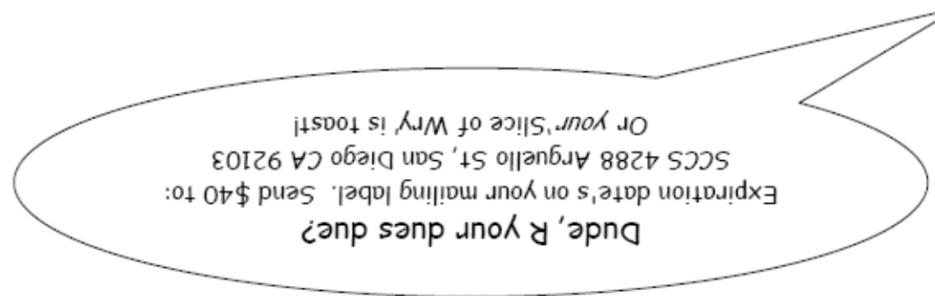


A Slice of Wry

The Official Newsletter of the Southern California Cartoonists Society
www.sccs-online.org
and the San Diego Charter of the National Cartoonists Society



www.sccs-online.org
10675 Mathieson St
San Diego, CA 92129
A SLICE OF WRy

stamp

Introducing...

Hi, my name is Margie Holland, and I'll be the new editor for 'A Slice of Wry'.



If you have any contributions or suggestions, I am always open to new ideas and input.

majiemae@att.net

Final Thoughts:

I would like to thank: R.C. Harvey, Jim Whiting and Charlie Roberts for their pieces on Shel; and Greg Evans and Sonjalee Holland, for the special artwork.

And last, but not least, a special thanks to Terry Van Kirk, who carried the ball for "A Slice of Wry", and is now allowing me an opportunity to take a stab at this endeavor. I hope I can do half as well as she did.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SCCS North County Dinner: 6 pm Thursday, 7-17-08
Grandma's Hilltop Hideaway & Café 539 Vista Bella
Oceanside, CA 760-757-8777

July 24, Thursday
SCCS-NCS Comic-Con kick-off party.
Busters Beach House

July 23-27
San Diego Comic-Con Convention

August 08
Vacation! No meeting, no Slice of Wry

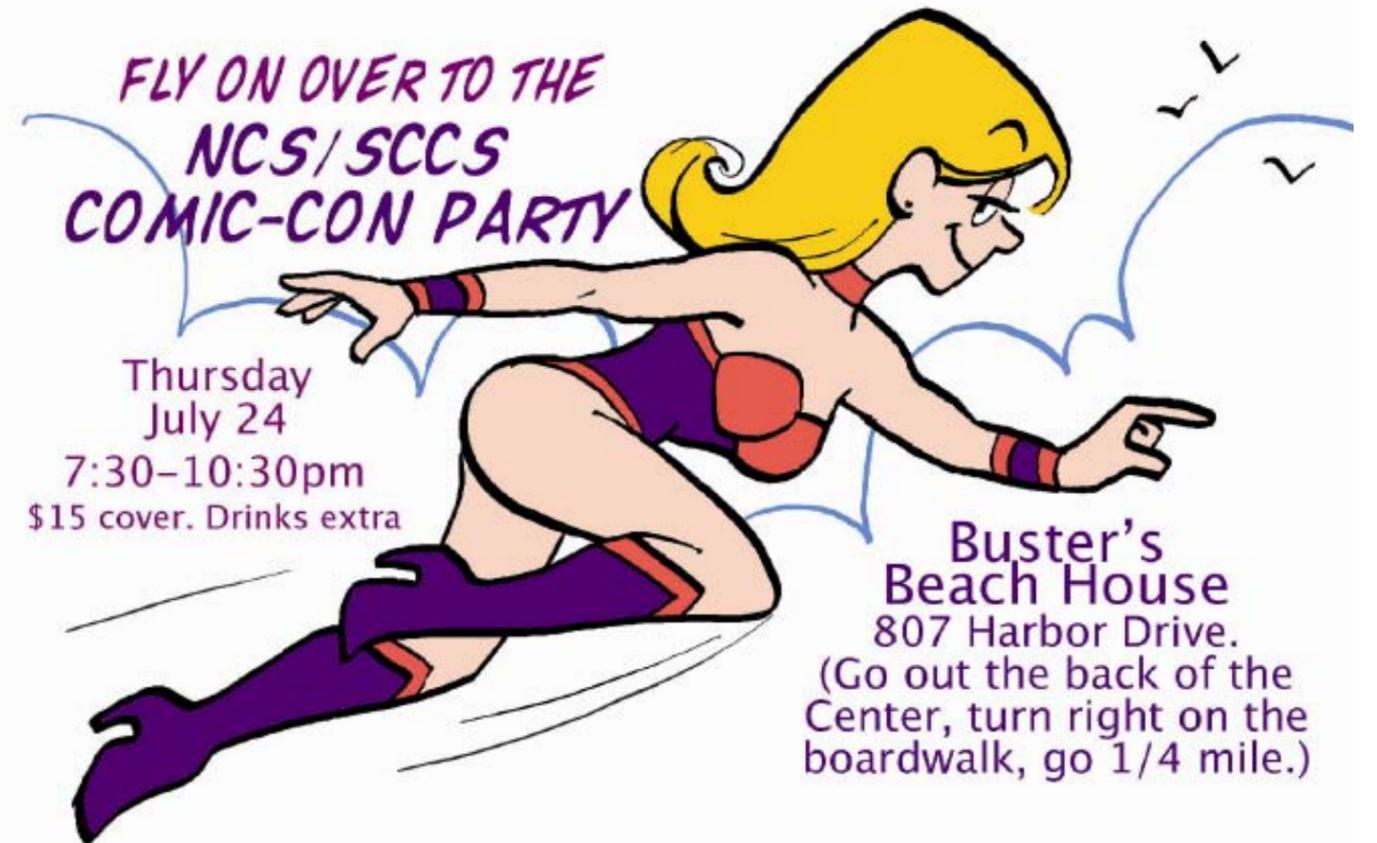
September 10, Wednesday
Jorge Pacheco - artist, cartoonist, caricaturist
*Nominations for president
SD Blood Bank

