

ROY THOMAS' CONVENTIONAL  
COMICS FANZINE

# Alter Ego™

**SUPER-FAN  
DAVID SIEGEL ON  
BRINGING HORDES OF  
GOLDEN AGE  
ARTISTS  
TO SAN DIEGO!**



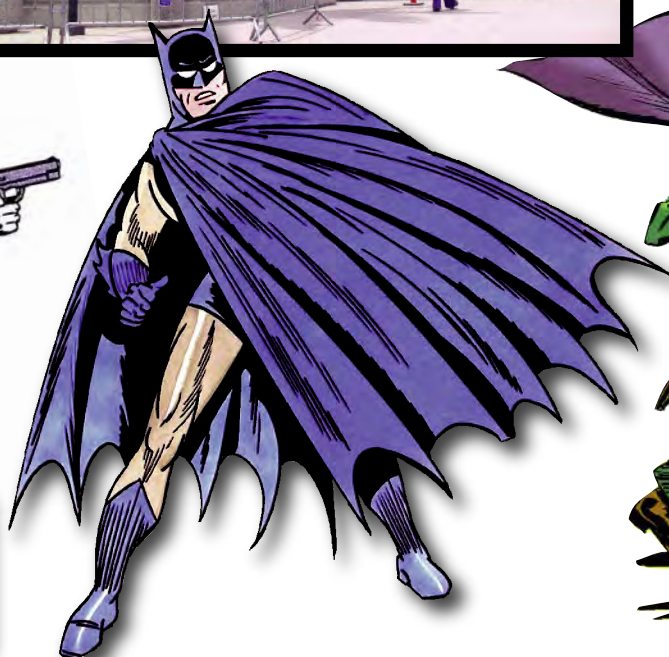
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CHUCK CUIDERA  
SHELDON MOLDOFF  
CREIG FLESSEL  
& MORE!**



**PLUS: HOW  
SILVER AGE STAR  
JOHN BROOME  
GOT TO THE CON!**



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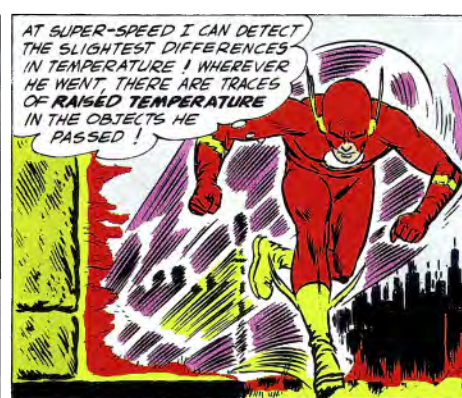
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# Alter Ego



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**On Our Cover:** Since this issue's lead interview is with David Siegel, the comics fan who made it his special mission for a decade and a half to find a way to get legendary 1940s/50s artists invited as guests to the San Diego Comic-Con, layout supervisor Chris Day, publisher John Morrow, and I decided to utilize the work of six artists in a miraculous montage: *The Flash* by Harry Lampert, *Blackhawk* by Charles "Chuck" Cuidera, *Batman* by Sheldon Moldoff, *The Sandman* by Creig Flessel, *Aquaman* by Ramona Fradon, and *Captain Marvel Bunny* by Chad Grothkopf. But they're only the tip of an incredible iceberg of Golden Age talent awaiting you this time around. [Characters TM & © DC Comics.]

**Above:** One very special guest that Rich Morrissey, Dave Siegel, and others managed to bring to the 1998 San Diego Comic-Con, for his one and only comics convention appearance ever, was Golden/Silver Age writer **John Broome**. Pictured above are panels from the first story of the new "*Flash*" that Broome ever wrote—the second tale in Showcase #4 (Oct. 1956), penciled by Carmine Infantino and inked by Joe Kubert. Reproduced from the hardcover *The Flash Archives*, Vol. 1. [TM & © DC Comics.]

This issue is dedicated to the memory of  
Alan Kupperberg, Frederick Hillel Iger,  
Dexter Taylor, & Rich Morrissey



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FIRST PRINTING.





# The Tracker Of The Golden Age Artists!

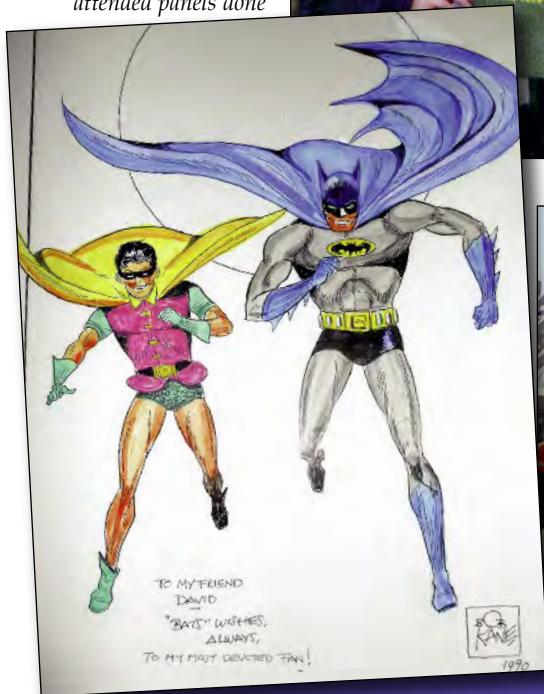
## An Interview With Super-Fan DAVID SIEGEL

Conducted & Transcribed by Richard J. Arndt

**INTERVIEWER'S INTRODUCTION:** David Siegel is and has been for many years a taxi-cab driver—but he is also an enthusiastic comics fan who, beginning in the late 1980s, made it his mission to track down, invite, and find the financial means to bring long-missing Golden and Silver Age artists to the San Diego Comic-Con. Without use of the Internet, without belonging to any of the San Diego Comic-Con committees, and despite living on the opposite side of the country from many of the artists and writers for whom he searched, Siegel's efforts between 1987 and 2005 located dozens of Golden Age greats, allowing the formation of many greatly enjoyed and well-attended panels done

at San Diego, hosted by, among others, Ron Goulart and Mark Evanier. For many of the artists whom Siegel found, it became their first convention appearance and brought the realization that they actually had fans for their decades-old work. Siegel received an Inkpot Award for his efforts in 1996, despite never having written or drawn a comic book. He also was involved in getting guests to WonderCon (in the San Francisco Bay area), and helped

organize one of the largest Berndt Toast cartoonist meetings ever. I found Dave Siegel to be a very enthusiastic and dedicated fan and greatly enjoyed talking to him. This interview was conducted in Dave's home in Las Vegas on May 16, 2015....



### Siegel Surrounded!

David Siegel as he likes it best—surrounded by talented cartoonists, some of whom he helped bring to the San Diego Comic-Con, and by comic art by two iconic illustrators. (Left to right in undated main photo:) Dave... Gill Fox (Quality Comics editor & cover artist)... Creig Flessel (*Sandman*)... Chad Grothkopf (*Hoppy the Marvel Bunny*)... Fred Schwab (many cartoons, including the cover of the 1939 *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly* #1)... Bob Weber (1960s comic strip *Moose and Molly*)... Vin Sullivan (cartoonist who edited *Action Comics* #1 and *Detective Comics* #27, later founded both Columbia Comics and Magazine Enterprises). Thanks to DS and Charlie Roberts for the 1990s photo.

