



Revenant 2

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Yet another fanzine from Eric Mayer, February, 2012 mail: groggy.tales@gmail.com

The Ink Stained Wraith

About three o'clock this afternoon I opened up a tin of Chef Boyardee lasagna. Mary and I tend to be grazers, eating light meals and snacking frequently.

"According to the label, it's the taste kids love," I told her.

The smell of that tomato sauce they only seem to use in tinned pasta jolted me backwards more than half a century. What was I doing at home, in the middle of the afternoon, eating a bowl of Chef Boyardee, when I should have been in class? There was lacking only a sore throat and Bob Barker's Truth or Consequences on the television to make the illusion complete.

Before I'd got my spoon back to the bowl I was sixty-two again, official early retirement age, were I able to retire. But for a second, somehow, I had been a gradeschooler.

Maybe exactly the same neurons had fired in the precise pattern they had one day back in 1959 allowing me to re-live the identical state of consciousness I had experienced then.

Or maybe I've never grown up.

Part of what took me back was doubtless that I was frittering away my time playing with this fanzine. A computer has replaced my box of Crayolas but my motivation hasn't changed. Many people stifle the creative impulse as they get older. Our society considers it part of the maturation process. Leave it to me to be out of step.

Not that I 'm invariably in the minority. For example, I've always been a baseball fan. A fan of the New York Yankees no less. This time of year, as winter drags on.,looking forward to the baseball season helps keep me going. And did you know the season actually starts on February 19 this year? That's the day pitchers and catchers report to the Yanks' spring training camp in Florida.

Each baseball season is a new book. The first line never changes: "Play ball!" But the story is different every year.



FIELDING PRACTICE

My dad and I never got along as well as we should have. We were too much alike and I didn't want to admit it. Both of us probably neglected a lot of important things for our art, in his case painting, in mine, writing. Then he got sick and after the better part of a lifetime it was suddenly too late to rectify matters. One weekend in the early spring of that year, I found myself alone in a hotel room with HBO. At the end of *Field of Dreams*, where father and son play catch, my eyes teared up.

The Mayer family leaned towards aesthetics rather than athletics, but baseball was a prominent part of my childhood experience, along with scraped knees, bicycles and crayons. When I was a kid, even skinny, near-sighted bookworms played ball in the backyard when they didn't have their noses in a Tom Swift Jr. adventure.

There was also a history of baseball in the family. My

grandfather had a reputation as a tough local ballplayer back in the early part of the twentieth century. An old buddy of his recalled him not only as an accomplished pitcher and catcher but the best fighter in the county. An important skill in an era when games tended to end in brawls.

Before one important pick-up game the priest who was sponsoring the team promised a reward if my grandfather hit a homerun, which he did. The catcher's mitt and bat which lived out in the barn behind our house, just inside the door, amidst the rakes and shovels, had been my grandfather's payment, or so my dad said.

By the time I was old enough to play ball my grandfather was too sick to. Dad let me and my friends use the bat and mitt when we took an interest in them after my grandfather was gone. We venerated that ancient equipment. It was impossibly old. The catcher's mitt

resembled its modern counterpart about as much as a trilobite resembles a trout. It was a round, leather pillow, scuffed and bleached by age, with a deep baseball-sized depression in the middle. It had no flexibility and no amount of Neatsfoot oil gave it any. You needed to get the mitt in front of the ball and then keep the ball from popping out with your free hand. Which wasn't easy since it weighed enough to sprain a scrawny wrist. We figured it must have been one of the first mitts to drag itself out of the pre-Doubleday ooze onto the emergent baseball diamonds, though, in reality, it didn't go back quite that far.

The bat was prehistoric too. It had met baseballs that were around when Babe Ruth was still setting records and calling his shots. The wood felt harder than anything to be found in the bat racks at the local sporting goods store. The barrel was massive. Even the handle was thick enough to drive a ball. At 42 ounces, the bat lived up to its "Louisville Slugger" label. Although maybe "Louisville Club" would have been even more appropriate. My friends and I could hardly lift that much lumber let alone swing it.

Nevertheless, we used to haul The Bat out into the field behind the house for games and practice. At critical moments, with the score tied, or when Mickey Mantle was due up during a simulated World Series, we'd toss away whatever little stick we had been using and ceremoniously take up the all-powerful Baseball Slayer. It always felt like it was filled with magic from the baseball's age of legends. (Or maybe my grandfather had put some lead fishing weights inside) Once we got the bludgeon in motion we had a little



bit of the Babe and the Mick in us. The slightest contact with the pitch sent the ball into the weeds at the end of the field. A miss and the weight carried the batter around in a circle. He usually ended up on flopped on his back in the dirt, doing his best "shot dead at the O.K. Corral" routine, which at least ended the game dramatically.

I knew about professional baseball players from playing the Strat-O-Matic board game. I spent endless hours throwing the red and white dice and consulting the player cards. It must have looked like a tedious pastime, but those long columns of numbers and complicated charts transported me to distant baseball stadiums as surely as my science fiction books took me to far away galaxies.

Whether managing the Yankees at my bedroom desk, or performing outdoor dramas with my friends, I enjoyed baseball, like most other things, in the safety of my imagination.

I never played organized baseball, not even Little League. My brother did and I still remember watching him hit a double in a big game at the end of the season. I didn't have the coordination, or strength, or self-confidence.

