

GENESIS

...and then some



*the essential
companion
to the
Last
Nevergate
Chronicles*

E.T. ELLISON

GENESIS

...and Then Some



the essential companion to the award-winning
Last Nevergate Chronicles



clownbox
press

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, organizations, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental and beyond the intent of either the author or the publisher.

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Right: Original Chronicler's Edition frontispiece illustration of Dunnigans Wall by Howard David Johnson | Previous page: original Chronicler's Edition cover illustration by Marla Baggetta | Front cover, book design and all other artwork by E. T. Ellison.

124190



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click on content item to go to that page

1	Introduction
2	St Coriander Vicinity
3	St Coriander Land Use Diagram (Amandra Smythe)
4	Holy Quincunx Original Concept Drawings (E.V. Henry)
5	Clans Dunnigan History (Donauld Fetterwyre, SCIAK)
6	Great Nevergate Hack (paingame reviews, 2231)
7	St Coriander History (Lavendra Cortioli, PhD)
8	An Adjunct's Final Flap (Newsclip: Arthur's Lament)
9	Merlin's Hourglass Hammerli's Reliquarian Resource
10	Septriq Iconograph (Iris Ho)
11	Oprah 5 Interview with Original Dunnigan (Igan) Twins
12	Lysheem's Triplehorn Helmet (TIA)

*NOTE RE SOURCES: Items 3-12 courtesy Transpoint Independent Archive (TIA).
For more information on TIA, please consult The Cult of Madonna 13, book 6 of
The Last Nevergate Chronicles.*



WHEN the book-of-the-year (among other accolades) hardcover Chronicler's Edition of *The Luck of Madonna 13* was published in 2002, it included a number of textual and visual embellishments. There was also a companion website containing additional items of miscellany, most of which were referenced in the Chronicler's Edition by quincunx icons in the margins. It was a concept for extending the novel via the web, but alas, also one whose time came and went in a metaphorical eyeblink.

Although these materials illuminate aspects of the fictional time in which the story is set, as well as some of the characters, none of them are essential to the story itself. If this were school instead of a novel, it would all be labeled "extra credit" and thus ignored by most students. However, readers with excessive spare time and/or beyond-the-norm curiosity have discovered clues and ah-hahs and, so I'm told, even moments of wry amusement. Updated versions of some of the original website documents have been compiled into this volume, including an updated version of the future history (originally called Genesis) that preceded the narrative in the Chronicler's Edition but was deleted from 2013 and 2020 editions. Many quirks of St Coriander are explained, making it a handy companion for the complete six volume Last Nevergate Chronicles. Have at it.

~ E.T. Ellison (aka The Chronicler)
Autust 2021

*Writers with
a modicum
of common
sense learn
to stop
writing
(and in
some cases,
designing)
when the
narrative
is handed
over to the
publisher.
Apparently
I was
elsewhere
when the
common
sense was
handed out.*

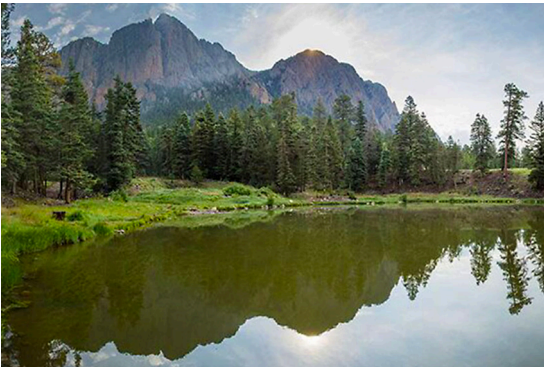
~ ETE

NORTH-CENTRAL NEW MEXICO: THE ST CORIANDER VICINITY

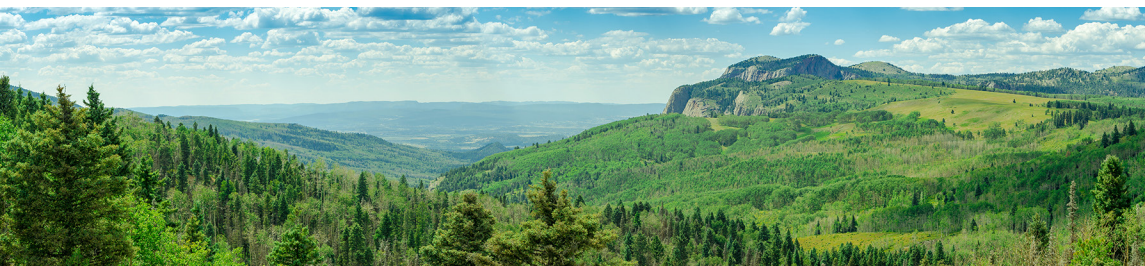
THE DEADLY

Township Fence is located right about where the black asterisk sits on the adjacent map. Nestled therein is that singular IsoTown named St Coriander. Not in the present day, of course.

The last time I visited this part of the northern New Mexico high country it was pretty sparsely populated. While it has some noteworthy natural features — like the singular Brazos Cliffs — there's no obvious reason for a population boom anytime soon. This seems to suit many local residents just fine. A shop owner in Chama once told me that the day a traffic signal got installed in the town was the day he'd be moving out. It's lonesome country, which makes it a perfect hide-away for lottery winners suffering from Paraspirtual Wealth Trauma*.

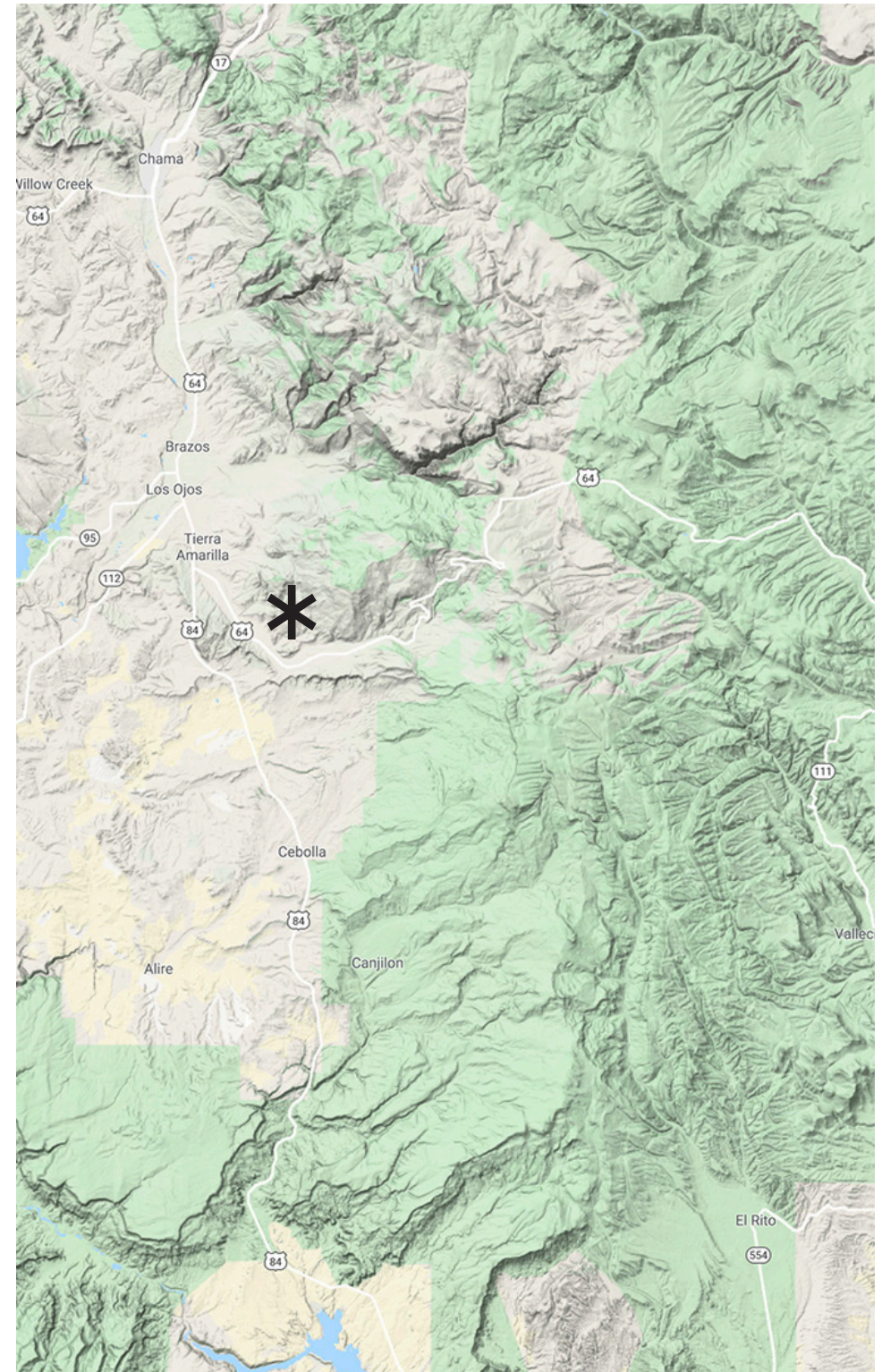


Brazos Cliffs. Photo courtesy Corkins Lodge.



*Springtime: Brazos Mountains overlooking the Chama Valley from Highway 64.
Photo courtesy Wikipedia.*

** See Genesis (St Coriander history) for all the bizarre details.*



St Coriander Land Use Diagram: 2210-2254



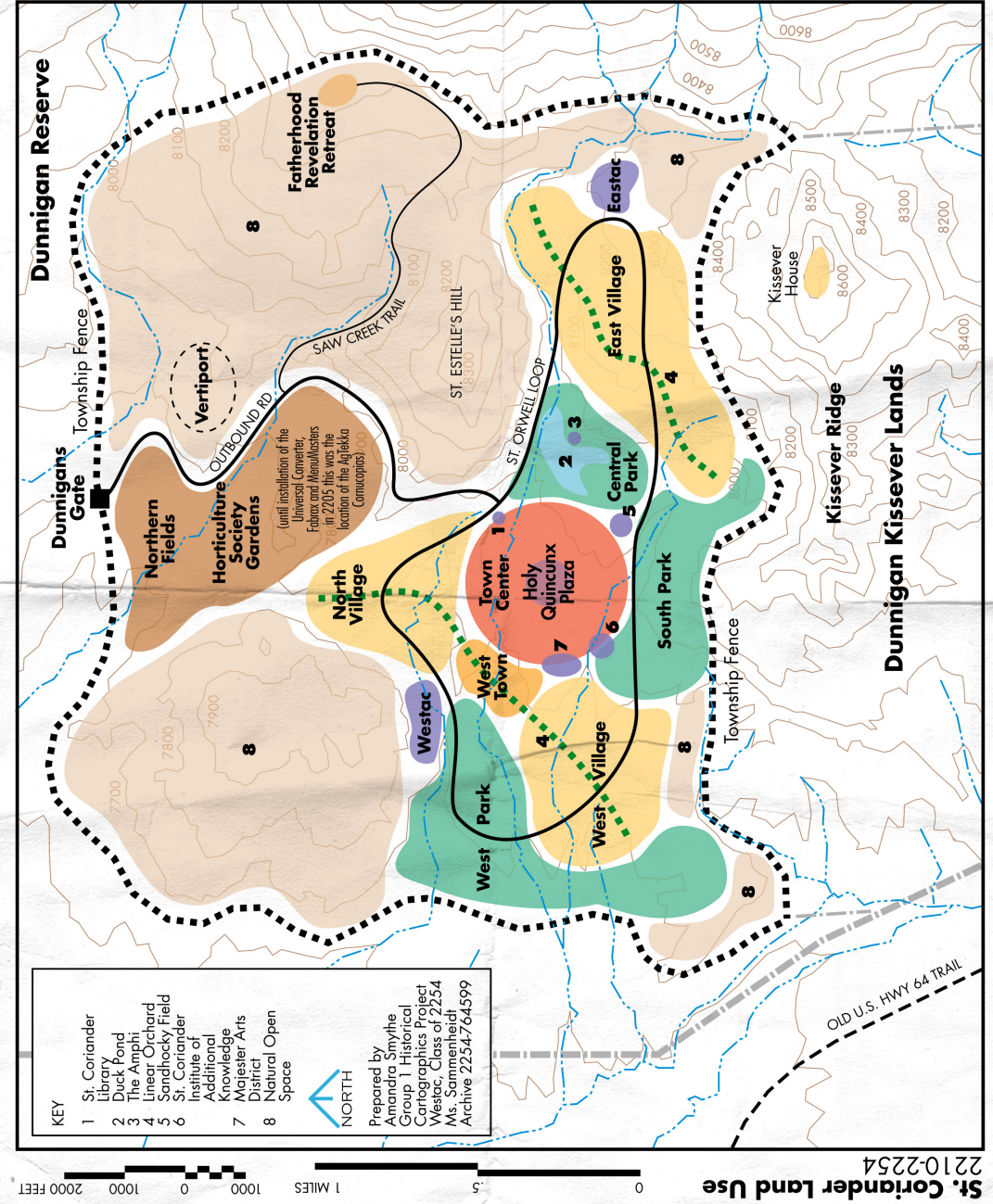
Date – Spring, 2254

Source – Westac Historical Cartographics Project; Amandra Smythe, student; Margot Sammenheidt, coursemaster. (via Transpoint Independent Archive)

Background – TIA's search of St Coriander records for suitable visuals of early St Coriander uncovered very little of use, perhaps due to the zealous work of the datarats deployed by Exeter shortly following the Second Nevergate War. This item was actual hardcopy that somehow found its way into North Castle prior to the Dunnigan Retreat and was preserved in North Castle Archives. The reproduction here was polled by TIA from an undisclosed offsite datamorgue.

St Coriander in 2534 is little changed in basic land use from this diagram. The one exception is the addition of the former Dunnigan owned Kissever House and properties to the south.

This expansion of the town boundaries occurred in 2261 when the so-called “Dorelli faction” became disincluded from the Clans Dunnigan, given title to the Kissever properties and reincluded into St Coriander. By the time of the Second Nevergate War in 2285, the Township Fence had been rerouted to include these additional lands. The imposition of the Quarantine, the Counterindicated Zone and the New Rules by the “Mad Sorcerer” Exeter immediately thereafter added an additional degree of lethality to the Township Fence but did not alter the town boundary.



Holy Quincunx (Pentalisk Towers)



Date – January 7, 2178

Source – St Coriander Library Special Archive, via Transpoint Independent Archive (TIA)

Background – These three “blueprints” are thought to be the first design drawings for the Holy Quincunx Towers. They were evidently based upon a rough sketch made on a Falling Frog Lounge (later called the Falling Frog Pub) napkin by Elvern Faunibeune on or around New Year’s Eve, 2177. The items were among Father Faunibeune’s private papers comprising a bequest to the St Coriander Library’s Special Archive. One remarkable thing about these initial concept drawings is the degree to which the final product stayed true to this early design. The main difference in the final design is that everything was scaled up about 25% from this concept. And the name was changed, of course.

The reference to “wright-think” in E. V. Henry’s note refers to the influence of seminal twentieth century architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The noted impact on Henry evidently occurred during a workshop he attended at Taliesin West, Wright’s former studio, during 2176.

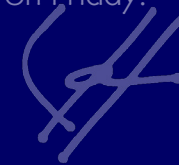
THE PENTALISK TOWERS

A Preliminary Design



Dear El ~

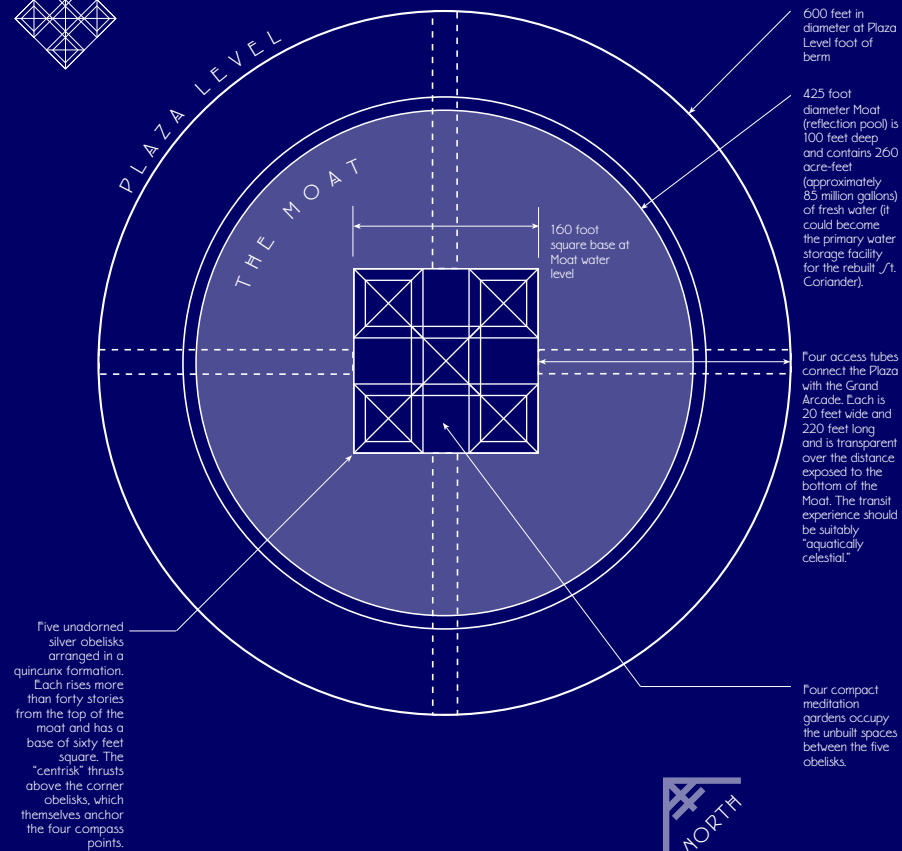
Attached are a couple pages of “visual thinking” based on our discussions and the godawful mess you scrawled on that napkin the other night. This may or may not remotely resemble the sort of thing you had in mind, but remember...I’m an engineer, not an architect. If I’ve let my engineer’s stern sense of geometry get out of control, please forgive me. Same thing applies to the case of wright-think I took away with me from Taliesin: forgive me if it shows too much. But this is just a concept, after all. Till, it would sure be fun to grow something monumental like this in a place like Ft. Coriander. In any case, you owe me a custard, at least. I expect to collect on Friday.