October 8, Wednesday
Andrew Mitchell -artist, cartoonist, author

***Elections for prez**
SD Blood Bank

November 12, Wednesday
TBA - SD Blood Bank

December 10, Wednesday
Holiday Party @ Jack's Magic Museum



With a special tribute to Shel Dorf - godfather of Comic-Con



President's Mess.

Comic-Con = Halloween in July

By

Karyl Miller, prez SCCS 6/24/08

As everyone knows, the Con offers some of the finest people watching anywhere! Comic-Con is a show and so are the people who go to it. It's a feast for the eyes but not for the faint-of-heart. At Comic-Con, anyone with spandex and a sewing machine can turn himself into a human conversation piece. In fact, Comic-Con attendees can be divided into two distinct categories: those taking pictures versus those posing for pictures. All it takes is a costume to switch sides. Why wait for October 31 when you've got an overwhelming desire to parade around in a 5-inch thick foam rubber Incredible Hulk outfit? Who cares if it's a blazing 98 degrees? The show must go on - *and you're it.*

It might be fun to have everyone want to take my picture. If my costume was good enough, I'd be hounded by the Con-erazzi all day.

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I'd get to experience what it feels like to be Paris Hilton, only likeable and not rich. Who knows? I could become the next YouTube sensation.

What costume would I make for myself? Yes, I said make. For some of us, simply donning some flammable Dorothy get-up bought off the rack at WalMart just doesn't cut it. Of course, making a costume is like making soup. Success depends on what ingredients you've got on hand. I've got the perfect Daisy Mae. All I need is a Wonderbra and some Kleenex, a torn skirt and I'm good to go. I'll be a sensation!

BUT WAIT: Does anyone really want to see a woman - *old enough to remember Elvis as a thin man* - dressed in a mini-skirt?

FACT: The Con is like a Star Trek convention and Halloween all rolled into one. It attracts a certain high-ish percentage of borderline out-of-touch thespians (often *in costume*) that I don't want to see. Like the 300 lb. Spidey or the equivalent. I'm sorry that dude's now etched in my memory along with the other horrible images - like pictures of Auschwitz I wish I hadn't seen. *So do I want to become one of them?*

Maybe I'd be more credible if I chose a more age-appropriate character like Mammy Yokum.

I've got a corn cob pipe and combat boots, but how would I make myself look that old? Rubber cement?

What if I dressed as Mammy Yokum and nobody knew it was a costume? I would die. Really, I'd have to race to the back of the Convention Center and throw myself into the Bay.

