

Autumn 2012

WARP 84

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Please help us plan **your** activities!

On the Cover

Photo by RASC Montreal Centre member, Luis Eguren: "Rising before the Sun are Venus, Jupiter, Alderaban and the Hyades and the Pleiades; mix in some clouds that looked like dragons and you have an incredibly beautiful scene! Taken with a 21mm Olympus lens @ F4, 10 second exposure using a Canon T3 (unmodded) camera, Aug 12 @5 AM.
(Used with permission)

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YAHOO!

MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Except where noted, all MonSFFA meetings are held
Sundays at 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Espresso Hotel, St-François Room, 1005 Guy Street, corner René Lévesque.

Programming is subject to change, check our website for latest developments.

OCTOBER 28

Top 10 scary moments in SF/F & horror films
The real CSI : Computer crime
Garage/craft sale beginning at 11 AM

NOVEMBER 18

Dinosaurs & Sci-Fi (Cinemasaurus)
Fan Fiction and fan art
as an introduction to the genre

DECEMBER 8

MonSFFA Christmas Party
Details to be announced

Tentative Dates for 2013 Meetings and Events

Check the website for more complete information

January 20

Elections
The Two Wacky Pin Guys - Product and Design, How's it Made

February 24

Cyberpunk - What happened?
The Wonderful Worlds of Fantasy
PANSTARRS: The brightest comet in past 6 years?

March 24

Spot The Blooper

April 21

Paleoart
SCI-FI Model Kit Box Art

May 26

Weird and Wacky Worlds of SF

May 26

June 9

Club Outing

July 21

BBQ

August 11

September 22

October 20

November 17

December 7

MonSFFA Christmas Party

Really Fine Print: WARP is published quarterly by 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 the writer, or ask the editor to pass on your request. 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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Dear Cathy:

Here's a letter of comment on Warp 83, the first letter I've written since coming back from Los Angeles. I wrote down notes on the issue on the plane to LA and on the plane home, so let's see if I can figure out what I was thinking of at the time I wrote them down. I also remember wishing these A320s were roomier...

I don't think fan-run cons are dying, but they are changing into something you and I might not recognize. Around Toronto, I have seen newer conventions that specialize in anime, gaming, and something termed 'geek culture'. These are being held in Toronto, but also smaller

towns like Guelph, Oakville and Burlington. Genrecon is a geek culture convention in Guelph, and they explained geek culture as best as they could...I still don't know if this is a convention I'd want to go to. Donald Simmons is doing some research into what it is, and what it includes. The Genrecon people said any interest you could really get into, which for them even includes NASCAR.

Another reason we don't go to the newer cons is that we expect we'd be the oldest people there. We did not go to the World Fantasy Convention in Toronto...we never know if any particular WFC is fan-friendly or not. Some of them haven't been. Many pro writers in attendance raved about it, some commented on how far it was from the airport, and the chairman was notable by his absence from any reports I'd read.

I always enjoy Ad Astra, I've attended it every year since 1982, and I expect I will always go to it. I think the convention's focus has shifted slightly, from literary to literary/party, and the outlook of the first con of the year, the solution to the winter's cabin fever. I don't get to many cons any more, so as of now, Ad Astra 2013 is my next con. SFCOntario is a real contender, they seem a little more literary and fannish than Ad

Astra, and with that, I am enjoying SFC a little more than AA. CostumeCon is coming here in 2014, we are looking forward to it, and perhaps costumers of yesteryear may appear, but I suspect only if we give them memberships.

Worldcons...in LA, we saw a lot of Worldcon bidders, but part of the discussion was the possibility of another Montreal bid. Projected year is 2017, because it will be Canada's sesquicentennial year, and also the 350th anniversary of the founding of Montreal. I hope some confirmation will come up soon, plus more details.

There's the page, and I am done for now...I will send you another Tale From the Convention!, and my latest list of events, as soon as I put it together. See you then!

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

Hi, Lloyd!

There is (or was, I'm not sure of its current status) a Geek Con in Montreal. The idea is to appeal to any interest that has what might be termed extreme fans.

I will certainly be going to Ad Astra again this year. As you mention, it is the

first con on the calendar and I really look forward to it every year.

I might be able to go to SFC since I cannot afford to go to World Con in Texas this summer. It will likely be a last minute decision depending a lot on finances. I also plan to attend the Dr Who convention in November. I am so going

to miss Polaris!

As you have probably heard, Con*Cept is no more, but it looks like there will be a literary convention called Perception which might start this year. I hope they succeed in keeping the SFF flame alive in Montreal

Thanks for the Tale from the

Convention and the list of events for the year!

Yours in fandom,

Cathy

See page 16 for more letters from the MonSFFA mailbag.



By Your Command... Lloyd Penny

Flying to Atlanta means you fly into Hartsfield

Atlanta International Airport, and that's exactly what we did on our way to the 1986 Worldcon, ConFederation. We had an uneventful flight out of Toronto, landed no problem, and we found out that this airport is so big, it has its own subway. So, into the airport subway we went to head for the main terminal.

Now, keep in mind that 1986 is about seven or eight years since the original Battlestar Galactica television show. (Today, that sounds really strange, to say the original Battlestar Galactica...) Ah yes, Lorne Greene, Muffy the Daggit, a non-Survivor Richard Hatch, cheesy special effects, being attacked by hostile stock footage, and everyone's favourites, the black and silver

Cylons, a single red visual light strobing from side to side, with that dull monotone voice, intoning, "By your command..."

Back to Atlanta...we hefted our luggage and ourselves into the subway, got settled, and off we rode into the dark tunnel to the next terminal. And then, there was announcement over the PA...

"Next stop...Terminal Three...Air Canada...Air Jamaica...Air France..." in that same Cylon monotone. Yvonne and I looked at each other, and started to snicker, and at the end of the announcement, I strobed my finger in front of my eyes, side to side, and in that monotone, said "By your command." And of course, we laughed our fool heads off.

A couple of people at the other end of the car must have heard us...they laughed and turned around to wave. Guess they recognized the references...

"Hey, you must be going to Worldcon!"

"Yeah!"

The original Battlestar may have been cheesy, but on that day, it served as the perfect icebreaker.



And speaking of Cylons...

SFF Sightings! From Cyberspace



Starfleet Treachery

Barbara Silverman

The story so far: On a rare visit to Earth, Kathryn Janeway is called in to her father's office. Admiral Janeway tells her about Commander Chakotay's defection to the Maquis, soon followed by that of Ro Laren who is rumoured to have recruited over six thousand former resistance fighters. He fears the two forces may be joining up, and he has asked his daughter to come up with a plan to stop Chakotay and disrupt the impending coalition against Starfleet and the Federation.

Janeway has a mole, Tuvok, in Chakotay's crew and knows that Chakotay has also recruited B'Elanna Torres and Tom Paris. Starfleet reports the suspiciously easy capture and arrest of Tom Paris and Janeway worries that Chakotay may be upping the ante. She plans an ambush for the Maquis, using a shipment of medical supplies as bait. Chakotay is captured, but the rest of his crew escape. A conversation with Chakotay leaves Janeway puzzled as to his motives, and the ease with which he was captured.

After turning Chakotay over to the authorities, Janeway is assigned to exploring the Gamma quadrant for three months. On her return, her father explains why it was necessary that she get to know the quadrant and become familiar with the Cardassians. It appears there may be an alliance between the Cardassians and the Dominion, and if so, the Federation needs to know if it's an alliance of mutual protection, or aggression. Chakotay may hold some answers, so Admiral Janeway is having him brought to Starfleet HQ.

CHAPTER 16

Leaving her father's office, Kathryn Janeway headed to the transporter room. Walking with her usual quick pace she voiced her opinion to Molly as they proceeded down the corridor. "Damn! I hope Dad knows what he's doing. Usually, I agree with him. Not this time!" Oblivious to the problems of the world surrounding her, Molly trotted silently alongside her mistress.

Entering the transporter room, Janeway was greeted with a formal nod from the young male ensign. "Afternoon Captain, you too, Molly. Transport to Station Centre Three?"

Janeway moved in the direction of the platform. "Please! I'm looking forward to a peaceful afternoon and evening. It might be the last opportunity that I'll have to relax for awhile."

"Captain?" Knowing Janeway was one of the more 'approachable' captains, the ensign was not afraid to voice a question.

Stepping up onto the pad, Molly jumped up beside her. "Nothing. Just afraid something will happen that I hope will not." Seconds later human and dog found themselves only a couple of minutes from home.

As Janeway hurried from the transporter station, the attendant sneaked Molly a dog biscuit from the hidden supply under the console. "Afternoon Captain, have a good evening."

"Thanks, you too," returned Janeway, pretending not to see the treat sticking out one side of the red muzzle.

Once home she changed into civilian clothing, at the same

time holding a one-way conversation. "Molly, I don't like this. Not one bit! Dad is confident he'll have no trouble, I'm not so sure. Want to play ball?" Molly, knowing the the word ball, wagged her tail.

Walking outside they entered a large backyard, enclosed by wood fencing. There they played the age-old game: human tosses ball, dog catches it. Then dog drops ball from wet mouth into human hand.

An hour later Janeway returned to her kitchen. After feeding Molly she went over to the replicator. "Computer, one cheese sandwich and coffee." Supper in hand she decided to go into her study where, with Molly curled up at her feet, she picked up a book of poetry, trying to read until bedtime. Time and again her mind strayed from the printed page to her father and the Maquis leader. To the conversations with both men. Finally, finding the words failing to register, and having read the same page four times, she called it a day.

But rest did not come easily. Even in bed her mind refused to deviate from the Dominion-Cardassian alliance and the events miles away surrounding her father. When sleep did arrive, Kathryn Janeway tossed and turned. Would her father be successful?

Or would the Maquis manage to free their leader? There was no peaceful slumber as the question refused to rest.



