HERE THERE BE SAPS

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HERE THERE BE SAPS Volume Two, Number Five. Published for the January 1985 mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society by Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen CA 95442. Founding member: fwa. Cover by Rotsler again!

150 Mailings, That's Not Too Many If you could go back in time and tell one of the founding members of SAPS that this organization, started almost as a joke and dominated by lightweight, humorous publications in its earliest mailings, would persist for 37 years, would he punch you in the nose? In these days of apas hanging out on every street corner, as it were, the founding of a new one probably seems like an everyday event, but in 1947 SAPS was only the third fannish apa ever to be formed, after the original FAPA in 1937 and the VAPA (Vanguard APA) in 1944 (this latter dominated by pros). It must have definitely been a subject of interest on the fanews-cards of the time.

Thanks no doubt to the unflagging efforts of Art Rapp, SAPS now seems to me to be something of the equivalent of daytime television, dominated by fannish reruns. The common denominator of the bulk of the membership as it is now constituted is made up of former members, sort of the "Brady Bunch" or "Happy Days Again" of fandom...SAPS members from all eras, but especially the earlier ones, returned to the fold and SAPSing away as though vast eras of fandom and massive galleries of fanfaces hadn't come and gone in the interim.

But SAPS goes on, and on...the mailing comments upon comments upon comments fading back into distant mailings past in an unbroken line back to Van Splawn, Lloyd Alpaugh, Joe Kennedy, and other members of the first mailing. Art, where are these early members? Let's get them back, especially JoKe who must have some interesting tales to recount of what's happened to him since 1947. I'm hoping to see in this mailing some statistics on the history of SAPS, perhaps a cumulative roster of all those who've ever participated in this little backwater of fanzine fandom. Art?

Meanwhile, on the occasion of the 150th, let's all pause here--corticothalamically, of course--and muse on what lies ahead. After all, if Blotto Otto is back, can Wallace "Waste-basket" Weber be far behind? F.M. & Elinor? Norman G.? Onward!

Something Completely Different Like how about some mailing comments? Though they're the life blood of SAPS, or any apa, they're something I've kind of let go these last few mailings except for a few peremptory short shots at a few people. But this time, more comments came to mind and I want to get them down for the record...

Dian Crayne: It was interesting to read that you use WordStar. I've been taking free instruction in WordStar at the high school in Sonoma. I go every day for a couple of hours and do exercises which have slowly but surely been teaching me about WordStar and its companion programs, MailMerge, SpellStar and SuperSort. While I might actually also use some of this sometime, I mainly took the course to overcome my computer fear, and in that regard it has been highly successful. No longer am I a non-computer literate poop at fannish parties. I too now have the potential to become a Computer Bore. (This is not a personal

aspersion cast on you, I hasten to add.) >< Glen Ellen has "luxuriant foliage, babbling brooks, and clean air--fifteen minutes from a supermarket, cleaners, hardware store, nursery, etc." and much more in Sonoma, seven miles away. But unfortunately I know of nothing like Glen Ellen in Southern California. I see from the SPECTATOR that you've moved to Manhattan Beach after all. Are you in the place next to the shack? If so, did you give them the chickens yet?

Harry Warner Jr.: While your skepticism is well-considered concerning the use of word processors by authors, I really honestly believe you're going to be proved wrong about the "fad" claim you make for their usage. As I say above, I have just started learning about word processing (since mid-October), have done one FAPAzine on one, and am producing my camera-ready copy for this issue on it as well. It seems to me to be the perfect medium for doing an apazine. One can put it on the computer first-draft as the mailing is read; then one can return to it later on to edit and polish and add any later thoughts one might have had, finally printing out a hard copy on a letter-quality printer. And many libraries, at least out here, have such printers available inexpensively for rent on the premises, so you don't necessarily have to own one. At least not right away. I don't think, though, that I'm going to use word processing for TRAP DOOR; it doesn't have the right "fannish look." >< Yes, California definitely does have trains for nostalgia buffs to ride. North of here, running between Willits, a town on Highway 101 about 100 miles from San Francisco, and Fort Bragg on the ocean over the Coast Range, is the Skunk Train, run by a railroad company whose name eludes me right now. The railroad runs the Skunk during the days and uses the same tracks at night to run logs out of the woods down to the mills. An old friend, Alan Graham (David, Ray & Terry will know who this is), at one time was the stationmaster at a little "town" called Lost that was on the Skunk Line. Alan used to dress up in full railroad regalia, just like Engineer Bill, and come out waving a kerosene lantern every time a Skunk ran through, providing oodles of "local color." He also did switching for the lumber trains at night.

