

WARP

A PUBLICATION OF THE MONTREAL SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY ASSOCIATION

Issue 113



MonSFFA Executive Board

President

Cathy Palmer-Lister
president@monsffa.ca

Vice President

Keith Braithwaite
veep@monsffa.ca

Treasurers

Joe Aspler and L.E. Moir
treasurer@monsffa.ca

Appointed Positions

PR, Membership, editor of *Impulse*

Keith Braithwaite
impulse@monsffa.ca

Webmaster

Cathy Palmer-Lister
webmaster@monsffa.ca

WARP Editor

Danny Sichel
warp@monsffa.ca

Keeper of the Lists

Josée Bellemare

WARP Mascots created by Karine Church

WARP Design & Layout by Valerie Royall

Contact Us:

MonSFFA
c/o 29 rue Harold
Kirkland, Québec
H9J 1R7
Canada



On the Cover

This month's cover is a mermaid diorama by MonSFFA member Josée Bellemare and was one of several models shared by members in a presentation during February's e-meeting.

MonSFFA Calendar of Events

All in-person meetings are cancelled until further notice. Programming will be posted on our website and Facebook page a week or two ahead of the virtual meeting. Invitations to Zoom are sent to members and friends about a week before the meeting. Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month.

Stay safe and follow us on the internet!

Website: www.monsffa.ca

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MonSFFA

The Fine Print: WARP is a publication of the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA), a nonprofit 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 us first. The use of copyrighted material is generally discouraged, but sometimes unavoidable: our apologies to the copyright holders, no serious infringement is intended. This is an amateur production, and your tolerance is appreciated by your fans.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear MonSFFen:

Thank you for sending me issue 112 of *WARP*. I hope I am in time for the next issue, I've been behind on a lot of things, but it's time to move on this.

My letter of comment...Since I wrote that, both Yvonne and I have received our second vaccination booster shots for COVID-19, and if there are any other shots available before the end of the year, we'll get them. The British author D.J. Holmes... I have now edited three books for him, and he is promising me a fourth. I have also helped to edit and copyedit more issues of Dreamforge Magazine. I have a few more dollars in the bank, and a sense of usefulness, which I think may mean even more to me than the money.

From *WARP* 24...Eramelina Boquer is a name I remember from local radio here. I think possibly she may have been connected with the old CKO news radio network, not sure. The idea of a Transwarp today might be a good idea, to see what's left, and if there are new people who might like to start taking part in clubs and other organizations.

Vale Marc Durocher... I suspect most of us are at the age where we may lose friends to illness, or even to natural causes. I am 63, and my right hip is starting to bother me, and on occasion, an arthritic pang in my right shoulder. I must have laser treatments on my right eye at the end of the month. Wish I had a reset button! *Vale* Maureen Whitelaw, too. Also, *vale* Nichelle Nichols. I never met her, but did see her once from a distance.

I think our Bell problems with our built-in PVR have been solved, and now, we can watch the last three episodes of *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*. And, I look forward to it, for it looks so faithful to the original. Granted, this *Enterprise* looks a little roomier than the original, and I will not believe the interior of the ship is mostly empty, as the alternate timeline movies would have you believe. Right now, I have only started watching the opening of the 16th season of *Murdoch Mysteries*, so catching up with *ST:SNW* sounds like good fun. *Discovery* and *Picard* will return soon in 2023, *Lower Decks* has started its third season, and *Prodigy* may yet return as well. There may be new shows on Starfleet Academy, and Ares



Issue 113

Spring/Summer 2023

Photo by Valerie Royall

31. We Trekkers are spoiled rotten.

It is getting late, so I will finish it up and prepare for e-mail launch. I hope you are all well, had a great summer, and are looking forward to a busy fall. Take care, and see you with the next issue.

Yours,
Lloyd Penney

Blast From the Past

By Cathy Palmer-Lister



WARP 25, Summer 1993

Dinosaurs were hot that summer, thanks to Jurassic Park. To celebrate the 25th issue of *WARP*, the cover art was in full colour.

COVER-UP: Member Jean-Pierre Normand's full-colour artwork again graces the cover of *WARP*. His herbivorous dinosaurs were rendered for us in inks and gouache. The painting was done largely with an airbrush; detailing with a fine tipped paintbrush.

In her editorial, Lynda Pelley informs us that MonSFFA will not volunteer or have a table at Creation due to the way our members had been treated at a previous event. Warp 9 and KAG were also boycotting Creation.

She also announces that the date of the November meeting is being shifted to avoid conflict with Who Con, being run by The High Council of Gallifrey. Those were halcyon days, several clubs, often working together on projects such as TransWARP and Con*Cept.

There are 15 businesses listed on page 5 as offering discounts to our membership.

The LoC column was longer than usual—five pages! Andrew Gurudata, president of the aforementioned HCoG, wrote a response to Lynda's review of the K&L convention, and Lynda responded to that, both using more ink than the original review. Lloyd Penney's LoC refers to the in-fighting at MapleCon. And then there's a letter from René Walling about KAG's boycotting Con*Cept '93, and the response from K'Hack (Bernard Reischl) And then, there is a quarter-page, double-boxed item advising the readers that "While MonSFFA founded Con•cept, and for the most part, ran it these past few years, effective 1993 Con•cept has assumed a wholly independent status and therefore MonSFFA is no longer in any way involved in the organization and operation of the Con•cept SF/F convention..." etc. In other words, we are not responsible if the boat sinks.

MonSFFA reviews TransWARP, and reports on June club meeting which largely featured dinos, and our presence at the SFF 1 run by Warp 9. MonSFFA donated \$100 to the Baird Searles Award Fund.

Bryan Ekkers' fanfic *Pranksters* concluded with Part 7.

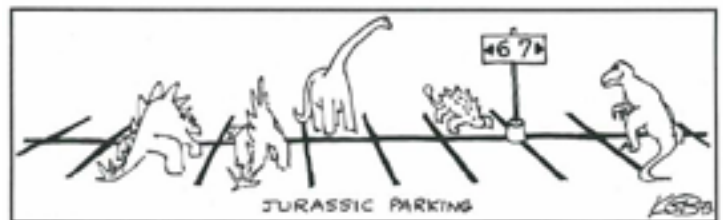
Keith's review of TransWARP has photos of fans when we still had hair. "The TransWARPing Klingon" posing in the lobby is Krikor in ST:OS garb. We see him again in Lynda's review of the Festival, this time in Next Gen costume. Robin Curtis was a wonderful guest! Sylvain reviewed Ad Astra 13, with emphasis on the masquerade, which he deemed the best yet.

Georges Dodds wrote a great sercon article entitled *F & SF before the Double Helix*. Georges has a huge personal library of classic SF&F and is now seriously into the Penny Dreadfuls.

Movies reviewed: *Jurassic Park*, *Last Action Hero*, *Super Mario Bros*, *Coneheads* and *Hocus Pocus*. Books: *Return to Rocheworld*, *The Arctic Grail*.

Kevin Holden interviewed Douglas Adams while he was in Toronto for a book tour. Definitely worth reading, as is Joe Aspler's "Copyrights and Wrongs". Did you know "Live Long and Prosper" is trademarked?

Keith's article, "Literaturaptors and Cinemasaurus", inspired by Jurassic Park, is very informative, which will not be a surprise to the MonSFFen reading this. He drew a cute cartoon, too, entitled "Jurassic Parking", and there's a Jurassic Quark later in the zine.



And then there's another half-page to alert everyone that MonSFFA is no longer responsible for Con*Cept. "Any mail directed to Con*Cept but addressed to MonSFFA will be returned to sender". (Their italics, not mine.)

Sensors has the usual news & rumours about *Trek*, *B5*, *QL*, etc, but also an item about Canfandom in which it is mentioned that there will be 6 conventions in Montreal, including one in French. The issues swirling around Con*Cept is also touched on.

The last page is a poster advertising William Gibson's book signing for Virtual Light at Nebula Books. Ah, those were the days, my friend! 6 conventions in Montreal, Maplecon and CanCom in Ottawa, T-Trek and Ad Astra in Toronto, and we could drop into Nebula Books anytime we needed an SFF lit fix.

MonSFFAAndom

By Keith Braithwaite

While the club has, on a few occasions during the period covered here, managed to host in-person events, allowing members to come together face-to-face after more than two years of isolation at home, our regular meetings continue to take place online. MonSFFA's continuing search for an accommodating and affordable meeting room at a hotel, church, or community center has, frustratingly, turned up no viable option. It seems there is, currently, a dearth in this city of available and reasonably priced function space for a group such as ours.

2022 Virtual Picnic

With the resilient COVID-19 virus still, stubbornly, a disruptive factor playing havoc with the normal functioning of society, the club opted to postpone its in-person Summer-Picnic-in-the-Park, originally scheduled for July 9, until the end of August.

July, then, was suddenly *sans* MonSFFActivity, prompting the club to hastily organize, for Saturday, July 23, an e-picnic. With no formal programming scheduled, the club welcomed MonSFFen for a casual video-chat on ZOOM, an afternoon of "conversation and camaraderie." Keith Braithwaite put up an online photo album of the club's well-attended field trip to the Exporail train museum the previous month, and snapshots were shared of recent SF/F modelling projects undertaken by both Daniel P. Kenney and Wayne Glover.

August e-Meeting

While noting the recent passing of *Star Trek* actress Nichelle Nichols, and sadly, one of our own, long-time club member Marc Durocher, we wanted, with summer in mind, to keep things light and breezy for our August 13 virtual get-together. On offer, then, was an afternoon of fun and games.

Keith Braithwaite's Summer Mega-Quiz 2022 got programming underway with a whopping fifty SF/F-related trivia questions! Contestants, playing against the clock, were challenged with queries ranging from literature, movies, and TV to comics, gaming and fandom.

Post-break, Danny Sichel hosted another edition of what we have come to call "Sci-Fi Balderdash," a game that has proved both challenging and popular with MonSFFen. Working only from an *actual* SF/F story title, players are tasked with concocting a fake, two-sentence story synopsis convincing enough to fool fellow competitors into believing it the genuine article. Further, they must pinpoint from among these fakes the one, *true* synopsis when all are read aloud at the conclusion of each round.

We also reserved time, as is our custom, for club members to showcase their latest sci-fi crafting projects, and to discuss SF/F books recently read and movies or television series recently viewed.

