



Notes from the
Underground
January 2010

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

Notes from the Underground is a bi-monthly newsletter published by Several Unlimited. Dues are \$12.00 per year in the US, \$16.00 overseas, payable September 1. Submissions of articles, reviews, and artwork are welcome. All written submissions should be sent online or typed. Please don't send original artwork by regular mail. The deadline for submissions is the first of every month.

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Erika

Editor, Notes from the Underground

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Club News

Prez Mez 2010

Happy New Year to All! I hope everyone is thawing out from the cold snap, and that those who came down with seasonal crud are recovering.

This holiday season I attended Jennifer Hebert's Christmas Party and Steve Dial's New Year's Day Open House. Both of them were a lot of fun. I think that Jennifer and Steve deserve our thanks for organizing these parties and giving us a chance to celebrate the season fannishly. Yay Jennifer and Steve!

At the December meeting we collected \$110 dollars for the Houston Humane Society. Contributors I made out all checks to the Society and covered cash donations with my own check.

For the New Year, I'd like to suggest a few resolutions to the Several:

- ❖ Invite a friend to at least one meeting. (Maybe a Video Party?)
- ❖ Volunteer at a local con like Apollocon or Revelcon.
- ❖ Visit one of the other clubs in our area (Starbase, Inner Loop SF, Fan Force, etc.)

Finally, what new excursions might be interesting to the Several in 2010? Plays, museums, picnics? What must-see SF movies are coming up?

Free Gifts

Not for us, sorry—but stuff you picked up for free can matter a lot to other people. The hotel soaps, shampoos, lotions, etc., that you toss into your suitcase after every con can be put to good use by the local food banks. (Full-size products too, of course.) This year the local food pantries are being pushed so hard that all their money is spent on food—nothing is left for toiletries. If there isn't a specific Food Bank that you want to contribute to, I will be glad to collect these items and take them to Braes Interfaith Ministries (5020 West Bellfort.)

Several Unlimited Fan fiction Archive

We would love to receive and post your fanfic in our web archive. We would love to receive electronic copies of them—send them to fanfic_archive@severalunlimited.com. We can scan hard copy too-- email us first before you send us anything on paper.

Upcoming Events

Chronicles of Narnia: The Exhibition, ends Jan 31, 2010

The museum is near Highway 59 at the corner of University Blvd and New Territory Blvd..

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Exhibition: Immerses visitors in scenes from the famed literary world of Narnia, and explores the science behind its inhabitants. Fans can tour scenes from the famed world of Narnia and view costumes, props and set dressings from the magical films. Step through the wardrobe and into the wintery world of Narnia, where it's actually snowing.

Con-Jour 2.0, January 29-31, 2010

Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and Horror Convention

University of Houston, Clear Lake campus.

- ❖ GOH: Steven Brust
- ❖ Guest: Glen Welch
- ❖ Guest: Simon Nightingale
- ❖ Guest: Linda Nightingale

Discussion Panels, Media Rooms, Feature Films, Scheduled and Open Gaming, Cosplay, LARPS, Dealers Room, Masquerade Ball, Con Suite, and more!

AggieCon 41, February 5-7, 2010

Oldest & largest student-run science fiction convention in the U.S.

College Station Hilton Hotel, **College Station, Texas**

- ❖ Writer GOH: Steven Gould
- ❖ Editor GOH: Ellen Datlow
- ❖ Toastmaster: Selina Rosen

Regional Guests: Caroline Spector (writer), Gloria Oliver (writer), Jayme Lynn Blaschke (editor), Laura J. Mixon (writer), Mel White (web comics), Rhonda Eudaly (writer), Rie Sheridan Rose (writer), Scott Cupp (writer), Tom Knowles (publisher), Tracy S. Morris (writer)

[D]emos, lectures, workshops, panel discussions, games, and media

showings. Dealers Room, Art Show, Gaming, Cosplay, Video Room, Charity, etc.

[AggieCon or Death!](#)

ConDFW IX, February 12-14, 2010

A Science Fiction and Fantasy Event

Crowne Plaza Suites Dallas, (**Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex area**)

- ❖ Author GOH: Jack McDevitt
- ❖ Special GOH: Elizabeth Moon
- ❖ Artist GOH: Vincent Villafranca

Art Show, Autographs, Dealer's Room, Con Suite, Panels & Readings, Gaming, Readings, Gallery Tables, Freebie Tables

Charity Book Swap, Hard Science Panels, Intergalactic Archaeology, "Late Night Double Feature", Ms. Celestial Starburst, ProArtist Drawing Challenge, Sci-Fi Spelling Bee, Short Story Contest

