SOL RISING

The Newsletter of The Friends of the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy

FREE

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I Feel Like We Are Being Watched

World Horrorcon guests of honour Peter Crowther and Michael Marshall Smith pose for a quick picture in front of the Lillian H. Smith Branch. For more World Horrorcon coverage please see page 6



Photo by Andrew Specht

MERRIL COLLECTION OF SCIENCE FICTION

SPECULATION AND FANTASY

SOL RISING
Friends of the Merril Collection
Number 36, May 2007

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Friends of the Merril Collection, c/o Lillian H.Smith Branch, TPL, 239 College St. 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5T-1R5 www.tpl.toronto.on.ca/merril/home.htm

www.friendsofmerril.org/

Call for Submissions!
Contact Sabrina (sabrinafried@rogers.com)
if you wish to submit articles, essays or art
pieces. Be a part of SOL Rising, speak out!

SOL RISING Friends of the Merril Collection

Number 36, May 2007

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11th Annual Fantastic **Pulps Show and Sale**

By Jamie Fraser

n May 12, The Friends of The Merril Collection will be presenting what the late, great Ed Sullivan used to call "A Really Big Shoe". We're pretty sure he meant "Show" and if he were around today I'm certain he'd agree that this year's Fantastic Pulps Show is deserving of such an accolade.

Last year we celebrated the show's tenth anniversary and a wonderful time was had by all. We had a record number of tables, new dealers as well as most of the regulars, and a retrospective of the previous ten shows. It was a bang-up show and everyone agreed that it would be hard to beat it. But never let it be said that those of us responsible for the show are afraid of beating ourselves. Let me rephrase that: We're not afraid of a challenge and we won't just rest on our laurels as so often happens after a milestone event like a tenth anniversary.

So we have done our best to live up to that challenge and on May 12 everyone will get to see the fruits of our labours. Many have asked why our show is being held on May 12 instead of the last Saturday in April as in previous years. There are many reasons for the change, most of them positive. We'll no longer be in conflict with the Chicago Pulp Show, so our U.S. dealers and customers will be able to attend. The same applied to the Toronto Comicon, but it has since been moved to June. The weather should be a bit nicer than in April, with greater walk-by traffic resulting in a higher attendance. And it's now after the Friends AGM so I don't have to write a report or talk about it. Except to remind everyone at the AGM to urge everyone they know to attend and spread the word.

We'll also be promoting the show more aggressively than in previous years. Apart from our usual media contacts, we hope to promote the show through TTC pamphlets, library and college boards and blogs, book and pulp sites, and some of the more alternative publications. We're trying to target those with an interest in the material available: spectacular covers, action packed stories, hero pulps, reprints, and rare paperbacks. Mystery, sf, horror, literature, westerns, fantasy, romance, aviation and adventure are some of the genres present. Even scarcer genres such as gay and lesbian fiction and early Canadian paperbacks will be well represented.

There will be something for everyone, from Weird Tales and The Shadow maga-

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MERRIL COLLECTION OF SCIENCE FICTION SPECULATION AND FANTASY

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zines to signed first editions, with condition ranging from fine to reading copies.

This year's show promises to be our biggest yet, with a new record of 25 dealer tables. Considering that this show was sold out since the end of last year's show, this is no mean feat. The details of fitting in all the tables have given me numerous headaches. I can absolutely guarantee that there is no chance of surpassing this number unless tables are allowed in the antechamber. But given how popular our show has become, don't be surprised if this is allowed for 2008's Fantastic Pulps Show, even if only by special dispensation.

As some of you know, Peter Gallacher, a good friend and long-time dealer at the Pulps Show, passed away recently. Much of his collection will be made available for sale, the proceeds going to his family. Peter was an avid collector for more than 20 years, and one of those rare individuals who actually read his books while still managing to keep them in excellent shape. Further details and directions will be available with purchases from my tables at the Show.

Aside from the wonderful material available at the tables in the dealers room, the Merril Collection will be offering guided tours. The schedule for said tours will be posted. As well, a special slide show presentation on the pulps, their history and art, will be given in the afternoon. This is always one of the more popular events of the show and seats go quickly, so watch the schedule. And while you're at the show look through the material on the Friends of The Merril Collection table; their membership forms are to die for.

I hope to see you all soon, either at the AGM (one week before the Pulp Show), or at the Show itself. Since I left the downtown core, it's only at events such as these that I get the chance to see so many of my old friends and customers. So don't disappointment me by not showing up on May 12 for our 11th Annual Fantastic Pulps Show and Sale.

New Publications About Judith Merril

By Lorna Toolis

"he Love Token of a Token Immigrant: Judith Merril's Expatriate Narrative, 1968-1972" by Jolene McCann is the second thesis about the Merril Collection's founder to be deposited at the Merril Collection. It was submitted at the University of British Columbia as part of a master's degree in history.

"Judith Merril and Isaac Asimov's Quest to Save the Future" by Michael LeBlanc was published in issue #98 of Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction.

SOL RISING

Friends of the Merril Collection

Special Notes

DONATIONS TO THE MERRIL COLLECTION IN 2006

The Merril Collection gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following donors:

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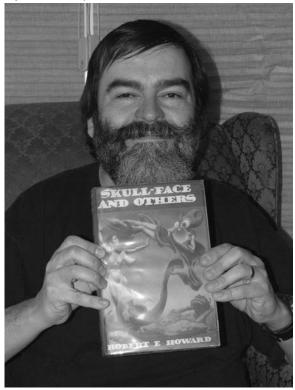
DONATIONS: HOW THEY WORK

Your thirty-five dollar membership generates an income tax deduction certificate for that amount, as do all cash donations over the membership fee. The Toronto Public Library Foundation mails the certificate to you and you deduct it as a charitable donation the next time you do your income tax. The money that vou donate is moved into the Merril Collection's book budget and enables the Collection to purchase that many more books. Think of it as a means of directing the use of your tax dollars - what better use could the library make of your money than buying books?

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Hunting Robert E. Howard : One Fan's Obsession

By Andrew Specht



While writing this article, Andrew Specht realized just how much REH he has. Photo by Sarah Ennals

Robert Ervin Howard (1906-1936), largely considered to be the father of modern heroic fantasy (or at least a black-sheep uncle) never saw a book of his stories published in his lifetime, despite several attempts on his own part to have works published in the United Kingdom. Even his friend and correspondent H.P. Lovecraft can lay claim to having seen two minor attempts at hardcover publishing before his death in 1937: *The Shunned House* (1928) and *The Shadow Over Innesmouth* (1936).

A Gent from Bear Creek, published by Herbert Jenkins in 1937, was the first of what would become an almost unending collection of Howard volumes. The Jenkins book, though it apparently sold quite well, today survives in about nine copies (only one of which is confirmed to have a dust jacket). The very next time that Howard would be collected between hard covers would be Arkham House's voluminous tenth-anniversary retrospective Skullface and Others.

Leap forward to the the 1950s, when Gnome Press would produce the first of many attempts at collecting all of Howard's Conan stories in a concise hardcover edition. Their books, however, left out several stories and were also impaired by additions from other writers, a state of affairs that would continue to dog Howard's famous barbarian until at least the middle 1970s.

In 1966 the Howard book market was given its largest popular-cultural boost when Lancer Books reprinted much of the material that had been in the lesser-known hardcover editions. The difference was that this was the first cheap series of Howard paperbacks (corrupt texts included), but their most important advantage - Frazetta. Frank Frazetta's stunning cover paintings for the Lancer Conans (reprinted endlessly by Ace Books in the States and Sphere in Great Britain) heralded the beginning of a program of Howard publishing that continues to this day.

In the 1970s new "pure text" editions were attempted by fantasy author Karl Edward Wagner. Despite his example, other companies continued to put out editions of Conan that attempted to place the stories in a chronological order, interspersed with stories cribbed from other Howard material, or with out-and-out pastiches of poor quality. The collections edited by Wagner for Berkley, many of which also contain non-Conan stories as good or better than the more famous material, can still be found in used bookshops, in dealers' rooms at cons, or online, as can a similar (though not identical) set of paperbacks released by Zebra Books, also in the mid-seventies. Chief amongst these Zebra volumes is the wonderfully-titled *Pigeons from Hell.* Almost all the Berkleys feature art by Ken Kelly while the Zebras primarily have cover art by Jeff Jones. Just do an ABE (Advanced Book Exchange - www.abebooks.com) search for "Robert E. Howard."

