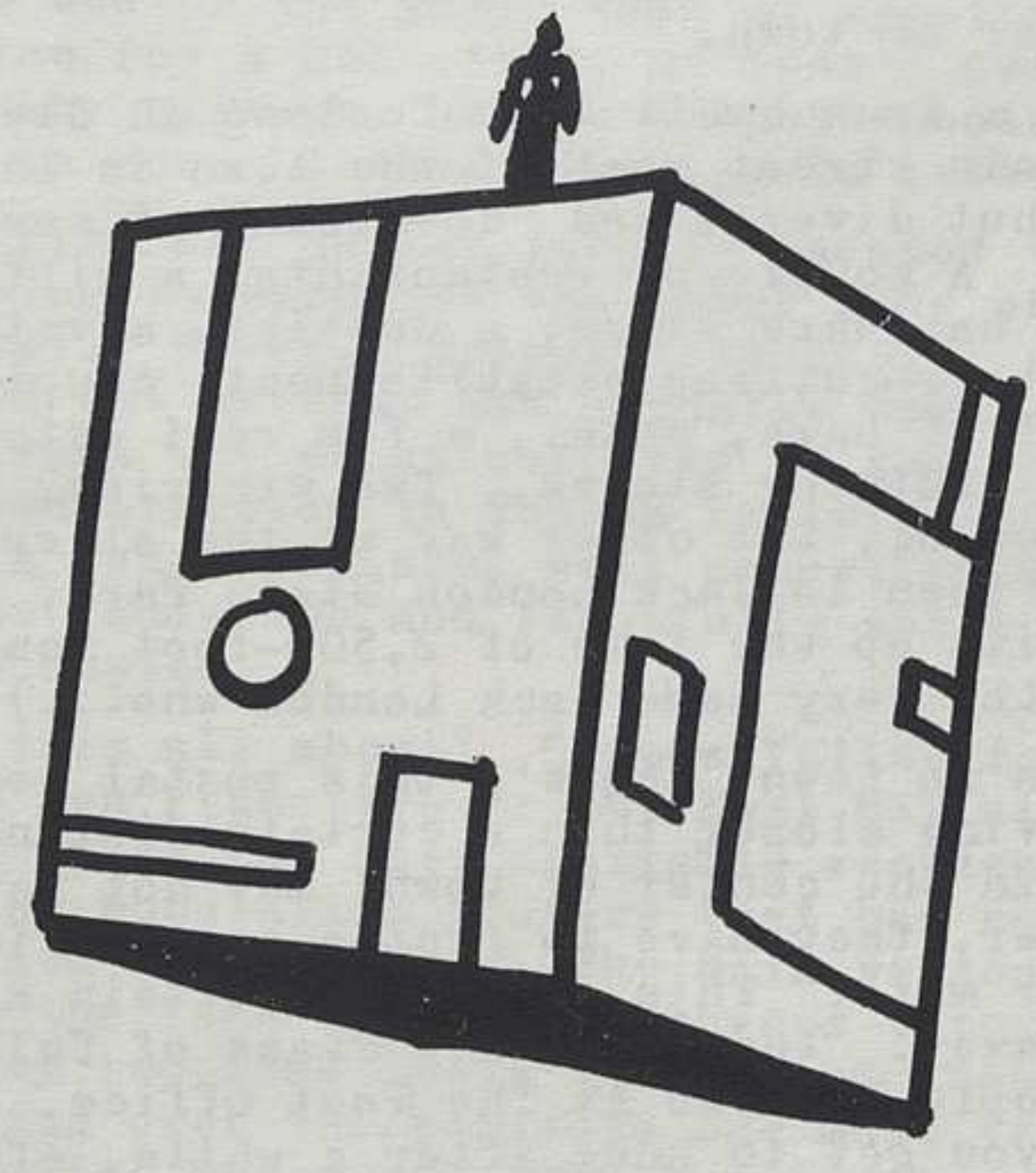
HERE THERE BE SAPS

July 1984
SAPS #148





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is important to me and is probably the main reason I don't want to live in any large population areas again if I can avoid it.