CHAPTER 17



On the other side of the world her father, confident his mission would be successful, was unaware of his daughter's fitful slumbers. The pilot of the shuttle tapped the comm display. "Prison control, this is the shuttle Abydos requesting landing permission."

A polite, but authoritative, male voice responded. "Abydos, this is prison control, you are clear to land heading one-mark-two-seven-five."

Reaching to close communications the pilot acknowledged

his orders. "Landing one-mark-two-seven-five. Abydos out."

Turning his head the pilot addressed the man sitting beside him. "Sir, we'll be down in two minutes. The landing zone is just within the prison gates."

Nodding his head in confirmation, Admiral Janeway did not turn his head away from the window. Emerging on the horizon, he could see the prison complex basking in the New Zealand afternoon sunlight. "I will not be long. Wait here with the security detail, be ready to leave the moment I return."

"Yes Sir!" Preparing the craft for landing, the pilot's hands

glided back and forth across the instrument panel.

Two minutes later when the shuttle touched, the admiral lost no time in disembarking. A tall man with silver hair approached. "Admiral Janeway, this is a pleasure. I'm Warden Britt."

Janeway shook the warden's hand. "The pleasure is mine. I have received many fine reports on your successful rehabilitation programs. At a more appropriate time I would like to discuss these with you, however, today I must leave immediately. Where is Chakotay?"

The warden replied as he pointed in the direction of the prison complex. "In his cell. As per your orders he has not been informed of the transfer. I am the only one aware of the reason for your visit. Do you wish him to be brought here or to my office?"

"I'll meet him in your office." Janeway replied, taking a step in the direction of the buildings.

With a swing of his arm, the warden indicated a set of buildings slightly to the front of the five-floor section housing the inmates. "Right this way." With Admiral Janeway walking beside, Warden Britt headed towards the long, single story building containing offices, reception center, and medical clinic.

The entrance way led into a medium-sized antechamber where the atmosphere was pleasant yet authoritarian. White walls contained several

pictures, all pertaining to various member planets of the Federation. The furniture was sparse and functional. In the center stood a couple of desks equipped with computer monitors, where security officers kept guard over the activities of the penal colony. In front of each desk stood two empty chairs, waiting to greet those with business at the complex. To the side, where visitors waited to be escorted to see inmates, stood a row of six seats. At the moment five were empty. Several doors along the side and at the rear of the room led to various departments. Britt quickly headed in the direction of the furthest doorway on the left.

Entering a small outer office, Warden Britt addressed a Vulcan woman sitting at the desk. "T'su, please have Chakotay brought to my office immediately."

Turning to the admiral, Britt indicated a door to his right. "My office is over here, Chakotay will arrive within five to ten minutes. We take extra precautions anytime he leaves his cell and he is monitored constantly."

Entering the room, Janeway found it small and serviceable. A plain desk with a computer monitor stood under a large window. Through the window Admiral Janeway could see the exercise yard, where several prisoners were engaged in a game of tennis. One chair faced the desk, with several others lined up against a wall. The wall opposite the chairs contained shelves of books and padd organizers full of records. Several pictures and citations were visible hanging on the walls.

After the door slid back into position the warden turned to his visitor. "Your communique came as a surprise. Has something developed with the Maquis?"

Janeway's answer was truthful yet evasive. "We have some questions which would be best asked back at Starfleet Command." The admiral quickly changed the course of the conversation. "Has

Chakotay been causing any problems?"

Britt shook his head. "We had naturally expected problems with a prisoner such as this, but no, it has been just the opposite. We couldn't ask for a better inmate. Quiet, polite, he does what is asked of him without complaint or back-talk. He keeps to himself when in the exercise areas or work rooms, no attempt to obtain support for the Maquis, or incite the other prisoners." The warden started to say something, then hesitated. After a moment he continued. "It's strange....whenever I observe him....I have the impression he is waiting for something."

Admiral Janeway made no comment. The warden's combadge beeped. "Yes T'su?"

"Chakotay is here." Replied the crisp Vulcan voice.

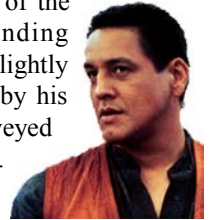
"Bring him in." Instructed Britt.

The door slid open, admitting Chakotay with a guard before and behind. Janeway turned to the warden. "I would like a moment alone with Chakotay."

"Of course." Motioning to the two security agents Britt left Admiral Janeway alone with the outlaw.

Chakotay walked slowly to the centre of the

office. Standing with feet slightly apart, hands by his side, he surveyed his visitor. The Maquis leader had



"What I have to say will depend on how much you already know. And....what action you are prepared to take. Another Janeway made her position quite clear. If you share the same sentiments, then perhaps you are wasting your time."

been expecting this, especially if he was correct about his caller. A moment later he had his confirmation.

Placing his hand on the back of a chair, the admiral studied the man standing before him. During his years in Starfleet he had faced many people, all too frequently they were in opposition to Starfleet and the Federation, with that hostility always reflecting in the eyes. This time he stared into the eyes of the Maquis leader. Finding to his surprise no coldness in the deep brown, only curiosity. "I'm Admiral Edward Janeway from Starfleet Command."

Though he had heard of Admiral Janeway, Chakotay had never seen the man up close. He studied the admiral's face. "Are you related to Captain Kathryn Janeway?"

The admiral nodded but did not elaborate. "Yes, there is a relationship. There are several important questions to which we require answers. I felt you would prefer meeting with me under more suitable conditions, we're leaving for Starfleet Headquarters at once."

The Maquis leader spoke softly. "Admiral, I know to what you are referring. What I have to say will depend on how much you already know. And....what action you are prepared to take. Another Janeway made her position quite clear. If you share the same sentiments, then perhaps you are wasting your time."

Chakotay had heard a lot about Admiral Janeway. He knew if anyone would listen this man would be the one. Why else had he arranged for certain information to cross the admiral's desk. Chakotay also knew this Janeway, as with the captain, was not to be taken lightly. The fact that the had come himself went a long way with the Maquis commander.

The admiral did not flinch before Chakotay's piercing gaze. "Sir, until I have proof that would change my position, I do share

the same viewpoints as the captain. I cannot promise that the information you have will change my position, however, you told Captain Janeway nobody would listen, I am prepared to do so. I would not have come all this way if I were not ready to hear you out. And I give you my word....it will be with an open mind.”

Admiral Janeway watched Chakotay. He understood the thoughts of the Maquis leader. The Federation would have to show a willingness to admit they were wrong. Begin to believe and trust the Maquis, or afraid of Starfleet warning the Cardassians and Dominion, either on purpose or accidentally, Chakotay would keep his knowledge to himself. Especially, if Kathryn Janeway were correct, and the Maquis leader was protecting others, probably those working undercover. If positions were reversed the admiral knew he would do the same.

After a moment of deliberation Chakotay placed a hand on his hip. “Who will be there?”

Admiral Janeway knew he had passed the first test. “Just you and I. And Captain Janeway.”

A small smile formed on the corners of Chakotay’s mouth. “I hope you will supply me with a thermal outfit. The last conversation between Captain Janeway and myself caused the temperature to drop several degrees.”

Glancing downwards for a second the admiral gave a slight laugh. “Yes Commander, I image it did. The captain is not one to mince words.” Walking to the door, the admiral addressed the men on the other side. “Warden Britt, would you prepare Chakotay for travelling and provide an escort to the shuttle.”

Once again the Maquis leader found his arms firmly secured behind his back. The anklet, worn for the past four months, carefully inspected. Satisfied, the guards escorted him out of the office. Then turning immediately to the left they passed through another door and down a short corridor leading outside.

With the warden and admiral taking the lead, the small group moved in the direction of the shuttle. Few words were spoken, the conversation between Britt and Janeway centring on routine prison affairs. Reaching their destination, Chakotay was quickly led inside by the security detail from the shuttle, as the escort from the prison returned to the complex.

After watching the Maquis leader disappear inside, Admiral Janeway turned to Britt. “Thank you warden, I’ll notify you when Chakotay will be returning. I’m not sure how long he’ll be at Starfleet Headquarters, but I expect it will be a few days.”

The warden shook hands with Janeway. “I wish you success. Hopefully, Chakotay will answer your questions. Up until now he has refused to say anything about the Maquis.”

“Warden, so do I.” With that Janeway followed the outlaw into the shuttle. Edward Janeway had failed to add, with the outcome meaning peace or war, he feared what those answers would be.

Moments later they were airborne, joining a fully armed escort that had been waiting. A short distance away two more Starfleet ships, on full alert, weapons on-line, scanned the area for any unauthorized ship.

Inside Chakotay sat facing Janeway, with the guards sitting two behind, two on the other side of the small craft. All was quiet. Starfleet admiral and Maquis outlaw both lost in a world of thought, thinking about the conference that was to come.

Time passed in total silence. The two men studying each other. Both knowing the future of the Federation depended on the result of the next few hours.

Suddenly, the silence was broken by a slight, barely audible sound. The air around Chakotay began to shimmer. Janeway, about to speak, sat with open mouth, words unsaid. Stunned admiral and startled guards, with phasers still in place, stared at the vacant seat.



TO BE CONTINUED IN WARP 85

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Did you know? MonSFFA has a mailing list for fans interested in astronomy news!

Contact: cathyp1@sympatico.ca

Star Dracula: Part VIII

François Ménard

The story so far: When the Jump-gates failed, worlds colonized by humanity were isolated until the invention of the super-light drive. Ships from New London are re-establishing contact with other worlds, one of them being the HCSS Demeter, captained by Jonathan Harker, just arrived in the Carpathian system.

First-Contact Op, Thomas Renfield is sent down to the planet, but crash lands. IGOR takes him to "Master" who introduces himself as Dracula, and explains that an IGOR is an Iso-Genetic Organic Robot.

