CounterClock
Issue # 14 MAY 2013

Flipping casually through the pages of German Fandom History from the Beginning



Illustration by Mario Kwiat: 1935-1991

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INTRODUCTION

German science fiction-fandom has a history of feuds and quarrel. Not so much around the pub table, nor do German fans quarrel a lot with foreigners, but when it comes to their hobby and when they are supposed to agree on how an organization should be run, they can become bitter enemies.

Walter Ernsting, generally thought of as the father of German fandom, founded the Science Fiction Club Deutschland in 1955. As early as 1957 the SFCD numbered over 750 members and was then the largest SF-Club in the world. At one point there were two clubs called SFCD who fought each other. Since the roaring 50's with grand but sloppy laid plans, the club went to an all-time low in 1974, when it very nearly was dissolved.

A fan, Dieter Steinseifer, saved the club and it was followed by a relative peaceful time of prosperity for the SFCD. Through the years, the number of memberships has gone up and down, but it is now one of many associations in its own country not distinguishing itself particularly above the crowd.
Current SFCD 2nd chair Roger Murmann feels confident that the club which today numbers around 340 members is again steadily increasing in size.

With the Perry Rhodan-series (see CoClock # 4, for details), Walter Ernsting and Karl-Herbert Scheer had created a second very important factor. In the late 60's and throughout the 70's most German sf-fans discovered sf and it's fandom through Perry Rhodan's letter column. But it also created a sub-fandom with a lot more energy and drive than what the SFCD ever could muster. Perry Rhodan-fans founded their own clubs and in the 70's every major town had at least one of them. If there were two, they fought each other. Like proud cocks on a heap of dung.

Outsiders find it difficult to understand what there is to fight about. Even fans from the former GDR who were reunited with the Federal Republic in 1989 do occasionally shake their heads in disbelief over the seriousness with which a West German sf-fan approaches his hobby. But then, the East German sf-fans had more serious problems to deal with.

One can not help but to suspect the trauma after the second world war **must** have had something to do with this. I can compare with Scandinavian sf-fandom in which there had been only one huge and very destructive period of feuding. When feuding even was fashionable, because fans had no idea how badly affected fandom could become.

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The computer boots in the morning while I make coffee. I start Open Office, Notepad and iTunes and the speakers are turned on, unless I have heard the voice of Patrick Stewart telling me he is Lucutus of Borg; that resistance is futile and my life as I knew it will be over. Not to worry! It only means, I forgot to turn off the speakers the night before.

Next I hear Bill Haley counting, accompanied by drum-beat; "One, two, three o'clock, four o'clock rock!" and another day of labour at the computer has begun. To stay longer in the atmosphere of the second half of the 50's I have added some more songs of the Platters, Buddy Holly, Paul Anka and Everly Bros. The music eases my spirit and before finishing the first cup of coffee I feel all the energy Little Richard pours into Long Tall Sally's and my cup.

The songs convey some of the feeling of its time. They were happy and innocent days. Nobody speculated whether Buddy Holly was gay or not, when listening to *"Oh Boy!"*, or if the Chordettes actually were sucking genital in *"Lollipop!"* People were simply not wired in this way. Today we all need to watch our mouth carefully.

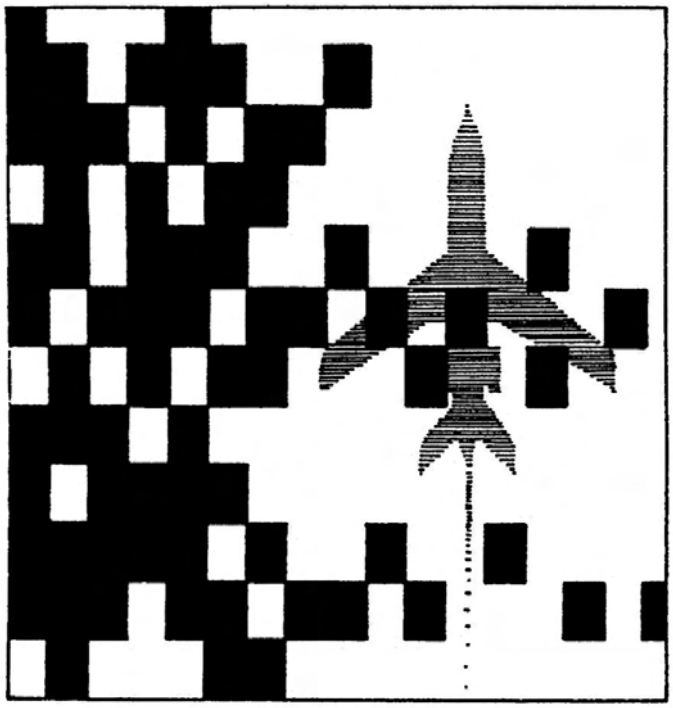


Illustration by Mario Kwiat.

PERSONAL REFLECTION ON WWII IMPACT

After the second World War it was also a time of healing. Both of healing and of not allowing to forget. One can question the wisdom of showing multiple images of the most horrible acts committed by humankind to a boy of six, but I was no older when I first was made aware of the holocaust. I quickly learned to tell my peers in school I wasn't even born when the war ended. But as late as in 1976 in college in Sweden, I was purposely made to feel guilt for my German name and heritage.
Not one person can be returned to the realm of the living. Shame and remorse wasn't ours to dwell upon, but we carried the stain whether we talked about it or not. Our fathers and grandfathers were fighting in the war. My father was 13 when it ended. His job was to dig out the dead from the ruins. My grandfather didn't engage in politics at all. One day, so he told me, Hitler was in power and he could either do what he was assigned to do or let himself get lined up and shot. He was an engineer in the navy, rounded up by the Brits and demoted when it all was over. My grandmother had no idea what was going on. She bawled her eyes out when she found out what Hitler had been up to.
Germany was damned and divided. In my proximity the horrors of war were talked about for the entire duration of my childhood. Only the British sf-fans could jestingly use the name Gerfany or the contraction Gerfandom. Media in Germany rarely used the name of the country at all. TV, Radio and newspapers said "Bundesrepublik" meaning the Federal Republic, to distinguish it from the Democratic Republic. A complete healing was not even possible before 1989.
I can't speak for all Germans, but the wall in Berlin was not merely cutting through streets and houses. It separated friends and families, and so it was cutting through many a German soul, including mine.

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And we were not the victims of the war. People in the inappropriately named Democratic Republic could not complain either. Not openly anyway. Preciously little was indeed democratic under Erich Honecker's rule. But the 70's and 80' were remembered as happy days in the GDR, so I've been told. But since Stalin was a worse mass-murderer than Hitler, ending up under his, or the regime of his friends wasn't perhaps the best outcome. The difference between Stalin and Hitler was that his Russian counterpart not only exterminated Jews, but his intellectual elite as well. Many of the sharpest minds in German fandom were politically on the left side of the scale. Perhaps they would not have been so aggressive, had they been better informed.

I really loathe watching anything with make-believe Nazi-Germans in it. They are made fun of and depicted as utter dimwits.
- They are not making fun of Germans, they are making fun of the Nazis, a friend of mine said.
Well, there is a problem. There were so few Nazis. Most people just followed their leader where it took them. They were not obviously evil. Had the evil been obvious, it wouldn't have happened. The tragedy was that an entire population of ordinary people got caught in a collective madness. Not mentally deficient people. They did not have that excuse. No wonder leadership in Germany was questioned as a result of this. It is not the first time something like this has happened and it is unlikely to have been the last. As long as humankind is willing to kill for a cause, this madness can disguise itself under a different name. Only the conquered get caught.

The next generation of Germans had no guilt assigned to them. But German fans always were very, very serious about their hobby. The history of the SFCD and Gerfan-dom is filled with endless feuds and quarrels.
Any propensity, any even remote semblance with attitudes which led to the tragedy of WWII was met by forceful defiance. I believe Gerfans would rather shred

each other to pieces than allowing any one of them to pursue overbearing goals.

Music was an ointment to the soul and science fiction was a hope for redemption. Because, as Taylor put it so eloquently in the Planet of the Apes: "Somewhere out there, there has to be something better than man!"

World War II. It felt relevant in this case, but I prefer not to talk about it. Neither did we in Gerfandom. It occurred to me just now, that I never even talked about WWII with my son, who will be 27 this year. Not once. What he believes to know, he has learned at school or seen on TV.

ROCK & R◷LL and MARTIANS

Between previous paragraph and this one, several weeks were lost in a race against the weather to get six apiaries ready for re-populating after a vile parasite infestation and in time for the first swarming. We still had one queen with a poor lot of worker bees left. It was followed by two weeks of a nasty cold; a real beauty of it, a badass, the mother of them all! Coughed until my brain seemed to explode. Then I went on a heavy Sambuca-treatment. It tastes like Ouzo, or Pernod, which I like. And then...
Boy! Is it difficult to get back into the saddle!? Is it ever?

Meanwhile I also had the fortunate benefit to listen to a documentary about the emergence of Krautrock in West-Germany. It is relevant, because the Krautrockers were basically the same generation as the sf-fans. It was interesting to hear that many musicians felt that the Americans left all the same Nazis in charge, after they left Germany.
Now, one should keep in mind that it is perfectly well possible to be an asshole without being a Nazi, even though being a Nazi at the very least meant, that one was misguided in perception.
The people I knew, while living in Germany 1962-1966 and 1971-1974, were not Nazi's. My teachers were not. I can't say that it was this way or the other, but I have to believe those musicians who felt that way. I believe it was very much a personal experience.

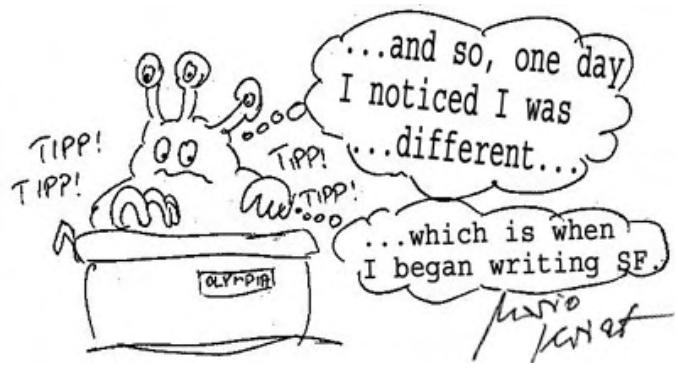
But this has also helped me to understand the German sf-fans, politically on the left side of the scale. From their point of view, the Americans brought evil and mayhem and left nothing but evil behind. How much the Russians hated Stalin, was a story to be told much, much later.
Krautrock and sf-fans converged in the 1970's when the Düsseldorfian Karl-Heinz Schmitz began dragging his sound-equipment to SFCD-conventions and playing the sense-of-wonder-evoking music of *Tangerine Dream* and other creators of electronic music. The peak of this convergence was the excellent concert by *Rolf Trostel* at BÄRCON in 1980.

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Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier on October 14, 1947

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* Perry Rhodan was long uncontested deemed a fascistoid space opera, even though this as Martin Marheinicke demonstrated in 1998 (see: CoClock # 4) hardly was a justified accusation.



GATHERING ◷F DATA

The work on this issue began immediately after finishing # 13. The vast amount of Information I knew I had to absorb, was a bit scary, to say the least. The biography on Herbert Häußler alone, was an 80 page A4 issue of Andromeda. Among relevant material I had also Rolf Heuter's Die Geschichte des SFCD 1955-1982 and a magazine column in 12 parts by Hermann Urbanek, Fanzines in Deutschland, published in 1980-1981.

Fate or foresight made me staple the photocopied series of articles with Ish 5 of Hagen Zboron's fanzine *AUCH 'NE MEINUNG*. In it, Hagen gave us his view on the Austrian fandom in january 1966. Considerable work had already been done by former SFCD chair (1988-1998) Thomas Recktenwald on the History of GDR fandom (at fanac.org), which he translated from the thorough report by Wolfgang Both, Hans-Peter Neumann and Klaus Scheffler. And cut, cut and cut.
You would not be served well with the total abundance of names and data. First of all, you could not remember it anyway and secondly, chance is you would use this issue as a sleeping pill. But, for Germans it might be good to know what there is and where to look if they wish to dig deeper. For Germans, this is merely a reference guide (at best). I am also willing to part with the material I have, which is not otherwise available, to benefit a serious German researcher.

Sources:

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DIE ZUKUNFT IN DER TASCHE by Rainer Eisfeld, 2007. Gentlefen, Gerfany got itself a Harry Warner jr of its own. With THE FUTURE IN MY POCKET the first steps taken in German fandom become crystal clear. Eisfeld covers the years 1955-1960 and did not only rely on his memory, but has carefully researched the facts. He does not fail to mention ideas and events of the past which are relevant in fandom of today. It is a treasure trove for anyone who wishes to dig in further into the topic. There is also a 30+ pages photo-section with 50+ pictures.

I was wary before reading the book, having been alerted by SKYRACK # 14, from February 22nd 1960, that Eisfeld sided with Rohr in the big feud between the two SFCD's in 1960 against Walter Ernsting. Considering myself a friend of the latter, I was prepared having to set something straight. I didn't have to. There is no smearing. The book does contain criticism, but it helps understanding the limits of the man with a vision. Deifying Ernstings role doesn't.

Alongside *Warhoon 28*, *All Our Yesterdays* and Terry Carr *Fandom Harvest*, this volume goes onto my shelf of most valued books (*in German language only joined by the best work of Michael Ende)*.

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*Hermann Ritter wrote a very wise thing about Neo-Nazi's in ANDROMEDA # 136-137: "The danger does not come from **their** activity, but from **our** silence."*

LET'S D🕐 THE TIME-WARP AGAIN

As we go backward in time, mobile phones grow bigger and easier to use until they suddenly disappear. Home computers become less and less capable and their software use available RAM more efficiently, internet shrinks until it vanished together with microwave ovens. The further back we go, the more we have to remove.

Musical performers on the radio play real instruments again and regain the rather impressive ability to sing instead of talking their way through a tune. The voice of the artist is no longer digitally manipulated. The lyrics are broader in their scope. It's no longer solely about the intricacies of mating.
We once again entertain ourselves with Amiga 500, then Commodore 64 and finally load programs from a tape-recorder to our Sinclair ZX 81. TV reverts back to one or two channels, goes black and white and fades.
The automobile in the street no longer resembles a plain doorstop. People no longer ooze of aftershave, soap and deodorants. Smoking picks up again, life is simpler, news less depressing and we laugh more often, it seems.
Women's skirts go up and down until they barely serve to disguise the underwear. All trace of humans having walked on the moon disappear. Swedish people turn over to drive on the left side of the street, I finish school and go home backwards. We carry out our first TV after 1963 and I crawl back into my mum and become a tiny sperm in the testicles of my father.
Aah, and the music... Sweet, sweet music. Rocking and rolling in from America and the UK.

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* "*Rock & Roll and Martians*" *is the title of a short story by Swedish sf-writer Bertil Mårtensson, which I translated into German language for Andromeda # 111 in 1984.*

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In this issue I have given prominence to some people for two reasons. First reason, because their presence in German fandom had a significant impact and it would be a crime not to mention them. Secondly because some of them have been mostly ignored, forgotten or their impact on fandom has been underestimated.

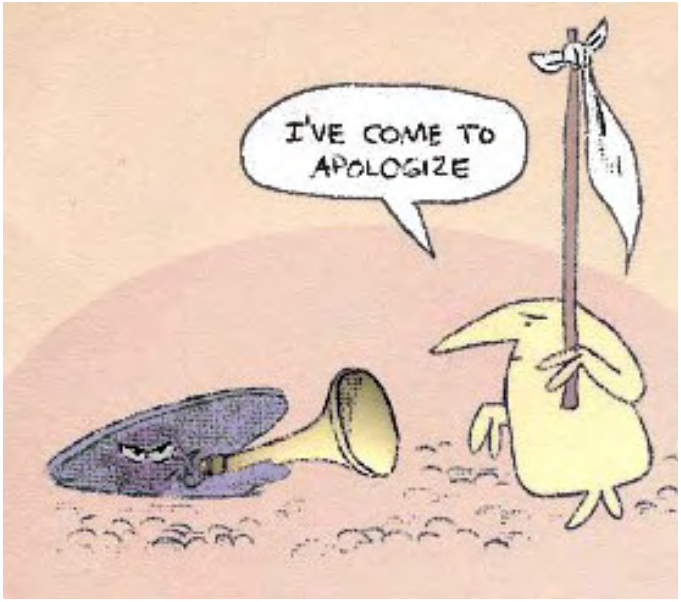


Illustration Bill Rotsler (The Tattooed Dragon)

Herbert Häußler 1912-1973
the first German SF-Fan

In March 2002, the SFCD published an issue of their magazine Andromeda (# 148) devoted entirely to the first German science fiction-fan Herbert Häußler. The issue was prompted (in part) by an article in Fandom Newsletter, written by Thomas Recktenwald in 1991. In it, Thomas asked if there were any signs of Häußler in East German fandom after 1945. The thorough work on Häußlers biography was then made by Wolfgang Both, Hans-Peter Neumann and Klaus Scheffler.

Near the end of the unified monarchy known as the German Empire, Herbert Häußler was born on May 8th in 1912 in Reichenbach im Vogtland. His father perished in WWI on July 23rd, 1916 in France. His passion for the movies and for the fantastic was fuelled in early age, as Tarzan of the Apes (1918) came to German cinemas in August 1921. The first science fiction novel he encountered was Otto Willi Gail, who was one of the most popular science fiction authors in Germany before WWII. Der Schuß ins All (1925) (translated as The Shot into Infinity) enflamed Häußlers imagination and craving for more of its kind. He rather put aside the money he was given for food while in school, instead to spend it on magazines of the fantastic and cinema.

At this point, I find it relevant to mention that Otto Willi Gail (1896-1956) was a science journalist and author. The Shot into Infinity was his first published novel, followed by another three published before WWII and his last in 1949. His close relationship with two German space pioneers, Max Valier and Hermann Oberth was surely a source of inspiration and a cause for the realistic details in his writing.

In 1928 Herbert Häußler learned Esperanto. After a few months, he had mastered the language well enough to pick up correspondence with other Esperantists. In the early 30's he had correspondence with Alton Rogers in Marshfield, Oregon. He sent the "Heroldo de Esperanto" (Cologne) to the US and received in return various American publications. Among them *Wonder Stories* and *Astounding Stories*. This was Häußlers second encounter with science fiction.