POSSIBLE IDEA: Blondie is older than I am (How does she do it?). All I'd need is a Wonderbra and some Kleenex (same as my old Daisy Mae outfit, but not torn). Okay who am I kidding? I've got to get real. I've got to pick a character with my similar body type.

LIGHT BULB! Mutt and Jeff! (I LOVE the classics!) I own both a vest and a high silk hat. All I'd have to do is let my moustache grow out. I'd like to be Mutt (the taller of the two), but because I'm 4'11," I'd have to find someone shorter than me to be Jeff and that might limit the casting possibilities. So I'll be Jeff. And all I need is a partner 5' 4" or taller. So, hello all you Mutts out there. I can't do it without you. Please send me an Email stating WHY you want to play the part of Mutt to my Jeff along with a JPEG of you in your costume. The winning Email gets the job.



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WEBSITES

www.sccs-online.org

www.reuben.org

SCCS DISCUSSION LIST

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sccsonline>

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SPOTLIGHT ON DAN McCLINTOCK

We've all watched with fascination, Cynthia Devereux's flying fingers, as she sits at the front of our lectern ASL signing entire meetings for deaf SCCS member Dan McClintock.

Now we ask Dan to tell us about himself, how he first came to SCCS, about his deaf news reporting, awards, cartoons, his fascinating blog posts, deaf politics and any other subject he wishes us to know about. Dan take it away ---

MH: *When did you join the SCCS? And how did you find out about it?*

DM: I think it was three years ago that I joined SCCS. I found out about SCCS at Comic-Con when I went there with Cynthia.

MH: *What made you decide to start a cartoon strip?*

DM: I have been drawing cartoons and comic strips since I was a child. I developed drawing skills at age 4. My mother provided me with art supplies and encouraged me to develop my art interest. I remember my late grandfather, a diplomat who had work to do in his office, would provide me with a box of art supplies to keep me busy while I was placed in a room at his house on Embassy Row in Washington, D.C. and I would draw picture after picture all day there. Aside from his expertise in diplomacy, my late grandfather had some drawing skills and would doodle a little when he was bored in his office. He also had a keen interest in the arts shared) (a common interest that all my family and culture, and had a particularly interesting library at one of his few residences where my father and I visited, in Annapolis, MD. It was a small nice apartment that he would use whenever he went to Annapolis for sailing on his yacht Excelsior.

Among many treasured books in the library he had collected were, oddly, comic books...Asterix and Tintin. He gave me those comic books to read while he and my father attended to business.

Since that experience I became an avid Asterix and Tintin fan. My mother gave me a copy of Tintin in French one time for my birthday. I learned Spanish a little by reading a comic book my grandmother gave me when we were traveling in Venezuela, Condorito, which is popular in her native country Chile. (My grandfather was U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela at this time.) Later as I was growing up I became enamored with MAD magazine, especially the comic strips by Sergio Arigones (who came from Mexico), Antonio Prohias (who came from Cuba) and Don Martin. MAD magazine was one of the biggest influences on my style in comic strips.

I collected for a brief time in the '70s PLOPI!, a comic book that Arigones put out but didn't last too long a time (wasn't it inspired by PLOPI!, a different comic strip that appeared in Chilean Condorito?). I am also a Snoopy fan as well as a Dick Tracy and Spiderman fan. I collected MARVEL and DC comics all my childhood.

I would doodle often when I was at school and friends would often ask me for cartoons.

Later in my life I attended California State University, Northridge and majored in commercial art.

I eventually graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting/Illustration. My comic strips and cartoons were published in deaf-owned publications - SILENT NEWS, DEAFROCHESTER, DEAFNATION, JDCC News (Jewish Deaf Community Center), SIGNews and more.

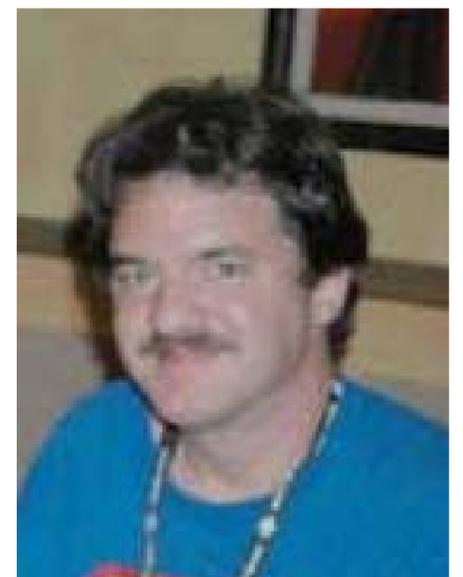
Published by Communication Service for the Deaf in South Dakota,

SIGNews is currently the leading deaf community newspapers out in America and can be accessed at www.signews.org/.