PS ~ I know you’re going to hate the name, but I had to call it *something*.

THE PENTALISK TOWERS

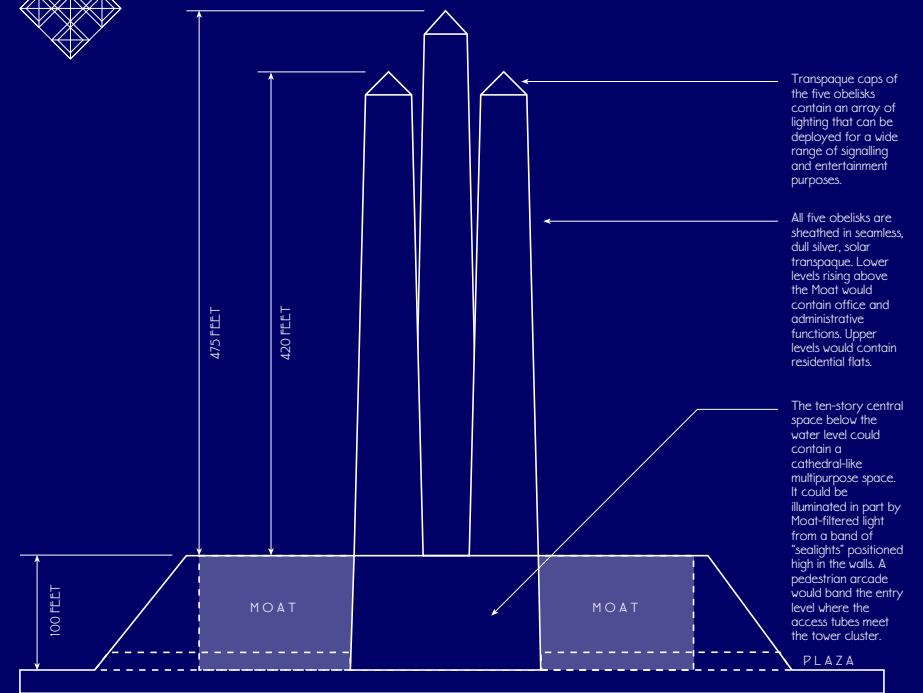
Site Plan



E. V. Henry
January 7, 2178
Drawing Scale: 1" = 100'

THE PENTALISK TOWERS

Southwest Elevation & Partial Section



E. V. Henry
January 7, 2178
Drawing Scale: 1" = 100'

Graphic Scale
50 0 100 FEET

Clans Dunnigan History



Date – May 14, 2252

Source – St Coriander Institute of Additional Knowledge (SCIAK), via Transpoint Independent Archive

Background – TIA's search of its entire archives for a compact historical summary covering a reasonably broad span of Clans Dunnigan history yielded this odd nugget: the first draft of a SCIAK student paper. Subsequent drafts were much attenuated in key areas and less relevant to the Last Nevergate Chronicles. The TIA Archivist found Dr. Pojorolli's pointed critiques in this initial draft (the red text in the margins) to add quite a bit of useful context for the reader interested in these times.

The Archivist also notes that Dr. Pojorolli was at the time of this paper also a senior member of the Retrographic Society and owner of fabrax reproductions of six

museum grade IBM Selectric typewriter models spanning the years 1961 to 1983 as well as a rare Wheelwriter from 1985. As a historian of technology [SCIAK Speaker for Technosociographic History], he was fond of requiring students to relive precomputer history in instructive ways.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS 214 Donauld
Fetterwyre
DR. POJOROLLI'S ADVANCED TUTORIUM
May 14, 2252

TERM ASSIGNMENT: Construct an interpretive chronologue of event threads leading to the Clans Dunnigan Decentralization Initiative of 2234. Identify and classify Formatives, identify key Intersects and Nodalities. Provide any necessary supporting narrative and a brief analytic conclusion. Diagram your work using standard symbology. Use Manuscript Format SR 2.3 and the IBM Selectric 1963 typewriting simulator with Courier 12 for body text.

Mr. Fetterwyre:
While this is a marginally acceptable first draft, I am concerned about the numerous instances of questionable relevance (I haven't bothered to mark them all): it seems to be a habit that borders on anecdotalism. Further, your selection of event threads is very thinly supported when supported at all. Similarly, you do not support the rationale for your classifications so much as one iota. Please see me during office hours before you begin work on your next draft. As preparation, I should like to first review your list of sources; somehow your reference links did not appear on this draft. Adequate rigor seemed to be missing as well.
P. J. Pojorolli

TERM ASSIGNMENT: Construct an interpretive chronologue of event threads leading to the Clans Dunnigan Decentralization Initiative of 2234. Identify and classify Formatives, identify key Intersects and Nodalities. Provide any necessary supporting narrative and a brief analytic conclusion. Diagram your work using standard symbology. Use Manuscript Format SR 2.3 and the IBM Selectric 1963 typewriting simulator with Courier 12 for body text.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Formative 1:

Pre-Clans Dunnigan Thread -- 2

Intersect 1:

Connection and Wealthification -- 3

Nodality 1:

The Quake and Immediate Aftermath -- 6

Subformative:

The Henry Line in St Coriander -- 9

Strong Formative:

Dunnetix LLC -- 11

Nodality 2:

The Prototype Center Raid -- 22

Conclusion -- 24

Thread A — Igan Component

Twins Donella Viola Igan and Victoria Kathleen Igan born to Lamond Henry Igan and Jolene Diana Igan, April 23, 2150, in Deadwood, South Dakota (WG.US.SD). Lamond was half-Navajo/half-Cherokee, Jolene was Chinese and mixed European. The parents co-managed the venerable Bullock Hotel and Casino in historic downtown Deadwood. The parents developed the basic design for their twin girls with the aid of GeneVision UltraKid Pro v12.5. Cellular implementation was performed on a XaXaX cellular assembler at the Deadwood Eugenics Clinic. The Igan twins grew up in Deadwood and earned their ME degrees in engineering from Cornbelt Institute of Applied Science's vCampus in 2166 while working part-time in the family hostelry. Donnella's specialty was paragenetics design; Victoria's specialty was axodymic software design. Between 2166 and 2174 they freelanced through the Virtual Engineering Agency for major firms around the world.

Thread B — Dunn Component

Twins John Aurelius Dunn and Michael Julius Dunn born to Damon Horatio Dunn and Isadora Janis Dunn, May 4, 2150, in Eureka, California (WG.US.CA). Isadora (Japanese/mixed European descent) was a professor of psychology and ethics at Humboldt University in neighboring Arcata; Damon (Scottish/

English descent) was captain of the Tinwhistle Mary Saloon and Gamery, an offshore gaming ship operated by NoCal Affiliated Tribes and serving the booming California northcoast resort market. The Dunn twins were modeled on an Orthometrix BioVid 14.2 with cellular assembly handled by a GenGen-Ho cellular assembler at Humboldt University Health Services. Shortly after the twins' sixth birthday, the family relocated when Isadora accepted a fellowship at the prestigious Tahoe Institute. Horatio Dunn assumed the captaincy of the reconstructed Queen Elizabeth II which at that time was operating as a floatel/casino on Lake Tahoe. The twins worked on the QE2 during their school years and graduated with ME degrees from Pacific Rim Institute of Technology's Northern Nevada Campus in 2166. John's specialty was nanomechanical systems; Michael's was cyborganic sensors. Between 2166 and 2174 the twins freelanced through the Technists Unlimited for major firms around the world.

INTERSECT 1: CONNECTION AND WEALTHIFICATION

2174 June 27

Both pairs of twins arrive independently in Las Vegas, Colorado themecity for a vacation from their various freelance assignments.

2174, June 28

9:59 PM -- John Dunn wins \$100 million Arm of Fortune jackpot at The Lost Dutchman resort.

10:17 PM -- Donnella Igan wins \$100 million Arm of Fortune jackpot at Luna City Dome resort.

10:22 PM -- Victoria Igan wins \$100 million Arm of Fortune jackpot at Jack the Ripper's London resort.

10:38 PM -- Michael Dunn wins \$100 million Arm of Fortune jackpot at The Emerald City resort.

2174, June 29

Las Vegas Colorado Gaming Commission shuts down all Arm of Fortune machines for investigation of tampering. The Dunn twins and the Igan twins are instant celebrities and meet momentarily during an exclusive interview arranged for

Is "wealthification" actually a known word? It's not in my dictionaries. If it is a neologism of your own creation, you may wish to insert a reference link and so indicate.

Is there a reason you do not somewhere make reference to the alleged connection between gambling work in the backgrounds of both pairs of twins and their highly improbably episode with the Arms of Fortune? I believe this was widely discussed at the time.

People. Dunns and Igans are assigned "protective escorts" during the remainder of their Las Vegas Colorado stay. Twins receive a bounty of congratulations, offers of marriage, investment opportunities and death threats.

2174, June 30

Dunns and Igans separately receive invitations from Estelle Faunibeune to visit St Coriander. Twins like mountainous high country. Accept.

2174, July 1

Both pairs of twins arrive at the St Coriander private vertiport in separate Nanoset-Viebel corporate mollers, where they're met by Estelle Faunibeune herself. At a dinner party that night they are formally introduced to each other, to Merritt Frank Orwell and to the "grand St Coriander experiment." Details of their stay with Estelle Faunibeune are unknown, but it is believed they helped with arrangements for Dr. Orwell's surprise fortieth birthday party. Dunn twins and Igan twins discover numerous commonalities and begin

courtship with long hikes in the vicinity of St Coriander.

2174, July 8

Twins decide to formally join their futures together in a traditional ceremony of wedlock. Estelle Faunibeune makes arrangements to have her brother Elvern come to St Coriander after Orwell's fortieth birthday party to conduct a dual marriage ceremony. Estelle Faunibeune also introduces the twins to Nanoset-Viebel corporate grandees and strongly suggests a consultancy be arranged. Twins agree to visit N-V headquarters in Brussels after the birthday party to discuss possible contractual arrangements.

2174, July 13

Madonna 13 and performing entourage secretly arrive in St Coriander. The troupe is slated to perform at Dr. Orwell's fortieth birthday party the following day. Madonna 13 and the Dunns and Igans are introduced.

NODALITY 1: THE QUAKE AND IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

2174, July 14, 5:28 AM

St Coriander earthquake: 8.9 on the Richter Scale. All told, 2,489 residents of St Coriander are killed, including Dr. Orwell and Estelle Faunibeune. The original St Coriander is virtually leveled. The two sets of twins are unharmed and rescue Madonna 13 who they found trapped under an overturned bathtub. The Igan twins remove her from the carnage and chaos of St Coriander to a shelter in the nearby hills, while the Dunn twins assist in the rescue efforts.

2174, July 15

Father Elvern Faunibeune arrives and participates in rescue efforts.

2174, July 18

Father Faunibeune arranges and conducts a group funeral for the thousands of deceased and a private ceremony for his sister and Dr. Orwell.

2174, July 28

Two weddings are transacted: Donella Viola Igan is wedded to John Aurelius Dunn; Victoria Kathleen Igan is wedded to Michael Julius Dunn. The official witness to the ceremony was Maxanna Ever-More, the current Chief Extropian, who was in attendance as a cherished mentor of both the Igans and Dunns. The twin pairs adopt a new composite surname – Dunnigan – and form the two parallel lines of the Clans Dunnigan.

2174, July 29

The two pairs of newlyweds decide to jointly invest in an "entertainment property:" Madonna 13. They acquire her Genecopy Asset License as well as full DNA ownership. Several days after these acquisitions are completed, "Only the Lucky" is released and quickly becomes a Triple Novinium hit, earning the newly formed Dunnetix LLC significant income from publishing royalties and ancillary licenses.

"Significant income" is an inadequate descriptor. Certainly you can locate an estimate. Also include a timeframe: a week? a month? a decade? a lifetime?

2174, August

The Dunnigans energetically participate in the cleanup of St Coriander. However, the 670 surviving residents -- all staunch Orwell Society members -- find the Dunnigans to be somewhat over-energetic and resist their efforts at leadership, along with their proposed changes to St Coriander's Rules.

2174, August 18

In a contentious meeting of the Orwell Society, a vote is taken electing Father Faunibeune as Interim Town Coordinator. The Society also accepts his proposal to extend invitations of habitation to such members of his Temple of Fortune Church as are inclined to move to the isolation of St Coriander and adopt Orwell Society Rules, which include Zero Population Growth and Elevation by Thrice Sixteen.

2174, August 19

The Dunnigans decide to abandon St Coriander proper and initially acquire 77,000 heavily forested

acres in the Tusas Mountains, including Brazos Peak, which was subsequently renamed Mt. Faunibeune. They also acquire enough lands contiguous to St Coriander to encircle the town with their holdings.

2174, August 29

Design of 100 offspring is completed using modified Natrex Perfection Mark 12 integrated cellular design/build units, modified for accelerated fetal development optimization. Fertilized eggs are mollered to an undisclosed Santa Fe eugenics center where they are implanted in late model Incubix pods.

2174, September

Dunnigans retain the services of neo-medievalist architect Casparides and soon begin construction on first wing of Kissever House, a "temporary" home for both Dunnigan clans. The site is the so-called Kissever Ridge, which overlooks St Coriander from the south. The first wing contains apartments sufficient

to house the entirety of the first generation of both Clan lines.

2174, October 11

In a heavily publicized ceremony, the four Dunnigans present Madonna 13 with full title to her own DNA and permanently remove her "license clock." A close Clans Dunnigan relationship with Madonna 13 continues through the present time. Some observers believe that the celebrity relationship has been a major point of leverage for the Clans, providing them with unusual freedom of action in certain areas.

2175, April 1

In the morning, 100 occupied Incubix pods are mollered to Kissever House and installed in the newly completed vivarium. In the afternoon, 100 wetnurses arrive. At 11:59 PM, the one hundred Dunnigan infants (fifty males and fifty females) are officially born.

SUBFORMATIVE: THE HENRY LINE IN ST CORIANDER

2168, February 14

Edmund Valentine "Val" Henry (natborn, April 14, 2142, elevated April 14, 2190), a freelance mesostructural engineer residing in Boston (WG.US.MA), wins the annual Massentine Megaheart Lottery with a payoff valued at \$160 million over 50 years. Joins the Temple of Fortune (Virtual Chapter) in 2169. Answering Father Elvern Faunibeune's call for volunteers, participates in the post-Quake cleanup in St Coriander in July of 2175. Permanently relocates to St Coriander in August of that year.

2176, January 19

Val Henry married to Tamarre Wales Cavanaugh (natborn, July 27, 2156, elevated April 14, 2190), the only member of her family to survive the quake. They fab a new home on Harvard Court in North Village.

2177, September 23

Eliot Wilver Henry and Wilma Eileen Henry natborn to Val and Tamarre Henry.

If you are going to indicate both birth and Elevation dates as you do here, do so consistently.

You must support your "celebrity relationship" assertion and link it to your hypothesis.

2178

Val Henry collaborates with Father Elvern Faunibeune on the design of the Holy Quincunx complex. Henry oversees design, engineering and construction/growth of the project.

2183, September 4

Val Henry honored at Holy Quincunx dedication ceremonies attended by a number of outside noteworthies.

2190, April 14

Val Henry and Tamarre Cavanaugh Henry are simultaneously elevated on Holy Quincunx elevation stage.

2195, June 21

Eliot Wilver Henry married to Shawn Gaylen Flitz-Carpentier. Couple acquires former De Grassi home on Holly Wood Court in West Village.

2196, January 16

Elvern Wade Henry natborn to Eliot and Shawn Henry.

2215, June 6

Elvern Wade Henry married to Mariah Dancie Fenderwell. Elvern and Maria acquire the former home of Val and

Mariah Henry, Elvern's paternal grandfather (former master engineer of the Holy Quincunx).

2217, December 30

Twins Wilhelm Daniel Henry and Daniel Wilhelm Henry natborn to Elvern and Mariah Henry.

