Left and right, there were only thousands of glittering, apprehensive eyes. The monkeys, oscillating in counter-point the garlands of their intermingled bodies and interlaced tails, slowly, very slowly drew back and disappeared, one after another, in the direction whence they had come.

The brother felt abandoned, alone, terribly alone, as if his guardian angel had forsaken him. What could he do, it was not time to retire to sleep; definitely, he would not go back. Besides, some vague prescience warned him that great things were going to happen.

Night was not yet complete; he went on, less assuredly perhaps, hesitating as to which direction to take. Finally a sort of winding passage among the lianas opened up before him. It was almost a path, but a path arched over by the tree canopies. Surprisingly, the leaf litter showed signs of trampling! But now, a few paces farther, a clearing opened up, where, for reasons known only to Nature, the vegetation had reined in its exuberant growth. It was a veritable green-walled and roofed crypt, whose twilight sparkled with myriads of phosphorescent insects. The smells of moist soil and succulent flowers thickened the warm air.

The brother stopped, intimidated, composing himself as when he entered a church. A greenish half-light obscured the clarity of things – his eyes were adjusting to it – he soon was able to distinguish, along with the walls and columns the jungle simulated, a few raised beds upon which were strewn sets of bones. It was a cemetery, the catacomb of a new species. He moved forward a step at a time, dumbfounded.

His anthropologist's eye could not deceive him.

This cranium! These femurs! These jaw-bones! He began to measure them, to estimate their volumes, and who knows what else? His heart was pounding, his hands clenched the bones; he held truth! And suddenly he trembled. Was it not a sin to know so intimately what God had seemingly wished to keep hidden for so many eons, that which he had so carefully hidden! Truth! Was this not God's treasure, and did man truly have the right to appropriate it in this manner, through patience and perseverance?

Ah! How difficult it was to distinguish good from evil!

How clearly he comprehended the huge import of the parable of the forbidden fruit! God and the devil were right; the Lord because it was true that man in eating of the fruit of science transgressed upon the mysteries which surrounded him; the devil because it was true that through science man attained absolute wisdom.

What was he to do? And, like Hamlet, he held a skull in his hand – and, like Eve, he thought he held the forbidden fruit in his hand; he hesitated.

Hamlet won out. Besides it was too late, since he already knew. He had measured and estimated the volume of everything. He was convinced; he even wondered if he would go further, for this cemetery led to the unavoidable conclusion that a colony of pithecanthropes was present.

He would go on! But which way? His angels were no

longer there. It was only a passing hesitation; a mysterious certainty drove him as if, having so distanced himself from humanity and come closer to his less evolved fellows, an innate sense of direction had been added to his other faculties. Besides, the path took up again on the far side of the clearing, and as he straddled roots monstrously twisted and knotted like the coils of a giant serpent, how his soul took flight! His attention was soon entirely devoted to the silence which, in these impenetrable jungles, was of an unusual nature: it is not the silence of the plains or mountains, where the slightest sound expands infinitely through space or echoes and dies out; it is a living silence, alive with thousands of imperceptible sounds which an innumerable, invisible fauna creates through the efforts of their hidden but continuing life.

However, a remarkably regular series of blows, muffled by their distance, broke through the silence. The brother went on. The blows became more distinct, and, had it not been for the improbability of such a supposition, Levrai would have taken them to be the sound of a hammer or axe.

This was also the call of the Unknown, echoing through the missionary and scientist heart. Was he going to find himself among an unknown people? How would first meeting unfold? Bloody visions of martyrdom clouded his eyes.

The blows had stopped suddenly. The brother took a few quiet, tentative steps, careful not to disturb the cover of silence which spread out around him. And again he found himself in front of a clearing; frozen he tried to peer in. No one! Had they fled at his approach? And notwithstanding his earlier visions of torture and death, he was wracked with regret. The words gorilla, orang-outang trembled on his lips.

But here it was that his eyes suddenly stopped, awestruck, on some sort of huge nest built of screw-pine leaves and woven branches, a genuine hut supported on the main limbs of a tree and reaching to the upper limbs for support as it circled about the trunk.

O! what minutes of anticipation! The anticipation of the big game hunter who sees the tiger's head emerge from the jungle like a blossom suddenly bursting open. The nest's leaves were suddenly thrust apart; a sudden leap, and an extraordinary creature, half-man, half-beast was standing there erect, right in front of the brother. A tragic moment, for ape or man, it held a great club in its hand.

Their eyes met and the anger burning in the ape's eyes died out as it observed the brother's humble, not to say pitiable aspect.

On his side, the brother, seeing the gradually mellowing mood of the...man and wishing to ensure his goodwill, said to him in his most fawningly sympathetic voice, nonetheless tinged with his overwhelming emotion:

"Good day, my friend..."

He would have preferred something better suited to the solemnity of the occasion, but nothing had come to him.

The ape, on his part, replied with an inarticulate grunt, which nonetheless indicated his seemingly great forbearance for the inoffensive and hang-dog look of the one engaging him in an exchange.

The brother was already telling himself that he had here,

at hand, the celebrated mystery of human history, the truth regarding creation. His emotions overwhelmed him; the large ape appeared beautiful to him, particularly in terms of moral beauty, for, when all was said and done, if he had wanted to, he could have sent the brother sprawling ten feet away with one blow of his club.

How shameful to think that a man would have acted thus! He was so overwhelmed, that had the brave anthropologist dared he would have given the ape a great big hug, but he did not even risk a handshake. But such moments cannot last forever, as impressive and eternal as the first meeting between man and his ancestor might appear in the eyes of Levrai. Again he would have liked to have something grand, unforgettable to say, words which would have consecrated this unique instant of Eternity; he was too awestruck to be inspired.

"Good day, my friend..." he repeated with a smile.

The ape affectionately took hold of his arm, and drawing him towards the tree, made a soft little cry. His mate showed herself.

Levrai, for all that he was a priest, could not help but find her somewhat attractive. She was not overly hairy – for that matter, her husband was not either – but more so than ordinary women, certainly, even those with the most abundant hair, the bushiest eyebrows, the most shadowed lips, but this detail only proved a greater attraction to him. The brother was going to look her over in even greater detail when he remembered his youth and saw himself on the slippery slope of covetousness, nay, even perhaps adultery!

He nonetheless had some difficulty during the days in which he stayed with his new hosts, to avoid, without offending her with a blunt rebuff, the ever mounting attentions of his hostess. He thought, more than once, he could read in his friend's eye a small glint of jealousy. He was wrong; everything pointed to... man being above such feelings, but the brother saw with bitterness that the sins of lust and adultery were older than man, and that no bloodline went back far enough, for these sins sank their roots even unto our ancestral animality. How well he now understood the inefficacy of laws and religions in proscribing physical love!

