

This PDF is an excerpt of the pages from the Noreascon 4 Souvenir Book related to Jack Speer. Jack was a Fan Guest of Honor at the 2004 Worldcon in Boston.

The excerpt contains the front cover — Jack is the leftmost guest carved in rock. The splash page and table of contents are included for context. Then there are four pages of appreciations, art, and photos, and four pages with the script to Jack's one-act play, "The Last and First Fen."

This PDF was prepared by Geri Sullivan on June 29, 2008 for distribution on Bill Burns' **eFanzines.com**. Please contact Geri for information on the availability of the full 244-page Souvenir Book.

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# Noreascon 4

fol





## The 62<sup>nd</sup> World Science Fiction Convention

### Pro Guests of Honor:

# TERRY PRATCHETT WILLIAM TENN

Fan Guests of Honor:

# JACK SPEER PETER WESTON



## September 2-6, 2004

## Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Hynes Convention Center Sheraton Boston Hotel Boston Marriott Copley Place

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# FAN GUEST OF HONOR JACK SPEER

# A Fan to Appreciate

by F.M. Busby

I first met Jack here in Seattle at a Nameless Ones meeting. By 1950 he was already a fannish icon of long standing. From the wilds of Oklahoma he entered active fandom at age 15, and plunged into the fannish debates of the time with vigor. Then, as later, he showed a knack for lining up on the side of common sense.

A landmark of Jack's activity in fandom was his writing and compilation, in 1944, of *Fancyclopedia*, a definitive reference work covering a great many facets of the fannish microcosm. Noteworthy among its entries was his hypothesis of numbered fandoms, eras defined by the prevailing interests and emphases of the fannish community over a given period of time, with transition periods when these factors changed. As of 1944 he listed and defined First through Third Fandoms, along with their intervening transitions. The progression continued for two more decades, until fandom was fragmented by sheer size.

In the arena of FAPA, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, Jack earned a reputation for penetrating, insightful comments, and impatience with lack of clarity. He liked to dig at the bones of a comment, see if there was any meat to it. He still does.

Jack also favored an economy of style that often left his target wondering just which item was under discussion. One commentator contended that the archetypical "speercomment" would be, "On the other hand, it may have been triangular." Face to face, there is no such confusion. Blessed with an inquiring mind, Jack digs for the meanings cloaked in general statements. This is more fun than it might sound; he has a gift for dry humor and isn't stingy with it.

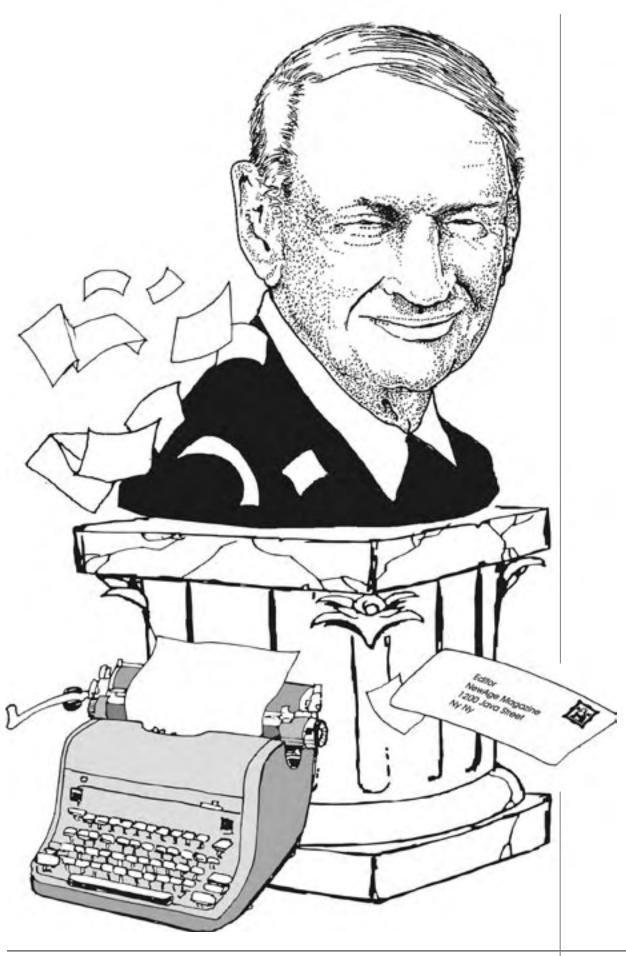
Of course life contains more things than fandom (you didn't know?). Toward the end of the 1950s Jack was practicing law in North Bend, about halfway between Seattle and the spine of the Cascades. A pleasant area. I remember a summer day when he and his wife Ruth hosted a party in honor of some visiting L.A. fans. Fun times.

A bit later, Jack was nominated for and elected to a seat in our state legislature. At one point during his tenure, he ran head-on into a misconception. Needing to do a lot of legislative consultation in downtown Seattle, where parking was (then, as now) evil, it would seem he took someone's word that our state's representatives had immunity on parking tickets. His confidence was misplaced; he got lumbered with a veritable stack of citations. The papers reported his predicament, but never did say how it turned out.

(No, I did not ask.)

Over the next few years we enjoyed seeing Jack and Ruth every so often, as events allowed. Then (the year eludes me) they relocated to Albuquerque. By 1974, when we flew down for a Bubonicon, Jack had become a judge, no less (Fans Rule).

Here, too, the Speer hospitality flourished. After the con we were trusted with the family car for a jaunt to Santa Fe, and our visit ended with Jack at the wheel for a heart-stopping race to the airport. I had



misread our schedule and we were about to miss the last useful flight of the day. He made it, though. Whew!—and thanks again.

I'm not sure what all Jack's been up to in recent times. I'd expect he's still keeping FAPA on its toes. We cross paths at conventions, though all too rarely, and each holiday season we do manage to trade bits of news. In the essentials, he doesn't change

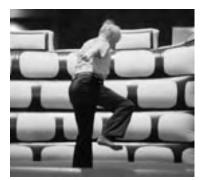
much.

Jack Speer—a good fan, a good friend, a good man.



Friends old and new: Bob Tucker, Jack Speer, and Ken Forman hanging out in the Silvercon consuite, c. 1995.







Bouncy Castles: Fun for all ages.

## Fancy Jack

by Joe Siclari and Edie Stern

In the beginning, there was Speer. Along with a few others, Jack Speer helped create many of the fannish traditions we now think of as part of everyday fandom. When you meet Jack, you'll see a distinguished, polite gentleman. When you talk to him, you'll find he is eloquent and knowledgeable about many matters. All of which befits a lawyer, a judge, and a legislator, which he has been. Underneath this urbane exterior beats the heart of a child that wants to be on the bouncy castle, as befits a trufan.

Jack has been an active fan since 1934, the very early years of fandom. This year marks his 70th anniversary. In those early days, Jack's innovations included doing mailing comments in APAs, documenting fannish history, writing filk songs, Worldcon costuming, and conducting opinion polls. His fannish activities today still show the enthusiasm, and hard work that they have shown throughout his entire career. Jack still publishes lengthy fanzines in FAPA, sixtyseven years after it began.

Jack is one of the active fans who was in FAPA (Fantasy Amateur Press Association) from the beginning. In fact, Jack has the longest continuous active FAPA membership. In FAPA's early days, he was one of the first to do mailing comments on other people's zines. Jack was one of FAPA's braintrusters part of that rarefied crew that included Milt Rothman, Donald B. Thompson, Art Widner and others. They engaged in serious discussion on science, politics, society, and social issues rather than just fannish folderol.

He put together the first set of science fiction songs for the second Worldcon, Chicon. He was also one of the people who responded to the convention's call for costuming representative of the field, and the only one who was stopped by a police officer questioning his attire and accouterments.

Jack documented too. One of his early zines was a history of fandom, titled "Up to Now" detailing fandom's evolution up through 1939. More than that, in 1944 he documented the terms, the legends and the practices of fandom in the now famous Fancyclopedia. This first fan encyclopedia was so well regarded that the Fantasy Foundation offered to publish it and dragooned the members of LASFS into doing the stenciling and printing. A searchable copy is available on line at www.fanac.org/Fannish\_Reference\_ Works/Fancyclopedia/Fancyclopedia\_II (or follow the links to Fan References from homepage fanac.org). Jack was also a notable fannish photographer. His collection of photos of fannish faces is an excellent window on early fandom.

Jack was fandom's first investigative reporter. When Claude Degler created his Cosmic Circle, with all kinds of outrageous representations, Jack did a background check that quickly cast doubt on Degler's reliability.

Jack also can count. He created (adapting it from Spengler) the concept of numbered generations of fans. While his numbering is no longer in use, it remains highly quoted and the concept is used to identify fannish generations. Some organizations still use the terminology he created (e.g. First Fandom, Second Fandom, Sixth Fandom and the notorious Seventh).

We're delighted that Jack is a Noreascon Four Fan Guest of Honor. After all, without Jack, much of fandom-as-we-know-it would not be here. In the last seventy years of active participation in fandom, he's been responsible shaping fandom, for as well as recording and passing on what has gone before. He's put it in perspective (and numbered it too). He's done all this while having a successful non-fannish life. Best of all, he still gets on the bouncy castle.

If you see Jack, say "Hi!" The conversations are the best part.



Claude Degler and E.E. "Doc" Smith at the Jackson, Michigan, conference, November 16, 1941.





## The Fannish Life





*Above left:* Jack Speer and Robert Bloch at Dean Grennell's after the 1956 Democratic convention in Chicago.

Above right: The famed Spirit of FooFoo at Russ Chauvenet's Virginia home, c. 1941. Followed by refueling the Spirit of FooFoo with Milt Rothman in Maryland.

*Left:* Jack as Merlin with his finacee, Ruth, at a Nameless Ones dance in Seattle, c. 1951.

*Right:* Talk to Tucker. In front of Bob's home, c. 1956.



#### Last and First Fen: Introduction

by Jack Speer



A United Press story in 1945 quoted Major P. C. Calhoun, "head of the A.A.F. guided-missile branch," as saying that they expected to be able to shoot a rocket to the moon within 18 months, and within five years "to have a rocket that will carry men outside the Earth's atmosphere and return safely." Some stefinists were not so sanguine: in Gerry de la Ree's polls of SF readers, authors, and editors, the majority estimated a date of 1950 or sooner for manned flight to the moon or another planet.

I ran with that idea in the following. This is what's now called faan fiction, i.e., fiction about sfans.

- The Captain is Arthur C. Clarke, who was nicknamed Ego.
- Starfasci is Larry Farsaci, who was stationed at Tule Lake during the war.
- Stuff is "Juffus."
- Ole must be E. Everett Evans.
- One-Face is 4SJ (Ackerman), sometimes known as "#1 Face."
- The Mad Scientist is Milton A. Rothman.
- Joke is Joe Kennedy.
- The Youngfans were not specific persons.
- Ninety-four is Al Ashley, AA-194 (his score on a test, which an excerpt in the NESFA Press book will explain).
- Gallop is Art Widner, the Poll Cat.
- BFSers would have been members of the British Fantasy Society.
- MFS is, of course, the Minneapolis Fantasy Society.
- The Nitrosynthetic (it was Nitrosyncretic in my manuscript) voice must have been Abby Lu Ashley, but I don't remember why that word.
- Incidentally, it was X.J. "Joe" Kennedy, its original publisher, who named the play. I submitted it titleless.

# $\begin{array}{l} LASTAND\\ FIRSTFEN\\ \end{array} \begin{array}{l} \text{...a thrilling Elizabethan}\\ \text{drama of the starways...}\\ \text{in one act}\\ \end{array}$

by Jack Speer

#### (Enter CAPTAIN)

**CAPTAIN:** So soon Man gains Barsoom! Who would have thot,

Five years ago, when we still at war, That ere we passed the century's middle mark Our ships would make the moon, and pass beyond

To find another planet whereupon Is air to breathe, and fertile soil, and eke Sufficient water, if we husband it, To nourish our new nation. Hark, who comes? It is the Crystal Poet, God forbid!

#### (Enter STARFASCI)

- **STARFASCI:** The air is brisk and clear, and one can see
  - The stars shine near at hand: Unblinking globes!

So pulsant with your promise to our race, How long ere we shall clasp you, brilliant stars, And know first-hand the secrets you withheld? **CAPTAIN:** Good morning to you, Larry.

#### **STARFASCI:** Who is there?

- **CAPTAIN:** 'Tis I, E. Clarke, the captain of the ship. But I do not recall yourself among The crew we signed to make this maiden trip. Although, forsooth, a couple dozen fans Seemed like tenscore, and one may be excused For failing to acquaint with each of them. What think you of Barsoom?
- STARFASCI: To tell the truth,

It seems far less romantic at close view Than when we saw it as a jewel set In sable space, from Earth on winter nites. There's rocks and sand, and clay, and scrabby weeds.

I had my fill of these at Tulelake.

(Enter STUFF, carrying something)

STUFF: Lo, in these desert wastes there shall be reared
A temple to our Foo, to glorify
His home throughout the Universe. See here, Ego, the model we have made for it.
So perfect is it in its each detail
That were we thumblings, we could enter in The hinged portal, genuflect before
The sacred altar, and with hymns of praise Invoke the Fooly Spirit's presence there.

**CAPTAIN:** This is all very well, Speer, but it seems to me that there are things of higher priority to be done right now.

**STUFF:** Yeah? What was the first thing the Puritans did when they landed in America?

**CAPTAIN:** I don't know and I don't care. My Puritan ancestors stayed in England and fought for Cromwell.

(Enter OLE)

**OLE:** Gosh-wow-boyoboy! This makes me feel like I was fifty again! Isn't it swell, fellows, to have a planet all our own, and nobody but slans on it?

(Enter ONE-FACE)

Think of it, fellers! First it was Slan Shack. Then Slan Center. And now—

**ONE-FACE:** Hush, and I'll think of a pun.—Slannet! (Appropriate reactions.)

CAPTAIN: Hello, Erjay.

**ONE-FACE:** You'll never guess what Wollheim's men have found!

A forest full of perfect echo-flowers. Honest to Foo! He says "Salad!" to them, And they obediently answer back, "Salad!" He trains them, too, by giving them rewards For proper answers, so that when he asks, "What should be Will Sykora's fate?" they cry, "Draw through the streets of Scientown behind A yoke of thoats, before the public view, And then live out his days in solitude, With naught to read but old Ziff-Davis mags."

**STUFF:** At last the Daw has stooges, in true faith.

(MAD SCIENTIST crosses backstage with an armful of large oranges.)

**CAPTAIN:** Come, man, we cannot live in idleness For long; our little stack of food will go. We must turn to, and work, and farm, and build,

If we would be sufficient to ourselves.

STUFF: 'Tis true; at Jamestown, under Captain Smith, The English gentlemen spent all their time In search of gold and jewels, so the town—

**CAPTAIN:** Pox on your history major; keep you still. Who is it that hurries hither in such haste?

(Enter JOKE)

**JOKE:** A party of the younger fen draws off, And makes demand to be returned to Earth. They number nearly twenty—

**CAPTAIN:** What is this? How can they, when we shipped but twenty-five, And we are nearly half-a-dozen here.

JOKE: I know not, but it seems to me we've had More men than twenty-five since we dispersed On landing, though I have not counted them.