Otto Pfeiffer: Welcome back. I'm as surprised to see you here as you appear to have been over my appearance. It took years, Otto, but the mind rot experienced from my stint as a steady WRR letterhack has finally worn off. Or maybe not. >< I make a pretty mean vegetarian spaghetti sauce that's a big hit with my kids and for that matter even my ex has commented favorably on it. I use finely chopped tofu, chunked fresh mushrooms and a can of chopped olives to give it some texture. >< We have a McDonald's here, too, and Taco Bell, Burger King and the Colonel are all slavering at the gate waiting to get in. >< A "classic" SAPSzine!

Burnett Toskey: You're definitely right about some movies, mostly the type that rely on adventure or special effects, not being effective on the small screen of a television. "Bladerunner" was one of these. I saw "Bladerunner" three times at the movies. I sat in about the fourth or fifth row back (depending on the theatre) so I was totally enveloped in the action on the screen. It was the only way to see those gigantic animated billboards on the sides of the highrise buildings and the other scenery one experienced from the Deckard's-eye point of view riding about in his "spinner." I loved the movie for this sort of experience, though its plotting and screenplay left much to be

desired. (One of my friends who saw the movie before reading the book had no problem with this, however.) Then I saw it at a friend's house on a 19" color set. It seemed totally different; instead of absorbing you in the vastness of the setting, it seemed flat and actually rather uninteresting. >< I don't play golf, but I do try to get out and walk around in as natural a setting as possible now and then. We here in Glen Ellen are blessed with the 900-acre Jack London State Park in the hills above the west side of town. There are miles of trails in the park and I enjoy going up there in every weather except rainy or extremely hot and climbing up the side of Sonoma Mountain. >< It's very hard for me, too, to read much in the summer. This is because my children are out of school then, thus are not going to bed as early as during the school year. Since most of my reading and fanning is done late at night, after they're asleep, given my current living situation (me and two kids in a small one-bedroom apartment), the late hours they keep in the summer make it difficult. >< Why do you "have to be satisfied with printing on one side"? I've used Kodak copiers often and they are perfectly capable of printing on both sides of the paper. Even at self-service establishments, it is possible to have an attendant reload the paper for you, or teach you how to do it. It would help save trees as well as keep down the cost of mailing.

Megret Stull: Your notecard sample is very nice, and in fact I'm sore tempted to take it out and use it sometime. (Completists please turn away and don't watch.) Your tales of the financial ins and outs of the notecard business sounded familiar as they have many parallels to the book business, of which I've some knowledge. Wish you luck in getting this off the ground. >< Around here the restaurants aren't so numerous as appears to be the case in your neighborhood. Here the breakdown is mostly resident/tourist and it doesn't matter if you go to the wrong one because it's all pretty mellow. And no, our postmaster doesn't keep a pot of coffee out for us patrons.

Terry Carr: Probably a lot of the chain sawing you hear every summer is preventive thinning and trimming that has to be done to prevent dead or weak branches from falling off during windy spells and trees from falling on even more houses than they already do. Is anyone planting new trees to replace those that falls down or die, or is there no consciousness of that? It would be great to bring that consciousness to your neighborhood if it doesn't already exist so that the area will remain wooded over the long run. A new variety could be introduced with a longer life span. >< One thing you can do that will use quite a few of those surplus plums is to undertake the making of your own plum wine. This sounds like a lot of work, but isn't really. No doubt there's a store in your area carrying the supplies you'll need as well as books to instruct you in how to do it. >< I always thought you weren't a very typical Aquarius! This revelation that you're a Pisces after all explains much. I learned several years ago from astrologer Robert Cole (coauthor with Paul Williams of **The Book of Houses** [Entwhistle Books, 1980]) that such things as "progressions" exist in astrology and that your sun sign changes every 30 years or so depending on fixed data about when your sun sign passes into another part of the zodiac. So while you were born a Pisces, Terry, you eventually became an Aquarius and probably now are already or about to be an Aries. Isn't astrology fun? >< By "the rock and roll of the early '50s" do you mean stuff like "Sh Boom" by the Chordettes or "Work