OwlCon XXIX, February 19-21, 2010

Gaming, Fantasy, & Science Fiction Convention

RMC/Ley Student Center, Rice University, **Houston, TX**

OwlCon is an annual gaming convention at Rice University, Houston, TX, dating back to 1980. Table top and live action role playing games, miniatures games and events, historical miniatures, board games, card games, a dealers' room, and more. OwlCon 2k2 gaming events include RPGA events, official tournaments for Warhammer 40k, Warmaster, Shadowfist, and Mage Knight, Matchbox-scale Car Wars, World of Darkness tabletop games, a Vampire LARP, a Call of Cthulhu LARP, a Crossroads fantasy LARP, and many other games with prizes galore! OwlCon will once again be swarming with official demo folks for various game systems to give you a chance to try some of their great games. We will also have open gaming, an anime room, a TV lounge running movies, some "all nighter" events, and our annual OwlCon party and costume contest in Valhalla.

News and Reviews

Jamie Ritchey wins SongVid Award

Our very own Jamie Ritchey has won a Best Vid award in the Light My Fire Awards. Her notice and winner banner is below:

Many congratulations on winning the following category in the 2009 Light My Fire Awards.

Winner: Best Vid: Bad Day



Sherlock Holmes

Dee Beetem

The movie's been out less than a month, so I'll try not to include spoilers. First off, if you're a Holmes fan, it's definitely worth seeing. Robert Downey Jr. isn't the best Holmes I've seen (I'd give that palm to Jeremy Brett) but he's good—even convincing. I've seen so many treatments of Holmes that the most interesting ones have a twist:

- ❖ **Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother** (Gene Wilder as the comic, resentful younger brother)
- ❖ **Without a Clue** (Michael Caine, as an actor playing 'Crime Doctor' Watson's drunken sidekick)
- ❖ **They Might Be Giants** (George C. Scott as a brilliant paranoid who believes he is Holmes)

Downey's Holmes is swashbuckling but slightly dysfunctional; Jude Law is his swashbuckling and competent friend, Dr. Watson. Unlike Nigel Bruce's Watson, the original Watson was neither elderly, fat, nor bumbling. Since this is a holiday movie, the stakes are stupendous, there are many explosions and fights, and there is of course a girl (Irene Adler, the woman for Holmes in canon.) It's not the way Doyle presented them,

but one can choose to imagine that Watson censored a few things out when he wrote the stories.

At one point I had the terrible fear the movie was going to completely jump the shark. There are some things you cannot do with Sherlock Holmes without violating his essential nature. But we've seen a lot of that in recent movie adaptations (*Wild Wild West*, anyone?) so it did not seem unlikely. But Sherlockians can be reassured—in the end, it's still Holmes.

And boy, does it look like there's going to be a sequel.

Doctor Who, the End of Time Review

Erika Frensley

It's finally arrived, the last episode of David Tennant's *Doctor Who*. And is it a doozy. The Doctor knows his time is coming to an end, and he's desperately trying to live his life in the time he has left. But he may have delayed too long... the Master is coming back, and that's not the worst of it. The Time Lords, long thought dead, may be coming back as well. This may not be a good thing, considering the horrors of the Time Wars...

The end of Tennant's, and Russell Davies' era goes out with a bang. The episode brings up the meaning of regeneration for the Doctor, the real reason for the Master's insanity, and the nature of Time Lords (and Timothy Dalton as a Time Lord!). And, before the end, all the major companions have a proper goodbye. Donna Noble's story is a big part of the epic saga, and her grandfather Wilfred Noble almost steals the show from Tennant, and Donna's situation (she cannot remember her time with the Doctor, or her brain will burn out) keeps you on the edge of your sofa.

And then there's the glimpse of the new guy, Matt Smith, amidst the crashing TARDIS, who's apparently very glad he's not a girl.

I have to say, I am looking forward to the new series of *Doctor Who*. The epic stories solved by the Deus ex Doctor and the Hallelujah Chorus singers have gotten a bit tiresome of late. I'm hoping that the new season will have a bit of the old-fashioned *Doctor Who* back, and a bit less of the fanboyishness. And, hopefully a lot less snogging for the Doctor – Celibacy worked for Brother Cadfael, after all!

There's a new trailer out for Series 5 of *Doctor Who*:

http://denofgeek.net-genie.co.uk/television/390575/doctor_who_series_5_the_first_full_trailer.html

David Tennant will be continuing his role as the Doctor in an animated Doctor Who series (air date TBD), and there's rumors of a movie in the works.

Websites of the Month

Tor.com

<http://www.tor.com/>

Tor Books' science fiction, fantasy, and horror site contains podcasts, interviews with authors, editors, and artists, reviews, and new stories by their authors. Registration is free.