2022 Picnic-in-the-Park

A small contingent of MonSFFen attended this August 28 in-person event and, under lovely summer skies, enjoyed hotdogs grilled on the club's newly acquired propane barbecue unit, and spent a lazy afternoon relaxing and chatting on a variety of topics.

Those who attended on this day reported Parc Maisonneuve



2022 Picnic-in-the-Park: Cathy Palmer-Lister grills hotdogs on club's new propane barbecue unit, Parc Maisonneuve, August 28. Inset: Daniel P. Kenney showcased his latex mask-making techniques during our 2022 Virtual Picnic, July 23.

to be quite a practical alternative to our traditional Parc Angrignon picnic site, which has recently fallen into a state of absolute shabbiness.

September e-Meeting

On the agenda for our September 10 virtual meeting was Joe Aspler's in-depth and highly informative presentation on internet sales platforms, focusing primarily on eBay. MonSFFen wishing to divest themselves of old genre books, magazines, and collectibles were eager to cock an ear. Joe has been selling his own books, old cameras, and assorted memorabilia on eBay since 2005, and on behalf of the club, has also been handling the recent online sales of certain premium items bequeathed to the club from the late Sylvain St-Pierre's legacy.

He outlined the basics of second-hand commerce on the internet, and detailed all aspects of selling one's treasures on eBay, from realistically pricing items, to honesty in properly describing and presenting them, to shipping responsibilities and costs, to post-sale feedback.



Joe noted, interestingly, that people will happily pay \$25 for a book with \$5 freight added, but will usually balk at buying a book for \$5 with \$25 extra tacked on as a carriage charge! eBay Canada offers a calculator that will help determine Canada Post's rates for shipping within Canada and to the U.S.

For those wishing to make of online selling a sideline, Joe

also listed prime sources of merchandise—garage sales, thrift shops, estate sales—and opined on what was likely to sell, and what was not. Digital cameras, for instance, are not as valued as mechanical cameras.

Perhaps the single most important piece of advice Joe offered potential sellers was, when pricing items, look at a guide to listings of the final sale price of similar articles, not at what sellers were initially asking.

We followed Joe’s presentation with Keith Braithwaite’s quick look at deleted scenes from SF/F films and television series. Keith screened examples that either ran too long, were superfluous, or altered the tone or direction of the narrative. The most common reason directors/editors cite for cutting a scene, Keith observed, is for reasons of pacing.

A scheduled ZOOM chat with Linda Ross-Mansfield, co-chair of Pemmi-Con, the 2023 NASFiC, was, unfortunately, scrubbed at the eleventh hour and rescheduled for the following month.

The remainder of the meeting allowed for MonSFFen to highlight their latest “fancraft” projects, and briefly discuss recently enjoyed SF/F books, movies, or television series.



October Halloween e-Meeting

2022’s Halloween e-Meeting took place on the 15th, and opened with a Halloween Quiz prepared for the occasion by Lindsay Brown. Two dozen questions tested the knowledge of MonSFFen regarding Halloween lore, traditions, and superstitions, as well as horror trivia.

Keith Braithwaite’s treatise on the facts and folklore surrounding vampires followed, covering the mythologies of various cultures around the world, particularly those of Eastern Europe, the science behind the superstitions, the vampire in art, literature, and popular entertainment, and the real-life historical personages whose heinous acts contributed to these blood-soaked legends. Vivid illustrations accompanied Keith’s text on the club’s Website as he also delivered his presentation over ZOOM before the floor was opened to all on the topic of spookiest, scariest, most shocking, books, films, or television episodes remembered from childhood, or more recent times. Everyone had their own catalogue of unforgettable horror stories that haunt them still.

After the mid-meeting break, we welcomed to our ongoing ZOOM chat guest Linda Ross-Mansfield, who, regrettably, had been unable to join us the previous month as originally planned. We were glad to make time for her this month, as she reported on Chicon

8, the recent 2022 Worldcon, offered an overview of the upcoming Winnipeg-hosted NASFiC, dubbed Pemmi-Con, of which she is co-chair, and fielded questions on same.

Pemmi-Con, set to take place later this year (July 20-23), will mark the first time a city outside of the U.S. hosts the NASFiC, or North American Science Fiction Convention. A NASFiC is held whenever the Worldcon takes place in a locale other than North America, and the 2023 Worldcon is to be hosted by Chengdu, China. For more information, surf to: pemmi-con.ca

This e-meeting also included an art gallery, featuring the “colourful, arresting, *astounding*” sci-fi/horror B-movie posters produced for American International Pictures (AIP) under the aegis of long-time art director Albert Kallis, along with our usual e-meeting features.

November e-Meeting

MonSFFA’s November virtual get-together took place on the 12th, and with Remembrance Day fresh in mind, we included in our introductory post a brief history of Canadian World War I army field surgeon John McCrae and his famous poem, “In Flanders Fields.”

First on the programming agenda was Danny Sichel’s talk “Monarchies in SF&F.” Danny spoke of the various monarchist forms of government imagined by science fiction and fantasy writers. Folk are, no doubt, familiar with *Flash Gordon*, in which Mongo is ruled by the despotic Ming the Merciless, or the *Star Wars* universe, which includes such major characters as Princess Leia and Emperor Palpatine.

“I, for one, welcome our new hereditary overlords,” Danny began, quoting The Simpsons’ Kent Brockman. *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the *Dune* books, Pratchett’s *Discworld*, and even Marvel’s technologically advanced African nation, Wakanda, all feature monarchies of one form or another. Superhero comic books feature many royals—Blackagar Boltagon, Diana of Themyscira, Prince Namor—and royalty is extraordinarily prevalent throughout the SF/F genre. Many a space opera involves a galactic empire ruled by an emperor or empress, for instance, and a trope of epic fantasy is the concept of the “rightful king” discovering his true ancestry and fighting to win the crown.

The mid-meeting break included our usual prize raffle draw for all of the afternoon’s virtual attendees. Also, Josée Bellemare shared snapshots she had taken the previous month of the Harry Potter-themed Halloween displays at her local mall.



Keith Braithwaite's illustrated reviews of "7 Stupid SF/F Shark Movies" followed the break, in which Keith, screening brief video clips, opined on a collection of low-budget sci-fi and horror movies involving often mutated, genetically engineered, or ghostly sharks. Some were better than the others, and several were really, *truly*, irredeemably and laughably bad across the board! Titles included *Planet of the Sharks*, *Sharkula*, *Land Shark*, and *Shark Side of the Moon*.

With the holiday season approaching, we also offered photo galleries of mid-century modern, or "Atomic Age," Christmas decorations and SF/F-themed snow globes.

We closed proceedings with the Ode of Remembrance.

Holiday Celebrations 2022

Our traditional holiday celebrations for 2022 unfolded in two parts, the first a casual, virtual gathering on December 3, followed by an in-person Christmas luncheon on the 10th.

Our Virtual Holiday Get-Together offered, simply, the chance for MonSFFen to meet online for a few hours, chat, laugh, and offer each other their best wishes of the season.

No formal programming was scheduled, but we did rerun a few of the wonderful festive presentations resurrected from the club's very first virtual holiday celebration in 2020. "Think of this as our take on the broadcasting of perennial Holiday specials," wrote club vice-president Keith Braithwaite in the afternoon's opening post, "not on TV, but right here on the club's Web site!"

The late Sylvain St-Pierre's comprehensive "MonSFFA Holidays Special" was a highlight, and both Joe Aspler and Keith updated presentations they'd given in 2020, Joe's an *Introduction to Chanukah*, Keith's a reworked Holiday trivia quiz.

MonSFFen then had opportunity to get together face to face the following Saturday afternoon, December 10, for our 2022 MonSFFA Christmas Luncheon, which was held at a private function space on the West Island arranged for by MonSFFA co-treasurer L.E. Moir.

The event was well attended, despite the unusually far-flung location. A Christmas tree and festive menorah were set up, and a catered, self-serve buffet laid out. Folk gathered, toasted the season, and immersed themselves in conversation. Our traditional Christmas Gift Raffle sent *everyone* home with a wrapped present to put under their tree, though most couldn't wait and opened their prize right then and there!

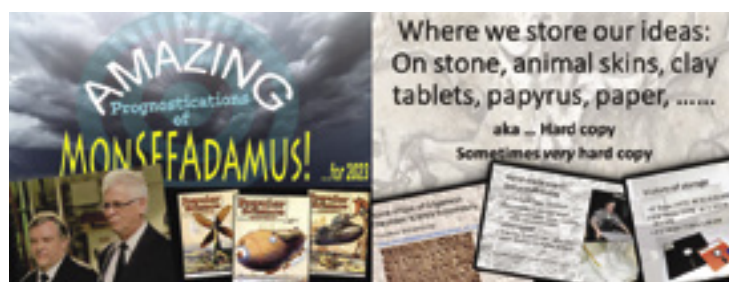
January e-Meeting

The New Year began for MonSFFA with our January 14 e-meeting. We opened programming with "The Amazing Prognostications of MonSFFAdamus for 2023," a satirical piece written by Keith Braithwaite lampooning current events and obliquely referencing well-known sci-fi movie scenarios in the process.

Our principal presentation of the afternoon was a history of information storage, delivered by Joe Aspler. "Humans have this need to record our thoughts," Joe began, proceeding, then, to outline the various ways in which our ancestors did so, from prehistoric cave paintings on through the ages to the present digital age.

But information stored on computers, suggested Joe, is the least archival of all. We can still read a book centuries old; however, will we be able to read today's hard drives a century from now? Just try retrieving, today, data stored on an old 1970s or '80s floppy disc!

Concurrent with our regular Show-and-Tell segment on



ZOOM, we posted on the Website extrapolations about the year 2023 published 100 years ago, in 1923, and a few were astonishingly prescient, including the expectation of "watch-sized radio telephones...allowing global communication." Most fun, however, were those entries that proved *way off*, like the fashion forecast for women of "shaved heads and blackened teeth!"

Following the break, Josée Bellemare fronted our redux screening of video clips and stills highlighting cameos in SF/F film and TV. For instance, both Barry Bostwick and Meat Loaf appeared as cable news station managers in a 2010 Halloween episode of *Glee* which saw the students staging a production of *The Rocky Horror Show*. The two, of course, starred in the well-known 1975 film adaptation of the play.