With Me Annie" by Hank Ballard and the Midnighters? I mean, you're talking a wide spectrum here. >< I can totally relate to your leaving New York because of the heat and humidity. When I went to live in Tennessee, I somehow hadn't realized what kind of weather came with the territory. I never got used to it and I hope I'll never have to live in that climate again. As you know it gets pretty hot up here, but it's a dry sort of heat that's not hard to take, but not so dry that it cracks one's lips and parches one's throat like the dry heat in places like Arizona and New Mexico. >< Sight reading is something I encountered only after learning to read by the phonetic method. I started school in Cleveland and got through the first half of second grade before we moved to Los Angeles. I learned reading by phonics in Cleveland and when I got to California I found that they were teaching reading by the sight recognition method. I was already well ahead of my age group in reading so this wasn't a problem for me, but my brother, three years younger than me, learned to read in Los Angeles and as a result was never as accomplished or prolific reader as I was.

Nancy Rapp: Your quover was amusing, but why explain Stigwort's Disease and not also explain Twonk's Disease, which is--as older members will already know--falling of the armpits, first correctly diagnosed by Dr. W. Mildew Danner. >< I never had salsify and it does sound like a lot of work. When I lived in Tennessee I picked poke salad and lambs' quarters every spring. Do these grow in your part of Pennsylvania? Poke salad has to be picked young because it gets toxic as it gets older. Even at that, it's quite some work because you are supposed to boil it for a while, then drain off that cooking water and cook it some more in a new batch of water. Lambs' quarters, in addition to tasting like a wild variety of spinach, were much easier to deal with and stayed tasty even in older plants. I don't really miss either of these vegetables, though, since out here I can grow turnip greens and kale, two of my very favorite leafy green vegetables. >< Why did I leave The Farm? My marriage had broken up, I was floating from one temporarily empty room to another with my possessions stored in boxes in a well-hidden corner of the print shop (this was at the community's absolute population peak when housing was tight), there were weird vibes from supposed friends about my marriage breaking up (this was a New Thing on The Farm at that time), there were no economic opportunities or interesting (to me) jobs available in that part of Tennessee, and I hated those muggy summers to boot. Paul Williams wrote me from California telling of good times in publishing and how he needed help--and did I want a job?--and then offered to pay my way out. Too good to pass up! When did I start thinking of leaving? In any kind of very serious way, about 1975 when I started realizing that mismanagement and preemption of the goodies by a small power clique was well-entrenched. I stuck with it the rest of the time hoping that somehow things would turn around. They never did.

Nicki Lynch: Speed traps along the interstates every 100 miles in Tennessee is no problem. If it hadn't've been Sunday, they would have been out every 40-50 miles. I used to drive extensively in Tennessee on interstate and rural lane alike, and it was always a rule of thumb--at least on the interstates--that you'd run into a radar trap about every hour at the most. Most of these are always in the same place (like the Highway 99 exit on I-65 some 35 miles south of Nashville, where Smoky hides on the off-ramp northbound) and you can count on them. If you don't

want to keep track yourself, get a Fuzz Buster or listen to the truckers on citizen's band radio. I had a CB myself most of the last half of the '70s and never got pulled over because I always knew well up front of actually passing these radar traps. And, of course, Tennessee is not unique in this. >< For my taste, "Romancing The Stone" deserved every good review it got and is far superior to either of the "Raiders" films. >< Why have you never spent a night in a tent and never intend to? Pretty strong statement, this! I should add that probably I'm on your side about this, since I've only rarely been in a tent and don't really enjoy it that much more or less directly in relation to how dewy a night it turns out to be. I hate waking up wet.

William Austin: Our "brainiest leaders" are crushed, where they exist at all, beneath the weight of posturing sycophants we call our leaders, politicians whose mentality is that of three-year-olds fighting over who's to play with a desirable toy. Our alliances with tyrants to preserve access to materials and/or cheap labor for the US-based multinationals whose influence is heavy on our government make us the laughing stock of the world. Our recent deep concern with apartheid in South Africa, for instance, is only a diversion to the problems of a growing racially mixed underclass here (mostly not white, but increasingly so)--those "working poor" who have to scramble at the most underpaid 20% of jobs while executives puzzle over the shape of conference tables, bloated in the sheer weight of their perks. At this point [Dec. 20], it looks as though our lunatic "defense build-up" will go nearly unabated while such institutions as job training programs, AmTrak and the Small Business Administration will go down the tubes. People are in power in our current administration who would make the US another third-world sort of country with a large group of permanently poor people who have to coexist with the rich at the latter's convenience. We may in time, if this sort of thing is permitted to continue, become the best-defended and most morally bankrupt nation on the block. Has our group consciousness believed the worst of the alternate futures outlined in our science fiction?