My one moment of horsehide heroism came when I blasted a homerun in the bottom of the ninth during the informal "Boys Club" game my best friend's uncle arranged for local kids every Saturday. Actually "popped" would be a better description than "blasted." It was what we called a "Chinese homerun" -- which meant "cheap" as the labor of Chinese immigrants had been, I guess. The ball traveled about fifty feet into the thicket on the hillock behind the first base rock. I rounded the bases before it could be found and disentangled from the brush. In newsprint, in the "Notes From Our Neighborhoods" column at the back of the local weekly, it looked like I had sent the ball soaring out of the park. A lot more impressive than the Methodist Church bake sale or Mrs Brown's niece visiting from Schenectady.

My dad never pushed me into organized athletics. In fact, as a high school art teacher he was pretty much against sports. His kilns and paints had lost out to new football uniforms at too many budget meetings.

We played catch sometimes. He slung the ball sideways. Any other way hurt. One day when he was in his early twenties he'd spent a whole afternoon throwing to a visiting friend who had played some semi-pro ball. My dad showed off his curve for hours -- a darn good curve according to the friend -- and the next day he couldn't raise his arm. His shoulder finally stopped hurting but he never

could throw right again.

I liked fielding "practice" better than catch anyway. "Practice" was a euphemism. Since I never played ball except with my friends I really didn't have anything to "practice" for. I enjoyed it for its own sake, like most of the writing I've done over the years.

Summer evenings, after my dad got home from work, I'd don my glove and position myself on the back lawn and he'd hit me flies, pop-ups and liners. He started by sending the ball right to me, then gradually he placed it to one side, further back, or maybe a long ways in front of me. I needed to take a few steps, then trot after the ball, then run all out.

We'd be out there until dark. Sometimes I was disappointed as the ball grazed my glove and fell to the grass, hit a few inches too far for me to make the spectacular grab I envisioned. Other times, I tracked the ball down but was sure I could have run a couple steps further if I'd had to.

Twilight fell. The pines around the edge of the property became black sentinels and the lawn filled up with night. I could barely see my dad. It was a second after the crack of the bat before the ball emerged from the darkness of the yard into the pale gray sky.

I always wanted just one more chance. I was looking for that perfect catch. The catch where I judged the ball's flight precisely, pivoted as quickly as possible, raced as fast as I could, stretched out to my full length, at exactly the right instant, and sprawled on the ground, half the ball sticking out of the webbing but held firmly.

No matter how many good catches I made, it always

seemed there was a far better one, some ultimate catch -- a Willie Mays tracks down Vic Wertz' World Series drive catch -- still out there somewhere.

My dad kept hitting balls into the fading light until, finally, I would hear the sound of bat against ball and stay where I was, staring up into the sky, unable to see anything but a stray firefly. I doubt he wanted to spend so long hitting baseballs after teaching all day. Maybe he understood my quest.

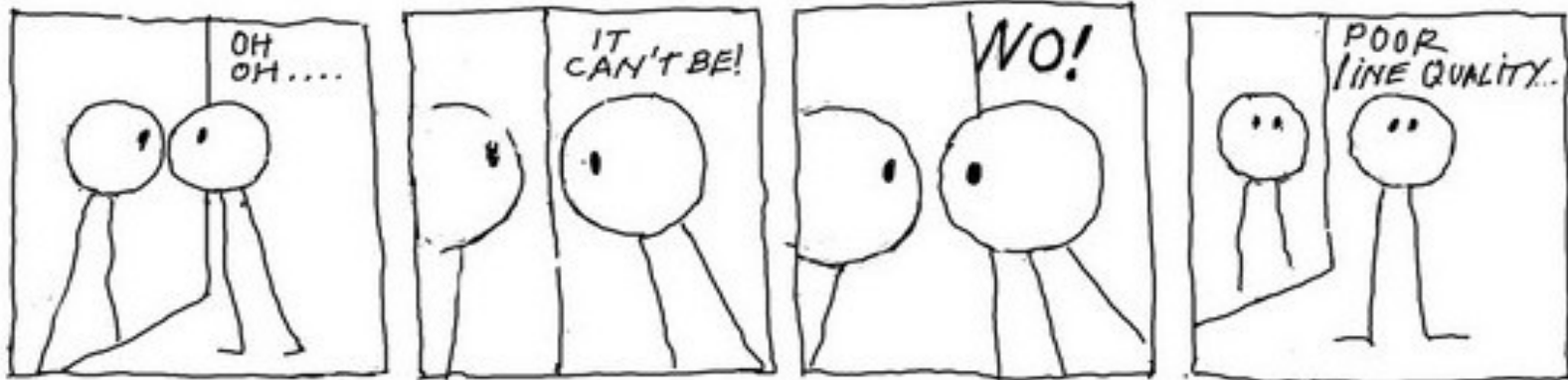
Artists, whether they work with words or paints, or play an instrument, or whatever other form their efforts

might take, spend their whole lives trying to make the perfect catch, trying to find the elusive limits of their own abilities. There's always a better painting or story barely out of reach. Next time we'll be able to track it down.

But maybe that's just me. I wonder what Dad would think if I posed the theory to him. He'd probably disagree in no uncertain terms and then we'd argue.

[This essay originally appeared in John Purcell's excellent fanzine, Askance.]