Below that image are photos of the San Diego Convention Center, all decked out for the Comi-Con—and two primo pieces of comic art that hang in Dave's Las Vegas home: Batman and Robin by Bob Kane, and Captain America by Jack Kirby—a pair of artistic giants who'd hardly have needed Dave's help and encouragement to get to San Diego. But lots of others *did*—and it's a story well worth the telling! Pics by Richard Arndt. [Batman & Robin TM & © DC Comics; Captain America TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]



## "The First [Comic Book Convention] I Attended Was Back In 1977"

**RICHARD ARNDT:** David, let's start out with some remarks on your early life—where you came from, how your interest in comics came about.

**DAVID SIEGEL:** I was born in Los Angeles. In 1962 I started going over to my cousin's house. He was much older than I was, but he let me look at his comic books. He was a huge DC fan, so that sort of rubbed off on me. The influence of DC on me was huge. That red-oned cover behind your head for *Batman Annual* #7 (Summer 1964) by Sheldon Moldoff, which he did as a commission for me, was one of the covers that just fascinated me. In 1964 I bought my own very first comic book, an issue of *The Flash*, and that got me started as a big reader of comics. [chuckles] That never left me.

**RA:** When did you go to your first comic book convention?

**SIEGEL:** The first show I attended was back in 1977. It was a small one, out in Los Angeles. I remember it was in the Marriott—on Century Boulevard by LAX [L.A. Airport]. I followed that up by attending a *Star Trek* convention later that same year, and I was hooked! There was a comic book dealer there by the name of Irving Bigman who had all these cool Golden Age comics that I started wheeling and dealing for. He had a son, Larry, who was also a big comic book fan. Larry, in later years, became an advisor for the *Overstreet Price Guide*. I bought a fair chunk of his Golden Age collection when he was selling it. I visited my first comic book store in 1974, and there were Golden Age books there, as well. There were influences all around at the time.

In 1979 I finally had the money to attend my first San Diego [Comic-]Con. The Con was established in 1970, and while it wasn't anything like what it has become, it was still the biggest West Coast comics convention. That was the first time I really talked to comic book artists. I talked to Jim Steranko, who told me his all-time favorite comic book character was Captain America. The most exciting thing for me, though, was meeting Jack Kirby. I thought that maybe he'd be interested in doing an art piece for me. He told me I had to talk to his wife Roz, so I went over and found out that Jack and Roz lived in Thousand Oaks, which was only a thirty-minute drive from my home. The end result was them inviting me to come over to their house to talk about the commission.

So, after the Con, I went up to his house to work out the deal for the art piece. Like Steranko, my all-time favorite Kirby character was Captain America. So I wanted Cap, and I'd always liked Baron Zemo. Kirby suggested adding The Red Skull, and the result was that piece on the wall. [NOTE: As seen on p. 3. —RA.] Talking with Jack while I was sitting in his combination living room/drawing room made me want to pinch myself. What was I doing here?

We talked about New York. We both loved Jewish delicatessens. We made a connection there, talking about delis. [laughs] The initial price of the piece was to be \$300, but it ended up \$50 more for the color.



Wayne Boring.

## "Wayne Boring Had Never Been To San Diego"

**RA:** So that explains your love for comic-cons, as well. What got you started looking for the Golden Age artists?

**SIEGEL:** Way back in 1985, former "Superman" artist Wayne Boring was doing commissions. I happened to look in one of the San Diego souvenir convention books, where they listed all the Inkpot winners, and it dawned on me that Wayne Boring had never been to San Diego or won an Inkpot Award. I had a very good friend named Mark Stadler, who was involved with the Comic-Con there, although I'm not certain now what title, if any, he had. I asked him if he could bring up the name of Wayne Boring to the committee that invited guests for 1986's con.

He did that for me, and the Comic-Con refused. They didn't give a reason for the refusal. Boring passed away in February of 1987. If they'd invited him, he could at least have had the honor of being invited to the San Diego Comic-Con, even if he couldn't have attended. That made me very angry inside. I swore that I was



### Look! Up In That Comic Book!

The "Superman" splash page from *Action Comics* #342 (Oct. 1966), penciled and inked by Wayne Boring; script by Jim Shooter. Throughout the 1950s and into the '60s, before being gradually replaced by Curt Swan, Boring had been the Man of Steel's most important penciler. He'd started out in 1939-40, ghosting the *Superman* newspaper strip for creators Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster. It was the disinclination of the San Diego Comic-Con to invite Boring to be a guest in 1986 that led Dave to begin his personal crusade to find ways to bring Golden Age artists to the con. Thanks to Doug Martin. [TM & © DC Comics.]





### Comics Cast & Crew (From Above Left):

One of Dave's favorite photos shows him flanked by artist Creig Flessel and his wife Marie on the left, and by his friends Charlie and Joan Roberts on the right, at a WonderCon, circa 2004. Charlie Roberts is an active fan and collector, who took a number of the pics that accompany this interview. For more about Creig Flessel, see *A/E* #45—and read on in this issue! Thanks to DS.

Shel Dorf, one of the co-founders of the San Diego Comic-Con, pictured at the con in 1982. Photo by Alan Light.

Jerry G. Bails in 1997, courtesy of Bill Schelly. In 1961 he'd founded both *Alter Ego* and, in a sense, super-hero comics fandom—and in the 1970s he'd published and edited the original print edition of the *Who's Who of American Comic Books*, which was co-edited by Hames Ware.

going to do whatever I could to prevent that from happening to other people. I wanted to make a difference out there. I wanted to change the course that the Comic-Con committee was on.

Like the old saying goes, "If you want to get something done, you've got to do it yourself." Believe me, everything I wanted to do was going to be my way. The first thing I had to do was learn how Comic-Con worked. This is where planning comes to play. I had to work this thing out, find out what I had to understand. Mark Stadler was a huge help in this. He and another gentleman on the committee, by the name of Barry Short, explained to me how the basics worked. I found out that the organization was made up of different committees and so on. It took me a year or more to process.

The other thing was how to figure out how to actually find artists. There was no Internet. Many of these people I wanted to find had left the comics industry years, even decades, earlier. The comics companies had no idea where these people might be. My friend Charlie Roberts introduced me to Shel Dorf, who was one of the co-founders of the San Diego Comic-Con. I explained my concept to him and asked where one could find Golden Age artists. Well, Shel was friends with Dr. Jerry Bails, who'd written the *Who's Who of American Comic Books*, and probably knew more about comic book artists than I ever would. I asked Shel if I could contact Jerry Bails, because he knew where everybody was at.

I was really trying to do the opposite of what everyone else in comics fandom was doing at the time. Most of these people were writing articles and reviews of comics, mostly current comics, and that was not my forte. I'm not a writer. I wanted to do the flipside of what comics fandom was doing. They were writing their opinions of the comics, but I wanted to see the human side of the comics. I wanted to actually bring the creators to Comic-Con. I was an admirer of Phil Seuling's East Coast conventions, and I'd read how he'd brought artists of the Golden Age to his shows. However, I had no guide of who Seuling had invited to his cons, so my own

guide became that list of Inkpot Award winners.

My goal was not to repeat people who'd already been to San Diego. I wanted to get people who'd never been there before. There was a time-frame to consider as well. I was dealing with artists, many of whom had been born before 1920, who would have age problems, health problems, economic problems, so I realized that I was racing against the clock. These people were very much a senior crowd. I wanted to honor as many of them as possible. So Shel Dorf got me in contact with Dr. Jerry Bails and I got to talk to him on the phone to explain my plan. Jerry Bails sent me a page of addresses.