Other MonSFFen joined in with their own examples of cool cameos.

In keeping with MonSFFA's first-meeting-of-the-New-Year practice, we held the club's Annual General Meeting, and elected our Executive Committee for the coming year. The sitting leadership, seeking re-election, ran unopposed and were thus acclaimed to office for another term.

Congratulations and best wishes for another successful year were extended Cathy Palmer-Lister, president; Keith Braithwaite, vice-president; and Joe Aspler and Lil Moir, co-treasurers.

Unfortunately, time ran out on the meeting before club members could be asked the habitual question "What Are You Reading, or Watching?" We'd have to wait until our next conclave to find out!

February e-Meeting

Before we opened the club's February 11 e-meeting, we took a moment to extend condolences to long-time MonSFFAn Lynda Pelley on the recent loss of her beloved mother.

First on tap this day were tips on properly matting and framing SF/F art, and on expertly mounting and presenting sci-fi scale models, figurines, or collectibles. Keith Braithwaite spearheaded this segment, detailing his own approach to selecting the right size and colour matte, and style of frame, showing the group numerous examples.

A frame can be wide or narrow, plain, ornate, or something in between, but should appear in harmony with the work for which it provides a border. An abstract painting, for example, often calls for a plain, narrow frame, while a formal portrait may require a wider, more substantial border having some kind of ornamental flourish. With his own work, Keith strives to identify a major colour, or colour range within the painting in question, and select a matte that either complements, or alternately, on occasion, contrasts with that colour. Be careful, though, to avoid the matte visually overwhelming the picture, Keith cautioned.

There are the general guidelines of aesthetics to be followed, but no hard and fast rules, here, no right or wrong look, given that we all have differing tastes. It all works if you find that the framed art, in



the final analysis, looks good hanging on your wall! Simple as that.

Josée Bellemare, Brian Knapp, and others working with 3-dimensional *objets d'art*—scale models, etc.—offered their takes on good presentation, outlining the techniques used in the building and painting of diorama settings and display pedestals using a variety of materials like wood, plaster, and plastic.

Much of the remainder of the meeting was given over to what proved an animated discussion surrounding book collections. Moderator Cathy Palmer-Lister asked how individual club members came to acquire so many books, where they stored them, and how they plan, eventually, to part with some, or all of them when they run short of shelf space or decide to downsize, a process that can be quite trying. The topic was suggested by a newspaper article that examined the emotional and other difficulties elderly folk preparing for retirement, in particular, were having divesting themselves of beloved book collections amassed, for most, over a lifetime.

The lively discussion ate into the time we'd scheduled for some of our regular e-meeting features, the topic so captivating that MonSFFen expressed a strong desire to carry on with it at a future club gathering.

We did post, on the Website, just before all of this talk got underway, our nod to the upcoming Valentine's Day holiday, an illustrated list prepared by Keith of SF/F's most famous couples. And, we made available a downloadable list of some 70 of the late Sylvain St-Pierre's SF/F LPs, most of them film soundtracks, which were offered to club members. (Ultimately, there was interest expressed, but no takers. Nobody, it seems, still owns a turntable on which the records could be played! All were later sold to a second-hand store, netting MonSFFA \$140.)

March e-Meeting

MonSFFA welcomed a special guest speaker to its e-meeting of March 11. A long-time friend of the club, Lloyd Penney is a Toronto-based fan, 'zine loccer, former con-runner, and now editor of the venerable *Amazing Stories*, currently an online publication. Having recently taken on the job, he spoke of his responsibilities as editor, the steep learning curve he faced, the types of science fiction stories sought—largely hard SF in the tradition of Golden-Age classics—and the criteria for submissions.

Of interest was the challenge posed by new developments in AI, with ChatGPT-generated stories landing in the submissions box, and the need to filter these out from the genuine, human-penned stories. At this point, it's still possible to distinguish between the two,

Lloyd stated, but for how much longer?

Running a tad late on this day was Keith Braithwaite, who had been scheduled to open programming with his presentation on Canada's short-lived wartime comic book and pulp magazine publishing phenomenon. He did, finally, join the ZOOM chat about 30 minutes in and was able to proceed.

During World War II, the Canadian government, in order to hold in reserve within the country Canadian currency so as to help support the war effort, enacted WECA, the War Exchange Conservation Act, which banned the importation of, among other "luxury products," the popular American comic books and pulp magazines of the day. WECA's restrictions created an opportunity for Canadian publishers to produce homegrown alternatives to satisfy demand.

Keith told the story of this endeavour, which spawned numerous Canadian comic book superheroes, adventurers, and crime-fighters, like Nelvana of the Northern Lights, The Iron Man—predating by two decades the Marvel character of the same name—Johnny Canuck, and many others. He also covered the so-called "CanPulps," focusing on *Uncanny Tales*, the only domestic sci-fi, fantasy, and horror pulp magazine to consistently feature original stories written by Canadians—most Pulps produced in Canada during the WECA era simply reprinted stories culled from American magazines.

After the break, Lloyd was up again, with more on *Amazing Stories* and a Q&A. We shifted in due course to an open discussion period, during which we discussed the club's ongoing problems finding a function room in which to hold face-to-face meetings, as well as programming ideas for our upcoming virtual get-togethers.



After having welcomed Ottawa-area SF/F fans Henry Troup and Jennifer Bulman to our recent February e-meeting as participants in the day's discussion, news of Jennifer's passing, of cardiac-related issues, just a month later came as a shock. The following note was posted on the club's Website:

MonSFFA's Executive was saddened to hear of the sudden and unexpected death of Jennifer Bulman on 19 March, 2023. Jennifer was a long-time fan who hailed originally from Montreal.

Some of our members might recall that Jennifer, and her husband Henry Troup, joined us in February for the

monthly MonSFFA meeting, during which we discussed book collections and how we accumulate—and dispose of—same. Their input was insightful, interesting and of value to the discussion. The Executive joins all MonSFFA members in offering condolences to Henry, and to extended family, at this time.

Jennifer was memorialized as a scholar, devoted to her church, and an enthusiastic mover and shaker within the Society for



Creative Anachronism (SCA). She was a life-long musician, playing guitar at science fiction conventions as well as church services. Other interests included travel, cooking, and gardening. She was noted for her “intelligence, kindness, and passion,” which “led to many lasting friendships.”

Those many friends find themselves reeling at this sombre news, and missing her so very much.

MonSFFen were stunned by news of club member John Mansfield having passed on April 19, just a few months before he was scheduled to attend Pemmi-Con as Fan Guest of Honour. John had been keenly involved with Winnipeg’s successful bid to host Pemmi-Con, the 15th North American Science Fiction Convention, or NASFiC, a conclave which takes place whenever the Worldcon is held outside of North America, as it will be this year. The event will mark the first time a NASFiC unfolds in other than a U.S. city, and John would surely be proud to have played a part in seeing that honour bestowed upon Winnipeg!

As of this writing, details of his passing are scant; we understand he was under hospice care when he died. Not that long ago, he had been regularly participating in MonSFFA’s monthly e-meetings, which he made a point of praising as a splendid means of bringing fans together from across the land during the pandemic, and after. He strongly encouraged the club to continue hosting these online get-togethers.

A veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, John served his country for 26 years and was involved in SF/F fandom for decades, dating back to the mid-1960s, when he attended his first SF con. He was active in OSFS, the Ottawa Science Fiction Society, in the early days of that organization, and was, in subsequent decades, involved with clubs and conventions in New Brunswick, Alberta, and of course, Manitoba. He travelled to many an SF, Star Trek, and gaming convention, as well as to numerous Worldcons.

He was probably happiest as a con-runner, and chaired, first, Winnipeg’s winning bid to host the 1994 Worldcon, for which he was awarded an Aurora, then the Winnipeg Worldcon itself, ConAdian. He was also in the mix for the next two Canadian Worldcons, Toronto’s Torcon III in 2003, and Montreal’s own Anticipation in 2009. John was a tireless booster of Canadian fandom and encouraged many to join in the fun and get involved in organizing conventions, large and small.

For many years, too, he ran his specialty shop, Pendragon

Games and Hobbies, in Winnipeg, and in the wake of his passing, was acknowledged by many of the local gamers as pivotal to the creation and development of a robust gaming community in the city.

John Mansfield certainly made his mark.

He will be missed by, in particular, his wife, Linda, and family, to whom we extend our sincerest condolences.

We have also lost gentle, genial, ConCept Green Room hostess Jaime Yip, who had recently entered palliative care.



Special: Tales From the Convention

By Lloyd Penney

Lloyd Penney is the Editor-in-Chief of Amazing Stories Magazine. He shares with us here several tales of his experiences at conventions past.

My First Convention

I’m sure you remember your first convention...I sure do. And, as most first cons seem to go, it was memorable, not because it was a great time, but because it wasn’t. But usually, if there is fun to be had, the con doesn’t have a lot to do with it.

My first convention took place in 1978, and it was called Erincon III. It was held at Erindale College in Mississauga, west of Toronto, now called the University of Toronto at Mississauga. It was an unmemorable convention, except for the fact that Spider Robinson was in town, arrived at the convention, and only found out at that time that he was the GoH. Spider has referred to it as Nonexistacon, and let me tell you why...

Yvonne and I were dating at the time, and she told me about this convention in Mississauga, so we agreed to meet at the far western subway station in Toronto, and take the bus out to the college and the con. Wires got crossed, I probably got the times wrong, but I think we passed each other in the subway twice before arriving at the subway station together.

Never having been to a convention before, I wasn’t sure what to expect, but I had been told, and I’d read, that they were a lot of fun. That’s what I was going to have, wasn’t I?

Once we got there, it was very quiet. Too quiet. We paid our \$5 at the door (70’s, remember), and proceeded into an open area in the middle of the con facility. There were lots of empty tables. There were lots of filled tables, too... a local comic shops purchased 30 tables from the con, and put 500 or so copies of a single issue of a comic book on a table. Thirty tables carried 30 different comics. Well, that made going through the dealers’ room very easy. The artshow was surrounded by security guards, so I didn’t get to see it.