DIG! by AR



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Paths

We lost our cat Sabrina a year ago this month. Our outside cats seem to have departed as well. They were only "ours" in the sense that we watched them from our windows. I suspect the neighbors fed them, The white cat with the black spots always looked well fed although she supplemented her diet by hunting. We had proof. There's nothing like glancing out the back window and seeing a cat with the squirming hind legs of a chipmunk hanging out of its mouth.

The white cat always followed the same route: across the back yard, behind the shed, along the perimeter of the yard next door where the grass meets the woods, then through a gap in the pines, onto the next property and down past the side of the house there, vanishing from our sight in the direction of the road. She returned along the same route exactly. There might as well have been road markers pointing the way. Maybe there were noticeable markers if you were a cat.

I wonder did the cat invariably take the same route out of habit? Has it been a cat highway since time immemorial or did this cat choose it? And why? Merely because cats prefer to skirt the edges or because it takes her past the best hunting spots? Does it intersect a chipmunk thruway? It would be faster to simply cut straight across all the yards.

When I was a kid there were ant paths worn into my

grandparents' front yard. They led from the flagstone walk to the big, partially hollow maple trees in front. The paths were no wider than a child's finger, but distinct. How many ants and how many years does it take to wear a tiny rut from which no blade of grass emerges? The paths were always busy. The ants hurrying toward the sidewalk were unburdened, those returning to the maples, where they must have had colonies, carried bits of leaves, or maybe a dead aphid or even a cracker crumb. If you dropped a twig on their road the ants would quickly congregate to remove the obstruction.

I once lived in a house where generations of mice had gnawed a gap in the corner of a plank door. An indentation had been worn into the floorboards where a procession of mice had scurried through the gap on their way along what was no doubt a well established route.

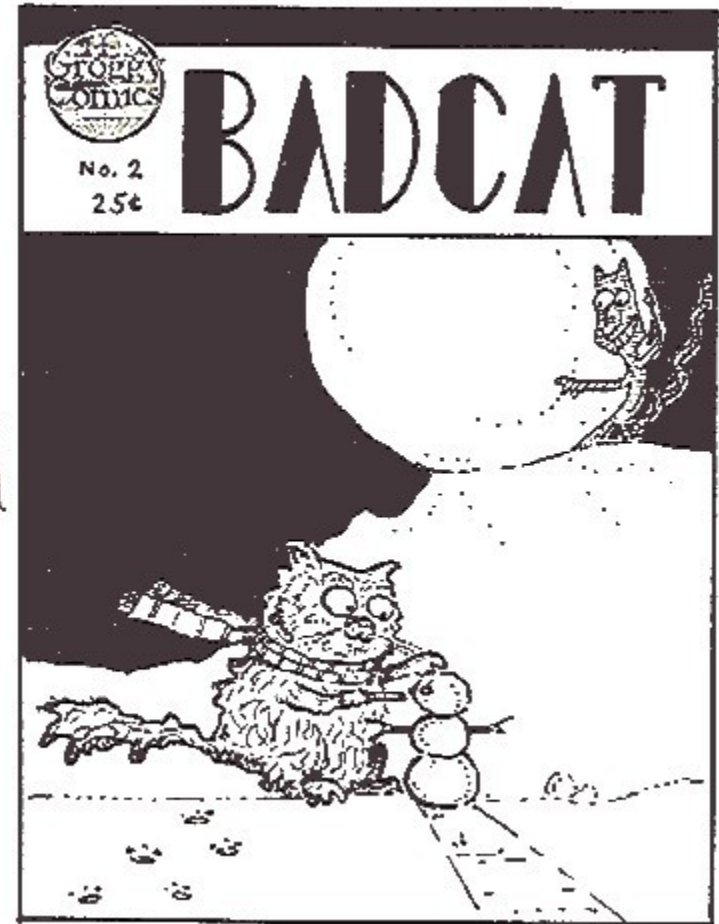
Waiting for spring is a time for thinking about paths. I suppose most of us will tend to take familiar paths. We avoid roads we don't know, the idea of bushwacking appalls us. Do we stay on our paths for a reason or from habit? It's comforting to have a path to follow. Whether it is always good or not is another question.