At this point, after studying how the committees worked and such, it was 1990, and I was preparing possible guests for the 1991 Comic-Con. I had concluded that if I had to join any of the committees it would be, for me, a nightmare. It would take up a lot of time that I needed for searching and I felt that I would be dealing with people who might not understand or care for what I was doing. I wasn't looking for contemporary artists. I was digging into the past for the first generation of comic artists. Many comic fans can't really deal with that.

### "[Sheldon Moldoff] Was A Giant Of The Golden Age"

**RA:** Partly because they don't actually know the history, and partly because for many readers comics history started when they personally picked up their first comic...

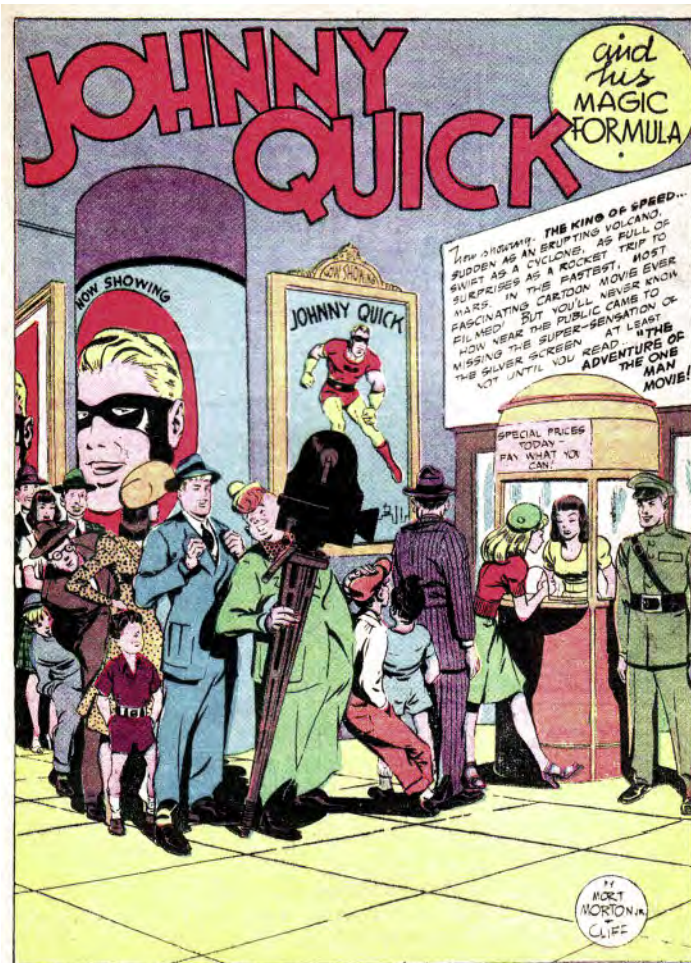
**SIEGEL:** Exactly. It became detective work in a way as to who was still out there and who I could find.

The very first artist I tried to contact from that list was George Papp, an artist I admired very much. Papp was best known for his 1960s work on *Superboy*, but in the 1940s he co-created "Green Arrow and Speedy" with Mort Weisinger in *More Fun Comics*.



# Two Titans Who Quickly Turned Dave Down

You can't win 'em all—and Dave Siegel couldn't interest either of this pair of major comic book artists in going to the San Diego Comic-Con. But at least he got his picture taken with them!



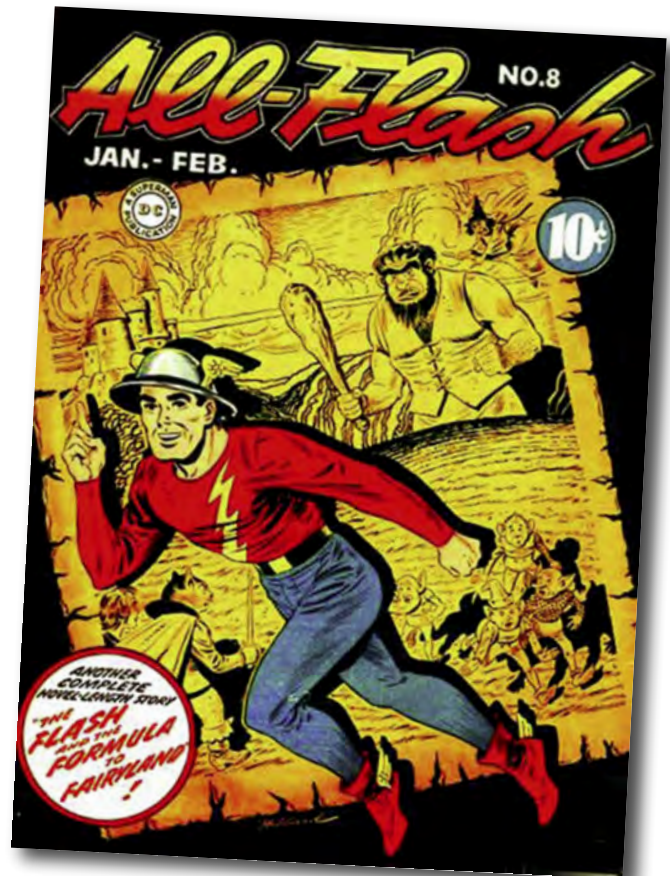
## "Quick" As A "Flash"

Mort Meskin (aka "Mort Morton, Jr.") splash page for the "Johnny Quick" story from *More Fun Comics* #84 (Oct. 1942). The "Cliff" byline probably means that artist Cliff Young inked or otherwise assisted with this one. Thanks to Ger Apeldoorn. For the "Flash" whom Johnny Quick was virtually as quick as, see right. [TM & © DC Comics.]



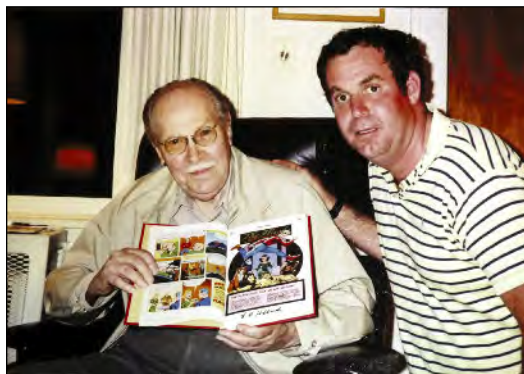
Mort Meskin

with Dave Siegel in 1992. Photo courtesy of DS & Charlie Roberts. [© Charlie Roberts.]