He soon signed a subscription to Astounding Stories and applied for membership in the Science Fiction League (SFL). He was accepted into the SFL as member # 952. In 1935 he initiated a correspondence with another Esperantist, Forrest J Ackerman in San Francisco, California. The exchange with Forry lasted 4 years, until it was interrupted by the beginning of World War II.

At age 28 Häußler was drafted to the infantry and sent to the eastern front. He spends Christmas 1941 in the trenches, after the German advance towards Moscow had been thwarted by the Russians. There he lost four toes on his left foot to the cold. They had to be removed in Neubrandenburg, which fortunately allowed him to return home in the midst of the ongoing war.
Upon his recovery, he was sent to a working unit in Munich and eventually ended up as a Prisoner of War.

Again fortunately, he was being held by the Americans and he managed to soon established contact with his home and former correspondence friends. Replies came from his wife in Reichenbach, from an esperantist in Sweden and in USA. And in a letter dated February 26th, 1946, he also received a reply from Forry Ackerman in Hollywood. The following letter Häußler wrote was in English, which Ackerman quoted in his fanzine VOM.

End of July 1946 Häußler returned to Reichenbach at age 34. But the political climate was casting a shadow over his communication with the world. As Forry wrote to him on November 21st, 1949: *"The limits of postal service makes it impossible for me to brighten your day with all the books I would love to send to you. Damn this lousy world!"* Germany had already been divided into the Federal Republic and the Democratic Republic.

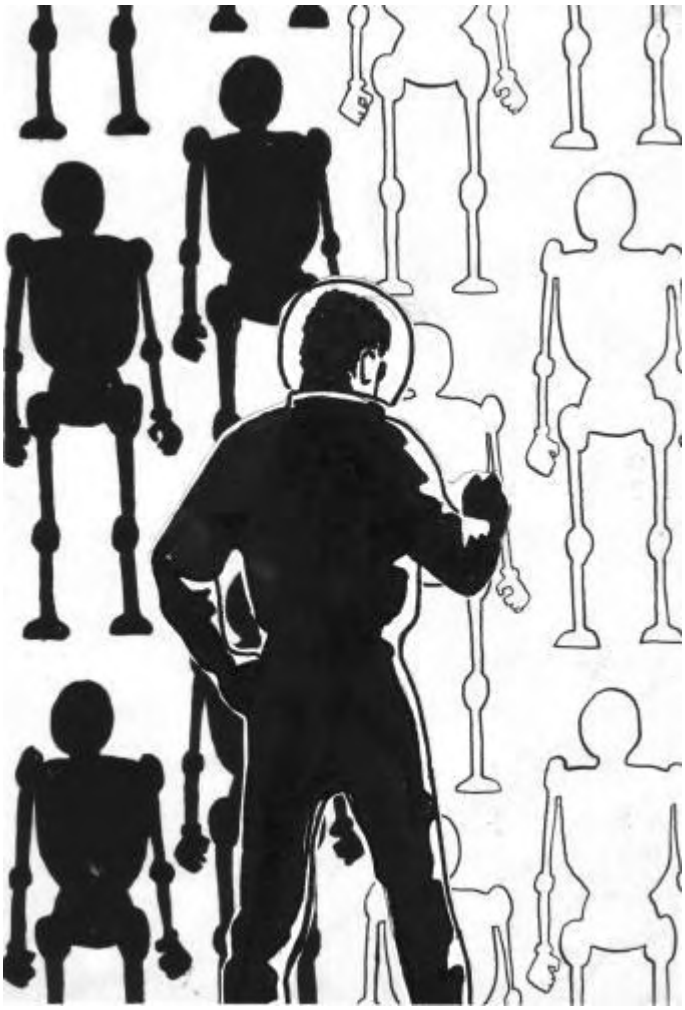


Illustration: Mario Kwiat

50's - the Beginnings

Herbert Häußler remained in touch with Forry Ackerman throughout the following decades, but it was not until after 22 years of friendship by mail, in 1957 that the two finally met for the first time. Forry had planned his trip to Europe in detail. "*I will arrive in Frankfurt am Main around noon on Friday 13th of Sept.*" Upon arrival Häußler awaited him on the platform. "*After 22 years, we finally met eye to eye. It was a moment I won't forget easily.*" he wrote. "*I had the luck and privilege to welcome him to Germany as first and only one for the particular occasion*.

From there, they went on to Bad Homburg together to attend the first SFCD-Convention (14-16 Sept).

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A man whose role in the Early Days hasn't been properly recognized by German fandom is Julian Parr. His story begins in England, before the war.



Julian Parr 1923 - 2003

The Stoke-on-Trent Science Fiction Club

Parr discovered fandom in 1936, at age 13 when he first purchased some American pulp-magazines on sale in his hometown Stoke-on-Trent in England. His arising passion for science fiction quickly exhausted available sf-literature at the local library. But the allowance he received in those days was insufficent to order any of the available new publications on mail order. An additional frustration was his limited ability to travel around in order to meet all the fans he had become acquainted with through fanzines.

So he formed the *Stoke-on-Trent Science Fiction Club* in the summer of 1939 and used a hectograph to produce flyers, which he then inserted between the pages of sf-magazines on offer in local shops. He assembled almost a dozen regular sf-readers, of which a few became actual fans.

With combined funds they bought new books. Julian alotted and exchanged them among the members, riding around on his bicycle on Saturday afternoons.

The club dissolved a few years after Julian entered the Royal Air Force in 1941. He remained however in fandom throughout the war by correspondence and fanzines, such as Forry Ackerman's VOM and Mike Rosenblum's FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST (available on eFanzines).

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Vince Clarke's Science Fantasy News No. 3, May-June 1949: *"Julian Parr, former Stoke-on-Trent actifan, now in the Control Commission, Germany, visited London when on leave and turned up at the White Horse, unfortunately rather too late to meet many fans."*

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After the war, in 1946, Julian Parr was working with the Control Commission in Düsseldorf. He became curious about German science fiction and began compiling a list of German sf and fantasy. Before going back to England he sent a copy of the list to Jakob Bleymehl in Saarland, who was the German contact for FANTASY TIMES. But Jakob was more of a bibliophile than an sf-fan. Between the spring of 1953 and until October 1954 he was back home in the UK.

When he returned to Germany in 1954, the situation had changed drastically. The UTOPIA GROSSBAND was on the market. Not exactly an sf-magazine like the English or American ones, but at least a regular one. Within a few weeks he wrote a letter to the publisher, PABEL VERLAG, who forwarded it to Walter Ernsting.

In it, he suggested them to add a letter column to the magazine which would help to build up an sf-fandom in the country. And Walter Ernsting replied from Bonn on the 14th of December, thanking him for his idea and suggested they should meet. The following months, they met several times, either in Julian Parr's new home in Cologne or in Walter Ernsting's home in Wahnerheide.

In these days the Psychological Institute at the University in Munich had phrased an opinion about UTOPIA, which they felt prudent to forward to a Federal bureau supervising publications which may misguide youth. This resulted in a formal complaint against UTOPIA and to an intervention by the Bavarian Interior ministry, attempting to cancel the publication of UTOPIA.

Ernsting and Parr mobilized their international contacts, which resulted in a massive defence for the publication and a letter from Forry Ackerman in which the benefits of SF as a genre were praised. The complaint against UTOPIA was withdrawn.

For early August of 1955, the American sf-pulp-writer Raymond Zinke Gallun planned a visit to Germany and on August 4th, Parr and Ernsting gathered with UTOPIA translator Walter Spiegl and Gallun in a Frankfurt am Main pub. And as many good things are more or less spontaneously inaugurated so did also this begin, not with champagne, but over pints of beer. It became the birth of the SCIENCE FICTION-CLUB DEUTSCHLAND.

Julian Parr was member # 2.

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Harry Warner writes in chapter 17 of A Wealth of Fable about the PARR VALUE: *"As the 50's were winding down, one tribute (in SIRIUS) to Parr said that he "made an essential contribution regarding the formation of German Fandom, and its foundation would have taken place years later without his active assistance and precious advice."*

Walter Ernsting 1920 - 2005

I have found very little about how and when Walter came in contact with science fiction, what initially caught his fascination, but it is clear that he had read most sf published in Germany until 1939. In 1940 he was drafted into the Wehrmacht shortly after the war began. Some fanzines in English language claim he had been at Stalingrad. This is incorrect.

He served in an intelligence unit and was moved across Poland, Norway and France until he ended up in the Baltic countries, where he became a prisoner of war. 1947 to 1952 he spent in a prison camp in Karaganda, Kazakhstan. Upon return to Germany in 1952, he started to work for the British authorities as a translator. Here he came in contact with Anglo-American sf magazines.

Intrigued with the genre, he started working on novels of his own, but Germany wasn't ready for native sf-authors. In 1954 he started working for the publisher Pabel, doing translations for UTOPIA GROSSBAND.

His first novel *UFO am Nachthimmel* (Tomorrow, the Future) got published, because he tricked the publisher. He invented the pseudonym Clark Darlton and he made up a ficticious original title and claimed his story was a translation of this chimerical author. It got published in 1955.

Over the course of his lifetime, Ernsting wrote more than 300 science fiction novels. Asteroid 15265, discovered in 1990, was named after Ernsting in 2003. (Wikipedia)

Erwin Scudla 1930 - 2005

Apparently, the first genuine crackpot (or fakefan) of German speaking fandom. Immediately after the war, the first fanzine in German language is launched in Austria. It was a young man by the name of Erwin, who published 20 issues of his fanzine WELTGESCHEHEN between 1946 and 1951. The name can be translated as *World Events*, so maybe it was not an entirely pure sf-fanzine. Scudla founded the *Utopia Club Austria* in 1946 and published it's club-magazine SIRIUS with 18 issues until 1957, when he renamed UCA to International Society for Science, Culture and Technology (ISST).

In 1953, the Science Fiction Club Austria was formed as a sub-section of UCA and renamed into International Science Fiction Society (ISFS).

Undoubtedly he was way ahead of Ernsting and every other German speaking sf-fan. He was the first to publish a fanzine in German language. He was also the first to start a club. There was only one big problem with Scudla. He was a real space man.

Wearing a remote resemblance to baseball player Eddie Klep, he must have made a perfectly normal impression in real life encounters. He was fond of languages and by 1959 he wrote quite well in English, French and Russian. But the world in his head didn't always correspond to the world outside. So he made the claim in Sirius # 1 / 1959, (available on efanzines.com) German speaking fandom had exceeded the 3000 mark. He also (according to Hagen Zboron) claimed his ISFS had more than 5000 members, among them 5 in Ghana. These may have been *slight* exaggerations, if I dare say so. But after the other crazy Austrian, I believe this guy was seriously aiming at a peaceful empire under a benign führer.



Anne Steul 1924 - 1989

First German SMOF. She ran to Walter Ernsting's grand tantrum on 14-15th of January 1956 the first German SF-Con in Wetzlar, aided by Ellis Mills (*American based in Germany, see his photo in Peter Weston's Prolapse # 7*) Jim and Gregory Benford. She was probably also the first fannish fan in Germany. A fandom which otherwise was deadly serious about its hobby. Anne appears to have been a sociable person, so she fitted better in international fandom than *at home*. She contributed to OMPA (*Off-trail Magazine Publishers' Association, a British APA*) before any German even had heard of an APA.

She would have been erased entirely from the history of German fandom, had not Rainer Eisfeld included a chapter about her in his book and unless Julian Parr had not reported about the Wetzon in ANDROMEDA # 3 (re-printed in issue # 115, *Recktenwald*).

She attended the London Circle's Cytricon II on March 30th-April 1st 1956, published also a fanzine in German language; FANTUM (1956) and was one of five German fans at the WorldCon in London 1957. At conventions abroad she was reported to have been hanging out with the Belgian fan, Jan Jansen. This reminds me of the observation I made at the Eurocons in Fiuggi, Zagreb and Stockholm. German fans don't hang out with other German fans. They just don't seem to like each other very much. Or... they get enough of each other *at home*.



I read somewhere... a statement by Bill Rotsler himself, that no fanzine may be published anywhere without a Rotsler cartoon in it. I hereby obey the edict (with colorized Rotslers).



Karl-Herbert Scheer 1928 - 1991

Co-creator of the Perry Rhodan-Series and sf-author. He founded in the turmoil around the SFCD another sf-club, STELLARIS on June 1st in 1958, which became a feud free zone for fans. Considering his writing, it was a tad ironic. Not undeservedly he was known in fandom as the handgrenade-Herbert. Plenty of war and destruction in his novels. In real life, his legacy was the opposite.

Willi Voltz 1938 - 1984

The work of young Willi became invaluable for the club STELLARIS. By 1961 he had already progressed to best fan-writer. By 1963 he had already become absorbed by the Perry Rhodan-writing-team.

Wolf Detlef Rohr 1928 - 1981

Science fiction author of the 50's, a colleague at Pabel and an even more seriously minded man than Walter Ernsting. Initially their interests converged about the SFCD, but Rohr aimed at a more commercial outlook, while Ernsting saw the value of idealism. In 1958 they went from friendship to antagonism in less than a year.

Rainer Eisfeld 1941-

Rainer Eisfeld from Bonn was one of those *Boy Wonder*, which I only have encountered in sf-fandom. Perhaps because sf-fandom doesn't discriminate. We care what is being said and not who is saying it. His astonishing eloquently spoken English at the Worldcon 1957 was according to himself the result of listening to records of Bill Haley, Elvis Presley, Little Richard and Chuck Berry. It's still remarkable. A lot of people were listening to Rock & Roll without understanding the lyrics. Not many start working as translators before they finish school either. But he did. He also edited 3 issues of SF-Hobby in 1959.

Swedish Fandom had their Boy Wonders in roughly 10 years interval. Sam Lundwall in the 50's, then John-Henri Holmberg in the 60's, Roger Sjölander late 70's and Mats Lignell in the late 80's. They were all in the first half of their teens as their fandom-adventure began. And they were all brilliant.

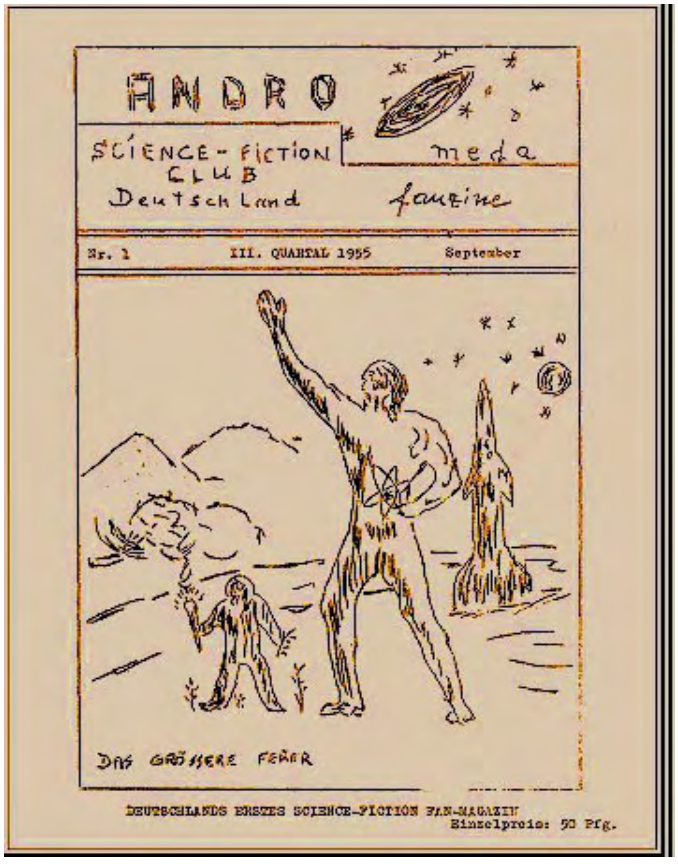
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IN THE WAKE OF UTOPIA

As sf-fandom in Germany was beginning to form, it was through the virtue of a letter column and readers contact forum in UTOPIA under the header *Meteoriten*. Walter Ernsting was hoping for a shower of letters, of which some, which would expect to have an impact, would be published in the magazine. The other letters, so he wrote in the first column, would also brighten up his night sky, just as meteors do as they burn up in the atmosphere.

The people with a sense of wonder were out there. And they started coming together, joining the young SF-Club Deutschland in the second half of 1955.
"Friends! This is the first issue of the first sf-fanzine of the first sf-club in Germany. It is altogether the first issue of a fanzine in German language."
With these words began the first 12 hectographed pages of issue # 1 of ANDROMEDA in september 1955.

He was probably unaware of Erwin Scudla, who was out there in the anonymous crowd of potential members.
But unlike Scudla's, the enterprises of Ernsting were still all alive and well, early in the following Millennium.
But Anne Steul was *not* impressed, and she didn't hurry to join the SFCD since she already had plenty of contact abroad.



The second issue of Andromeda was ready with 30 pages for Christmas the same year.

Around 1936-1938, the first sf-conventions were held in the UK and the USA. The first sf-convention in Australia was held on the 22nd of March in 1952 in Sydney. In August 1956, LunCon, the first Swedish sf-convention was held in Lund/southern Sweden, the weekend before the German convention Walter Ernsting invited to in Bayrisch-Zell. The Swedish convention would have been the first sf-convention not held on Anglo-Saxon soil, had it not been for Anne Steul, Ellis Mills and the Benford twins.

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Meanwhile in Wetzlar fannish enthusiasm was brewing plans for a historical event. Not that they knew it would be historical, they were hardly thinking along those lines. They just thought it might be fun to have a convention.
In and around Wetzlar lived four sf-fans at the time, which was a very high concentration, considering their coordinates in time and space.
The general attitude towards science fiction in these days can well be understood with a dialogue young Gregory Benford had with his father. He went to his dad and said; *"Dad, I know the military is a good, solid career, but I want to grow up and become a science fiction writer."*
His father shook his head sadly and replied*, "Sorry, son, but you can't do both."*
(*See Mimosa # 30, Gerfandom Days by Jim & Greg Benford, http://www.jophan.org/mimosa/*)

It wasn't easy being a sf-fan. The older one got, the less one was expected to be interested in that kind of *crazy ideas*. So, meeting other people with the same interest was not only fun, but it was infact a **need**.