Around the same time, publisher Donald M. Grant was putting out what he hoped would be the first complete

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deluxe edition of Conan. The series ran from 1974 to 1989 but, like the Gnome Press edition, did not manage to bring out all the stories and in many cases edited content for political correctness of the time: they are very pretty books, with corrupt texts.

Further along, in the mid-nineties, Baen Books produced a seven-volume paperback Robert E. Howard Library that reprinted a slew of non-Conan Howard material with completely restored texts. The content ranges from heroic fantasy like the Solomon Kane stories to Howard's later stories of regional horror such as Black Canaan. Again, these are readily available if you know where to look for them; see suggestions above.

Now, in the twenty-first century and the 100th anniversary year of Howard's birth, there is a whole new selection of Howard material on the market. I'll get to each one in turn:

- 1. Del Rey Books has been printing its Complete Robert E. Howard Illustrated Library, reprinted from the prohibitively expensive signed and numbered limited editions produced by Wandering Star in Great Britain. The paper-backs contain all the texts, illustrations (the paintings in black and white instead of colour) and layout of the more expensive editions, making the material accessible to the Howard fan on a budget. The set includes a three-volume complete Conan of Cimmeria: The Ultimate Triumph illustrated by Frazetta, a one-volume complete Bran Mak Morn, and my personal favourite, the one-volume Savage Tales of Solomon Kane (the hard-cover from Wandering Star is now around \$900 U.S. get the paperback). Most recently, they have released a complete volume of Howard's King Kull stories.
- 2. Wildside Press (www.wildsidepress.com) is in the middle of printing a ten-volume complete set of Howard stories reprinted from *Weird Tales* and associated pulp magazines. This is not a bad attempt; however it suffers in a few places from shoddy editing and poor production values (i.e. binding). It is far better, if you wish to get hold of these, to get them through a service such as Amazon than to go directly to Wildside as they will (in my experience) take forever and a day to get back to you. At the time of writing, they are at volume six. The volumes are all quite thin, from 170 to 220 pages each, and are clearly being produced this way to justify a ten-volume edition. You could just as easily spend your money on their paperback releases of this series, as the paperbacks are more consistent in quality at less than half the price.
- 3. Girasol Collectibles, out of Mississaugua, Ontario, offers a number of wonderful things for the Howard collector: Firstly, their pulp reprint series includes several facsimiles of *Weird Tales* issues containing Howard stories. Their other, even better offering is a complete Howard-in-*Weird-Tales* two-volume (*The Weird Writings of Robert E. Howard Vols. 1 and 2*) facsimile edition including all fiction, poems, and even letters ever published by him in *Weird Tales*. A one-volume companion (*The Exotic Writings of Robert E. Howard*) offers up many of Howard's other types of story, i.e. historical-fiction, spicy etc. These three collections are the purest period Howard you're gonna get. The cost per volume ranges around \$100 U.S. each. Contact their website (www.girasolcollectibles.com) for availability; and just check out their site in general as it is faboo.

Well, I hope I've given you all a fair overview of Howard publishing over the years, as well as where to get it now. These are only the most visible of the Howard materials available. There are smaller collections of Howard, or books about him being released almost faster than even a full-blown Howard junkie can follow. To those who want to know about everything Howard, I highly recommend the fine website www.howardworks.com as well as *The Neverending Hunt*, a bibliography of Robert E. Howard by Paul Herman. If you cannot locate the hardbound limited edition, Wildside Press will shortly be making a more accessible edition available. Happy Howard-hunting!

Horror Springs Forth

Text by Lorna Toolis, all photos by Andrew Specht

o celebrate the launch of the latest books by horror publisher PS Publishing, the Merril Collection, in conjunction with World Horrorcon 2007, played host to a launch party. 160 people attended the launch which was held on Friday, March 30 in the basement of 239 College Street. Peter Crowther spoke about his hopes when he founded PS Publishing and the success the company has enjoyed. Among the people attending were: Ramsey Campbell, F. Paul Wilson, Robert Knowlton, Beth Gwinn, Ellen Datlow and Stephen Jones. The reception ended early in the evening so attendees could return to the convention hotel for a mass autograph session featuring many of the convention's special guests.



The lower rotunda of the Lillian H. Smith branch, with its mysterious lighting and columned architecture was a perfect setting for the PS Publishing launch party. The Merril obtained a special liquor license so that the celebration could be held with all the appropriately alcoholic libations.

PS Publishing's founder, Peter Crowther, takes a moment to thank party attendees for their support as he reflects on surviving eight years (so far) in the publishing business.



From the Merril



The day after the launch party at the Merril, Lorna Toolis moderated the panel "Forgotten Authors: Their names were big once, but who today remembers them?" with Robert Knowlton (far left), Don Hutchison, Jeff Beeler and Edward Bryant

Later that same evening, Mary Canning moderated the panel "Collecting Horror Literature: What makes a book valuable, and which titles should you be looking out for?" featureing Joseph T. Berlant (far left), Peter Halasz, Robert Knowlton and Monica S. Kuebler

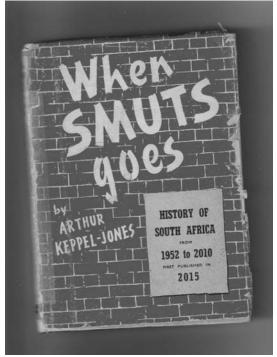




On Thursday, March 29, the World's Biggest Bookstore hosted a book signing attended by many of the convention Guests of Honour. Although not an event connected to the Merril, many Friends and members of the Merril executive attended.

Science Fiction in South Africa - A Personal Perspective

By Tony Davis



When Smuts Goes was originally written as Arthur Keppel-Jones sought to vent his anger against the rise of apartheid in South Africa. Cover scan courtesy of Tony Davis

South Africa at a time when the fall of the apartheid regime was imminent following after the June 1976 Soweto riots. As an avid sf fan and reader I sought to find whatever I could in this very different country, rooting through used bookstores for sf hard-covers and paperbacks. And one day I spotted a small notice in a Johannesburg newspaper about a local sf club meeting. Thus I discovered Science Fiction South Africa (SFSA) which was a club of like-minded sf fans from the Johannesburg and Pretoria area who met together on a social basis to discuss their favourite subject. Membership was equally male and female and almost exclusively "white". SFSA had been around since the early 1960s and its first chairperson, Tex Cooper, also edited a clubzine called *Probe*. This clubzine reached its 100th issue in 1997 and is still going strong. (Yours truly edited *Probe* for several issues in the late 1980s.)

SFSA members gathered at members' homes, talked sf and watched sf films on projectors (this was pre-video days). The club boasted a few published authors, including Claude and Rhoda Nunes, whose novels *Revoil* and *Inherit the Earth* appeared in Ace paperback doubles. When Claude autographed a copy of *The Sky Trapeze* for me (Hale Books), he mused that he at least knew one copy had sold! (Sorry, Claude, it was a book review copy.)

Aside from bragging rights that J.R.R. Tolkien was born in Bloemfontein, South Africa's other prominent sf author was Arthur Keppel-Jones, who wrote *When Smuts Goes: A History of South Africa from 1952 to 2010* in 1947. Professor Keppel-Jones later immigrated to Canada where he joined the history faculty at Queen's University in Kingston. Commenting on his speculative history novel, he stated that in writing the novel he was working out his anger and frustration at the inevitable election of the Nationalist Party - which did come to power with its apartheid platform in 1948 (from *A Patriot in Search of a Country*, his 2005 autobiography). Several other mainstream South African authors, such as Wessel Ebersohn and Peter Wilhelm, also wrote sf.

During the late 1970s, SFSA started holding monthly public meetings with talks, film screenings and a lending library. Annual conventions started up as well, utilizing the facilities of a Johannesburg university campus. *Probe* began to publish the winning stories from SFSA's annual short story competitions (with cash prizes as well) and in one case, a nationally distributed magazine (*Scope*) published a winning story.