While he sleeps, Dracula poisons Renfield's mind against Captain Harker. Fearing for his life, Renfield escapes in the lander. Worried when there is no word from Renfield, Harker drops down to the planet to search for him. Dracula welcomes him with drugged wine. When he awakes, Harker is unable to contact Renfield or the ship, and he sprains his ankle while trying to escape the mansion in the dark.

Renfield is running amok on the Demeter and another lander is lost in an attempt to rescue Harker. The first officer orders the launch of an emergency survival pod, hoping Harker will find it, and heads for home.

Six weeks later, the Demeter was on a collision course with the planet Piccadilly, and Harker was still lost on Carpathia. Rescuers found the Demeter's crew all dead of sudden blood loss, except for a delirious Renfield. Carpathia is declared quarantined until the cause is found, but Mina, Lucy and Dr Seward are determined to rescue Harker.

Lucy is in sickbay suffering from severe anaemia and Mina has hired a pilot to rescue Harker. Renfield escapes from confinement in mysterious circumstances and is found eating insects in Hydroponics. An orderly is discovered in a tank, her body drained of blood. A team of medical specialists, including a very elderly Professor Van Helsing, arrives. Carfax Station is put under medical quarantine, along with all who might have been in contact with someone from the station in the past 5 days.

The next day Doctor Seward and Professor Van Helsing were studying the autopsy report. "No doubt about it now, Professor," said Doctor Jack Seward with a sigh, "Whatever killed everyone on the Demeter is loose on the station. I just hope we can figure out what it is and how to stop it before we lose someone else. Renfield must be some kind of carrier but of what? Is it viral? Cellular? Chemical?"

"Yah, this is one elusive puzzle." was Professor Van Helsing's response. "Have there been any other cases yet, Jack?"

"No, not that I'm aware of," with that, Doctor Seward got up briskly and began pacing around the room.

"You're a good doctor, Jack," stated Van Helsing, "Very good. One of the best I've known, I'd tell you if I weren't afraid it would go to your head." Doctor Seward laughed dryly at his old mentor's odd sense of humour, "But you used to be better than this. Something's troubling you, what is it?"

"You mean other than being trapped on a station infected by a disease I cannot even identify, let alone treat?" Van Helsing looked at his student disapprovingly. "I'm sorry, Professor. I'm worried about Lucy, a friend of mine."

"Lucy you say. The same from..." Doctor Seward nodded in reply. He had forgotten how his old mentor had helped him through that trying time. "I understand. What's the matter with her?"

"She's developed some kind of acute anaemia—" upon hearing this, Professor Van Helsing's eyes widened with shock, "I know what you're thinking, Professor, but it's not related. She hasn't had any of the other symptoms and she is recovering, if only very slowly."

Van Helsing got up himself, took his cane, and smacked his old student on the head with it. "You're success really has softened your brain, Jack. You used to be so much better than this. She has the one symptom Renfield doesn't and you think it's unrelated?" and Van Helsing hit him again. "We go see this Lucy of yours, right now. I need to examine her, quickly."

Doctor Seward rubbed his head, more than a little embarrassed. He had forgotten his mentor's vitriolic temper. "She should be resting at the moment, but I'll ask—" and Doctor Seward ducked, narrowly avoiding another smack from the cane.

"Ask?! Jack, her life, as well as the lives of everyone on this station way well hang in the balance. We go, now. Move, move, move!" and the older man ushered his old student to the door with his cane.



Lucy was more than a little surprised when Doctor Jack Seward and his elderly friend came to her quarters. "Jack, I know you wanted to check up on me, but really. What's this about, and who's your handsome friend?" she teased.

"Abraham Van Helsing, dear lady," the Professor introduced himself as he took Lucy's hand and kissed it gently. "Once a teacher to this thick, foolish, slow witted doctor of yours. Also his friend and hopefully to become one of yours as well. Jack used to speak very highly of your beauty, but I see now he never did it justice."

"And what is it you taught Jack? Obviously not how to charm women otherwise he never would have lost me." She laughed as Doctor Seward's face turned that particular shade of crimson when he was embarrassed.

"Lucy, please," he said, unable to look her in the eye, "Can we come in? It's important."

"Your friend here can most certainly come in." and she took Van Helsing's arm in hers and lead him into her quarters. After a few steps she stopped and turned back towards Doctor Seward, "Oh, I guess you can come in, too." She and Van Helsing laughed.

Lucy offered them some tea and the three of them sat down to drink it together. After a few more jokes and some reminiscing, Professor Van Helsing turned to Lucy, "Now, my dear," he said in a more serious tone, "Jack here tells me you're ill, yah?"

"It's nothing," she replied, "Jack's a sweetheart but he worries too much. I'll be just fine."

"Lucy, it's not 'nothing'. The Professor and I—" Van Helsing held up a hand to stop Doctor Seward mid sentence.

"Maybe it's nothing," the older man continued, "But with everything that's been going on, do an old man a favour and humour us, alright? I would just like to examine you and make sure."

Doctor Seward was surprised at Lucy's reaction. He had expected her to continue with her jokes and her teasing, instead her face went pale and serious, "Oh, Professor, you don't think this has something to do with what happened on the Demeter? Is that why the station's been quarantined, Jack? Do I..." and she began to cry softly.

Professor Van Helsing put a comforting arm around her shoulders, "No, no, no. Nothing like that, my dear. We just want to make sure so this old man can stop worrying for nothing, yah?"

"Alright," she answered, drying her tears, "You want to take me to medical?"

"Nah," said Van Helsing, "Just need to make a simple examination. Now open your mouth and say 'ahhh', good. Now could you loosen your collar so I can check your throat." Lucy opened the collar of her sleep suit and Van Helsing gently took her chin in his hand, raised it, and turned her head to either side. Then he paused. Doctor Seward saw Van Helsing's face turn pale but after a short moment he caught himself and continued, "All good there, just one more thing, put your hand on this, please." and he pulled a shiny, metallic object from his pocket. As soon as Lucy touched it she drew back her hand suddenly.

"Ouch, that burns!" she exclaimed.

"Sorry, my dear, but that's the end of it." and he put the object back in his pocket, "All done," he repeated, "Nothing to worry about but you know what? What a beautiful lady such as yourself needs to get better are flowers, eh Jack?" Doctor Seward nodded non-committedly, "We go to Hydroponics and get you some. Until then, all you need is rest, yah?" Lucy nodded and smiled, "Good. Come, Jack, we get this beautiful lady some flowers."

"Please, Professor," said Lucy smiling, "You both have far more important things to take care of."

"True, my dear," he replied, "But we can't work all the time, and the walk will do us good. Besides, the flowers will help, they're medicinal."

"If you say so," she turned to Doctor Seward, "Thank you, Jack. And don't worry, I'll be fine and you'll figure out what happened to the Demeter, I just know it."

As they left Lucy's quarters, Doctor Seward turned to his old mentor, "What is it, Professor? What do you know? And what was that thing you burned Lucy with?"

"Know?" he replied, "I know nothing yet, so I'll say nothing. I only begin to suspect. As for what 'burned' that dear child, here, see for yourself." and Van Helsing reached into his pocket and tossed the object to Doctor Seward. Jack caught it and reflexively tossed it back up, expecting it to be hot. To his surprise it was cool. A simple, square piece of shiny metal. He looked towards his mentor questioningly, "Silver, Jack. Plain, old, simple silver. Now tell me, please, does your hydroponics grow *allium sativum* and/or *aconitum vulparia*?"

"Professor?" Jack Seward looked puzzled towards his mentor.

"Garlic or wolf's bane, Jack, garlic or wolf's bane."



Dr. Seward and the Professor soon returned with several garlic flowers and bulbs. "Now Jack, set the bulbs around the door and air vents." Dr. Seward took the bulbs and set about the task, "Good. When you're done, crush any bulbs you have left and work the juice into the door and the vents as best you can." He turned to Lucy, "Now, my dear, please take these flowers and place them by your bedside. Here, I make a pretty necklace for you to wear while you sleep."

"Professor, is this *really* necessary?" asked Lucy as she took the flowers and recoiled, turning her face and nose away, "The smell—"

"Is strong," Van Helsing continued, "But it's good for you, you'll see." The Professor finished making the wreath of garlic flowers and placed it over Lucy's head and around her neck. She flinched, shook for a moment, then turned to Van Helsing, sighed, and smiled. "See now, all better, yah?"

"They still smell," she retorted making Professor Van Helsing chuckle, "But yes, I do feel better, thank you."

"Good, good, good. Now you keep that on, yah?" She nodded, "Especially while you sleep. Good girl. Doctor Jack and I will check on you tomorrow then. We bring some nice fresh flowers. Everything's going to be okay now. You should get some rest. Jack?" he turned to Doctor Seward, "You finished yet?" Doctor Seward got up from the last vent and nodded, "Good, then let us be off and leave this beautiful young lady to her rest."

"Thank you so much, Professor, and you Jack. I don't know why you put up with me sometimes." Dr. Seward's face turned bright red and Lucy laughed, "Oh, Jack..."

"Come, Jack. We go now, many things to do, yah? You take care, Miss Lucy, and we see you later." and with that, Doctor Seward and Professor Van Helsing left.

On their way back to Medical, Doctor Seward turned to his mentor, "I don't understand, Professor. Surely a breather would be easier for Lucy than all this? The dosage would be much better monitored and she wouldn't have to deal with the smell."

"True, Jack, if the garlic were for her, it would be." Van Helsing replied enigmatically.

"It's not for her?" Doctor Seward asked bewildered, "Who or what is it for, then? Is this some kind of joke?"

"No joke, Jack. Think! Bah, you used to be better than this! She is anaemic, yah? Continued blood loss. Where did the blood go, Jack? Tell me, where did the blood go?"