Julian Parr reported from
WetzCon'56

(*previously published in ANDROMEDA # 3 and with a translation into German language in ANDROMEDA # 115*).
On Saturday afternoon, 14th of January 1956, a battered Volkswagen was winding its way up the Lahn valley, carrying a load of fanac. This was the "Rhine-Ruhr" contingent, which had snowballed along by train from Wattenscheid (Ernst Richter and wife) through Düsseldorf (me) and Siegburg, where we had transferred to Walter Ernsting's car. After Trude Ernsting had put her son onto a train bound for his grandmother, we drove out to the Autobahn and sped southwards, taking turns to spout the latest gossip and swig at my bottle of cheap brandy and Walter's awe-inspiring mixture of cherry brandy and Underberg "herb" bitters. Before we turned off the Autobahn at Limburg to follow the Lahn up into the hills we had eaten our sandwiches, cakes and oranges and thus discovered that we could well skip lunch... Outside we could see little; the refuse heaps of the ore mines looming out of the mist, the black waters of the icy Lahn, and the hoary trees of the Westerwald...
We were disgorged into the market place of Wetzlar. After stretching our cramped limbs and harnessing ourselves with scarves, hats, bags, flasks and other belongings, we staggered up the narrow Pfaffengasse to the Deutsches Haus hotel. Unfortunately, I did not discover until weeks later that this might well have been the very 'Lottehaus' or Lodge of the Teutonic Order which had been kept by Lotte's father. For us it was just another respectable and solid furnished, dark but clean and well tended German Gasthaus.



Wetzlar, Mühlgraben (Wikipedia) *Photo: Andreas Praefcke*

The owner or manager welcomed us and displayed a pencilled list he had been given by Anne Steul: Rooms had been reserved for all except me! This led to some witty comment from the others, who theorized that I was due to stay at Anne's place (she had written me way back in May that *in an emergency* she could put five people up), and someone gave me a dig in the ribs to see if I wasn't after all some kind of *wooden horse*. While the others were unpacking in their rooms I telephoned Anne from the bar (I'd ordered a fine foaming bheer as soon as we arrived); in the receiver I could just discern Anne's voice above roars of laughter; "We'll be down in an hour or so." Asked where I was supposed to be staying. She hesitated and finally told me to take Ellis Mill's room. I hardly knew whether to feel relieved or offended...

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Note, the word bheer spelled with an extra "h" to signify the divine nature of the beverage. The "h" indicates that the reference is to fannish deities. In Gerfany the most revered fannish deity was Ghu.

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The five of us met again at a large round table in a corner of the dining room. We rubbed our hands and licked our lips and ordered food, hot FOOD! - and a round of drinks of course. Suddenly two persons appeared round the open door and stood gazing at us. The man was very smartly dressed in a black suit, dark blue shirt and silvergrey tie; he had dark hair and clear-cut, handsome features and wore heavy horn-rim spectacles. With suave courtesy he introduced himself: Wolf Detlef Rohr. His companion was Fräulein Fröhlich, a pretty young lady whose name kept evading me during the weekend and whose role and background still escape my memory. We ordered another round and began to listen to Wolf's account of his hazardous dealings with Erich Pabel. His voice died away as he saw that we were all looking past him towards the door where a group of people stood.
I'm afraid my immediate impression was a stage version of a radical political meeting! Anne Steul wore very little or no make-up, her hair was cut short, and her imposing figure was clad in a tightly-belted trenchcoat buttoned up to the neck. Behind her, like uniformed bodyguards, stood the Benford twins: tall, slim bespectacled, with

Teutonic crew-cut hair and identical dress: dark trousers and bright green tunic shirts! Rather taken aback I turned to the other two arrivals, Ellis Mills was medium size, a sturdy figure, wearing a comfortable looking sport-jacket. He seemed younger than his reputed 25 years. Jan Jansen was tall and thin, with rimless glasses and light lank hair, which he had to brush out of his field of vision at times. Both were grinning widely. The spell was broken and the room was soon full of noise as the introductions began. More drinks were ordered.



Illustration: Mario Kwiat

When I look back on the WetzCon I believe I can see an imponderable fate operating to keep the groups separate from the beginning, although there was certainly no trace of conscious Apartheid. We had the dining room to ourselves, the waiter set a row of small tables together to form a long one, where Anne and her coterie sat and conversed in American-English - that is, all except Jan. How I enjoyed his disarming voice. The rich, genuine English accents made me quite homesick after eighteen months in Germany! For our part we (how distressing to have to use this *we* here!) remained at our table, where the meal was now being served, and continued to speak German. After eating we moved over to the main table. The waiter brought me another bheer. As all the Gerfen could speak some English I suggested that the two groups intermingle, but no action was taken, so that they occupied the two ends of the long table and only the fans in the middle could get to know each other. (As usual, I was one of these "fringe" fans!)

Anne remained at the head of the table far away from us. With the arrival of Walt Spiegl, a youngster of twenty-one, dressed to perfection and very good-looking (in envy I nicknamed him "Pretty-Boy" Spiegl, but in this account he shall be "Walt" to distinguish him from Walter Ernsting), together with Heinz Bingenheimer, a bluff and hearty ex-sailor, the SFCD executive was almost complete. Only Rose Ebert and Dieter Reiss were unable to attend. A little later a young man was shown in and looked around appealingly. He was taken in hand and then introduced as Guntram Ohmacht - surely the real hero of the con, for he had travelled all the way from Hannover to attend, the only SFCD neofan who had responded to the call in "Andro". The last to arrive were two Wetzlar youngsters of about fifteen, who were shown in by the waiter and shyly seated themselves at a distant table. It was now that Anne's puzzling inadequacy as a con hostess became really evident: she refused to go over and welcome the kids (who had turned up in response to her slide announcement in the local cinema) but asked Greg Benford to do this. Poor Greg was at loss, for his German wasn't up to the task; Anne then suggested that I go with him to interpret! This lack of resourcefulness manifested itself more than once during the weekend and I'm still puzzled by it. The forceful personality Anne had displayed in her letters and in FanANNia had led me to expect her to dominate the scene, and in fact I had even steeled myself to resist any attempt to sweep us off our feet! But rather than being carried away, we were left to drift too much... In all fairness, it may have been Anne's effort to avoid treading on anyone's toes which made her so passive; we ourselves, knowing how touchy she could be, were leaning over backwards to avoid interfering in her con arrangements.

It was obvious that no more guests could be expected, and Anne disappeared upstairs. While waiting her call the twins unloaded hundred of tiny slips of paper and passed them round the table. Ernst Richter, a most upright Gerfan, studied the quote-cards very seriously and asked what he was supposed to do with them. "They are too small for *that*!" cried Walter. Amazed at this quantity, I asked the twins if the programme for Sunday included a paperchase. "You ain't seen nuttin'" said Greg. "We run off 500 invitations to the Wetzcon!"

I still can't imagine where 300 of these went to. We were all chattering away like madmen: I sat both next to and opposite a Benford twin, and soon found them in my hair, for their conversational style was based on a series of friendly insults. As befits fannish characters they showed a complete lack of respect for me, a fossilized remnant of Second Fandom, so that I was forced to counter-attack, forsaking my polite and dignified British reserve, with such weapons as nicknames ("Gin" and "Dregs" Benford, for instance) and scorn at their drinking so little Cola after their violent campaign on behalf of this their national drink.

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Please, note that Julian Parr himself is age 33 as he writes about himself as a fossilized remnant. At the time, it must have been difficult to imagine a fan in fandom for 40-50 years, or more. Science fiction-fandom itself had not yet existed for such a long time.

At first I kept confusing the two, but by the end of the con I could distinguish Jim, not from his appearance but because I sensed bitterness behind his insults; furthermore, Greg was the more self-possessed of the two - although both were shockingly nervous.

I suspect that the rigorous demands of fanac are too much for youngsters still at school - and the con itself was no doubt a strain, for they put up a very good show among us adults. They played their parts well: and kept stiff upper lips a Limey could envy! On the other hand I could not help shaking my head over their astonishing height for fourteen years; and when I heard Jim complain to Greg about pains in his knees I almost felt ready to believe that old misnomer "growing pains".

At about half-past-eight Anne called us upstairs to the meeting room. On the stairs and in the corridors we found cardboard arrows pointing "To the SF Exhibition". These had been put up by a local bookseller who had laid out a small display of books for sale, and Anne passed strong hints that we should spend as much as we could spare in appreciation of the trouble he had gone to. Anne's own collection, which seemed to contain only American and British promags, was also on display, and I earned her reproachful smile by trying to buy part of it. I dug up a few marks for some British promags which served to illustrate the talk I was about to give on "SF in England" (sorry, you others, but in Germany no one speaks of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). The Benfords must have got rid of a mound of marks, for I saw them wandering about afterwards with their arms full of mags and pb's. Another commercial venture launched at this stage of the proceedings was Anne's "Fantum", a new fanzine in German, at 70 pfennigs each.

In the adjoining room there were two long tables down the length of the room; at the head was a small table, where Greg and I settled in to give our talks, Anne once again abdicated and took her seat at the head of one of the long tables, accompanied by Jim, Jan and Ellis, and the Wetzlar youngfen; the SFCD delegation took over the other table. My talk was tendentious, I suppose, in that I tried to draw parallels between the trials and errors in the past developement of fandom and pro SF in the UK and the problems which still face Germany. Then Greg read a carefully prepared account of SF in the USA in halting but curageous German. I thought I could detect a Steulish influence not only in his classic German but also in his statement that the disapproval of the fans had forced American pro-editors to refrain from overstressing the science component in SF. I was itching to tackle this confusion between *fans* and *readers* in the open discussion which I thought would follow, but despite my efforts to dissuade her, Anne insisted on playing back a recording of Willi Ley's address to the CleveCon - a talk of forty minutes in length! We listened to the opening sentences, which revealed both Ley's sense of humour and his noticeable German accent, but soon we fell into whispering groups of fans anxious to get acquainted, for it was already ten o'clock and as far as we knew the only item on Sunday's programme was a visit to the cinema.

Every now and then the waiter appeared with a new tray of bheers...

I was with the twins, Ellis and Jan. Ellis was a quiet, pleasant fan, who was at his best when he forgot that he was supposed to act like a *fannish f*an. Jan, the doyen of Continental Fandom, was still pale and drawn after his wearisome overnight journey in a *Slow Train to Wetzlar*.

The two of them tried to explain to me how the *Explorer* was somehow quite different from other fanzines; and they astonished me with their plans to take over and reform the ISFCC. This sercon missionary spirit seemed to me most unfitting for two who profess and call themselves *fannish* fans. We had our heads together like conspirators, but my eyes kept returning to the painful gap between the two long tables. As yet, although both Anne and Walter had been on their best behaviour and had exchanged the usual pleasantries, there had been no real personal contact between them, and as time passed the prospects of a remarche towards cooperation grew fainter. I had fears that the con might fizzle out without even a whimper, an appalling prospect. I could see that by this time Anne herself was no longer listening to the Ley address but had her head down among the jungfen, so I plucked up courage and asked for the recording to be switched off and the tables brought together to form a rough triangle. We rang for more drinks. But it was already nearly eleven, and Anne and the others prepared to leave. With Jan's support I persuaded her to meet us again at the hotel on the following afternoon for a heart-to-heart talk before our departure. Then we hotel guests continued to talk and drink and eat sausages until the manager came in at about 2 am to hint that we break up the party...



Illustration Mario Kwiat

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An explanation for the tensions between Anne Steul and Walter Ernsting is given in ZUKUNFT IN DER TASCHE, where it becomes clear that she wasn't above challenging his authority. (W)

My bed was the usual German contraption with a three piece mattress and at the head the notorious hard wedge matress, which I immediately flung into a corner. The only covering was a *Federbett* (known back in the Rhineland as a *Plümeau*) - a ridiculous linen sack full of feathers, which is supposed to leave only the sleeper's head uncovered. In fact the average Englishman find either his feet or his chest protruding (do all Germans revert to the foetal position in sleep?), and each time he turns over a draught of cold air finds it way under the sack. I could not get to sleep; what with the bed, my excitement, my bheer-logged system, and the confused mumblings and outbursts of songs from tipsy revellers who were still to be heard stumbling along the cobbled Pfaffengasse - despite Anne's parting shot that we should not expect to find any night life in Wetzlar...



Illustration Mario Kwiat

The next morning I felt wreck for a minute or two, but soon recovered my good spirits and jumped out of bed, eager to meet whatever the day had in store for me. My first shock was when Walt Spiegl accepted my joking offer of a cognac - before breakfast, too! My stomach curled up and died inside me. Downstairs, as we waited for breakfast, I brought Walter Ernsting and the twins together in an attempt to encourage fraternisation. A discussion arose on Anne's references to "filthy pro's" and "dirty old pro's" running the SFCD. At first Greg suggested that anyone who earned money from SF was a pro, but I pointed out that Anne herself was paid for translating SF (one of her translations was published in the Utopia series, and her public complaint that Pabel and Ernsting had not paid for this - in fact her agent had not forwarded the money - had been the start of the feud.) Walter was the only full time pro in the SFCD executive. His wife had a full-time job in an office, Ernst Richter is an official in the court administration, Walt Spiegl works for the American Express in Frankfurt, and Heinz Bingenheimer seems to be a commercial agent.

We tried to explain to Greg that the only real distinction between full-time and part-time pro's (and thus between Walter and Anne) could only be the measure of their success at writing or translating... SF... Greg shrugged his shoulders. Poor Walter! Still puzzled by his frequent references to *fannish* fandom in VOID he asked Greg what kind of SF he chose to read, then. "What, me?" said Greg, shocked. "I don't read *science fiction*!" Walter's eyes rolled upwards as he tried to work that one out...

After breakfast we wandered through the streets of old Wetzlar towards the cinema. This was our only real glimpse of the town. We passed below the cathedral, a confused pile of masonry, hemmed in by houses which prevented one from seeing it at the distance which might have lent it harmony. We crossed the Lahn and met Anne, Jan and Ellis outside the cinema. We were all astonished to find the cinema almost full, for the attendance at these Sunday matinees (at 11 am) is usually poor. The manager was overwhelmed. We were given the best seats in the house: double snogging seats at the back. During the short documentary on Turkey, prior to the main feature, Walt Spiegl came out with his description of the con till now: "A Thousand and Last Night." Then, specially booked for the con, the dubbed version of "The War of the Worlds". It was only during this film that we realised how closely Wolf Detlef Rohr resembled the young scientist in it...



As had been planned, Anne slipped down to the front at the end of the film and invited all who were interested to stay behind for a short discussion. Although her voice did not carry through the whole auditorium about thirty remained behind besides ourselves. Anne introduced Walter Ernsting and then disappeared to the back seats. Walter gave a rather flowery description of the developement of UTOPIA and the SFCD, but soon got involved in a discussion with a loud-mouthed heckler with a broad Berlin accent. Heinz Bingenheimer rescued the situation by subduing the Berliner with tolerant and quiet common-sense explanations of our interest in SF as a hobby. At this point Anne passed down a note asking that an open invitation to the hotel that afternoon be announced.

The result was, of course, that although only about four youngsters turned up, their presence made a free-for-all discussion all the more difficult. Walter took the teen-agers under his wing and discussed space travel with them, while Anne Steul began a heated conversation with Trude Ernsting and Heinz. We non-Gerfans watched this scene in the dining room; I with mixed feelings, for by observing the expression on Anne's face I could see that no progress was being made. I could

see Ernst Richter getting redder in the face, although he bravely refrained from making any comment.
As the time for our departure drew near I couldn't resist wandering over to the disputants and letting off a little steam about Anne's choosing this of all occasions to bring the feud with Walter *onto the streets*.
I gathered that although Heinz had offered a) to allow her three pages in each issue of "Andro", for her to use as she liked, or b) to distribute her "Fantum" for her in return for her cooperation in the SFCD, she had stated categorically that she couldn't work together with a man like Ernsting. "If I were to publish my correspondence with him..." she said loudly, and Walter overheard her and challenged her to do it. When she brought up her old charges about pro's running the SFCD I asked her point-blank whether she really believed that the seven club officials could make money out of the club or its fanzine - and pointed out to her that her "Fantum" cost more than "Andro". It was no use, and we began to don our costs and prepare to leave. Heinz did get Anne to agree to think over his offers again. For my part I couldn't help expressing my disappointment as I took my leave of Anne. Perhaps this was unfair, for maybe it was my own exaggerated hope that was at fault. I was really deeply disturbed by the confusion, unhappy frustration and uncalled-for enmity among these founders of Gerfandom. It was only later that I began to appreciate again the privilege of sharing with them the pangs of birth...
It was already dark as three cars swung out of Wetzlar and followed the Lahn as far as Weiburg. There we stopped for coffee and a final review of our plans for the future. Then we separated: Wolf and Fräulein Fröhlich to destinations unknown; Heinz, Walt and Ellis to Frankfurt, and the "Rhine-Ruhr" party squeezed together for warmth in the Volkswagen and headed for home.