It was only these matters of the flesh, which troubled the fortnight he spend among his hosts – like those cold, nasty winds which sometimes mar a lovely spring morn. Besides, he quickly regained his composure, and, his missionary's conscience regaining an upper hand, he tried, at every appropriate opportunity, to draw the exchange into the domain of his apostolate. It was rather difficult; they understood each other so little, not to mention the difficulty in discussing the divine in a place yet so close to primæval nature.

To the brother, however, they were men, rough and uncouth, but men! He even had to admit, to his dismay, that they understood him better in all things than he did them. But every time he had said to himself: "now is the right moment to broach the great question," and had begun to talk, by gestures as much as by words, of the Infinite, while his hosts' eyes had indeed followed the mysterious signs of the Absolute he traced out in the air, when, carried away with his subject, he tried to have them understand the great questions of the faith, he had

found his listeners distracted, dozing off, just like peasants during a Sunday sermon. His flock even had the unfortunate habit, at the most solemn moments, for example when he extolled the supreme importance of only considering one's salvation in the hereafter, they would scratch with their fingers the sores which plagued the brother's neck.

He had to face the facts; these people were not yet at the stage of considering God. Beyond food and drink and letting Nature provide for them, the only thing which worried them was the extinction of their race.

He had managed to explain quite clearly that they were the last of their species, and that notwithstanding their diligent efforts they had not borne any children, and that their name, which for them was the equivalent, was going to be forgotten and lost in nothingness. It was through a feeling of pride, born from the remarkable things they believed they had done, but that pretty much inexplicable instinct, which pushes our middle-class to wish for a boy in order to perpetuate the family name, which, only really manages to perpetuate their name and their misery.

When, finally, the missionary became disillusioned as to the efficacy of his zealous preaching and he saw, more clearly than ever, the dangers of this ménage-à-trois, he resolved to part from his friends. The anthropologist took the upper hand; he foresaw a mission to accomplish, that of going to announce to the scientific world what he had seen, that is the very truth regarding the theory of evolution. His self-esteem was excited by the importance of such a mission, and with all the tenderness one can convey in gestures, he opened up to his friends.

The woman was greatly saddened, a rather human emotion, for one knows that a man will most regret the departure of his mate's friend, while the woman would rather more cry over the departure of a friend.

On the day of their separation, the goodbyes were touching and even, miraculously, at certain moments, tears wetted his hostess's eyelids; the man was awestruck, he had never seen the likes of it, neither he, nor his mate, nor any of his species had ever cried.

It was the first sobs of the race and it was love which had brought them on! The poor unfortunate went sadly back to her nest and only his friend remained to escort him back out.

They followed each other in silence, but already the split had occurred in their hearts. The steps they took together tread on the ground of parting, the ground which separates, the ground which draws apart; memories interposed between them as one made his way back to the land of men and the other, in spirit, turned back to the lonely place where his mate waited for him.

In such a manner they reached the crypt. The wild man stopped and the brother understood that this was the spot which he had tacitly chosen as the farthest point he would go.

The brother made it understood with friendly gestures that he would have been well pleased were he to walk along farther with him, but in vain. By other gestures the primitive man made him to understand that this cemetery represented the ends of the earth to him, and that none of his race would ever consent to go beyond the territory where his ancestors had settled for eternity, that it was an intangible law not to see beyond the death, and it would have shown a lack of respect for them to go on.

Thus then, the brother considered, the cult of the past and the sadness of love which had been recently manifest in the spouse, these two characteristics of our civilization, the great apes knew and were subject to them already.

There was nothing that could be done, the reasons were among those one does not discuss; the moment of parting had arrived. Friend held out a hand to the friend who placed his in it; the priest lifted ceremoniously his right hand and was going to make the sign of the cross over the apes head, when the latter, taken by who knows what fear, turned suddenly and disappeared into the jungle.

After much trials and tribulations and yet more dangers, the brother had finally reached Pontianak.

His spiritual headquarters was the Capuchin convent where he found Father Palud, his director of conscience, in flourishing health. He had been anxious to see him again, especially since such great but fearful things had occurred in his shaken soul, and that he felt the need to retemper his faith in the strong, perhaps somewhat sectarian faith of his confessor, and to draw from it that blind confidence in God that one loses too easily when alone with Nature.

He had just giving a truthful account of his incredible adventure, increasingly apprehensive of Father Palud's obstinate silence, when the latter, in a curt, cold voice which cut like a knife, cried out in irritation:

"What you have done is a crime. You have betrayed the Church's eternal truth for the adulterous love of worldly truth. You have picked the forbidden fruit and I understand that you would wish other men to bite into it.

"For the sake of simple scientific curiosity you would abandon all your spiritual learning. This will not happen! Even if it is the death of me, I will save the eternal truth. Follow me!"

"But—"

And without further delay, the monk shoved before him the sad and discouraged missionary who dared not further disturb Father Palud's stubborn silence. They left the convent and headed to the jungle, retracing step by step the unbelievable and dangerous route the brother had already covered twice, full of hope upon leaving, with the scientist's pride of discovery upon his return. ✱

Watch for the tragic conclusion of Brother Levrai's Strange Adventure in WARP 65.

Learn more about the pithecanthropes, now known as *Homo erectus* (Java Man), <http://www.mnh.si.edu/anthro/humanorigins/>

The Doctor Visits Smallville

Josée Bellemare



Rose and the Doctor were just about to leave London when the Doctor noticed something strange on one of the console monitors...

That's odd."
"What is?" asked Rose.
"The Tardis is detecting an alien energy signature."
"Coming from space?"
"No, it's strictly on the surface," the Doctor responded.
"A transporter beam. Low level, not enough energy to get through the atmosphere."
"Are we going to check it out?"
"Might as well. I'll set the coordinates for the point of arrival." The Tardis started up and within minutes they had arrived at their destination.
"Here we are. You'd better bundle up, Rose, it's freezing out there."
"Where are we?" she asked.
"Northern part of Alaska. The North Pole basically."

Their arrival had not gone unnoticed. The noise had attracted the attention of a young couple. "Stay behind me," warned the young man, "until we know what this is. I don't want you getting hurt."

Just then a strange, blue box materialised. Its door opened and out walked a very human-looking couple.

"Nice place you have here," the man commented, as he stared around the frigid wastes. "The crystalline formation is definitely alien. A bit cold though. Ever consider central heating?"

The young man stepped forward. "Who are you and how did you get here?"

"My apologies, I'm the Doctor and this is Rose Tyler. We got here in my Tardis. Who are you? What planet do you come from?"

The couple looked at each other and the girl just shrugged.