"Some sort of cellular break down? Micro-viral attack of the haemoglobin?" Doctor Seward conjectured while his mentor looked on disapproving. "What then?"

"The plasma didn't just evaporate, Jack! Think. The marks on her throat?" Van Helsing hinted.

"Some kind of puncture? If that were the case there would be blood everywhere, Professor." Doctor Seward chided.

"Better, Jack. Much better. Now tell me, where did the blood go?"

"Something just crawled in there and took it, then?" Doctor Seward asked rhetorically.

“Yah, Jack. I’m afraid that might be precisely what is happening.”

“Be reasonable, Professor. What could have done that?” Doctor Seward could not believe the conversation he and his mentor were having.

“The same thing that did it on the Demeter. And if it is not stopped... I would very much like to have a word or two with your Renfield.” Van Helsing trailed off.

“You think Renfield did this? And the Demeter? And what happened to Anne Dempsey?” Doctor Seward was aghast, “Professor, the log shows Renfield was locked up on the Demeter. And if something did attack the crew we would have seen it on the monitors.”

“Renfield was “locked up” here, too, and he got out. Not to mention he was found wandering the ship when the Demeter was towed in, not in his quarters.” Van Helsing paused a moment. “Yes, I must see this Renfield. And then we should speak to Holmwood and Morris.

“They’re both going to think we’re mad, you know.”

“A lot of people think I be mad, Jack. Never made me any less right, now, did it?” Jack Seward could not disagree to be honest. Many considered his mentor eccentric at best but more often than not, he was right.



Simmons and Peters were both currently assigned to what was becoming known as “wing-nut duty” – guarding Room 17 in Medical, Renfield’s room. Thankfully Chief Morris had set up frequent rotation, two hours at most, but for those who pulled it, it was unnerving to say the least. Of course the main topic of conversation was which was worse, the screaming, the sobbing, or the silence? They were currently experiencing sobbing when Doctor Seward and one of the specialists came to the door. “How is he?” asked Doctor Seward.

“Listen for yourself, Doc.” answered Peters, referring to the mournful weeping coming through the monitor. “At least he’s calmed down. Was throwing a fit about thirty-forty minutes ago.”

Doctor Seward turned to his companion who checked his chronometer and nodded sombrely, “Did you notice anything *unusual* about that fit in particular?” asked Doctor Seward.

“Not really, Doc,” responded Peters, scratching his head, “To tell the truth, I try not to notice what he says during those, gives me the heebies, you know?”

“Now that I think about it,” interjected Simmons, “There was something about a ‘pretty lady’ and blabbering on about his ‘master’. Nothing new about the ‘master’ nonsense but I’ve never heard him talk about a ‘pretty lady’ before. You, Peters?”

“Like I said, I try *not* to pay attention.” Peters turned back to Doctor Seward, “anything else, Doc?”

“No, um-Peters was it? Professor Van Helsing and I would like to see him now, please.” stated Doctor Seward.

“Sure thing, Doc, comm-monitor’s right there. Best of luck getting him to respond to it, though.”

“We should go inside, Jack. I need to see him in person.” said Professor Van Helsing to Doctor Seward.

“Sorry, Prof,” interjected Peters, “I don’t think that’s a good idea. He’s dangerous and no one goes in there without Chief Morris’s or Doctor Seward’s say-so and an armed guard.”

“Well then, my boy,” answered Professor Van Helsing with an amused tone, “Doctor Seward is right here and you both look like good strong lads and you each have one of those shock-pistol-things. What you think, Jack?”

“If the Professor needs to see him in person, I’ll authorise it, Peters.” The security guard sighed in resignation at Doctor Seward’s order. “And I’ll be entering as well.”

“If you say so, Doc.” and Peters turned to Simmons. They both made fists out of their right hands and pumped them three times rapidly in unison. After the third pump Peters held his hand open, palm down, Simmons’ held out two fingers and made a cutting motion with them. Peters sighed again and they both pulled out their shockers, primed and charged them. “Okay, Doc, Prof, get between Simmons and me, right there, good. Now when Simmons opens the door, wait for me to give you the all clear before you come in, and be careful not to cross in front of Simmons,” the doctor and professor nodded their understanding. Simmons checked the room monitor, nodded to Peters who readied his weapon, then opened the door and trained his own weapon on Renfield you lay in a corner, rolled up in a ball, sobbing. Peters trained his weapon on Renfield as well and slowly walked into the room, speaking in a firm but calm voice. “Okay, Thomas, you’ve got a couple of visitors here. Just be a good boy and everything’s going to be alright.”

Renfield’s sobs stopped abruptly. He calmly stood up and turned to the door, brushing off non-existent dust from his leggings. “Doctor Seward,” he said in a perfectly calm tone, “Please, do come in.” Peters nodded to Doctor Seward and Professor Van Helsing and motioned for them to come in. As they entered, Simmons closed and locked the door behind them. “What can I do for you today? Would you care for a snack?” Renfield held out his hand and on his palm was a still-living, one winged fly.

“Renfield, where did you get that?” admonished Doctor Seward.

“No?” said Renfield mockingly, “Then you won’t mind if I do, do you?” and with that he popped the fly into his mouth. A look of disgust fell across the faces of Doctor Seward and Security Guard Peters, Professor Van Helsing seemed unfazed. He stepped forward.

“Hello, Mister Renfield,” he said cordially, I am Professor Van Helsing.”

“Hello, Professor, a pleasure to meet you,” Renfield responded and stepped forward himself.

“Close enough, Thomas,” said Peters in a commanding tone, levelling his weapon.

Renfield sneered at him and continued, “And you, Professor, can I offer you anything?”

“Thank you, Mister Renfield, but no. I wouldn’t want to ruin my dinner. I understand you’ve had a very trying time. Would you care to tell me about it?”

“Oh, I am sure Doctor Seward’s told you all about what happened to *me* Professor.” Renfield’s tone turned snide.

“Yes, a terrible ordeal indeed. But I’m curious about this ‘master’ of yours. Tell me about him.”

“Master?” said Renfield incredulously, “I don’t know who you’re talking about. I’m just a crazy-man, ask Doctor Seward, he’ll tell you *all* about it.”

“Now, Renfield-“ Doctor Seward began to admonish but Van Helsing waved him down.

“Very well, Mister Renfield,” Van Helsing continued, “Tell me about this diet of yours, then.”

“No different from yours or anyone else’s,” he replied, “All life feeds on other life, Professor. Each life I ingest gives that life to me. The more life I take, the more life I have.”

“Very true,” continued Van Helsing, “But there aren’t many insects on a space station. After they’re all gone, what will you eat then?” Renfield’s face grew suddenly very sad and his eyes began to tear up. He moved forward suddenly and began to cry as Van Helsing took him in his arms and cradled him. Peters went to fire his shocker but Doctor Seward motioned him not to. “It’s alright, Renfield. It’s alright.” he comforted, “There’s still lots of bugs on the station. Lots and lots of bugs. But tell me, who brings you the bugs?”

“The Master,” responded Renfield. After a moment he stopped crying and looked at Van Helsing with a look of sheer terror. He then pulled away from Van Helsing and went to a far corner of the room and stared into it, rocking in an agitated manner.

Van Helsing motioned to both Seward and Peters then reached into his pocket, “I’m sorry, Mister Renfield. But here, I have something very special for you. A very special life, just for you.”

Renfield turned around and smiled, “Just for me?”

“Yes,” answered Van Helsing, “Come and see.” Renfield walked up to him again and Van Helsing offered him a small, purple flower. Renfield grabbed it, then howled. A scream of both agony and anger. Throwing the flower to the ground he lunged at Van Helsing then suddenly convulsed and collapsed as an arc fired from Peters shocker and struck him square in the chest.



The door slid open as Simmons entered and trained his weapon on the collapsed Renfield. “I think we should leave, Professor,” said Doctor Seward once he regained his composure. Van Helsing agreed and they both exited the room, followed by the two guards who closed and locked the door behind them.

Seward turned to his old mentor, “Professor, what’s going on? What was that plant you gave to Renfield and why did he react to it the way he did? Is Renfield responsible for all this?” he asked.

“Responsible?” answered Van Helsing thoughtfully, “No, no. That poor wretch is as much a victim as Miss Lucy. In some ways even more so.” he paused for a long moment, “Still, he must remain contained, for all our sakes as well as his own. The plant was simple *vulparia*, wolf’s bane. As for that reaction and the reason for it,” he paused again, “Best we get Administrator Holmwood and Chief Morris for this. I fear this will be quite an ordeal and I’d rather not have to repeat myself again and again.”

“If you say so, Professor.”



“Let me get this straight,” said Arthur Holmwood as he sat in a conference room with Quincy Morris, Doctor Jack Seward, and this Professor Abraham

Van Helsing, a supposed medical expert New London had sent up, though his accent show he clearly wasn’t native to it, and one of Doctor Seward’s old teachers. After the story this Van Helsing had just told, however, Arthur was more inclined to think he should be locked up with Renfield. “Some *creature* is stalking this station and feeding on blood. It’s been feeding on Lucy, killed Anne Dempsey as well as the entire crew of the *Demeter*, except Renfield.” Van Helsing nodded in response “Then please tell me why no one has even seen it, not even Lucy? And why hasn’t it shown up on any monitor, scanner, or even the visual records of it’s victims *while* it’s attacking them?” Arthur asked in an irritated tone referring to the last log entry of Lieutenant Morrow.

“What we’re dealing with cannot be ‘seen’ by technological means. Scanners, cameras, and the like are useless. No one knows exactly why or how. I understand how this seems impossible, but rest assured what I tell you is fact.” answered Van Helsing. Arthur scoffed in response.

“What I don’t get,” interjected Quincy Morris, “Is why it killed Dempsey outright but is taking it’s sweet time with Lucy?”