## "It Can Happen To You..."

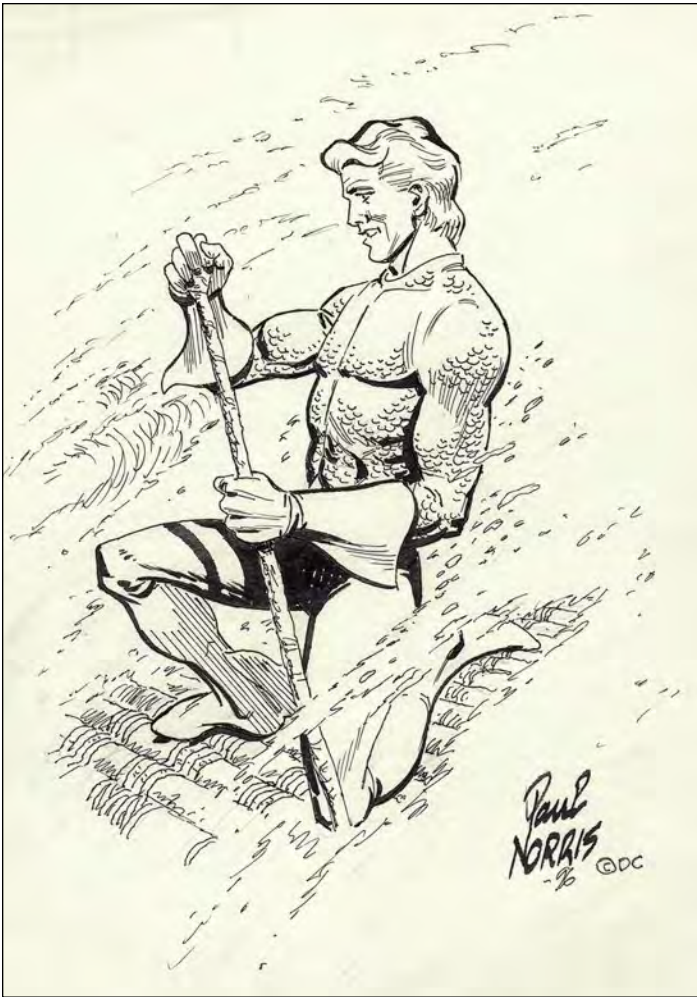
Hibbard's cover for *All-Flash* #8 (Jan.-Feb. 1948), which took The Flash and the Three Dimwits to Fairyland. And this one wasn't a ride at Disneyland—which wouldn't exist for another seven years! Thanks to the Grand Comics Database. [TM & © DC Comics.]



E.E. (Everett Edward) Hibbard

with Dave in 1992—so, despite his memory, Dave actually *did* get through the artist's front door! Photo courtesy of DS & Charlie Roberts. [© Charlie Roberts.]





### Color Me Soggy!

Paul Norris drew this Aquaman commission drawing for collector Bob Hughes. We wanted you to see it in its original black-&-white form—and as specially colored for this issue of *A/E* by Larry Guidry. [Aquaman TM & © DC Comics.]

Guardineer, then to Manhasset to pick up Vin Sullivan, and finally met up with Creig Flessel in New York. Now, Creig was already going to San Diego. The original plan was to bring both Vin Sullivan and Fred Guardineer out to San Diego, sharing a hotel room, but unfortunately Guardineer was not interested in coming to San Diego.

After I took Guardineer back to his home in Babylon, we drove down to Manhattan to see if we could meet up with an editor [for Fawcett] named William Lieberman, but that didn't pan out. But we did get to go up to Joe Simon's apartment and meet him. So, in 48 hours, we met Hibbard, Meskin, Sullivan, Guardineer, Flessel, and Simon. Not a bad two days!

I had moved to San Diego by then, and, thanks to Jerry Bails, I discovered that Paul Norris, the co-creator of "Aquaman," lived only about 25 minutes away from San Diego in Oceanside, California. I met with him and, as a bonus, I told the Guest Committee that they could get an artist who lived near San Diego, so they wouldn't have to pay for a flight or room, just a ride to the convention center. I've always thought it was fitting that the creator of "Aquaman" was living in Oceanside, California! They were still a little negative on me, but one of the women on the committee said it would be stupid not to invite Paul Norris to Comic-Con. So, because he was local and cheap, they agreed to

have him attend the 1993 Comic-Con with Vin Sullivan. It was at that convention that I introduced Jack Kirby to Sullivan. Kirby was astonished to meet him! I wished I'd taken a picture of that! Will Eisner met Vin at one of the Comic-Cons, as well.

It was great to see Sullivan pick up his Inkpot Award. Paul Norris didn't attend the ceremony; he actually stayed home that day.

That 1993 convention was when I first began working on the Golden Age panels with a man named Chris Sturhann, who was a great guy. He'd tried setting a panel up in 1992 with Creig Flessel, but it didn't pan out. So I got involved in the 1993 Golden Age panel where Vin Sullivan, Julie Schwartz, Gil Kane, Russ Heath, Paul Norris, Marty Nodell—nine people in all—appeared. I was busy! It was on the panel that Marty Nodell [co-creator of the Golden Age "Green Lantern"], a great guy, gave Paul his Inkpot Award; Paul wasn't aware he was getting one. He stood up and pointed at me and said, "You!" in a rather accusing way. [laughs] That con was a lot of fun.

Gary Carter, from *Comic Book Marketplace*, was the very first host of the Golden Age panel. Gary was the head of that group, the American Association of Comicbook Collectors, so I was going through him. But I was making the decisions on what guests I





**Rich Morrissey**

with his Welsh Springer Spaniel, Joanna; photo courtesy of Patricia Floss.

**A/E** EDITOR'S NOTE: The story of how the co-creator of the Silver Age Green Lantern and the major writer of the Silver Age Flash became a guest for the first and, as it happened, only time at a comics convention is interesting in and of itself. It also sheds additional light on John Broome and his charming wife Peggy. The talented and devoted comics fan Rich Morrissey wrote this piece not too long before his untimely passing in 2001. Our sincere thanks to his friend Patricia Floss for giving us her blessing to print it here, even if necessarily in a slightly abbreviated form.

## Touches of Silver

It all started in early 1998, with a call from David Siegel.

David is a former California fan now residing in Nevada, one of whose ruling passions (which I happen to share) is comic books of the Golden and Silver Age. In an era when more and more comics trade publications tend to concentrate either (like *The Comics Journal*) on the avant-garde comics of the limited press or (like *Wizard*) on the newest, flashiest comics, writers, and artists, David is dedicated to remembering the history of the field and the people who produced the comics that influenced so many of us. He's made a concerted effort over the years to bring an earlier generation of professionals to the major conventions, especially the San Diego Comic-Con. It's largely thanks to him that such people as Vincent Sullivan, Harry Lampert, Ramona Fradon, George Tuska, Jim Mooney, Bob Haney, and many others had been able to attend in years past.

Many of these people enjoyed their visits so much that several

# Clean Sweep

## Or, How JOHN BROOME Got To San Diego In '98

by Rich Morrissey



**John Broome**

at the 1998 San Diego Comic-Con. From the Internet.



### "The Exhibition Is Just About To Open..."

...and our cast of characters is moving into place: Rich Morrissey and John Broome, flanking the Broome-scripted splash page from the second story in *Showcase* #4 (Oct. 1956). Robert Kanigher had scripted the first, which included the origin. Both were penciled by Carmine Infantino and inked by Joe Kubert. Thanks to Bob Bailey for the "Flash" scan. [*Showcase* page TM & © 2006 DC Comics.]

have made return appearances in subsequent years. But, as Dave told me in 1998, fewer and fewer of the convention-organizers seem really interested in the old pros each year, being much more interested (or, perhaps, feeling that most of the attendees were more interested) in the "hot" younger talent. In many cases, he admitted, private individuals were chipping in on behalf of old pros: "It's just impossible to afford the expenses for some people. John Broome would be all ready to go, but the airfare is too high for the con committee."

"John Broome?" I asked, trying to keep the excitement out of my voice.

"Well, he lives overseas," David explained. "He and his wife go back and forth between Paris and Tokyo. It wouldn't cost that much to bring them over, since they're usually in Paris in the summer, where the fares to America aren't nearly as high, and they're both senior citizens. And Mrs. Broome would really like to see California, since she's never been there. But it'd still be close to \$2000 round trip for them both, since he wouldn't want to go alone. And nobody

can really afford that, what with getting Joe Simon and Paul S. Newman to come this year."