Wrai Ballard: It was true on The Farm, too, as in your community, that more people knew me than I knew. I'd meet people in the context of my various jobs in the community who I'd assist or serve, but wouldn't get to really know, at least not right away. In the later '70s, when the population got really large, and I was working at the publishing company which was a world unto itself, many people came to live that I never got to know much at all. This was not exactly what I had in mind in living there, but it just happened. >< Seattle definitely could be the reading capital of the US on a per-capita basis, though New York, Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area are the actual numerical leaders, I believe. I came to Seattle in 1978 when I was bookselling for The Farm's publishing company on the west coast and was impressed at the number and range of styles of bookstores that existed there. And when I called on these booksellers, I was impressed at how knowledgeable and unique each of them were in their approach to bookselling. Seattlers are indeed privileged to have such an open forum for books. (Oh, by the way, Gertrude, did you and Frank still have your shop in 1978? If so, I think I may have dropped in there and perhaps tried to sell you books without realizing what a fannish encounter it was.)

Carol Ballard: Regarding bulk mail, I don't feel that it should pay the first class rate because it is presorted by the sender in a way that does a large part of the sorting for the

post office. This ought to be, and is, worth something. What I think is that the rate structure ought to be modified so that no piece can go for less than the 11¢ per-piece rate. As it stands now, there is a per-pound rate of 75¢ under which lightweight junk mail now moves for 2¢ or less per piece. If these mailings had to pay the minimum per-piece rate, that alone would raise enormous amounts of revenue for the post office. I don't favor outright abolition of the pound rate because it is useful and fair to mailers of bulkier items such as catalogs. >< It's amusing that, in the age of computers, you and your computer friend have to resort to handwritten interface between your systems. >< What kind of mushrooms do you pick out there in the woods? >< The days of knowing your mailman are not gone in Glen Ellen. There are two rural routes delivering out of the Glen Ellen post office and they are handled by two nice ladies who've been doing it for some time. When I moved to a new part of town where I could have mail delivery and the first piece of mail addressed to me at that address--a copy of my rental agreement--came up for delivery, the mail lady came to the door and asked if I wanted it delivered here since she knew I got my mail at Box 30.

Jim Woolsey: I consider it lamentable that people like Heinlein and Pournelle come out in favor of the "Star Wars" defense system. I consider Pournelle to be a right-wing wacko myself and discount most of what he says. It's embarrassing to have to acknowledge that such nationally-known fuggheads come out of fandom. I find it disturbing that you don't believe that "alternate" energy sources (wind, solar, tidal, hydro, etc.) can take on a large percentage of the energy usage in times to come. "Industrial greed" to me is when large oil companies lobby to have funds removed from government programs designed to help alternate forms of energy get out, and then when that fails to stop development they try to buy up the companies engaged in these ventures and then put them on the corporate back burners, so that this kind of development is always having to buck a huge wave of resistance to change on the part of the "traditional" energy companies. And, hey, no one says that non-nuclear power sources like coal and gas aren't polluting too, but none of them produces genetic mutations in quite the same way as nuclear. If we want to have big centralized power generation sources, we'll have to clean up our act, but it is possible. At least we'll have our genetic stock unmessed with. >< Second your praise of "Sixteen Candles" which I found enjoyable and refreshingly handled.

Robert Briggs: Your friend, Mr. Swycaffer, says all I could to your remarks in this issue...and more. Please keep him as a regular contributor. He's a good antidote to you.

Parting Shots This concludes another thrilling issue of HTBS, the SAPSzine that's small so it tries harder, ahahaha. Also, this wraps up my first year in SAPS and while I'm still wondering, sometimes, why I've taken on this level of fan activity, I'm mostly enjoying it so far and the mailings aren't such a wasteland as they first seemed. It appears that, in SAPS, there may be egoboo sufficient to sustain life.

Happy Fiftieth Birthday, Ghu!!!

QUESTIONS CONCERNED CALIFORNIANS ASK ABOUT NUCLEAR WAR:

