



Mythopoeic Society

mythLORE

A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

Volume 2
Number 3

Article 7

Winter 1-15-1971

Mythcon Reports

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Recommended Citation

GoodKnight, Glen (1971) "Mythcon Reports," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 2: No. 3, Article 7.

Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol2/iss3/7>

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Mythcon Reports

It rang in him as when a man in the second of waking hears himself called, or at least hears a call and believes it to be for him, and at once from the mere shock cries out in answer. But Challis' eyes were so on Clarissa that at first this new voice did not penetrate; he was held, within and without, by the vigour of her concentration. The voice again rang through him; it became a repetition; it said, with a kind of shrillness in it, but not at all hysterical, rather with a plaintive challenge: 'Is anyone there?'

He knew, even at that moment, that Clarissa was trying to hold him back from any answer, and for his part he was perfectly willing that she should. He shut his mouth firmly; he had had to have his voice under control on many occasions, and so now; but he could not altogether prevent himself thinking; and somewhere in him, even under Clarissa's eyes, there sprang an emotion which, translated into speech, would have been: 'I shan't tell you.'

The shrill noise - it was rather a noise than a voice; a kind of humanized squeal, but articulate and even imperious - said: 'Who? who?' That at least was what it seemed to say, and now he began to pull himself together. For one thing, the floor had stopped swaying; for another, through the hole beyond Clarissa there was only the moon in a clear sky and no drifting cloud; for another, Clarissa herself was no longer making gestures, but only looking at him seriously and full. He felt himself, somewhere within him, saying: 'no'; and then he was smiling at Clarissa, and finding himself a little surprised that she did not smile back. He did not, after her warning, quite like to speak first, but he did not know why she was looking so serious; unless -

The rat - it must be a rat - squealed again, but he took no notice of it, for a much more important thought had struck him;

she couldn't be thinking - or could she? - that he was ill or drunk? They had only had a little wine, hours before; still, he had been reeling about and grunting... she might wonder... He said: 'What have I been doing? It did not seem as if...'

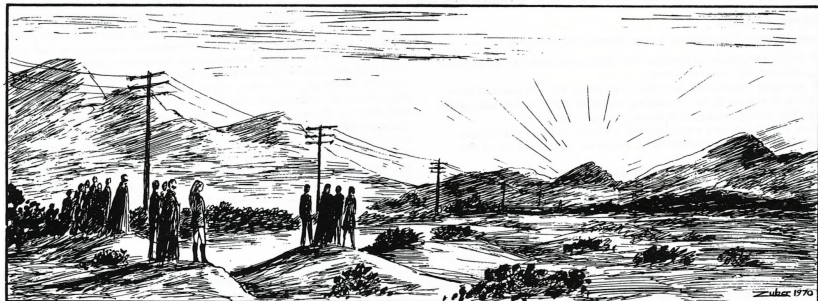
She cut through his words. She said: 'We'd better go,' and began to move towards the door. He started on another half-apology, changed his mind, and said: 'But we haven't found out anything, have we?'

Her hand pressed his arm, but she said nothing. They came down the stairs and into the room below. They collected their things, and still in silence carried them to the car. While they did so, he was aware of the same rat's squeal, recurring from time to time. It was, he thought, a little odd that he should hear no other sound, no scurry or rush in the walls, but the thought was unimportant and faded. Presently as they got into the car he ventured to say again: 'Did you find out anything?'

Clarissa moved her head; he was not sure if she shook it or nodded. The calm of her apparent competence was shaken, and he did not well know how to respond. But presently, as he drove, he said: 'Something's happened to worry you; something new. Tell me,' and when she did not answer, he said again, and she felt once more, as she had after dinner, that now he had taken charge: 'Clarissa, tell me.'

She answered: 'I've gone further than I meant; we've gone further. I've found out all I thought, and I'm afraid it may have found us out. When we get home come in and we'll talk. You'd better know everything now.'

LAST: Chapter III - untitled



REMEMBRANCE OF DAWN FANDOM by Bernie Zuber

Mythcon Reports

Glen GoodKnight

Since Mythcon has caused a multitude of experiences for so many people, we've decided to offer several short impressions of the convention, rather than one long "official" one.

To me, Mythcon was a long-held dream come true. But then realized dreams are always unexpectedly different from those one carries in his mind. I needn't go into the long planning by many others besides myself to make Mythcon come true. At the con itself, I got very little sleep. Three hours the first two nights, and five refreshing hours the third night. I could have gotten more sleep if I had wanted to, but there was so much happening that I didn't want to miss any of it. As a result I was really tired out by the second day. I must be more prudent next time... (so they say).

There were so many highlights, I feel I would be practicing favoritism just to mention a few, but I will. The slide show with its surprise (see World of Fanzines); the opening session where I got to spout off some ideas I felt very relevant that had been

gestating in my mind for a long time; the musical program; the masquerade (where I nearly passed out from wearing that horrible Tash costume for three hours, suffering from exhaustion, heat, little air, and less eyesight); our Guest of Honor, C.S. Kilby, speaking on the Inklings (that was a real dream come true. What a man! The person to be Goff at the first Mythcon, and how well received he was by all); Dawn Fandom - a truly "numinous" experience (when the sun finally came up I shouted a few lines from Lewis: "It comes! It comes! Sleepers awake! It comes! The Stone Table is broken! Asian is alive!" This sounds corny now, but it seemed very appropriate at that moment). And the people. There was a special atmosphere that I find impossible to put into words.

The con is now several months past, and it has passed out of immediate consciousness into the "mythic time" of memory, but there it becomes something alike to what Hyoi said to Ransom: "A pleasure is full grown only when it is remembered."