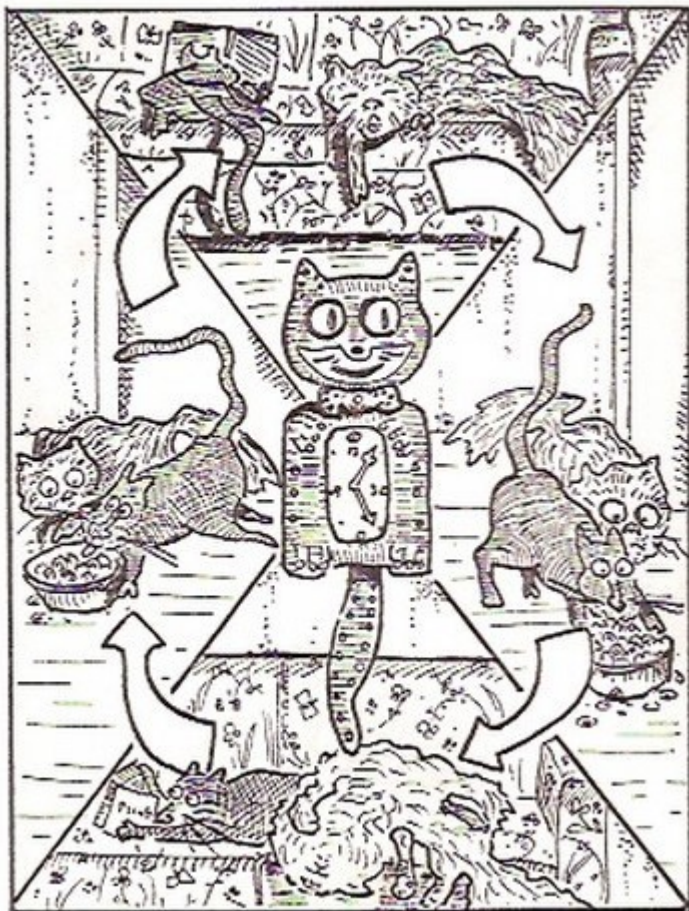


Here's the second issue of my Bad Cat mini-comic, from 1986. For a couple years I spent long evenings at my desk in the basement drawing comics by the light of a tensor lamp.

Sometime --in the eighties I think -- there was a revolution in pens and ink drawing thanks to the advent of a wide variety of felt tips. . Early on in my brief fanartist career, I struggled with the old fashioned metal nib drawing pens that you dipped into a bottle of India Ink. You had to know how to vary your line and avoid splodges. They were unforgiving.

The felt tips, however, came in a wide variety of widths. Narrow points for lettering, huge paintbrush points for filling in dark areas. They were a lot of fun to use. I am not sure if they come in such wide varieties these days. In art supply shops, perhaps. In the drug stores where I usually picked them up the variety seems to have vanished.





YOU'RE LUCKY TO HAVE A CUSHY JOB LIKE THIS, SID.



THEY PULLED YOU OUT OF THE GUTTER. YOU WERE HAPPY ENOUGH TO COME IN WHEN YOU WERE STARVING AND HALF FROZEN.



I TRIED TO WARN THEM ABOUT YOU.



COME OFF IT, KARACHI. WHAT SELF RESPECTING CAT WOULD SETTLE FOR A LOUSY GIG LIKE THIS? EAT AND SLEEP EAT AND SLEEP.



3

I THINK I CARRY IT OFF WITH STYLE.



AND PUTTING UP WITH THAT ROTTEN KID.



I ENJOY WORKING WITH PEOPLE.



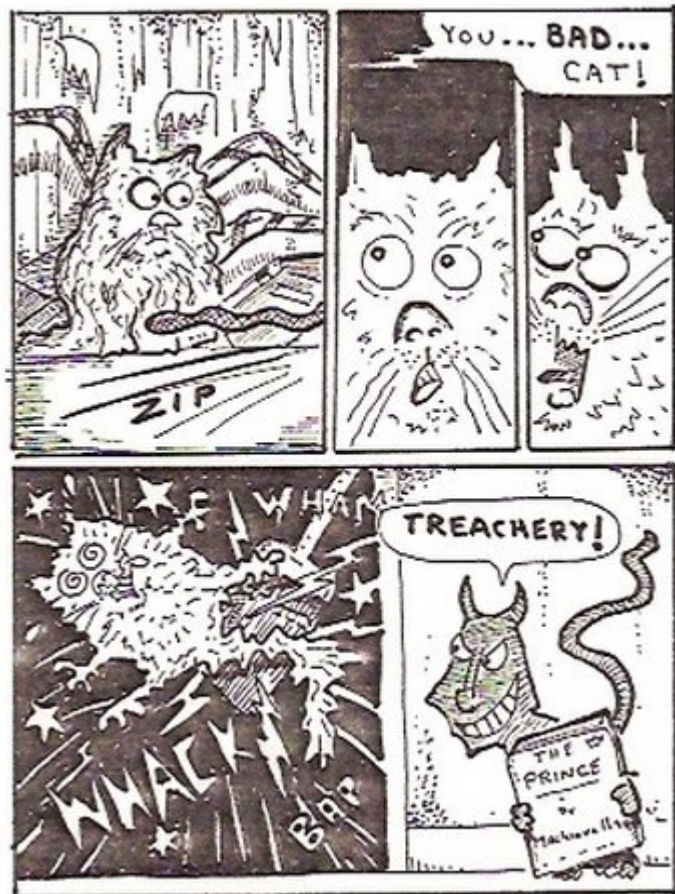
THIS JOB DOESN'T UTILIZE MY UNIQUE TALENT.



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Fanacademia

Bad Cat is in the collection of the University of Michigan Library. Imagine that! Several years ago I ran across the listing while browsing. Seems a peculiar thing to save in a library. There are some Groggies in university collections also, along with many other fanzines.

Why? For what reason might someone consult a collection of mouldering twilltone 100 years from now (or even 200, or 300 -- let's be grandiose!)? Fans of the future would doubtless love to a glimpse of what their way of life was like in ancient times. And they would be enthralled by what the ancients did with crude, mechanical duplicators. A hectograph is only about one step above a stone tablet.

But what about non-fans? Universities surely won't be maintaining collections for the benefit of any fans who might still exist.

Will nonfans find fanwriting or fanart to rival the greatest nonfan creations of our times? I doubt it. Fanzine collections will not be of special aesthetic value. Rather, they might contribute to a study of the psychology of cults, or be viewed as a precursor of the Internet.