"My name is Clark Kent and this is Chloe Sullivan. Are you telling me that that thing is a space ship?"

Clark focussed his x-ray vision on the Tardis. He was quite surprised by what he saw. He then turned his attention to Rose and the Doctor. "That thing is bigger inside than outside. She's human but you're not: you have two hearts. What planet are you from and what are you doing here?"

Rose looked at the Doctor. "How does he know?"

"I have many talents... Again, what planet are you from and what are you doing here?"

"No need to get upset, we're friendly. Rose is from London, England and I'm from the planet Gallifrey. We detected the energy signature of the transport beam and thought we should check it out.

"What about you? The design of this place is clearly not from this planet and I'm pretty sure you're not either, just as I'm sure Clark Kent isn't your real name. What's your home world?"

"Clark Kent is the name I go by and I grew up on Earth. Only a handful of people know I'm from another planet. My birth name is Kal El. I'm from the planet Krypton. I was sent to earth when I was just a baby."

"Krypton you say?"

"Ever been there, Doctor?" Rose asked.

"No but I have heard of it. It was destroyed a while back."

"The Time War?"

"No, as far as I know, a geomagnetic instability in the planet's core caused it to explode."

"So there's nothing left."

"Only a lot of meteors," said Clark. They crashed on Smallville almost 20 years ago, at the same time as my ship."

"So, since you've been here all this time I take it you have no hostile intent towards the planet or its inhabitants," the Doctor looked thoughtfully at Clark.

"Of course not. If anything I'm usually saving people from one threat or another."

"Clark here is as close as you can get to a superhero," Chloe said. "All he needs is a colourful costume, a catchy name and he's good to go."

"Chloe, don't exaggerate," Clark looked embarrassed.

"Deny it, if you can!"

Clark could only shrug.

"That's a relief to know," said Rose, "considering the number of hostile aliens we've had to stop. Since I've been with the Doctor, it's been one invasion after another. The Autons, the Gelth, the Daleks, the Slitheen, the Sycorax... it can be rather exhausting."

"You have to tell me all about it!" said Chloe, the reporter in her coming out.

"I don't think the world is ready for that," said the Doctor.

"Maybe not, but I'm dying to find out more."

"Maybe later. For now I'd rather get back to what brought us here. I'd be very interested in finding out more about your transporter beam," said the Doctor, looking at Clark. "I know it works as a link between two set points but what's at the other end? I'm also curious to know how you built this place."

"The departure point is a chamber in the Kawatche caves. They were discovered a few years ago. The walls are covered with paintings depicting various legends of the Kawatche people."

"One of those legends is all about Clark," said Chloe.

"Really!? I'd love to take a look at those caves."

"Why don't you come to Smallville?" asked Clark. "You can stay at my farm and you can examine the caves all you want."

"Thank you for the invitation," said the Doctor. "Are you sure your parents won't mind?"

"No problem – Lois is out of the country and my mom is stuck in the state capitol for another week. You can hide your ship in the barn."

"Fine then, just give me the coordinates to your farm and I'll transport there in minutes. Would like to travel with us in the Tardis?"

"You mean, in your ship? Chloe's eyes widened. "Are you serious?"

"Absolutely. You'll love it."

"I don't know about you, Clark, but I'm in. This the chance of a lifetime."

"Sounds like a plan, said Clark. "Just let me grab the key."

A quick flash of blue and Clark was back. "Okay, let's go."

"X-ray vision, super speed, what else can you do?" Rose asked.

"A lot of things but we can talk about that later. Let's see this ship of yours."

All four entered the Tardis. Clark and Chloe stared at the control room as they walked in. "Now Clark, if you could pinpoint the location of your farm on the map, we can be on our way," said the Doctor.

Clark went up to the console screen and showed the Doctor the exact coordinates of the farm. The engine started and minutes later they materialized just outside the barn.

"Wow, this is incredible!" Clark exclaimed. "By the way, you didn't say, what's your name? Doctor who?"

"Just the Doctor."

Chloe spoke up. "That's not going to be enough. The people you run into will ask questions. You'll need some sort of cover story."

The Doctor thought for a moment. "How about Doctor John Smith? I've used the name before. I'm visiting Smallville to study the cave paintings and Rose is my assistant."

"That should work," said Clarke. "Do you want to stay in the house, or does that ship of yours have bedrooms?"

"We have rooms of our own in the Tardis, but perhaps we can leave a few things in your house to keep up appearances."

"I'll go pack a bag," said Rose. "Hey, Chloe, want a tour of the Tardis?"

The girls went into the Tardis. The Doctor turned towards Clark.

"In the meantime you can tell me about these cave paintings and the Indian legends."

During the next hour Clark told the Doctor about the caves, the legend of Naman and Segith, Jor El, the three stones of power, how they came together to form a single stone and

how it created the crystal fortress.

He also told the Doctor about kryptonite, its effect on Clark and the mutations it caused on some people over the years.

"That's fascinating," said the Doctor. "I'm looking forward to seeing those caves. For now, I think it's time for dinner. I don't know about you, but I'm getting hungry."

During dinner Chloe took great pride in telling Rose and the Doctor about Clark's various exploits, much to his embarrassment. After dinner Chloe drove back to Metropolis.

After Clark had gone to bed, Rose and the Doctor were talking in the Tardis.

"So, Doctor, what do you think of Clark Kent? Do you think he can be trusted?"

"Yes, Rose, I do. In spite of the fact that he's an alien from another planet, he's just what he appears to be: a farm boy from Kansas and I believe he has a great destiny ahead of him."

"So what are we doing here?" asked Rose.

"For one thing, I'm curious about those cave paintings and I would like to have a better look at that crystal fortress. Who knows, I may even be able to talk to the spirit of Jor El, Clark's biological father."

"Good luck on that last one. Anyway, I'm going to bed. Good night, Doctor."

"Good night Rose."

The next morning Clark took Rose and the Doctor to see the caves. They took video recordings of every painting and symbol. The Doctor seemed to understand them all. Then they looked at the chamber and the altar table and Clark explained that when he puts the key in the slot it activates the transporter beam.

After a detailed examination of the caves, they all went into Smallville for a bite to eat at the Talon.

As they were enjoying coffee and sandwiches at a secluded corner table, Clark was telling Rose and the Doctor about Jor El's visit to Smallville.

"So Jor El came to earth in the '60s and met the Kents so when he sent you here to save your life he knew who he could trust," said the Doctor.

"Pretty much, yeah," responded Clark.

"Wow, that's so incredible!" Rose exclaimed.

"Clark, would it be possible for me to talk to Jor El?" asked the Doctor.

Clark let out a long sigh. "I don't know. I can take you to the fortress and show you the control console but I can't guarantee anything."