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COUNTERCLOCK: Walter Ernsting had not yet turned 35 (born June 13th), Parr and Bingenheimer were 31 and Anne Steul was just about to turn 31, apart from Ernst Richter who was in his 50's, these were the people who were supposed to be *older and wiser*. It appears that Anne never was a neo in German fandom. Her international contacts clearly went further back. Perhaps it was a thorn in her side, that *a man like* Ernsting should come along and introduce Germany to the phenomenon of sf-fandom, when she already had invested so much time and effort in it. Here came a *filthy ol' pro* and took what she may have felt was *hers* and gave it to everyone.
Walter Ernsting had a plan, and he knew he had the better hand, so there was no need for him to quarrel. Besides, five years Karaganda (among other things) had taught him not to speak to soon. When he fired his verbal projectiles, he needed not to worry about the recoil.
It surprised me, that he had any adversaries at all. By the time I got to know him, he had already accomplished his goals, so I only knew him as a very friendly and generous man. He loved the sf-fans, and they loved him back.
But then again, I never really pondered much upon the nature of German fans before. When they started quarreling I just kept my distance and, like Julian Parr, preferred to indulge in a cool foaming pint of bheer. What is missing here, in this picture? Gerfans don't seem to trust each other very much, do they? Me, I rather trust until proven wrong. In sf-fandom, my friends, don't we all pursue the same goal, the future? *(Wolf)*

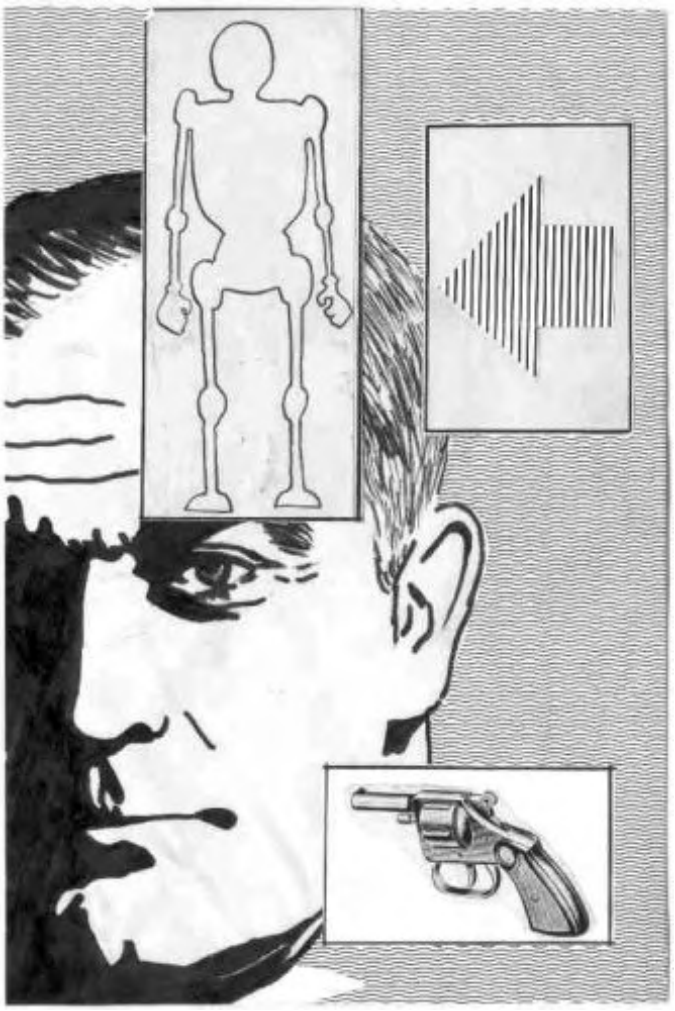


Illustration Mario Kwiat

DEUTSCHER SCIENCE FICTION KONVENT
bei Bayrisch-Zell 1-2 September 1956

Held on the weekend after the first Swedish convention was held in Lund of southern Sweden. This more proper convention gathered 57 fans. More than twice as many as the WetzCon.
It was at this occasion when Rainer Eisfeld happened to encounter Walter Ernsting which resulted in Walter enlisting Eisfeld as a translator, at age barely 15.

ANDROMEDA in the 50's saw six further issues in a copycount steadily increasing from 400 to 625 during the year, rising to 800 in 1957 by which time Ernsting's time as a faned was entering its first drought after issue # 13. The issue # 14 came after another year. He produced another 2 issues of the fanzine in February and May of 1959 before he handed over the editorship of the club-fanzine to Gottlieb Mährlein. By then he had produced 610 pages of the fanzine. Not bad for a *filthy ol' pro*.
Being the club magazine of the SFCD, Mährlein and his successors had the weight on their shoulders to produce the *flagship* among German fanzines. The standard against which all other fanzines would be measured.
I feel, considering the competition there always have been in Gerfany, they did well. It wasn't always the BEST fanzine of the year, but it was always good quality by Gerfan standard. As flagship it maintained its position well into the 80's.

MUNICH ROUND UP

Among the most significant fanzines to emerge in the 50's was MUNICH ROUND UP (MRU), for many years edited by Waldemar Kumming and other members of the SFCD city group of Munich. In 1997 the issue # 166 saw the light of day and since then, in the new Millennium we also could enjoy the # 167, but Waldemar Kumming's faltering health makes the production of further issues now most insecure.
MRU distinguished itself from most other German fanzines by its use of satire and humour. Too many fans were dead serious and sercon about everything.

THE BIRTH OF TRANSGALAXIS

Initially within the bounds of the SFCD, but due to the concept that no one shall make a profit from sf-fandom, Heinz Bingenheimer who handled the book-club was under suspicion of making himself money with it and saw himself foreshadowed with an expulsion from the club. He preempted the decision by announcing his departure from the SFCD by the end of the year 1957.
Instead he founded the sf-book-club TRANSGALAXIS which became a highly successful business-venture long after the splitting off from the SFCD and long after his unexpected death in 1964. His son Rolf continued the business.

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In the Swedish parallel universe, SFSF which wasn't founded until 1960 also acquired a sf-book-club in 1976. This book-club didn't separate from the club until 1990, when it was taken over by a group of active sf-fans and turned into one of Sweden's most succesful bookshops, specialized on sf , horror and fantasy. >>SF-Bokhandeln<<

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From London to Bad Homburg in 1957

It was expected of Julian Parr to represent the SFCD at the first WorldCon in London but professionally the call of duty shattered these plans. Instead Walter Ernsting appointed Rainer Eisfeld to speak for the SFCD.



Peter Reaney, Lars Helander from Sweden (standing) with his hand on the shoulder of Bill Harry and Thomas R.P.Mielke (standing) behind who (?) in London 1957. Photo: unknown

Rainer Eisfeld stunned the sf-world with his speech and was predicted a grand future in sf-fandom by Mr Fandom himself, Forry Ackerman, who was profoundly touched.
Walt Willis wrote: "*Between these two speeches there were short informal addresses by John Brunner, Forry Ackerman, Lars Helander of Sweden, and Rainer Eisfeld of, Germany. All were excellent, but Rainer Eisfeld registered a remarkable personal success, the sensation of the convention so far. This 16 year old boy, speaking in a strange language in a country he was visiting for the first time, spoke so fluently, interestingly and sincerely that in fact he received a louder ovation than any of his predecessors, even Campbell himself.*"
And Ron Bennett in Mimosa # 30: "*Eisfeld brought a gasp of astonishment from his audience when he spoke of The Science Fiction Club Deutschland having a thousand members." (*Amusing details behind this are being revealed in ZUKUNFT IN DER TASCHE).

Needless to say, Julian Parr could not have done it any better. Unfortunately the climate in Gerfany was not of the sort which would let a fan like Rainer Eisfeld thrive.

Among the 268 members at the 15th World SF Convention were 5 Germans. Rainer Eisfeld, Anne Steul and Thomas RP Mielke are confirmed. Who else was there?

Veteran fans from all over the world, I would like to invite you to look at the Norman Shorrock-collection at:
http://efanzines.com/1957WorldCon/
...and help to identify yet not identified people. Also at:
http://fanac.org/worldcon/Loncon/w57-p00.html



The following weekend it was time for the convention in Bad Homburg.
Forry Ackerman comes to Gerfany and is greeted by his old friend Herbert Häußler on the platform of the train in Frankfurt am Main. Together they arrive in Homburg.
Rainer Eisfeld delivers a report on the essentials of the first official SFCD-Convention in chapter XIV of his book.

SHARDS OF FANDOM 58-59

The year 1958 was another year of disgruntlement. The Feud between Wolf Detlef Rohr and Walter Ernsting got worse than anything seen before. An immediate effect was the splitting off by K-H Scheer who founded the STELLARIS SFI.
Rohr had the SFCD renamed into SFCE (for Europe) and Walter Ernsting founded SF Union of Europe as a direct successor to the SFCD. An inspiration to these megalomaniac ambitions might have been Erwin Scudla and his ISFS.
The Brits were getting rightfully *confused*:
In the lettercolumn of TRIODE 16 (August '59) the strange affair of the ISFS came to a head. The International Science Fiction Society was set up in 1958 in order to improve links between the various national fandoms. Organised primarily by German-speaking fans it grew out of an Austrian group called the Utopia Club and was intended as an international fan centre and clearing house. However, since it was weakest where fandom was strongest, ie. the English-speaking nations, its ambitions in this regard were obviously hampered. Eric Bentcliffe had already arranged loose links between the BSFA and a continental group called Science Fiction Club Europa during his time as BSFA Chairman, so Erwin Scudla, a mainstay of the ISFS, approached him about similar links between the BSFA and ISFS. Bentcliffe discussed this with Doc Weir, his successor, who had friends in Vienna check the society out. They reported that it was receiving funds from the International Society for Science and Technology, an outfit they claimed was a Communist-front organisation. Scudla admitted that, technically, the ISFS was a branch of the ISST but denied that either had anything to do with Communism. He was particularly incensed with Bentcliffe for running a piece on this in TRIODE because in these Cold War days such rumours could put Western members in danger of losing their jobs, and on the other side of the Iron Curtain might cause the authorities to suspect the two organisations were linked with American espionage, which would obviously be extremely dangerous for their members there. Inevitably, the idea of a link with the BSFA died amid the recriminations. The American LASFS group had affiliated with the ISST but they too had second thoughts after the revelations in TRIODE.

SKYRACK # 5 dated 28th July 1959:
RAINER EISFELD, who will be remembered for his oustanding speech at the London World Convention two years ago, writes to give notice that the Science Fiction Club Europa will sponsor what is described as the "first European convention" at the Weisser Wind Hotel, Zurich on August 22/23. Notwithstanding the fact that the 1952 London Convention at the Royal was also similarly labelled - I remember that PLANEET editor Nic Oosterbaan attended - this SFCE project sounds worthwhile of support and it is hoped that any British fans who might be holidaying on the Continent will attend the convention. Whilst the main language spoken at formal sessions will be German, it will be a three language convention. A French delegation, beaded by Pierre Versin has already agreed to attend.

And SKYRACK # 7, dated 9th September 1959 reports:
THE FIRST EUROPEAN SF CONVENTION was held in Zurich August 22/23 and is reported as having been a resounding success. Covered by radio, press and news reel cameramen from Switzerland and Germany the convention boasted an attendance of 130 with representatives from Germany, Switzerland, Portugal and France. Guest of Honour was German author Freder van Holk who lectured on Research and. Fiction. Amongst other speakers was Pierre Versins who spoke on French science-fiction. Karl-Herbert Scheer was awarded a Hugo for his novel, Octavian III and awards were also made to other German writers and to the makers of Forbidden. Planet, The War of the Worlds, This Island Earth arid The Fly.



Models from an exhibition at early Gerfan convention.

At the time, German fans had contact with French fans through Pierre Versin, Jacqueline Osterath and others. The Swedish fan Sture Sedolin had plenty of contacts with both British and German fandom. And with Erwin Scudla in Austria. It was a popular, but somewhat naïve idea, that if one had a member in another country, one could immediately add the entire country to its domain.

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When Eurosmof was started (in 1997) Bjørn Tore Sund once said something I always kept in mind ever since. *"We have to remember that it is people we are dealing with, not countries."*

CLOAK AND DAGGER FANAC

The first Eurocon in Zürich was run by W.D.Rohr and with no one knowing, Walter Ernsting was also there, disguised with a fake beard. In secret meetings in hotel rooms, he enlightened Pierre Versin and others, what Rohr's real plan was, to start a commercial book-club.
Successful in his mission, Ernsting presented this real life cloak and dagger mission at the second SFCD-Con in Unterwössen the following weekend.
Now...
Thomas R.P.Mielke has received some criticism for claiming that he had been at the worldcon in London. Not only this, but he claims to have been there with Walter Ernsting and Jacqueline Osterrath. Rainer Eisfeld didn't see them.



This photo is one of the few pieces of evidence Mielke could present for his participation in London 1957.

Mielke is not feebleminded, nor does he have any reason to make up his story. Checking out this picture against the Norman Shorrock-collection confirms that it is he who is sitting between Dave and Ruth Kyle, with Alan Whicker lighting a cigarette next to Mrs Kyle.
The painting from the exhibition had been relocated to improve the scenery for the BBC interview.

Memory can be deceitful and of course it is possible that Mielke has mixed up his memory with the one week later following convention in Bad Homburg. Because what reason could Walter Ernsting have had, to run another (actually his first, if it was so) cloak & dagger operation in London? Normally I would have dismissed such a theory, but the passage about Walter Ernsting's secret mission to Zürich, which is accounted for in Rolf Heuter's history of the SFCD, makes me wonder. He was not above these kind of actions. A newspaper article from 1957 presented to me by Rainer Eisfeld confirms: There were 5 Germans at the Worldcon.

In London, Dave Newman shaved off half his moustache and later on the rest. Was he giving us a hint?

Jacqueline Osterrath, the French translator of Perry Rhodan and editor of the fanzine Lunatique never mentioned having been in London 1957. Not being mentioned and staying out of the view of the camera is however no evidence against. We just have to see if the mystery ever will be completely solved.

60's - When SFCD was all of Fandom

Gerfany enters the 60's deeply split. Every prominent person had his own club. Walter Ernsting and Wolf Detlef Rohr were feuding about whose SFCD should be acknowledged as the real one, both SFCD's subsections of their grand European plans. Meanwhile KH Scheer's STELLARIS SFI seemed to attract all the fans and their fanac. The issue was finally settled in court.
Walter Ernsting won.

Wolf Detlef Rohr lost all interest in sf-fandom and vanished. Julian Parr had already declared his dislike for the absurd feuding. As a consequence he withdrew from German fandom-politics to a point of observation. On a local level he continued within the Düsseldorf-Duisburg group of the SFCD and developed it together with Jürgen Molthof and Rolf Gindorf to one of the most progressive and important city groups of the SFCD. Rainer Eisfeld turned his attention to mundane studies and became a professor in political science.

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Ron Bennett's SKYRACK # 32, 1st May 1961, *"Gerfan editor of SPACE TIMES, 21 yr old Jürgen Molthof killed in car accident 13th March. Great loss to German fandom."*

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The first German APA - FAN (Futurian Amateur News), modelled after OMPA and FAPA was launched in 1960 from Vienna by Burkhart Blüm. It was followed by RAPE (Ring of Amateur Publishing and Erudition), which was based on elitist ideals with a hierarchical structure. Behind it, two fans who split off from FAN, Rolf Gindorf and Burkhart Blüm.

K-H Scheer and Walter Ernsting made peace with each other and launched the Perry Rhodan-series in 1961. The joint venture turned out a resounding success and the leadership of the SFCD was handed over to a widely non-controversial fan from Munich; Waldemar Kumming.

Waldemar Kumming was made chairman of STELLARIS in June and of the SFCD in August of 1962. Within a year the two clubs were merged into one. Or... to be more accurate, the SSFI was simply absorbed, because all club-publications remained SFCD's and the SSFI-publications are completely omitted in the history of the SFCD.
The reign of Waldemar Kumming lasted six years, until August 1968 and was relatively peaceful.

Instead of clobbering each other, all evil eyes were now turned on the highly successful Perry Rhodan-series.

Started in 1961 and appearing with a new issue every week, Rhodan went from the moonlanding in 1971 (this was conceived before JFK made his promise to reach the moon before the end of the decade), where they discovered the crash landed spherical spacecraft of the Arkonides (who were degenerated because they rather would sit in front of their computer-games than work), to reach out for the neighbouring galaxy Andromeda in 1965, to the sombrero galaxy M-87 in 1967 and beyond.
One has to salute both Scheer and Ernsting for their prophetic accuracy. Not about the moonlanding, but about the Arkonides. It's us. Now!

SF CLUB OF LONDON VISITOR'S BOOK - 27 Apr 62
Thea Grade, Rolf C Gindorf, Wolfgang Thadewald,
Horst W Margeit, Guntram Ohmacht, Tom Schlück
Guestbook covers May 61 to Mar 67
The above German delegation were acquainting themselves with Brit fandom after visiting Ronvention, the 1962 Eastercon at Harrogate.

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The German Fan-Poll:

The Fan-Poll running from 1961 to 1974 was one of the few German installations in which fannish work was acknowledged.