“We don’t know for sure how long Miss Dempsey was in its power, Mister Morris,” responded Van Helsing, “But to answer your question, do you not take your time to savour a fine meal? Time you wouldn’t take with field rations, I’m sure. Remember, what we face was once human. It retains much of what it was, including it’s appearance.”

“Yes, it’s *power*,” sneered Arthur, “You mentioned that before. You say this thing has some kind of psionic ability?” he asked incredulously.

“Indeed, that is why Miss Lucy consciously remembers nothing of its attacks. It is also what has made Renfield the way he is, though for what purpose I do not know. But Lucy is more than some random attack, its intentions towards her are far more sinister- “ Doctor Seward’s comm beeped urgently, cutting the Professor off abruptly.

“My apologies,” said Doctor Seward as he responded to the device’s emergency alert, “Speaking of Lucy, I programmed her bio-comp monitor to notify me of any change in her – oh, no! No, no, no, this can’t be right.”

“What is it, Jack?” Van Helsing asked, his voice harsh.

All colour drained from Jack Seward’s face as he lowered his comm. His eyes stared blankly as his face lost all expression. “Lucy’s dead,” His voice was devoid of all emotion.

Both Arthur and Quincy bolted from their chairs in shock and anger. Just as they were about to speak Professor Van Helsing exclaimed, “Come, all of you, we must go to her, quickly now!”

With surprising speed for someone of his advanced age using a cane, Van Helsing was out the door and down the corridor when the three other men recovered from their shock and quickly followed.

What they saw when they arrived at Lucy’s quarters would haunt them until their dying day. She lay sprawled out on the bed, her head and arms hanging off the edge, legs spread wide, naked and lifeless. The bed was stained crimson and surrounded by a pool of blood. The garlic bulbs and flowers Van Helsing and Doctor Seward had left were heaped in the disposal. Quincy pulled out his shocker instantly by reflex scanning Lucy’s quarters left and right with a look of violent intent. Arthur cried in despair

and agony. Jack simply stood still in shock, what little colour that had returned to his face in their race here disappeared.

“Jack!” exclaimed Van Helsing as he rushed to Lucy’s side and checked her pulse, “Pull yourself together and help me here, *Doctor*.” Doctor Seward shook off the shock of seeing Lucy like this and hurried to the bio-comp. “Put it away, Mister Morris.

It’s not here and even if it were direct energy weapons would be of no use against it.” Van Helsing then got up, covered Lucy’s body with the least blood soaked sheet he could find, and put a hand on Seward’s shoulder. “It’s no use, Jack,” he said as Doctor Seward tried desperately to revive Lucy using her bio-comp he had now attached to her directly. “She’s gone.”

TO BE CONTINUED IN WARP 85



Stargate Enterprise - Trick or Treat

Josée Bellemare

It was mid October and the Enterprise was on its way to Atlantis for a supply run. Except this time they had special cargo. Because of Halloween, Thanks giving, and Christmas, the Atlantis kitchen staff had requested a large quantity of baking supplies, including spices, apples and pumpkins. Not to be outdone, Major Louise Reynolds, chef on the Enterprise, had been baking pies, muffins and cookies for the whole crew. Needless to say, everyone was coming back for seconds when it came to desserts.

At dinner one night, the captain was talking to Dr Doyle. “He’s going to want a rematch, you know that don’t you?”

“I know. I’ll be ready for him. I’ve been practising with the crew.”

“Good to know. Good luck Dr Doyle”

The ship arrived on the 28th. After the supplies were unloaded Rodney McKay rushed to the control room. He looked like he had just taken a gallon of coffee. He called Dr Doyle on the Enterprise and issued an official challenge for a chess match. The challenge was accepted and they decided to hold it for the 31st in the morning. Mr Woolsey once again agreed to act as bookmaker for the event. The crew of the Enterprise was also invited to the costume party to be held Halloween night. When he heard this, Commander Kramer smiled, as if he was planning something.

In the days leading up to Halloween everyone went about their duties. On the morning of the 31st Dr Doyle and the rest of the counterparts beamed down to Atlantis. The setup was the same as last time but this time Rodney wasn’t feeling so smug. The two players sat down and started the match. It was close at first, then Rodney seemed to be getting ahead. This made him arrogant while Dr Doyle stayed calm and at the last minute she pulled a move that Rodney didn’t see coming and won the match.

“No! That’s not possible! I was winning! I studied your moves for months! I was ready! What happened?”

“You may have studied my old moves but I developed new ones. Better luck next time.” Dr Doyle was surrounded by her crewmates, all offering congratulations.

The rest of the day was spent preparing for the evening’s party. Shortly before dinner Commander Kramer made an

announcement: “Attention all personnel. Due to overwhelming demand on the part of this crew, Stargate Command has agreed, for this night only, to a change in uniforms. The new uniforms, in appropriate colour, size and rank have been distributed to everyone’s quarters. Enjoy yourselves but remember, tomorrow morning its back to normal. Kramer out.”

As soon as their duties permitted, the crew changed into their uniforms and so everyone at dinner was dressed in an original series Starfleet uniform. Kramer had opted for a captain’s green tunic and Dr Doyle even had her own pointed ears on. Needless to say the Enterprise crew made quite a sight when they beamed down to Atlantis for the party.

The activities for the evening were varied. Beside the dance, a scary movie marathon was being shown in the media room in spite of the occasional cold drafts and one room had been set aside, with a fake campfire and unexplained strange noises, for telling scary stories. The crew lounge had been decorated and a snack table prepared in the corner. Everyone was having a good time. Commander Kramer even asked Dr Michaels to dance.

At midnight the lights went out and a spotlight focussed on an elderly gentleman. “Good people of Atlantis, Midnight... The witching hour... For your entertainment, a few magic tricks from an old wizard.”

The old man then made objects levitate, disappear and reappear elsewhere. “Ladies and gentlemen, I am Merlin and these simple tricks were my treat to you. Thank you for your kind applause.” The spotlight was gone and the lights back on but no trace of the old man. The party went on till two o’clock. The next day, Commander Kramer was saying goodbye to Woolsey on the view screen. “It was a nice visit and a great party. Your Merlin was a nice touch.”

“Thank you Commander but I thought Merlin was one of yours.”

“I have no idea who he was. Anyway, see you next time. Enterprise out.”

Lt Harris spoke up, “Sir, Merlin was an ancient. SG1 found him in suspended animation a few years ago. He died in Daniel Jackson’s arms.”

Happy Halloween!



Gambling. SF&F Style

Sylvain St-Pierre

One thing that I have noticed over the years is that our pet genre is fairly well represented in Las Vegas. (Before you say it, let me add that the fact that I, as MonFFSA's Treasurer, regularly go to Sin City - and that our funds tend to be low - is well known and is now an old running gag in the club...)



A classic style one-arm bandit

All slot machines operate under the same principle: you need a certain number of matching symbols to win. It used to be that all of them were virtually the same (cherries, lemon, pot of gold...), but nowadays there is staggering number of styles available.

Science fiction and Fantasy hold a prominent place among the many themes used to dress up the one armed bandits; and now that photography

is no longer forbidden in many casinos, I have been able to snap a few shots of the most striking ones. Sadly, static pictures do not render the animation that comes during play and which, especially in the more recent machines, can be quite striking. You can at least get some entertainment value out of gambling, even if you almost always end up losing money. Personally, I have found that playing for pennies is just as fun, and that way you will not end up losing your favourite Star Trek shirt.

For amateurs of light Fantasy, there are several games based on mermaids, fairies, leprechauns and classical gods. Most Chinese-themed games have at least a dragon or two, and there is no dearth of Arthurian Mythos or generic Indiana Jones or Lara Croft lookalikes.



Typical Chinese dragon

Major movie franchises are a very popular source of inspiration



Alien



Ghostbusters



Wizard of Oz



Star Wars

Major movie franchises are a very popular source of inspiration, particularly now that technology allows for much finer graphics. Because it tends to be more flamboyant, SF&F makes up for a large proportion of those newer machines, and I have seen several of them during my most recent trip in May. Among the more memorable I counted, and occasionally tried, Alien, Batman, Ghostbusters, Star Wars and the Wizard of Oz. Some of them will even let you play as your favourite character, which is a rather nice touch.

Among the current crop of original creations, I also encountered the

following:

Invaders From the Planet Moolah, which is a very funny and colourful game, involving alien cows in udder-garnished flying saucers kidnapping various Earthlings. Return to Planet Loot which has very cliched imagery, but that is precisely what makes it endearing

Double Dinosaur, that has, in addition of nice pictures and animations, the particularity of sounding a deafening roar whenever you hit a winning combination, no matter how small.



Planet Moolah



Planet Loot



Double Dinosaur

Although they are slowly fading away, you can still find, tucked away in remote corners, machines dressed up in the colours of older TV shows that were at one time popular and are remembered fondly by some of us. The I Dream of Jeannie machines, in particular, with their little Barbara Eden dolls



Barbara Eden doll in a bottle

happily dancing in their bottle, are quite cute. You almost don't mind losing..

Finally, if you like elaborate displays you should not miss the various islands that stand on the floor of most casinos. Grouping half a dozen

slot machines or more, they often sprout an impressive sculpture in the middle. While that can be a Greek naked lady for the stuffer locales, the more relaxed places will have something more whimsical, often animated. My very favourite, at the Harra's, had one of the three-eyed aliens from Toy Story happily going around in a flying saucer!



Elaborate display at Hara's

At this rate, the club's funds are never going to improve...



The Las Vegas Atomic Testing Museum

Sylvain St-Pierre

Except where indicated, all photos are by the author

For a while during the '90s, Las Vegas tried to shake off it's reputation as a sinful place and to become a family destination. Those were great years for genre-lovers, as theme rides popped all over town and there was hardly a casino without a scifi/fantasy corner tucked away somewhere.

