WIND FROM THE WILLOWS

July 1983, THE ROAD HOUSE MAGAZINE Volume I, Number 1


Welcome. This is the first issue of the Wind From the Willows, the official Toad Hall newsletter. Toad Hall is a group of local writers, artists, and other people, who think they are creative and/or smart, who have gotten together to support and encourage one another. There is more information on everyone's later on in this issue, so I'll keep to the group itself.

For a number of years now, a number of us have been attempting the arduous path of creative self-growth, writing for most of us, although some of us paint, play music, or design buildings. Some of us just study and analyze the relationships of ourselves and the world around us. The path is made tougher by the fact that it is largely a solitary trek. Few people give you encouragement; motivation must come from within. Writing is not generally a team sport.

Hopefully, that is coming to an end. In recent months, a number of us have gotten together to support, encourage, and motivate each other. We are meeting on a regular basis, setting goals, letting each other know what we are doing—so they can nag us—and sharing our work with each other. If you keep turning the pages, you'll get an idea of what we've been up to. The newsletter itself is our first major group project, but it is undoubtedly just a beginning.

Beyond the advancement of our personal aims, maybe we can eventually come up with another group project, such as an anthology, a public reading or maybe just a big sign that says, "SEE, FRESNO IS NOT AN INTELLECTUAL BACKWATER", or....

Being that this is the first issue and I, a semi-experienced publisher, am first editor, there's going to be a lot of jury-rigging in this newsletter. Since this will be partially the result of editor idiosyncrasies, I think the personal business should come first. After all, that is what this is all about. The following is composed by Jon Golding.

MARK BROWN: 5188 N. Angus, Fresno, Ca. 93710. INTELLECTUAL, AMATEUR ZEPPELIN LOVER, COLLECTOR OF WORLD TRIVIA, WRITER, STUDENT OF LIFE.

Mark's goals involving this group involve our support of his writing. His more important life goals also include taking a less-complicated view of life. He wants to over-intellectualizing everything and enjoy it more. "I've learned that freedom from convention does not necessarily war with it." Mark also wants to develop more knowledge on the mechanical, or 'classic' side. More knowledge on auto mechanics, stitchery, cooking—to decrease his dependence on others. He would like to learn to use computers, to fence, to speak Chinese, play an instrument, watercolor, and, perhaps, sail a boat. This may sound like a lot, but Mark's goal is to be good at all of them, rather than perfect at each one. He quotes Aristotle: "A gentle man should be able to play the flute,
but not too well. Of his new attitude he says, "My current motto is 'Just so' and I don't take this to be an attitude of apathy, but one of deeper involvement in the world and life as they are, right here, right now, which is the only timespace I can deal with right now."

ANNA NAPOLI-BROWN: 3188 N. Angus, Fresno, Ca. 93710. INTUITIVE, DEN MOTHER TO THE WORLD, HOUSEWIFE, MUSICIAN, BATIK ARTIST, CLEANS UP AFTER US.

Anna's goals so far seem to be using the motivation of the group to spur her on to various projects. She states that she hasn't a solid idea yet what she wants from life and the group, though she sees many directions. Her short range goals at this time are to finish college and get her B.A. (she needs six units). Also, to get into shape (physically) and to stay that way. "You could say that exercise is a long term goal, but this can be accomplished in a short amount of time. It is more likely a step towards a long range goal. School, on the other hand, I just want to nip in the bud."

ANDY DYER: 2301 Sixth, Sanger, Ca. 93657. ATHLETE, BIOLOGIST, SEER OF HOW THE WORLD SHOULD BE, AMATEUR WRITER.

"I am at a turning point in my life where I have academia behind me and an open road in front of me. Due to my personal experiences of the last year or more, I am not possessed of a definite direction in which to travel. I have been going through a large number of mental changes in this period of time and the result has been a broadening of the field of choices with a concurrent realization of the absence of priority of one choice over another."