I thought hard. Ever since I'd read the index to Silver Age "Flash" stories in the 1963 *Flash Annual* #1... the first time I'd stopped to realize that comic books actually had writers... I'd been fascinated by the three men (John Broome, Gardner Fox, and Robert Kanigher) who, it turned out, were the stars of the Silver Age of DC and a good deal of the Golden Age. The fascination became ever greater since, right around the time I was first getting into organized fandom, the names of the first two of these were



fading from DC's credits.

The very first time I'd met Julie Schwartz, the original editor of *The Flash*, *Green Lantern*, and *Justice League of America*, I'd asked him where John Broome and Gardner Fox were. Broome, he told me, was in Tokyo (a place far beyond my budget at a time when I was still saving up to go to London and see the then-love of my life for the summer), but Fox was in Yonkers, NY, a more accessible locale. I wrote to Fox, he wrote back, eventually I went to see him (bringing along Ken Gale, Al Turniansky, and Mark Gruenwald, who would go on to become a major writer and editor for Marvel); and the following year, in *Batmania* #23, I published what turned out to be one of a relatively small number of Fox interviews.

In the early '80s, I talked *The Comics Journal* into letting me interview Robert Kanigher. Robin Snyder, a fellow-member of CAPA-Alpha and Interlac at the time and one of the few fans Kanigher would speak to, helped make the contact; he and my friend Al Turniansky came with me. The resulting interview was published in two parts in *TCJ* with a fine cover by long-time Kanigher collaborator Joe Kubert.

Only one was left to provide a clean sweep of classic *Flash* writers met. (Or of any Silver Age *Flash* writers met, with the exception of the late Frank Robbins, who wrote a handful of stories in 1968 and, like Broome, spent the last decades of his life outside the United States. I'd met E. Nelson Bridwell, Cary Bates, Mike Friedrich, Len Wein, and Mike Barr, who, together with those mentioned above, pretty much complete the list of Barry Allen's writers in his own book.)

No, I desperately wanted to meet, and play a part in interviewing, John Broome. But \$2000 was a lot of money to raise alone. "Why don't I give it a try?" I asked David.

He enthusiastically promised to chip in, but since he was already helping to pay for the attendance costs of Joe Simon and writer Paul S. Newman, he couldn't promise more than \$100. I knew I'd let myself in for it, but I already had a good idea whom to ask. There would be a meeting of HEAT very soon....

## Taking the HEAT

In the years immediately before what would ultimately be John Broome's final visit to the country of his birth, his most famous godchild had fallen on bad times. Although he had written for many of the most famous characters in comic books...including



**Gil Kane**

With thanks to Dewey Cassell.



### A Super-Hero Who Definitely Wasn't Yellow

John Broome wrote both "Green Lantern" tales in *Showcase* #22 (Sept.-Oct. 1959), which introduced the second GL and was another major milestone in the nascent Silver Age of Comics. Art by Gil Kane—and, all-important both to "The Flash" and "Green Lantern," editing (and the idea of revamping/updating the hero, in both cases) was the domain of Julius Schwartz.

[TM & © DC Comics.]



**Julius Schwartz**

From the Julius Schwartz Collection, with thanks to Bob Greenberger.

Captain Marvel, Superman, Batman, Flash (both Golden and Silver Age versions), Green Lantern (ditto), and The Justice Society of America, Broome's actual *creations* had tended toward the more obscure: characters like

Detective Chimp, Captain Comet, The Atomic Knights, and Star Hawkins. Broome had been the head writer on the Silver Age Flash, Barry Allen, and had created almost all his classic Rogues' Gallery and such important supporting heroes as The Elongated Man and Kid Flash (Wally West, who would succeed Barry as The Flash); but Barry himself had officially been created by Robert Kanigher, a writer who stayed with the character for only a short time.

However, Broome's other major character of the '60s was to be almost entirely his own creation: Green Lantern. Although that hero's name and basic powers were derived from his Golden Age namesake created by artist Martin

Nodell and writer Bill Finger (Broome had scripted the original Emerald Gladiator in the late 1940s), and science-fiction stories, especially Edward E. Smith's "Lensmen" series, had possibly provided inspiration for many of the details, the Silver Age "Green Lantern" series was otherwise entirely the creation of John Broome, working with artist Gil Kane and editor Julius Schwartz. Together, that trio created the immortal Guardians of the Universe, their Green Lantern Corps, and Hal Jordan, the fearless test pilot who became the first Earthman to wield the green Power Ring in the cause of justice. It was also Broome who created and fleshed out Hal's important supporting cast: his lovely female boss Carol Ferris (who soon had a subconscious alter ego of her own as the alien-powered dominatrix Star Sapphire), his mechanic, biographer, and sole confidant Thomas "Pieface" Kalmuku, Tom's devoted wife Terga, Hal's brothers Jack and Jim, the inquisitive Sue Williams (ultimately to become his sister-in-law), and a wide selection of other Green Lanterns that ranged from the exotic (the avian Tomar-Re, the glamorous red-skinned Katma Tui, and many others) to his occasional Earthly backups, the pugnacious Guy Gardner and the dedicated actor Charles Vicker.

Schwartz, Broome, Kane, and inker Joe Giella launched "Green Lantern" in *Showcase* #22 in 1959, and after three consecutive issues ("The Flash" had taken four issues spread out over two years) continued the new "GL" in his own title. From time to time, they would be spelled by other inkers (including Murphy Anderson, Wally Wood, and substantial runs inked by Sid Greene and Kane himself), other writers (usually Gardner Fox, in later years occasionally Denny O'Neil or Mike Friedrich), and occasionally





HI EVERYONE!  
YOU CAN CALL  
ME **TINMAN**, 'CAUSE  
OF THIS HERE **TIN SUIT**  
I'M WEARING! BACK IN 1967  
I TOLD MY WRITER, **MR. BINDER**, HE SHOULD CALL  
ME **THINMAN** INSTEAD OF  
**TINMAN**, 'CAUSE **MR. BECK**  
DREW ME REALLY **THIN**, SEE?  
AND THEN **VAN** AND ME COULD  
FIGHT CRIME AS **FATMAN**  
AND **THINMAN**! BUT FOR  
SOME REASON **MR. B. TOL'**  
ME NOT TO HELP HIM  
WRITE HIS **FATMAN** STORIES.  
**HMPH! TOUCHY GUY!**



### The Fatman Rocks!

C.C. Beck drew the covers to all three *Fatman* comics. Issue #1 (April 1967), #2 (June 1967), and #3 (August 1967). [Covers TM & © Milson or successors in interest.]



OH WELL! AT LEAST I GOT T'HELP  
MY PAL **VAN CRAWFORD** BATTLE BADDIES  
IN TWO ISSUES OF HIS COMIC-- 'FORE IT  
GOT ITSELF **CANCELLED!** THERE WAS EVEN A  
**FOURTH** ISSUE THAT NEVER GOT DRAWN --  
NOT ALL OF IT, ANYWAYS.

WE GOT SOME TO SHOW YA,  
IF YOU'VE A MIND. 'COURSE I GOTTA **WARN**  
YA, I'M **NOT** IN IT. BUT IT'S PRETTY **GOOD**  
ANYWAYS. SO LET'S TAKE A **LOOKSEE** AT...

**FATMAN...THE LOST ISSUE!**

(PART 2!)





## Fatman... The Lost Issue (Part 2)

by Michael T. Gilbert

**C**.C. Beck was one opinionated S.O.B.

When DC hired him to help revive Captain Marvel in 1973, they had no idea what they were getting themselves into. While Beck's art was as delightful as ever, Charles Clarence Beck fancied himself a de facto writer and editor as well. This was the case during his stint at Fawcett, where Beck's editorial expertise was appreciated. Not so at DC. After butting heads with editor Julius Schwartz over scripts he found deplorable, Beck and DC parted ways after a mere ten issues.