Sadly, it did not last. The taste of the day now runs more towards the international chic and many of the rides are gone. Even the fabulous Star Trek Experience (covered in Warp 45, January 1999) is in storage and may very well end up being sold at auction.

Still, there remains a few places worth a detour for people like us. Most notable amongst them is the Atomic Testing Museum. Located only a few minutes off the Strip, this remarkable exhibit covers the history of the extensive amount of research that went on at a rather worryingly short distance from Las Vegas for many years.

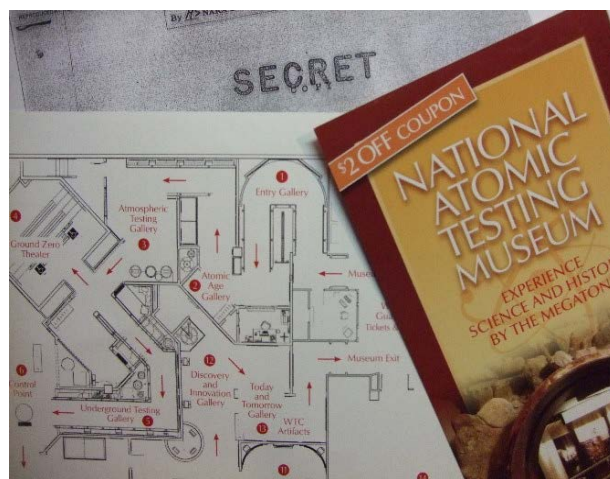


A reasonably accurate replica of Robby the Robot

This is a "serious" museum, but the designers did a very good job of making the displays entertaining, if not fun, and informative. The entrance hall has a very nice Robby-inspired robot, obviously fan-made but instantly recognisable. Many of the sometimes weird artefacts are apparently genuine vintage equipment, and one wonders what is

the rad count behind those thick glass panes. I found the section devoted to the atomic bomb in popular culture during the '50s and '60s to be of particular interest, and the rather cavalier attitude of the workers involved at the time with the tests to be a bit disturbing.

There is also a section set aside for temporary exhibits, and when I was there it was devoted to a very good Area 51 exhibit. Photography in that part was, unsurprisingly, forbidden but it was a comprehensive and well laid-out display; and I did get to keep the fancy badge. Of course, it's obviously a coverup to hide the truth and the badge probably has a hidden tracking device...



Map of the facilities and pamphlets.



The atom in popular culture.



A close-up of the previous exhibit. There is a slight inaccuracy there; the Atomic Disintegrator (upper left, with red handle) actually dates back from the 1940's.



Lots and lots of Geiger counters



This strange device was used to test how various materials and electronic components would react to a nuclear blast.



An atomic blast mushroom as seen from Downtown Las Vegas in the 50's <http://vegas.blog.com/>



One of the hopefully harmless exhibits



A display about shelters during the Cold War. Fortunately, they were never needed



A nuclear warhead. It does say "museum model" on the casing, but still...

To learn more, visit: <http://www.nationalatomictestingmuseum.org/>



More from the MonSFFA mailbag!

From R. Graeme Cameron, news of the awarding of the Elrons and Faned Awards at VCON 37:

“R. Graeme Cameron presented the Elron Awards at VCON 37 Sunday, September 30th 2012. The Elrons are fandom’s oldest ongoing spoof awards, predating the Hogus and Black Holes.

And the winners are:

- Avro Arrow Fen, for nearly convincing the Canadian Federal Government to revive the Arrow project cancelled more 60 years ago.

- Dutch Birdman ‘Jarno Smeets’ for not choosing the more obvious solution to manned flight, i.e. cloning giant Pteradactyls to ride on.

- Professor Parker for wasting effort creating artificial yet living Jelly Fish when more calamari is what’s needed.

- James Cameron for funding Parker’s experiments in order to seed the bottom of the ocean (hence deep dive project) to grow a fleet of killer jellyfish so that he really can become ‘King of the World.’

- The Mars Expedition One ‘Reality Show’ Project, for cheapening a cherished dream (Colony on Mars) yet still making it possible... maybe...

- Disney Execs re John Carter flick, for sabotaging their own film with lousy promotion.

- The geeks who programmed the copyright ‘bots which cut short the livestream broadcast of the 2012 Hugo ceremony.

- Swill by Vile Fen Press, for Worst Fanzine.

- And, of course, John Norman for 40+ years of genuine swill.

Next, Cameron presented the winners of the 2012 Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards (‘Faneds’) for achievements in 2011:

- Best Fan Artist: Scott Patri

- Best Fan Writer: Taral Wayne

- Best Loc Hack: Michael John Bertrand

- Best Fanzine: Swill by VileFen Press (Editor Neil Jamieson-Williams)

- Hall of Fame: Nils Helmer Frome (Editor of SupraMundane Stories circa 1937)

Only Canadians are eligible for the Faneds, designed to promote Canadian SF&F fanzine fandom and its heritage.”

I include the Elrons to let people know the Elrons are still being awarded (first time was at VCON 1 in 1971!) but also because you’ll note SWILL won a ‘Worst Fanzine’ Elron (because of Neil’s use of the Pud- Monkey font) as well as a ‘Best Fanzine’ Faned (because of the quality of the content). I am quite pleased with myself for coming up with this combo, the first time anyone or anything won both an Elron AND a Faned in the same year (indeed, announced at the combined presentation). How cool is that? Both awards well deserved methinks.

From MonSFFan William (Pete) Pettit:

Hi Cathy,

If you can wait a day or so, I can send you a close-up of the CanadaArm prominently on display in front of the space shuttle Discovery at the Air & Space Museum outside DC. The entire length of the arm is on display and the Canada logo is quite prominent. I thought it was pretty significant, because for US audiences NASA only referred to “the robotic arm” and in



televised sequences, the Canada logo was seldom visible. I think that most of the shuttle’s missions couldn’t have been accomplished without the CanadaArm. And it seems that the Canadian analytic instrumentation on the new Mars rover may not be getting the credit it deserves.

Pete



As displayed on the left (well lighted) side of the shuttle



Slightly out of focus but shows the discolored heat shield tiles on the underside of the shuttle.



After Armstrong died the Air & Space Museum took his gloves & visor out of controlled storage and put together a temporary display. Note that the right hand glove has notes printed on it. NASA wanted to ensure that Armstrong and Aldrin didn't forget to do the priority tasks. It seems like yesterday.....



REVIEWS: Gadgets & Apps

Oldify iPad App Sylvain St-Pierre

With the average human life expectancy going up all the time, have you ever wondered what you will look like at, say, a hundred and two? You can now have some idea with the Oldify Application. This is quite an amazing little program that will process the picture of a human face and add a great many years to it. Using face recognition algorithms, it will overlay age spots and wrinkles, give you shrunken cheeks and a generally decrepit appearance.

The results can be quite striking, especially for younger

subjects. While the free version has only one setting, the paid upgrade will not only make you look even older, but will also add some limited animation, making you blink, cough and sigh. A very impressive package for only a dollar!

The subject needs not even to be alive; we got a downright creepy effect when we tried it on a Teddy Bear at the MonSFFA BBQ last Summer. But the scariest thing is that my own oldified picture does not look all that different from my unprocessed one...

"In the year 2525, If MonSFFA's still alive..."



President, Bernard Reischl



VP, Keith Braithwaite



Treasurer, Sylvain St-Pierre



Danny Sichel



Phil Simard



Mr Theodore Bear

The Watch (2012) - Comedy with a touch of Alien Invasion
Steven Janssen



Actor: Ben Stiller
Vince Vaughn
Jonah Hill

Following a murder at the local Costco store, Evan (Ben Stiller) forms a neighbourhood watch to find the murderer. Unfortunately, he bites off more than he can chew when he uncovers an alien plot to invade

the earth.

In the spirit of "A Night at the Museum" (another Stiller movie), a regular working man gets into quite an unusual situation. Although nowhere near as good as "A Night at the Museum", this movie was fun to watch. Part of the entertainment came from the fact that I was not expecting the alien invasion plot. Beware, a lot of foul language not appropriate for young kids is used.

Nothing in this movie is really good, not even the actors but nevertheless, it was entertaining to watch and I had a few good laughs.

Peter Jackson's The Hobbit



Keith Braithwaite
Too long.

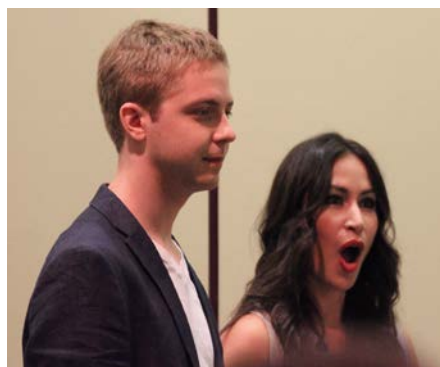
Cathy P-L
I read the book.

REVIEWS: Conventions & Events

FanExpo 2012 in Toronto, as seen by Dom Durocher



Teddy Wilson of InnerSpace introducing a guest



Cynthia Loyst and Ajay Frye before the InnerSpace panel



John Rhys-Davies (Raiders of the Lost Ark, Sliders, Lord of the Rings, etc)



Young and old – William B. Davis & Erik Knudsen play Alec Sadler on Continuum



Stephen Lobo & Rachel Nichols of Continuum



EXTERMINATE! Daleks invade FanExpo



John Barrowman of Dr Who/Torchwood



Christopher Lloyd



As Judge Doom (Roger Rabbit) dropping the shoe in the Dip.



Joe Flanigan of Stargate Atlantis



Last but certainly not least, Amanda Tapping (SG1, Sanctuary)



Are you reading somebody else's WARP? Join MonSFFA Today!