TOR·COM 

Stories include this little gem:

[*I, Cthulhu, or, What's A Tentacle-Faced Thing Like Me Doing In A Sunken City Like This \(Latitude 47° 9' S, Longitude 126° 43' W\)?* by Neil Gaiman](#)

TV Tropes

Margaret McNickle

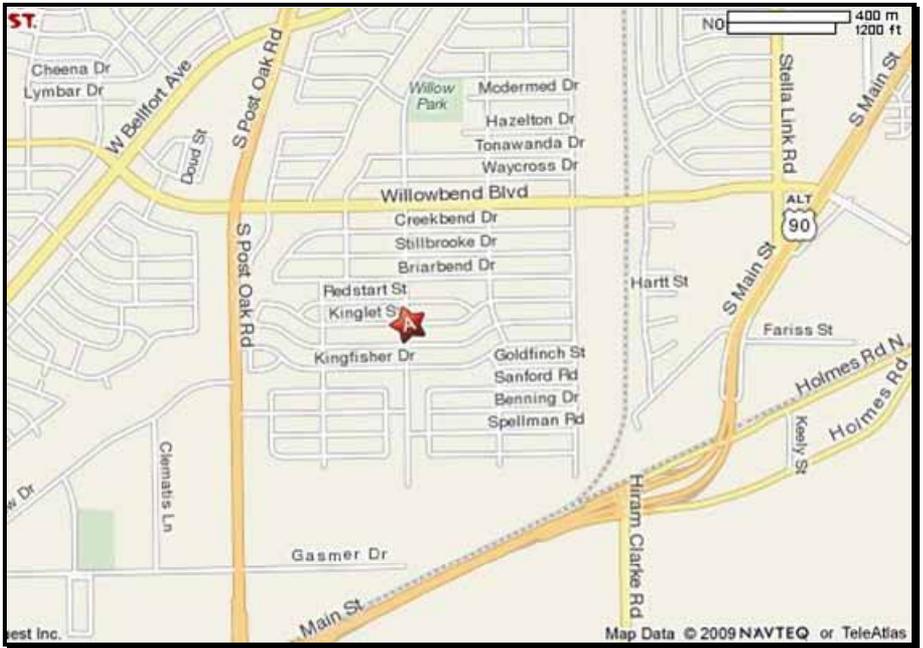
<http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/HomePage>

I found TV Tropes while looking up information about an obscure 80's cartoon series called Mighty Orbots. This wiki lists writing devices and conventions found in TV series-Action Girl, Clark Kenting, Chickification, Space Does Not Work That Way, and more! The handy search box lets you find tropes in your favorite fandom. Every term has a link to the glossary, so you never have to guess what Timey Wimey Ball means. (Huh???)

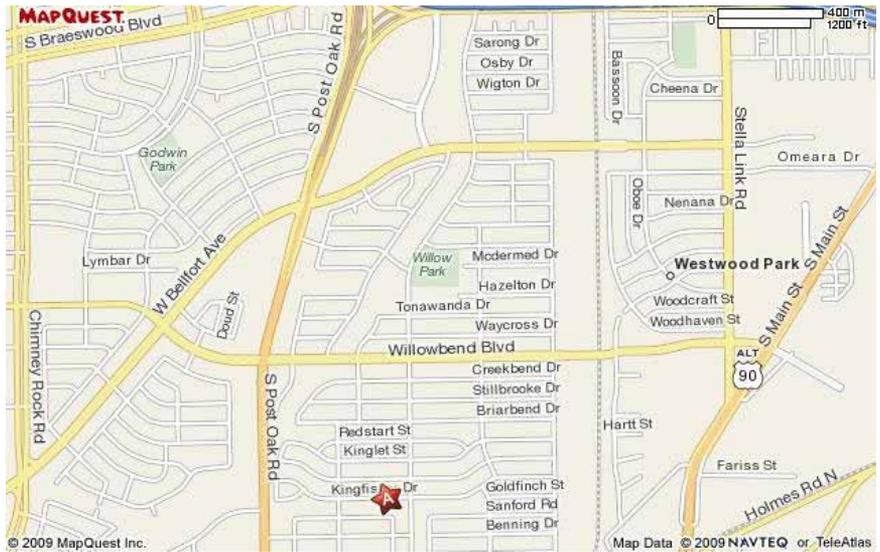
Just check it out. Spend an hour or so on this very entertaining site, and have a good laugh. Times being what they are, we can all use one.

Calendar and Maps

January 15, 2010 Several Unlimited Meeting	Erika Frensley 4701 Kinglet St, 77035 713-729-7211
January 29, 2010 Several Unlimited Video Party	Dee Beetem 4737 Kingfisher St, 77035 713-729-4716



4701 Kinglet



4737 Kingfisher