**CAPTAIN:** Find Donna Belle; she served as secretary And ought to know who's here without our leave.

**ONE-FACE:** While joke is doing that, I'll find the Reds. I'm sure they had no part in this revolt.

**CAPTAIN:** The rest of us will posthaste to the ship; It should be guarded, lest they capture it.

(Exeunt severally.) (Enter YOUNGFANs)

YOUNGFAN 1: Amazing has been out for three days now, And here we're forty million miles away!

YOUNGFAN 2: I wanta go home.

YOUNGFAN 3: I gotta girl I used to date three-four times a week—I'll bet Charlie Wick is seeing her now.

**YOUNGFAN 4:** There isn't a hektograph on this whole rotten planet, and the officers won't let me use up any mimeo stencils.

**YOUNGFANNE:** These constant sandstorms ruin my complexion.

YOUNGFAN 1: Who's that?

YOUNGFAN 4: A girl!

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YOUNGFAN 1: I saw her first!

YOUNGFAN 4: Says who?

YOUNGFAN 1: I said so—what's it to you?

YOUNGFAN 2: Fight! A feud! Go to it, boys!

(Enter GALLOP)

**YOUNGFAN 1:** So what?

YOUNGFAN 4: So what what?

YOUNGFAN 1: So what what, what what, what what?

(They wrestle.)

(Enter NINETY-FOUR)

NINETY-FOUR: What's up?

**GALLOP:** A fite. I'm watching it to check My psychometrics. How are things with you?

YOUNGFANNE: Ruffians!

(Exit with YOUNGFAN 3.)

NINETY-FOUR: It's restful on Barsoom. The individual Has free play here. No unions, no bureaus To tell us what to do. Say, Art, these kids— Who are they? Were they with us on the ship? GALLOP: They must have been. I don't recall their names.
Perhaps they're BFSers. But this one I think was at the Seacon. (YOUNGFANs cease fighting.)
Look, the other
Has "MFS" tattooed upon his arm.

YOUNGFAN 1: What happened to the girl?

YOUNGFAN 2: They went that way.

(Exeunt YOUNGFANs)

NITROSYNTHETIC VOICE offstage: Alfred!

NINETY-FOUR: Excuse me, Art. (Exit.)

(Enter JOKE)

JOKE: Hey, Art, had Laniac been by this way?

GALLOP: Not that I know of, Kennedy. What's the rush?

JOKE: Haven't you heard about the revolution? A squad of younger fans has seized the ship. They don't know how to run it, but they have Our food and Stuff, to bring us to their terms.

(Exeunt together.)

(Enter MAD SCIENTIST chewing on a huge cheese)

**MAD SCIENTIST:** Altho the molecules were multiplied,

The grain was coarsened by enlarging it. (Exit.)

(Enter NINETY-FOUR and STARFASCI)

NINETY-FOUR: We've planned the contents of the mag with care. There's no space left to put your poem in. Besides, in confidence, it stank.

**STARFASCI:** Oh, Al, How can you say such things about my work? Such is the stars' supernal beauty, none Can write aught but exalted verse to them.

(Enter CAPTAIN, STUFF and ONE-FACE)

CAPTAIN: Hang'em, I say; I'll hang them every one.
'Tis not enuf that they must stow away. This thing is mutiny; as CAPTAIN I Can deal with them as harshly as I will.

**STUFF:** Seeing that our good ship is not in space, I doubt that you have high-seas powers now.

**CAPTAIN:** Pox on you lawyers! In our brave new world There'll be legalistic conjurers.

**STUFF:** (Calls him names in ancient Anglo-Saxon.)

(Enter YOUNGFAN 1)

**ONE-FACE:** Be on your dignity. Their envoy's here.

 YOUNGFAN 1: The Brotherhood of Anti-Martian Fans
 Greet CAPTAIN Clarke, and here present the terms
 On which they will admit him to his ship: That he assign to them sufficient crew

To take them back to Earth again, and pledge Upon his word as fantasite –

#### CAPTAIN: What-what?

Do you not realize the ship and fuel Cost all our fortune, and could not return Until another thousand pounds was raised For fuel, which might be never?