Since January, I've moved to a larger place. I'm still in the Glen Ellen "postal district" but now I'm in a neighborhood about 1½ miles south of the center of the village, on the other side of a 2,000-acre state hospital for the "developmentally disabled" which serves as a buffer zone from the development happening in the rest of Sonoma Valley, population 30,000 and growing. Yes, dear readers, Robert "Bob" Lichtman is living in suburbia, a mid-'50s subdivision of small ticky-tacky on small lots, no sidewalks, dips in the pavement to channel the rainwater. Blech! Forced here by poverty relative to the prevailing rents around here (this new place is cheap), I'm regarding this as a temporary move and have left lots of stuff in boxes under my bed awaiting my dream cottage in the heart of Glen Ellen that I'll be able to afford later on, hopefully by the end of the year, when my appointment to the Postal Service (as a CoA clerk, no less!) comes through. Glen Ellen, the village, has no neighborhoods such as the one I'm in now. I feel like I'm in exile.

Glen Ellen has so far largely escaped the urbanization beginning to occur on the other side of it from the state hospital. Several modest residential projects have been approved but neither has actually been started. Nothing to freak out about compared to what's been happening in new construction in Sonoma Valley. Condos have struck with a vengeance, some well conceived but others a blight on the landscape and rightfully still largely unsold and unoccupied.

What's this all about? Sonoma Valley is a one-hour commute from San Francisco or the East Bay cities, 45 miles away. It is the only desirable residential area that close to these population centers that has not significantly urbanized in the past. The main reason forthis is and has been the lack of major highways into the valley. There are only two-lane roads which wind around through the valleys and over the hilltops one must traverse to get here from the Bay Area. There are only about five blocks of four-lane road in the entire valley, all around the historic Sonoma Plaza. In the last few years, though, development has struck with a vengeance mostly in the form of condos. (Sonoma is a popular retirement area.) Also much commercial development with our first MacDonald's later this summer being amusingly situated at the most congested problem intersection on our two-lane state highway that is not scheduled to get traffic signals until next year sometime. Typical, one nods sagely but disgustedly.

This area still has much to recommend it. A great climate, history everywhere you turn (Sonoma was the state capital at one time), lots of recreational facilities

both here and nearby, nice but increasingly expensive housing (other than condos), and let's not forget that sense of community. But the time will come if this build-up continues when it will overwhelm, obscure and obliterate those very qualities of life that attracted those already here in the first place and will make this "just another urban center."

Perhaps these concerns are shared by some of you about the areas in which you live. The urbanization of our small towns near major cities is nothing new. I've been in most of the areas of the country in which SAPS members live and have been witness to the development there. Still I wonder what it's like for all of you out there in SAPS? Tell me about it in the next mailing...

Where's the next installment of "The Musquite Kid"?
It's late! (Hey, Wrai!)

IN A RECENT fanzine, Harry Warner jr rues the fact that the age of reduced type fanzines has coincided with the decline of his formerly crystal-clear vision. In our very own O-O in this mailing, Art Rapp confesses "it's murder on the eyeballs--though legal." Since I myself have sported reading glasses since last fall, so as not to be left out of geriatric fandom, I sympathize with all those who must squint or don glasses to read this reduced type. It's reassuring to know our official editor says it's not against the law.

In its defense I must say: it saves both postage and trees. And--attention, fan editors!--it turns good fillos into excellent covers.

SOME BRIEF MAILING COMMENTS, before I exit from here for this mailing...

By far the most enjoyable item in this mailing was the delightful "How to Self-Promote Your Book." As a more or less "professional" book promoter in recent years, I can vouch for the contents of this book being right on. But what's enjoyable beyond the nuts and bolts of book promotion are the extremely humorous anecdotes of the authors' personal experiences. This title ought to be available in every bookstore. It deserves a much larger circulation than I suspect it's getting. I would like to see this book repackaged, perfectbound, with Ray Nelson "Globly" cartoons lavishly illustrating its text and a beautifully-humorous Globly cover in full color. I think it might be the ultimate way, Ray, to get the Globlies out to the wider audience they've so long deserved.

God invented the orgasm so we would know when to stop