Mostly, I suspect, future historians will find in fanzines an invaluable source of what folks who weren't paid to write were thinking back in the twentieth century. The personal stuff that often goes into fanzines is all over blogs today but until recently such personal material was fairly

hard to find.

If that's the case then those fanzines with less value to fans or collectors today, might be the most valuable in the future. Historians looking for insights into our times won't learn much from faanish humor, or Brandonizations, or convention reports. Zines filled with sparkling faanish content would reveal far less than the unvarnished mundane natter in a boring crudzine.

Obviously in my publishing, I am aiming at posterity.



Messages From the Other Side

Editorial comments are in italics.

Brad Foster

Well, you were -almost- the first zine I got of 2012, but Langford sent an email of the new Ansible right before the notice of Revenant from efanzone. Still, you are getting this first one in right at the start of the year, giving you the full 12 months to do just 5 more. After the 17 issue run of E-Ditto, be curious to see if you end up doing more than six issues of this in this year.

I'm going to make an effort to control myself this year.

The definition for revenant that I found was: "A revenant is a visible ghost or animated corpse that was believed to return from the grave to terrorize the living". So

I can see the animated corpse returning from the grave part



of the definition in this zine, but not quite as sure of the terrorizing bit.

To me it's kind of scary that I still want to do a fanzine after 17 issues last year.

I like the horizontal format design to better use the computer/browser screen format. If not planning any print versions, certainly is easier to read on the screen without all the squinting if try to get it all on the screen, or the down-up-down-down-up-down etc scrolling needed if get it to a size comfortable to read.

I'm relieved that people seem generally to like the format. To me it seems natural for a ezine but not too many faneds

have adopted it. I can think of David Burton with Catchpenny Gazette/Pixel and Dave Locke with Time and Again.

The cover art is wonderful. And going by the reaction I've had over the years to my own owl image

<http://www.jabberwockygraphix.com/nightfloater.html>

if you've got a good quality copy of it, or the original, you ought to do up some full size prints. The owl folks do love themselves more pictures of owls!

I really appreciate the comment but, in all honesty, my own can't carry your owl's...uh...dead mouse?

Liked "Adventures in Small Press", and not just because you made reference to me in such a complimentary way. It's just always nice to know I'm not the only person around here with a foot in more than one odd little cult of interest. (Cult? Maybe "sect"? Whatever, just a perpetual outsider in the world of big groups.) So, your next assignment is to find out whatever happened to Donnie Jupiter!

Anyone interested in Donnie Jupiter (Don Marquez) and check out his site: <http://www.cartuneland.com/index.html>

Loved the Reus cartoon on page 13!

His stuff cracked me up but I haven't been able to find out what he's doing these days.

Having these pages from "Bad Cat" out here in a group now officially puts the lie to all your own comments over time about what a poor artist you are. These are wonderful, both in design and execution. Puts me in mind of Ted Bolman for cool line and image. Since you've started off here with the first issue, you -have- to publish the next two in future issues.

I have scans of those so I can do that.

I don't see any reason you couldn't print a 3-D zine using the old red-and-blue inks technique. You can print anything you want these days. It's having the proper glasses to view them that would be the trick. And now that I bring that up, did a quick search and right off the bat found you can get a set of 3 of the cardboard-frame styles for only \$2.75 through Amazon. Not that bad after all if someone wanted to do it....

Wonder if misaligned hectography would work? Better not to think about that.

David Burton

Since you'd decided to stop publishing E-DITTO I'd resigned myself to a fairly scarce amount of fanzine reading in 2012, only to be surprised to find you hadn't given up the zine-publishing ghost after all. I can't think of a better way

to start the New Year than reading your new zine. Okay, that's a lie, but some of the other ways I'd like to spend it involve several willing nubile young ladies, copious amounts of whipped cream, winning the Publisher's Clearinghouse Sweepstakes, and channeling Steve Jobs. Not all at the same time, mind you.

Oh. Not at the same time. Phew. I was wondering where Ed McMahon fit in....

Glad to see that you've decided to go with the horizontal rather than vertical format - much easier to read a digital zine that way. And that you haven't tied yourself to the hecto/ditto "schtick" as well - it'll open up the possibilities for layout and formatting.

I enjoyed the faux ditto but I think you need to keep moving on or your work gets stale and it is better to move on too soon rather than too late.

I guess if you weren't considered a "real" fan because you didn't attend conventions or have much face-to-face interaction with fans, I wouldn't be far behind you. I've only been to four cons (69 Worldcon in St. Louis before I even knew much about fandom, and three Midwestcons), and my last go-round in fandom (last decade - seems funny to write that now, but it's true) I had very little personal contact with fans; in fact a couple of lunches with mutual friend Dave Locke sums it up. But I always enjoyed being a "paper" fan.

Instead of "last go round in fandom" can't we say "most recent go-round"?

I enjoyed your article about Kiwanni and small press comics, and am sorry I missed it the first time around. I love these "behind the scenes" kind of articles. I got into collecting comics in the early to mid-90s for a while, although apparently after the hey-day of the small comics. The store I shopped at was incredibly well-stocked, and I'm pretty sure that had they been readily available, they would have been on the shelves. I think you should continue to reprint your comics in REVENANT. I haven't seen many of yours, but I've enjoyed the ones I have. Your drawing has a wonderful naive quality - and I mean that only in the best sense - and I appreciate your humor, written or drawn.