Because a sizeable amount of good fiction was being written by SFSA members, I edited two "best of..." anthologies in 1981 and 1986. (Privately printed and in a limited print run - they're hard to find today). As a result of the publicity arising from the sale of the first collection, which was nationally distributed in several stores, the political monthly journal *Frontline* ran a feature on the stories, on SFSA and science fiction in South Africa (quoting yours truly at length).



The cover to Jan Rabie's 1971 book Die Hemelblom. Cover scan courtesy of Tony Davis

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I wrote a number of articles for *Probe* on the subject of literary censorship. Since the Nationalist Party came to power numerous books were banned from being distributed, usually based on political and religious views. However, a good number of sf books were banned as well and all the bannings were duly recorded in a mammoth black tome titled *Jacobsen's Guide to Objectionable Literature*. There one could find lots of sf - from Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* and Koontz's *Demon Seed* to De Camp's *Cosmic Manhunt*, etc, etc. Oftentimes suggestive cover art or editors' blurbs could result in a banning. Correspondence between SFSA and the government's Director of Publications evidenced the futility of trying to get a book "unbanned".

Science fiction could also be found in South Africa's other official language, Afrikaans, in reprint fiction from overseas or, sometimes original fiction. One example is Jan Rabie's *Die Hemelblom*.

An interesting anecdote: during those tumultuous times (late 1970s) of student school boycotts in Soweto, I was walking through a deserted public school and found myself in a library. There were only a few bookshelves and not too many books, but what I did find was about two-dozen sf hardcovers. Looking over

a couple of titles, I found that these were discards from "white" school libraries. Somewhat ironically I mused that perhaps the idealized futures speculated on by some of these sf authors gave some Soweto students more promising visions for the future of South Africa.

Tony Davis is a Toronto area local, a corporate director of human resources for a Canadian furniture manufacturing group. In his spare time he indulges in pulp magazines. He has received the "Lamont" award for his contributions to pulp fandom, namely as editor of the annual Pulpcon's conzine "The Pulpster".

Daniel Pinkwater's *Blue Moose* Becomes an Opera!

By Lorna Toolis

In the grand tradition of commissioning works of art to celebrate significant events, the University of Redlands has commissioned an opera intended to reach audiences young and old. *The Blue Moose* is based on the novel by renowned author and National Public Radio commentator, Daniel Pinkwater, with music by the Chicago composer, Daniel Tucker. Mr. Pinkwater has also written the libretto. The work was directed by Artist Professor of Opera and Voice, Marco Schindelmann, and premiered on March 29, 2007 as part of the University's Centennial Celebration.

Curiosity educated the cat.

Add to the discussion in our magazine. Advertise with us. Contact Sabrina for further information. sabrinafried@rogers.com

Contribute to Sol Rising!

Sol Rising is currently looking for articles, photographs and illustrations on science fiction, fantasy, horror, speculative fiction, genre movies, fandom and any related subject you can think of.

Experience is not required. For more information please contact Sabrina Fried by email at sabrinafried@rogers.com.

Announcements from the Merril

Missing Members

When members forget to send a change of address to the Friends of the Merril Collection, we try to locate them. If you know where any of the people listed below are currently living, please contact the Merril Collection staff.

John Pirker Barry Wellman Theresa Wojtasiewicz Rob Yale

A Primer On Donating to the Merril

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About Toronto Public Library Foundation

Toronto Public Library Foundation was established in 1997 as a registered charity. A Canadian charity, its mission is to provide essential resources for the enhancement of Toronto Public Library and to allocate funds to those priority needs not supported by municipal funding. Since its inception Toronto Public Library Foundation has raised over \$17 million in support of Toronto Public Library priority needs.

The Foundation envisions a future in which the Library goes beyond maintaining traditionally strong service and plays a leadership role in city-building. Innovation, revitalization and renewal are the themes shaping the Foundation and the Library's work together to reach more people through improved and expanded collections, enhanced programs and services, and revitalized community spaces.

The Foundation's long-range goal is to build an endowment fund that will generate sufficient income to support enhanced library programs, collections and services in perpetuity.

