DOOR KNOB

January 1987



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inclined these days. I will retire from a regular work career and devote a portion of my time to activity in fandom. I will keep you all informed of my progress along these lines. Wish me luck! And, remember, I'm doing this for fandom.

1986 WAS THE YEAR I finally re-equipped myself fannishly speaking. With a steady flow of money and some good fortune, I've been able to purchase a decent typewriter. I am now the owner of a Silver Reed EX200 electronic typewriter. Through some good connections, I got this new machine at a discount price from an individual who used to have a store front and was a dealer for Silver Reed, but who now operates out of his garage and is simply trying to sell off the left-over stock. I got this $500 machine for $325! It's a light to mediu duty office machine with many nice features such as automatic return, automatic underlining, decimal tabs, automatic centering, block indent, and relocation. It's adjustable to three different pitches, has two "keyboards" so that some of the keys take on additional functions, has indexing in both directions, and much etc. It is not a word processor and has memory only about a line back for correction purposes. Other than machines of questionable quality, there are no word processors available in this price range. However, when I'm ready financially to step up to a computer with word processing, this machine can be a letter quality printer with the addition of an inexpensive interface. It's taken me a little while to get used to the "feel" of the typewriter, since it has a daisy wheel print elemen and has an entirely different "feel" to it than the IBM golfballs I'm more used to, but I now like it quite a lot and when I recently had to borrow Paul Williams' Selectric II for some typesetting for TRAP DOOR (since I don't have a 12-pitch wheel yet; it's on order) I missed my typer's features. To sum up, I'm thoroughly enjoying this new typewriter and my productivity has shot way up.

Through the kindness of Jack Speer I now have a saddle stitch stapler of my own for TRAP DOOR and the occasional multisheeted issue of this zine. Jack asked SAPS waitlister Art Widner over in FAPA if he wanted it, and I wrote to Jack and asked for it in the event that Widner expressed no interest. I then forgot about it entirely and was surprised, some months later, when it just showed up one day in the mail, a total surprise but a welcome one.

Also, last summer I was walking along Fourth Street in downtown se Santa Rosa when I spotted a big Acco stapler in the window of the large office supply store on a closeout at $20. This is the stapler that takes several sizes of large staples and can, using the largest size, staple around 100 sheets of paper at a time. I went in and immediately purchased it. Amusingly, no one in the store could figu out just how it'd ended up in the window at that price, since it's normally a $45 stapler that they usually keep in stock all the time (although they just had the one that day). I counted my blessings and $20 in small bills and got out of there before anyone could change his or her mind about it.

Prior to these acquisitions I was having to borrow the use of Paul's Selectric to do TRAP DOOR and anything else I wanted to look presentable (or sneak it on the office PC), and also was having to rs borrow staplers from kindly local fans in the Bay Area when I needed them, often ending up hanging on to them for months before being able to reunite them with their owners. It feels good to be self-sufficient in these respects.

Looking ahead to 1987 I find myself faunching for a full-sized four or five drawer filing cabinet more than anything else. My fan-

zine collection is in a series of cardboard boxes and unsorted piles atop my bureau. I would really like to have them more organized and accessible. When I win Lotto I'll buy several of them in oak from a quality dealer. In the meantime I'd settle for just one metal cabinet, second hand, and hopefully not too beat up...

A FEW SELECTED MAILING COMMENTS: Carol Crawford: Yes, "The Farm" that I lived on during the '70s was the same one as that described by Peter Jenkins in A Walk Across America. I remember when Peter was on The Farm in about 1972 and was just talking about writing that book. His dog got run over by The Farm's water tank truck while he was visiting with us. He was warned about having his dog follow close by the water truck but ignored the warnings. I guess he thought he had SuperDog, or something; I remember him being kind of sentimental/weird about his dog. At the time, however, the Farm party line was anti-pet and my recollections could well be flavored by that. Anyway, Peter certainly mentioned the incident in Walk and it definitely seemed to cast a pall over his visit at The Farm.

Elinor Busby: Having just become "legally unemployed," I can definitely relate to your comment about the "petty humiliations" of working. I consider that I was a reasonably fast learner of all the minutiae of legal secretarying, but the case load of the attorney I was working for went from 40 to 75 in 1½ years and I was expected to keep up with all of it although my pay certainly did not increase in anywhere near that porportion. Inevitably little things, sometimes even obvious routine things, would slip through the cracks that were created by being constantly under pressure to churn out more work. One day she'd had enough and fired me. Her previous three secretaries had all, I learned, quit because of this slave driver and I was the subject of extreme sympathy from the other secretaries, paralegals and even the two junior attorneys all of whom took up a collection and got me a $85 gift certificate good at the Chart House restaurants, a chain of posh and pricey eating establishments up and down the west coast and elsewhere. I was quite relieved to be out from under this load and went ahead and took the vacation I was about to take anyway. Now it's the week of January 5th and I have nine newly updated resumes out to prospective employers and am signing up with temp agencies to try and keep as much money coming in during the interim. I prefer not to take another legal secretary job unless my spies in the Sonoma County Legal Secretaries Association tell me that the job scene at that office is good. || I hope you and Buz will make an exception to your Westercon aversion and come down to the one this summer in Oakland.

F.M. Busby: It was interesting to read of your getting a Subaru because these days, unlike 1969, I tell people to buy themselves a Toyota or a Subaru for a Good Car. (Definitely not a new Volvo.) Nissan/Datsun used to be on the list, too, but I've heard they've slipped a bit in recent years. I'm still driving my 1971 Datsun 510 wagon with some 210,000 miles on it. It's 45,000 miles into a rebuilt engine and still going strong, using no oil between charges every 3,500-4,000 miles.

G.M. Carr: I will leave it to others to berate you about "The arms race...increases the production of goods for military use" because such circular logic is beyond me.

IN CLOSING let me announce that I'm currently sec-treas of FAPA whose 200th mailing is coming up in August 1987. There's currently almost no waiting list, activity requirement is 8 pages a year, dues are $16 (to be lowered after the 200th mailing), living legends abound. Two buck waitlist fee. If interested, please apply...