STRONG FORMATIVE: DUNNETIX LLC
DEVELOPMENTAL PHASE 2078-2114

2178

In addition to their Tier-rearing activities, the four Dunnigans invent the PuppyVac, based on an innovative hybrid lifeform technology. PuppyVac is the first in their line of wildly successful appliance lifeforms. Nanoset-Viebel is contracted to handle "production." Madonna 13 brings one with her on a Letterman 3 Show appearance and has it vacuum up a freshly doffed pair of lacy undergarments. uNivendir alone sells 1.8 billion in first year.

2179

Design and engineering for Dunnigans Wall complex begun.

And the relevance of the Madonna 13/Letterman 3 references are...? I note that you refer to Madonna 13 numerous times in this paper without ever establishing her connection, if any, with causality factors pertaining to the Decentralization Initiative.

Is there a reason you make no mention of St Coriander's eugenics facilities and which, if any, of your cast of characters made use of them? You were quite detailed in describing eugenics pertaining to the Igans and Dunns.

2180

Dunnetix introduces PickaParrot line as followup to the PuppyVac and becomes a popular item for messy people the world over. Madonna 13 uses one to pick up and fly away with garments discarded during her act.

2180

Construction begins on Dunnigans Wall and the two castles behind it.

2182

Dunnetix creates Nevers 1.0, the first so-called verticycling hypercreative intelligence cluster (VHIC). According to Dunnetix hyperbole "these fast-learning, fast-evolving nanobio hybrids were designed to invent the uninventable."

2183

Dunnetix begins marketing Nevers 1.0 sponsorships (Nevers lifeforms are "sponsored," not sold). Becomes a competitive must-have for globals in nearly every field of commerce. Engineering guilds and unions protest "unfair competition."

2184

Dunnetix-sponsored Nevers 1.20 creates Nevers 2.0, which has its own mobility and sensory systems. Creates a public scare. Nevers 2 series is never marketed.

2185

Nevers 1.14 sponsor Panasia-Totax attempts to reverse-engineer the fundamental, patented Nevers lifeform technology. Nevers 1.14 becomes deceased in the process. The Panasia "murder" of Nevers 1.14 precipitates one of the new WorldGov's most difficult bioethical regulatory challenges. Dunnetix files a \$5 trillion breach of sponsorship lawsuit.

How does a lifeform of any sort "become deceased"? Is this an advanced form of dying? Or perhaps a new term for suicide?

2186

Victoria Kathleen Dunnigan establishes the Institute for Advanced Lifeform Research; hosts first annual conference in the "ballroom" of Kissever House's new second wing.

2187

Universal Panergy-sponsored Nevers 1.4.5 invents the Universal Converter and interfaces its feedstock outputs to Fabrax Nanobuilds.

2191

The venerable Dunnetix-sponsored Nevers 1.2.0 invents first Nevergate (originally termed a Probabalistic Interpoint Gateway), a single-directional prototype which succeeds in sending something to somewhere in an unidentified parallax universe.

2191

Dunnigans Wall complex completed and North Castle is occupied. Arrowmere begins to fill behind it.

2194, April 1

Second Tier of 100 Dunnigan offspring born in North Castle vivarium.

2194, June

First Tier Dunnigan offspring depart North Castle on Educational Missions to prestigious universities around the world.

2196

Nevers 3.1.9, under sponsorship of Opus Geneering LLC, invents prototype Opus Refurburator, an advanced system for human body age-reversal and genetic optimization: indefinite life extension now inevitable (at least for the wealthy who live outside of St Coriander). Not publicly announced at this time.

2196

Dunnetix-sponsored Nevers 3.5.0 creates first full-scale two-way Gate with embedded n-dimensional beaconing. Successful in intraplanetary tests.

2199

Dunnetix-sponsored Nevers 4.1.0 develops Ambassadors: mobile, intelligent MicroNevergates optimized for exploration and mapping of chronospatial probability domains accessible via Nevergates.

2200

Exclusive Opus Refurburator Clinics launched simultaneously in 874 popcenters worldwide. Dunnetix begins earning standard 10 percent

Does your parenthetical contain a veiled value judgment pertaining to Elevation? If so, this paper is not the place for it.

As long as you are detailing key Dunnetix accomplishments, you might wish not to exclude the 2204 design of the highly controversial local climatic alterations by Nevers 1.2.0 that resulted in the McTavish Glacier. This even though it was really a Clans Dunnigan initiative.

I have noticed several instances where you mention the instigation of legal pleadings. Might your readers not deserve to know their outcomes? This can be done via footnote.

royalty on gross sales in addition to basic Nevers sponsorship fees.

2204

First contact made (via Ambassador) with ET civilization in Parallax Universe 14 (PU14). Trade mission established with the Pixxils of Cametto-5.

2205

WorldGov's Galactic Contamination Hearings force shutdown of Mt. Faunibeune Nevergate. Simultaneously, WorldGov attempts to confiscate Mt. Faunibeune Nevergate using Eminent Domain theory. Dunnetix receives temporary injunction against so-called "beneficial internationalization."

2206

To mitigate concerns about possible contamination, WorldGov funds Dunnetix-sponsored Nevers 6.5.0 to design Transpoint One, a large-scale, space-based, cargo-capable Nevergate cluster and First Contact Center to be built in orbit between Mars and Jupiter. As part of the deal, Dunnetix agrees to build

and "donate" the world's largest Nevergate complex beneath Ellis Island in New York harbor (WG.US.NY).

2207

Transpoint One construction begins by the Myndwyn Collaboration, a joint venture of global engineering and construction firms with Dunnetix as prime contractor for Nevergate installations and training.

2008

Institute for Advanced Lifeform Research awarded contract for development of autonomous maintenance lifeforms for ongoing Transpoint One operation.

2212, April 1

Third tier of 100 Dunnigan offspring born in North Castle vivarium.

2212, June

Second Tier Dunnigan offspring depart North Castle on Educational Missions.

2213

Upgraded and enlarged Mt. Faunibeune
Nevergate resumes operation.

2214

Ambassador sponsorship program
implemented. More than 100,000
corporate, institutional and polune-
sponsored Ambassadors are sent
through WorldGov's Ellis Island
Nevergate Center during 2213 and
2214.

2215

Cametto-5 dragons are smuggled to
Earth via the roving, submarine-
based All Caribbean Freeboy
Nevergate prior to Transpoint One
becoming operational. The dragons
are blackmarketed worldwide as
luxury pets by Dalax & Co. Dunnetix
Nevergate Customer Service Agents
detect violations and Dunnetix sues
for license violation.

2216

"Special edition" Dunnigan
offspring, Robert Orville Miles
Dunnigan and Diana Faye Lorris
Dunnigan are designed, genebuilt and
implanted in the wombs of recently-

Refurbered 67-year old Donella Viola
Dunnigan and Victoria Kathleen
Dunnigan.

2217, April 1

The "special edition" Dunnigans are
natborn. The "blessed event" is
said to have been broadcast live on
ClanChannel. The St Coriander Times
brands it "a publicity stunt: no
more, no less."

2218

Dunnetix-sponsored Nevers 9.60
designs and creates Biax 1.0, a
special-purpose lifeform engineering
lifeform. Sponsorship is assumed by
the Institute for Advanced Lifeform
Research, now located in its own
facility in the vicinity of Kissever
House, but over Kissever Ridge from
St Coriander.

EARLY NEVERGATE PHASE: 2218-2233

During this eighteen year period
more than five thousand Dunnetix
Nevergates of various models and
capacities are built and licensed
to corporations, governments and
agencies. All incomings are routed
through Transpoint One for any

*Unamplified slang
terms such as "pol-
une" have no place
in academic work.
Use this form for
your first instance:
"Political Unit (PU or
polune)".*

*Relevance is ques-
tionable unless you
support it.*

*And the outcome
was? Give us at least
a footnote, please.*

necessary decontamination and customs procedures. Cleared items are then gated to their ultimate earthbased Nevergate destination. No limits on outgoing transactions.

2218, September 23

Transpoint One becomes operational. Celebration at WorldGov sponsored gala in Geneva.

2220

Ambassador 1492 arrives at Transpoint with a rotund androform alien from Nihurrvannashama. Errigaspovarrial (immediately dubbed "the Buddha from Nirvana") is offered "asylum" by the current Dalai Lama via the Potala Nevergate in High Tibet.

2222

Errigaspovarrial conducts the first of his annual Nirvana Soul Train Tours. More than one million residents of Earth accept Free Passes to Nirvana during the initial Tour, never to return. Decimation of Earth's human population slowly begins.

2222

Refurbished Madonna 13 comes out of retirement to join the first Soul Train Tour with an act built around a new songshow "Last Train to Nirvana." The vid sputters in its first global release, but is licensed by Errigaspovarrial as a theme song for would-be Soul Trainers. Later, it goes Triple Novinium.

2223

Prototype Center built near Institute for Advanced Lifeform Research facility. Designed to resemble a large mound of boulders. Institute announces design phase of Wyvern Project.

2225

Biax 1.0 grows first wyvern prototypes in a new vivarium built specially for wyverns. The "somewhat whimsical" species design specifications were initially developed by Biax in conjunction with a committee of Clans Dunnigan notables and genemasters.

You used the expression "somewhat whimsical" in quotes. It needs an attribution.

It is easier to infer a connection between Errigaspovarrial and the Decentralization Initiative than it is to make the Madonna 13 connection. But not by much. You would do well to apply this principle to your paper: "data either supports your hypotheses or it is disincluded."

2226

WorldGov begins investigation of Errigaspovarrial for possible coercive use of "beautific ecstasy." The powerful Faith and Freedom Foundation publicly supports the Soul Train Tours and the investigations are formally dropped.

2227

Soul Train Tour #6 results in the issuance of thirty million Free Passes, placing severe strains on existing outbound Nevergate capacity.

2228

North Castle's Grand Theatre opens its doors to the very rich, very famous and very powerful. It quickly becomes the most prestigious venue for the performing arts on the planet. The radical metahumanist Errigaspovarrial is among the early visitors and over time becomes a "regular."

2228

December 30. While preparing for a Soul Train event in Albuquerque (WG.US.NM), Errigaspovarrial is

given a tour of St Coriander, the Holy Quincunx and its elevation stage, which he was allowed to operate. His presence triggers unexplainable behavior in the stage's psyfrac controllers. Many people in St Coriander at the time blamed the problems not on Errigaspovarrial, but on technical complications brought about by the recent installation of the alien ThoughtDancer SI (imported from Miotx 4 in PU 918) that had been installed in 2226 to provide integrated management of the complex town infrastructure, including the Ucey, Central Fabrax, water supply and Township fence as well as the Elevation stage.

2229, April 1

Fourth tier of one hundred Dunnigan offspring are born in North Castle vivarium.

2229, June

Third Tier Dunnigan offspring depart North Castle on educational Missions.

The psyfrac anomalies were a matter of great interest in St Coriander at the time. You might well elaborate with a footnote or reference.

Wasn't there also some controversy about acquiring alien technology over a proven Dunnetix SI like the Apex 2.2 that was originally considered for this purpose?

You might provide a few more examples of the types of individuals attending Grand Theater events.

2230

Soul Train Tour #9 issues nearly seventy million Free Passes. WorldGov launches an "economic conspiracy" probe: both Dunnetix and Clans Dunnigan are named in the investigation.

2231

Dunnetix-sponsored Biax 1.2 designs, grows and "educates" Apex 3.0.1, which becomes "Brain" of North Castle.

2232

Senshaw Trading Company obtains master license from Saurquians of Aldebaran 6 in PU 992 for their hoverbar gravitation shunt technology. First Saurquian hoverbars imported via Nevergate and marketed through Senshaw on an annual license basis. "Gravitational Freedom Era" proclaimed.

2233

With Transpoint One operating at far beyond its original design capacity, WorldGov commissions design of asteroid-sized, fully autonomous

Transpoint Station using most advanced technologies available. Dunnetix Ike 4 manages automated construction.

2233

Soul Train Tour #11 issues nearly ninety million Free Passes. Global Commerce League files \$10 trillion lawsuit against the Soul Train Ministries, et al, claiming "market sabotage." WorldGov revenue authority launches investigation into Ministry finances. Total of more than 450 million Free Passes issued to that date.

NODALITY 2: THE PROTOTYPE CENTER RAID

2233, April 1

Institute for Advanced Lifeform Research Prototype Center, home of the controversial Wyvern Project, is raided by a student brigade from Westac led by Wilhelm Daniel Henry, a popular Westac sixteen-year-old. It is still not known how they passed through or around the Township Fence. Among the rampant speculations was the popular idea

You have made several mentions of what we now call the "Nirvana Exodus" but you have not yet established any connection with the Target Event. Further, you have made no reference to the deteriorating worldwide socio-economic conditions that made a "Free Pass" so appealing to so many millions of people. There is ample well-documented research on causality issues; feel free to use it in your next draft.

Interesting? Maybe. Accurate? Yes. Relevant? Highly questionable. Again.

One might think you would make at least a small mention of the almost familial relationship between the Henry twins and Fr. Faunibeune. It would support your choice of Subformative.

that the group somehow discovered secret passages under St Coriander. During the raid, Wilhelm Daniel Henry was brutally killed by a female wyvern prototype. Although the evidence clearly indicated self-defense, a hue and cry was raised by the St Coriander Times against the "homemade alien monsters being raised next door to St Coriander." Surviving Westac "raiders" include Wilhelm Daniel Henry's twin brother, Daniel Wilhelm Henry, who opted out of St Coriander several months later.

2233, April 15

WorldGov institutes a moratorium on all created species development work.

2233, May 1

Under heavy public and political pressure, the Institute terminates the offending wyvern.

2233, July 17

Institute formally abandons the Wyvern Project and begins demolition of the Prototype Center. Under WorldGov supervision, the remaining

183 wyvern prototypes are gated to the Clans Dunnigan private spintown located between Mars and Jupiter in the vicinity of Transpoint One and the future Transpoint Station. Their voluntary space-based quarantine is monitored by WorldGov Securitans.

2234

Clans Dunnigan launches Decentralization Initiative. Dunnetix "administrative offices" are established in the vicinity of key Nevergate locations around the world. All are staffed by Clanmembers from one of the first three "seed" Tiers. In addition to these facilities, estates resembling Kissever House with suitably expansive grounds are established in suitably secure enclaves in all these locations. The Clans Dunnigan practice of "Tiering" is modified for these locations: it is widely thought that ten to twenty podborns is currently the preferred Tier size.

I suggest that the spintowns and the local Dunnigan involvement in their development deserves at least a small footnote.

And the relevance of Tier size to Decentralization is?

Specifics such as the 19,755 documented threats of bombings and other unpleasantness are more illuminative than mere "heavy public and political pressure". Also, it would be instructive to at least comment on the sociocultural sectors that found Prototype Center work so offensive.

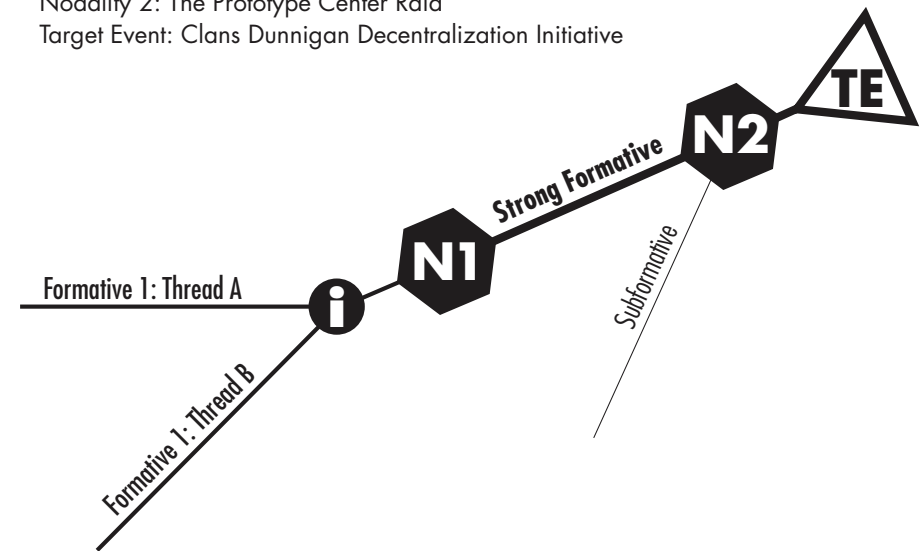
CONCLUSION

Your conclusion, while logical, is woefully insufficient: it does not even begin tie up all the loose threads you have so casually left lying around on these pages.

The researcher has located no official Clans Dunnigan documents in which decentralization is specifically mentioned. It was apparently not a matter of high priority. Further, analysis of known Clans Dunnigan (and Dunnetix) investment and activity both before and subsequent to 2234 strongly suggests that no urgency had been placed on decentralization prior to the Prototype Center Raid of 2233. Following the Raid and the abandonment of the Wyvern Project, however, a rather large investment was made in establishing numerous physical facilities dispersed around the planet. Since the Nevergate assets had seemingly been smoothly supervised from Dunnetix headquarters prior to this initiative, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the investment to establish so many costly, Clans-staffed facilities was based on Clans' strategic concerns as opposed to day-to-day asset management necessities.