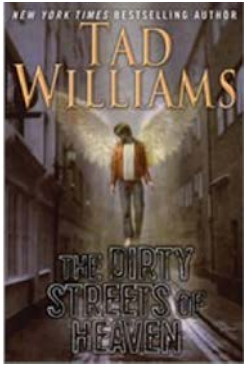
Send cheque or money order to:

MonSFFA, c/o Sylvain St-Pierre, 4456 Boul. Ste-Rose, Laval, QC, Canada, H7R 1Y6

Our yearly remain unchanged at 25\$, which works out to only about 2\$ per month!

From Cathy's Library

"Do you know that books smell like nutmeg or some spice from a foreign land? I loved to smell them when I was a boy."
From *Fahrenheit 451*



The Dirty Streets of Heaven

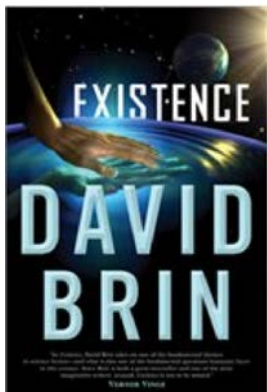
Tad Williams

Daw2012

"Bobby Dollar" is the earthly name for Angel Dolariel, advocate for Heaven. His job is to speak for the dead, in hopes of saving them from Hell. Meanwhile, he lives among humans in a thinly disguised San José. It's not an easy job, humans being such complex creatures, neither all good nor all bad. The Enemy has advocates, too, and the demons don't

play fair. Neither do the angels, sometimes. Bobby isn't entirely happy in his role. He's not even sure he really is an angel, sometimes he thinks maybe it's just a courtesy title. Souls have their memories wiped, so what's the point of having been a saint if you don't remember? The angels can do "God's Work" on earth, or live in bliss in heaven, an existence Bobby thinks is not much different from being blissed out on drugs. No one ever seems to actually communicate with "the Highest", Heaven is run by a bureaucracy, and he doesn't dare trust anyone – not the bosses, nor his colleagues on earth. A crisis is brewing, and the first sign of trouble happens on Bobby's watch when he and the demon advocate show up to try a soul that never shows up. Heaven doesn't have him, and Hell claims they don't either. Souls do not just disappear! Bobby insists on finding the truth about the wheeling and dealing going on between Heaven and Hell, and predictably gets in way over his head. Apparently, being an angel does not make a man free of pride and anger, not to mention lust when he meets one of Hell's emissaries, the Countess of Cold Hands.

I loved this book, and I'm glad to learn there will be more Bobby Dollar novels.



Existence

David Brin

Tor, 2012

Part of this novel, the first chapters involving Peng Xiang Bin, was first published in *Gateways*, a tribute to Frederik Pohl. I was quite taken by the story of a shoresteader who was eking out a miserable existence salvaging junk from sunken mansions. When Bin found an alien artifact, he found himself hunted by unknown forces, unable to protect his family, unable to

recognize the good guys from the bad. Or maybe there are no real good guys. I eagerly awaited the rest of the story!

However, Bin is only part of the big picture. There is another salvager, Gerald Livingston, working in space and he also finds a demon stone. While Bin and his stone are hidden, Livingston lives a life in mostly unwelcome limelight. Tor Povlov is an Internet reporter, though maybe Internet is not the right word to use for what the web has developed into. And then there is the cartel of the incredibly wealthy and powerful working behind the scenes. Lacey is just breaking into this elite clique, but she soon has reason to question their secret agenda. Adding to her stress, her playboy son, Hacker, goes missing while racing rockets. Instead of a landing celebration at a Havana casino, he's crashed into the ocean. Toss in high-functioning autistics, some shady politicians, a pod of "uplifted" dolphins, a lot of alien "demons" spouting all sorts of conflicting warnings, and you get an interesting Existence.

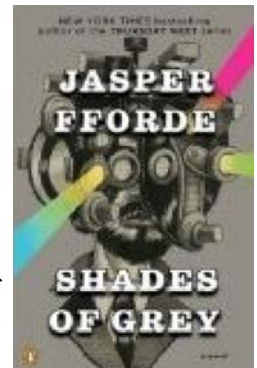
It's messy, in my opinion, and not up to Brin's usual standards. Some threads get lost in the weave. There are pages of "philosophy" which I found boring; sometimes Brin just cannot stop pontificating. It's a good book, an interesting plot, but it could have been a much better book.

Shades of Grey: The Road to High

Saffron

Jasper Fforde

Penguin, 2009



Fans familiar with his Thursday Next stories will find *Shades of Grey* a bit of a shock. Certainly, there is still humour, but there is also tragedy and even horror. The "Something That Happened" left a strange, twisted sort of world behind. Everyone is to some extent colour blind, and society is organized according to the degree of colour one can

see. At the bottom of the pyramid are the Greys who have no colour vision and are slaves in all but name, which is why Eddie Russet is so intrigued by the mysterious and very outspoken Jane Grey. Jane seems to know rather a lot, and how on earth did she get from one place to another so quickly? She drives Eddie crazy, rudely snubbing him one minute, and dropping hints the next.

Eddie knows, indeed most of the society knows, that the Rules make no sense (but don't ever be caught saying that out loud), hence the fine art of finding loopholes in them so people can manage some common sense. Especially peculiar is the way the Head Office every now and then decides certain books or certain technologies are no longer allowed. Slowly, but surely, society is moving backwards. But that's not the worst of society's ills, there is much, much worse. The big question is "Why?" and that I hope will be answered in the promised sequels.



SEPTEMBER

MonSFFA's September 23 meeting saw two of the afternoon's planned presentations regrettably scrubbed. Shortly before the meeting, we were advised by the scheduled presenters of their being, at the last minute, unavoidably indisposed. Fortunately, we were able to extend our third listed presentation beyond its original time allotment as presenters **Josée Bellemare** and **Berny Reischl** had on hand more than enough material.

Josée and Berny screened stills and video clips from some of sci-fi TV's many "one-season wonders", and provided brief synopses of the shows. Most of these, some dating back to the 1960s and '70s, were laughably ridiculous prime-time hopefuls the poor quality of which predictably resulted in their cancellation after airing but for a single season or less. Some particular stinkers lasted for only a handful of episodes before the plug was pulled. *Automan*, a cheesy sci-fi actioner about a police officer and computer programmer who creates a holographic crime-fighting AI, ran for just 12 episodes-half a season-on ABC in the mid-'80s. Of the same era, NBC's *Manimal* aired even fewer episodes. This one was about a man with the ability to transform himself into any animal, a talent which he used in helping the police solve crimes. Other such gems highlighted included the atrocious *Battlestar: Galactica* follow-up, *Galactica 1980*, and *The Man from Atlantis*, featuring Patrick Duffy as a super-powered citizen of the fabled lost city with a goofy swimming technique who is recruited by a top secret research agency. *Future Cop*, meanwhile, was similar in concept to but predated *RoboCop* by several years, and was a rather poor interpretation of the idea. And as it was a silly sit-com, we might forgive *Mr. Merlin* its trespasses; the show saw the Arthurian wizard running a garage in modern day San Francisco!

On the other hand, there were those series that were quite good and quickly developed a solid core of devotees. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, *Space: Above and Beyond*, *American Gothic*, and *Firefly* were among the fondly remembered series cut short. But regardless of superior quality, critical acclaim, or a devoted following, such shows ultimately met the programmer's axe just as surely as did their less worthy cousins. Fans have long complained of network impatience with new shows that do not

perform well enough out of the gate. A new series needs time to establish itself, grow its audience, they say. But show business is just that, a business. And with a lot of money on the line, networks rarely have time for such arguments. A show that doesn't attract a sufficient number of viewers, and thus advertising dollars, is not long for the TV sked, regardless of engaging storylines, top-notch acting, superior production values, or anything else! Occasionally, particularly notable series have managed to squeeze, perhaps, another half-season out of programmers, but in the final calculation, were still axed before they could really reach their stride. Some of these shows remain popular with fans years later, despite their premature demise, which often left storylines frustratingly unresolved.

Between the best and worst were many short-lived series that ranked well with MonSFFen, including comic book superhero shows *The Flash* and *Birds of Prey*, creepy Body Snatchers-like *Invasion*, demonic *Brimstone* and *Point Pleasant*, and *X-Files* spin-off *The Lone Gunmen*.

With a representative of the recent Montreal Comic-Con present to gather feedback, we discussed during the latter part of the meeting our impressions of the event (largely positive) and offered suggestions for improvements next year. We also touched on upcoming club events.

For their contribution to our September meeting, we extend thanks to Josée and Berny, and to all of the usual suspects. Those presentations that were cancelled will be rescheduled for another meeting.

GET WELL SOON

We send our best wishes to club VP and Impulse editor **Keith Braithwaite**, who is recovering from an attack of Bell's palsy which has left half of his face paralysed. In the large majority of such cases, we are given to understand that facial movement returns to normal within between a few weeks and a few months of affliction. Get well soon, Keith.

We are also hearing that recurrent Warp cover artist **Marquise Boies** has been a bit under the weather of late, and wish her a quick return to health, as well.

OCTOBER



Several MonSFFen took the opportunity to sell their crafts and some of their old sci-fi books, comics, collectibles and such at the club's **Sci-Fi Garage Sale / Bazaar**, which ran concurrently with MonSFFA's October 28 "Halloween" meeting. These folk offered several tabletops-full of their bargain merchandise to fellow MonSFFen during the course of the afternoon. The event succeeded in putting a few dollars in the pockets of some of our members, although many promptly spent said profits buying stuff from other vendors! As sponsor of the garage sale, meanwhile, the club raised a healthy stipend (\$55.50) for its coffers in table rental fees and a cut of sales revenue.