I'd always figured that C.C.'s main complaint was that Otto Binder wasn't scripting the new *Shazam!* comic. Binder, of course, was his old Golden Age *Captain Marvel* writing buddy during the good Captain's glory days. However, Schwartz preferred to use his own stable of writers, which was just as well since Binder was no longer writing comics. So Julie enlisted Denny O'Neil, Elliot S! Maggin, and E. Nelson Bridwell to do the honors. Beck got along with the new guys like oil and water. But Beck's troubles started even earlier.

### The Write Stuff!

Last issue we talked about how Beck and Binder re-united in 1967 in order to produce the *Captain Marvel*-inspired, 64-page *Fatman* comic for Milson Publications. Otto Binder scripted all three issues, with C.C. Beck providing the art. Beck and Binder hadn't worked together since Fawcett ended its comic line in early 1954. Both were excited to be collaborating again, under publisher Will Lieberman, one of their Fawcett editors during the Golden Age.



### Second Cousins?

Beck's heroes must use the same tailor. Any similarity between Captain Marvel and Fatman is purely on purpose! From *Captain Marvel* #100 (Sept. 1949) and *Fatman* #1 (April 1967).

[*Fatman* © 1967 Milson; *Captain Marvel* © 2016 DC.]

Recently Gary Brown sent me a copy of the remains of an unpublished fourth issue of *Fatman*, consisting of two completed scripts and xeroxes of partially finished art. I was surprised to discover that Binder didn't script any of the stories in that aborted fourth issue. Instead, there were stories by former Fawcett editors Rod Reed (who had written "Captain Marvel" tales in the '40s) and Wendell Crowley. So where was Otto Binder? One possible answer came to mind immediately.

The comic would have been cover-dated October 1967, meaning the finished art would most likely have been due that July or earlier. I recalled that Otto's only daughter Mary (whom Otto had named after Mary Marvel) had died in a tragic auto accident on March 27, 1967. The teenager was walking home from school when a car jumped a curb, killing her. Ironically, Mary was mentioned in an Otto Binder biography in *Fatman* #1, mere months before her death:



"Where Binder's super-heroes roam the world and whole universe, he himself sticks in one place, having lived in his Englewood, N.J., home for over 20 years. His one daughter, age 14, has been his #1 'fan,' reading every word of his total comics production since 1939—and that's some 3,250 scripts!"

The lighthearted paragraph is chilling in hindsight, knowing how soon tragedy would strike the Binder family. Otto never really recovered from the loss of his beloved daughter.

It's tempting to pin his quitting *Fatman* to that event. *Fatman* #3, Binder's last, was cover-dated August 1967. Otto

### Billy and Binder!

Captain Marvel's Alter Ego, Billy Batson, greets his #1 writer, Otto Binder. From DC's *Shazam* #1 (Feb. 1973), written by Denny O'Neil and drawn by C.C. Beck. [© 1973 DC Comics.]





G.B. Love.  
(1939-2001)  
Photo by  
Robert Brown.

## Alter Ego's Multi-Part Tribute To G.B. Love & RBCC – Part 6

# RBCC's Last Great Days

## Chatting With JAMES VAN HISE – Part II

### Introduction by Bill Schelly

**C**hapters of our multi-part salute to Gordon Belljohn Love and his important and influential fanzine/adzine *Rocket's Blast-Comicollector* (more generally known simply as RBCC) have previously appeared in *Alter Ego* #133-135 and in #140-141. We began in #133 with the first part of our chat with Love's eventual partner and successor in RBCC, Jim Van Hise. There was too much ground to cover to get all of our talk with Jim into one issue, because Jim edited and published RBCC for close to a decade after G.B. left the fanzine and moved to Houston. How did that come about, and what was the arrangement between Love and Van Hise for the continuation of the venerable fanzine? I talked with Jim Van Hise on October 8, 2012; our talk was transcribed by Brian K. Morris.

### G.B. Moves To Houston

**SHELLY:** What was G.B.'s personality like? What kind of a person was he?



Jim's The One In The Middle!

Jim Van Hise visits the set of the 1988 movie *Return of the Living Dead II*. He says it "wasn't as violent" as the first one. We'll take his word for it. Thanks to JVH.

**VAN HISE:** Well, he was very politically conservative. His father was, too.

**SHELLY:** So he probably didn't view the hippie and counterculture thing that was going on at the time very positively. [chuckles]

**VAN HISE:** No, he would be probably the opposite of that. He was also very, very tight with a dollar, although he was making decent money from the *Rocket's Blast*. He got involved doing some conventions with some friends in Texas, and he made money from that. And that's where he got enough extra money to move to Texas. At that point, he'd saved enough that he didn't need to do anything like the RBCC or other publishing. He would work on a Texas convention or two each year, and made enough profit to live on for the rest of the year.

**SHELLY:** How did it happen that he moved to Houston?

**VAN HISE:** There weren't a lot of conventions in those days [the early 1970s]. Dallas and Houston had conventions, and they happened to have more of them in the Midwest there, in Oklahoma and in Texas. In those days, conventions showed a lot of movies, like the old serials that weren't seen any more. Only rarely in certain parts of the country did any of those serials ever get shown on TV. But at conventions, they would show all twelve or

### Hangin' With Don Newton

Don Newton's Hangman cover for RBCC #68, circa 1970. Newton was one of the foremost artists contributing regularly to RBCC, and would soon turn pro. [Hangman TM & © Archie Comic Publications, Inc.]





### The Wrightson Stuff

Bernie Wrightson's artwork graced the covers of these three issues of *RBCC*, all from the Van Hise era (left to right): #114 (1974), #117 (1975) and #125 (Feb. 1976). [Art © Bernie Wrightson.]

can look it up in the early issues—Alan Light advertised, saying, “Send us your name and address and you’ll get a free lifetime subscription.” But those lifetime subscriptions only lasted a few years and then he said, “Well, gotta start charging for it now.” [Bill laughs]

**SCHELLY:** And so naturally, that had a big effect on *RBCC*, since it cost money to subscribe to it.

**VAN HISE:** Plus, *The Buyer's Guide* was published weekly, which was far more helpful to the advertisers, because they could send in an ad every week and they were getting orders every week instead of every six weeks.

**SCHELLY:** Yeah, you were publishing every six weeks. So, at that point, it wasn't making as much money, and the conventions maybe looked like a better source of income for G.B.

**VAN HISE:** Yeah, it was like he had the alternative. He'd already been working on the conventions, so he knew how much money he could make for those. It was much more lucrative to stick with that.

**SCHELLY:** Plus, he could move away from living with his parents, which I'm sure he wanted to do as he got older.

**VAN HISE:** Yeah, and the magazine which wasn't making as much as it had been, say, three years earlier.

**SCHELLY:** Right. How old would he have been at the time?

**VAN HISE:** Well, it was 1974. I would have been 24, so I guess he would have been 34.

**SCHELLY:** What did this mean for you as far as finding a new place to work from and so on, since you'd been working with him in his home office?

**VAN HISE:** Well, instead of the little apartment I lived in, I basically just moved into a bigger apartment and worked from there. That was 1974. Then, a couple years later, I rented a house

because I discovered I could rent a house for the same price as an apartment. And I thought, “Gee, you know, living in an apartment has got its drawbacks, because you’ve gotta listen to the neighbors fighting, and things like that.”