About American Foundation for Toronto Public Library

Established in 2004, the *American Foundation for Toronto Public Library (AFTPL)*, a New York nonprofit corporation, is an organization described in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, enabling donors from the U.S. to claim their gifts to the Foundation on their tax returns.

AFTPL's purpose is to promote and support public libraries and library programs and services, including: helping public libraries build, strengthen and diversify their collections, such as the Merril Collection of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Speculation at the Toronto Public Library; promoting reading and public library programs that encourage all segments of the general public to read; supporting children's reading programs, mobile library programs and other services provided by public libraries; supporting programs that provide members of the general public with electronic access to library reference materials; and supporting literacy programs offered by public libraries.

Merril Events and Volunteering



Bring out Your Dead! - A Science Fictional Flea Market

Saturday, September 8 10 am to 4pm in the Beeton Auditorium at Toronto Reference Library

Are your shelves being weighed down by your old paperbacks? Are you hunting for the R2-D2 Pez dispenser you need to fill out your collection? Do you have sf con program books that need a good home? Then worry no more, as The Friends of the Merril Collection present "Bring Out Your Dead," a science fiction flea market one-stop shopping for your genre bric-a-brac needs.

"Bring Out Your Dead" will be held on Saturday, September 8 from 10 am to 4pm in the Beeton Auditorium at Toronto Reference Library

Admission is FREE!!

If you have items you wish to sell, please contact Donald Simmons at dfs.engineer@gmail.com for table fees. Space is available in half-table increments (standard 6' x 2.5' tables) and must be reserved in advance. All proceeds will go to the Friends of the Merril Collection to organize public sf events (like this one!).

Check out our webpage for updates at http://www.friendsofmerril.org/events.html

Volunteers Needed!

If you would like to help with any of the following, contact Lorna Toolis at Itoolis@torontopubliclibrary.ca

- * Event Set-Up: In the hour or two before every Friends of the Merril event (readings, Xmas Tea, etc), there are a number of small jobs which need to be done (rearrange chairs, pick up catered snacks, etc.)
- * Event Notification: Before Merril events, send out email notifications to members, contact local weeklies (Eye, NOW) and local event websites (The Torontoist, etc.)
- * Man the Tables!: Help staff the Merril promotional table at events such as Word on the Street, local sf / fantasy conventions.
- * Merril Mailings: Help organize and carry-out occasional mass-mailing to members of the Friends (generally two-three a year).
- * Sol Rising: Write articles for our twice-yearly newsletter, help with proofreading, ad sales, graphic design.
- * Marketing / Promotions Committee: Looks at ways to increase the profile of the Friends and the Collection (among both individuals and corporations), and promote Merril Events. It will involve occasional meetings (decided upon by its members), and follow-up work investigating its ideas.
- * Fundraising Committee: The Fundraising Committee looks at ideas to raise money to support the Friends and the Collection, through merchandise sales, fundraising events, encouraging individual and corporate donations, etc. It will involve occasional meetings (decided upon by its members), and follow-up work investigating its ideas.

All Great Houses Begin With A Strong Foundation



The Friends of the Merril Collection is a volunteer organization that provides support and assistance to the Collection, which houses the largest public collection of science fiction and fantasy books in North America.

The Friends support the collection through the publication of Sol Rising, providing the Collection with volun-

☐ I wish to become a member of The Friends
of the Merril Collection. I have enclosed a cheque
or money order (payable to "The Friends of the
Merril Collection") for my 2007/08 membership fee
as indicated (memberships run from May 2007 to
May 2008):

Individual	\$35.00	per v	year
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☐ Student (under 18) \$20.00 per year

☐ Institution \$42.50 per year

This is a:

□ New membership

teers and sponsoring events held at the library, including readings and appearances by prominent members of the science fiction and fantasy community.

The Friends is an entirely self-funded organization, existing through the generosity of its donors.

ship form below and sending it in you are helping to promote the genres of science fiction, fantasy and speculation to new readers and future generations. The Friends of the Merril Collection would like to thank all the generous supporters and volunteers, without whom this would not be possible.

By completing the donation/member-

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Please mail to: The Friends of the Merril Collection, c/o Lillian H. Smith Branch, Toronto Public Library, 239 College St., 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R5				
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