"Thank you," said the Doctor. "When can we go?"

"How about tomorrow?"

"Fair enough. In the meantime I'm going to spend the afternoon inputting the data from the caves." Then the Doctor suggested, "Why don't you do some shopping?"

"In Smallville?" Rose looked doubtful.

"I could drive you to Metropolis," said Clark. "Besides,

I'm sure Chloe would love to hear about your adventures."

"Sounds like a plan."

"Alright then, let's go," said Chloe. "Doctor, we can drop you off at the farm before we go."

"Thank you."

The three left the Talon and dropped the Doctor off at the Kent's home. Then Rose and Clark left for Metropolis. Along the way they saw that a car had hit an electrical pole. The driver was unconscious, the car was leaking gas and a downed power line was shooting sparks.

"Stay in the car, I don't want you getting hurt," said Clark, and then he was out of the truck, tearing the door off the car, and pulling the driver to safety. Just then the gas reached the power line and the car blew up. That's when Clark threw the driver to the ground and shielded him from the flames.

When all was clear, Clark walked back to the truck and pulled out his cell phone. "911, how can we help you?"

"I want to report an accident on route 25, 10 miles south of Smallville," said Clark. "Live power lines on the ground, the car blew up and is still burning. The driver is safe but he is injured. I'll stay on the scene until emergency services arrive."

"Super strong and fireproof on top of the powers I've already seen. What else can you do?" asked Rose.

"Another time. Right now it looks like the shopping trip is cancelled," Clark answered.

"It was worth it just to see you in action" said Rose. "That was incredible!"

Sirens in the distance were getting closer. "Not a word about my powers. We got here, the door was already off the car and I pulled the driver out to safety long before the car exploded."

"Got it."

After giving their version of the facts to the police, Clark and Rose drove back to the farm.

"What are you two doing back so soon?" asked the Doctor.

"We saw an accident," said Rose, "and Clark used his super powers to rescue the driver. You should have seen it; he was amazing!"

"Really? I'm sorry I missed it, so long as the two of you aren't hurt..."

"Don't worry, Doctor," Clark reassured him. "I made sure Rose stayed safe."

"I'm sure you did," said the Doctor. "That's the sort of person you are. Since you're back, how about some dinner? I don't know about you guys, but I'm getting hungry."

"I can barbecue some steaks if you're up for it," said Clark.

"Sound good!" the Doctor responded, smiling.

A few minutes later, Rose was preparing a salad, and the Doctor was setting the table. Clark was trying to get the coals burning. Finally, he gave up conventional methods and used his heat vision. The Doctor looked impressed.

"Must come in handy sometimes. How long have you

had these powers of yours?"

"Some I've had all my life," Clark answered. "but others have popped up over the years. It's always a bit... confusing at first, but I usually get the hang of it after a few days."

"That I can understand," the Doctor sympathised. "I have the same problem with my regenerations."

"Regenerations? What's that?" asked Clark.

"A trick my species has to cheat death. If I'm injured so badly that I'm about to die, every cell in my body regenerates and I change into a new form."

The look on Clark's face showed disbelief.

"It's true," Rose confirmed. "I saw it happen. He was out of it for a couple of days."

"So, basically, you're immortal."

"Long lived, yes, but not immortal. I can only regenerate 12 times. I'm at my 10th life. I'm 900 hundred years old."

"Fascinating," said Clark. "In all your years you must have seen so many wonders."

"I've been travelling with the Doctor for about a year now," said Rose, "and I've seen things and places you can't imagine. I saw planets at the other end of the universe and met people from history. I've seen *A Christmas Carol* performed by Dickens himself."

"History? Dickens?" Clark looked incredulous.

"Didn't I mention? The Tardis can travel in time as well as in space."

"You could go back in time! You could take me back in time to save..."

Rose cut him off before he could finish his sentence. "Don't even think about it. It doesn't work that way. You can't change the past. I know, I tried. I wanted to save my dad and the consequences nearly destroyed the world."

"I guess I had to ask."

"I understand. Believe me, you're not the first to ask."

"So, if I can't change the past, how about you tell me about it?" Clark suggested. "You must have some incredible stories. Did you really meet Charles Dickens? Who else have you met?"

So, the Doctor spent the rest of the evening telling stories about some of the famous historical figures he'd met in his travels.

"You actually inspired H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*?"

"Not intentionally," the Doctor answered, "but it worked out that way."

"I bet you don't get to tell these stories very often. Chloe is going to be sorry she missed this."

"I'll find a way to make it up to her somehow," the Doctor promised. "But if we're going to travel to the North Pole in the morning, we should get a good night's sleep."

The next morning they all went down to the caves. The Doctor wanted to experience the transport beam. He took a scanner and his sonic screwdriver along with him. When they got there, Clark led them to the transport chamber.

"Hold on," he advised. "The first time leaves you a little rattled."

Rose and the Doctor took hold of Clark's shoulder, one on each side, just as he put the key in the slot. They were surrounded by a whirlwind.

When they arrived at the Fortress, Rose felt a little dizzy but, to no one's surprise, the Doctor was fine.

"If you come with me," said Clark, "I'll give you the grand tour."

"No offence, Clark, but the décor doesn't impress me," said the Doctor. "This whole ice walls thing just doesn't do it for me."

"I don't blame you. I felt the same at first but you get used to it after a while."

"Clark, you were going to show me the control console," the Doctor reminded him.

"It's this way, but I have no idea if you'll be able to talk to Jor El. A lot of its functions I still haven't figured out."

The Doctor scanned the console in detail. He then looked at the readings, made some adjustments to the sonic screwdriver, and held it over the console.

When he turned it on it glowed its usual blue but then the console also started to glow. The Doctor looked rather smug. At that moment the console came to life. "Who are you to call me? You are not human. What planet are you from?"

"I am the Doctor, a Time Lord from the planet Gallifrey."

"The Doctor... I have heard of you. I thought you were only a legend..."

"As you can see, I am very real. I was hoping we could talk."

"What is your business with my son, Kal El?"

"No business in particular. I detected the energy signature of the transport beam and thought I should check it out. Now that that's done, I'll be moving on. You know, he's a fine young man."

"He is rebellious and stubborn," Jor El seemed to sigh.

"And what were you like when you were that age?" asked the Doctor.

The response sounded almost like a chuckle. "You have a point, Doctor. All things considered, he has turned out well. The Kents did a good job raising him."

"You can be very proud of him. He has great potential."

"Yes, he is destined for great things."

"I look forward to seeing that."

"As do I Doctor, as I do. It's been a pleasure speaking with you."

"I found it quite enlightening as well, Jor El."

The light in the console turned off. The Doctor then turned to Clark. "Since we're here, would you care to show us around?"