EXHIBIT 1: HISTORIGRAM Event Threads Leading to Clans Dunnigan Decentralization

Formative 1: Pre-Clans Dunnigan Threads
Thread A — Igan Component
Thread B — Dunn Component
Intersect 1: Connection and Wealthification
Nodality 1: The Quake and Immediate Aftermath
Subformative: The Henry Line in St. Coriander
Strong Formative: Dunnetix LLC
Nodality 2: The Prototype Center Raid
Target Event: Clans Dunnigan Decentralization Initiative



Your historigram is acceptable as a first cut, although you have neglected to include OE symbols and the customary datemarks at OE, TE, Intersects and Nodalities. Please include such notations in an accurately timescaled version for your next iteration.

While tidy, your use of Futura typography here violates the Courier typewriter specification. Use paper and the "pasteup" technique in your next iteration. A single Ucey chit will get you a functional simulation of Marabu-Fixogum adhesive for this purpose.

Great Nevergate Hack (game review 2231)



Description – Game reviews: The Great Nevergate Hack, by RapZap Media, a trademark of Reward & Punishment Enterprises LLC.

Date – September 7, 2231

Source – uNivendir, via Transpoint Independent Archive (TIA)

Background – uNivendir’s review pages are a neverending source of delights and guffaws. This batch was snapped not long after yet another real attempted hack of the much maligned Royal Argent Nevergate, known for its notoriously relaxed security measures.

RapZap absorbed another burst of politically motivated heat from WorldGov lip-flappers following the unsuccessful August 3 raid by veteran RapZap game savants, but declined to demarket the popular product line. Dunnetix LLC, also criticized the WorldGov criticism, citing a strong belief in “freedom of enterprise”

as their reason for continuing to allow RapZap access to nonclassified information about Nevergate layout and operations.

For those who don't follow the gamebiz, The Great Nevergate Hack has been through 14 iterations in its 14 years of existence and still ranks as one of the top games of all time with more than 50 billion copies licensed gatewide. It remains on the Outbound Interdicted Product List and cannot be exported to Uncertified PU markets.



EDITORIAL REVIEW

sWellter99x, Gatewide Reviewers League

Well, you have to give RapZap credit: they know how to milk a winner. Each year they come up with enough of a twist to keep the Nevergate Hack franchise alive and well. If you believe their hype, they've sold 50 billion gatewide over the last dozen years or so. But I'm supposed to focus on the game, aren't I?

If you're just off the boat (where did that one come from?) and new to this much cherished vennie, here's the concept: somehow hack into one of the best defended places in the known universes, then force or persuade a Nevergate to violate all its Protocols and take you wherew you want to go and the riches of howevermany PU's there are now is all yours. Your team's riches really, but there would still be plenty to go around. Yes, you can play solo, but noooooobody has ever scored a maxwax as a solo. But still, how hard can that be when you have the best simhackers ever modeled to pick from? And you can even finetune their attributes? And you've got the best sackers and backers to draw on as well??

Well, my friend, it's devilishly hard. This is the really taxing, sweat bullets kind of fun. Not just because Nevergates are extremely impervious and well defended. What makes the stink dribble out of your pores before you even launch a raid, my friend,

is the price of losing. Nobody does painsim better than RapZap Take my word for it. And the new Agonizing Simdeath Algorithms (ASA) for the 2231 edition, are hellishly persuasive and also adjustable. If you're a fleezer, you can spare yourself the richly deserved agony of your failure. Plus, the Nevergate is now defended by a horror generator that will have you puddling the floor if you ever make it past Firewall Zero. No shit. Well, maybe. Unless you cough up for psych buffers, of course. And they ain't exactly cheapo plugins. Or unless you've been through Securitan training. If that's not bad enough, look out for their latest new hardweapon: spraks. I can't give it away, so that's all I'll say. Like the Boy Scouts (look 'em up) used to say: Be Prepared.

On the less foreboding side, the setting for the latest Hack — the Royal Argent Nevergate in Belize — is deliciously, sumptuously tarnished tropics in every minute detail.

A little warning for gaming moms and dads: the skinny little headband that comes in this package (you can get better aftermarket jobs if you want) can deal out some serious agony; and simdeath isn't for every adult, much less weebies. Even if you have a current medspec on file and Hack lets you deploy the ASA of your choice, be careful here: you don't want to find yourself becoming a deathjunkie. And absolutely, positively, don't let the kiddies get their hands on this one. There's a very good reason you've gotta show ID to buy the Great Nevergate Hack these days.

uNivendir Product Description

The Great Nevergate Hack 2231 Edition offers challenges in strategy, teambuilding, leadership, creativity, knowledge, resourcefulness, military tactics, weaponry, hand-to-hand combat and psychology, among other attributes. It's set in the lush-but-gritty tropical mecca of Punta Gorda, Belize (CAM.WG), which is home to the Royal Argent Nevergate. All the resources you need are here, along with an equivalent number of distractions and lurid-but-dangerous sidetrips. The biosims and sensories delivered through the patented headband are hyperrealistic and definitely not for children.

Selected Customer Reviews

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ARKUS KAMMEN, BUKHORO.UZBEKISTAN (WG.UZ) — I ben play Hack sence two yers an 2231 is the duker of all. Got to control rum but the sprak most took my arm off. Homie said I scream like for true damage...but no dyings yet. Wort to pay for sheld. Pain rules bigbad. Truss me."

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆ LANCER DAN, ENCLAVE PARK (WG.US.MO) — "RapZap didn't exactly pull out all the stops with this edition, but the their new sprak security system will make you pay with pain if you don't buy their shields. TeamDesign is better than in 2230, mostly because of the League Canvas

feature which lets you model the best and learn realtime. I'm a big city guy, tho, and I liked 2230 Rio setting. Backers is an interesting feature, but if you don't stay up with politics your honchos could stive your tucker. Buzz is that for reality check, RapZap paid big ones to run this edition past the Nevers [1.2.0] that invented the first Nevergate, but who knows? Buzz is buzz. Still, for the price, 2231 isn't a bad play and you've always got a chance for the big gander."

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ AN ANGRY WIFE, VANCOUVER (WG.CA.BC) — "What is the world coming to? Whatever happened to healthy playtime activities like going to titty bars and getting schnocked: sloppy and lapdanced at the worst? Even nude bat hockey would be better than this sinful, painful, degrading excuse for 'strategic adult recreation'. My husband and his socalled 'friends' piss away half their stupid, low-life lives doing these Nevergate Hack things and the latest version is the worst ever. My friend Marge told me that her husband bought some kind of blackmarket plugin that lets him...well, I can't even write down what it let's him do. Ladies, be warned. Let him know you're not going to put up with it."

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ STRONGDUCAT, HAPPENSTANCE (PU18.SB.4812) — "The frontier is a bitch, as we say in Happenstance. But having gotten here via Nevergate, I've always been a little curious how the game presents the experience. Fact is, it doesn't. It's all about getting there, not being there, if you know what I mean. But that's not a bad thing: just the setting for this attempted hack of the Royal Argent Nevergate is like paradise for a Happenstancian. If you haven't been to Happenstance (and why would you? it's ugly, cold and our meager tourist facilities are fullwankers at best), you probably wouldn't know just how exotic and delicious a place like Punta Gorda can be; even if there's a bucketload of pain (including repeller-resistant supermosquitos) that can be part of the price for hanging out there (or simdeaths, if you're the type). Maybe I'm not much of a gamer (or maybe I'm not a huge fan of unnecessary pain, but the best thing about the 2231 version of the Hack is the sensories. Even without the headband I can see and taste the memory of Maria's halapeño sauce — the hot orange stuff in the little bottle — on my lobster tacos while sitting at a grimy little table in Erstwhile's, the Brierly-retro dive they have in there. Awesome! I'm originally from Texas and there were a couple places down in Arroyo City that had Maria's on their tables and Brierly reruns on the tablevids. You're never going to find places like that in Happenstance. So my advice with this game is just forget the whole hack side of it. Just hang in Punta Gorda, go sailing, go oink hunting, find yourself a couple cheap barbabies and have a hot, sleazy vacation."

★★★★☆ ANGELGRL FROM NUNYERBIZ — LNH2231 is samediff 2230 (and urlative, still) excapt for two gargs that grls won't want to miss. Spec the sprak tool, gang, not for the sparkle and wham but for the code — next time that 'gate might fall. Speshly if those stickjocks keep putting on that dopfic band instead of going Securitan. (Can you grok it grls? Steel balls, my ass.) Look to the simsin gnarl on this issue, too. Pristine boneware, that (under the "skin")! All for all, elegant is as elegant does and this one's almost there for me. Catch it and skan my site for finers: angelgrl@sky-9er93767162.

St Coriander History (Genesis)



Ed. Note: In the **hardcover** *Chronicler's Edition of 2002*, this **excerpt was called "Genesis."** It was placed **before the narrative text of *The Luck of Madonna 13* for reasons of chronological precedence and authorial whim.**

Description – Excerpts from *Oddballs, Cults & Worldchangers*, by Lavendra Cortioli, PhD.

Date – 2288

Source – Hooligan Central Free Archive

Background – Included in the following pages are portions of the introduction and the complete text of Chapter 27 of Dr. Lavendra Cortioli's 2288 history of the IsoTown Movement, *Oddballs, Cults & Worldchangers*. Dr. Cortioli was awarded the Living Dustbin Society's prestigious Durant in 2290 for her exhaustive 2,640-page work.

Chapter 27 pertains exclusively to St Coriander, the one IsoTown that is inseparable from the Last Nevergate saga and thus of some relevance to these Chronicles.

Even the Clans Dunnigans themselves acknowledge a certain debt to their

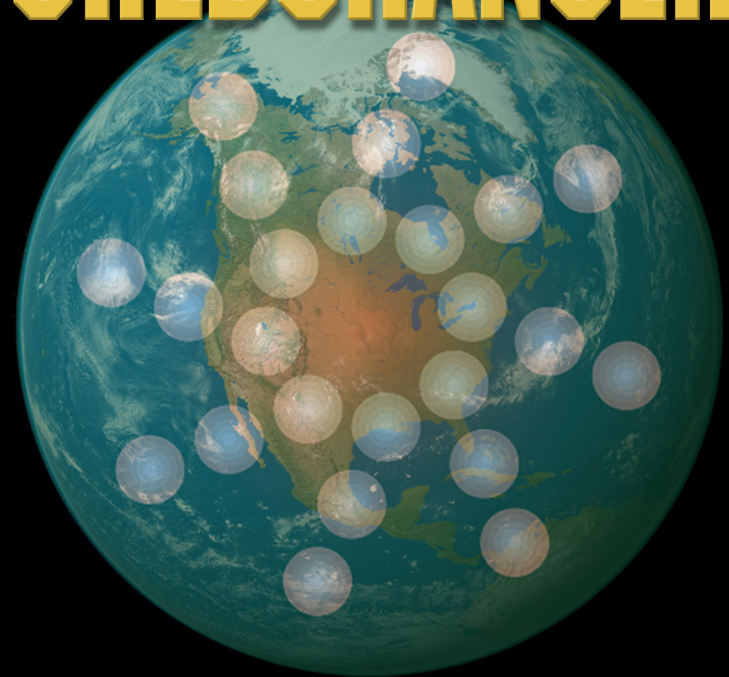
town of origin. To wit, these words from
Inga Lyrus Marlena Dunnigan, Genemaster
of Dunnetix LLC:

“There are seeds and there are Seeds.

**We of the Clans must never shirk the
quirky poetry of truth. Thus we should
smile when we tell that our own Seeds
first took root in the strange soil of St
Coriander.**

Great Seed is stronger than soil.”

ODDBALLS CULTS AND WORLDCHANGERS



A history of the
IsoTown movement:
2138-2288

Lavendra Cortioli, PhD

Ed. Note: We thank the Hooligan Central Free Archive for their gracious permission to reprint portions of the introduction and the complete text of Chapter 27 of Dr. Lavendra Cortioli's 2190 history of the IsoTown Movement, Oddballs, Cults & Worldchangers. Dr. Cortioli was awarded the Living Dustbin Society's prestigious Durant in 2192 for her exhaustive 2,640 page work.

Chapter 27 pertains exclusively to St. Coriander, the one IsoTown that is inseparable from the Last Nevergate saga and thus of some relevance to these Chronicles.

ODDBALLS CULTS AND WORLDCHANGERS

By Lavendra Cortioli, PhD

Ed. Note: The following background information on IsoTowns has been condensed from the author's introductory chapter.

BETWEEN 2138 and 2288, nearly 7,000 IsoTown® franchises were awarded to a great variety of special interest groups. The IsoTown was a hybrid nonprofit-entrepreneurial response to a convergence of certain technological advances with what has been called by some the Evoluting Movement, and by others as “just another round of neo-tribalism.” IsoTown LLHC's product offerings were pre-engineered, highly self-sufficient, “just add water” town kits designed to support isolated populations of three hundred to five thousand individuals.

For technically inclined readers, first generation IsoTowns were constructed from prepackaged kits using Fanuc Autobuilds and were usually powered by GE-Berkeley Hydrons interfaced with Burpee GroPond systems. AgTekka Cornucopias were available as an option for larger towns wishing to have a more complete control over food supply. After 2195, a second-generation infrastructure was launched, with Universal Converters supplying energy and elemental feedstocks, Fabrax Nanobuilds supplying complex material goods and family-sized Chan-Singha MenuMaster units handling

the biomaterials and foodstuff preparation. Infrastructure upgrades for first generation communities were a popular retrofit.

In 2238, exactly one century after the organization's founding by Aimee Semple Kawasaki, demand for Earth-based IsoTowns had slowed to a crawl and the assets of IsoTown LLHC were acquired by Gatewide Cultural Exporters, which had developed a set of rapid adaptation exobiological algos for colonization in compatible parallax universes identified by Nevergate Ambassadors.

CHAPTER 27 ST CORIANDER

ST. CORIANDER ORIGINS

ST CORIANDER was founded in 2161 by Merritt Frank Orwell, Ph.D., and his followers, collectively called the Orwell Society. A theoretical physicist of some note, Orwell's professional scientific career was derailed shortly after the publication in 2149 of a controversial paper outlining a theoretical basis for human "Planar Elevation" as he termed transcendence from the "vale of tears," the normal plane of human existence. Orwell was sharply criticized by both the scientific and spiritual establishments, but gained a following of would-be "transcendental adventurers" who were to later coalesce into the Orwell Society.

Orwell's dream was to construct a device that would demonstrate the viability of his theories, but he was able to garner little financial support from traditional sources. His early followers, however, included one Estelle Faunibeune, Ph.D., the lavishly wealthy heiress to the Nanoset-Viebel fortune, mathematician, vegetarian and occasional comedian. Dr. Faunibeune urged Orwell to pursue scientific and spiritual freedom away from the taunts and jeers of lesser talents. With her generous financial support, the Orwell Society acquired an IsoTown Franchise.

After an extensive site search, the Society purchased acreage in the San Juan Mountains of northern New Mexico (a sparsely pop-

ulated western state of the pre-WorldGov United States of America). Society documents suggest that this high-altitude locale was selected in equal parts for its remoteness and for the geomagnetic vortices along the Vittergauss Fault, which bisects the townsite. The vortices were thought by Orwell and others (ironically, as we shall see) to possibly facilitate intentional Planar Elevations.

Faux sainthoods and funnybones

THE ORIGIN of the name St Coriander has long been a matter of curiosity. Sainthood records in the Vatican reveal no such name and numerous data searches have disclosed not even so much as a single reference to such a saint, in fiction or non. Dr. Orwell reputedly declined to provide explanation, even though his signature was affixed to the IsoTown franchise agreement in which the name was specified. The only hint in published sources is the following quotation from Estelle Faunibeune in a 2172 interview recorded in *Grandammel* magazine: "Frankie has always loved traditional Mexican seasonings. Need I say more?" Evidently we must be satisfied with ambiguity.

There is also the matter of the naming of nearby Mt. Faunibeune. Twentieth- and twenty-first century maps of the region show no Mt. Faunibeune for the simple reason that its official name remains Brazos Peak. Over the years it came to be called Mt. Faunibeune (or Mt. Funnybone) by residents of St Coriander, evidently in honor of Estelle Faunibeune. However, records do not indicate whether the "Funnybone" nickname that the mountain acquired is a simplification of Ms. Faunibeune's name, a reference to her comedic talents, or both.

An outlandish juxtaposition

THE PHYSICAL environment of St Coriander was originally an IsoTown® Model 1955, a radial WalkingTown design using mid-twentieth century suburbia-styled architectural skins on its single-family residential components. According to the original brochure, a copy of which is now on display in the Museum level of the Holy Quincunx, the Model 1955 is a "self-sustaining, ze-

ro-growth design incorporating all necessary infrastructure and sustenance-provision mechanisms.”

Tucking an IsoTown called St Coriander into a lightly populated primitivist outdoor recreation area was not a popular idea at the outset. A number of environmental groups — in Chama Valley and elsewhere — opposed the project, particularly for its “outlandish juxtaposition of failed whitebread suburbiforms” with the rugged aesthetics and Spanish cultural roots of North Central New Mexico; yet in the end, the project was developed and St Coriander began its functional life. To the local populace it was virtually invisible in any case, and when Chama Valley residents referred to it at all it was with expressions like “those crazy, rich spiritualists out there” accompanied by a baffled shake of the head.