A hallway beckoned away from the main area...we explored, and found all the Star Trek reruns we could eat. We realized we’d been

through the entire convention in the space of about 20 minutes, and wondered aloud, what do we do now? One of our friends had brought a set of the new infrared Star Trek phaser toys, and far too much time was spent shooting each other with the toys, and laughing at the familiar sound effects. That was just the effects of boredom...later on, with nothing more to do, we grabbed a bite to eat at a restaurant at the college, and we went home. Spider was right.

Afterwards...one of the organizers said that the convention wanted to save money, so they cut way back on the number of flyers they printed. When asked how they expected to let people know about the convention if there were no flyers, the committee couldn't answer the question.

Well, that was my first con, and it could have been my last. I was told by my new friends not to worry, most conventions were much better than that, and I'm very glad they were right.

Room for the Roomies

Some years ago, in the midst of our con-running careers, Yvonne and I took in some roommates to save a few bucks. To protect the guilty and save on their embarrassment, let's call them Joe and Lynda...

In saving those few bucks, we told the hotel we were staying in that we only had two people in our room, and as a result, we received only two keycards. Yvonne and I would be needing our cards, as we'd be in and out of our rooms regularly, and our roomies were out enjoying the con. Fine with everyone, we thought...

At one point Saturday, Joe asked me if he could borrow our room key, and I thought little of it; I was going back and forth regularly. Later on in the day, I realized that Joe hadn't returned the room key, and I hadn't seen him in a while. I found Yvonne and asked to borrow her key... she said Lynda had borrowed her key and hadn't returned it. We looked at each other, and the light went on. Our roomies had borrowed our key for a little, ahem, afternoon delight, and kept us in the dark. I needed to get into the room, as did Yvonne, and the room was officially occupied, and we were locked out. Needless to say, we were pissed off.

Yvonne and I headed to the hotel front desk, and we said that we'd lost our room keys (I guess we had, I suppose), and could we get replacements? No problems... Yvonne marched off to our room, with me behind her, stifling a laugh, and when we got to the front door, Yvonne, in true matron fashion, swiped the keylock, barged into the room, and demanded, "WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?" As if she didn't know...

Now, I was behind Yvonne, and I certainly didn't get to see what she saw, but I will never forget the sight of two skinny butts quickly disappearing over the side of the couch in the room, and two bewildered faces popping up after.

Good thing they were the forgiving type; we kidded them about taking the room keys for years. And for some, reason, they were never our roommates again...

The Weekend We Broke the Bed

About 15 years ago now, Yvonne and I were guesting at Pinekone 1 in Ottawa, at a fancy hotel in the downtown area. It was kind of tradition for the FanGoHs at Ottawa conventions to run a room party at the con on Friday night, so who were we to break with tradition?

We arrived at the convention, and we had a prime room, Rm. 2001. What better room to be in? The flyers we posted said that

our room party was in room 2001! (Dontcha love it?)

We packed the room, had a great time... rooms never have enough places to sit, so sitting on the bed was a necessity. Let's see, there was me, and Yvonne, and Karen Wehrstein, and Shirley Meier, and I can't remember who else...

It was getting close to midnight, when something shifted beneath us, and then there was the scream of bending metal... and then, one corner of the bed hit the floor, and so did I. Once we realized what had happened, miGhod, we laughed... They broke the bed frame! In the middle of a party, yet! Yeah, explain that one.

After wiping away some tears, we had to get a little serious, and figure out what we could use to prop the bed up. After all, we'd have to sleep in it eventually. A quick check of the room's drawers revealed a couple of phone books, plus one of Mr. Gideon's free samples, and the bed was upright and stable again! A cheer, and back to party, and afterwards, we got at least a few hours of sleep. A very successful good time.

The next morning, once we arose, we realized we'd need to let the hotel know what happened.

"Front desk..."

"Hello, this is Lloyd Penney in room 2001...we're going to need a repair here. The leg bent right off the bed frame."

"I beg your pardon?"

"The bed frame is broken, and we'd like to get it fixed."

"Yes, sir (snort), we'll get on it right away (choke)." After the call, I said to Yvonne that I thought they might have been laughing; I guess it was their turn.

We enjoyed the day at the convention, and came back to our room to find workmen actually replacing the bed's frame. There were a few knowing smiles, a chuckle and a snicker here and there, but you know, there are some stories beyond the help of any explanation, and this was one of them.

Hotel People Do It Better

In the late 80s, Yvonne chaired a 24-hour party called Toronto Trek Celebration, and it was held at an uptown Toronto hotel. Our contact there was a lovely Scottish lady, rest her soul, named Rosina Pajak.

We were extremely new to convention management, so Rosina held our hands a little, and covered for us in case we made a mistake. The event was successful, and she was one big reason.

We found out Rosina was moving to another hotel, and we wished her luck, and then we decided that we could turn this 24-hour party into a 3-day convention. We called her at her new hotel, and plans began in earnest.

Rosina had been so good to us, and we wanted to return the favour. When we sat down with her to discuss the convention, we were painfully honest about what might happen. We would probably sneak in booze and other legal comestibles over and above what we might buy in the restaurants. We'd be serving beer in the con suite, perhaps stronger, attendees will do as they please, and there might be strangely-clad or scantily-clad people wandering the hallways.

We expected Rosina to be a little shocked. Instead, she started to laugh.

"You think you're doing horrible things? And you think you're putting one past us? Whatever you've done, we've done it better!" She proceeded to tell us about hotel management conventions, about sneaking in cases of liquor, trays of foods and flats of beer, sneaking in friends and family, and perhaps a hooker or two,

but she wasn't sure about that one...

Perhaps we were a little shocked, but that was the first hint we got that no matter how unique we thought we might be, we're really just like everyone else. So, we got the convention on the go, and did a better job because we weren't feeling guilty, or weren't trying to avoid getting caught. People asked us if we could sneak food and drink in? Sure, go ahead. It's not like we're fooling anybody... It was a great convention, and was the origin of the big media SF convention in Toronto, Polaris.

There's Beer in Ottawa

Many years ago, SF and comics fandom in Ottawa, and other places in central Canada, enjoyed a convention called Maplecon. The con is long gone, but it was our first out-of-town con, and it was among our first adventures.

One year, Ottawa fandom couldn't raise enough people to fill the Maplecon committee, so they asked me and Yvonne if we'd run the con suite. We'd had some experience with hospitality rooms at that time, and we had some equipment to bring with us, so we agreed, amid some objections from some Ottawa fans. Can't we do all of this ourselves? I guess not.

Our concom contact was Paul Valcour, and Paul wanted to bring back some old Maplecon traditions. For a number of years, the con suite had been dry. Good food, soft drinks, etc., but no beer. This year, there would be beer. Seeing this was our first year running their con suite, how much beer do you think we should buy, Paul? Paul decided on six 24s, 144 bottles or cans, and we thought that should be sufficient. Foolish us...

Maplecon gave us a challenge. We usually say that we can party anywhere, and we have, but Maplecon, because it was held at Carleton University, gave us a dormitory, common area and a few small bedrooms for the con suite. We did our shopping, hit the beer store, and headed for the university. We brought coolers and a box of equipment, and with a fridge available, we were in business. When we opened a few fans wandered in, and opened the fridge, and found lots of sodas, cold water and cold beer.

Oh, wow! COLD BEER! The word went forth... The grapevine works when it wants to, and in this case, it worked at near-lightspeed. We didn't put our whole stock in the fridge, but did have our remaining stock chilling in coolers. The thirsty crowds raided our remaining stock, and by the time they were done for the night, they'd drunk us dry. Paul? We have a little problem...

Our surprised contact gave us more money, and seeing it was the Saturday of the con, we all decided that 12 cases, 288 bottles and cans, would do us fine for the rest of the weekend. Uh-huh... Even with opening the suite a little late, and putting out the beer around 1pm, the word still went out, and thirsty locusts descended upon us, and sure enough by the end of Saturday, every bottle and can was empty, even with trying to save some for the next day. Paul?

It is now Sunday, and at that time, beer stores in Ontario were closed that day; still are. However, Ottawa is close to the border between Ontario and Québec, and in Québec, beer is sold in the corner stores, or in Québec French, les dépanneurs. Early that morning, Yvonne and I got in our car, and drove across one of the local bridges from Ottawa, Ontario to Hull, Québec, and we drove just past the downtown area to try to find a dépanneur. When we did find one, the manager was just opening the front door. Our question was, "Ou est la bière?", or "Where's the beer?" "En l'arrière", or "In the back." We headed to the walk-in fridge area in the back of the store, we purchased eight cases of beer, and some flats of soda,

loaded up the car, covered it all over with car blankets, and drove back to Ottawa. Why cover it up? According to the regulations of the province of Québec, we bought enough beer to be charged with importing beer without a licence. Shhh! Don't tell anyone!

The Sunday con suite was a success, and they once again drank us dry, which this time meant no leftovers. A few blessed us for getting their favorite Québec beers, and a few even discovered that even though they'd only drink microbrews or homebrew, some Québec beers were pretty good.

One thing I should mention...the con suite was in three different locations during the weekend. The university double booked several events, and as another group came in, the local authorities would come to order us to pack it up and move it to a new area they would designate, until the next double book...

One featured food I made for the con suite was a big pot of homemade chili, and we knew that we had some eagerly waiting its being served up. We froze the chili for about a week, and then bundled it up to bring up to the convention. I guess when it froze for a week, it froze hard. We stored it in the freezer compartment of the con suite fridge, and we took it out to thaw, and it didn't. We had a small microwave and a microwavable pot to go in it, but the frozen chunk of chili was too big to go in. So, with the help of a corkscrew and a friend's Swiss Army knife, I was able to carve the chili. White meat or dark?

It was like taking chunks off an iceberg, but we eventually heated up the chili and fed the masses, but in the carving of the chili, I broke that friend's Swiss Army knife. I apologized, and offered to replace the knife, but he declined, saying that the entertainment value of seeing me try to cut up this big, slippery hunk of frozen chili more than made up for it.

I am certain that while we kept the population of the convention happy and well inebriated, we also spent any profits the convention had, and probably much more. We headed home, with the committee pleased that we'd done such a good job, but if I recall, next year's con suite was dry again. I'm sure the convention treasurer made sure of that.

Report: Mini-Comicon 2023

By Josée Bellemare

Saturday January 28th I went to Mini-Comicon at the Montreal Palais des Congrès.