So Clark spent the next half hour showing Rose and the Doctor around the Fortress. They got back to Smallville just in time for lunch.

"Why don't you two take that trip to Metropolis as you planned while I go pick up a little something for Chloe," suggested the Doctor.

"When are you going?" asked Rose.

"The end of the 19th century."

So Clark and Rose went shopping in Metropolis and the Doctor went to New York. They all made it back to the Kent farm sometime in the evening.

While Rose was putting away her purchases, the Doctor took Clark aside.

"Clark, last night I was thinking and it occurred to me that you may not be the last of your kind. We both know that Krypton was capable of deep space travel. It is possible that some of your people may still be alive. Embassies on other planets, trade delegations, deep space exploration. Don't give up hope."

"Thank you Doctor."

"This is for Chloe, to make up for missing the tales of my adventures. Goodbye Clark, see you around."

The Tardis left on its way to their next adventure.

The next day, Clark gave Chloe her gift. She opened the box. It was a book. She started turning the pages.

"What is it, Chloe?"

"It's a scrapbook of press clippings. Oh my God! It's the complete works of Nellie Bly!" she exclaimed.

"Nellie Bly? Where have I heard that name before?"

"She was the first female investigative journalist. She was a big champion of women's rights and social issues. It's all here: her exposes of insane asylums and sweatshops all the way to her time in Europe during WWI. This is incredible! The Doctor is amazing..."

"Obviously he knew what to get for you," Clark chuckled. "Enjoy your collection. I have to get back to the farm. See you around, Chloe!" ✱

According to the Doctor Who Information Network (DWIN), the CBC has not yet announced when they will air the new season of Doctor Who, though with hockey back (last season there was an NHL lockout) it is unlikely to be this spring. They speculate that we may have to wait for the fall because the show was too much of a hit to squander the



ratings by broadcasting during the summer. Meanwhile, desperate fans are pestering friends in Britain for copies of the show, or downloading episodes from the Internet. You can keep up with the latest news by joining DWIN. <http://www.dwin.org> They publish a very classy-looking 'zine called, "Enlightenment." Look for their table while at Toronto Trek. —Ed ✱

Le Salon Medieval at the Hippodrome

Reviewed by the Fernster

I really enjoyed the event this Sunday morning. The artisans and dealers had really cool stuff, from women's dresses, to full scale armour, chain mail, and leather armour suits. No Medieval fair would be complete without weapons....from the broad swords to maces, to long bows and crossbows, including, a broad choice of foamed and rubber weapons for those

who enjoy the active roleplaying of full scale war. There were lots of dealers with chain mail shirts, and a smattering of jewellery and leather products. All in all it was an interesting event which I plan to attend again next spring. *



Photos by the Fernster

Fanzines Received by MonSFFA in Trade for Warp Reviewed by Keith Braithwaite

Last issue, Keith Braithwaite wrote of the fannish tradition of fanzine publishing and offered his thoughts on the state of the fanzine today (see "Fanzines: The Fourth Phase of Fanac," Warp 63, Winter 2006). Keith now begins a series of brief reviews of some of the 'zines received by MonSFFA in exchange for Warp.

MonSFFA's mailbox is regularly filled with issues of the numerous fanzines the club receives in exchange for our own Warp. Such exchanges are common fannish practice.

Many of the 'zines we receive are "clubzines" like Warp. The clubzine is a subset of the fanzine and, as its monicker suggests, a periodical produced by an SF/F club, focusing chiefly on the activities of that organisation and featuring the contributions of its members. Clubzines reflect the primary interests of their sponsoring clubs. A Star Trek fan group's publication, for example, will center on Trek-related subjects while a greater diversity of topics might be explored in a 'zine supported by a multi-interest club such as MonSFFA.

I have chosen to begin my series of fanzine reviews with a look at two long-running clubzines:

BCSFazine, c/o P.O. Box 15335, VMPO, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6B 5B1

Clubzine: Newsletter of BCSFA, the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, Vancouver, British Columbia

Editor: Garth Spencer

This digest-sized monthly, closing in on 400 issues, boasts the longest uninterrupted run in Canadian SF/F 'zinedom. SF writer Spider Robinson was once editor.

The current package regularly includes "locs" (letters of comment from readers) and the musings of editor Spencer on the state of contemporary fandom, the balkanisation and often apathy of which concerns him greatly. In addition to BCSFA's own events calendar, listings of local and regional functions of interest to the club's members are featured, along with details of major Canadian and American conventions, fan funds, awards, and such. Book and film reviews, opinion pieces, details of the club's executive meetings, convention reports, news of the local fan-run SF/F convention (V-Con), and columnist Ray Seredin's "Media File" are also included.

Covers are printed on brightly coloured stock, include a table of contents, and sport an illustration or photo under the "BCSFazine" masthead. Page layout is straight-forward—single-column text occasionally punctuated by photos and line art. Page count varies; somewhere in the neighbourhood of 30 seems to be about the average.

BCSFazine properly serves the members of its sponsoring club, providing a handy font of information on area fanac and a forum for an invariably interesting fannish discourse.

Subscription to BCSFazine included with BCSFA membership. Cover price: \$3. Electronic editions available in .pdf or .txt formats; for information, e-mail: garthspencer@shaw.ca

De Profundis, c/o Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society
11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601, USA

Clubzine: Official newsletter of LASFS, the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, North Hollywood, California

Editor: Milt Stevens

Launched in 1965 under the editorship of John and Bjo Trimble (soon to become well known Star Trek fans), this "official newsletter" of the venerable LASFS, fandom's oldest surviving SF/F club, has averaged about 10 issues annually over more than 40 years of publication. The LASFS had intermittently published other 'zines prior to the introduction of De Profundis, but few lasted for more than a handful of issues.

The bulk of an issue of today's monthly incarnation of the 'zine is taken up by the abridged minutes of the club's weekly meetings, of which nearly 3600 have been convened since the inception of the LASFS in 1934. Such club-related content is given priority as mandated by the organisation's bylaws, leaving few if any pages open for other material.

The group approaches the record of its proceedings with unabashed silliness, labelling these minutes the "menace." Fund-raising at meetings is conducted by the "Committee to Gouge Money from the LASFS," backed up by the "Legion of Substitute Gouges." Another LASFS committee is the "Ministry of Silly Gavels." The club officer tasked with maintaining the club's duplicator has been dubbed "Speaker to Gestetner" while another's title is "Party Rabbi." De Profundis mirrors well the club's sense of humour.