What architectural critics have called the “insufferable blandness” of the IsoTown Model 1955 aesthetic was, according to Orwell Society records, a part of the Society’s strategy; it was believed — or at least fervently hoped — that an intentionally stultifying physical environment would stimulate residents to focus on enhancing their individual “transcendent moments” which would lead toward widespread “spontaneous Elevations.”

PLANAR ELEVATION

NUMEROUS BELIEF systems incorporate the metaphysical concept that the Universe contains various “planes” of existence, many of these being undetectable to humans on this Earthly plane. Heaven, Hell, and Nirvana, for example, all represent alternate non-Earthly planes. Physical death has typically been the mechanism by which an individual moves from the Earthly to some other plane — typically a “higher” one — which represents a venue for achieving continued spiritual growth of one’s “soul.”

Various spiritual/metaphysical traditions prescribe methods by which a devotee might intentionally move toward higher planes. However, no incidents of an individual intentionally, and in plain sight, disappearing (Elevating) from this Earthly existence (presumably, to some other plane), had been scientifically documented as of the mid-twenty-first century.

Psychon meets psyfrac

Orwell did not believe in metaphysical phenomena. Like many scientists throughout history, he believed that such fuzzy ideas as “metaphysics” exist, in the long term, only where science has yet to evolve satisfactory phenomenological explanations backed by testable hypotheses and theories. His discovery of the so-called “psychon” quasiparticle, which he believed was the “electron of the soul,” led him to believe that by manipulating psychon vibrational frequencies, one might “elevate” one’s soul (and the physical body it was inhabiting) out of this physical plane at will. His so-called Psychon Frequency Accelerator (Psyfrac) was designed to do just that. The Orwell Society — and St Coriander itself — was built around this idea.

In Orwell’s mind, the viability of his Psyfrac technology was both inevitable and “just around the corner,” and thus he felt the process of achieving Elevation should be deeply integrated into the design of St Coriander’s culture. From the outset, Orwell was dissatisfied with a purely voluntary approach to Elevation, feeling that even the true believers who founded St Coriander would “dillydally with this-plane life” rather than “move up the ladder.” Fear of the unknown, after all, has been a fairly universal hallmark of human behavior throughout its history. Thus, he insisted that St Coriander’s “Rules” (common parlance for the Guiding Principles of Governance and Comportment that served as laws in St Coriander) include “encouragements” such as a remarkable financial and social safety net for offspring (one of Estelle Faunibeune’s “contributions to the cause”).

Curvaceous and thrice sixteen

PERHAPS THE MOST radical of St Coriander’s Rules was the Elevation Curve, which established severe “economic disincentives” (Orwell’s somewhat parental approach to “encouragement”) for excessive longevity past Handoff. According to “The Book” (Merritt Frank Orwell’s compact but pithy The Evolutionary Case for Rule Delimited Planar Elevation), Handoff (or “passing the torch downstream”) was optimally to occur shortly after the time at which offspring were officially ready to reproduce. The Rule, while not

specifically requiring Elevation at a particular age, did set Coming of Age at age 16. Elevation for the parenting generation was suggested at “thrice sixteen, more or less,” to allow for a reasonable period of “convenience grandparenting” before moving up the ladder. While one was ideally supposed to achieve Elevation via non-technological means, the Psyfrac would “enforce” it, if necessary. No one would die of senile dementia in St Coriander.

Orwell was a lifelong bachelor and felt strongly that “thrice sixteen” was too long to remain Unelevated. However, he was ultimately persuaded to go along with the Thrice Sixteen Principle by a group of Society members with children and grandchildren who made a strong case for the value of limited grandparenthood in “smoothing the spikes of upgrowing.”

Once the inevitability of technologically assisted Planar Elevation had taken root in his mind and the initial Psyfrac prototype tested (on whom it is not known), Orwell became impatient with life as we know it. The idea of continuing on the Earthly plane past forty now felt “superfluous, slothful and a reflection of spiritual bankruptcy” according to his personal journal, which also records that he frequently felt a “strong pull toward the next plane.” He himself was age thirty-nine when he and a dedicated team of “psyfracticians” completed the original Psyfrac prototype in 2173. According to his notes, he planned to be the first Society member to “ride it up the ladder.”

EARTHQUAKE

IRONICALLY, neither Orwell’s Elevation nor his vision for St Coriander were realized during his lifetime: the original St Coriander was obliterated by a magnitude 8.8 earthquake on the morning of Orwell’s fortieth birthday, July 14, 2174. As a direct result of the quake and subsequent fires, Orwell, Estelle Faunibeune and 2,487 other St Coriander residents were killed, plus the entire twenty-seven-person entourage of Madonna 13, plus several thousand residents of other small communities in Chama Valley. According to best estimates, approximately 670 persons in St Coriander survived,

including five visitors, one of whom was the aforementioned Madonna 13. More will be said about these visitors shortly.

An unwelcome mat

VISITORS TO St Coriander were then — as now — a rarity, for a variety of reasons. In the town’s early years, it attracted little media attention. Its location was another factor: a remote part of an already remote area that was a “dead-end” destination, without significant economic or recreational assets and accessible only by a single private road and a private vertiport. For another, tourists and the casually inquisitive were actively discouraged: a Certified Guest Pass was required and could only be issued at the specific behest of a Bonded Resident. St Coriander was, at least in the minds of its initial populace, a serious and important experiment in the spiritual evolution of the species.

A further deterrent to unauthorized visitation was — and still is — the Township Fence, a tall, thick, attractive, and thoroughly unpleasant affair of impenetrable, living thornmesh that circumnavigates the entire town. For those unfamiliar with this marvel of bioengineering, it is the living equivalent of poison-tipped razor-wire married to a nest of high voltage electric eels. It can entangle, slash, poison and electrocute. Wise folk give it a wide berth. Finally, there was the matter of lodging: no motels, hotels, flytels, floatels, inns, bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, RV parks or other public lodging have ever been built within the town.

Two pair ace the arms

ALL FIVE nonresident survivors of the devastating earthquake have played significant roles in the evolution of St Coriander and adjacent areas. Madonna 13’s presence in St Coriander at the time of the Quake will be discussed later. The other four survivors consisted of two pairs of identical twins, all four engineers, all four having recently enjoyed remarkable winnings at famed Las Vegas (Colorado franchise — formerly the town of Grand Junction) theme-city resorts.

Estelle Faunibeune, whose interest in improbable probabilistic phenomena has been well documented elsewhere, extended an invitation to the Igan sisters and the Dunn brothers to “visit the St Coriander experiment before you fritter away all your winnings on gewgaws, joysticks, bodyguards and nonsense.” The two pairs of twins¹ were formally introduced to each other at a dinner party hosted by Estelle two weeks before the Quake. According to Dr. Faunibeune’s journal, “the erotic charge between the Igans and the Dunns was so potent that one could experience an orgasm just walking past them.” The rest, of course, is (as we historians are wont to say, perhaps in excess) history. Estelle Faunibeune sent for her brother, a priest, to immediately preside over a somewhat unusual dual matrimony.

DUNNIGAN BEGINNINGS

THE INFAMOUS Quake intervened. “Father” Elvern Faunibeune arrived on schedule the day after the Quake but the urgent press of emergency matters caused the parties to postpone the big event for a week. Finally, on July 28, 2174, the twin marriage ceremonies were conducted. Donella Viola Igan (a paragenetics design engineer) was married to John Aurelius Dunn (a nanomechanical systems engineer); Victoria Kathleen Igan (an axodymic software engineer) was married to Michael Julius Dunn (a cyborganic sensors engineer). On a whim, the two identical couples elected to adopt a new surname: Dunnigan. Thus began the illustrious Clans Dunnigan and their remarkable influence on future events.

Newlyweds get busy

THE NEW Dunnigan pairs shared more than wealth, names and genetics. All counted themselves Extropians by philosophical inclination; all were determined activists by temperament; all were impatient builders by nature; all were bored with their prior ca-

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*1The Igan and Dunn twins were born during the Twinning Craze that peaked around the middle of the last century. This extremely popular fad is thought to have been spawned by Delilah Fannish’s 2141 bestseller **Twin It: Double the Fun and Half the Trouble**. Between 2150 and 2180, nearly a fourth of the children born in the USA were eugenic twins.*

reers. These qualities combined to radically reshape their futures. A first step was deciding to stay in St Coriander to participate in the rebuilding. Perhaps they felt, in addition to the psychic electricity of new challenges, some moral obligation to the newly deceased Estelle Faunibeune. For a fact, their diaries reveal that all four viewed Orwell’s ideas and theories as “scientific quackery at best” but had almost instantly become exceedingly fond of the “gray tornado,” as Dr. Faunibeune was often called.

The newlywed Dunnigans proposed that this rebuilding occur along somewhat less stringent philosophical lines, including temporary abandonment of the Zero Population Growth principle which had guided the Society since St Coriander’s founding. Much acrimonious debate ensued, which spawned a series of philosophical conflicts between the energetic and flamboyant Dunnigans and the “bruised-but-steady” surviving Society members who comprised the leaderless remnants of the original St Coriander. In the end, sentiments of the survivors that the Dunnigans were “power-hungry interlopers” and “shameless opportunists” prevailed and St Coriander was rebuilt in somewhat different layout and physical form, but nonetheless in strict accordance with the original precepts.

Perhaps as an expression of their collective irritation, the newly wealthy newlywed Dunnigans promptly began to acquire substantial landholdings in the region. Within five years they assembled more than 120,000 acres, which ultimately became known as the Dunnigan Reserve. These lands completely surrounded St Coriander. Early purchases included the thickly forested hills bordering St Coriander on the south, an area they romantically dubbed Kissever Ridge. Here they immediately commenced to build the first wing of Kissever House, a fanciful, rambling hodgepodge of quaint styles. Architecturally speaking, it was totally at odds with the reigning suburban paradigm of St Coriander, which it overlooked with a somewhat whimsical majesty. The residents of St Coriander hardly viewed Kissever House as majestic, nor even whimsical: numerous uncomplimentary descriptions, including “a sneering mess of architectural trinkets,” “a ghastly affront to proper civic values”

and “that godawful blight of addled pokes and juts” found their way into *St Coriander Times* editorials of the time.

The Dunnigans’ prodigious output of offspring — some have said it was only to flaunt St Coriander’s “replacements-only” population control principles — rapidly established what became known as the Clans Dunnigan, one clan line deriving from each of the pairs of twins.² While various protests were submitted by St Coriander, the Dunnigans argued that since all their plenteous offspring were grown in artificial wombs from engineered genestocks, they contributed no “births,” which was how the popcon principles had been described in *The Rules*. A *St Coriander Times* editorial in 2180 referred to the Dunnigan attitude as “both facetious and overly legalistic.”

One serious economic puppy

ANOTHER TANGENTIAL Dunnigan influence on early St Coriander was economic. Founded in 2174 and headquartered in the newly built Kissever House, the fledgling Dunnetix LLC — the epitome of the virtual corporation — became an instant success with its first in a line of “appliance lifeforms:” the ubiquitous PuppyVac®. With the profits from the PuppyVac, Dunnetix invested heavily in a project that had been initially conceived by the Dunns and the Igans during their first meeting at Estelle Faunibeune’s dinner party. This led to the first of the Nevers line of hypercreative nanorganic intelligences in 2182.

These remarkably inventive new “minds” were responsible for a cascade of technological advances kicked off by the 2187 invention of the Universal Converter (by Nevers 1.4.5 which was then under Universal Panergy sponsorship). This was followed in 2191 by the first so-called Nevergate, an invention of the venerable Nevers 1.2.0

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*2A number of St Coriander residents from time to time exercised their moral indignation at the Dunnigans’ offhand comments about the difficulties of Kissever House residents in correctly identifying their spouse. “Long live mistakes” was one of Donella Viola Dunnigan’s favorite provocatives, always delivered with a sly wink. Victoria Kathleen Dunnigan favored the coy expression: “They really **are** identical, you know.” The former Dunn brothers wisely kept their own counsel on this matter and rarely expressed more than a raised eyebrow in public discourse.*

(under Dunnetix sponsorship). It is doubtless unnecessary to mention that Nevergates radically altered life on Earth; they also made Dunnetix and the Clans Dunnigan wealthy to a degree hitherto unimaginable.³

Paradoxically, although Nevergates have had an indelible influence on Planet Earth, they have had little direct influence on St Coriander, whose populace eschews “all things Earthly and crass,” at least as they have conveniently (and often quixotically) defined Earthly and crass.

TEMPLE OF FORTUNE ARRIVES

AN ANGULAR counterthrust against the Dunnigan influence was a new cultural force that also took root right after the Quake: the pacifist Temple of Fortune church, as it was then called. Few would dispute the notion that the Temple of Fortune, founded by “Father” Elvern Faunibeune (the elder, equally wealthy brother of Estelle Faunibeune), was the most pervasive influence on the unique chance-centered governance modality of present-day St Coriander.

A charismatic psychotherapist, former PanCatholic priest and AllPlanet Lottery winner (he donated his winnings to various charities), Father Faunibeune’s profession drew to him a surprisingly large number of other winners of major lotteries. The similarities among many of his “lotterian” patients led him to coin the term Paraspiritual Wealth Trauma (PWT) to describe a condition he believed was triggered by his patients’ perceived exclusion from “normal” society after acquiring their winnings.

Book therapy and taxing philosophies

THE SURPRISING success of his 2166 book *Winning Big, Winning Ugly* prompted him to abandon his individual psychotherapy practice and form the Temple of Fortune to provide “victims” of PWT with a healthy venue for “respiritualization.” Before long the

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*3 The current list of historical treatments of the Clans Dunnigan could easily fill several bucksters. R. W. Raxler’s recent five-volume **Compleat History of the Clans Dunnigan** is perhaps the most exhaustive...and also the most daunting. The casual reader might best pursue specific areas of interest with Transpoint Independent Archive or another resource of similar scope.*

Temple's dues-paying membership had grown to some two thousand certified lottery winners, all of whom had pledged twenty percent of their assets to the organization as an initial membership fee.

Though brought to the IsoTown of St Coriander to join together the Igans and Dunns, Elvern Faunibeune stayed, no doubt tantalized by the opportunity presented by the Quake: the need to rebuild and repopulate a smitten and freshly leaderless community. This political/spiritual vacuum, coupled with the isolation of St Coriander, suited his Temple of Fortune church just fine. The survivors of the Quake judged the Temple, with its decidedly "average American" membership, the lesser of two evils. They almost unanimously preferred the wealthy lottery winners who followed Father Faunibeune to St Coriander to a quartet of equally wealthy, but all-too-bright and "rather full of themselves" Dunnigans. The extent to which Elvern's blood ties to the Orwell Society might have impacted their preference is not known. Certainly his own financial independence must have soothed suspicions that he remained in St Coriander for economic motivations.

For Elvern Faunibeune, the migration to St Coriander also mitigated a potential threat: the former U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The IRS had filed suit against the Church, arguing that mere pecuniary motivations were at the root of the Temple of Fortune's philosophy and that it did not meet the IRS definition of a religion. However, in an alleged under-the-table deal, the perennially beleaguered agency would abandon attempts to "disveil" the Church as long as the Church confined itself to St Coriander and made no further attempts to recruit lottery winners or otherwise propagate its ideas. The stage was now set for the Temple of Fortune Church to dominate the political, cultural and economic environment of St Coriander.

That's edifice with a "q"

THE YEAR 2193 marked the completion of the new town center and its centerpiece, the Holy Quincunx (pronounced "kwinkess" in St Coriander), the Church's lavish edifice of worship, governance and Elevation symbolized the ascension of the Church to full dom-

inance in this IsoTown. The sternly majestic cluster of five obelisks in a quincunx⁴ configuration is clad in dull silver solar transpaque and dominates the town center of the reconstructed St Coriander. The remaining Orwell Society members did not strenuously object to the construction of this icon once they were persuaded that the structure was far more magnificent than the Dunnigans' detestable "Kissever Eyesore" and all its "over-busy comings and goings."

An additional persuasion was that they would be awarded full shares in the Church's Offspring Security Fund (which also had substantial assets) if they "rolled their vows" and became converts. In 2177 the Temple of Fortune and the Orwell Society formally merged and officially adopted a new name: the Church of the Holy Quincunx. Merritt Frank Orwell and Estelle Faunibeune were elevated to sainthood status and Planar Elevation was formally integrated with the Temple's "minimalist theisms."

While some analysts have expressed surprise that the Church agreed to adopt St Coriander's Rules as their own, the exclusion of the Fatherhood (which pass for "clergy" in the Holy Quincunx organizational model) from Elevation Strictures for "purposes of spiri-

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4 The creation of a quincunx-shaped structure can be seen, in one sense, as a sort of lavish architectural drollery or play on meanings propagated by Elvern Faunibeune. Why? Geometrically, a quincunx is merely an arrangement of five objects so that four occupy the corners of a rectangle with the fifth in the center. This is the familiar layout of the dots on the fifth side of a die and is the basic footprint of the Holy Quincunx. Less well known, but equally valid, is a very different quincunx which is a mechanical apparatus for statistical observation.