In spite of the lack of celebrities or presentations attendance was strong. I got there shortly after it opened and the room was already crowded. It was a massive dealer's room with a great variety of goods and clubs.

Some people showed up in some impressive costumes from films, TV, comic books, video games and more.

I'm the first to admit, I do not take good selfies. I don't know if my arms are too short or if I have bad angles but I have yet to take a good picture of myself.

When people take my picture I usually have a nice smile but when I sat in the Klingon command chair holding a Bat'leth I felt growling was more appropriate.

By the time I left there were hundreds of people waiting to get in. Security were only letting in a limited number at a time, most likely for safety reasons.

All things considered, it was a good day.

Feature: A Short History of Canada's Wartime Comic Books and Pulp Magazines

By Keith Braithwaite

PREAMBLE

December 2, 1882: The first issue of *The Golden Argosy*, dated December 9, 1882, is released. A weekly story-paper for children founded by **Frank Andrew Munsey**, the title banner claims the publication “Freighted with Treasures for Boys and Girls.” The ambitious Munsey had just moved to New York City from Augusta, Maine, where he managed the Western Union telegraph office, in order to join with partners in pursuit of this publishing venture. But circumstances saw his partners drop out, leaving Munsey to carry on by himself.

December 2, 1896: 14 years later, Munsey’s publication has weathered financial storms and near-failure, and been reimagined in a number of ways. Renamed *The Argosy*, now publishing monthly, and offering exciting, all-fiction content to an adult readership, Munsey inaugurates one more change. As a budget-slashing measure, he opts, with the December 1896 issue, to begin printing on low-cost, low-quality wood pulp paper. With that, the first Pulp is born.

The stories published in pulp magazines—“pulp fiction”—quickly gain a reputation for being substandard. And to be honest, they often were. But just as likely to be found within those pages were terrific, well-crafted, captivating tales penned by famous, established authors, as well as by writers who would later gain recognition as among genre fiction’s greatest.



[**SIDEBAR:** One such author was **John Buchan, Baron Tweedsmuir** (1875–1940), a Scottish historian who, in addition to writing adventure fiction, served as Canada’s fifteenth Governor-General!]

The Argosy’s circulation soon doubled to 80,000, and by 1907, the magazine’s 25th anniversary year, it surpassed 500,000!

Nothing lasts, of course. Over the decades, *The Argosy* saw

further title and format changes. It absorbed and assimilated other magazines, it returned to weekly distribution, and as the Pulp Era waned, it became a men’s adventure magazine, leaning to political and racy, “softcore” content. The final issue was unceremoniously published in November 1978.

March 10, 1926: **Hugo Gernsback**’s Experimenter Publishing launches a new magazine, the very first devoted *exclusively* to science fiction. Dated April 1926, with cover art by Frank R. Paul illustrating Jules Verne’s *Off on a Comet*, the publication is called *Amazing Stories* and will help to popularize and develop the field of what Gernsback initially termed “Scientifiction.”

1929-1939: During the Great Depression, the Pulp magazines are at their peak, with Munsey’s seminal periodical since joined by *The Blue Book Magazine*, *Adventure*, *Western Story Magazine*, *Black Mask*, *Love Story Magazine*, *Weird Tales*, Gernsback’s *Amazing Stories*, and countless others. Everyday readers are offered inexpensive, escapist entertainment and voraciously consume sensational stories of thrilling exploits on land, sea, and in the air; of daring explorers scouting exotic locales; of valour on the battlefield; tender romance and lurid sex; sports heroics; two-fisted, six-shooter action in the Old West; strange, supernatural mysteries, “Weird Menace,” and blood-curdling horror. Of particular interest to the members of this club are those tales of advanced super-science, voyages into outer space, and stirring adventures on bizarre, alien worlds—*science fiction!* Authors often wrote in multiple categories, and many stories incorporated elements borrowed from other genres.



First edition covers of *Amazing Stories* and *Action Comics*.

Some Pulp titles endured for many years, others folded after but a handful of issues. Many tweaked their names, sometimes several times over the course of their runs, or were merged with or absorbed by other magazines. Still others showcased Pulp Heroes like The Spider, G-8, The Domino Lady, Doc Savage, Conan the Barbarian, and The Shadow: forerunners of, and inspirations for, many comic book superheroes to come.

April 18, 1938: *Action Comics* #1 (cover date June 1938) is published, introducing Superman, the superhero archetype. He prompts a boom which sees, within a couple of years, the debuts of numerous superheroes, including Amazing-Man, Aquaman, The Atom, Batman and Robin, The Blue Beetle, Captain America, Captain Marvel, The Crimson Avenger, Doctor Fate, Doll Man, Fantomah, The Flame, The Flash, Green Arrow, Green Lantern, Hawkman and Hawkgirl, Hourman, The Human Torch, The Magician from Mars, The Masked Marvel, Minute-Man, Phantom Lady, Plastic Man, The Ray, The Spectre, The Sub-Mariner, The Thin Man, Vision, and Wonder Woman.

August 31/September 1, 1939: Nazi Germany's charismatic, determined, and ruthlessly aggressive chancellor, Adolph Hitler commences hostilities against neighbouring Poland in the early morning hours of the following day. He seeks to obliterate Poland and partition the territory between Germany and Josef Stalin's Soviet Union, with which Germany had, just a week earlier, signed a non-aggression pact. German forces invade Poland, tanks, infantry, and aircraft crossing the border between the two nations in what the world would come to know as *Blitzkrieg*: "Lightning War." Polish defenders are quickly routed. The Second World War has begun.

September 3, 1939: Poland's allies, Great Britain and France, declare war on Germany.

September 10, 1939: Canada follows suit, announcing its own declaration of war against Germany.



THE WAR EXCHANGE CONSERVATION ACT

At the outset of the war, there were few domestic pulp magazines on Canadian newsstands. The Pulp magazines were largely an American publishing phenomenon, and the vast majority of Pulp magazines sold in Canada were imported from the U.S.

With the nation now at war, and in order that Canadian dollars be held in reserve within Canada to support the war effort, the Mackenzie King government passed the War Exchange Conservation Act (WECA) on December 6, 1940, restricting trade in "non-essential goods"... including pulp magazines and comic books. Canadian readers were bereft.

[SIDEBAR: WECA's restrictions on imported publications were not comprehensive. While working-class readers and youth lost access to their pulp fiction, the more affluent readers of high-end "Glossies" high-end magazines—like Collier's, Life, and The Saturday Evening Post—were unaffected by the new restrictions.]

With the advent of WECA, Canadian publishers saw an opportunity, and set to work quickly producing homegrown alternatives with which to fill our newsstands.

NEXT ISSUE: "Canada Whites" – Canada's wartime comics.

Sighting: Fairy Door

By Fernando (Fern) Novo



Early one May morning, as I was doing my daily walk through the streets of Montreal I happened to stumble upon a tiny Fairy Door at the foot of a huge tree trunk! I had heard of Fairy Doors and seen pictures on the internet but these had been located mainly in England and in Germany! So I was particularly pleased to find this Fairy Door in my district of Rosemount in Montreal. I will not reveal the exact location of the Fairy Door as its discovery is part of the delightful joy of seeing it for the first time.

Review: *Shazam – Fury of the Gods*

By Josée Bellemare

In April I went to see the movie *Shazam—Fury of the Gods*. There were only three persons in the room: me, and a mother with her daughter. Some people might see this as a bad sign but I enjoyed myself very much.

The movie was entertaining with the right balance of drama, action and comedy. It was serious at times but not too much, the fight scenes were well staged, the visual effects were impressive and the humour was light but not too silly and I thought the Greek mythology was well researched without being boring.

It is true that some scenes looked copied from other movies but it was fun to watch. I really enjoyed a car playing the song "I Need a Hero" during the rescue scene on the bridge. Yes, it was a bit silly and yet it seemed right.

Making special appearances were Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman and for those of us old enough to remember, Michael Gray, who played Billy Batson in the Captain Marvel TV series back in the 70s.

I recommend as a fun movie.

As of this writing, *Shazam: Fury of the Gods* is available in Canada on HBO Max.

Book Review: *The Hollows* by Daniel Church

By Valérie Bédard

The Hollows est le premier roman de Daniel Church (auteur britannique à ne pas confondre avec son homonyme américain). Le récit se déroule en Angleterre, dans le district de Peaks, dans le Derbyshire. Le village de Barsall vit d'agriculture et de tourisme: les montagnes avoisinantes attirent des randonneurs pédestres et de temps en temps des archéologues amateurs. Bon an, mal an, il s'en perd quelques uns qui doivent être recherchés, souvent sans succès, par la police locale

Hors, un dix-neuf décembre, à la veille d'une énorme tempête de neige (dans une contrée sans souffleuses!), la policière Ellie Cheetham se porte au secours de deux jeunes promeneurs qui sont tombés en forêt sur le cadavre d'un homme mort de froid. Ce dernier s'avère être Tony Harper, l'un des célèbres semeurs de trouble de la région, membre d'une famille de tarés locaux. Les Harpers vivent sur leur ferme à l'écart du village, menés par leur matriarche, la redoutable Liz. Tous connus de la police et maniaques d'armes à feu illégales, ils sont universellement haïs par les villageois, en particulier Paul, le fils sociopathe et violeur en série.

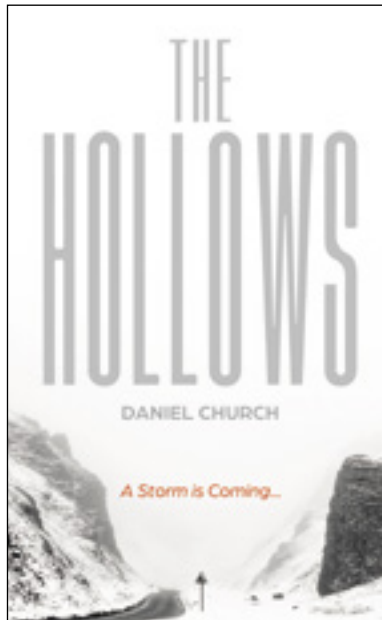
Le corps policier se limite à Ellie et son supérieur Tom, paresseux notoire ne songeant qu'à sa retraite prochaine... Tom ne voit dans le cas de Tony Harper qu'une simple histoire d'ivrogne mort d'hypothermie, mais Ellie a des raisons de croire que Tony a tenté de se défendre contre plusieurs agresseurs qui l'ont encerclé et laissé mourir de froid. C'est à elle qu'incombe la déplaisante tâche d'annoncer à Liz Harper le décès suspect de son garçon. La réaction de Liz sera extrêmement violente et étrange. Ellie se sortira de justesse de la situation...