1961 **Rolf Gindorf** best fan-writer "essay"
Mario Kwiat best fan-artist 1961, 1965, 1967
Jürgen Nowak best sf-critic
SOL best fanzine
Willi Voltz best fan-writer

1962 **Arnulf Krauss** best fan-writer "essay"
Helmut Mommers best fan-artist (aka AROL) 1962-64
Jürgen vom Scheidt best fan-critic 1962-1965
PIONEER best Fanzine 1962-1964
Helmut Mommers best fan-writer

1963 **Eduard Lukschandl** best fan-writer "essay"
Wolfgang Jeschke best fan-writer
Siegfried Raguse best oneshot (ANABIS-Special)

1964 **Helmut Mommers** best Oneshot (Pseudonymkey)
Hubert Straßl best fan-writer 1964-65
Hubert Straßl & Franz Schwabeneder
best fan-writers "essay"

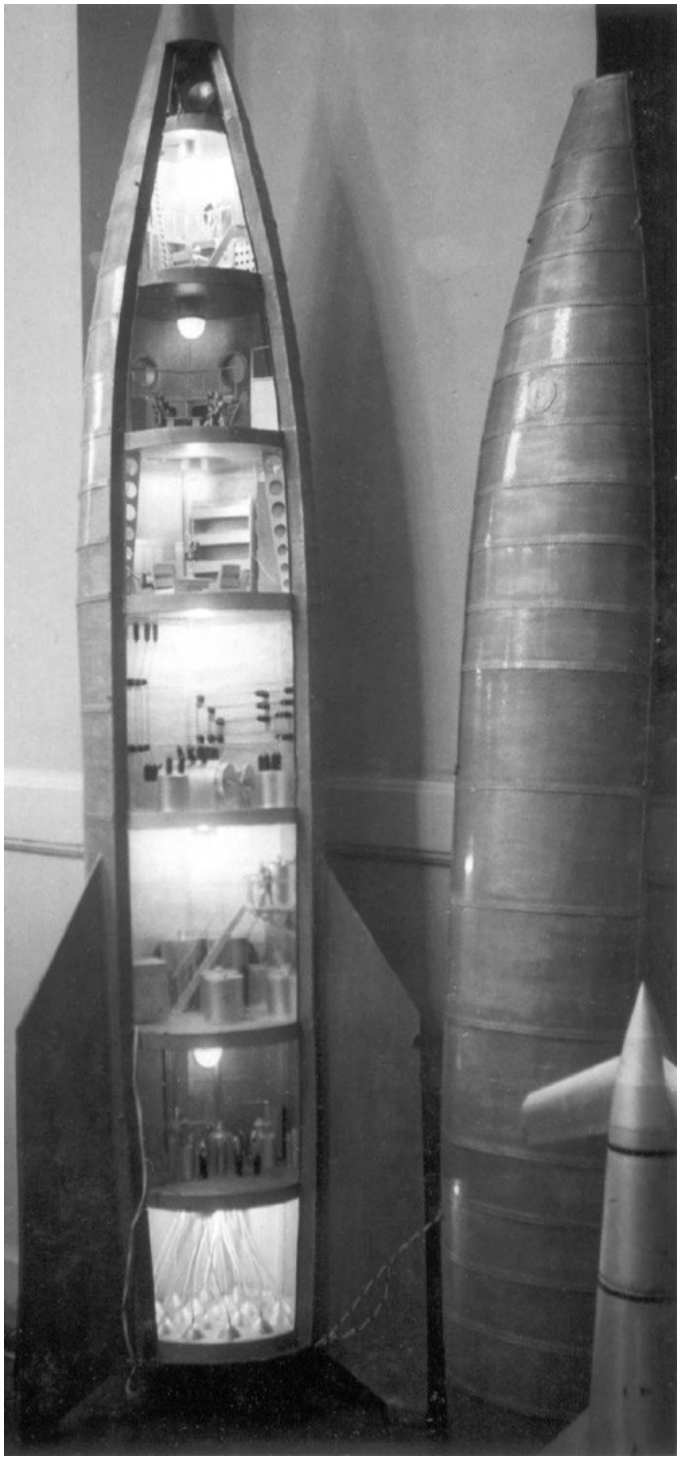
1965 **Waldemar Kumming** best essay
Mario Kwiat best fan-artist
MUNICH ROUND UP (MRU) best fanzine 1965-66
Raimund Schui best oneshot (4 Fantasy-Stories)

1966 **CON-HEFT** 1965 + **FANOPTIKUM** best oneshot
MUTANT & MRU best fanzines
Heinz Rehwald & **Ernst Vlcek** best fan-artist
Franz Rottensteiner best fan-critic 1966-67

1967 **ANABIS** best fanzine 1967-68
Mario Kwiat best fan-artist
Franz Rottensteiner best fan-writer "essay"
Walt Willis best One-Shot

1968 **Peter Krüger** best fan-artist
MUTANT-special, best oneshot: "**Weird Fiction**"
Franz Rottensteiner best fan-writer

1969 **Hans-Joachim Alpers** bester fan-critic
ANDROMEDA best fanzine (ed: Hans Langsteiner)
Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig best fan-artist
Gerhard Gadow best oneshot: "Erinnerungen an die Wirklichkeit" (SLAN-Nachrichten - Sonderdruck_2
Gerd Maximovic' best fan-writer "short stories"
Franz Rottensteiner best fan-writer "essay"



This amazing rocket-model was on display at a German sf-convention in the late 50's or early 60's. Note the detailed workmanship. Building model spaceships is a popular hobby in Germany and in the 21st century one can marvel at todays equivalents at the DARMSTADT SPACE DAYS.

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THE SHOE SCANDAL (1963-64)

A true story told by William Voltz (1980),
told in honour of Walter Ernsting to his 60th birthday.
In a time when I was a fresh addition to the team of authors at Moewig and needed the encouragement of my seasoned colleagues, Walter Ernsting took me under his wing in a peculiar fashion - he seduced me to commit a criminal offence. Because the entire affair by now has been dropped and lies well over a decade in the past, I

have the courage to come forward and confess and regret my action.
We (refers in this case to the team of writers on the Perry Rhodan-series) were hosted by a run-down, once noble hotel in Munich. After an evening which our culturally conscious publisher referred to as a social event, the participants retired to their beds. Everyone except two of us, namely Walter and I. We still felt jolly good on our feet and decided to continue without the others until the bar-tender yawned and advised us to go outside and enjoy the cheerful concert of the early morning birds.
Instead we took the elevator to the top floor where our rooms were located. And there they were; two lines of wonderful shoes. For ladies and gentlemen, black, brown, white, blue and orange. Sandals, brogues, boots, with or without inlay. Shoes with shoelaces, buttons, belts, with or without ornaments. Back then, the world was still a neatly, well ordered place and in a fine hotel ones shoes were brushed if they were left outside the door of the room.
The sight of all these wonderful and expensive shoes must have triggered Walter's intoxicated mind, because he began; I swear it is true so help me God, to gather them all right in front of my eyes. Just imagine! A young writer in a mild post puberty disarray, witnesses his exalted role model stealing shoes in the night. But it was only the beginning, because Walter animated me to follow his example. As we both were overloaded with shoes, Walter said: "To the elevator!"
We went down to the second floor, where we distributed the shoes, taking the ones from the second floor up to the seventh floor. Where fine lady shoes had been standing, were now a pair of wandering boots in its stead. The possibilities to mix were endless and it was still only the beginning of our actions. We brought the shoes from the seventh floor down to the first and so on. All shoes from the third floor were suddenly standing on the fifth floor and from the fifth to the fourth. Walter and I worked like possessed madmen. It was an extraordinary accomplishment which men only can fulfill under very particular circumstances. Proudly, but exhausted we finally retired to our rooms and sank into a peaceful slumber.
As I was torn from my dreams after two hours of sleep, fairly sober, my conscience immediately haunted me. As I left my room, I could hear it. The hotel had turned into a hive of angry bees. Up and down the stairs went cursing guests of the establishment, most of them barefoot. A redfaced lady was standing with the heavy boot of a man in her fist, holding it like a shotgun. A grey haired movie-star was holding two tiny shoes of a girl. A young sales-man held on to a pair of one black and one brown shoe.
The following trades and exchanges would have filled any Arabic bazaar with envy.
Carrying my own shoes, should have caught suspicion, but somehow I managed to walk all the way into the breakfast room, without being hindered. Walter Ernsting was already there, chewing on a sandwich with a stoic, deadpan face. Our editor, Kurt Bernhart was used to express himself straightforward in his Hesse dialect.
"You know, Voltz!" he said, "Comes a fine young man like yourself for the first time in his life to an exquisite 'otel in Munich precisely when all goes to pots!"

There! I have finally told the story. I had to get this weight off my chest and perhaps Walter will forgive me, and feel as relieved as I do.

PS: No one needs to worry about spending the night in the same hotel as Walter Ernsting. Shoes are no longer put outside for brushing. And now you know why.

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SKYRACK # 55, 20th June 1963

THIS YEAR'S EUROPEAN CONVENTION was held over the weekend in Bielefeld. Due to the fact that most Gerfans live in southern Germany, the attendance was somewhat small and around the sixty mark. Tom Schluck writes that he with Mario Kwiat, Wolfgang Thadewald, Franz Ettl and others, toured historic places around the consite and on the con notes that there was a reunion between Germany's biggest clubs, Stellaris and the SFCD. There were speeches about literature and electronics and the film shown was 1984. Plans are meanwhile going ahead, as in England, for the 1964 con, which so far appears to be developing on fantastic lines. The locale is near Unterwössen in Upper Bavaria. An entire castle is to be rented to house the convention. Most of the English speaking fans will be present and as the date is early August 1964, this looks to be a wonderful chance for British fans to take a fannish holiday in the Alps. Further details will be given in Skyrack as and when they are realised. This one sounds good! ::: Tom also says that Guntram Ohmacht, Franz Ettl and Wolfi Thadewald have for some time been selling their own fannish brew, Vurguzz, a green and Germanic equivalent of Blog, I gather, which boasts an 80 proof kick. Three hundred bottles have so far been sold. Put me down for a bottle, gentlemen. ::: Other news from Germany is that we can offer congratulations and good wishes.to Guntram Ohmacht, Gerfandom's own taxi-driver (to conventions, I hasten to add) and Sabine Brama, engaged on 8th June.

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Dieter Steinseifer 1941 -
and the Seven German HUGO

More than anyone else, Steinseifer deserved the one and only German fan-HUGO which ever has been awarded. Walter Ernsting received permission from Hugo Gernsback himself to hand out a German HUGO.
Ironically Walter Ernsting received the award 3 times himself out of the 5 times he handed it out. Once it was given to K-H Scheer.
In 1966 and 1967 Ernsting handed over the privilege of giving this award to the SFCD, but disallowed it again 1968 to 1977. The SFCD was anew given the privilege to hand out the award in 1978, when Steinseifer was the obvious candidate for a fan-Hugo and Herbert W Franke for his collection of short stories: *Zarathustra Returns*.
But after 1978, the SFCD has never been able come to unanimity about how the receiver of the award should be decided.

Franz Rottensteiner 1942-

Infact not German at all, but an Austrian. Rottensteiner distinguished himself as a formidable sf-critic with his fanzine QUARBER MERKUR, hailed (in Germany) as the most longlived magazine in the world (which is not entirely accurate. The publishing of Swedish JULES VERNE-MAGASINET began in 1940 and was last seen

in 2010 (# 542), which means that *Quarber Merkur* still has to go another 20 years until they caught up. Unless JVM picks up again, in which QM is unlikely to ever catch up). Issue # 100 of *Quarber Merkur* was 2004 honoured with the Kurd Lasswitz Award.

Thomas Schlück 1943 -

The 1966 undisputed TAFF-winner and one of the most active fans of the 60's. Shows hardly up at all in the History of the SFCD. Started as a translator and founded his literary agency in 1973. Has been pro ever since.
Last seen by this faned in Mönchengladbach 1982.

Eckhard D Marwitz

Doesn't want you to know when he is born. That's why it says 1911 on his FB page, but it is safe to assume he belongs to the same generation as Steinseifer, Schlück and Rottensteiner. If nothing else, the colour of his beard today is an indication.
Defined by Hagen Zboron as a VolDes-fan (volatile destructive) in the 60's and in adversary stance to a huge portion of sf-fandom. Perhaps for one reason that he kept reading Perry Rhodan, while aspiring to become the heir of Rolf C Gindorf. Marwitz went gafia for a while, only to return to fandom in 1978. The new Marwitz was another man whose accomplishments in Gerfany would be a really dreadful omission, should it be omitted.

Alfred Vejchar

Another fan of the above generation, who doesn't want you to know. According to FB he claims to be born 1953, but if it were so, it makes him 13 when he appears in Hagen Zboron's gossip-files. "*One of the last remaining active fans (in and) from Vienna*". This position is one which Alfred has maintained through the years, today the Grand Old Man of the Vienna group, which is still very much alive and active. But it is safe to assume, that he just like all the others are of the Beatles generation.

Carla Mötteli

Was as almost as mysterious as Atlantis, a poetic lady, living in Lucerne, Switzerland. Everyone in Gerfany had heard of (or from) her, but nobody had ever met her.
Her fanac stretches from the 50's throughout the following three decades without ever faltering much in intensity. Was she one or two women, Carla Andrea and later Carla Lucille Mötteli, her daughter? Or was she one and the same all along? No one knew. In matters of fan-religion she claimed to be a High Priestess of Ghu.

Hagen Zboron

The one fan of the 60's I regret most never to have met. He is the source for all the gossip I have, through his fanzine AUCH 'NE MEINUNG over Sture Sedolin and Ahrvid Engholm ending up in my posession.
Zboron as a fan-writer was of the fannish entertaining sort. He theorized that Erwin Scudla must have held up his worldwide imaginary association as long as until 1961 when he probably was the only member left. It remains a conundrum how this man (Scudla) ever could be taken seriously by anyone. Zboron is one of two fans who actually went to Lucerne, trying to meet Carla Mötteli. He went in the 60's, I went in the 80's.

F.O.L.L.O.W - Fellowship of the Lords of the Land of Wonder

Hubert Strassl and Eduard Lukschandl started the first German fantasy-club on 6th August 1966 during the ongoing SFCD-Convention in Vienna. Both Strassl and Lukschandl were fans who had been along for the ride of Gerfandom since the late 50's and throughout the 60's.
They centered the new association around a fantasy-game they called Armageddon and a world which later was given the name *Magira*. Under the pen name *Hugh Walker* wrote a Magira-trilogy, which was translated and published by DAW-books 1975-1976. FOLLOW split off the fantasy fandom from sf-fandom in Germany.



Andromeda # 66 in April 1968 reports on the life and death of Hugo Gernsback 1884-1967.

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SKYRACK # 92, 9th September 1966

THE VIENNA CONVENTION was held over the first weekend in August, some 120 eager attendees gathering in the Austrian capital. Following introductions by Axel Melhardt who had organised a first rate programme, Viennese scientist, Dr. Kuhn, spoke on developments in Russian sf. The Saturday saw fans gathering in the afternoon for a panel-discussion about SF in Germany which featured fans, authors, agents and translators. This was followed by a slide lecture by Gerhard Richter about a special Viennese school of art which is still active, combining as it does elements of fantasy and surrealism, the Viennese School of Fantastic Realism. The evening turned out to be the convention's highlight with a beat dance and a costume ball A St. Fantony Ceremony was held, for the first time partly in German, Walter Ernsting being inducted into the Order. The Sunday's programme was mainly devoted to business affairs, not the least important of which was concerned with German fandom's bid for the 1970 World Convention. Whilst Frankfurt looked to be the

proposed centre should the Gerfan bid succeed, the meeting came out in support of Heidelberg, a. decision which cannot help but strengthen the bid. Altogether an excellent weekend with attendees including Tom Schluck, Polaroid Norman Weedall, Archie & Beryl Mercer, Eddie Jones, Peter Mabey, John Owen, Gerry Webb, Franz Ettl, Waldemar Kunming and Heinrich Arenz.

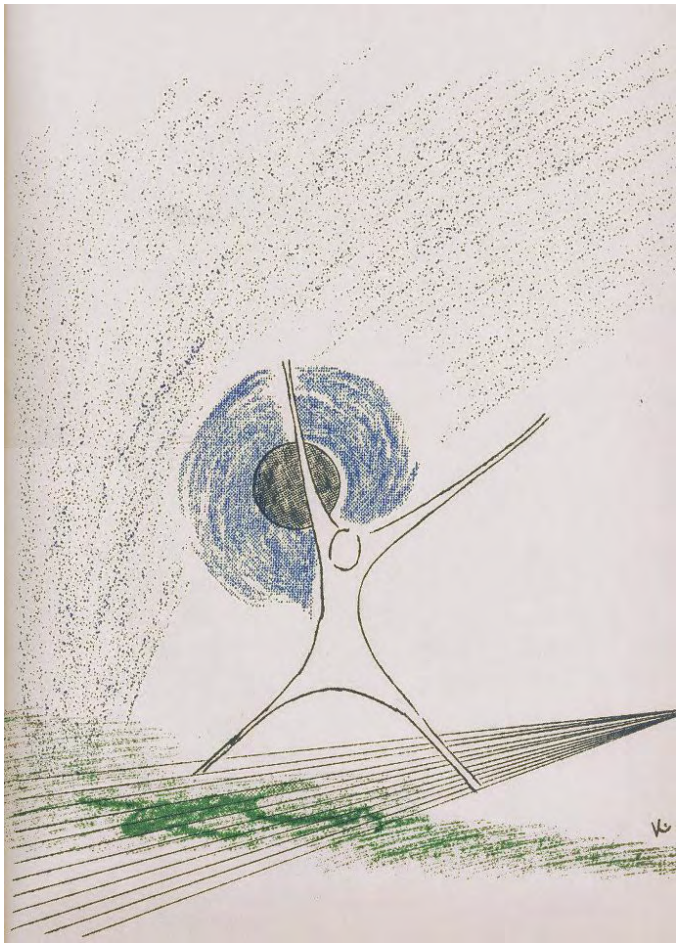


Illustration Mario Kwiat (on mimeograph stencil?)

Late 60's & new Clouds at the Horizon

I said before, the Waldemar Kumming-years were relatively peaceful, yet Hagen Zboron describes the years as continuously filled with feuds and quarrels. I say it was relatively peaceful, because it was petty bickering compared to the storm which was brewing ahead.

Kumming handed over the scepter to **Gert Zech** in August of 1968. He held it for an entire year before it was passed to **Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig**. The Berlin fan remained in charge until the end of 1971. The next chair wasn't elected until a year later, when **Axel Melhardt** assumed the *throne*. The SFCD consumed two more chairs in the following years and the only constant through these years of turmoil was the 2nd chair Dieter Steinseifer who kept the boat floating 1968-1975, the worst time in the history of German fandom.

The reasons for all the commotion wasn't the common hope for Egoboo, but rather the suppression of it. Early signs of the storm were already seen in 1965.
It wasn't okay for the Perry Rhodan-series to be so successful. Very soon he was branded a space-age Hitler by the critics (which was a ridiculous accusation).
But within the SFCD were also the makers of the series and its supporters.
What the micro-cosmos of fandom reflected, was merely an image of what the world at large looked like. IRL the politically left side of the scale led to the emergence of such radicals as the Baader-Meinhof terrorists. And it is not that the leftists were stupid, quite the opposite. In the micro-cosmos of fandom they were among the sharpest minds.
Being a Perry Rhodan-reader did NOT per default make you a supporter of the war in Vietnam, it did not make you a potential mass-murderer and it didn't make you a Nazi. But the leftists were finding it hard to accept people with a different frame of mind and their radical methods included the strategy of verbal bombardment, which they were good at,. because they actually were highly gifted people with a great verbal arsenal.
And of course, anything coming from the United States of America had to be bad, bad, bad...
So the World Convention in Heidelberg 1970 wasn't only a celebration of Gerfannish smoffing, but also a major cause for brawling.
Gert Zech wasn't thanked for sacrificing his leisure time for idealistic work. A couple of fans started the ICO within the SFCD (Inner-Club-Opposition) and demanded "*Zech has to go*!" With their fanzines ZONK, ICO-News and SLAN-News they practically bombarded Gerfandom.
I agree completely with the leftists about one matter and that is that *Hitler came to power, because people were passive*!"

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SLAN-NEWS

In August 1968 Peter Skodzik published the first issue of SLAN. The Berlin fan had an editorial group of seven behind him. SLAN's main content was short stories by J.G.Ballard, Ray Russell, Rolf Heuter and William Voltz, an interview with Forry Ackerman, a presentation of Robert Heinlein, reviews, some news. The follow-up issue contained short stories by Gordon R Dickson, Roger Zelazny, Herbert W Franke and others, an article by Sam Moskowitz, reviews, LoCol, etc
To be able to rapidly report on events, they also started a news-fanzine, called SLAN-Nachrichten (Slan-News).
SLAN-News sometimes appeared almost on a wheekly basis, the 1st of September 1969 saw # 54.