The "bead board" was originally created by Sir Francis Galton (cousin of Charles Darwin) in the 1870s. Dalton's quincunx worked by dropping a series of identical spherical objects (Dalton used beads) through rows of equally spaced pins protruding through the vertical board. Each bead, as it hits a pin, has a 50-50 chance of falling to the left or right. When the beads pass through all of the pins they fall into a slot or cell. The shape of the beads' distribution forms what looks like a bell-shaped or "normal" curve. Part of the utility of quincunx bead boards is to illustrate certain aspects of probability theory. Elvern Faunibeune, it is believed, selected the quincunx in honor of his late sister's interest in randomness and probability and, with tongue firmly planted in cheek, designed the "culture of chance" which has reigned in St Coriander throughout nearly all of its history. A central implement in his design concept for the Holy Quincunx was the eighty-foot-tall polyplanar quincunx sculpture — the Grand Quincunx — which continues to play an important role in ceremonies, rituals and community decisionmaking.

tual continuity” has been regarded as ample explanation by more worldly — perhaps cynical is the more apt term — observers. Kairvoss Fairfellow’s comment in a 2195 issue of *The Global Interdependent* was not atypical: “Although the religious masses have always set themselves up for servitude by allowing their leaders special privileges, the situation with the ludicrous Temple of Fortune/Holy Quincunx cult in St Coriander sets a new low standard.”

THE MADONNA 13 PHENOMENON

NO DISCUSSION of early St Coriander is complete without at least a mention of Madonna 13.⁵

Lured by the successes of Elvis Presley 2, and Bing Crosby 3, a series of promoters acquired three-year cloning and marketing licenses from the Original Madonna^{LM} DNA holders at various times, but were unable to establish any of these Madonnas as viable entertainment products during their respective license terms. Madonna 2, while remarkably adept at creating scandals during her three-year “reprisal,” was never a “star” to the degree accomplished by Original Madonna. None of these Madonna asset licenses were renewed beyond their original license period, and the “assets” themselves were all “retired” on schedule, according to media accounts, if not INSIC records. It is believed that as many as eight or nine licenses were skipped entirely, perhaps for marketing reasons.

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5The Institute for Nomenclatural Standards in Cloning (INSIC) was established to help provide the public and investors with a reliable and consistent way of identifying various clonal generations of an original genestock. The INSIC Board of Genestock Examiners was subsequently established to mediate competing claims pertaining to original genestocks and to establish and certify such original genetic materials. Only INSIC-certified original genestocks can use the Lifemark (LM) designation.

The case of Madonna 13 provides an interesting footnote to this footnote. Whether or not she was actually the 12th clone of Original Madonna^{LM} may never be known with absolute certainty, due to the INSIC “bodybag” scandal of 2153 in which 21 years of certified holorecords (including those of Madonnas 3 through 11) were stolen from INSIC headquarters, allegedly secreted in the abdominal cavity of a mutilated cadaver that had been used for training purposes. The manner in which all known backups were simultaneously corrupted remains unknown to this day. It is believed the original holorecords were subsequently sold to collectors.

Madonna 13, however, was a different phenomenon. With her Dunnigan sponsorship, and by virtue of what a member of her press corps described (off the record, of course) as her “un_____ing-believable luck,” she accomplished a degree of celebrity perhaps even exceeding Original Madonna. This, however, is only conjecture since the Parventer Multi-Vector Scale of Celebrity had not come into widespread use during Original Madonna’s long career.

A wet and ironic beginning

MADONNA 13’S IMPACT on St Coriander began with the simple fact of her remarkable survival during the Quake. She and her entourage had been secretly brought into St Coriander by Estelle Faunibeune to provide surprise entertainment for Merritt Frank Orwell’s fortieth birthday party (according to his journal and unknown to Estelle Faunibeune, he had planned to publicly demonstrate his pioneering Psyfrac on his birthday, using himself as the experimental subject). The “Pandemonium” (as the original Community Center building was called, perhaps owing to the sometimes chaotic town meetings held there) where Madonna 13 and her entourage had been housed was totally destroyed by the Quake. Of the group, only Madonna 13 survived, saved by the strength of the antique cast iron bathtub in which she was enjoying an early morning soak. Sales of Original Cast Iron Bathtub Company bathtubs skyrocketed shortly thereafter.

The Dunns and the Igans, who themselves had survived the Quake by virtue of being on a “romantic moonlight hike” in the wilds of South Park, found her under the overturned tub. Ever the opportunists, the Dunnigans scurried her off to a turkeyshoot shelter in the northern foothills before she could be tallied and identified by rescue workers. They immediately bought out the remaining two months of her rather lackluster license period.

Although terms of the deal have never been made public, the subsequent lawsuits suggest they acquired her Genecopy Asset License for a bargain sum. The Dunnigans then negotiated full DNA ownership from the longsuffering Master DNA holders. Two weeks later the “Only the Lucky” vid had been recorded, released and was

on its way to becoming the only Triple Novinium hit of the 2170s. Thus began Madonna 13's association with luck, as well as her long relationship with the Clans Dunnigan. These events, combined with time-tested good looks, sex appeal and attitude, a sufficiency of musical talent and an "off-the-scale" knack for self-promotion, have been pivotal in securing her place on the scrolls.

Madonna 13's surprise appearance on the Holy Quincunx Elevation Stage on April 1, 2266, closed out a remarkable chapter in entertainment history. Her endlessly repeated "finals" are placed here only for historical accuracy: "You have called me lucky and I can't deny it. But even luck grows old. With a final appreciation to all my faithful fans and loved ones, I give you this short kiss goodbye."

THE UCEY ERA BEGINS

IN 2205 St Coriander acquired its first central Universal Converter (what uceys were originally called). Uceys had recently become affordable by small special-purpose districts, and the town purchased the full upgrade package from IsoTown LLHC. With the ucey to supply virtually limitless cheap energy as well as an almost unlimited variety of material goods (as long as they could be described in HESSOL⁶ axodymes and thus be constructible by the ucey's companion Fabrax units), the stage was set for even greater insularity in St Coriander.

As in other communities all across the Earth, the ucey revolutionized daily life in St Coriander, although to a lesser extent due to the preexisting wealth and security of its citizenry. Still, "work for pay," which had already become optional, further diminished in importance as leisuretainment became endemic. The LT revolution was accelerated in St Coriander, some say, by the unusual wealth of

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6For the technically disinclined, the development of HESSOL (Holometric Extensible Solid State Output Language) software in the 2160s provided a standardized system for the automated description and delivery of complex molecular fabrication/assembly instructions for Daimler-TRW Fabrax Nanobuild™ systems. By the time St Coriander acquired its Universal Converter and Fabrax, the Fabrax Free Object Library comprised more than 100 million items in a thousand different substance categories, any of which could be instantly licensed through VAST.

recorded entertainment media available at the St Coriander Library (reportedly over 100 million titles by the turn of this century and over 500 million titles at this writing). Curiously, these expansions were effectuated through periodic media donations from the Dunnigan Foundation, which also provided funds for the continued expansion of the Library's facilities (the Library was required to grow downward into the bedrock due to prevailing height restrictions on all structures except the Holy Quincunx).

An issue that has at times been hotly debated is the motivation of the Clans Dunnigan in making such periodic donations to a community that had, in effect, long ago exorcised them from the town. Some wags hang their hats on an alleged statement by the Dunnigan Foundation president, the brash young Carlos Magnus Peter Dunnigan, that the Library gifts would "give the sheeple something less annoying to do than harass energetic and productive Dunnigans." Various conspiracy theories were also advanced from time to time, the most popular being that at least one particular "donation" was a bribe to lubricate the construction of Dunnigans Gate to replace the unlucky original Township Gate along Outbound Road (see the following section). The approval of this "token of esteem" by Father Faunibeune was never popular and was generally seen as yet another example of "Dunnigan egotistic excess" even though its security capabilities were vastly superior to those of the old gate.

A CENTURY OF SLUMBER

ST CORIANDER'S physical isolation and cultural strictures combined to make it virtually an island of languid calcification in a world characterized by staggeringly rapid change and perennial idea shock. Naturally, these conditions were spawned by the Nevergate Era that, at this writing, seems to be coming to a rather abrupt and chaotic close. Very little of note occurred in St Coriander during the century spanning the late 2180s through the present. Two incidents stand out for their thematic connection. An unrelated third straddles them time wise.

The gory Wilhelm Daniel Henry "murder" of 2233 was the first As unprecedented and shocking as it was at the time, this event

may not, as we will speculate, be through creating significant ripples in St Coriander history. Only the future will know for certain.

Don't try this at home

THE EVENT ITSELF went something like this, according to an eyewitness account of one of the participants. A group of West Academy (Westac) sixteeners conducted an ill-conceived “prank:” a late night raid on the Dunnetix Lifeform Prototype Center in Faidrester Hollow, not far from Kissever House and on the “wrong side” of the Township Fence. The prank went afoul when Wilhelm Daniel Henry, the Westac student body’s Number One and a noted rowdy, allegedly taunted one of Dunnetix’ early prototype wyverns with a “fryball” launcher.

The wyvern, a female, was said to be innocently working a *HESSOL 57.0 for Smarties* exercise in its apartment when the group, with Wilhelm Daniel Henry in the lead, burst through her door. Henry triggered a spray of highly charged fryballs, apparently intending to immobilize the raiders’ “prey” for reasons that have never been specified by the perpetrators. To the group’s surprise, the wyvern was unfazed by the splatter of high-energy gelllets, but nevertheless reacted violently and with incredible speed; whether out of self-defense, outrage or some other reason is not known.

According to reports, Wilhelm Daniel Henry died almost instantly, but in an extremely messy fashion: his body was later recovered from the room as a scatter of disconnected parts, some of which had apparently been clawed apart and gnawed as if by a large, hungry carnivore.

The other raiders, barely able to believe the instant carnage that exploded before their eyes, nonetheless had the wit to escape before meeting their leader’s fate. Although the *St Coriander Times* described it initially as a “shockingly unlucky incident,” pressure was brought to bear on Dunnetix and a month later the hapless creature that a *Times* editorial now described as an “unholy devil-spawn cannibal” was destroyed.

Political pressure continued until Corwin Davis Rice Dunnigan, the then-CEO of Dunnetix, announced cancellation of the

already controversial Wyvern Project and ordered the Prototype Center razed. Still the incident was not quite ended.

Thinking perhaps to extract a large cash settlement from Dunnetix, Daniel Wilhelm Henry (Wilhelm’s identical twin brother) publicly vowed revenge against the Clans Dunnigan and began to recruit a “vigilante force” of Westac sixteeners. Fearing that St Coriander and the Church would not fare well in a direct clash with Dunnigan economic and political might, Father-Mayor Faunibeune persuaded the extremely bright, charismatic and shamelessly opportunistic Daniel Wilhelm Henry to opt out of St Coriander and accept a very generous “enhanced” scholarship to his own alma mater, Yale. Calm returned gradually to normally placid St Coriander.

The buzzard invasion

YOU MAY RECALL the so-called Pulp Revival of the 2240s. Lowbrow printlit was back with a vengeance and the Dark Mystery genre reigned supreme over even Sordid Lust, the distant second, with Tawdry Romance bringing up the rear. Among the dark mysteries was a short-lived series called *Flickers in the Attic*. The first book in the series was *Treasure of the Holy Quincunx* by Ace Falken and took place in a ruined IsoTown called St Cumin. *Treasure’s* popularity flared briefly when the *Village Global* reported that the fictional St Cumin was actually the real, unruined St Coriander with both great wealth and a real and towering Holy Quincunx. Father-Mayor Faunibeune deftly deflected or absorbed the spike of media attention and the storm passed. Almost.

Several years later, the October 2248 issue of *Soldier of Fortune* featured a detailed plan for an assault on St Coriander in search of treasure. The raids began. Most casual adventurers were turned back by the forbidding realities of the Dunnigan Reserve’s park rangers and the Township Fence (both of which were trivialized in the article). In the vicious winter of 2251, one group calling themselves Bilko’s Buzzards managed to penetrate the Holy Quincunx itself. First they braved a blizzard to reach the Gate. Then they entered St Coriander by befuddling the Township Gate, the single breach in the entire Township Fence and the only significant tech-

nological element not controlled by “Snoopy,” the ThoughtDancer thinkbox that has operated the townsystem since 2226. Somehow, the gate let them in and then, possibly recognizing its error, committed the smartgate equivalent of hara-kiri: it blew itself to shards. During this distraction the invaders used a still unrevealed method to enter the Fatherhood Zones of the Holy Quincunx.

All five Bilko’s Buzzards were captured in a slidewell near the top of the Centrisk, the central obelisk in the Holy Quincunx. A quick, quiet St Coriander-style trial was held and the fates of the guilty parties were rolled by Father Faunibeune himself. A visit to the Holy Quincunx Elevation Stage and the Buzzards were promptly “deplaned” (sent to a plane of lesser vibrational frequency than even the present). All very nonviolent.

A month later, the WorldGov Jurisdictional Rights Commission landed at the St Coriander vertiport and St Coriander was back in the news. The Fatherhood received a stern warning for improper procedures involving nonresidents, a number of pages were added to the Rules and things returned to a normalcy for more than a decade.

A footnote to this episode is the subsequent reconstruction of the Township Gate (mentioned earlier in connection with donations to the St Coriander Library) at the behest of the Dunnigan Reserve Stewardship Office that at that time was headquartered in Kissever House. Embarrassed that raiders had successfully trespassed the Dunnigan lands surrounding St Coriander completely unmolested by the redoubtable park rangers, the Clans proposed to donate a new, advanced security portal. This new gate was to be crafted in the medievalist architectural modes of North and South Castle.

The *St Coriander Times* originally offered no opposition, but later vigorously opposed the design, the Dunnigan technology inside it, the inclusion of the Dunnigan clanmark and its official renaming as Dunnigans Gate. A concurrent donation to the Library by the independent Dunnigan Foundation was probably only coincidental as the matter ultimately went to independent arbitration. The case was settled in favor of the Dunnigan interests based on a legal principle known as the Greater Trespass Rule.

Kisseverness all over again

THE THIRD EVENT of interest during the Century of Slumber is the so-called Reunification, the reincorporation of a spur of the Clans Dunnigan back into St Coriander proper, along with the entirety of the area known as the Kissever Lands. This occurred in 2261. Although no official Clans Dunnigan statement was ever made, a number of sources have described essentially the same series of events.

The triggering stimulus was apparently the so-called Wyvern Controversy, where a cache of 641 “escaped” wyverns were discovered living in an abandoned uranium mine on Navajo lands. At the annual Gathering of the Clans at North Castle on Dunnigans Wall, the Dorelli Dunnigan Line, led by the fiery and passionate young William “Billy the Kid” Bonham Dorelli Dunnigan, formally opposed continued Dunnigan support of wyverns, and most particularly, the establishment of a proposed “Wyvern Home” in the vicinity of Hillerman in the vast Navajo Nation. Wyverns had, they argued, become a potentially serious political liability.

The Dorelli faction miscalculated. Seriously underestimating their clanfellows’ quasi-parental sympathy for their wyvern creations, the Dorelli line was unable to garner significant support for their position. In an apparent show of defiance (some have referred to it as petulance) they voted themselves out of the Clans. They had just enough support to negotiate a sort of “favorite son” treatment — Clans Dunnigan style — and were granted the Kissever Lands and Kissever House as Just Compensation for agreeing to abandon the Dunnigan surname and guarantee the security of Dunnigan family secrets in perpetuity.

Since that time, Kissever House has been occupied solely by members of the Dorelli family, who, upon moving in, gifted a tract of their holdings to St Coriander as a “gesture of faith in the town’s spiritual principles.” Ultimately the Township Fence was rerouted and extended to include St Coriander’s only annexation. Most of the donated lands were added to the popular recreational area known as South Park.

Inclusion, inshmoosion

THE FULL INCLUSION of the Dorellis into St Coriander life has, to this date, not yet occurred. The reasons are doubtless complex, but three factors stand out by virtue of their obviousness: 1) decades of frequent, incendiary editorials in the *St Coriander Times* by Editor in Chief Fusillia Krebs and others; 2) the consistent and emphatic disinterest of the Holy Quincunx Church in serving as an intercessor or at least a moderating influence; 3) the over energetic tendencies of the Dorellis compared to run-of-the-litter St Cories.

Of these factors, the first was probably most important in keeping an uncomfortable distance between the people of Kissever House and those of “proper” St Coriander. Of particular import was Editor Krebs’ persistent accusation that the whole Reunification was a thinly disguised ruse to facilitate spying on the good people of St Coriander. Her standard tirade: “Dorellis Schnorellis! They’re all damnable, Elevation-sneering Dunnigans to me...and far, far too busy for their own good.” Through persistent repetition, these simplistic memes seem to have been gradually adopted as truth by most St Cories.

The importance of the second factor, however, cannot be minimized: the Fatherhood has found little utility in defending the widely disliked and distrusted Dunnigans and Dorellis. Its complete silence has undoubtedly been interpreted as a form of unspoken — and politically shrewd, at least in local terms — support for Krebs and her varied and seemingly numerous supporters.