Andy's main purpose in the group seems to be the constant swirling around of new ideas in the group, possibly to stimulate his own choices. He does not wish to set any life goals at this time, but would like to accomplish the following: Learn a martial art, particularly Kendo, mostly related to physical and mental discipline; he is considering taking up a musical instrument; he would like greater interaction with his surroundings (he will be taking two ecology courses at CSUF towards this); he would like to become locally active, though he has not yet defined this for himself, and his primary interest is to keep Toad Hall moving. Andy is a man of few thoughts and many words; those interested in his goals should read his long term statement in the Toad Hall book at the Hall.

JON GOLDF: 5188 N. Angus, Fresno, Ca. 93710. DREAMER, INCREDIBLE AUTHOR, VISIONARY PROPHET, WRITER OF THIS ARTICLE.

Writing about myself is not easy, but in my fiction it always comes much easier. I've gone through a recent period of great change in my belief systems and have changed my standpoint on a lot of views I once held as truth. My main goal, and the one I want Toad Hall to help with, is my writing. Also, I want to continue my deepening awareness of myself. I want to be less self-centered, a life-long problem that I'm only now beginning to make progress on. I would also like to continue my halted education, possibly taking some classes at FCC this fall. Also, I want to adopt a more relaxed way of looking at things and not be so rushed by the amount of work I have to accomplish.

DAVID HURST: 1140 Sutter St. #206, San Francisco, Ca. 94109. TYPIST EXTRAORDINAIRE, LOST SOUL, ASPIRING BODHISATVA.

"I am an Existential Humanist, Aspiring Writer with decidedly left-wing viewpoints who is all too often merely human with a hundred faults of varying importance. I am a freedom loving, drug experimenting, rock-'n'-roll fanatic who refuses to compete with people over much of anything, but who rarely hesitates to expend upon his philosophy. In
Well, it's hard to top that. David seems to be after what most of us want from this experience, motivation. He wishes to concentrate more on his writing, and, by the end of '84, have something sent off for rejection or publication. He wants to become involved with, or plan something for the Democratic National Convention. He wants to study intensively, to the point of including or outright rejecting the following: Vegetarianism, Marxist-Communist thought, Revolutionary thought, Zen, and contemporary world economics. He would like to travel more, master a musical instrument, and return to school. Eventually he plans to die.

MIKE KARRY, address not given. THINKER, BUCKMINSTER FULLER'S RIGHT BRAIN, ARCHITECT, CREATOR OF THE E.R.C.

Mike states he has but two main goals in life. "One: to contribute to the well-being (and therefore the survival) of humanity as a whole. And two: become financially and intellectually well-equipped enough to achieve the first goal." It's not so certain what Mike wants out of the group, since he has been doing quite well by them. In July of 1981, he obtained media attention for an environmentally-conscious community—the E.R.C. (or Elevated Rotational Community). The response was very positive and established Mike's credibility. He has recently completed a Masters and a CSUF, which, he feels, will lend further credibility. While he feels these endeavors have cut into his creativity, sometimes he states, "Reputation is critical to my financial and intellectual success as an earthshaper. Reputation is only a bright flag, however, of no real substance, and is designed to catch the attention of people so they may see the ideas... the all-important ideas."

RICHARD SHATTO, 2440 W. Andrews, Fresno, Ca. 93705, STRATEGIST, KNIGHT OF THE HELM, RONIN, FANTASY AUTHOR, EDITOR OF THIS MESS FOR THE FIRST ISSUE.

Rick's goals are not new to those that know him. He has been one of the more dedicated writers I've met, and wants to have a substantial amount of material, possibly a novel, sent off within the next year. His other goals, simply stated, are to have a new job in 4-6 months, make some progress at physically bettering himself, and to like himself more.

Thank you Jen. And now for a piece of general business I consider important:

San Francisco Chronicle, Tuesday, June 14, 1983

SPACECRAFT SAILS OUT OF SOLAR SYSTEM, by David Perlman

PIONEER 10, the first man-made object to fly beyond the orbits of the sun's most distant planets, passed out of the solar system yesterday and headed for an eternity of wandering among the stars of the Milky Way.