Le lendemain on trouve une résidence et un bar en périphérie de Barsall complètement saccagés. À part Kate, une jeune fille retrouvée en état de choc dans une cave, tous les résidents ont disparus... On retrouve des traces de lutte et les agresseurs se sont particulièrement acharnés sur les appareils ménagés et électroniques.

À la tombée de la nuit suivante, la tempête prend de l'ampleur. Barsall se retrouve sans contact avec l'extérieur: la ville voisine n'envoie personne déblayer les routes. Des secteurs du village se retrouvent sans électricité, les lignes téléphoniques et internet sont coupées. L'inquiétude des

villageois grandit. On se remémore de vieilles légendes et la disparition de presque tous les habitants du village lors d'un terrible hiver du Moyen-âge...

Si vous aimez les romans policiers avec des éléments surnaturels, ce livre vous charmera à coup sûr!!! Il contient tous les ingrédients d'un bon roman de "folk-horror": un milieu rural isolé (je serai toujours fascinée par la peur de la campagne des citadins!), une nature hostile et déchaînée, ainsi que des superstitions concernant des forces occultes anciennes. La dualité entre



les gens de la place et ceux de l'extérieur, les uns gardiens d'anciens savoirs et les autres "raisonnables" et incroyables est fort bien campée. Quelques gens de la ville, lassés par la violence de celle-ci, sont venus s'installer à Barsall recherchant une vie plus paisible. Ellie, la policière venue oublier la mort de son jeune garçon et un divorce subséquent, est une des femmes fortes de l'histoire, racontée principalement du point de vue de trois personnages féminins: Ellie qui veut protéger la population, Liz qui mène sa famille de délinquants d'une main de fer, et Jess, sa fille adolescente et monoparentale qui doit apprendre à protéger son bébé contre de multiples dangers... Ces trois

femmes sont des figures guerrières qui doivent survivre à l'impensable. Les personnages secondaires sont aussi fort intéressants: Milly, la doctoresse d'un village, qui verra sa grande foi en Dieu testée par les événements; la vicairie Madeleine, fascinée par l'archéologie et les traditions païennes...

L'auteur met en place l'action sur quatre jours, incluant le solstice d'hiver. Trois camps s'affrontent: les villageois, les Harpers et de terribles forces de destruction oubliées depuis des siècles. À saveur lovecraftienne, l'ennemi est terrifiant à souhait. Le rythme du récit est enlevé et on a de la difficulté à déposer le livre!!!

Seul petit défaut de l'oeuvre, lue en version originale anglaise: certaines phrases doivent être relues et semblent un peu bancales (verbes absents, entre autre...). Est-ce un effet voulu de l'auteur ou une erreur de révision? Je suis curieuse de voir ce que donnera la traduction...

Mais le roman n'en reste pas moins palpitant et glaçant! Bref, un début fracassant pour Daniel Church, dont je compte suivre la carrière assidûment.

Book Review: *Broadway Revival* by Laura Frankos

By Joe Aspler



What do you get when a writer of F&SF has an encyclopedic knowledge of American music and theatre? You get *Broadway Revival*, by Laura Frankos.

Frankos' first full-length novel is an alternate history with a difference. She doesn't deal with alternate world wars and empires and alien invasions. Her "what if" deals with the Great White Way—Broadway.

In the year 2078, time travel is a Thing. The use of the SlingShot to send travellers into the past is expensive and riddled with political intrigue. Messing with history doesn't create grandfather paradoxes. Instead, you create Splinterverses, or Splinter universes, which co-exist with and develop in parallel to our own. When France tries to prevent World War I by stopping the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914, as one character says, "They stopped the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in 1914. Well, let's just say it's a different world."

The protagonist is David W. Greenbaum; actor, writer, and composer. His brother is a Ripper—a time travelling historian. In July 2078, David is mourning his husband Ramon, victim of a late 21st century designer drug addiction. The McGuffin is not as world-shaking as trying to stop a World War. The target is George Gershwin, who died from a brain tumour in 1937 at the age of 38. Gershwin composed for Broadway, films, and for the classical repertoire. His works include the opera *Porgy and Bess*, *Rhapsody in Blue* for piano and orchestra, and many Broadway musicals. What if Gershwin had lived for another 40 or 50 years? What works might he have composed into the 1970s and even the 1980s? More shows and popular tunes, plus operas and more contributions to the classical repertoire?

It's believed that Gershwin had either astrocytoma or glioblastoma. Both are brain cancers that even today have poor survivability. So how does David provide Gershwin with effective late 21st century anti-cancer drugs?

Step one – hijack the SlingShot and have himself

sent back to the 1930s. Step two – establish an identity for himself, and head for Broadway. Step three – try to get close enough to Gershwin to give him late 21st century anti-cancer drugs.

And so, David W. Greenbaum becomes Joseph David Cohen, whose birth records were conveniently lost in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire. With the anti-Semitism of the time, he then becomes J.D. Taylor. While some time travellers make money by betting on sports or by "inventing" new technology, J.D. Taylor becomes an Angel of Broadway—one of those brave souls who risk their money as backers on the Great White Way. Greenbaum – now Taylor – only backs sure things. Then he starts writing and producing. Naturally, he fits into the Broadway establishment of the time, and meets up with an awesomely name-dropping collection of writers, actors, producers, composers, and more. No politicians and statesmen and great scientists here!

Along the way, David doesn't just try to save George Gershwin. He tries to save people—show-business people—from accidents, heart problems, drinking, or tuberculosis. He also becomes the lover of a famous composer, at a time when accusations of homosexuality could ruin someone's reputation, and likely land them in jail.

In its own way, the book addresses an issue in alternate history stories that some authors fail to examine: the basic idea that you can't just change one thing. You stop a World War—how does that affect history beyond? In this case, if you save the life of a composer or writer, what do they write? What doesn't get written? If an actor appears in a different play than our history, how does that affect their life? If new Gershwin show is a hit, does it displace another show that might have been a bigger hit? If you save someone's life, how might they die in the new timeline?

Conclusion: an excellent read, and a refreshing take on problems with alternate histories. MonSFFA's old friend Baird Searles would have loved it. Just keep Wikipedia handy to look up all the names that are dropped.

And back to the Splinterverse in which the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne is not assassinated in 1914. Frankos is also married to Harry Turtledove, known as the Master of Alternate History, and a guest of honour at our ConCept in 2005. Perhaps the answer will be a joint work by Frankos and Turtledove.

Fiction: *Starfleet Treachery*

By Barbara Silverman

Alternate timelines can diverge fast. When Captain Kathryn Janeway leads the USS Explorer into the Badlands while pursuing Chakotay and his Maquis on board the Val Jean, they are abruptly flung into the Delta Quadrant. Many of Explorer's crew are killed—but not, as in the timeline we are more familiar with, first officer Commander Cavit or medical officer Dr. Fitzgerald. Without those high-level vacancies in Explorer's hierarchy, Janeway cannot offer a position to Chakotay, or leave the EMH permanently on... and the differences accumulate.

PREVIOUSLY: *Janeway has been critically injured during a Kazon attack, and Cavit and Fitzgerald—who both bear a serious grudge against the Maquis—have seized command. Cavit's first official act: terminating Janeway's nascent truce with Chakotay.*

CHAPTER 58

Seconds later a beam of light appeared in the transporter chamber.

Cavit took out his phaser, as did the rest of the security team.

When Chakotay finally rematerialized, Cavit stepped forward. “Commander Chakotay, you are under arrest for crimes committed against the laws of the United Federation of Planets.”

The Maquis leader's face showed absolute shock and disbelief. He looked from Cavit. to Tuvok, then back to Cavit. “Where is Captain Janeway?”

This time when Cavit looked at Chakotay there was no mistaking the hatred within the Starfleet officer. “Captain Janeway was critically injured, and is not expected to survive for more than another hour or two. I am now the authority on board this ship, as you will soon learn. Step off the pad! Carefully! Crewman, remove the prisoner's phaser!”

Dazed by the news of Janeway's condition, Chakotay stepped slowly down onto the deck, remaining motionless as his phaser was confiscated. The Maquis leader realized he had no choice but to obey, as Cavit would not hesitate to use his phaser. He had been careless, walking into the hands of the man who hated him, and who would take full advantage of the situation.

Cavit motioned to one of the team. “Get those restraints on this outlaw. He will not escape again.”

Andrews moved quickly to carry out the order, being careful not to look directly at the Maquis leader. Having been part of the away team, he did not like what was happening.

Once again Chakotay found himself a captive of Starfleet, his arms bound tightly behind him. Looking over at Tuvok, he found the

face of the Vulcan without expression; however, in that emotionless visage he detected a hint that the Vulcan was not in agreement with Cavit.

Cavit holstered his weapon. “Well, well, that's better. Tuvok, you and two others will accompany us to the bridge. This rebel is about to learn the proper way Starfleet deals with traitors. Let's go!”

In total silence Captain Cavit, Tuvok and the two guards escorted their prisoner into the turbolift. On the way to deck one, apprehension weighed heavily on the Maquis commander. What did Cavit have in mind? Whatever it was, Chakotay knew it would not be pleasant, either for himself or his crew.

Stepping out onto the bridge Chakotay noticed everybody immediately lowering their eyes or looking away. He sensed Cavit's actions did not sit well with any of them. However, they were Starfleet, powerless to do anything but follow the orders of their superiors.

The Maquis leader could easily see anger written on the face of Harry Kim, and he noticed Tom Paris was not at the helm. Hopefully, he would have the opportunity to speak privately with Tuvok, and find out exactly what had happened to Janeway.

When the group reached the command area, Cavit turned his attention to the conn. “Ensign, move us a little to the Maquis ship's aft. Position us so we are halfway between their antimatter containment pods and the warp core.”

Cold fear gripped Chakotay as the view of his ship shifted. Cavit was satisfied. “Hold position!”