Currently, I am spending more time on painting and pastel work as well as illustration for different projects.

I just completed a book project last spring for DawnSignPress, a deaf-owned publishing company that is based in San Diego and puts out children's book and educational materials on sign language and Deaf Culture, www.dawnsign.com. The new book will be announced soon in due time. I am now on a second book project that is in slow progress due to a chemotherapy treatment I was undergoing. I look forward to resume doing cartoons and illustration this fall after I complete my treatment and relocate to Los Angeles.

I like Lalo Alcaraz's La Cucaracha strips. I had been reading books on my grandmother's native country Chile and its history while recuperating at my home as I was undergoing chemotherapy treatment for my liver condition and as a result of my ongoing immersion in Chilean heritage I feel inspired to create a humorous comic strip about a deaf Chilean-American's journey of discovering the Chilean soul. That will come out in the near future.





SHEL DORF

San Diego Union Tribune
July 16, 2006
Laura Embry

When the San Diego Comic-Con International opens its annual run at the Convention Center Wednesday night, Shel Dorf won't be there.

The man widely considered the founder of the convention is 73. The last time he went, several years ago, he was in a wheelchair because of diabetes and he couldn't make his way through the throng.

A drawing of Comic-Con founder Shel Dorf is on a wall of fame at the Palm Restaurant in downtown San Diego.

"We had no idea it would get this big," he said in a recent phone interview. "To me, it's just become an ordeal. I don't know of any way to make it smaller, though. I guess in some ways it's become too much of a success."

He isn't bitter, not publicly anyway. He figures he had his run. He was actively involved in the convention for the first 15 years, using contacts he'd built from a lifetime of loving the comics to bring some of the industry's biggest names to San Diego.

The convention also helped him get more work as an artist and a writer and enhanced his reputation as a historian of comics. When Warren Beatty turned Dick Tracy into a movie in 1990, Dorf was a consultant.

But now, being in the background is fine with him. He declined to be interviewed in person at his Ocean Beach home. "I'm not seeing people," he said. He didn't want his picture taken, either. He suggested using a caricature that hangs on the wall of a local restaurant – a cartoon for one of cartooning's ultimate fans.

When Dorf was a kid, growing up in Detroit in the shadow of the Great Depression, he made his own comic books. Every day he would cut strips out of the newspaper and paste them in scrapbooks.

Dick Tracy was a particular favorite. Dorf can remember waiting on his front porch for the carrier to arrive, anxious to learn what had happened to the square-jawed detective.

He loved the stories, and he loved the artwork, and the people who created the comics were his heroes. He knew them all by name. When he grew up, he wanted to be one of them.

Back then, in the 1940s, being a fan didn't make you a creep. Nobody knew what "stalking" was. You got a star's picture or autograph because it meant something to you, not because you were going to sell it on eBay.

Not many people considered cartoonists stars, but Dorf did. He reached out to them, sent them custom Christmas cards. Some became his friends.

He went to the Art Institute of Chicago to learn the trade, then plied it – first at the Detroit Free Press, then in New York as a freelance commercial designer.

In 1969, his parents retired to San Diego. Dorf helped them move. The lifelong bachelor got one look at the city and decided to stay. He brought along his scrapbooks, and kept adding to them. The newspaper strips, he said, were "too good to throw away." It didn't take him long to find kindred spirits on the West Coast. Within a year, he and some of his new friends decided to hold a comic convention here. Dorf had worked on similar gatherings in Detroit.

"I just felt that the cartoonists who entertained the popular masses were not getting their fair share of recognition," he said. A convention would celebrate their many contributions.

Dorf, who was 36 then, also remembered what it was like to be a kid burning with a desire to become an artist, and not really knowing how to get there.

A convention, he believed, would be a way to let youngsters meet pros, get some advice.

They held a one-day test fair in March of 1970, then the first three-day convention later that summer, in the basement of the U.S. Grant hotel.

About 300 people came. They didn't know it, but a monster was born.

Several of the teenagers who helped Dorf put together the early conventions moved on to successful careers. John Pound drew the "Garbage Pail Kids."