I have virtually no art training and it shows, but one of the beauties of amateur publishing is that we don't need to adhere to the sort of standards commercial publishers do. An artist, or writer who lacks adequate skills to reach a large, paying audience might nevertheless have interesting things to say to a smaller group who happen to be on the artist's same wavelength.

Ned Brooks

Nice issue of Revenant. Sheryl Strickland uses that title for her SFPazine, but I wouldn't worry about it. The "Kiwanni" comic reminds me of an elaborately printed one called "Dawn the Dark-Eyed" but I forget the faned's name.

There was even a poster, I think I know where that is. An outfit in NJ offers ditto and mimeo supplies on the Net - but I suspect their stock is just as old as mine. The machines that made ditto carbons must have all gone to scrap long since.

I reckon any ditto masters you have now would be perfect for printing Revenant because you'd only get a ghost of an image.

I confessed to Ned I had never heard of SFPA and he replied:

You never heard of SFPA?! I yam mortificated.... The Southern Fandom Press Alliance just celebrated its 50th anniversary mailing - and one of the founding members, Bob Jennings, is the new OE, replacing Guy Lillian. SFPA is said to have had the largest single mailing ever - the 100th mailing was over 1700 pages. I have been in SFPA over 40 years, and have the only (as far as I know) complete set to date. I'm sure that Sheryl, a librarian and past OE, does not care that her short-run apazine has the title also used for an e-fanzine.

The title has been used quite a few times but apparently not in a general circulation fanzine.

"Revenant" in my mind was an eldritch word that was used it gothic spookery to denote a return from the grave!

The OED reveals that in 1828 it definitely meant a ghost. By 1864 it could be a metaphorical ghost, and by 1886 it could just mean returning to a place you had been before. It's from the French "revenir", "to return". But oddly enough there is an obsolete archaic meaning from 1440, when they found a cite where it meant "pleasant"! Perhaps this was because you would "return" to something you had found pleasant.

A lot of mornings when I get out of bed I feel eldritch. All those meanings strike me as appropriate for a fan returned from gafia, except maybe pleasant. Words can have weird histories.

Lloyd Penney

It didn't take long to wind up E-Ditto, and start up Revenant, and good for you, even though this title's been in the prep stage for some time. (I've got a title in mind for my own zine...the whole project TBA.) Here are comments on the first issue.

I am really looking forward to seeing our master locsmith on the other side of the door...or something...damn metaphors can run away with you. Pub your ish!

I've been told by so many you can't take a fanzine title that has already been used. If only there was a master list of what's been taken, we'd know these things. It may be a crap shoot to pick a title, and then you may get blasted by your peers. I actually have two titles in mind, and I might even get to use them both.

As they used to tell me when I was a kid, you "can" but "may" you? There are lists of general circulation fanzines but APazines aren't as well documented and there have been billions and billions of them. Probably you're okay as long as you pick something obscure. Hyphen might not work.

I have been considering what to do with my own collection, about 20+ Bankers' Boxes of zines. I don't want to recycle or shred them, and I might want to give them to the Merril Collection, our local SF library, but whether or not they'd take them, I am not sure. I could give them to Murray Moore, I suppose, but his house is only so big. J It is possible that we've been in that mall...we used to go to Rochester every year for Astronomicon, but there's another con that has run its course.

I lived in Rochester for about twenty years but for some reason I never heard about Astronomicon. For much of that twenty years I was out of fandom which probably explains it. With a con that close, maybe I'd have showed up out of curiosity.

“Fandom, so neat, so nifty...too bad it's full of fans.” A caption from a Bill Rotsler cartoon, and so wise. We could be so much more inviting, not only to newcomers, but to each other. Some of us are just too eager when they detect a little weakness, or notice a small error or omission, or just plain smell a little blood.

Fanzine fandom is the most unwelcoming hobby I've ever encountered. Every other hobby cult I've been involved with, from mini-comics, to orienteering, to interactive fiction, has been thrilled just to have anyone share their obscure interests.

While I believe that the vast majority of fans are welcoming and freindly towards newcomers we have in fandom a small cadre of critical, insular loudmouths who do our hobby a disservice.

No, there are some things we recognize on television we wouldn't want our wives to know that we know. Porn, sports, cartoons...how do you know about THAT? We have to watch ourselves when we open our mouths. How do I know about that? Oh, nothing, just a good guess...

You expect me to comment on that when my wife reads this zine?

The Bad Cat cartoon is good...reminds me of Fat Freddy's Cat. Thanks for a good laugh!
I appreciate the encouragement. I am pawning more cats off on you this issue.

My loc...still no work. However, one government job is now in its second month of being decided upon. There's also been a change of responsibilities on the part of the team making the decision. Sigh...make up your minds! Two other

jobs are in hiatus, and I am waiting there, too. I don't want them all, I only want one! (Hurray for the Globe and Mail. Speaking of which...)

Hope the news is better by the time this sees print.

I'm done, the page is full. I should get myself some lunch before heading out to the evening job at the Globe and Mail. Take care, say hello to Mary for me, have a look at the FAAn Awards ballot on the Corflu page, I think, and see you next issue.

Ah yes, I guess I should vote for the FAAn Awards since I read plenty of fanzines last year. I'm kind of ambivalent about awards. I'm not sure they don't do more harm than good. People can get too wrapped up in them and then there are hard feelings.