He then turned to Tuvok. “Bring forward photon torpedoes on-line, full spread to hit the antimatter containment and warp core areas. Commander Chakotay has a choice to make!”

Numbed with fear and rage, Chakotay whirled to face the captain. “Cavit... you can't fire! This is murder!”

“If I fire, that will be your decision,” Cavit calmly replied to his prisoner, taking pleasure at the Maquis leader's discomfort.

Still standing beside Chakotay, Tuvok tried to object. “Sir...”

Cavit took a step in the Vulcan's direction. “Mr. Tuvok! Do you refuse to carry out a direct order? We are a Starfleet ship, sworn to uphold the laws of the United Federation of Planets! According to those laws, Commander Chakotay and his crew are traitors! To be dealt with as such! You served with Chakotay – am I to assume you are now a Maquis supporter?”

“No Sir.” Tuvok could find no logical argument against Cavit.

Captain Cavit locked angry eyes on the Vulcan. “Tuvok, you have your orders. If you hesitate again I will consider you to be a rebel



sympathizer and I will place you under arrest!"

Turning around, Cavit's eyes slowly travelled over each member of the bridge crew. "That applies to any crewman serving on my ship! If there is *any* indication, any at all, that you support the Maquis, you will be instantly removed from duty and thrown into the brig. Is that clear?!"

Despite fear for the welfare of his own crew, Chakotay felt deep sympathy for those onboard the Starfleet ship.

Turning, Tuvok walked over to his station, inputting the necessary commands into his console. "Launchers on-line."

Turning back to Chakotay, Cavit's voice was cold and uncompromising. "Commander, it is very simple. Contact your ship, tell them to surrender. Or... I will give Tuvok the order to fire. The tactical link to your ship has been severed, we have changed position. Your ship and your crew are helpless. Which will it be? I will fire! Make no mistake in that! You have ten seconds!"

Chakotay stared at the officer in horrified disbelief. Knowing that Cavit would, without hesitation, destroy his ship and everyone onboard, the Maquis leader nodded. "Okay, Cavit, you win. I'll order them to surrender."

Cavit felt a surge of satisfaction. He had done it! He had defeated this Maquis outlaw. "Remember... our weapons are on-line, do not try any tricks. Ensign Kim, open comms."

In an instant Evans appeared on-screen. "Chakotay..."

The Maquis leader took a deep breath. "Evans, there have been... some changes. Captain Janeway has been severely injured, Cavit is now Captain. I have been placed under arrest. Do not bring phasers on-line or raise shields, the weapons of this ship are trained on you. Lay down all arms, do exactly as Cavit tells you to do."

Evans wished he could reach through the viewscreen and wrap his hands around Cavit's throat, but used all his willpower to clamp down on his anger. He realized Cavit had used the trust between Chakotay and Janeway to set the perfect trap. With the Starfleet captain incapacitated and the Maquis sensors not working, fate had provided the perfect opportunity.

Like his commander, the Maquis second-in-command knew he had no choice. "All right, Chakotay, we will follow Cavit's instructions."

This time Cavit felt more than a momentary flash of gratification. He had not really wanted to destroy Chakotay's ship. The crew, yes, but not the ship. "Evans, be warned...we will be monitoring you every minute with weapons trained on your ship. Arrange for your crew to be transported over here, without weapons, in groups of five or six. No one is to be left onboard. I will inform you when the transports are to begin. Do not deviate from my orders!"

"We will do as you say," Evans replied as he began evaluating the situation and looking for a solution to their plight. Silently delighting in his triumph, Cavit's eyes remained glued to the screen. "Ensign Kim, close the com link."

A very pleased new captain turned to Tuvok. "Have Rollins replace you at tactical. He is to maintain weapons lock on the Maquis, and monitor that ship for any signs they are not following my orders. Escort Chakotay to the brig, keep him in restraints. Prepare the smallest cargo bay to act as a holding cell for the others. When ready, notify me, and I'll inform the Maquis to begin transports. After all the outlaws are locked up, take a detail over and secure their ship. Report to my ready room when you are finished."

"Yes Sir. Mr. Rollins, report to the bridge." The Vulcan silently watched as Cavit headed for, what was now, his ready room.

Moments later Rollins stepped out of the turbolift. News of the change of captains and Chakotay's arrest had already spread

through the ship, anger at Cavit's actions showed in his eyes as he looked at the Maquis leader. Without a word he walked over to Tuvok.

After quickly instructing Rollins, Tuvok stepped away from his station. "This way, Commander."

The Vulcan, the two guards, and Chakotay walked over to the turbolift. A few minutes later, the Maquis leader found himself occupying the same cell that he had been in only four months earlier.

This time, however, there was a difference. This time he was not a prisoner of Kathryn Janeway.

This time, he was the prisoner of a man vowing revenge. And this time, his crew had not escaped.

CHAPTER 59

While Cavit may have been happy, those on the Maquis ship were not.

As the viewscreen went dark, Evans slammed one balled fist into the palm of the other hand. "Damn! B'Elanna, report to the bridge!"

From near the turbolift an angry voice responded. "I'm right here! What the hell are we going to do?"

Evans turned to face his furious engineer. "Right now... there is nothing we can do but comply."

"Damn that Janeway!" Torres swore, smashing her hands down on the guardrail.

"B'Elanna, this is not Janeway's fault!" Evans firmly pointed out.

He looked at the infuriated, distraught faces of the bridge crew. "Chakotay said Captain Janeway had been injured, and those injuries must be serious, otherwise Cavit wouldn't be in command. This would never have happened if Janeway was still in charge, and you all know that. Regardless of the situation back in the Alpha Quadrant, Captain Janeway has been our friend and ally. Cavit was extremely unhappy when she called the truce. He's been waiting for an opportunity to countermand Janeway's orders, and he was handed one on a silver platter. I wouldn't be surprised if their Dr. Fitzgerald also had a hand in this."

B'Elanna's head jerked up. "Peter's brother?"

Evans heaved a sigh. "Yes!"

Torres threw her hands up into the air. "Oh great! It's still Janeway's fault. If she hadn't been so decent, her and that Starfleet ensign, Chakotay would never have gone over there."

From her position at the ops station, Seska looked from B'Elanna to Evans. "What's this about their doctor?"

Evans knew time was short and he had an important task to complete. "No time to explain right now. Seska, B'Elanna, I'm placing you in charge of preparing the crew."

Seska stormed over to where Evans was standing. "We're going to do what Cavit wants? Just march over there and say '*here we are, Starfleet, do want you want with us?*'"

Evans tried to calm his angry crew. He didn't want anyone doing something stupid. "Listen, everyone! You heard Chakotay, Cavit is prepared to destroy this ship and everyone on it. At present, there is nothing that can be done."

He looked at the enraged faces before him. "We will do what he wants, make it appear we are defeated, helpless prisoners."



Now Evans spoke with pride, infusing his strength into his shipmates. “However... do not forget... we are Maquis. I promise you, we’ll make Cavit aware of this. Be on the alert, we outnumber the Starfleet crew, and I suspect not all of them agree with Cavit’s actions. Watch for an opening, a chance to overpower any guards, to take Cavit by surprise and take over the ship. If we bide our time... the opportunity will come. Cavit has already made one mistake. He has no respect for Chakotay, for us, or for the Maquis. Therefore... he has underestimated our abilities. We must be ready to take advantage of any opening that comes our way. Now go, organize the crew. Hurry, Cavit will be contacting us shortly.”

He started to turn away.

B’Elanna looked at him. “And you... what are *you* planning to do?”

“Taking a few precautions,” Evans replied as he headed for Chakotay’s ready room.

Sitting down at the desk, he opened the monitor. For the next few minutes he tapped in a series of commands, locking out the computer to everyone except Chakotay and himself. Satisfied that it would take days for anyone—even Tuvok—to break the encryption sequence, he pressed the OFF switch.

He had one last duty to perform.

Cavit must never have command of the ship and its records. In the wrong hands the information could be devastating. “Computer, authorization Evans beta-gamma-two, begin 24-hour self-destruct sequence. Silent countdown with no console display or additional warning. Only Commander Chakotay or myself can authorize discontinuation of the countdown.”

“Acknowledged! Self-destruct 24-hour countdown beginning. There will be no visual display or verbal warning.” Silently the computer began the long, slow countdown to self-destruction.

There, it was done! Evans leaned back in the seat. If neither he nor Chakotay returned within the prescribed time... then they never would.

Taking a deep breath, Evans patted the arms of the chair, then he slowly rose to his feet.

It sickened him to think of the loss of life Cavit might be responsible for. The Starfleet ship would be caught in the explosion, or at least suffer heavy damage. And with their warp core problems... Even if the *Explorer* did escape, there could be a Starfleet security detail onboard the Maquis ship.

Evans rubbed his hand along the desk. He did have twenty-four hours, a lot could happen. If necessary, and if he had the opportunity, moments before the explosion he would warn Tuvok, giving the Vulcan just enough time to evacuate personnel and move to a safe distance.

Walking over to the door he turned, taking one last look around the room. Heaving a sigh he moved through the doorway, returning to the bridge. Going over to his command seat he sat down, there to await final instructions.

CHAPTER 60

As he had done earlier that day, Evans materialized on the transporter pad of the Starfleet ship. This time, it was different. This time he was met by an armed security detail led by Tuvok.

The Vulcan stepped forward. “Mr. Evans, you are the last.”

It was both a statement and a question.



Exhausted by the strain of the past two days, frustrated and angry at the situation, Evans stepped slowly off the pad.

He looked intently at the Vulcan. “Yes, Tuvok, I am the last one. Now what?”

Tuvok returned the steady stare. “You and your crew are confined to the cargo bay, and Mr. Chakotay is in the brig. Captain Cavit has not informed me as to his plans.”

Evans found it hard to breathe as fear wrapped itself around his chest. “You refer to Cavit as captain. Janeway is... she... is she dead?”

Though a Vulcan, Tuvok found it difficult to reply. “Dr. Fitzgerald informed Captain Cavit that her condition will not improve. We are expecting the official announcement at any moment. Under Starfleet regulations, Mr. Cavit assumed full command. He is now our captain.”

Something in Tuvok’s last words caught Evans’ attention.

Holding out his arm to indicate direction, Tuvok took a step backwards. “This way, Mr. Evans.”