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The Berlin fan Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig was politically liberal, which still wasn't good enough for everyone, but at least half a victory. The revolution had been successful and everything could only get better. The ICO was dissolved, but instead formed the **AST** (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Spekulative Thematik - Workgroup for Speculative Thematic) Their immediate enemy was the upcoming Worldcon in Heidelberg.

FAN POLL 1970-1975:

ANDROMEDA best fanzine 1970, 1971 and 1975
Helmut Pesch best fan-writer 1970-1972
Helmut Pesch best fan-artist 1970-1972
Franz Rottensteiner best fan-critic
1971 MRU best oneshot (Vienna Round Up)
1972 **QUARBER MERKUR** best fanzine 1972 and 1974
1973 no award



Illustration Mario Kwiat

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70's - SFCD and Legions of PR-Clubs

A really noteworthy change of the early 70's happened when Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig, the new chair of the SFCD, inaugurated a newszine to compensate for the irregular and sparse appearance of ANDROMEDA, and at the same time to satisfy the needs for an official newsfeed within the club. SLAN-news had paved the way and the new fanzine was named **ANDROMEDA Nachrichten.** It appeared for the first time in March 1970 with 4 mimeographed pages.
AN appeared with 9 issues in 1971 and 8 in 1972, since then it has appeared bi-monthly, format A5, and with an ever increasing content, usually 60-100 pages. As a newszine it has been **the** most reliable source in Gerfany since 1970.

HEICON in August 1970

In the long list of worldcons, Manfred Kage is given as the chair of HEICON'70. But I read somewhere, that Mario Bosnyak was the worldcon chair!?
Manfred Kage eventually became Heicon's convention chairman, the last of more than a dozen fans who briefly held the position during the convention's rocky organizational period. (Wikipedia)
Oh!? Did it have a rocky organizational period!? No shit! I am not sure the foreign visitors were aware that the German fans expected blood to be flowing during the convention. According to Rolf Heuter, the fan Horst Pukallus should have mentioned hand grenades and it was expected by some that Pukallus would throw some into the audience himself.
I am not certain if Pukallus was all Montgolfier gas, or so radical that he actually could have done it, but in fanzines he was able to disintegrate the molecules of his targets.

It must have been ever so annoying that the Rhodan-series was not only thriving, but creating a vast amount of sf-fans which never heard of any other science fiction.
It also has to be frustrating to fight these windmills of fandom, because no matter how hard the leftists came down on Perry Rhodan, more and more of the fans sprouted.
The leftists were many things, intelligent, capable, loud and obnoxious. But they were never a majority.

TAFF of 1971

Heidelberg's fractional pre-worldcon chair Mario Bosnyak won easily the TAFF race of 1971 with 138 votes out of 335 cast. Other contenders were Peter Weston (84), Terry Jeeves (66) and Per W Insulander from Sweden (47). The European votes in this year amounted to 181, which beat the US total of 154. To me seem the 46 votes Bosnyak got from Italy as strange. Particularly since Italy never had much of a fandom. Bosnyak would certainly have won without the Italian votes, but me smell a fishy campaign here. In the American votes he came in third with only 32 votes. Weston had 51 and Jeeves 44 of the American votes. TAFF-candidates, ask yourself before you become overly aggressive in your campaign. Would I even be welcome?
However, I am certain the Americans received Bosnyak reasonable politely. Why should they not have?
They are not Germans...

* * *

I didn't start with Perry Rhodan. I had read several Swedish sf-books for young people, Murray Leinster and Lionel Fanthorpe. I had even heard of Isaac Asimov...
But as I was living in the great adventure of childhood, my mind was just about complex enough to cope with the adventures of Perry Rhodan.
It was a real goshwow-boy-ohboy experience!
From age 12 (1972) to age 17 I must have spent most of my waked time reading Perry Rhodan. There was so much to catch up with. And I DID catch up twelve years of publication (one magazine a week). I was insane.
No wonder there was no time left for doing homework from school. I didn't worry about my grades. As long as kept listening to what the teacher said I remembered everything. And there were never any surprises on the tests. My grades were always from well above average to excellent.
Finding that there was a Perry Rhodan-Club in every city, I decided to start one of my own in 1973 or early in 74. The PRC HEIMLICHES IMPERIUM (Secret Empire). It consisted of all of my friends who ever had read a few issues of Perry Rhodan and myself. It was a typical PRC. The SFCD was for the old people of fandom.
The Secret Empire was dissolved when we moved from Germany to Sweden by the end of 1974, but with me I took a more or less complete collection of Perry Rhodan from issue 1 to 699.

SFCD returns from the brink of total ◷blivion

In July 10th 1974 the motion is submitted to dissolve the SFCD. Dieter Steinseifer saved the club.
In 1976 **Jürgen Mercker** becomes the new chair. With Alfred Vejchar, Hans Sigmund (treasurer 1970-1982), Frank Flügge and Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig and Rolf Heuter, the SFCD suddenly got a new hard core. These fans brought the club back from its darkest hour. In my book they remain the heroes of Gerfany.

I have previously reported on my first two sf-conventions:
KLEVE 1977 (Counterclock # 4, page 9, pdf-edition)
MARBURG 1978 (page 11, pdf-edition)

For us, younger fans, the SFCD was the *old people's home* of fandom. We had our own megalomaniac dreams. And of course, the most of us were thinking of creating the best and biggest sf-club of all time and in the name of peace unite all sf-fans. Does it somehow sound familiar? I guess most of us didn't do so well, since there already was an establishment.

And of course, not all clubs intended to conquer Gerfany. There was for example the very mature **PRC FELLOW's INN**, whose members lived in and around Kleve. Mainly the Onckels brothers and Hans-Gerd Theunissen. They just ran the extremely nice convention in Kleve 1977 and I guess they were also SFCD-members.

The **SFC SARABOUND** in Niederkassel, Dieter Lamers, Dieter Liebig & friends. They were just intent on having as much fun as possible. Nothing wrong with that.

Not all clubs quarrelled as much as the SFCD did. I can't recall our own club **PRC TERRA KORPS** (founded 1976) ever having a feud among its Gerfan members.
The Swedish part, Sigma Terra Corps (which is the only to survive until this very day) had its share of commotion in the late 80's.

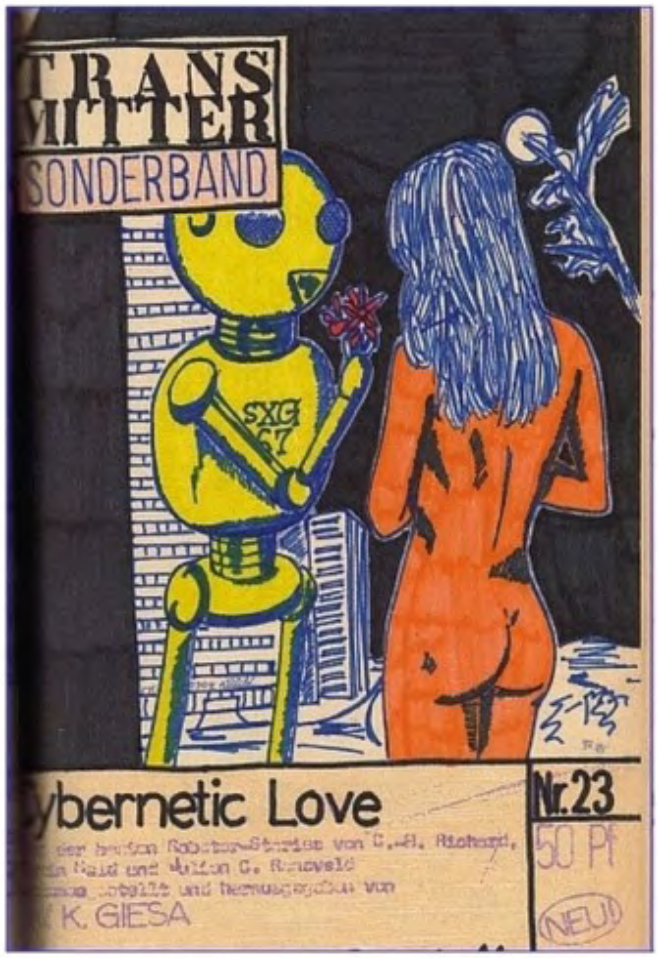
Some didn't even bother to start a club. The sf-fans in Lippstadt created a fanzine-publishing-house instead. The **TERRAPRESS** consisted of Werner Kurt Giesa, Ernst Albert, Manfred Pinzke and Charly Friedhoff.
Go to (and click on the second link):
http://www.charlys-phantastik-cafe.de/fandom/fandom.htm

"Die Lippstädter Fan-Publikationen aus den 1970-er Jahren."

Friedhoff tells here in German the whole story. But YOU have to go, just to look at the pictures! The thumbnails of the dittographed fanzines can be enlargened for better view.

Werner K. Giesa started this non-profit publishing house with the simple intent to get his own sf, fantasy and horror stories out there among the fans. Ernst Albert supervised the printing work. Most illustrations were made by W.K.Giesa.
Grab a load of that!!! I will put only ONE of the covers here to water your mouths.

Dittographed fanzines were the second most popular method in Gerfany to make fanzines at the time. The mimeographed or hektograph had almost vanished by the 70's. But these beautiful colorful fanzines flooded Gerfandom with their sheer joy in creation for a while. Sadly, activity in the Lippstadt group receded when Giesa went pro, and even more sad, when he died in February 2008 (age 54).



Amazing zines were made in Lippstadt.

Eckhard D Marwitz returned to sf-fandom in 1978. At our table in Marburg he remarked "*How quickly fandom forgets!*" But I can't say that we had forgotten him. We were utter neos. We had never heard of the man before. Neither had we heard of Rolf C Gindorf.

But we were eventually made aware of the APA **DRIVE** (Dritter Versuch = Third Attempt) which he launched in 1978. But this was only the beginning of Eckhard Marwitz second coming.

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Personally, I went by Interrail down to Gerfany every summer to meet my friends in fandom. I started publishing my own dittographed fanzine in 1978, or rather as a club-publication for the PRC TERRA KORPS. On my journey of 1979 we (Jörg Litschke, Joachim Henke and I) passed through Frankfurt, where we took the opportunity to visit Rolf Bingenheimer and TRANS-GALAXIS. It appeared as if he had everything ever published in Germany on offer. I love the smell of pulp-magazines. Not only in the morning, but all day!
We also paid a visit to Willi Voltz in Heusenstamm near Frankfurt. He was also the editor of the reader's column in Perry Rhodan at the time.
That was the occasion when he *really* became the hero of my youth. He gave us his view on what a good fanzine was and to this very day I completely agree with his assessment, that a good portion of humour is necessary. That was also the moment when we more or less decided (at least I did) to go on a *fannish crusade* in Gerfany. To add a shot of humour to the dry concoction.

The Perry Rhodan Letter Club Bell's Desktop

PRBCBS founded in 1978

Perry Rhodan Briefclub Bully's Schreibtisch

Among hundreds, nay... thousands of PR-Clubs, this one stands out in a particular way. It's still alive, for one. It was founded by a dynamic duo, Axel John and Axel Thon. When the latter disagreed with the direction John was taking with the club, instead of feuding it to pieces, he respectfully retired. A bit like Julian Parr, who always was above such misbehaviour.
The members of PRBCBS were enormously active. They had to be, because there was a demand of minimum activity. It published a monthly magazine called Club-Nachrichten, which was eminently illustrated by Stefan Barton and Stefan Somogyfoki, both brilliant.
Of course, being a PR-Club still in existence is a story which merits its own fanzine. But there is hope, since the club still is alive and well. Thriving on Facebook.

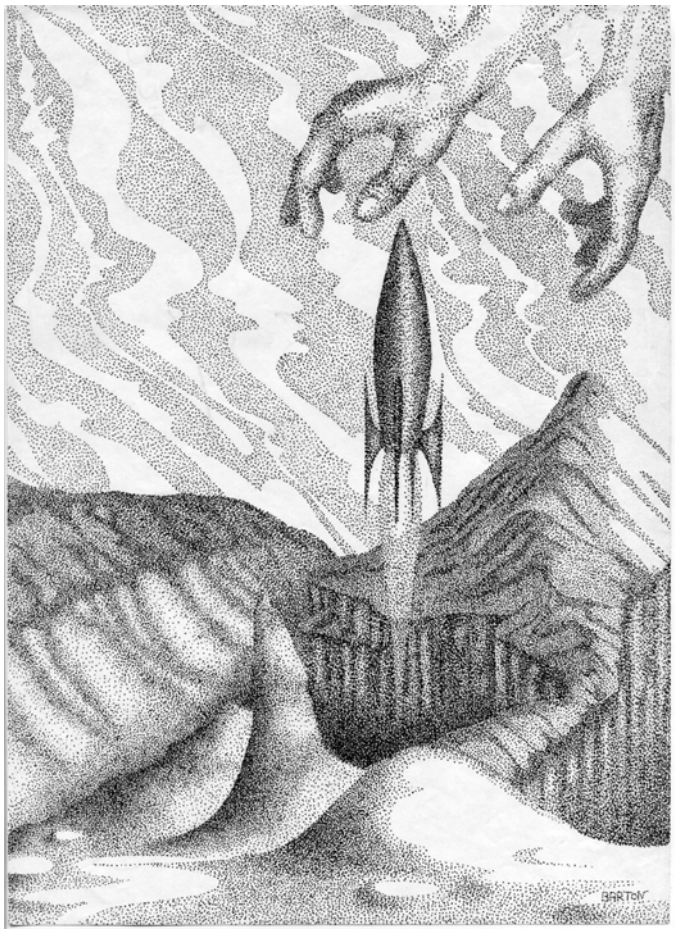


Illustration Stefan Barton

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A Wolf among Sheep

Having had a storm of leftists, perhaps it was not all surprising that at least one fascist should arise from/in Gerfany. In the late 70's **Christian Worch** emerged into sf-fandom. We kept him more or less *contained* for the better part of the 80's, in matters of fanac. No feuding.
Lucille and the Seven SMOF part 1 (CoClock # 6, p.5)
Lucille and the Seven SMOF part 2 (CoClock # 7, p.8)
Neither did we ever agree with his political motives. But I was hugely surprised when I saw him on CNN.

80's - Fannish Fandom Revival

The BÄRCON 80 August 15-17th - Berlin was clearly a better opening to the 80's than what HEICON had been to the 70's (prev mentioned in CoClock # 7, page 7).
In connection with it, Walter Ernsting was celebrated and congratulated to his 60th birthday. In a SFCD-special publication, UTOPIA. At this point one could say that he had achieved more than he could have hoped for. It was easy to tell that he was content.

Three more APA's were launched in the 80's.
CAPA launched 1980 by Wolf von Witting
75+ mailings until 1986
SUSAPA launched in july 1982 by Hans-Jürgen Mader
8 mailings until end of 1983
EURAPA launched in november 1982 by Jo Henke
8 mailings until march 1985

- -

Fanac is raw power in fandom. The more of it you do, the more power you have. Power to influence minds.
We didn't consciously coordinate our efforts, we were simply good friends and never feuded with each other.
The *inner circle* in alphabetical order; Joachim Henke, Hans-Jürgen Mader, Klaus Marion, Karin Plewka, Willmar Plewka, Klaudia Vidmar and I.
The *peripheral circle*: Wolfgang Bolz, Michael Dengler, Wolfgang Dirschauer, Frank M Hoyer, Carla Mötteli, Nils Stickan and Christian Worch.
The main difference between *inner* and *peripheral* is that it is extremely difficult to generate close friendship, trust and loyalty if you never (or very rarely) meet. The more contact, the closer we were forged together. As friends.

FANDHOME WHEEKLY 1981-84

Had definitely an impact. Not since SLAN-Nachrichten had German fandom been bombarded so intensely with fandom-news. And I admit it, Klaus N Frick was right when he questioned the objectivity of FW about me.

Frank M Hoyer created with **DAUBS** a fanzine which was totally out of line with everything Gerfany had seen before. At a first glance it appeared all to be total crap.
But why Frank and his friends went on for several years with no faltering in enthusiasm was because **they were having fun**! And ultimately, that's what sf-fandom ought to be about.

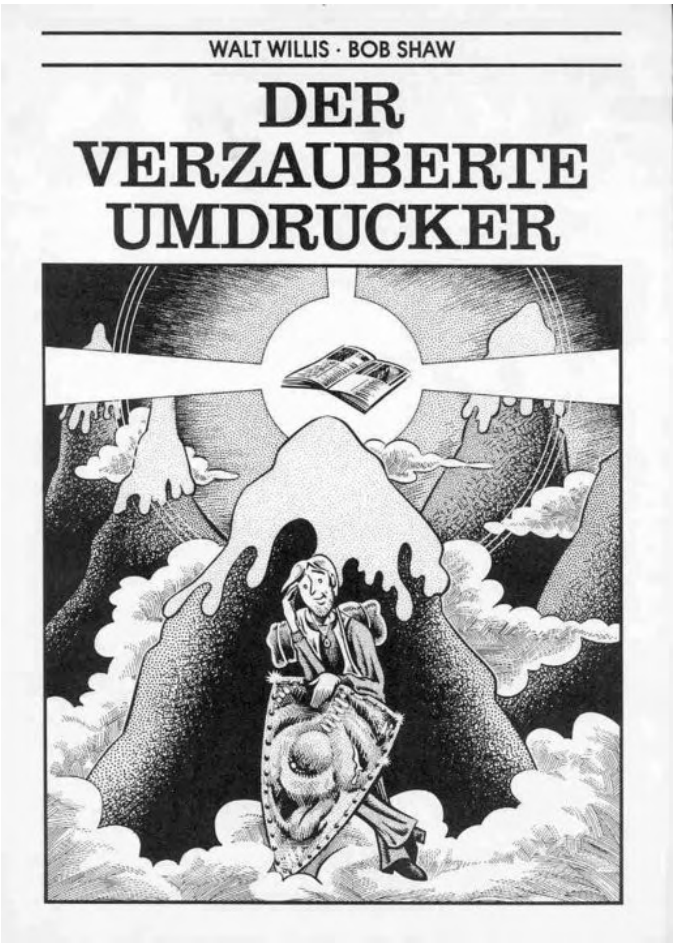
KLAUS MARION & HOODOO

From the Bad Kreuznach group (same as Jo Henke) came Klaus Marion, whose satirical talent was totally astonishing. Yes, MUNICH ROUND UP used to be satirical, back in the early days, but Klaus was the only fan-writer who had me laughing out loud almost with every short story he wrote.
Personally I feel that his dittographed zine HOODOO was one of the best Gerfan fanzines ever made.