Dave Stevens did "The Rocketeer." Scott Shaw went into comics, TV and advertising. In that way, Dorf's vision came true, and it makes him proud. "The convention is still doing its job in terms of new talent getting discovered," he said.

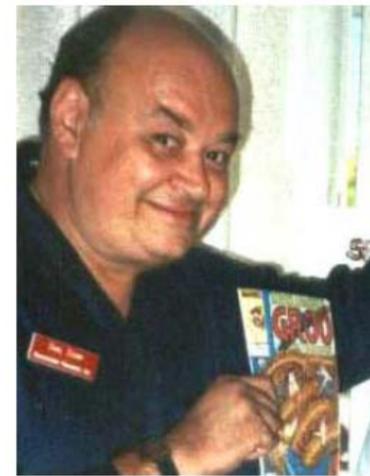
But he and other old-timers are uncomfortable with what they see as a steady march away from the event's roots. "Hollywood has kind of hijacked it," Dorf said.

The four-day event is getting known more and more as a springboard for new movies, video games, TV shows and toys.

Much of the pre-event buzz these days is about what film stars might show up.

"Our real goal in the beginning was to let youngsters meet the pros, the old guys, but that's not the priority that it once was," said Shaw, who has been at every Comic-Con. "A lot of us wish it was more about the art than the business."

Phil Yeh, another veteran artist whose work includes graphic novels and comic books such as "Winged Tiger" and "Patrick Rabbit," tells a story from last year's convention that he said illustrates the shifting priorities of the event and its audience.



Shel at 1986 Comic-Con

He had a table next to a booth for the Cartoon Network, which was giving away free T-shirts. People lined up for the shirts. As they stood there, Yeh encouraged them to look at his books. Most declined, he said, with many telling him they don't read.

(That's probably the wrong thing to say to Yeh. For the past 20 years, he has run Cartoonists Across America, which promotes literacy as an essential component of a functioning democracy.)

"Sadly, as the Con grew ever bigger and the big movie stars drew even bigger crowds, we lost sight of the fact that this convention was set up for the promotion of the actual art of comics and not for the selling of toys and games and promoting films," he said.

That said, Yeh and Shaw will be at the convention again this year. "It's still one of the few places in the United States where all the creators get together," Yeh said.

Shaw said he got his start doing posters and other promotional work for the early conventions, and his steady presence at the show – he said he's never missed a day – means a lot of people recognize him now. He's grateful for that.

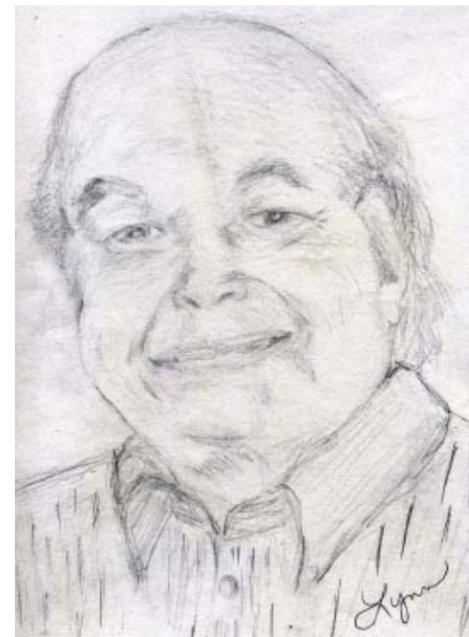
"The show is like an annual reunion," he said. "It's just that I used to know one out of every three people I'd see, and now it's like one out of every 30,000."

Convention organizers said their event remains the largest gathering of comics professionals in the country, and they believe the other attractions have come in addition to, not at the expense of, the original goals and purposes.

"Over its 37 years, Comic-Con has evolved and grown to become an event that offers many things to many people, serving as an umbrella for fans of all aspects of pop culture," they said in a recent newsletter.

He's getting ready to part with five boxes of material related to the Steve Canyon strip, by Milton Caniff. Dorf did the lettering for the comic for more than 12 years in the 1970s and '80s.

Convention organizers said their event remains the largest gathering of comics professionals in the country, and they believe the other attractions have come in addition to, not at the expense of, the original goals and purposes.



Drawing by Lynn Stedd

"Over its 37 years, Comic-Con has evolved and grown to become an event that offers many things to many people, serving as an umbrella for fans of all aspects of pop culture," they said in a recent newsletter.