Coincidentally or not, the Reunification — and Editor Krebs’ first accusations — came hot on the heels of the brief 2260 return of Daniel Wilhelm Henry to St Coriander after a nearly quarter century’s absence. Although nothing remarkable happened during this visit,⁷ it is not unlikely that Dunnigan leadership felt that Daniel

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7 Certain circumstances bracketing Daniel Wilhelm Henry’s brief and quiet 2260 return to St Coriander are of some interest to a historian, particularly one interested in the historical vortices created by certain singular individuals who seem to act as “event magnets.” Whether or not Daniel Wilhelm Henry turns out to be one of these sorts, only time will tell. As we see below, his odd lifepath has gotten him off to a good start. Some tidbits may illuminate this notion.

Wilhelm Henry was a person worthy of some continued scrutiny. This scrutiny may, in fact, have prevented untoward events. The Clans Dunnigan had learned to leave no threat untended, a strategy they have demonstrated numerous times in large and small ways.

SEPTRIQ – THE UNSECRET SECRET

SEPTRIQ IS an obscure slateware “oracle” that has enjoyed several brief spikes of popularity over the past two centuries. Its origin is unclear, but Manchester⁸ believes it was originally designed and

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In 2256, Henry, after an early “career” which seems guided more by whimsy and caprice than by plan or strategy, was hired by Ferdinand “Lord” Bellicarie to serve on Ommergard — his one-of-a-kind and justifiably famous floating castle — in two capacities: as Master Illusionist and Chief ScientiSt Castle Ommergard had been presenting provocative live entertainments to audiences all over the globe and in August of 2160 was in St Coriander, about halfway through a yearlong tour of such IsoTowns as could afford to book top-drawer acts. St Coriander marked Henry’s return as a celebrated artiste with a gala parade organized by the Theater Arts Guild and supported by a generous donation from Father Faunibeune. St Coriander’s infatuation with Henry was short-lived: the celebrity refused to appear at his own parade, averring that he was, in fact, no longer Daniel Wilhelm Henry.

Upon signing with Bellicarie four years earlier, Henry had permanently assumed the name Exeter, most likely as an expression of his fondness for the role of the Red Sorcerer Exeter in one of The Great Vondini’s marginally successful “magic operas.” Henry had played this role with verve and panache (and to reasonably good reviews) some years earlier while touring and studying prestidigitation with Vondini, who expected his students to earn their keep by performing.

This odd turn of career occurred after Henry abandoned his post-doctorate studies at the Santa Fe Institute and preceded his two years as an Adjunct Fellow of the Arthurian Institute in Cornwall. During this time he became enamored of “all things Merlin.” The stint with Vondini was also the period during which he first made the acquaintance of Vondini’s pet dragon Emmishak. It is widely believed that this is also where Henry learned that Cametto-5 dragons can communicate with each other over long distances by a process they call “tooth music.”

Tooth music played a key role in the highly publicized “Dragon Revolt” of 2258, which is believed by some observers to have been reluctantly instigated by Lord Bellicarie — and at Exeter’s relentless prompting — as a way of obtaining the services of thirteen live dragons for Exeter’s proposed extravaganza “Aerial Ballet for Dragons, Sky Monkeys and ‘34 Ford.”

Seven years later (and five years after Henry’s visit to his hometown) the Aerial Ballet became an “instant success a lifetime in the making” and was launched at a gala premiere in New York Harbor on Labor Day of 2265. Coincidentally or not, Madonna 13 was in the celebrity audience in the company of Robert Orville Miles Dunnigan, who at that time had just begun his reign as Master of North Castle on Dunnigans Wall.

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8 Puzzling Commerce: A Business History of Games by Eliot R. Manchester, 2272.

marketed in the early twenty-first century. Septriq is still used regularly and with some fervor in St Coriander, although apparently in a somewhat different manner than was originally intended.

Some of the credit for Septriq's staying power must go to a little slatedoc called *The Secret Oracle* by Dabney Fanneraq (2191-2239), which is also thought to have spawned the game's use as an oracle. Little is known about Ms. Fanneraq: she apparently garnered no particular distinction during her forty-eight years between birth and Elevation. In fact, *The Secret Oracle* existed only in slatedoc form during her lifetime and was only distributed beyond her small circle of "septrilogists" after it became known that she had used her Septriq interpretive paramodels to predict Wilhelm Daniel Henry's death at the hands of a wyvern. Or so it was widely believed at the time.

According to Gideon Alvernock, the current Father-Mayor, *The Secret Oracle* consists of a variety of interpretative schemes that allow "players" to use the game as an oracle, fortuneteller or decision-making aid. Although Father-Mayor Alvernock assured the author that the instructive tract is currently in widespread circulation and that Septriq is in widespread daily use, no copies of *The Secret Oracle* could be found in the St Coriander Library. "We all need our little secrets, don't we?" was his cryptic response to a question about the Church's lack of enforcement of Septriq's official Disapproved Status. Its "underground" popularity on St Coriander slates should be no surprise in a community built around luck and spiritualism.

Fanneraq apparently believed that the number seven and its geometries — including the heptagram (around which Septriq is devised) and various irregular heptahedrons — have arcane mystical significance. Historically speaking, she was not alone in this belief.

GOVERNANCE

"TO GOVERN Paradise," said Father-Mayor Elvern Faunibeune in an interview just before his Elective Elevation in 2264 at the age of 136, "is to make Chance earn her keep." It is believed that the "Paradise" he referred to was St Coriander.

The tradition of Father-Mayor began with Elvern Faunibeune, arguably a canny fellow supplied by Dame Fortune with heavy doses

of charisma, intelligence, political savvy and a tidy inheritance. What he found upon his arrival in St Coriander immediately following the Quake was a convenient leadership vacuum into which he stepped with graceful ease. As we have seen, the merger between the Temple of Fortune and the Orwell Society locked his power into place. But the weaving of Chance into the decisionmaking processes of St Coriander is perhaps his most remarkable legacy.

Chaney criticism

IT HAS BEEN centuries since Chance has been given so heady a role in human governance. Yet Elvern Faunibeune encountered little resistance to the idea of replacing rational argument and scientific evidence with raw chance. In *Lotto Loonies*, Ursula Fandergilt laid most of the burden on the uniquely skewed St Coriander populace: a preponderance of lottery winners who clearly owed much to Chance. "Just what should we expect from lotterians? Intelligence? Hardly. The masterful Father Faunibeune has played these gullibles like a six-fingered card sharp. Yet, when all is taken with all, what have they lost in his game? Nothing. They are indeed the world's luckiest sheep."

Free range critic Ferris McShee, in *The Village Idiot Speaks Again*, is slightly more generous: "In a comfortable, prosperous, passive and essentially like-minded community like St Coriander, governance has few real responsibilities. Life is automated abundance. With precious little to strive for and death a certainty by age forty-eight, who cares if a roll of the dice is used to decide this little thing or that? No one. Absolutely no one. In this Nevergate Age, maybe they're onto something. Let them roll."

Many observers over the years have derided St Coriander under Father-Mayor Faunibeune as an example of the emasculative power of great wealth, pointing to the consistent lack of conflict among the townsfolk as evidence. Nathaniel Hassim Argent's

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9 Argent's slim 2261 volume, *On the Essential Dynamics of Cultural Evolution*, basically posits that until human genes change along some new vector, human culture will continue to be characterized by lust, greed and tribal consciousness, in that order. His subsequent columns in the *Tradewinds*

view⁹ is representative: “Competition and conflict are as essential to evolution as water and air. St Coriander is a completely artificial socioeconomic construct and should be tossed into the dustbin of cultural history without a second thought: they have contributed nothing.”

Another camp, perhaps best represented by Dolores Hope Costaigne,¹⁰ may deserve equal consideration: this group believes that scarcity has been at the root of most human conflict throughout history and that, as perhaps one of the first examples of a community in which scarcity has been banished, St Coriander has pointed toward a “kinder, gentler” kind of future for humanity.

Rolling backbones and backing throwbacks

WHAT ARE THE practical realities of St Coriander governance? There is a hierarchy (or a bureaucracy depending on one’s perspective), of course. Curiously, the bureaucracy of the Holy Quincunx Church remains minimal, unobtrusive and reasonably efficient, judging from the persistent lack of crises over this IsoTown’s 121-year history.

The Fatherhood is the backbone, the organs and the sinew of the St Coriander bureaucracy. It is a male-only “throwback” institution that mirrors the orders of the old Roman Catholic Church in at least some superficial aspects. At any given time, its membership numbers exactly fifty individuals, all unmarried, all domiciled in the Holy Quincunx towers. In addition to their duties as “spiritual functionaries” they serve as the “City Hall” and the “Public Utilities Department” did in traditional communities. And, not to be forgotten, there is Chance to be administered. This ceremonial or judicial “invoking of the Fates” via a number of devices (ranging from

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Gatewide Weekly have earned him a substantial following among the curmudgeonly New Contrarians as well as with a number of respected public figures, including “retired” WorldGov Secretary General, Nafez Gamal Shah, himself.

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¹⁰ Costaigne is Chairperson Emeritus of the Society to Outlaw Poverty. Her scholarly **System Dynamics of Strategic Poverty in a Ucey World** is widely seen as an indictment of WorldGov’s shabby performance, which she claims is more a matter of strategy than complacency, incompetence or mere chance.

ordinary dice to the Grand Quincunx) is typically the Father-Mayor’s province. However, a broader reliance on the mechanism of probability is amply reflected in the decisionmaking behavior of the populace who, on any given day, can be seen seeking the counsel of Chance via the One-Armed Sages in the Grand Arcade that wraps around the entry level of the Holy Quincunx.

In his early days in St Coriander, Elvern Faunibeune was careful to distance the Fatherhood from “matters of enforcement” of the Rules, claiming that this ran contrary to the spiritual nature of the Order. Thus, the office of Sheriff was established to be a “volunteer” position with no connection to the Holy Quincunx Fatherhood. In practical terms, however, it appears that the Fatherhood and the Office of Sheriff work hand in glove. The procedure for selecting “volunteer” Under Deputies (the entry level of Sheriff), for example, is instructive: only such young men as are nominated by the Fatherhood may volunteer.

Refurbs, tubbies and other minor details

IT IS WIDELY believed that one or more Opus Refurburators¹¹ reside somewhere within the mysterious Holy Quincunx complex. Interestingly, the laity apparently does not begrudge the Fatherhood the extended lifespans made possible by such devices. It is difficult not to see this as a particularly poignant example of the mysterious shepherd/flock symbiosis that has characterized religious aspects of the human condition over its known history.

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¹¹ There are no known public records documenting the purchase or installation of any model of Opus Refurburator[®] by or for the Holy Quincunx Church. However, since neither the records of Opus Geneering Labs LLC nor the Church are open to deep levels of public scrutiny, this is not a conclusive datapoint. Because of the Opus/Dunnetix connection (the original Refurburator was designed by Dunnetix’ Nevers 3.1.9 under sponsorship of Opus Geneering Labs), there is a history of rumors (the author found a number published as St Coriander Times editorials) suggesting some form of covert linkage between Clans Dunnigan and the Holy Quincunx Church. It should be noted, however, that Refurburators have historically never been marketed as standalone equipment, but as components of Opus Refurburator Clinics, beginning with the company’s simultaneous launch of Clinics in 874 popcenters in 2200. Opus Refurburator is a registered trademark of Opus Geneering Labs LLC for its technologies, equipment and business systems pertaining to human life extension.

Another curiosity pertaining to the Fatherhood is their virtually universal physiotype and temperament: all are portly, jovial and gentle. During several visits to St Coriander, the author found the men of the Fatherhood to be archetypally affable, jolly fat men who wear their not insubstantial power as an afterthought, not as a helmet. Oddly, the St Coriander laity seems to find the stereotypical physiotype more comforting than remarkable.

Equally mysterious, nothing is known of the early lives of those men who belong to the Fatherhood, a curiosity that the folk of St Coriander seem uninterested in pursuing.

The current Father-Mayor, Gideon Alvernock, is a relatively unknown quantity, having presided over St Coriander for only eighteen years at this writing and having encountered no major challenges. There may be a storm cloud brewing, however: the reflected attention St Coriander is receiving in the wake of the Nevergate closures and the collapse of WorldGov. Only time will tell.

EDUCATION

WHEN IT COMES to educating their young, St Coriander is a study in contradictions. In its formative period, the town's founder, Merritt Frank Orwell, engaged Quintessence Learning Models LLC to develop a so-called "fresh sheet of paper" scheme for education in St Coriander. Their program was modeled on the venerable Meridian PTP (Processes-Tools-Projects) paradigm that had been successfully deployed in a variety of "fringe" settings but which had never seriously penetrated mainstream urban edumarkets. Given the unique IsoTown setting, QLM developed the competitive two-academy system that has now been in place for more than a century.

Dueling directionals

THE DIRECTIONALLY named East Academy and West Academy are designed to educate the youth of St Coriander from age two to sixteen and today continue a tradition of "friendly competition" that began in 2161, the year of the town's founding. Since St Coriander participates in no extra-jurisdictional testing or other normative

programs, there has been no way to "scientifically" compare educational performance there with other localities.

However, if one judges performance based on post-graduation scholarship, the system has produced more than its share of remarkable — if somewhat insular — minds. The works of advanced scholarship generated at the St Coriander Institute of Additional Knowledge (SCIAK), the town's functional equivalent of a university, are thought to be quite remarkable for a community as minuscule as St Coriander.

Critics of St Coriander's educational scheme (and there have been many) tend to focus on its lack of a traditionally structured curriculum. Given the town's emphasis on spiritual development and its isolation from world events, there has been a tendency over the years to de-emphasize traditional subjects like world history, comparative political science, geography and classical literature, in favor of topics of local interest which have been woven into the Academies' project schema.

Since only rarely are St Coriander residents "outplaced" from their IsoTown, this "selective ignorance" is probably not a serious handicap. Further, with the universality of compulsory Elevation at age forty-eight, there are broader questions of educational philosophy that have surfaced on a somewhat cyclical basis, but which are beyond the scope of this brief history.

Another criticism has been the lack of vocational components in the Eastac/Westac curricula. However, since a comfortable level of economic sustenance is a virtual guarantee due to the town's wealth, this criticism rarely generates much heat. In addition, SCIAK offers an extremely diverse range of "avocational studies." These offerings tend to change with changing local interests, but currently popular topics are generally well attended. In a sense, avocations and the arts are the real "business" of St Coriander and are well supported by the town's educational systems.

ARTS

ARTISTS OF ALL stripes abound in St Coriander. While this is not exactly a surprising fact in a place where folk are comfortable

and have plenty of spare time on their hands, the range and quality of artistic expression is, in many instances, remarkable. We will focus here on forms of artistic expression which originated in St Coriander, or which have taken on unusual amplitude or spawned novel variations unique to this IsoTown.

Fruit for the eyes

SCULPTURE is the artform most visible to the casual observer, since sculptural works adorn virtually every available public space. The most remarkable exhibition venues are the Linear Orchard Sculpture Galleries, those narrow linear parks that traverse the residential districts of the townsite. A standard element of the IsoTown Model 1955 design, the linear orchards originally served as both components of the food supply and as recreational and aesthetic amenities. However, since the turn of the century, their utility as a source of fresh fruit has diminished due to the universal acceptance of MenuMasters.

Recognizing their potential for artistic display, in 2214, Marsha Su Ching organized the Dimensional Arts Society, which urged the redevelopment of the orchard as a sculpture garden. Shortly before her Elevation in 2217, Father-Mayor Faunibeune rolled a propitious triple 7-11 triune during the dedication ceremony and the first sculpture was placed: Ching's own "Dance of the Five Winds." Since then, more than nine hundred sculptures spanning extremely diverse artistic modalities have been installed in these picturesque parks.

Psychon time and other local rhythms

WHILE A VAST range of musical styles are represented in St Coriander, two unique genres stand out. It is perhaps noteworthy that St Cories seem to value spontaneity and improvisation in musical expression: these qualities are showcased to a high degree in the forms known as "psaoltri" (or "soul-trapping" in the vernacular) and "quintriphonia" (popularly known as "tone-dancing").

In psaoltri, the audience contributes "dynamic significance" to the performance via the mechanism of psychon accumulators that

provide input and feedback to the ensemble. Ensembles vary radically in instrumentation and size, from traditional acoustic string quartets to "perdoes" (percussion dozens). Perhaps the most common ensemble is the "twodle," a pair of musicians using traditional 88-key controllers.

Tone-dancing is a hybrid artform combining dance, tone generation and lightplay. The traditional format is two male-female pairs of tone-dancers playing the spatial tracking arrays and one lightplayer at the visbox. Performances are often erotically charged and explicit and may not be suitable for small children. Holos of historic performances by famous ensembles like the Crimson Gash, Nolo-Bolo, Lower 48, Eye Soiree and others are available in the St Coriander Library.

Of the myriad other forms of creative artistic expression, only the language arts appear to have withered rather than flourished in St Coriander. The possible exception to this is haiku, which, perhaps because of its favor with Father Faunibeune, continues to be produced in significant quantity. The competitive nature of the town's two venerable haiku clubs — the Syllabic Savants and the Nissantics — may have played a role in keeping this form alive.

