



The Sixty first issue of a sort-of letter substitute, kinda thing. Maybe weekly, maybe not. Available from:

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Available via the World Wide Web, or as an email attachment. I recommend the Portable Document Format (pdf) or, if you insist, a word or Rich Text Format (rtf) can also be emailed. Get in touch and we'll sort something out. You are going to [TorCon III](#), aren't you? Dated, already, 20/10/02.

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## An Craic

Well it has been a few weeks since the wedding (you can watch a video of the ceremony at my Wedding website [Wedding video](#) - thanks to Mark McCann for the video) and I'm settling back down into work and life generally. Time to get TommyWorld back up and running again.

I've got the second part of James' Bacon triptych on WorldCons, which will be appearing here shortly, but first of all I wanted to catch up with the locs and comments you guys have been sending in. I know that some of you take a lot of time and effort in putting these together and it is also helpful for me to know what you all think of the stuff I've been doing. So here we go.

[Lloyd Penney](#) "Hello again from Toronto! The discussions about fan/fanzine rooms/lounges, etc., and this is a carryover from online discussions on Smofs or Trufen, one or the other... these are my opinions.

A fan room is a room where various fan activities can take place, such as fan panels, club tables, fanzine sales, etc. If there are refreshments available to make it a lounge of some sort, great. A fan lounge is a hospitality area for a specific group of fans, possibly not all the attendees of the convention. If it were for all the members of the convention, it would be called the con suite. (Very North America-centrist of me, but all I can say is what I know.) A fanzine lounge or fanzine room narrows down its function to a room where fanzines are handed out, sold, read and enjoyed, with the lounge being an area from refreshments from a cooler, refrigerator or full bar. A room seems to imply an area of activities, while a lounge implies an escape from the madding crowd of the convention. With all this in mind, I've been in very busy fan rooms, and very relaxing fanzine lounges. (I know I said in my letter of comment on TW51 that defining these terms would be splitting hairs over very little. So, there we are, split hairs at no extra charge.)

Another fanzine I enjoy when it arrives is *QuasiQuote*. I felt that the latest QQ might have been a rush job, let's get this done and mailed out. However, I'll always look at content over format. I think a lot of us can offer horror stories about our first conventions. Mine was at Erindale College in Mississauga, now the University of Toronto at Mississauga, and it was called Erincon 3. This is what Spider Robinson referred to as Nonexistacon many years ago. The committee decided that they'd save money if they didn't print up so many flyers, with the result that few people knew about the convention at all. Yvonne and I were dating at the time, and she told me about the con, so off we went to find a meagre event with one or two hucksters, episodes of Star Trek blaring away in films rooms, and not much else to do. A few vending machines were supposed to take the place of a con suite. We entertained ourselves as best as we could for a couple of hours, and then we decided to leave. I was assured by Yvonne and the few others there that seeing that was my first convention, I could expect future ones to be much better, and they were right.

I haven't tried to actively recruit people into fanzine fandom, but I have tried to do fanzine panels at conventions, with varying degrees of success. Sometimes, no one shows up, but when they do, I get some surprising statements about what the average fan knows about fanzines. They've told me that fanzines are 200- to 300-page thick publications, often Cerlox-bound, and full of fan fiction and illustrations about Star Trek, Babylon 5, Buffy the Vampire Slayer or any other popular SF programme. When I present them with *File 770*, *Mimosa*, *Banana Wings*, *Thyme* or any other fanzine I might have brought with me, I explain how to get them, what they contain, etc., and I am haughtily told, those aren't REAL fanzines! Others ask why anyone wouldn't talk about their favorite SF in fanzines, and when I say they do, about SF books, I'm told books are boring, and SF shows are fun, and much quicker to get through. Yet others ask why talk about things other than SF in a fanzine? If it's not SF, they don't want to talk about it. I assure them there are hundreds, if not thousands of fans around the world who produce these zines, they think me slightly mad. Maybe they're right, but it's my own madness, thank you very much, and I'm not suffering from it, I'm quite enjoying it. Yvonne are FanGoHs at Eeriecon 5 in Niagara Falls, NY this coming spring, and I expect I'll do another fanzine panel to see who comes to see the mad fan.

57...I understand James Bacon's essay only too well. There are arrogant fans everywhere, making up a substantial minority of fandom as a whole. Arrogant fans are not worth your time, and often sour you on your interests. Arrogant fans almost kept us from getting involved in conventions and fanzines. Such arrogance has caused us to leave areas of fandom, like costuming, for friendlier interests. Arrogance pushed us off the local Ad Astra and Torcon committees. However, we've been lucky in that we've moved on to greener pastures, and happier groups. An arrogant fan usually mean an unhappy fan, as are those around him. We refuse to be daunted, and I think that's why we've been involved in fandom for about 25 years each.