The crossing of Neptune's orbit, which signalled the Pioneers escape from the solar system, occurred at 5pm, PDT. Yet, because its distance of 2.1 billion miles was so great the spacecraft's nuclear-powered radio signal, travelling at the speed of sound, took four hours and twenty minutes to reach elated Mission controllers at the Space Agency's Ames Research Center in Mountain View.

The spacecraft was launched in 1972. In December 1973 it made its first historic encounter with Jupiter, to discover that planet's fierce radiation, analyse the chemicals in its liquid atmosphere, measuring its magnetic field and taking pictures of its dramatic array of 14 moons.

The 570-pound spacecraft, with all of its instruments still perform-
I believe this may be one topic that Toad Hall is solidly behind (I think). In June, I received from Edward G. Gibson, astronaut from Skylab III, NASA (retired) speaking for the American Space Foundation. Basically, it's a pro-space lobby that wants members and to send a petition to Congress. Memberships range from $15-500. I'm sending money after I get more information, however, I am sending in the petition. Anyone interested is welcome to what little information I have. The petition is as follows:

Petition to the United States Congress

Whereas, America was the first and only nation to land a man on the moon, and
Whereas, the American economy has benefitted from the Space Program through new jobs and new products developed through the Space Program, and
Whereas, the nations of France, Germany, Japan, China, and the Soviet Union have increased their commitments to Space development, and
Whereas, the US Government has steadily decreased its commitment to Space by reducing the Space Program budget, and
Whereas, important American Space projects have been severely cut or cancelled;

Now and Therefore, I the undersigned do hereby petition the United States Congress to:

REAFFIRM AMERICA'S SERIOUS COMMITMENT TO SPACE, RESTORE THE AMERICAN SPACE PROGRAM'S BUDGET AND PUT AMERICA BACK IN THE SPACE RACE 100%.

I guess I may try and start a tradition now. I think whoever is the current editor should close with some remarks. I think it might be fun. I like the idea of Toad Hall. I like what we hope to accomplish. I wish us success. But right now I'm kind of sanguine, or at least a little down. We've had at this writing five meetings, and we are slowing up. Perhaps the feeling that this is going to be all work rather than all fun is setting in—either way, enthusiasm is not as high as it was. Like down here has been hectic the last couple of weeks to say the least, but that's not a good enough excuse. Life will generally be hectic, in fact, IT WILL ALWAYS BE HECTIC! This is therefore the first newsletter mag--

GET OFF YOUR TAILS AND GET BACK TO WORK, NOW!

While the above editorial is not (?) the opinion of Toad Hall, the editorial does apply to the editor of this issue. Among others.

Life is Creation.

"Walking on water wasn't built in a day".

Jack Kerouac
ing flawlessly but one, was flying at the speed of 30,558 mph yesterday. As it continues onward, it will gradually slow to about 25,000 mph and continue at that speed for ever. No one will ever know if it does die, for its plutonium power supply, decaying minute by minute, cannot last more than another 10 years at most. After that, Pioneer's flight will be as silent as the utter vacuum of space itself.

Now we go to something that I hope will become a regular feature, though, perhaps, with a new name. We bring you POINT-COUNTERPOINT, this month starring Mike Kerby as Pro and Jon Golding as Con.

Statement: Was there Soviet intervention in the Peace Movement of the 1960's.

CON: Having given this topic a great deal of thought, I've decided that I'll be using no quotes from famous sixties radical leaders; after all, they could be tools of the state. Instead, let's look at this question from a realistic standpoint. History has already begun to show that which we already knew. We had no business in Vietnam (except, perhaps, to stop the flow of communism). It was a war we were sucked into and hundreds of young people were sucked into it right from the start. These young people were not protesting for the Soviet Union, but for their own lives, and more importantly, they were trying to say, "Give peace a chance." I'm certain that the countless numbers of draft evaders and jailed draft resisters were not helping the Soviets; neither were the students of Kent State. Considering the scope and importance of the sixties protests, even if the Soviets had put their finger into the pie, they would have made little or no difference to a peace movement with better reasons to exist.