The MonSFFA meeting itself featured, first, a fascinating

and most illuminating hour on the forensic sciences employed by the modern police force to help solve crime. Club member **Steven Janssen** happens to work in the field, computer crime being his particular area of expertise, and spoke primarily of cyber crime solving techniques, both real and as shown on television series like CSI. He compared authentic forensics methods in general with those often fancifully depicted on the many CSI-type television programs currently popular.

One of the common errors portrayed on TV, for example, is the swiftness at which various forensic tests are conducted and a conclusion readily reached that seals the suspect's fate, usually over the course of a commercial break! These things take rather

longer to unfold in the real world—weeks and months, and sometimes years, rather than hours or days.

In keeping with our Halloween theme, **Keith Braithwaite** followed the midmeeting break with his presentation on the methods Hollywood filmmakers utilize to scare their audiences. He screened numerous clips from such sci-fi and horror films as *The Shining*, *The Thing*, *Alien*, *Jeepers Creepers*, and *The Birds* to illustrate the careful and clever use of lighting, editing and pacing, and sound to frighten moviegoers.

NOVEMBER

Since the panels originally planned for the November meeting had to be postponed, the club's November 18th gathering focussed primarily on meeting planning for the coming year. With club president **Berny Reischl** moderating and taking notes, all MonSFFen present participated, tossing out a wealth of ideas for consideration. Among the potential programming items discussed and to be developed were panels/presentations on cyberpunk; steampunk; sci-fi/Westerns; palaeontological art; sci-fi model kit box art; strange worlds, both real and fictional; the genre's ideas on death and what follows; true cyber-crime stories; and geek culture. We also intend to include a number of fun and challenging games throughout the coming year, several "fancraft" workshops, and a confessional/celebration centred on the best Halloween pranks club members have pulled in their days of misspent youth! All of this and more begins at our inaugural 2013

club meeting on January 20.

Keith Braithwaite hosted a game during the latter part of the afternoon in which players' knowledge of the genre was tested, the task being to identify an SF/F book, film, or television series from clues revealing but a single character's name, or a principal or notable setting, or a particular object or concept featured in the piece. For example, the name Chewbacca, or the setting Mos Eisley, or a lightsabre or the Force would suggest that *Star Wars* is the sci-fi movie in question. Players accumulated points for correct answers and were able to take advantage of missed guesses by opponents. **Mark Burakoff** had prevailed over all comers by game's end.

Our thanks are proffered to all involved in the planning and running of our last club meeting of 2012.

DECEMBER CHRISTMAS DINNER AND PARTY

Photos by Christian Imbeault



MonSFFA's closing event of 2012 unfolded on Saturday evening, December 8. Some two dozen MonSFFen and family/friends convened at the downtown Irish Embassy Pub and Grill for the club's traditional Christmas Dinner. Over a fine meal, folk exchanged seasonal greetings and engaged in lively conversation, later sampling some the establishment's discerning selection of Scotch whiskies and other strong drink. This year, we chose to remain at our dinner locale for the party portion of the evening, and so simply remained seated after the plates were cleared.

A fund-raising raffle offered Christmas gift bags of goodies as prizes and added \$100 to the club's coffers! By means of our "Rewards

Raffle," we also awarded three randomly selected volunteer members with gift bags as a token of the club's thanks for their efforts on behalf of MonSFFA during the previous year. Regrettably, we were unable to arrange for our usual seasonal collection for charity this year, but encouraged MonSFFen to donate individually to a food bank in their neighbourhood.

Thanks to club president **Berny Reischl** for booking the venue, and to VP **Keith Braithwaite** for organizing the raffles. We trust all of MonSFFA's members and friends enjoyed a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



A fund-raising raffle offered Christmas gift bags of goodies as prizes and added \$100 to the club's coffers!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Lloyd Penny & CPL

January 18-20, 2013 - Emiko's Mini-Convention, Waterloo, ON
Gaming/anime/costuming convention.
www.go2emc.ca

January 20 - Fantasy & Gaming Expo 2013, Burlington, ON. www.toycon.net

January 26 - 12th Annual Crimson Knight Fleet Feast, the Klingon Assault Group kagfeast@gmail.com

March 8-10, 2013 - Furnal Equinox: Furrries in Uniform, Toronto. Guests: RedCoatCat, Rukis.
www.furnalequinox.com

March 17, 2013 - Canadian Toycon 2013, Burlington, ON www.toycon.net

April 6, Geekfest, Montreal, QC
<http://geekfestmtl.com/>

April 5-7, 2013 - Ad Astra 2013,
Guests: Jim & Shannon Butcher, Stephen Hunt, more TBA.
www.ad-astra.org

April 19-21, 2013 - FilKONtario 23,
Mississauga, ON
Guests: Tim and Annie Walker, Rand

and Erin Bellavia, Katt McConnell.
www.filkontario.ca

April 26-28, 2013 - Eeriecon 15, Grand Island, NY. Guests: Jack McDevitt, Carl Frederick, many more.
www.eeriecon.org

May 3-5, 2013, Congrès Boréal,
Montréal, QC invité d'honneur: Eric Gauthier <http://www.congresboreal.ca/>

What the Fur? Montreal, QC, GoH: HollyAnn
http://www.whatthefur.ca/home_e.php

May 24-26, 2013 - Anime North,
Toronto, ON www.animenorth.com

June 8, 2013 - Niagara Falls Comicon,
Niagara Falls, ON <http://nfcomicon.com>

June 22, 2013 - Steam on Queen 2,
Toronto, ON
<http://www.steamonqueen.ca/>

July 12-14, 2013 - Polar Chill,
Richmond Hill, ON Polaris Relaxicon.
www.tcon.ca

September 13-15, 2013 - Science Fiction: The Interdisciplinary Genre - An Academic Conference at McMaster University, Hamilton,
<http://www.academiceditingcanada.ca/blog/item/106-sf-inter-genre-cfp>

August 29-September 2, Lonestar: The 71st World Con, San Antonio, Texas
<http://www.lonestarcon3.org/>

November 1-3, 2013 - Reversed Polarity, Richmond Hill ON. Doctor Who 50th Anniversary convention.
www.tcon.ca

November 15-17, 2013 - Astronomicon 2013, Rochester, NY. Literary SF convention. Guest: David Gerrold, Liana K, Ed the Sock, more TBA.
<http://www.astronomicon.info/>

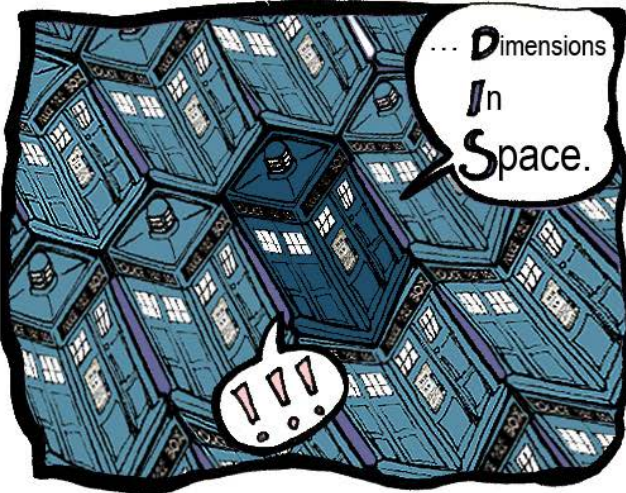
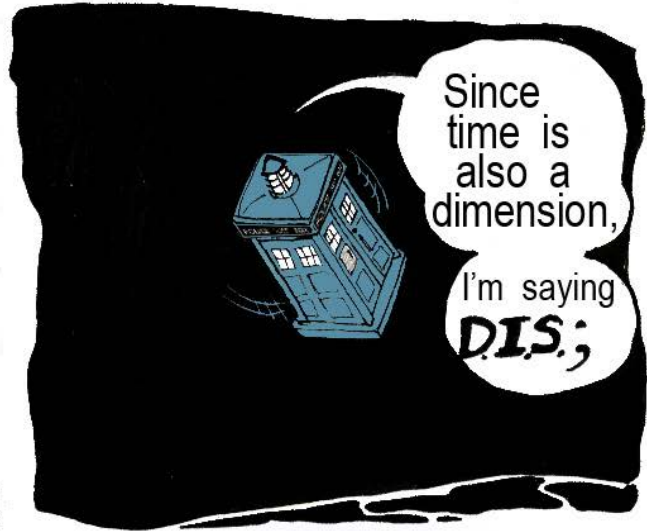
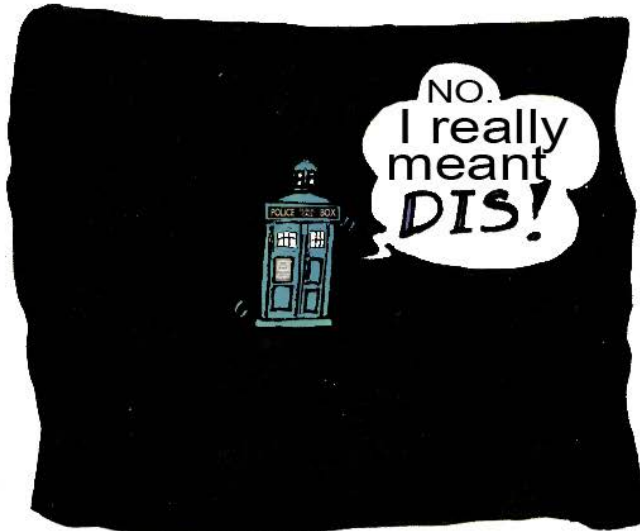
November 29 - December 1, 2013 - SFContario 4, Toronto, ON
Guests: Seanan McGuire, Dave Kyle, Chandler Davis www.sfcontario.ca

December 6-8, 2013 - SMOFcon 31,
Toronto ON. Convention runners' convention. Website TBA.





In a moment the Doctor used to fine tune the TAORDIS ...



Did you know? MonSFFA has a Yahoo Group! Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MonSFFA/> and click on "Join this group".