Operating out of its own clubhouse, the LASFS programs cult cinema screenings, gaming events, and short story readings, as well as the monthly "Estrogen Zone" gathering, a Saturday afternoon of chick flicks and craft projects hosted by the Ladies Auxiliary Sewing and Fallout Society. These and other activities are listed on a grid-style calendar featured on the cover of each issue of De Profundis.

The 'zine is typically printed on 8.5X11-inch white stock and folded in half for mailing. Layout is simple; generally two-column, devoid of illustrations or photos. Page count: 10.

De Profundis allows readers to vicariously enjoy the infectious fun of a LASFS meeting as club members—Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, and Forrest J. Ackerman among them—welcome guests, review books, discuss films and television series, exchange personal, club, and fannish news, ponder recent scientific developments, and pay ceremonial tribute to SF/F folk of all stripes.

De Profundis available to club members and select others. Electronic editions obtainable in .pdf format at: <http://barrydgold.home.comcast.net/deprof.html> *

Appearing in each issue of Warp, "MonSFFAndom" collates abridged versions of the news and activities reports published over the last few months in Impulse, MonSFFA's monthly news bulletin.

Items published in the February, March, and April 2006 issues of Impulse have been assembled for this edition of "MonSFFAndom."

We've placed in chronological order and held for last the monthly MonSFFA meeting reports for this period. We begin with the February Impulse's coverage of the selection of MonSFFA's 2006 Executive Committee, which saw the return of a former club president to the governing body:

Former MonSFFA President Returns as 2006 Vice-President

A former MonSFFA president has returned to the club's executive ranks more than a decade after stepping down as the club's second president. Keith Braithwaite was elected to fill the VP position resigned by Sebastien Mineau last year.

Keith brings to the job a wealth of experience, not only as MonSFFA's president from 1989-1993, but as a once treasurer, Warp editor, and co-VP (with Capucine Plourde). He is currently editor of this publication (Impulse) and is expected to continue in that capacity while assuming his new duties as vice-president.

Returned by the electorate as president and treasurer, respectively, are Berny Reischl and Sylvain St-Pierre. Berny is MonSFFA's longest-serving president, having occupied the office since 2001. Sylvain has been our treasurer since practically the dawn of time! We are pleased to note that our 2006 executive is the most experienced in the history of the club. We congratulate our three successful candidates and place our confidence in them as they undertake to steer the club through another winning year.

Cathy Palmer-Lister oversaw MonSFFA's 2006 elections as chief returning officer.

Further, the issue ran the latest news regarding Con•Cept 2006, which had...

...received the green light! The con has reserved function space at its familiar Days Inn location downtown and will unfold as a two-day event the weekend of October 14-15. Mark those dates in your calendar. Details of admission prices, hotel room rates, and guest line-up will follow. Meanwhile, the con is actively recruiting needed volunteers. Qualified individuals are sought for concom positions.

February's issue also included a brief note telling of the club's intention to restart production on Timeline, a fan film

project that had stalled in 2005 due to "delays brought about by technical and scheduling problems."

March's Impulse began with the announcement of the club's Toronto Trek 20 pass-winners:

Four Win Toronto Trek Passes

We are pleased to officially announce the winners of MonSFFA's four complimentary weekend passes to Toronto Trek 20 this summer: Nick Krimp, Lindsay Brown, Mark Burakoff, and Maery Morrison. Congratulations and enjoy the convention!

MonSFFA received these passes from Toronto Trek last year as our prize for having won the con's video contest with our short film, *The Simpleton's Life*. To arrive at our winners, we selected by random draw two names from a list of all MonSFFA members, and two from a list of the cast and crew of *The Simpleton's Life*.

Nick Krimp, as it happened, bowed out. His pass was delivered to substitute winner Dominique Beaudoin. MonSFFen were informed the following month in April's Impulse.

But back to the March issue, which noted a change to MonSFFA's meeting schedule—"the club's October meeting has been moved from the 22nd to the 29th."—and ran more news of Con•Cept 2006. The con was set for Saturday and Sunday, October 14-15, and was...

... now thinking about adding limited programming on Friday evening, the 13th, superstitions notwithstanding. Inquiries have been made re the availability of hotel function space to accommodate this plan.... Meanwhile, actor Steve Bacic (*Andromeda*, *Stargate SG-1*) is Con•Cept 2006's first confirmed guest.

If you will indulge us a quick time-jump into the future, we can report with certainty that Con•Cept has secured the required function space to hold Friday-evening programming. A contract has been signed with the Days Inn Hotel and the con is now a go as a full-weekend event.

March's Impulse closed with the club's "best wishes for a full recovery," extended to MonSFFAn Theresa Penalba, who had found herself "beset by serious illness," and to club treasurer Sylvain St-Pierre, who had taken ill and spent a few days in hospital.

April's issue of Impulse announced a last-minute programming change re that month's club meeting—"multi-media presentation on Superman... postponed until later in the year"—and reported that MonSFFA had been...

...approached by members of Vancouver fandom re the screening of our fan films at a meeting of the local SF/F club,



Photo credit: L.E. Moir

and at the local con. We were pleased to forward to our sister club in Vancouver, BCSFA (British Columbia Science Fiction Association), a copy of our MonSFFilms' Greatest Hits DVD and have welcomed the inclusion of our films in the video program of their Con•Cept-like convention, V-Con. We hope Vancouver fans enjoy Beavra, MooseMan, etc....

Allow us just a minute to add, before we get to the MonSFFA meeting reports for this period, that local movie premieres co-sponsored by the club during these few months were dutifully recorded by our news bulletin. These included Underground: Evolution, Firewall, the Russian-language vampire film Night Watch, the Hills Have Eyes remake, V for Vendetta, and the non-genre Robin Williams comedy RV. Randomly selected MonSFFen received complimentary passes to these screenings.

And while on the topic of movie premieres, April's Impulse also informed readers of the premiere passes MonSFFA anticipated receiving in the coming months—The Da Vinci Code, Click (a fantasy-tinged Adam Sandler comedy), The Lakehouse (a Keanu Reeves/Sandra Bullock vehicle that we are told involves time travel), and Superman Returns. It was noted that the club was “on the list for passes to these premieres” but was “not guaranteed the tickets.” We can step into our time machine again and jump into the future a tick to report that we did receive a couple of coveted passes for The Da Vinci Code, as well as several for Poseidon and X-Men 3.

And so we arrive at Impulse's coverage of MonSFFA's January, February, and March meetings, the news bulletin's reports reprinted here in chronological order as they appeared in the February-April issues:

MonSFFen Visit Mars at January Meeting

We went to Mars on January 22, courtesy guest speakers David Shuman and Paul Simard of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada's Montreal chapter. Our group was treated to an incredible 3-D slide show the two had put together detailing the travels of NASA's Mars rovers, Spirit and Opportunity.