REBUTTAL: "These young people" were indeed protesting for the Soviet Union—albeit unknowingly—since "countless numbers of draft evaders...jailed draft resisters...and Kent State" eventually resulted in an American pullout from South Vietnam and the eventual Communist takeover of that country. American morale reeled, the Soviet goals of political and economic disruption were achieved, and the stage was set for ten years of US unilateral disarmament. The Soviet Union has achieved everything and done it with nothing.

PRO: Proving Soviet interventions in the Peace demonstrations of the 60's requires irrefutable documentation—something I don't have. The argument therefore must be predicated on the logical assumption that the Soviet Union would have something to gain by fostering unrest, and, at the very least, encouraging an already active and well-intentioned peace movement.

It is obvious to both sides that an all-out nuclear war benefits neither side. To win the new nuclear war you must kill the enemy's ideas, not their people, for this only brings sympathy from the rest of the world and does not further your goal in the long run. In the new world warring both sides carry on attention-getting guerilla warfare (i.e., Vietnam), while making their strongest attacks through skillful encouragement of any and all possible areas of discontent within the enemy's economic and political structure. This has the advantage of costing infinitely less in terms of both human life and capital expenditure than all-out war and may even be winnable. It is a logical course for either side to pursue.

The USSR did not need to send ideological "super-agents" to lead these demonstrations. They merely had to send a few quiet operators to encourage those who were beginning to emerge as the true leaders of a noble cause. Because these leaders were engaged in gratifying their own personal discontent (and rightly so), they were probably unaware that
acclaim. Future submissions may use this system, create their own, or dispose of the idea entirely.

1. Citizen of the Galaxy, by Robert Hainlein, Del Rey, March 1982
   This is a book I've only read about five times so far. It's the story of a young man, a slave, who grows up free and fights against his slavery. I love this book, but the ending, to me, does not seem to be carefully thought out or well written. It's too abrupt, however it is good and covers enough holes, answers enough questions, to get the book four stars.

   I had a bad feeling about this book just from the stereotyped cover. However, I bought the book because I enjoy tales of Rome and gladiators. Next time, I'll listen to my hunches. It's the story of a young Gaulish warrior taken captive by the Legions, and after some minor tortures, becomes a gladiator. There is only one semi-stereo character in the book, Locus, a wisecracking Greek merchant turned pirate turned gladiator. His appearances are too brief and too few. I rate this book as burn before reading.

   The initial book of about a five book series, starts well. Its hero is Ewan, Prince of Edwatch, a young Simon-type mage who has decided to become mortal. Threats by his lady are null, he enters into a war to regain his father's title and the love of the isle... It has a certain amount of poetic beauty; it is more high fantasy than sword and sorcery. It is a must for those favoring a Celtic-type mythos story. Though I did like the book, in some spots it was not very predictable; thus I give it three stars.

4. The Many-Colored Land, by Julian May, Del Rey, July 1983
   Earth has settled into a number of worlds with a great deal of peace and contentment in the far future. They have been brought into the Galactic Milieu by a number of alien races, and are making galactic contributions like a well-sailed ship. However, what about the misfits: the dreamers, the out-of-place, the oddball? Well, a semi-operable time machine gives access to the Pilgrim six million BC. The misfits are rendered sterile and sent back with upgrades, non-ranged equipment, to live out their lives as they wish. They enter the machine to go back to uninhabited Earth, only to find the alien Tanu. Though the book has a little trouble standing on its own, I still must give it five stars.

   This is the story of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian the Great and his wife, Theodora, one of history's first true husband-wife ruling teams. Procopius wrote this book to have it published after his death. If Justinian had seen it Procopius would have been dead. The book reads somewhat like a documentary and is heavily slanted against the Emperor, his wife, his great general, Belisarius, and his wife, Antonina. Procopius could have been a great propagandist or advertising exec. The man succeeds in painting the four with such a coat of evil, not entirely born out by history, that the book is worth reading for that reason. I give it three stars.