Bernie Zuber

Elements Which Contributed to the Shaping of Mythcon I:

- 1) A basic structure of intellectual discourse similar to scholarly or professional conferences.
- 2) A parallel functional structure based on the example of Science Fiction conventions, including some of their color and informality (the Masquerade, Art Show, movies, etc.).
- 3) The creativity and professional attitude of the Performing Arts Workshop which introduced a cultured appreciation of the fine arts.
- 4) An atmosphere permeating to the spirit of the Mythopoeic Society best exemplified by a Charles Williams panel turning into a typical branch meeting or the hushed reverence of Dawn Fandom.

Christopher Mitchell

Mythcon was, for me at least, one of the most beautiful things that has ever happened to me, ever, ever. Now, obfuscation and clarification.

I haven't been to many cons, Mythcon and Westercon 23 the only two. So, as far as experience goes, I'm as untoughened as they come. However, this, perhaps, enables me to look at both of them, and especially Mythcon, with new, unsated eyes. The much-used clichés of wonderment, joy, etc., etc., I suppose ought to be avoided, but take them anyway, because behind the hackneyed words "themselves lie great beauty, experienced, at least, by me." So, after all this, I cannot be asked to give a cold, objective description of our Con, comparing it with Westercons, SFCons, WorldCons, FunCons innumerable; rather, I can give it the way I felt it was, namely an organic, living entity, alive through the people involved. And such people! Admittedly, some less-than-perfect ones got in somehow (Gods know who, but there must have been somebody) and, no matter how hard they tried, the members were human, and as such strived, "and striving they must err" (little emendation there. Sorry, Mr. Goethe), and thus some bad moments existed. But as for myself, such things occurred as are only read of nowadays: the Music Performance thingie, though some decry it as having been boring, unprofessional, ineffective, et al. To me, though, it was practically celestial in its feeling, its dedication, the love involved in its formulation and presentation and the love by which it was received (I thought, at least) by the audience, which, in my eyes, came together and, with the performers themselves, formed an organic "group-mind" kind of thing. Dawn Fandom was almost as lovely, though marred by such things as Cold and Indecision as to the question of such things as whether or not to go back to bed or cross the street or

leave before sun, which evidently had decided to stay a few degrees below the horizon that day. However, the reading (from *The Wind in the Willows*, the chapter "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn") brought me, at least, around. It's a pity that, though Coleridge's "Hymn Before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamounix" was supposed to be read also; due to technical difficulties beyond the Master's control, it wasn't. But it was all worth the wait. When the sun (finally!) came up, lightening the horizon, then the sky bit by bit, then the hill's edges, the hills themselves, the dust in the air turning it to red and gold, and finally, a meek, shivering group of sleepy Mythopoeists... Nice.

There was so much else. Frisbee games on the lawn, with characters one wouldn't really expect involved, the Masquerade riff, which, unfortunately, I missed a lot of, but saw the last two or three entrants in the first part, and the semi- and finals. Gads! Such beautiful costumes! The whole shoal of Gorgeous Narnian Ladies, sundry armed men of various persuasions, Bruce Pelz as one of my more favorite characters (along with the rest of Eddison), Gorice XII, "most glorious King of Witchland, Lord and Great Duke of Buteny and Estremarine, Commander of Shulan," etc., etc., Joyce O'Dell (who, as I agree with most everyone else I have spoken with, was undeservedly neglected by the judges) as the wearer of, and protagonist in, "The Necklace of Princess Fioramond," the author of which I am ignorant of, and David King, played by Gollum, whose disguise fooled no one, and lastly — Tash. Not bad, for a mortal. So much else there was, but there's not enough space to Tell All, so I will just mention more, less longly.

Proceeding the Masquerade, there was a glorious performance, excellently done by Dale Ziegler, Jon Lackey and divers hands of *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth, Boerthelm's Son*. At other times and places were: lots and lots of really good papers, explaining everybody's relationship to everyone and everything else, a very good (considering Mythcon's status) art show with lots and lots of beautiful Tim Kirk things, including an admirable study of Ffleddur, from Lloyd Alexander's thing, and a staggering (if unfinished) rendering of the Siege of Gondor, along with George Barr, a certain B. Bergstrom whose talent as yet is unappreciated, etc., etc. Last and least of those occurrences which spring to mind was the Great and Everglorious Pun Tourney, which Gordon Monson reportedly won, though not uncontested, atrocity after atrocity filling the air until the Powers That Be called a halt (too soon!) to the revelry. After more dying occurrences, the whole, fantastic (literally) gathering broke up, myself sadly especially, but I feel and hope I wasn't alone. More.

Glenn Sadler

Comments on Mythcon:

MacDonald: Lewis — Williams — Tolkien sat discussing it; the conversation went as follows:

Lewis: Smashing — I say — how did John Lawlor know those things?

Williams: He took copious notes — I felt coincidence throughout the Con... CSK has it!

MacDonald: Actually what you thought you felt was the spell of Middle-earth: the drama, music, and art show gave me something quite unlike Gwyntystorm; I think it was the opening of the door with the Golden Key....

Tolkien: What I liked about it was the originality; one thing I can't tolerate is people who are indebted to each other. Ah! the creativity!

Lewis: And the fine papers... to which we started it all — What do you attribute its success to, George?

MacDonald: My favorite people doing my favorite things in the way I like best. That's what the land "at the back of the North Wind" is really like, like an endless dream...

Mythcon II

Many exciting plans are in the works for Mythcon II, to be held from September 3-8 at the Francisco Torres in Santa Barbara, California. Details will be announced in issues of *Mythprint*, including the very reasonable room and meal rates. Write to: Mythcon II, Marj Hoyt, Registration, P.O. Box 5165, Station #4, North Hollywood, California. 91604