With 3-D glasses firmly affixed, we viewed a series of beautifully austere, rust-tinted Martian landscapes snapped by the rovers' cameras.

As the slides came up, a recorded narration explained exactly what it was that we were looking at and the significance of the various finds made in the rock and soil of Earth's planetary neighbour. David and Paul chimed in, as well, with their own observations. The stereoscopic effect was striking, bringing us as close to the surface of the fabled Red



David Shuman & Paul Simard

photo credit: L.E. Moir

Planet as we could be without actually standing there in person.



Photo credit: L.E. Moir

And the chance of an astronaut actually standing there in person within the next couple decades appears remote, offered our guests. The political will for such a venture seems to be absent amidst more immediate concerns like global warming, let alone the funding that would be required for a manned mission. Robotic exploration will likely remain the focus of NASA's Mars missions for the foreseeable future.

Following the mid-meeting break, MonSFFA's newly minted executive...convened a Board of Advisors (BoA) meeting. The objective was to sound out the assembled membership on programming ideas for future meetings and receive constructive feedback regarding the club's activities. The executive plans to touch base with the membership in this manner every few months.

Among the ideas discussed was that of a fresh group project to engage our interests. Members were asked to think about the proposal and come up with a few suggestions for our next gathering on February 19. Past such projects have included organizing and running conventions (Con•Cept and TransWarp), the production of a “live” radio drama, and our ongoing fan film productions.

MonSFFA thanks guest speakers David Shuman and Paul Simard for their fantastic 3-D Martian excursion, as well as those members who contributed to the planning and running of this meeting.

February MonSFFA Meeting

The club's February 19 meeting drew about 20 folk. Topics: urban legends and sci-fi TV.

Cathy Palmer-Lister was first up with a presentation on urban legends, some of which serve as inspiration to genre writers, forming the basis for ghost stories and tales of horror. Urban legends have circulated throughout society for generations. New tales have been added to old over the years, yarns reworked and disseminated afresh. Invariably, these friend-of-a-friend stories—as in “I heard this from a friend of a friend” (or the modern equivalent, “I got this on the Internet”)—are sufficiently vague on details as to preclude easy verification.

Alligators living in the New York City sewer system and preying upon hapless work crews. The escaped lunatic with a metal hook in place of his missing hand menacing teenagers parked in cars. And the babysitter who calls police to have them trace the origin of the menacing phone calls she's

receiving every 15 minutes, only to be told that those calls are being made from the upstairs extension in the very house in which she sits. These are all classic urban legends recognized as such by most people today.

Cathy explored more recent examples, many involving computer viruses or the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

One particularly disgusting report told of a young girl who complained of swelling in her mouth after eating at Taco Bell. A subsequent exam by her family doctor supposedly found that a pregnant cockroach had been imbedded in her soft chicken taco, and had somehow left its eggs to incubate in the girl's mouth. A lawsuit is apparently pending.

Not!

But another case involving the intrusion of a larva into a child's eye proved to be genuine. Cathy drew attention to the Snopes.com Web site, which specializes in debunking urban legends but also, from time to time, confirms the truth of some of the stories it researches.

The Taco Bell tale is a variation on the old pregnant-insect-enters-a-person's-ear-and-bores-through-their-head story, explained Cathy. She added that fast-food and other corporations are often the victim of urban legends, and spend a lot of time denying the purported veracity of such reports. Rumours of mice having been found in beverage bottles and the like pop up regularly.

The thing about urban legends, said Cathy, is that they *seem* plausible. But if it sounds too good to be true, it probably isn't. And, be wary of any claim prefaced by "this really happened" or "this is a true story."

Keith Braithwaite moderated a discussion on the state of sci-fi TV during the second half of the meeting, noting that a healthy number of the new programs premiered on the major networks last fall were genre shows, and that most were entertaining, at least, if not future sci-fi television classics. With the conclusion or pending conclusion of many of the prominent SF/F series we've been watching these past several years — *Enterprise*, *Smallville*, *Stargate SG-1* — genre audiences were anxious to see the new crop of sci-fi shows. Of these, two have already gotten the hook, and another is on shaky ground for renewal next season. But three of the fresh series seem to have found an audience, one — *Ghost Whisperer* — having even been described by critics as a minor hit.

The Kolchak: The Night Stalker remake lasted only a handful of episodes before it was pulled from the schedule. While not a bad show, it was very much an *X-Files* clone. The *X-Files*, though, had done it so much better and viewers were reminded of that with every episode of *Night Stalker*.

Threshold was an ambitious stab at science fiction. It boasted an accomplished cast, including former Star Trek star Brent Spiner, but, it was opined, the story moved slowly and was often illogical. Too much standing in a room talking and not enough drama and action was another comment proffered. *Threshold* was clearly struggling some half-dozen episodes in, as evidenced by the network moving it to another night in an attempt to boost ratings. Eventually, it disappeared altogether.

Invasion may not see a second season. While this tale of

a mysterious alien intrusion (or is it?) is well written and truly creepy, the pace is a little slow for most tastes. And it's a difficult story to follow without having seen all or most of the episodes. *Invasion* thus requires a weekly commitment many viewers are unwilling to make. But it is worth that investment in time.

Surface, a sea monster tale, was cited by a couple of audience members as an entertaining ride, despite some rather improbable situations. The show's cunning ploy to draw viewers back each week with exciting episode-ending cliff-hangers, it was observed, was highly effective. Expect the show to surface next season.

Silly title aside, *Ghost Whisperer* has proved to be the most popular of the new genre series. It was suggested that the show's appeal is likely tied to the public's interest in the spirit world as characterized by mediums, channellers, and such. Those looking for a good scare, however, will likely be disappointed as the scenarios are not really all that spooky. *Whisperer* is basically a feel-good family drama along the lines of *Touched by an Angel*. As such, it works well.

Supernatural is straight-up horror. The show deftly balances the scares with a sense of humour and an intriguing back-story. And the two photogenic, 20-something leads have no doubt helped make the show popular with young viewers. Cool car, too!

Meanwhile, the enigmatic *Lost* — last year's big new show — was universally praised, as were cable series like *Stargate: Atlantis* and the remade *Battlestar Galactica*.

All in all, the group concluded, SF/F on TV seems to have a promising few years ahead.

The usual thanks for this meeting.

March MonSFFA Meeting

We drew about 20 folk to last month's club meeting, held on the 26th. The group received an update on Anticipation, Montreal's bid to host the World Science Fiction Convention, or WorldCon, in 2009, followed by a comprehensive review of the career of expert stop-motion animator Ray Harryhausen.