There's one additional thing I would like to bring up. A number of us, while waiting in line to see Return of the Jedi, signed a petition to send from California to reaffirm our nation's commitment in Space.
August Concerts continued:
12/13 Peter Gabriel
8pm, $14.00 reserved, $12.50 general
UC Berkeley Greek Theatre (also next two concerts)
14 Joan Armatrading
4pm, $14 reserved, $12.50 general
26 Al Jarreau
8pm, $16.50 reserved, $15 general

Coming Soon in September:
Elvis Costello, Talking Heads, Men At Work
note: for tickets for any of this in advance, get in touch with
the Bay Area Toad Hall Extention, or, for concerts at the Greek Theatre
and Concord Pavilion, use Ticketron or BASS. The Kabuki and The Saddle
Rack use BASS outlets. Also, David Bowie is coming to Oakland around
August 11 but there's been no publicity. Try a Ticketron agent for in-
formation.

FILM PREMIERE (Bay Area):
July 16, One night only. A reconstruction of the original 3-hour
roadshow version in 3-strip Technicolor print presented in Cinemascope
with 4-track Stereophonic. Judy Garland and James Mason in A Star Is Born.
7:30pm, tickets $25, $18, $12. Paramount Theatre, Oakland.

CONVENTIONS (California):
San Diego Comic Con 14 (Aug 4-7)
San Diego Convention Center and Hotel, San Diego, Ca. $35 single,
thing, $6 one day. Comics, SF films, Animation, Masquerade, Art Show,
Awards Ceremony. Info: SDCC, Box 17066, San Diego, Ca. 92117.

OTHER: Kendo: the traditional art of Japanese Fencing
"Kendo" was born in the days of the Samurai warriors. In the past,
the Samurai trained with real swords, which made it very dangerous in
practice. This style of fencing was the basis for modern Kendo. With
the invention of practice armor and a bamboo sword, Samurai could prac-
tice without worrying about injuring the opponent. This new practice
method was the beginning of modern Kendo. For more information, call
Fresno Kendo Dojo, 222-7270; Fresno State University Kendo Club, 294-3965;
Division of Extended Education Office, 294-2549. Cheap Practice Sword:

Well, I've decided to write the last article myself. Again, I
would like to see it become a regular article with at least one contribu-
tion from everybody involved at either Toad Hall Central or North.
Here it is: The Semi-Official BOOKS ON THE WIND.

First, a brief account of the Shatto Book Rating System. It's based
on stars from 0 to 5. 5 stars means it's a Shelf Book. For those who
don't remember, the Shelf was a special shelf in my apartment where I kept
my most prized books. A book may make the Shelf for no other reason than
that I like it. 4 stars means that I enjoyed the book in question, but it
had some flaw that kept it from the Shelf. 3 stars means it is generally
enjoyable book definitely worth keeping, but has something wrong. 2 stars
means the book may rate as a high so-so. Usually favored authors make
this category. 1 star means the book has a bare something that makes it
worth keeping. 0 stars means that the book should be disposed of, or,
better yet, reduced to its component parts. I must admit this system is
based entirely on my likes and dislikes, not on any literary quality or
they were furthering the goal of the Soviets of discrediting the US political system and economy in the eyes of the world and destroying our own confidence in our own system.

It is apparent that through intervention the Soviet Union would have much to gain at very little actual cost. One may therefore conclude that the USSR lent at least partial support to the Peace Movement.

REBUTtal: Whether or not these young leaders were engaged in gratifying their own personal discontent, they were probably unaware that they were furthering the Soviet goal of discrediting the US political system and economy in the eyes of the world (an unproved fact historically), and destroying confidence in our system of government, because no such plan existed. Arguments of Soviet spy activity during the sixties protest meetings are merely the paranoid ravings of an anti-Soviet mentality that has kept us out of nuclear arms talks and in constant fear of our future. Our world might be better off today if we had looked to our own motivations for our beliefs and less time trying to divine the beliefs of others, or looking for conspiracies. Mike will probably say that I'm a Communist if I think that. What do you say Comrade?