Tony Cvetko

Even though the run is over I wanted to let you know that I've enjoyed E-Ditto very much. I discovered e-fanzines.com a little while ago and have been lurking around on occasion, reading some here and there. I haven't been involved in fandom for quite a while (it has to be over 20 years since I last wrote a loc), but reading people's various fanzines is like a new guilty pleasure.

E-Ditto has been the most fun, probably because it brings back those fanzine days in the 70's and 80's.

Tony, when I saw your name in my Inbox I just about fell over. One of the cool things about the Internet is how it allows people to reconnect.

This issue I particularly liked The Accursed Duplicator. It felt like the old days of fanzine publishing, alone in your basement or bedroom, in my case hand cranking out pages slowly on the cheap mimeograph I ordered from Sears. That was bad enough, I can't imagine going what you went through with hecto. Actually, reading your account brought back the smell of the mimeo ink...I always loved that smell. Once I got into college, I convinced the secretary in the Physics Dept to let me use their huge professional Gestetner, but I still miss that little piece of junk Sears cranker. Nice article.

In my case what I remember is the smell of duplicator fluid and of that pink, ink stain remover I was endlessly washing my hands with. Out, out duper spot!

There is something cool about hand cranking a duplicator and physically printing every single page.

I can't remember exactly when I stopped believing in Santa Claus. I can remember pretty clearly finding out from my friends that the mall Santas weren't really Santa, but Santa's helpers. I think every kid probably goes through that. Surprisingly, our ten year old daughter still believes. We thought for sure that she'd catch on by now, but unless she's

a really good actress, she's still into the whole Santa thing. We're thinking this is probably the last year, but I kind of hope not.

The accompanying photo depicts the moment when I should have stopped believing in Santa Claus.

From a LoC to Revenant

In my newfound quest to actually write to the zines I read, I'm writing about Revenant 1 before I change my mind. Why? First, now that I'm paying attention I've read some editors bemoaning the lack of locs of e-zines - rather lack-locster responses... *ouch*, that one hurt... And so I felt bad about reading and not responding. Second, it's either this or help my daughter study for a test tomorrow. Hey, let Mom help you! I have more...important...things to do.

If you feel bad about reading and not responding it proves you're a revenant like me. That attitude seems to have vanished.

I like that you did due diligence in researching the name of your new zine. Because you wouldn't want some old faneditor coming after you with a stern comeback on how you stole their 50 year old fanzine title. Thankfully, it seems to have worked out in your favor, well done!

Yes. I found quite a few Revenants but none that were in general circulation.



I related to your fanzine archive. I kept every single fanzine and apazine sent to me, but after college I moved several times. At one point I decided it just wasn't worth the hassle, and I disposed of the boxes. I really wish I hadn't done that. At least yours are safe under a shopping mall. I wonder where mine are...hmmmm..

Depends on how you disposed of them. Do fanzines go to heaven? Some crudzines might be on the reading shelf in Hell.

"One of Us" is interesting. I went to conventions starting in 1974 and into the mid 80s. Maybe it was just the nature of Midwest fandom, but my impression is that most of the con attendees were rooted in fanzines. I stopped going to cons in the early 90s because the vibe had changed, and a lot (not all) of those fanzine fans I knew had dropped out. But the e-people publishing on e-fanzines.com seem to talk about conventions a lot, so maybe things haven't changed after all. Maybe there's not really much difference between con fans and paper fans at all. Hard to say, I've long since gafiated.

Since I've never been to a convention -- except to walk into the Chambanacon hotel for about ten minutes where I met Mary in person for the first time -- I probably have no basis to even speculate about the relationship between cons and fanzine fandom, but I do anyway.

Cons were never an option for me, even if I;d been inclined to go. I was too broke and then, later, I was too broke and had family responsibilities and no time.

The highlight of this issue is your small press article. Wow, brings back memories. When I more or less gafiated in the mid/late 80s I started reading comic books - things like Love and Rockets, Zot, Flaming Carrot, Beanworld, that type of thing. Every Wednesday I would go to Dave's Comics & Collectibles in Royal Oak MI and pick up my week's worth of reading. On the front desk Dave kept a pile of mini-comics. I don't recall seeing anything from you there, but I plan on hauling out the comics boxes in our storage room and check out what's in there. By far my favorite was The Amazing Cynicalman by Matt Feazell (<http://home.comcast.net/~mattfeazell/>). I thought they were hilarious, because I was cynical and a lot of my friends were cynical. He spoke to us. So after reading your article I googled Cynicalman, found the website, and ordered his Feazell's book collecting the comics from back then. I'll be showing them to my daughter, so she can be cynical too!

Funny we both gafiated into alternative comics! Matt Feazell was way ahead of his time. Although stick figures have always been used in cartooning, he really made them into an art form and pushed them as a means of self expression. I wonder what he thinks about the success of stick figures, like XKCD on the Internet?

One last thing: We eat peanut butter on celery too. In fact, "ants on a log" is raisins on peanut butter filled celery. Delicious.

I haven't tried the raisins. Kids must love "ants on a log" just for the concept alone.

Dave Locke

Concerning BRIDE OF E-DITTO the thing I notice first is that the layout format of this digital fanzine is similar to that of some of the zines that Dave Burton and I generated. John Foyster did that about a decade ago. Of course, with my perszine/apazine UNSTUCK IN TIME the apa receives it printed, and the one-screen format would (I think) be at sea in an apa. For a digital genzine or perszine, whether printed out or not, no problem.