**SCHELLY:** As an employer, how was G.B. Love to work for?

**VAN HISE:** Well, just that it was a very simple operation. I worked for him six days a week. I was paid a flat rate. I got paid once a week, and that was never an issue or anything. He always paid me.

**SCHELLY:** Were you responsible for your taxes? It wasn't like he was withholding, doing any of that kind of stuff. You were like an independent contractor then, rather than an actual employee?

**VAN HISE:** Yeah.

**SCHELLY:** After G.B. left, would you say that it became the early days of your sword-and-planet books? I mean, it became the first day of the rest of your life.

**VAN HISE:** G.B. and I had been doing some small conventions in Miami, and I continued doing those every few months, and as well as the publishing.

## Branching Out

**SCHELLY:** But didn't you begin to branch out and get more into the pulps and other science-fiction then?

**VAN HISE:** I was also doing a *Star Trek* fanzine, too, called *Enterprise Incidents*. I started that as a sort of companion magazine. I was doing *RBCC* every six weeks or bimonthly, and I was doing *Enterprise Incidents* quarterly or thereabouts.

**SCHELLY:** Naturally, you did most of the writing in *RBCC*, but there were also some excellent columns, such as the one by Howard Siegel.

**VAN HISE:** Both Howard Siegel and Raymond Miller continued to contribute their columns.





MARVEL'S NEWEST  
SUPER-HERO!

# CAPTAIN MARVEL



MARVEL  
COMICS  
GROUP

12¢ 1  
IND. MAY

BIG  
PREMIERE  
ISSUE!

"OUT OF THE  
PAST...  
A HERO!"



MCG

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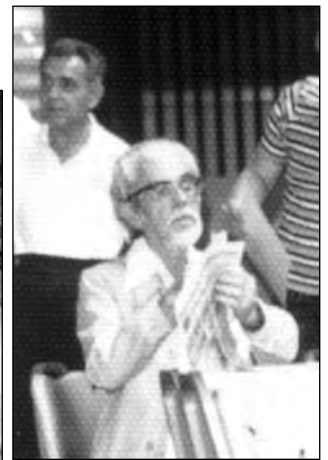
# WHAT IF

## Marvel Comics Had Been The Publisher That Revived The Original Captain Marvel?

by John G. Pierce

Edited by P.C. Hamerlinck

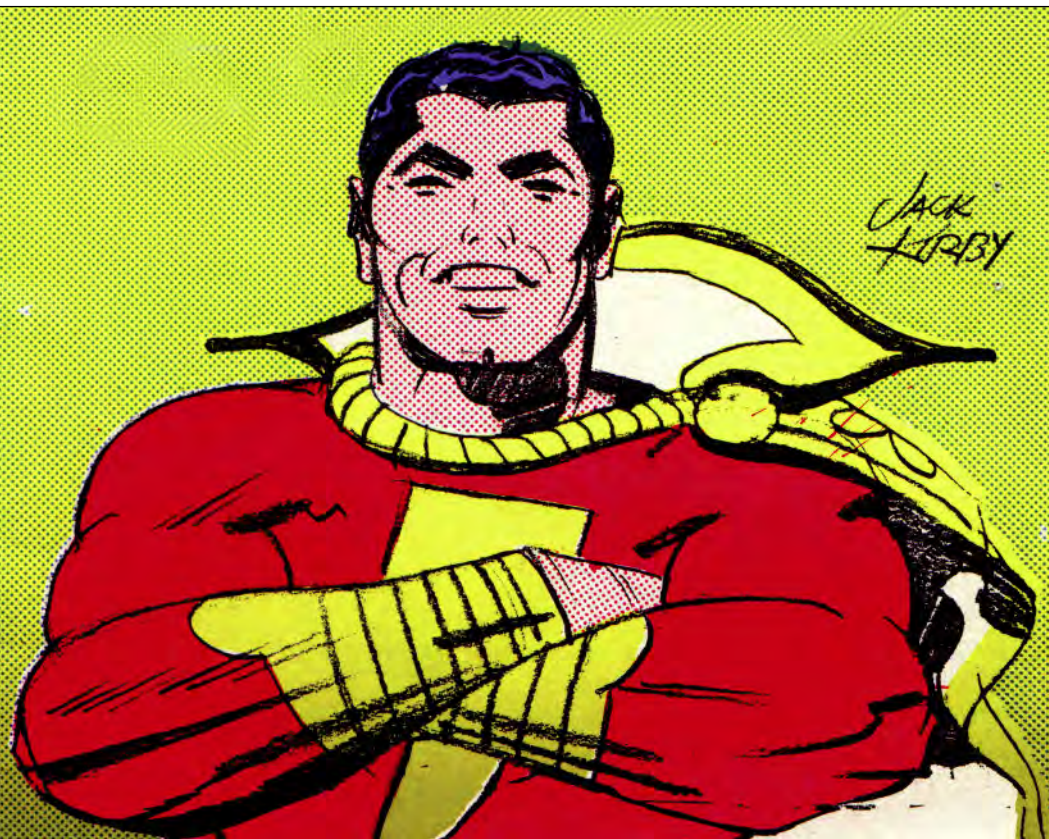
**AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION:** *Okay, we all know what really happened. About how Fawcett Publications relinquished its comics line in late 1953, and signed an agreement with National (DC) not to publish, or allow anyone else to publish, Captain Marvel and Family. And how, in 1966, Myron Fass published a character who stole Captain Marvel's name, but that inevitably didn't last long. And how, shortly thereafter, in 1967, Marvel Comics came out with its own hero named Captain Marvel. (The first of several that company has done.) And how, in 1972, DC brought back the original Captain Marvel, but because Marvel now owned the trademark on the name, they had to call their magazine Shazam!, although inside the book the character could still be referred to by his rightful name. But—what if history had gone a little differently? What if Marvel Comics had been the ones to revive the original Captain Marvel? Let us journey from Earth-Real to some other Earth—we'll call it Earth-Maybe-Marvel—and observe what might've been....*



### The Giants Of Marvel

The 1960s titans of Marvel Comics—and the old master of the original “Marvel”—Captain, that is. (On left:) Stan Lee and C.C. Beck at MiamiCon II, which took place at the Miami Holiday Inn, April 1979 ... and Jack Kirby (background above) and Beck at the San Diego Comic-Con held at the El Cortez Hotel in July 1977. (Some guys named Kurtzman, Kubert, Barks, and Caniff were also part of the 4,000 attendees at the latter.) Both photos were deemed significant enough by Beck to be included in his personal photo album—from which they have been directly scanned. Seen at left is a detail from the cover of *The Comic Reader* #100 (the final issue produced by Paul Levitz), featuring Kirby's mighty rendition of the World's Mightiest Mortal. [Shazam hero TM & © DC Comics.]

**I**t was Jack Kirby who first suggested, in 1972, that Marvel try to obtain the rights to Captain Marvel. Jack's mind was always bursting with ideas, so much so that he once ran his car into a ditch because his mind was so preoccupied with new notions! (Indeed, in 1970 he'd almost left Marvel for DC so that he could develop some of them there,







### A Captain Marvel Is A Captain Marvel Is A...

We don't have to imagine what a collaboration between Roy Thomas (story plot) and Gil Kane (artwork) on the original Captain Marvel would've been like, because it really happened!—in *DC Comics Presents Annual* #3 (1984), although RT got too busy to dialogue it and Joey Cavalieri wound up handling that end. (But of course the story would've looked, and largely even read, the same way, whoever wrote the dialogue and captions.) You can enjoy the thrilling adventure once again in the 2013 trade paperback *Superman vs. Shazam!* Of course, the Thomas-Kane team had earlier worked on Marvel's "Mar-Vell" version of its *Captain Marvel*. [Shazam hero TM & © DC Comics.]

but Stan Lee had kept him aboard by giving him an increased say in Marvel's creative affairs.) Jack, after all, believed not only in coming up with fresh concepts, but in dusting off old ones. And since he had worked on the original character, way back in 1941, even though for only one issue, Captain Marvel had a natural appeal to him.