But as the 1984 verdict said. Gerfans liked the sercon issue # 112 of ANDROMEDA by Willmar Plewka better than my fannish issue # 111 (came in only second best).

- -

Grass is green, Dear. The sky is blue!
Wish I could be as certain about you! (Medicine Head)



The Enchanted Duplicator, translated into German by Joachim Henke and Willmar Plewka in 1984. First published in Gerfany in Andromeda # 111, illustrated by Wolf von Witting.
This cover for separate dittographed print by Christian Holl.

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KLAUS N FRICK 1963 -

In February 1980 Klaus published the first issue of his fanzine SAGITTARIUS. It looked on the surface like most other fanzine at the time, but it was clearly less boring than the general Gerfannish product.
The Freudenstadt-fan was himself not the boring kind of person. Who would have thought he'd become...



Klaus N Frick and Ahrvid Engholm in 1982.

THOMAS RECKTENWALD

Rolf Heuter's history of the SFCD ends 1982 with Norbert Hefner resigning as chair of the club. If memory serves, he preceeded Lutz Reimers who handed over to Hans-Jürgen Mader, the chair of our *fannish crusade*. Recktenwald came as secretary during the last 3 years of Maders 'reign'.
He was then chair 1988-1998, succeeded by Birgit Fischer 1998-2008. Apparently an era of peace.
But I let Thomas phrase it in his own words:

Last year at Hansecon in Lübeck I organised a Kaffeeklatsch to celebrate 30 years in fandom because I attended my first convention October 24, 1982. Saarcon 8 was a local event with GoH William Voltz, then the mastermind behind the Perry Rhodan series. It attracted nearly 100 fans. There I not only learned about the Science Fiction Club Deutschland (SFCD) and immediately filled in a membership form but also got in touch with local fandom which mainly consisted of two city groups whose members - besides producing mediocre Rhodan-related fanzines - spent their leisure time fighting the opposite group. That's why I wasn't surprised when I later got more insight into West German fandom in general.

SF literature had a short time of flourishing in the early 1980s, and a shortage of anglo-American texts forced publishers to even accept material by German-speaking authors, with texts sometimes down at fanzine level. The result was, of course, a bursting of the bubble a couple of years later. German conventions of that period, however, weren't very attractive for people seriously interested in SF. Mostly small, run by local groups or individuals, attended by locals, with a local author or no GoH at all and a standard program containing a quiz and showing a movie on VCR. That changed when we got the opportunity to visit an affordable worldcon (Conspiracy 1987) in Brighton and the first Jersey Eastercon in 1989. At Conspiracy we were surprised by size and variety of the event but even more by a German worldcon bid for Berlin in 1994 unknown to us before. That bid ended in a lawsuit reported in detail in a fanzine, and remaining members of the bidding committee built a group with others to plan a big convention 1991 in Duesseldorf called X-Con. That also came to nothing - except two lawsuits also described in detail in another fanzine.

One group, however, was successful in learning from foreign conventions and started a series of cons called SF-Tage NRW (SF Days North Rhine-Westphalia) in Düsseldorf, with GoHs from UK and later US too and more than 200 attendees. Then we experienced the German reunification which influenced both West and East German fandom. East German clubs (which could only be established under the umbrella of a university or a comparable institution) suddenly lost a part of their membership - people who already showed little knowledge of SF before and thus were easily recognisable as members of the state security. West German clubs encountered fans who had more interest in SF literature than fannish conventions and fanzines. And in the process of reunification and transfer of people

and money from West to East some of them even found a way to collect public money for their projects. One group was formed by the people behind the magazine Alien Contact (AC), members of the East Berlin club Andymon with support by the West Berlin SFCD group. AC managed to produce nearly 40 paper editions and four on floppy disc before running out of money.

The other group are members of the Freundeskreis SF (Circle of SF Friends) Leipzig who still receive enough money from cultural institutions to invite UK and US authors for their biannual Elstercon, held in even years. Together with Dortcon in Dortmund in odd years these are now the main events in German fandom, and Dortmund is bidding for the Eurocon 2017. Both groups are fortunately far away from dreaming of a second German worldcon after Heidelberg 1970, not because of possible lawsuits. They know German fandom has currently neither experience nor locations nor enough of personal money necessary for the bidding process to establish a serious bid. It's already a good sign that we get in contact with SF fandom of neighbouring countries. There's a group of young fans now in Vienna collaborating with a newly founded Munich group, and some fans from Denmark are planning to attend this year's SFCD con in Munich. Let's see what influence Loncon 3 will have on German and Continental European Fandom.

* * *

Let's jump back to the 80's here:

HanseCon in Lübeck

In 1985 Eckhard D Marwitz initiated the longest running annual convention in the history of Gerfandom. Run in the same town by the same team, that is. The HanseCon in Lübeck, run by the SFC Lübeck with EDM.
This convention is still being made every year. It is a small, fannish, very cozy event which I am happy to recommend. Not only because my 21st convention was the second HanseCon 25-26th October 1986 and neither because I was GoH at this occasion.
The location of HanseCon is perfect for fans to join from Germany, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands.
I regret, that so far I have only been able to attend three of the HanseCons (last time in 2003), but *because* the convention is meant to be small, one really has time to get to know everyone who attends.
Fans I remember particularly well from HanseCon are Kurt S Denkena and Heinrich R Arenz (veteran fan from the early 60's), but I believe everyone who has been there has had a good time, including Klaus Frick, Birgit Fischer, Dieter Schmidt, Fred Körper, Dieter Steinseifer, Waldemar Kumming and many others.
Among the attractions for some years, was the Marzipan-Potatoe-Race, similar to the Great Peanut Race of NasaCon in Sweden, except in Lübeck it was about transporting the traditional Marzipan Potatoe of Lübeck.

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The 80's saw 2 PR Worldconventions... now they are no longer allowed to call it WorldCons though.
31.10.1980 Perry Rhodan WorldCon, Mannheim
06.09.1986 2nd Perry Rhodan WorldCon



Somebody baked a cake for the Perry Rhodan WeltCon in 1986 (Welt is German for World), decorated with and probably by a very old friend of mine. These Marsipans are a spin-off from my first fanzine. I have made them public domain. You may use them without asking for any non-profit purpose. This one appears to be based on a Klaudia Vidmar design. Klaudia did funnier cartoons than what I ever could.

* * *

The SFCD will prevail for many years still. It has a solid base and is again growing. The many feuds are a mere memory of the past. A disgraceful memory, but they had to be turbulent years, because the world could still be saved. Now we know, it's not the world in need of saving, it is just us, humankind who is endangered.



Rolf Heuter's History of the SFCD (1982) has been a great help to understand what fans were clobbing each other about in the late 60's/early 70's. His thorough work is heavy on the statistical side, but an invaluable reference to researchers.

HACKENHEIM 1987
and the end of the fannish crusade

YOU CAN LEAD A HORSE TO WATER, BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE IT DRINK.

Joachim Henke, Klaus Marion and all of our friends in Bad Kreuznach were smoffing the SFCD-convention as I celebrated 10 years of going to cons. We had done all we set out to do and it had turned out easier than we had thought. We didn't introduce anything really knew, we simply re-injected Gerfany with a new dose of fannishness. The ideas where taken from one place and used in another place. Everything is a remix.

Up in the north of Gerfany, Eckhard D Marwitz had his own ideas of fannish fandom and with his persistence I believe he in the end perhaps made a bigger imprint than we did. Marwitz, belonging to the generation that Roger Daltrey is singing about, will not be with us for ever (The Who - My Generation). I hope he still will be accordingly honoured. His lifetime contribution to fandom has been under-appreciated, from where I see it.

Also Alfred Vejchar, in Vienna, who after all these years still turns up to the regular pub-meetings. Can't recall him ever participating in any fan-madness. But then most Austrians were a peaceful breed (in their own way).

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A LIST OF ALL SFCD-Conventions can be found here:
http://www.charlys-phantastik-cafe.de/fandom/SFCD-history/SFCD-cons.htm

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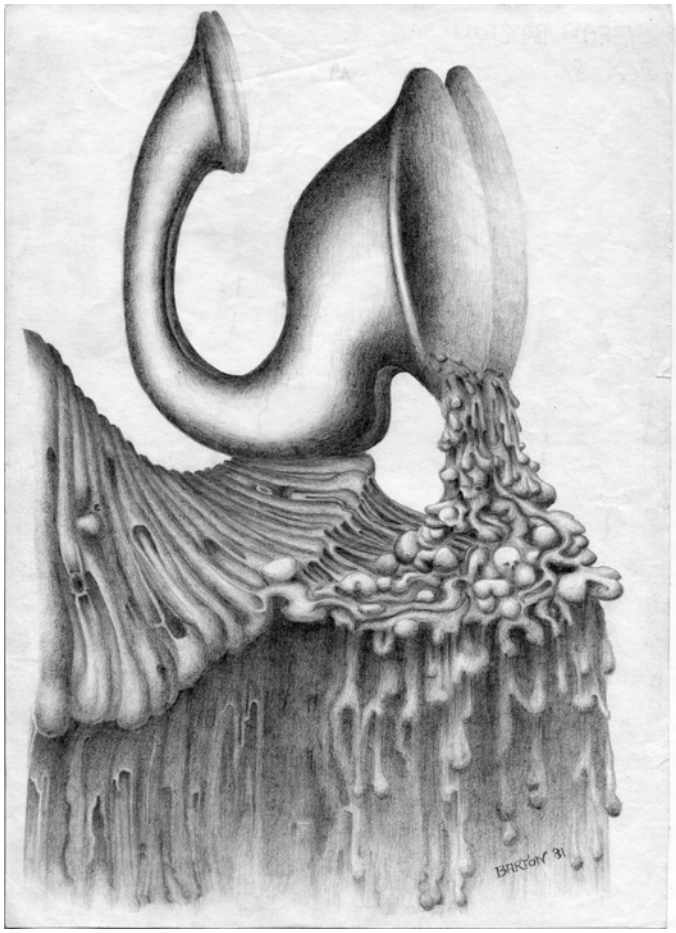


Illustration by Stefan Barton, who btw recently has returned to Gerfany after living many years in the USA.

90's - Two Fandoms Become One

The 60's was a time in which people still lived in fear of a possible World War III. SF-fandom was following the space race attentively, but in spite of the moon landing, the genre itself was not yet generally accepted.
In the 70's we were given the first warnings of an impending population explosion, of resource depletion and environmental destruction. We didn't heed these warnings very much, did we?
Culturally the western world peaked.
In the 80's it appears as if we dropped all fears. It led to the end of the East-West tensions as well.
Oil production peaked.
In the 90's... I don't know what the f--k we were thinking in the 90's! We were just trotting along, weren't we? The environmental information noise gradually got louder and louder. The wonders of technology were beginning to engulf us, just as it did the Arkonides before they crash landed on the moon. In the new Millennium, most fanzines have died and an entire fandom (namely the Gerfan one) appears to have entered Zombie mode.
Or what? I expect YOU to prove me wrong.
The wall came down and having spent so much time writing about the 50's, the 60's, the 70's and the 80's it doesn't suddenly even seem very long ago. Yet, anyone under 25 will not remember it.

It is clear that with the addition of fans from the former GDR, Gerfany as a whole (unintended pun), has gained in quality and quantity. Already have several SFCD-cons been held in Dresden, Leipzig and one in Schwerin (that one I remember). I look forward to visit Dresden and Leipzig as well, because former east Geman fans give the impression to be closer to the international *Zeitgeist* of sf-fandom. Ah, well... sorry... that is just an impression I have. My very personal opinion.

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Thomas Recktenwald has translated an excerpt from a paperback written by three East German fans:

A short outline of the history of GDR fandom

Read it here: http://fanac.org/Fan_Histories/Germany/

- -

Gerfany has never been good at appreciating fannish efforts. The KLP (Kurd Lasswitz Preis) did amazingly acknowledge some fans and their work, but in the cases of Alpers and Ernsting, the award went to their pro-work and not to their fanzines.

Kurd Lasswitz Award *(since 1981)*

special category:
1990 to Hans Joachim Alpers
(shared award in 1980, 1982) also 2011
1991 to the comittee of SFT-NRW
1992 to Waldemar Kumming for Munich Round Up
1993 to the comittee of SFT-NRW
1995 to Walter Ernsting for his Pro efforts
1999 to Erik Simon & Freundeskreis SF Leipzig e.V.

There! In 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1999 the KLP special award actually went to fans doing something for fandom. It happened also in 1978 (Steinseifer).

But otherwise, fannish endeavors were not exactly taken seriously. At this point I wish to address the current chief editor of Perry Rhodan: **KLAUS N FRICK**

Think about it! Real fans don't care much about money. But isn't the mousebeaver Pucky a splendid personification of a Perry Rhodan fan? You may know, that in fannish sf-fandom the beaver Roscoe is a symbol for the fannish industry and diligence. Isn't then a mouse-beaver a *small* sf-fan, with *great* ability? How about handing out an annual Pucky / Gucky which A) is a reminder of the great fan Walter Ernsting and B) is an excellent symbol for fannish diligence.
Together with a colorful diploma practically signed by Perry Rhodan himself, namely YOU, Klaus!
For fannish endeavours in Perry Rhodan-fandom.
I am confident that the mere piece of paper can make a young Perry Rhodan-fan happy like a *mousebeaver*.
And perhaps one day, Gerfany can wake up from its hibernation and follow suit. There are not too many awards handed out yet. For filthy ol' pro's, yes.

- -

In the 90's, I wasn't present in Gerfandom a whole lot. Not until near the end of the decade. And currently exhaustion hovers over my head and threatens to paralyze my fingertips. I've been hacking frenziedly since Monday, not to draw over my own deadline with very much. [..taking the night's rest..]
I **NOW** decided to change the title of this work. Having read ZUKUNFT IN DER TASCHE, I have been made aware what proper history-writing ought to look like.
I wish *somebody* would cover the 60's, 70's and 80's in a similar fashion. I am not the man for such a job. I am way too oscillating (a wibbly-wobbly personality).

What is typical for the Gerfan? I've come to realize, that I might look at my own idiosyncrasies. In particular the ones which distinguished me from Swedish fans and where I had to work on myself to improve. Because I'd say the typical Gerfan has grand visions and is full of enterprise. The Gerfan is insistant for better and for worse. We tend to overstate and overestimate our own significance. On the other hand, we're not easily discouraged. This fanzine is a good example. I aimed at wrapping up the History of German fandom and how far did I get? Well, at least it's a stroll through the years. It will wake some memories and rattle a few cages in Gerfany, I guess.



DARMSTADT SpaceDays, a SF Model Exhibition.
http://www.spacedays.de/

Was kommt denn da für'n wüster Krach, aus Frankfurt, Darmstadt, Offenbach? Was lärmt in Kassel, Giessen und Wiesbaden bloß, so gnadenlos? Was tut den Bayern, Schwaben, Friesen gründlich jeden Spaß vermiesen? Was tobt seit vielen Wochen schon? 'Ne schaurig, schöne Invasion!!! (Rodgau Monotones)

SOMETHING WONDERFUL HAPPENED!
or My God! It's full of stars!

Now that I've been telling you of so many ups and downs with emphasis on the downs, I have also to bring some good news. It happened first with music.
In the early 80's came a new German wave, fittingly named *Neue Deutsche Welle*, which was pop and rock music in German language. Not the usual post-war *Schunkel & Schlager-garbage* acceptable to our parents, but young, fresh and energetic in all the different dialects of Germany. Suddenly the German music conquered a position next to the heavy Anglo-Saxon influence.
It was Germany with complete self-confidence.

The generation immersing itself in it, was mainly my own and those slightly older and slightly younger. And fandom itself began also to transform.

In the vacuum *Fandhome Wheekly l*eft behind in 1984, it was first **Dieter Schmidt** who filled in with his newszine **FANDOM MIRROR**. Of course, there was still and has since 1970 always been the increasingly excellent bi-monthly **Andromeda Nachrichten** for members of the SFCD. But fandom needed more news-sources.
There was also **Kurt S Denkena** in Bremen publishing **SF-Nachrichten** now and then.

FANDOM OBSERVER
Was founded by Martin Kempf and Markus Sämisch in April 1989. Today, issue # 287 is out. Need I say more?
Unfortunately, Markus Sämisch died in 2004 (age 36) after a brief and serious illness. But Kempf has kept going and today Fandom Observer is perhaps the most reliable monthly Gerfan news-source.
Of course, Martin Kempf could not do everything alone, and the current FO team consists of himself, Günther Freunek, Florian Breitsameter and Olaf Funke.
Anything happens in Gerfany? THEY KNOW IT!
Of course, if they only would report on German fandom, then there wouldn't be much to write about, because not too much is happening these days. The quarrels and feuds are what they should have been a long, long time ago: HISTORY! - http://www.fandomobserver.de/

It is clear, that the team behind FANDOM OBSERVER has merited itself for one of the awards German fandom isn't handing out. Perhaps it should be FO inaugurating such an award? Martin Kempf knows well, that fannish endeavours are not about money. A colourful diploma ican already become a prestigious piece of paper to hang on the wall. Maybe a small statuette to go with it!? It doesn't *need* to be expensive. And hand it out at the German national sf-convention!? Ah, right! I forgot! You don't *have* a national convention. The SFCD-con lost that status long ago. Choose the site of the next national convention NOW and follow the SweCon mode, elect the following at this one.

Perhaps it is too late to select a national convention for 2013, but it is clear which one ought to be it next year. Why not let fans vote on it on your website?

You can also for the fandom award have people voting on your website and if you feel that some money ought to come with the award, then have the voters pay 3-5 Euros for the vote. That's how TAFF, GUFF and DUFF works.

The Cologne and Dortmund smof

Both in Cologne and Dortmund there were fans whose pleasure it was to arrange conventions. Both of them could probably fill an issue of CounterClock with their individual history.

The first ColoniaCon was held in 1982. I was at my first ColoniaCon in 1989 (which also was an SFCD-Con).
Now, brace yourselves, the latest seven ColoniaCon's were in the years 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012. The next in 2014 will be ColoniaCon # 21!

There are fans who have not published 21 issues of a fanzine. But smoffing 21 conventions of the medium size is a rather impressive merit.