I see my fanzine efforts as purely digital so it makes sense to me to use a layout suited to a screen. Since E-Ditto emulated a dittoed zine it needed to paper-sized. Why weren't monitors, which initially only displayed text, configured the same as books.?

Pubbing your ish for a measured length of time ("Revenant, like E-Ditto it will run for a year, probably six issues") is definitely different from the usual fanzine's lifetime which probably could be stated as 'until I get tired of it or can't stand to do it anymore'.

Indeed, and it's a shame that publications started for the joy of it usually come to such a sour end. A preset run avoids that.

Yes, I'll occasionally look at a word or term or phrase and think it would make a great fanzine title or a good name for an article or column. Unfortunately I go a step further and write them down. So I have a list of these things. Most of them just sit there in the list, like OUT OF SPACE and CATBIRD SEAT and FIRE RETARDANT CATFISH. But maybe, one day...

Those are great titles. Why don't you publish one of each? Why does a fanzine need to stick to one name? We're not publishing Time or Newsweek here! Groggy was also called Groggy Stories and Groggy Tales and the first issue was Charm.

Yes, I've had an issue with not wanting to reuse a name that's already been called to duty as a fanzine title. I remember as a teenager twice writing Harry Warner Jr. to ask if he remembered a particular title I was thinking of using. I think it was Gary Deindorfer who suggested I just title my next fanzine HARRY WARNER, JR. And twice I've had a zine title (AWRY) used by someone else, though in both cases I told them I was done with it and to feel free, though neither did and instead opted to change the title. Pat Virzi, in one or another mailing list on Aug 11, 2003, wrote: "I used "Awry" also, and learned immediately that as soon as

I think of a clever fanzine title I must immediately abandon it, as Dave Locke has no doubt already wrung out the last dregs of its fannish essence in the distant past." The fanzine I put out as TIME AND AGAIN wasn't a new title even with me. It was my previous genzine title and I put out the first two issues in the mid-80s, and for all of thirty seconds or so I thought of bringing back the AWRY title. For some reason it briefly crossed my mind that Pat would possibly write and say "hey, I used that last".

Now had this topic arisen back in the forties or fifties, no doubt some officious fan would have taken it upon himself to begin a fanzine title registry.

"The Groggy Fanzine archive is conveniently located directly below the entrance to the former Irondequoit Mall, just north of Rochester, NY." The "former" Irondequoit Mall? Have they renamed it in honor of the fanzine archive? No, probably not.

The mall was a boondoggle. (Real estate developers and local politicians spell "boondoggle" as "bonanza.") It opened in 1990 and little more than a decade later it was essentially empty and dead. It was renamed Medley Center and then LakeRidge, as various owners attempted to revive it, or at least get tax breaks for themselves.

I really like the photo you used next to your "One Of Us" essay. THE TERROR OF TINY TOWN? No, probably

not.

The photo was from Tod Browning's Freaks. So, is it appropriate? No, you don't need to answer.

Although you refer to this as a "perszine" I see that two sources I don't have much respect for -- Wikipedia and Urban Dictionary -- call it "perzine". Perzine is also how File770.com refers to it, as does the latest Faan Award Poll, and despite having some respect for both I think they're wrong. It was "perszine" in the 70s. It's also "perszine" at these locations among others:

<http://www.smithway.org/fstuff/termsO-S.html>

http://fanac.org/Fannish_Reference_Works/Fan_terms/Fan_terms-07.html

(both terms are give here)

<http://www.boston-baden.com/smofs/fannish.words>

<http://fancylopedia.wikidot.com/search:site/q/perszine>

Google shows 53 references to perszine. While there are thousands of references to perzine, most of them don't appear to have any relationship to sf fandom. Apparently those who refer to themselves as "zinesters" coined this term independently, and some of us sf fen are occasionally picking up on it. Personally, I still use perszine.

I'm out of step as usual. I never noticed the new spelling. To me it has always been "perszine".

The Bleak Midwinter

Okay, so this winter hasn't been as bleak as usual. In fact it has been eerily mild here in the Northeast. But I'm still in my February brown mood. It's traditional.

And as if to assist me with writing this end bit it is actually snowing outside. Beyond the office window the sun porch roof is speckled with white. If it sticks in any appreciable amount it will be only the second time this winter.

This issue might have been less somber if some disaster had befallen us. Nothing's funnier than household disasters, in retrospect. Unfortunately all Mary and I have had to deal with is a miniscule, intermittent leak which leaves a trace of moisture on the floor near the furnace, but whose source we can't locate, and a mouse that we keep glimpsing as it scuttles along the baseboards, apparently disdaining the poison that's out everywhere. Yeah, mice are so damn cute, we hate to poison them, but despite appearances they are vermin. I briefly wondered if the mouse wasn't peeing on the floor by the furnace...hmmmm...doesn't look like mouse piss....doesn't smell like mouse piss....

Well, maybe by next issue the furnace will have quit working when it's ten below and we're snowed in and then I'll be able to offer you something to chuckle about. now.

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Cover Photo by David Burton

Bad Cat by Eric Mayer

Cartoon on page 6 by Andy Reiss

Cartoon on page 12 by Brad Foster