Noting that WorldCon bids are often won by narrow vote margins, Anticipation bid chairman René Walling — who happens also to be a member of MonSFFA — stressed to his fellow club members the importance of voting for Montreal as one's preferred 2009 site (Kansas City and Albany—a hoax bid—are the friendly competition). The vote re 2009 will take place two years prior, at Nippon 2007, the 65th WorldCon, in Yokohama, Japan. Acknowledging that an expensive trip to Japan next year to attend Nippon 2007 is probably not on for many North American fans, René explained that folk can still participate as non-attending members of the Japanese WorldCon and thus vote for Montreal in 2009.

Should Anticipation's bid prove successful, the site of the convention is likely to be the Palais des congrès, which, of the downtown locales currently under consideration, affords the most function space and further, would allow most activities to be centralized in a single building.

René and his team continue to promote the bid both online via Anticipation's Web site (surf to: www.anticipationsf.ca)

and at conventions across North America and elsewhere. If reaction to the Montreal bid so far is any indicator, our city is viewed by many fans as a desirable travel destination.

Anticipation's pre-supporting rate stands at \$25.

The next few hours were devoted to Keith Braithwaite's extensive Ray Harryhausen retrospective. The Los Angeles-born Harryhausen, whose films include *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* (1952), *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (1958), *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963), *One Million Years B.C.* (1966) and *Clash of the Titans* (1981), is fantasy cinema's consummate craftsman. Adept as a designer, conceptual and storyboard artist, and model-maker, among other of the many disciplines of filmmaking, he is best known as a maestro of stop-motion animation.

A screening of the original *King Kong* (1933) inspired a teenaged Harryhausen to become an animator. He eagerly researched the then nascent stop-motion process — sometimes called 3-D or dimensional animation — and began experimenting with the techniques that had been employed to bring Kong and the dinosaurs of Skull Island to life on screen. In a nutshell, stop-motion works like this: doll-sized articulated models are moved incrementally and photographed frame by frame, then may be combined with live-action footage of actors to arrive at a convincing shot of prehistoric animals, mythological beasts, or imaginary monsters interacting with human beings.

While crude, Harryhausen's first stop-motion tests revealed a gift for the craft and before long, he was producing professional-quality footage featuring superbly crafted animation models playing out scenes on the wonderfully

detailed miniature sets that Harryhausen had constructed in his family's garage. These reels would serve to land Harryhausen work in Hollywood, including a job, early in his career, as assistant to his hero and mentor, Willis O'Brien, the stop-motion pioneer responsible for the special effects in *King Kong*.

The visual design and subject matter of *Kong* appealed to Harryhausen, who was a fantasy fan and dinosaur enthusiast. Many of the elements of Kong are echoed in Harryhausen's own films, noted Keith, as he took his audience through a detailed chronology of the master animator's career, culminating in Harryhausen's receiving an Academy Award in 1991 for his "lifetime of technical excellence" in motion pictures.

Keith's presentation was copiously illustrated with slides of Harryhausen's pre-production sketches, behind-the-scenes production photos, and stills from his many films. Film clips of his awe-inspiring creatures in action were screened as well.

Harryhausen's creativity and inventiveness were unparalleled, concluded Keith. His definitive fantasy images, created on limited budgets alone in his studio without benefit of the computer-based methods commonly used in movies today, have inspired many contemporary genre filmmakers, including leading talents George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and Peter Jackson.

MonSFFA thanks all who contributed to the planning and running of our April meeting, in particular Wayne Glover and Berny Reischl, who provided A/V support, and last but not least, our two panellists, René Walling and Keith Braithwaite.✴

CONVENTIONS AND EVENTS IN AND AROUND MONTREAL

(Compiled by Cathy Palmer-Lister & Lloyd Penny)

June 10-11 – **Otakuthon**, Animé convention, Concordia University, Henry F. Hall building, Montreal, QC
<http://www.otakuthon.com>

June 16-18 – **Gaylaxicon 2006**, GLBT SF convention, Best Western Primrose Hotel, Toronto, ON. Guests: Richard Arnold, Michael Rowe, Tanya Huff, Nalo Hopkinson, & others. <http://gaylaxicon.gaylacticnetwork.org/2006/>

June 22 – **Browncoats' Charity Screening of "Serenity"**
J.A. de Sève theatre, Concordia University, details TBA.

June 23-25 – **C-ACE**, Best Western Victoria Park Suites Hotel, Ottawa, ON. SF art convention. Guests: Julie E. Czerneda, Mark Oakley. www.c-ace.org.

June 24 – July 1 – **Cruisetrek 2006**, cruise from Montreal to Boston and return. Guests: Vaughn Armstrong, Chase Masterson, Suzie Plakson, Lolita Fatso, & more.
www.members.aol.com/cruisetrek.

July 1-4 – **The Gathering of the Fellowship 2006**, Sheraton Centre Toronto, Toronto, ON. Tolkien convention. Guests:

Craig Parker, Bruce Hopkins, Ted Nasmith, John Howe, & more. <http://gatheringofthefellowship.org/convention/>

July 7-9 – **TT20 (Toronto Trek)**, Doubletree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto, ON., media SF convention. Guests: Michael Shanks, George Takei, Amber Benson, Lexa Doig, Garrett Wang, Richard Hatch, & more. www.tcon.ca/tt20/

July 22 – **Northern Anime Festival**, Durham College and University of Ontario Institute of Technology, Oshawa, ON. Anime convention. Guests: Les Major, Lisa Furukawa Ray. www.northernanime.ca.

August 4-6 – **Anthrofest**, Plaza Hotel, Montreal, QC, Furry convention. Guests: Firestorm 6, Noble Wolf, www.anthrofest.org

September 1-3 – **Fan Expo Canada (SFX)**, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON. Multi-media, multi-interest convention..Guests include William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, Carrie Fisher.
<http://www.hobbystar.com/hobbystar/>

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<http://www.monsffa.com/monsffahtml/discountpage.html>

The Last Words!

The Fernster

Another Warp Magazine edition and another The Last Words. Try your hand on the following movie last words. Name the character who spoke these last words and the movie's name.

The Last Words # 4

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) "And spectacular special effects that only a grant from Telefilm Canada can bring to the screen – Heh" (2 pts) | 3) "Lens Cap!!!" (3 pts) |
| 2) "Shut up! You'll ruin the surprise!" (5 pts) | 4) "Okay.... Okay..." (5 pts) |
| | 5) "One more thing Sophie, is she aware her daughter is still alive?" (5 pts) |

Answers to The Last Words # 4

1. Narration at the end of the movie – Beavra
2. Rebecca – Tank Girl
3. Joseph Sullivan (Sky Captain) – Sky Captain and the world of Tomorrow.
4. Clementine (Kate Winslet) – Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind.
5. Bill – Kill Bill - Volume One.

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