The team behind ColoniaCon deserve at least one of the fandom awards Gerfany isn't handing out.



Illustration Bill colo-Rotsler, Tattooed Dragon

The Dortmund smofs were honoured in the 90's, with the Kurd Lasswitz award in 1991 and 1993 for their SF-Tage NRW (Nord-Rhine Westphal). The SFT-NRW improved from year to year until 1998 and SFT-NRW, where I had the extraordinary honour and privilege again to be FGoH. [For full report, see Emerald City # 33: http://www.emcit.com/emcit033.shtml]

The following year, the same convention was also the Eurocon of 1999, Trinity. And yes, it happened again, that unrest erupted in Gerfany. The responsible fan, Beluga Post was very nearly lynched for his mistakes. [See full report of Trinity in CounterClock # 5]
...and once again I had a brief dialogue with Wolfgang Jeschke, whose disappointment I can understand.
But the Dortmund team eventually bounced back, which is a trait I like. Don't give in!

The following DortCon in 2002 marked the end of my brief filking career. I had enough after 5 years of doing the same stuff. And I didn't really want to have the label of *filker* on me. Don't get me wrong, I *LOVE* filkers, but there are so many other things I can do and I was simply tired of only being asked to filk.
That's why my appearance in 2002 was half-hearted. But I have to salute Arno Behrend, who saved me from the embarrasment, which was bad enough as it was. I also have to salute him for holding together the Dortmund team and produce more Dortcons in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013. They too, clearly deserve one of those fandom awards Gerfany isn't handing out.

Arno Behrend himself was awarded in 2003 with the DSFP (Deutscher SF Preis) for best German short story.



Arno Behrend, awarded at the SFCD-Con 2003 in Lübeck.

The DSFP has been handed out by the SFCD since 1985 for best German novel and best short story. These things, at least, are valued in Gerfany.

All double-digit services to fandom are impressive, so were Recktenwald and Birgit Fischer's 10 years as SFCD-chair. Or Hans Sigmund's 12 years as treasurer, and Herbert Thiery's 15 years as treasurer.
Actually, Recktenwald appears to be heading for some kind of record, since he was 3 years secretary before becoming the chair and replaced Thiery in 2011 as the treasurer. Think about it, fellow Gerfans!
In my heart I have always been with you. Even when I was gafia, the time I spent in German fandom was the most fun I had in my life. Gerfans do know how to party, they're a grateful, appreciative audience and even though they do know how to *wash the head of* (idiom in Germany, meaning "to scold") someone, they do for the greater part have big hearts.



Birgit Fischer, chair of the SFCD 1998-2008. Gerfany always had a mostly male population. To keep them in line for 10 years, takes a special breed of women. Today they exist.

All Good Things...

It is with sadness that I have to report these deaths:
Heinz-Jürgen Ehrig *+2003*
Dieter Sachse *+ November 2005*
Hans Joachim Alpers *+2011*
Ehrig lives on through ANDROMEDA Nachrichten, which he started in 1970, while SFCD-chair.
Alpers was a fan and editor of the German SF-Times in the 60's before he became pro. This is something his wikipedia-entries completely ignore in all languages.
(Just another sign of Gerfany not appreciating itself).

But most of all I will miss Dieter Sachse. He was *just a fan*. But he was a fan, who in his own way was as constant as the Northern Star. He was always there, at the annual convention. He was always friendly.
All of the fans in this picture were of the sort I like to remember, and who deserve to be in our memories.
Because at the end of the day, what is it we like to remember? *It's the **fun** we had!*



Dieter Steinseifer, Dieter Sachse, Waldemar Kumming and Alfred Vejchar in Unterwössen, 1962.

It is my wish, that German fandom does not forget its heroes, Those who struggled upphill. Those who built, rather than tore down. The fen who sacrificed themselves without any rewards. Well, at least not with a whole lot of awards. Those who did it for the fun of it and only a little bit for their own egoboo.
Those are my heroes, and here's a quartet of them!

Efanzines.com now has a German equivalent, hosted by Andreas Dölling. That he didn't copy the idea is kinda obvious if you visit the site. It looks all different.
http://www.fanzine-index.de/

- -

Pub-meetings - in 2003 listed AN #200 pub-meetings in 33 different locations. Some places, like Berlin, Hamburg and Cologne even had two different pubmeetings. It is safe to assume, that not all were listed. The PR-fans have their own pubmeetings. Including the Rhodan-fans and fantasy-events, it also listed more than a dozen, conventions taking place.
Evidently there still is activity. Even if it is more and more in cyberspace.

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Everything is a remix!

In the age of Internet good ideas can be fast-forwarded. Sometimes I have to smile, when I see the ripple effects of what we did. For one, I have always tried so hard to come up with new and original thoughts, but in the end, even our *new and original* thoughts are best if we base them on experience. In youth we have creativity...

Don't you just loathe it when you think you had an original idea, but then you google it and get a zillion hits on the same idea? What was it most recently?
"*Necessity is the mother of invention. Mistake is the father!*" I wondered, if anyone had said that before, so I googled it and... yes, of course. That would have been a huge surprise, if no one hadn't said **that** already.

The idea to unite fandom is probably as old as fandom itself. But fans by nature are unruly. The SFCD changed name into SFCE (Europa). There was also the SFUE, the Science Fiction Union of Europe, the ISFSF and in more recent years, Uppsala students founded the ESFS, European SF Society, well aware that it was limited to the small university town of Uppsala, north of Stockholm. It was all in good fun. SFSF - the Scandinavian SF Society was limited to Stockholm. My own club, Sigma Terra Corps was a bit cryptic about the meaning of the greek letter "S". It could have been for Saltsjöbaden, in which the club was located, for Stockholm, the region, for all of Scandinavia or even for the Solar System. It all depended on how huge it would get.
We were like young boys for the first time at the urinal. "*Stand back, friends! I don't know how big it gets*!"

For some time, the SFCD-incarnations changed name almost weekly. At one point though, it came to be the name **Eurotopia**, for the big unit. I liked that name.

But it wouldn't work the way it was conceived way back in the late 50's. It wouldn't work at all. First one needs to consider all the different needs and all the different ideas of how something should run. Therefore, the small unit is better. Therefore, do not touch the small units! It allows fans to develope their club, their publishing house, their convention or whatever the project is, to develope it any way **they** want. And it's what **they** want, which is the all important matter.
A European Union of SF-Associations should **not** be allowed to interfere in the internal affairs of any club. As promised before on *Eurosmof* I hereby present my vision of an **Eurotopia**.



EUROTOPIA & leadership

In 1997-1999 I was chair of a Union of local Associations in Saltsjöbaden, Sweden where I lived. As such in these days I represented roughly 10,000 people in negotiations with politicians.
Professionally, at the railway, I had been given formal education in modern (Swedish ideals of) leadership. My second in command in Sigma TC for a while was Jan Johansson, whose military education involved different insights into leadership.
Jan and I talked about group dynamics. Every group has a formal leader and an informal leader. There are also other kinds. Have a look at James Cameron's *ALIENS* and you basically see all of them. In a crisis situation, everyone turns to the informal leader. Therefore, the military being well aware of this, the captain or lieutenant who leads his team, should better be both, or he might wind up shot, as the heat of the battle ensues.

To be both formal **and** informal leader, the captain needs to be part of his own team. You never work for the boss, when you work, you work together for yourselves.
The boss is the guy you turn to when you don't know what to do. Sometimes even the boss doesn't know.
When he doesn't, he asks for opinions and thereafter makes a decision. Sometimes he will be right and sometimes wrong. Experience and practice helps making the right decisions.
If the team **likes** working together, they will outperform other teams. My team, when I was working as traffic controller, did outperform some of my colleagues. The drawback was (in my case) that no one noticed it, since traffic then appeared to be running smoothly, without any problems.
If the leader of a team holds up to standard, is defined in the moment of crisis. More on this some other time, if anyone is really interested to know.
A fundamental truth is, no one can accomplish anything great on his own. Examples; SFCD, Fandom Observer, ColoniaCon, DortCon. Teamwork is needed.

A Union of Associations can serve only one purpose, to improve the existence of the member associations. The *leading u*nit serves therefore nothing by simply bossing around its members. Most democratic governments have the wrong idea. They believe the people of their country need to be governed (ruled), while infact they ought to **serve** the people who elected them.
I feel a government would be understanding its own role a whole lot better if they were called administration (DE: Landesverwaltung, SE: statsförvaltning) instead.
Funny... that's what the *government* was called in the Perry Rhodan-series! The *leaders* were administrators.

A good leader cares, listens to his people and does their will. He is not above his team. He **serves** the team.

It stands to reason, that someone representing a great number of people also could gain favourable results in any kind of negotiations. These results should benefit the team in the first place.

Now it gets complicated. We live in a world, where the value of many things still is measured in money.
Money, the representation of a value, correspond to a certain amount of goods or services.

In fandom we do things for free. This doesn't mean, that the things done for free do not have value. Measured in money, this fanzine, for example is a personal investment of mine corresponding to the value of a couple of hundred Euros (in essence, the time invested in typing).
You read this for free, because I give it to you.
You stop reading, when you feel I'm bull-shitting you too much. You continue, if you feel what I say makes sense.
I am also a hacker (of the benign sort, since 1990) and have always had the opinion that information ought to be for free.
Voluntary work values as much as compulsory work, except that the former doesn't get paid.

In representing a great number of people, a chosen spokesman also represents the potential of what these people can or will do. In the current system, this has a real tangible value.
I feel, that a unifying unit, whose purpose is to serve the benefit of its member associations **ought to** be paid for this work, but **only** if they can justify their own existence by bringing in more than they need and deserve for their efforts and, as Martin Hoare said to me in Zagreb, they have to do this completely transparently. So that the whole can see for itself, that nothing is secret about the actions in respect to the unifying agreements taken.

Considering the scrutiny Gerfandom is used to, I doubt anyone would get away with the slightest measure of corruption. When **Beluga Post** looked at my proposal, he laughed. "*I almost got lynched for the same idea*." he said. Of course, I've been thinking about it a lot since then. Who ever sticks his neck out, becomes a target for severe scrutiny. Which means one needs to perform an impeccable service. I wonder if the right person exists.

But before we get ahead of ourselves some questions need to be asked.
- Do we want a union of European sf-associations?
- Do we need it?
- In what country should it be based?
- What should the sets of rules look like?

(Italian and German legislation looks too motley for me to see through, the Swedish I get, because it is fairly simple and straightforward).

- Who volunteers to set things up?
- Who gets paid, for what, how much and when?

To this last question I'd like to state my opinion right away. I feel that ALL **work** done for Eurotopia, or whatever we decide to call it, ought to be paid.
The payment should be a reasonable compensation for the work invested. The amount should be paid in reverse order to the center of decisions made, meaning that whoever does for example translate, write or design something on behalf of the organization, should get paid before members of the organization itself and before its leader. Payment is made, when the organization (or its fund-raisers) have raised more than is being paid.

It ought to be an obvious win-win relationship for both the organization and to those who give it substance (the member associations).
If anyone feels he can produce better results, he or she should be at liberty to put his/her mouth where the money ought to come in, in a manner of speaking.

On April 7th we were going to have an online meeting to talk about these things on Eurosmof, but... The server supposed to host the event, went offline and has been offline ever since. So I promised to elaborate on my thoughts here instead. I hope it was...
Vaguely comprehensible.
Sorry, my mind is a chaos blender!



The cover of ANDROMEDA # 150, "Time Crystal" Tales from the Stanislaw-Lem-Club Dresden

The Letter of Comment:

Lloyd Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd. Etobicoke,
ON CANADA M9C 2B2
February 25, 2013
Dear Wolf:
Thank you muchly for issue 13 of CounterClock. I'd read online on Facebook. You weren't happy with the last couple of issues...hey, you put out issues where most of us didn't produce anything. You have intentions to make the future issues better, and no one can ask for more. However, issue 13 looks pretty good...
You produce the kind of zine you produce, and it's not fair to yourself to compare what you do to those of others. Different skills, different software...as above, you do produce a zine, and many don't. Do a better job next time, as you say, but most of all, satify yourself. If we get your zine, we'll be happy, too. I try my best to write clearly and to try to relate the ideas I have in mind in my letter writing; I don't always succeed, but I do try. With the advent of zines being superseded by blogs and webpages, participating in zines is a proud and lonely thing, and any participation is appreciated by your readers.
I hope you have more dialogue with Theresa Derwin... "Ha!" could mean anything, but I don't see anything negative coming from her. As you say here, 20% of meaning comes from voice, and 70% from body language, which means that we may not be able to assume any true meaning from any e-mail message. This may explain the misunderstandings and assumptions that cause so many fights and feuds online. We also like to hide behind the relative anonymity and distance of the web to lash out at others who might dare to disagree with our opinions.

Benedict XVI has resigned as Pope, and we are now learning what Joseph Ratzinger will do once he has shed his papal robes. Looks like it will be self-imposed exile on the grounds of the Vatican, probably for the rest of his life. Vatican and RC officials haven't had to deal with a papal resignation for close to 600 years, so I guess they have to play it by ear, and see what Ratzinger wants to do. I've seen the comparison and resemblance with the Star Wars character, so when I first learned that the Pope was resigning, my first thought was that Emperor Palpatine is resigning...

I think somewhere in my fanzine collection is an old issue of SF Journalien. I have always liked newszines as they bring you up to date with what's happening, especially when you are not that well connected to the fannish grapevine. Canadian fandom has had a few newszines over the years, I have always liked Ansible and File 770, but I did remember getting copies of Roelof Goudriaan's Shard of Babel, which was my first window to European fandom. Not only have newszines gone away for the most part, but so has the much of the community those newszines reported on.

The constant barrage of advertising that comes our way has had one benefit for us, that that's the ability to ignore that advertising. I get spam on the computer, on my landline phone and on my cellphone. I ignore it and carry

on. At least on the computer, there is sometimes the opportunity to filter out the spam. In some ways, it is good to know that particular goods and services exist, but I don't like the efforts to influence my decision to purchase those items or services. That decision remains mine.
I started my career in publishing, and that's what I've known most of my life. It's become very difficult to get back into publishing, not just because of the web, but also because of unions that represent my profession, but keep me out because I am not already in it. I can get a job if I am a member of the union, but to get the job, I must already be a member.

There are so many hobbies we could fill our time with, and with the web, we can have so much more involvement and spend so much more money on each of them. For me, it's stamp collecting, shortwave radio listening and science fiction fandom. Facebook brings so many other interests to the fore, but that when you realize you've spread yourself, your attention,and your time and money pretty thin, and you have to make some hard decisions about what you do. I still have my stamp collections, and shortwave radio is largely supplanted by the web, so I suspect I will be involved in fandom until my interests in it completely go away. That's just a matter of time.

We quite enjoyed the first Hobbit movie, but of course, because we'd already seen the amazing Lord of the Rings movies, we compared them, and found The Hobbit lacking, and it's not the movie's fault. I've had the chance to watch the three LotR movies one after the other, and I hope for the same opportunity once the three Hobbit movies are released.

Do you have any plans to attend next year's Worldcon in London? We are still saving to go, and we expect that will be our final overseas trip. Nothing is guaranteed, of course, but we are making our plans, seeing what the hotels are like, and we plan to check our local British Tourist Board office. Never too early to make the preparations for such a trip.

Your AD&D graphics on page 11 remind me of something I can boast about a little...I went to journalism school with Ed Greenwood, who designed the dungeon for AD&D 2nd edition, I think it was. As classes were going on, Ed would design each room in the dungeon, and while I have never been a gamer, three of the rooms within it were my own design. I still see Ed from time to time at local conventions here.
Many thanks for this issue, and I do look forward to the next issue.
Yours, Lloyd Penney.

WAHF: *Theresa Derwin, Teddy Harvia*

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Special thanks to:
Rainer Eisfeld, Germany
Rob Hansen, UK
Nina Horvath, Vienna /Austria
Ingo Kwiat, Germany
Roger Murmann, 2nd Chair SFCD
Thomas Recktenwald, Germany

Closing statement & LoC reply:

Oh, no! Lloyd, I can't believe what I am reading! What am I going to do if you lose interest in fandom? You are the *only one* who still reads this fanzine, or so I am led to believe. I hope you stay for many years still, because you are the main-kicker-in-the-butt I needed to get out of my trench. You are **the** spreader of happiness to faneds around the world with your legendary letter-hacking.
But, yes I understand your point of view.

I feel I have improved between the previous issue and this one. Not by much, but enough to satisfy my own demand. A famous sf-writer who also once commented on CounterClock used the word *substance* in relation to this humble publication. This has made me proudly stretch my back and ambition in this quest to reach the tall white Tower of Trufandom. I believe to have found the shield I momentarily lost in the Canyon after heavy bombardment (actually mostly rocks I threw up in the air which came down on my own head).

I think I know why critics have to come down so hard on everything which is popular, like The Hobbit. It's because they know, and could have done it much better. It is infact the critics who should make the movies and directors like Peter Jackson, who should be the critics.

I would so much like to attend the WorldCon in London next year, but nothing is certain. I would also like to attend the Shamrokon / Eurocon in Dublin the following week and the ColoniaCon and the FinnCon, HanseCon, FilkContinental, the SweCon, ElsterCon, EasterCon and at least one Croatian con as well as the annual British Filkconvention. Oh, my Ghu, how many cons I would love to attend...
There are times when being between jobs sucks more than other times. Particularly when one is between jobs for such a long time.

Finally, with the quarter of a page to go, half an hour and final proof-reading, then converting the whole *schlamassl* to pdf, I feel relieved. I did it! A new personal best.
Before long, I will be able to hold an issue of Counter-Clock next to my issue of Andromeda # 111 and be able to say. "*Yup! I'm back. In English this time.*" And before you know it, I may even be able to actually sell a few words (again). That would be a real sensation.

I have a feeling, I know what would have become of me, had we not moved from Germany to Sweden over New Years Eve, January 1st 1974/1975. I am quite certain now that I would have become a Perry Rhodan-author.

Next month... hell, NO! In less than two weeks, I will go to a Perry Rhodan-Convention in Garching, near Munich, to see what such a convention is like. I knew there was a reason why I had to wrap up this issue by today.
A second reason is, that Roberto Quaglia arrives here the day after tomorrow and that is an event which (*to me*) is more jolly than Christmas. And as Ralph Lundsten once wrote, I wish you a Merry Cosmos!
Fhannishly,

Wolf von Witting