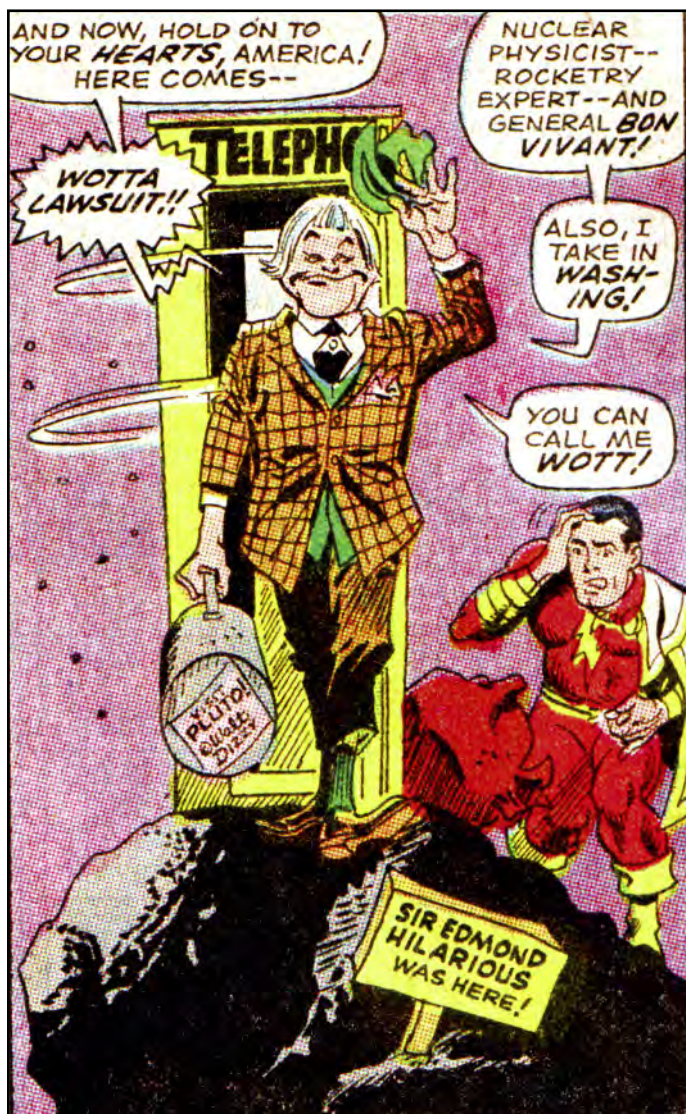
Ah, but selling the idea to the bosses—that was the problem. It was here that Jack played his ace. "This was the top-selling superhero of the 1940s," he pointed out. "For a while he outsold even Superman, and his own title was published bi-weekly." And since publishers are in the business to sell books and make money, the appeal was obvious. Martin Goodman was sold on the idea. Stan Lee was skeptical, however. Captain Marvel was different from anything that Marvel was doing at the time. Not that Stan was really all that familiar with the original. He knew about the Fawcett line of comics from years ago, and had some vague idea of the original Captain Marvel. But it wasn't difficult at that time (late '60s) to obtain some 1940s Fawcett comic books and go over some of the stories. Nonetheless, Stan just wasn't sure it could be made to work.

However, this is where Stan's right-hand man, Roy "the Boy" Thomas, entered the picture. Roy unabashedly confessed to having been a great fan of the character in his youth. He'd even written articles about Fawcett characters for various fanzines, including the

"All in Color for a Dime" section of the science-fiction fanzine *Xero*, as well as his own *Alter Ego* (the first volume).

Roy didn't need any persuading to join Jack's mini-crusade to get Captain Marvel into the hands of the Marvel Bullpen. And he had his own way of persuading Stan. "Look, I like what Otto Binder and C.C. Beck and others did with the original," he told Stan, "but I don't think that approach will work nowadays. I can bring the hero back, make him recognizable, but still turn him into a modern-day Marvel character. I think he'd make a great addition to The Avengers!"

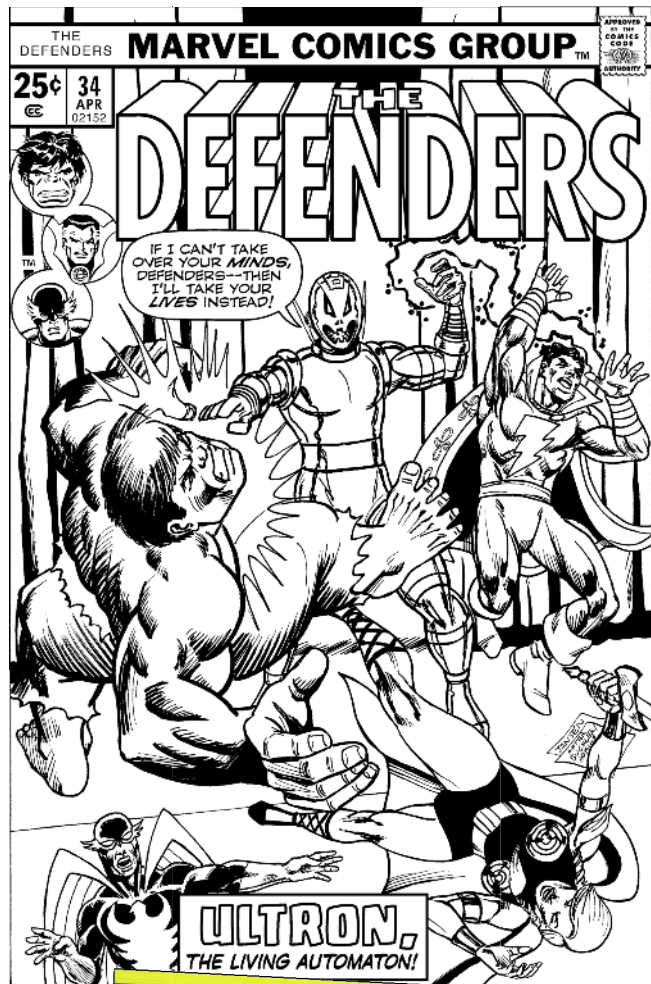
So, finally, Stan was convinced, and Martin Goodman set about having Marvel's lawyers pursue the due diligence required to bring the original Captain Marvel to Marvel, which included not only negotiating with Fawcett but also with Myron Fass and DC. And so, through some previously overlooked loophole (the arcane



### Next Stop: Captain Marvin Adventures!

Who says Roy Thomas doesn't have a sense of humor? C.C. Beck did, but many of the readers of "Where Stomps the Scent-ry!" in *Marvel's Not Brand Echh* #9 (Aug. 1968) by writer RT, penciler Gene Colan, & inker Frank Giacoia might disagree. This ticklish tale starring "Captain Marvin" spoofed Marvel's then-new *Captain Marvel* comic and featured a few surprise comedic cameos by the original Big Red Cheese and cohorts. Billy Batson, the Seven Enemies of Man, and even Mr. Mind popped up in other panels in the yarn. [TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]





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On Earth-Maybe-Marvel!

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#### ALTER EGO #142

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