One of the reasons Dorf used to send Christmas cards to cartoonists was to let them know how much they were appreciated, he said. In many ways, that has been his life's work.

Now he wants to make sure they are remembered, too. He's donated many of his old scrapbooks to Ohio State University, where scholars study them for various research projects.

He's also been heavily involved with a museum in Woodstock, Ill., for Chester Gould, the creator of Dick Tracy.

He's ridden in the annual parade there.

As for Dorf's own legacy, that will be on display again next week at the convention center.

"Shel's fingerprints are on Comic-Con in the fact that it exists at all," Shaw said. "He stuck with it. None of us who were involved when it started knew how huge it was going to be.

"He probably wishes he could be acknowledged a little more for what he did, but life is strange that way. People go into a Ralphs market and they don't wonder who Ralph is. Same with the Comic-Con. It just is."

Even without Shel Dorf in attendance.

Shel Dorf

By Jim Whiting

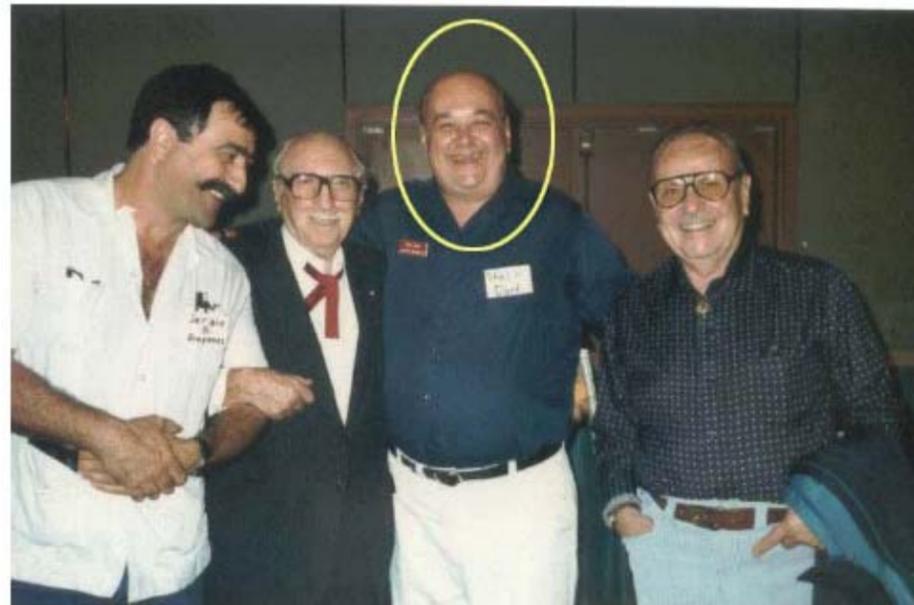
Hard to believe, but when we first moved to California from Watkins Glen, New York I'd never heard of the San Diego Comic-Con. Nor of Shel Dorf, for that matter. Later of course, it would be impossible to think of one, without the other coming to mind.

I did know San Diego Union staff artist Bernie Lansky from our Cartoonists & Illustrators School days in New York City and when I told him about a small group of cartoonists having lunch together once a month, he said, "You should talk to Shel Dorf.." Bernie knew that Shel knew cartoonists downtown, uptown, all around the county. Heck...around the country.

Well, I intended to get in touch with the cartoonist catalyst, but before that happened, Shel happened. He got in touch with me via telephone on March 16, 1986 and on the 18th. I drove him and Steve Schanes to the third meeting of the Southern California Cartoonists Society in Vista, CA.

It seemed as if every meeting following that one, a new face in the crowd would appear due to the diligence of Dorf. The consummate networker, Shel introduced a great number of aficionados of the art - neophytes and old pros alike - to our growing group. His personal contacts have resulted in many outstanding programs presented by stars of the cartoon industry at our monthly dinners. I often consider: if it were not for him, Bernita and I would have missed attending a CAPS banquet not long after we'd arrived in San Diego. It was there in Los Angeles where it was my pleasure to become acquainted with so many of our brothers and sisters in the cartooning world. And I can't begin to number other individuals who have enriched my west coast experience because of Shel's introductions.