Though Jon has generously asked for my (and other's) opinions on this subject, I don't think it fair on the first article of Point-Counterpoint. However, I will reply in the second newsletter with a decidedly right-wing slant. Other replies are welcome.

Other General Business:

CSUF HENRY MADDEN LIBRARY, Summer Schedule, 1983
June 13-July 22: Mon-Fri 0900-1800, Sat-Sun closed
July 22-August 19: Mon-Fri 1100-1500, Sat-Sun closed
August 22 on: 0800-1700

CONCERTS (Bay Area):

July:
16 Ronnie Montrose/Mitchell Froom
8pm, no ticket price information
Wolfgang's Nightclub, 901 Columbus Ave. SF

21 The Band ("First US appearance since 'The Last Waltz'")
no time or price information
The Saddle Rack, 1310 Auzerais Ave., San Jose

21/22 Jerry Garcia
no time info, tickets $7.50 at door
The Stone, San Francisco

25 Robert Palmer (possibly with Nona Hendrix)
8pm, no price info
Kabuki Nightclub, 1881 Post St., SF

29 "Out In Space", John Williams conducting the San Francisco symphony ("There'll be the memorable music from 'Star Wars', 'E.T., The Extra-Terrestrial' and 'Return of the Jedi' complete with lasers, pyrotechnics and special effects."
8pm, $12.50 tables, $7.50 dress circle, $4.50-$1.00 balcony
San Francisco Civic Auditorium

August:
4 John Cale
9pm, no ticket price info
Wolfgang's Nightclub, 901 Columbus Ave, SF

5-7 Concord Jazz Festival
three day pass: $31.50 reserved, $19.50 lawn
individual concerts: $11.50 reserved, $7.50 lawn
RULE OF THE GREAT:
When somebody you greatly admire and respect appears to be thinking deep thoughts, they probably are thinking about lunch.

In order to have a blank side for mailing, I have taken the liberty of adding a few final notes on this page.
First the errata, which are many: on pg. 1, under Mark Brown, line 7 should read "...wants to stop over-intellectualizing..." and line 9 ought to say "...perfect at any..." which changes the meaning of both sentences. Most of the rest are spelling errors (unpardonable for me) and/or typo's. Where I caught my flubs, I tried to fudge around it, with limited success. Also, I want to apologize for some of the liberties I took in typing up the newsletter, for example, the heading after my name in Jon's piece (in Rick's copy, I had no heading and I was lonely). In other places, when a particular phrase or word seemed to me to more accurately express the author's intent, I substituted, but when I was unsure, I went with the original.
Finally, I want to express my appreciation to all for allowing me to type this up.

-D. Hurst
San Francisco

He turns the typewriter off, pushes it away, stands up to unfold his creased muscles. Closing his eyes to rub them, a negative image of lines in paragraph format floats in front of him. He sighs and looks at the stack of finished ditto masters on the table, the product of nearly six hours of almost constant typing. Groaning, he realizes he hasn't eaten since that morning, he isn't comfortable standing (but can't bear the thought of sitting down), and his bladder has been full to the brim for an unknown length of time. In the bathroom, staring down at the toilet bowl, he thinks about what he has typed up. He's not completely satisfied with it, would have, perhaps, done some things differently had he been in charge. Turning and zipping up, he catches his scowling reflection in the mirror, stops a moment and laughs. Back in the kitchen, he looks once more at the dittos, this time smiling. This isn't a lone venture, he thinks, this is more, this is bigger, man, this is the beginning, imperfect perhaps, but the beginning none-the-less of a new movement. Feeling exultant, he gets down a glass and pours a few fingers of water (no booze, he sighs ruefully) and raises it to toast. To Toad Hall, he thinks, and drains the glass in a swallow...