Evans did not move. He studied the strained faces of the four-man security detail, two of whom had served on the away team. The Maquis second-in-command locked eyes with the Vulcan. “Do you agree with Cavit?”

Tuvok chose his words carefully. “He is the captain. His orders are to be obeyed. Even if we do not agree.”

Saying nothing more, Evans walked out of the transporter room. He had his answer in the words Tuvok did not speak.

After all the Maquis were secured and their ship locked down, Tuvok stopped by sickbay. Walking over to the bio-bed he looked down at the unconscious body of the captain. For several minutes he stood there quietly, his face unreadable. Looking up, he studied the read-outs above the bed. He then went into the doctor’s office.

Looking up from his monitor Fitzgerald quickly shut down what he had been working on. “If you’re here about the captain, it’s not good. I don’t expect her to live for much longer.”

“That is to say, there is no possibility for her to recover,” Tuvok stated.

Fitzgerald was annoyed at the Vulcan. He wished the Vulcan would stop interfering with his work, and just leave. “That is to say, there is no possibility for her recovery,” he said, mimicking him. “Look... As I informed Captain Cavit, if we were in the Alpha

Quadrant there may have been some hope. We might have been able to reach a Starfleet base with a proper hospital. Not here!”

And the Maquis will pay for this, he thought but did not say.

Tuvok look down at the doctor. “I notice some of the read-outs are not working properly. Could you be in error?”

The doctor wished he could throw this infuriating Vulcan in the brig with Chakotay. “No! I’m not wrong. Those read-outs would have no effect on the Captain’s condition!”

In disgust, Fitzgerald turned back to his monitor. However, he did not reopen it until the Vulcan had walked away.

Stepping out of the office, Tuvok stopped just outside the door. Turning his head he looked in the direction of the captain. Then he left sickbay for the bridge and a meeting with his new captain.

Exiting the turbolift, Tuvok walked across the bridge to the captain’s ready room. Deep inside the Vulcan stirred something that could be called the feeling of unease and concern, something he was not accustomed to. Even though Vulcans suppressed their emotions, they did have opinions. In Tuvok’s judgment, Cavit was wrong, but the captain was acting within the rules and regulations of Starfleet and the Federation. The Vulcan was left with no choice but to follow orders.

Entering the ready room, Tuvok walked up to the desk. He noticed how Cavit was acting similar to the doctor, immediately closing the computer screen.

Looking up, Cavit glared at his security chief. “Have the Maquis been taken care of?”

Choosing his words carefully, Tuvok replied. “Yes, sir. As per your orders, Chakotay is in the brig, and his crew under guard in the cargo bay.”

“What about their ship?”

Again Tuvok replied without going into details. “It is secured, and I left a security detail onboard.”

Cavit leaned back in the chair, as Janeway had done so many times before. “I’m preparing a hearing to decide the fate of our prisoners. It will be held in the conference room at 1700 hours. Chakotay is to be present; keep him in restraints at all times with four guards.”

Again Tuvok attempted to reason with Cavit. “Sir, I agree the Maquis are outlaws. However, Commander Chakotay had a truce with Captain Janeway...”

Cavit’s face was now a complete contrast to what it had been seconds before, his eyes a boiling volcano of anger and hostility as he stared angrily at the Vulcan. “With Captain Janeway, not with me! Any arrangement between Chakotay and Captain Janeway was nullified the moment I assumed command. Furthermore, that agreement covered the recovery of Harry Kim, which was accomplished.”

Looking down at the desk, Cavit fought to keep his temper under control. “This is a Starfleet ship acting under the auspices of the United Federation of Planets. It is up to us to obey and adhere to the laws of that Federation, either in the Alpha Quadrant or here in the Delta Quadrant. You are the security officer; see to the security of this ship. Only in that capacity are you to be concerned about the Maquis. Now, bring Chakotay to the conference room at 1700 hours. Dismissed!”

For a moment Tuvok looked down at his commander, then he turned, starting for the door.

Calming down, Cavit stopped him. “Under circumstances such as these, when the first officer becomes captain, the next senior officer normally becomes the new first officer. That would be you. However, there are regulations allowing the new captain to promote someone else. Once the Maquis situation is resolved, I will make my

choice. Your appointment to the first officer post will depend on your actions during this time. Dismissed!”

Tuvok turned and left.

Seconds later Cavit received a summons over the com system. “Fitzgerald to Cavit. Come down to sickbay, we have a problem.”

Top 10 List: Cool SF Character Names

By Leonard Lang

10) **Captain Nemo:** Indian royalty, the son of a raja, Jules Verne’s mysterious scientist/inventor is the first major SF character that I can remember who was a person of colour. So, ahead of his time, in that respect. He reserved a special hatred for Imperialism, and especially of the British Empire, which drove him to vengeance. Plus, he commanded a really cool, technologically advanced submarine, not exactly the kind of watercraft common in the late 19th century!

9) **Bernard Quatermass:** Nigel Kneale’s penultimate scientist/hero, head of the British Experimental Rocket Group and star of the influential BBC science fiction serials of the 1950s, and the subsequent Hammer films, among other adaptations, was unwavering as he faced sinister threats from outer space. Bernard Quatermass just sounds so like a scientist’s name, like science fiction personified!

8) **Kal-El:** I’ve always liked Superman’s Kryptonian name!

7) **Logan 5:** A Sandman turned runner in *Logan’s Run*. Any name that includes a number is definitely a cool-sounding sci-fi name!

6) **Indiana Jones:** Any name that includes a geographical component is *absolutely* a cool name! The whip and fedora don’t hurt, either!

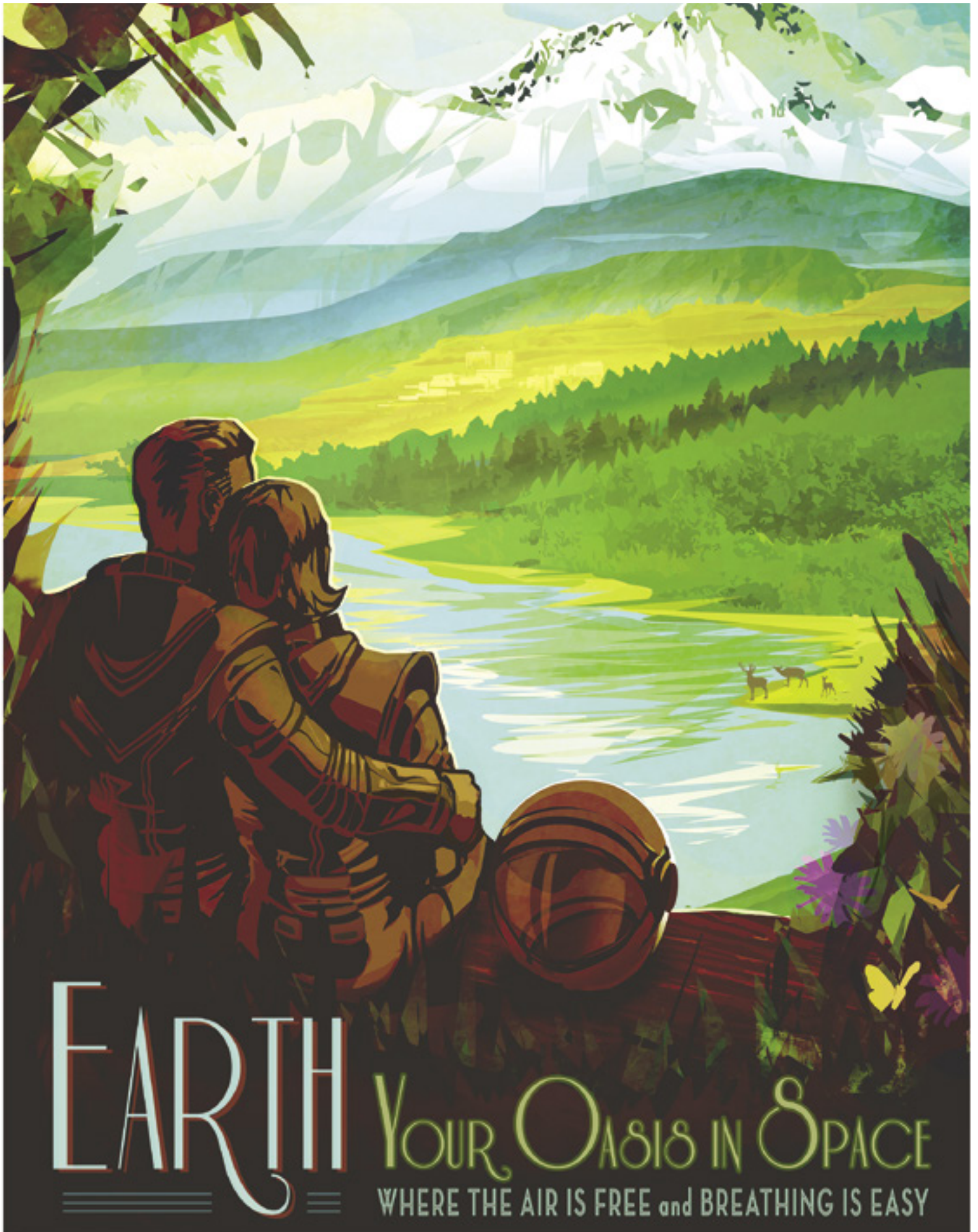
5) **Duncan Idaho:** He of the *Dune* series; like Indiana Jones, the geographical component is cool, and this one rolls off the tongue with a particular pirate-like swagger!

4) **Spider Jerusalem:** featured in the cyberpunk *Transmetropolitan* series, he’s the comic-book version of gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson. The handle is memorable, combining that aforementioned geographical component with the name of a bug; too cool!

3) **Sabetha Belacorus:** Just *the* coolest name for a fantasy anti-heroine! A thief, she was the love interest of Locke Lamora, of the *Gentleman Bastards*, until she left Camorr on unknown business. There’s more, but we don’t have the time!

2) **Darth Vader:** There are a lot cool-sounding sci-fi names in *Star Wars*, enough to fill up a whole other top-ten list, but I’m going with Vader, here, because the moniker positively *drips* with menace, as any good villain’s name should!

1) **Zaphod Beeblebrox:** Just an unquestionably science fictiony, cool, wonderfully funny name conjured up by Douglas Adams for his *Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series.



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