YOUNGFAN 1: In that case,

I would suggest the expedition all Return, save those who'll take their chances here.

**ONE-FACE:** Wait, Ego. Say, young fellow, tell us straight The reasons that the Brotherhood advance For leaving; do they not enjoy it here?

YOUNGFAN 1: Myself am nearly crazy for the sight Of stef again; as marijuana makes Its victim seek it more and more, I must Appease this awful hunger; and on Mars What have we but the tales told round the fire Half-recollected, all without the gleam Of Hamilton or Wellman's brilliant style? My friend from Buffalo can stand this lack, But for his lady-love he pines away. Another, younger one, is homesick now. Others would publish fanzines, but cannot, There being no equipment. So it goes.

**NINETY-FOUR:** The better half and I might take that boy,

The homesick one, and make him feel at home.

**CAPTAIN:** First tell me how you striplings came to Mars. I swear you were not listed in the rolls;

And all of you together'd top a ton, Which would have quite upset our navigation.

### YOUNGFAN 1: Perhaps we'll answer that when you agree

To meet our terms.

**STARFASCI:** He's bluffing; he doesn't know Much more about the matter than yourself. They must have come the same way I did come,

For I was not among your crewmen either.

**CAPTAIN:** How came you, then?

(Enter MAD SCIENTIST)

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STARFASCI: I only know, one day, A man came, dressed in laboratory robe Who asked me if I'd like to go to Mars. So, joining in the joke, I answered "Yes." A strange beam smote my eyes; I knew no more. **YOUNGFAN 1:** The same way it happened to me, the same!

I wakened on the Martian sand. Your ship Stood close beside, and you were serving supper.

**MAD SCIENTIST:** Perhaps the time has come I should explain.

(Enter YOUNGFAN 3 with YOUNGFANNE)

**CAPTAIN:** What, Milty, have you knowledge of this thing?

**MAD SCIENTIST:** Observing what the Poll Cat had revealed,

Of psychologic stress in Slan Center, I felt a need to have a counterweight Upon the veteran fen who settle here. Therefore, with their permission, as you've heard,

Though lightly given, I recruited these Young outer-circle fen, and in a field Of force imprisoned their constituent patterns, While leaving the original person there To carry on his life in normalcy. I brot these force-fields in my traveling kit And rematerialized them from the sand.

- **CAPTAIN:** Now, by our Lady! Milton, this will solve The space-ship cargo problem. Why'd you not Release the invention sooner? Then our ship Could have been built at far much less expense.
- MAD SCIENTIST: I just perfected it a month ago. 'Twill solve fuel storage problems, too; a load Of sand can be transformed to fuel as needed.

**STUFF:** Say, could you take the pattern of a building And reproduce it in gigantic size?

#### MAD SCIENTIST: Yes.

**STUFF:** By FooFoo! Wait you here a sec, I want to get the model that we made.

(Exit STUFF)

YOUNGFAN 1: Well, since the thing is settled, let us henceAnd choose a crew to get us back to Earth.I'll croak within a month, without Amazing.

MAD SCIENTIST: Amazing? Boy, I have my entire file, Brot dematerialized, set up again, In yonder gully; twelve years of the stuff.

YOUNGFAN 1: Then what want I with earth? And have you brot A hektograph, and stencils too?

**MAD SCIENTIST:** I have.

YOUNGFAN 1: Milton, you are the mosta of the besta.

CAPTAIN, from the bliss of yonder pair (Indication YOUNGFAN 3 and YOUNGFANNE) I think the last objection is removed, And we are satisfied to stay with you Indefinitely.

**CAPTAIN:** You'll all be very welcome.

(Exeunt.) CURTAIN