I wish there was a pill to take to give you all the knowledge of fandom so that the more knowledgeable fans wouldn't laugh at you. It's easy to say that all knowledge is contained in fandom or fanzines; it's getting the knowledge that's the tough part. I am always finding out more about fandom and its more esoteric areas of interest, so I call it an eternal learning experience. Those who claim to know it all are the arrogant ones; if my learning is deficient in some area, I extend the invitation to enlighten me. There's no way new fans could ever have access to the knowledge any fans might be able to accumulate in 20 to 25 years of fanning. Give him a break and let him learn. We have a habit of forgetting our own neohoods. Two years ago at Chicon 2000, I was handed a two-page essay called The Neo-Fan Manifesto, written by Julie Stickler. I still have it. It should be required reading for all fans. It's available at [www.emcit.com/neofan.shtml](http://www.emcit.com/neofan.shtml) .

So, tomorrow is your wedding day, and once again, congratulations to you and Leslie. We'll be thinking about you tomorrow, and we'll let the First Thursday group know. Take care, and we know you'll always treasure the day."

***I have had to edit Lloyd's comments heavily – he also touched on a lot of other topics and stuff even I daren't print, thankfully it was already DNQed. Thanks Lloyd.***

[Mike Scott](#) "It may or may not be prudent to comment on the first part of a three-parter, and you may or may not get a chance to do anything with this in the near future, but I can hardly contain my disagreement with James Bacon. Feel free to forward this to him. There are several problems with putting up a complete organisation chart for Interaction now and asking people to fill in the blanks. The first one is that it is common for people to volunteer for positions for which they are manifestly unsuitable, and it makes it hard to turn them down politely if you have publicly stated that you're looking for volunteers for that position.

The second is that three years before the con you don't actually know what jobs will need doing, how long they will take, and so on. Some jobs may be completely unforeseeable -- I doubt that Intersection realised in 1992 that they would need a webmaster by 1995, for example. But also, until you've filled the senior

positions, you don't know how people will want to structure their divisions and departments.

Finally, and most seriously, if you advertise the vacancies now you run a serious risk of filling them. This will probably generate a burst of activity now, when it's at best useless and at worst dangerous, which will then die down over the next few years when it should be building up. People lose interest, suffer life experiences, and so on. This is one of the major lessons of Intersection. The reason for not recruiting people until 2004, or even 2005, is that you get the initial burst of energy when it's actually needed."

***Thanks Mike – I'm sure James will address these in forthcoming parts.***

[Michael Beeney](#) "Hi Tommy, We didn't have any problem with the visa - it was the permission to marry which was the killer. Ola came here for a holiday and returned to Poland to get the visa - a very early morning trip to the British Embassy in Warsaw, a long wait and she got it fairly quickly - when they asked what we had in common she couldn't think of anything but they knew because of her smile - ain't love wonderful. Arranging the wedding in Poland was the difficult part - at that time there was no concordance between church and state i.e. the church wedding was not the legal wedding - Polish couples usually had the registry office wedding in the morning and the church wedding in the afternoon.

To have the registry office wedding, I had to produce a document from my government (British) stating that I was not already married - only Germany produces this document so the Poles assume the British do as well and want to see it. So we found in place of a document I would have to hire a solicitor and apply for an exemption from the court in Poland - once we had the exemption I was free to marry - as long as I went to London and swore an oath in front of the Polish ambassador that I was not already married in the UK - so why did I need to go to court????

We took Ola's passport with the finance's visa and her birth certificate to the registry office in Omagh and got married here - had the church wedding later in Poland. Problem solved, except.... The British marriage certificate (and the marriage) was legal everywhere else except Poland!!! The next time we were in Poland we tried to apply for a Polish equivalent which lists chosen married name and that of any children. After lots of frustration and conflicting information where a small regional registry office claimed that they knew more than the London embassy, we finally got the certificate - only to discover we were outside the time limit and all we paid for was a direct translation of our UK certificate. Lots of money wasted on official translations of my documents which had to be in a particular format. Oh, we also needed a copy of Ola's birth certificate - she was born in one town which amalgamated with another and then separated again - each district denied that they held her records and we never found a copy (we used an old copy). Six years on I still feel the frustration...

Anyway, about all the running about and phone calls home to get documents sent over - do you know that it is now my job to do those things for you - check my website at [www.belfastconciierge.co.uk](http://www.belfastconciierge.co.uk) - a good chance to slip in a plug - one phone call could solve it all and I have a few colleagues in New York. The white text is a million times better."

***And I thought Leslie and I had it bad...***

**IAHF:** James & Alix, Eugene Doherty, Damian Kearney A line from 'Fiddler on the Roof' springs to mind, '... Here's to wishing you the future of your choice ...', Mark McCann, Max, Dave Langford, Kim Huett, Alison Freebairn and loads of people wishing Leslie and I the best. Thank you one and all.

This is being distributed to a whole bunch of friends on the net, if you received this and would NOT like to be on the mailing list please accept my apologies for this intrusion and let me know so that you will not be bothered by further ramblings. If you know someone who would like to be on the mailing drop me a line.