No one person can assume credit for the fine club we have today, but certainly, if we had such award, Shel Dorf would be deserving of an MVP cup. (Most Valuable Promoter)



Sergio Arigones movie producer
Jack Cummings

Shel Dorf **Burne Hogarth**

Thanks Shel !

by Charlie Roberts

As a collector living in Pennsylvania in the early 1980's, I'd heard of the San Diego Comic-Con but had never been able to attend. I'd also read pieces by Shel and seen photos he'd taken, but never met him. In April 1983 my wife Joan and I drove from Pa. to the "Cartoon Museum" when it was still in Connecticut for a chalk talk by "Terry and the Pirates" and "Steve Canyon" comic strip creator Milton Caniff. The presentation was excellent, and Caniff was incredibly gracious, signing autographs and talking to everyone. During the chalk talk he had done an incredible "Dragon Lady" in color.

When we got home, I wrote Caniff, inquiring about commissioning a color "Dragon Lady" for the collection and sending him the incredible amount of \$40 (well, \$40 in 1983 would be equal to \$42 today...!). A few weeks later we received a great specially done "Dragon Lady" original from Caniff, and within a day or two, Shel sent us a superb color photo he'd taken of Caniff with our drawing. It turns out Shel and Tom French happened to be doing a video interview with Caniff in Palm Springs when Caniff received our request. The video actually shows Caniff doing our art (Ta Da!). We moved to the Ocean Beach area of San Diego in August 1983, and wound up living right around the corner from Shel. I was having a hard time getting a job our first few months, and Shel hired me to rule the lines and borders on blank "Steve Canyon" strips for Shel to letter. (I really hated to cash those Milton Caniff checks, but we needed groceries!) Shel also hired Joan to transcribe a few interviews he's done.

Over the next few years, Shel and I made several trips together to visit cartoonists.

Shel would do the interview, and I was designated unofficial trip photographer. Trips we made included: "Superman" creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster for Blackthorne's "Dateline 1930's" book, and the home studios of Sergio Aragones, Zeke Zekley (who was George McManus' assistant on "Bringing Up Father" from 1935 to 1954),

Norman Maurer (who was married to "Three Stooge" Moe Howard's daughter Joan), and Brad "Marmaduke" Anderson. Shel also took me to my first "Southern California Cartoonist Society" meeting in late 1986, where I first met Jimbo Whiting and Paul Norris. In the early 1980's I'd come up with a cartoon panel idea based on a sketch I'd done for my wife: "Baby Thid Thez", a lisping baby going on 40 years old. Frankly, I can't draw too well so I would write the gag, do a "rough" (real rough!!!!) and letter the panel. I showed it to Shel, and we worked on it together for a year or so. Shel inked everything but "Thid's" head. "Baby Thid" ran for 2+ years in the Ocean Beach "Beacon". So, within two years of leaving Pennsylvania, here we were, living a block and a half from the beach, visiting movie stars and legendary cartoonists, and I had a cartoon being published in a newspaper...90% of which was due to Shel Dorf!

This is just one small story based on knowing Shel, and there must be literally hundreds of stories of life changing events and stories from Shel's founding of the "San Diego Comic-Con" and how it affected peoples lives. Thank you for everything Shel, you are loved and appreciated.

Tribute to Shel Dorf

by R.C. Harvey

I met Shel in 1982. We were both attending Milton Caniff's 75th birthday party in Columbus, Ohio, at Ohio State University. Soon thereafter, we worked together on a comic strip we hoped to get syndicated: it was Shel's brain child, and he called it Lines; he wrote it, and I drew it. Before we got started, though, Shel thought we should discuss the terms of our partnership, and he wanted Caniff as referee, so he arranged a conference call for the three of us. One of Shel's questions was about divvying up the plunder, if any. I said, "Fifty-fifty—that way we'll both think we got the short end of the stick." Caniff laughed his approval. The strip didn't sell, so the question was moot.

A question about which there is no moot, however, is: Who is most responsible for the San Diego Comic-Con? Shel would be the first to say that creating and nurturing the Con wasn't a one-man enterprise: it took work by many people, of whom Shel was only one. But we can arrive at the truest answer to our question by asking it another way: Would the San Diego Comic-Con have come into being without Shel? The answer, I believe, is, No. He brought the idea of a comic convention with him from Detroit, where he'd been instrumental in staging the nation's first in Motor City. In San Diego, he found a cadre of interested youths who were willing to do the work, and Shel was happy to delegate. But year after year, he was the sparkplug, fostering interest in the Con among fans and professionals alike, keeping the flame alive, until today—an annual delirious conflagration at the water's edge. As Milton would say, Big Thanks, Shel.