Numbers for the faithful

AS WE HAVE SEEN, St Coriander has spawned several artistic innovations over its history. However, it would be unfair to gloss over another form of artistic expression that has flourished to a remarkable degree in the town. The Faithful Replication Society has taken the venerable paint-by-the-numbers concept to new extremes of precision. With the aid of a vast library of Paint-o-Gram matrices interfaced to an Exacula paint formulator, Faithful Replicators have produced some remarkably accurate reproductions of famous canvases.

Too accurate, some would say, particularly after the so-called Lost Rembrandt Scandal of 2239, in which three members of the Society were implicated in an art forgery ring of planetary scope. All three took Early Elevations and the Society shrank below one hundred members immediately thereafter. It has surged to more than

five hundred in recent years, attributable in part to the influence of *The Zen of Precision*, a highly memetic anonymous slatetext which is thought to have arrived in St Coriander via a Fabrax-borne slatevirus. This particular slatetext is a branch of a family of hypermemetics that has been widely implicated in the Nirvana Exodus elsewhere on the planet.

Backyard fortran for hookers

IS IT ART? Members of the Olden Arts Club don't seem to care. Founded by Kurtis and Rosetta Oldenham in 2272, the club is a spinoff of the ever-popular Horticultural Society, an organization that has operated a variety of community gardens in the Northern Fields since the AgTekka Cornucopias were dismantled in 2209. Olden Arts has recently surged in popularity among neo-traditionalists of all ages. Members choose a "lost" art, craft, skill, trade or activity and take on the task of "devestigation," the Club's term for preservation or revival. Members are currently working in such diverse areas as Fortran programming, spelling bees, backyard poultry raising, plumbing, moonshining, violinmaking, wage slavery and prostitution. Needless to say, some avocations have become controversial and intervention by the Fatherhood has occurred more than once.

SPORT

OLYMPIAN, it's not. Still, sport is an intriguing window into St Coriander psychology. As one might expect from a vegetarian, pacifist, static society, daily life is typically an endless sequence of placid events. Children are born, grow to adulthood and, by the age of forty-eight, are Elevated.

Youth is heavily spiced with sport and all the traditional forms have been represented at one time or another. Currently, bangerball is the dominant sport for females, while sandhockey is dominant for males. Both originated in St Coriander. Naturally, neither sport is a "contact" sport, per se, although as we shall see in the case of sandhockey, St Coriander seems oblivious to how far it has managed to distort the notion of contact.

Bangerball

THIS UNIQUE sport's origin is attributable to Consuela Kim Vartabedian, a collegiate volleyball letterperson whose serves almost never fell inside the back line. Ms. Kim was more fortunate in other dimensions of her life: in 2271 she won the Northern Polunes Life-Star Lottery, which both enriched and depressed her. After being diagnosed with Paraspiritual Wealth Trauma by Elvern Faunibeune in 2272, she decided, as part of her prescribed "passion therapy," that she was going to invent a sport with no foul lines. After moving to St Coriander with "Dr. El's Fortunatos," the recently married Mrs. Monty Vartabedian got her chance. Elvern Faunibeune liked her ideas and the first courts were built in 2180. Bangerball was an instant hit.

Bangerball is perhaps best described as volleyball with a ten-foot-high net played on a racquetball court with translucent walls, and with a hint of pinball inserted into its scoring paradigm. The floor is always black, but the five "containing walls" change color at random and scoring is dependent upon the color of the "last hit" wall before a "miss."

Wall colors are weighted as follows: red = 5; orange = 4; yellow = 3; green = 2; blue = 1. Ceiling, side walls and back walls are playable; the black floor is "dead."

Bangerball is a very fast, chaotic-seeming game in which the ball can be hit with any part of the body and in which there are no foul lines, except for the net: any surface is "fair" and points are won when one team fails to return the ball back over the net. The game demands quick reactions and quick calculations to avoid being "chanced out," meaning victimized by the factors of randomness that are built into the scoring paradigm.

St Coriander is the only place in the known world that plays bangerball, but it is extremely popular, as are its star players. As one might expect of a chance-oriented microculture, some players seem to be luckier than others. The pivotal position is the so-called "up-banger," which is not unlike the "setter" position in volleyball. The characteristics of a topnotch upbanger are outstanding peripheral

vision, fast reactions, precise body control, and a difficult-to-isolate ability called “lightsense.” Lightsense involves the ability to guess the most favorable outcome of an array of factors, including the probability of which wall is likely to switch to a high score color. A stellar upbanger appears prescient to rabid spectators. Unlike in its predecessor sport, volleyball, spiking the ball in a bangerball game is an exceedingly rare accomplishment, partly due to the ten foot high net, partly due to the game’s scoring scheme.

West Academy holds the records for both consecutive Town Championships (14) and most “perfect 75’s” (97). East Academy has the edge in overall Town Championships (63-39).

There are currently twenty-five post-Academy teams playing in the year-round Lady Bangers League.

Sandhockey

BECAUSE St Coriander’s young males considered bangerball a “girlie” sport, they invented their own sport, with considerable support from a sympathetic Father Faunibeune. Although hefty and not overly athletic, the good Father F was nonetheless a creditable offensive guard on his St Lilliput College football team. His fascination, however, was with the wild world of Sportsman Class racing cars. Think of sandhockey as a combination of destruction derby, motocross, soccer, billiards and bumper cars: all *à la nerf* for safety reasons. Curiously, two schemes of propulsion exist side-by-side.

There are seven “helmets” to a team (or “side”) and three sides play against each other in a game (or “heat”). In the leg-powered version of the game, each helmet is powered by two to four pedalists, depending on the class of competition. In the motorized version, one driver pilots a “quad” (a balloon-tired, four-wheeled, electric vehicle controlled via handlebars like a motorcycle). In either version, the helmet form factor is similar: a six-foot-diameter truncated spherical cage of inflated “smackertubes.” The helmet is both a protective shell for the occupant(s) and the contact surface for propelling the “sixball” and “relocating” other players’ helmets. The sixball is a six-foot-diameter inflated ball that weighs three hundred pounds and is marked with a three-foot-diameter circle displaying

the numeral six. By virtue of an internal electromagnetic weighting scheme, the sixball always displays eccentric rolling behavior, which contributes substantially to the game’s difficulty and unpredictability.

Junior Leagues (up to age nine) use four-foot-diameter helmets and four-foot diameter “fourballs.”

For all classes, the course is the same: a three-hundred-foot diameter field sandwiched between Central Park, South Park and the Town Center. It is comprised entirely of sand, but contoured into dunes and hazards, such as “snakepits” (depressions too steep for a quad to exit) and “waterhazards” (ponds). Each game’s course is different, shaped by robotic machinery according to a semi-randomness algorithm, but each course has three “pockets,” one owned by each “side” in the contest

The goal is simple: defend one’s own “pocket” while simultaneously getting the sixball into one of the two opponents’ pockets, earning a score. Action is fierce and fast, strategy is complex, contact is frequent, injuries are negligible. Academy Leagues are structured by age. In the motorized game, the helmets are horsepower and speed-regulated.

For adults, there are the Unlimited Leagues, both man-powered and electric-powered. Both are popular, but the “MotorUn” has evolved into a sport where speeds upwards of a hundred miles per hour in short bursts and four-gee accelerations are not uncommon.

Powered vehicles competing in the Unlimited League must fit the same basic form factor and safety criteria as the Academy League, but any other innovations are allowable. At this writing, there were nine independent Unlimited League sandhockey clubs (one in the leg-powered class, eight in the electric-powered class) in St Coriander, which make it the most popular avocation for the town’s adult males. The Unlimited League’s official monthly zine, *The Unlimited Sandhockey Journal*, is second only to the *St Coriander Times* in local circulation.

A TYPICAL ISOTOWN?

AS READERS of this volume will surely attest, there are no “typical” IsoTowns, except in the sense, perhaps, that the one common

thread is “difference.” St Coriander provides yet another example of the diversity possible in human communities. And it may be the one of the few towns in human history to live and die without a cemetery.

As one of the richest IsoTowns, it has experienced few of the privations that many others have suffered at one point or another in their histories. This wealth may also explain its durability: only sixteen others have survived past the century mark.

St Coriander is also remarkable in other ways, including the durability of its unique mode of “evolutionary spirituality” — Planar Elevation — and the institutions that have grown up to nurture and protect this tradition. This ability to remain unsullied by external influences is perhaps even more remarkable considering the fact that so much media attention has been focused so near and for so long. Dunnetix and the Clans Dunnigan have been continually in the spotlight for nearly as long as St Coriander has been in existence and only occasionally has this light spilled over into the IsoTown.

The future? The Nirvana Exodus, the Dunnigan Retreat and the unstable condition of WorldGov and its various companion institutions are likely to send ripples far into the future of this dear ball of dirt we call Earth. How will St Coriander fare against these ripples? If its history is any indication, this IsoTown is a survivor. •

Arthur's Lament (newsclip, 6-6-2256)



Description – Newsclip: An Adjunct's Final Flap

Date – June 6, 2256

Source – Arthur's Lament, via Transpoint Independent Archive (TIA)

Background – Arthur's Lament is an “off campus” newspaper focused on events in and around the Arthurian Institute located in the vicinity of Padstow, a coastal village in western Cornwall County in WG.UK. The student-produced Lament affects an attitude of pointed sharpness — if reasonably good-natured for an “underground” medium — toward the “establishment” of the Institute. Curiously or not, the weekly Lament has been traditionally produced on actual paper (made from locally harvested sea-fiber) using a retrogaphic technology known as “offset lithography.” This article is included to

help illuminate the charismatic nature of Daniel Wilhelm Henry even at a relatively young age.

He is rarely called by his actual name in these Chronicles, having adopted the stage name Exeter after playing the role of a sorcerer in one of the Great Vondini's magic operas. Within Castle Ommergard he is often called "Chief" (for Chief Scientist, a title bestowed up on him by Lord Bellicarie). Amongst themselves the Ommergardians frequently refer to him as the Red One or His Redness, among other nicknames.

An Adjunct's Final Flap

PADSTOW, June 6, 2256. *Arthur's Lament* has learnt of the imminent departure of the lively Daniel Wilhelm Henry from our dear little community of arcanists. Some of us mere sloggers will miss his gritty retrolicks as guitarist with the TopHatz on otherwise dreary Thursday nights at The Pewter Fox. But The Powers, we think, will somehow make do without him.

The official line from Sir Percy Flodwell, our dear, normally stentorian Chancellor, was hardly up to his usual pontifical bluster, but still contained all the necessary hints: "Adjunct Fellow Henry has provided us with numerous opportunities to meditate on our luminous shortcomings. We are all doubtless better folk for it. Sadly, we must warble and hop to our own jigs in the future: Mr. Henry is taking his leave from our beloved Cornwall and the Institute's musty rootings. Certainly we will all bid him our kindest wishes as he departs to launch his new career with the extravagant 'Lord' Bellicarie, noted purveyor of populist entertainments."

Thank you, Sir Percy. But it seems you have left us a dry steak with all the juice cooked out of it. Dear Reader, be consoled: the *Lament's* famous Department of Sordid Underpinnings (aka the Pig Stickers) has looked into the matter and wrung out a trickle or two of truth.

It seems that Adjunct Fellow Henry has ruffled some very tall and very prim feathers! Imagine that. The evidence is succulent indeed. We have reviewed the allegations and inferences contained in his treatise, "The AMORC and Merlin Connection: Reality or Ruse?" and find them suitably provocative and just what stuff we have come to expect from our dear Danny Boy. Know this, Danmaster Henry: the *Lament* will make great play with that Item for years. But we'll miss you. Recall dear olde AI as you cavort with Bellicarie in that new floating monstrosity of his. Maybe you can get him to float over here one May Day and frighten the fittles out of the Obby Oss Clan. The *Lament* will capture the moment, count on that! <=>

Merlin's Hourglass



Date – January 27, 2276

Source – Hammerli's Reliquarian Resource, via Hooligan Central Free Archive and Transpoint Independent Archive.

Background – As the brief reldoc from Hammerli's makes abundantly clear, the so-called "Merlin's Hourglass" is a remarkable artifact. Perhaps only the fact that it has rarely been on public display has sheltered it from far greater attention until it was purloined from North Castle in the aftermath of the Castle Ommergard assault some centuries later.

The true origin story of this artifact is even more remarkable than previous conjectures and was only revealed during Exeter's first visit to New Camelot (see *The Ashes of Madonna 13*, book 4 in the Last Nevergate Chronicles).

ARTIFACT 571333	HAMMERLI'S RELIQUARIAN RESOURCE <i>Since 2094</i>	1
<div data-bbox="1228 348 1444 796" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1242 817 1432 1532" data-label="Text"> <p>Document 001 This engraving is the earliest known image of the artifact. The artist is unknown, but the style, technique, ink and medium place its origin in the late 19th century, probably in Glasgow, Scotland. It was acquired by the Smithsonian Institution U.S., with the artifact as part of a private collection donated in 2139. Smithsonian donor records indicate only "anonymous."</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="1719 253 1983 279" data-label="Section-Header"> <h3>MERLIN'S HOURGLASS</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="1522 340 2188 1532" data-label="Text"> <p>BRIEF Merlin's Hourglass remains an enigma. While stylistically akin to certain functional timekeeping artifacts of the Louis XIV mode, its origin, materials and method of operation have never been established with any degree of scientific precision. In fact, it could not have been created with 17th century technology. Nor could it be created with any technology known to our 23rd century Nevergate Era.</p> <p>During most of its known history the artifact has been in the care of the Smithsonian Institution U.S. According to its Item Log, Smithsonian scientists, technicians and outside contractors have examined it in nearly a dozen separate instances over the 126 years it was in their possession. This much is currently known: the "glass" bulb appears to be a single molecule and virtually indestructible. The trapped "sand" inside the evacuated bulb appears to be a mix of previously unknown metallic forms of hydrogen and oxygen in a 2:1 proportion. The spherical "granules" are the closest approximations of perfect spheres ever measured.</p> <p>The ornately shaped "wooden" frame is more accurately an unknown quasi-organic material with an extremely complex molecular structure. The frame has no actual joints and appears to have been "grown" rather than formed into its shape. Ornate joinery appearing to be brass is actually a quasi-organic substance similar in structure to the "wooden" frame. Likewise, the top and bottom caps, although they simulate Lemurian white marble to such a degree as to be indistinguishable from that material in physical appearance, are also a quasi-organic substance similar to other "components." Both of the identical top and bottom surfaces, while they appear flat, are formed to a concave radius that is a remarkable approximation of the average radius of the planet Earth.</p> <p>The operation of the device has perplexed all who have studied it. Helmuth Knauss of the Berlin Institute for the Study of Unfathomable Phenomena (BISUP), a well-established organization of scientific "debunkers," said, in a 2189 report to the Smithsonian: "This is an object of unparalleled obscurity. Our techniques have shed no new light on its functioning. We are returning your fee."</p> <p>Dharma Jean Lacey of the New Satterfield Institute of</p> </div>	
	<div data-bbox="1797 1593 1903 1616" data-label="Text"> <p>continues</p> </div>	



Document 077

Acquired by the Smithsonian with the artifact, this portion of a Harry Houdini show poster during his Vaudeville years may have given rise to the idea, held by some, that the "Merlin's Hourglass" once belonged to the illustrious early 20th century escape artist and magician. The fact that the former Erich Weiss was something of a historian of things magical lends a certain aura of believability to this hypothesis.

MERLIN'S HOURGLASS (continued)

Nanometrics was able to at least make these observations in her brief report: "We applied photon tags to a sample of 200 each of the black and white granules. We then instituted 5,000 consecutive "flips" of the object using 26 different "flipping" techniques which were alternated in a random sequence. Another 5,000 "flips" were run using the simplest "flipping orbit" obtainable by mathematical definition. In all cases, the flips were accomplished using a freshly calibrated high precision Fanuc CMR14 complex motion replicator. In both trials we monitored the tagged orbs in two ways: we identified their ascension order and plotted their individual trajectories. In 100 percent of the flips, each tagged granule ascended in exactly the same order and followed exactly the same trajectory into the upper bulb. While we draw no formal conclusion from these observations, we would informally suggest that this apparently simple device is actually a machine of nearly impossible precision. However, it must also be noted that its 'hour cycle' was never exactly one hour in duration."

Robert Orville Miles Dunnigan, a notable of the Clans Dunnigan, acquired the Merlin's Hourglass artifact and related files at a Smithsonian fundraising auction held on the White House "front lawn" on April 1, 2265, outbidding one Exeter of Ommergard. It is believed Robert Orville Miles Dunnigan subsequently offered it to the late Madonna 13 as a "friendship" gift, which she apparently declined for unknown reasons.

The artifact is currently on exhibit in the recently completed North Castle Museum (private) on Dunnigan's Wall in the Tusas Mountains District of WG.US.NM. It is viewable only upon invitation and all other information has been privately vaulted in the Transpoint Independent Archive.

The *Hollywood Reporter* has this comment on file, attributed to holomaker Cecilia Demillian upon returning from a visit to the North Castle Museum: "I know one thing about that exhibit they call Merlin's Hourglass. Every time I had it flip, I lost an hour on my timepatch and had to reboot. So does this mean if I flip it 823,440 times I'll get to start my life all over again? And if I do, will I know then what I know now? If so, where do I sign up?" ●

Revised January 27, 2276

Description — Painting of Septriq first edition software jacket (early 21st century) by Iris Ho.

Date — Circa 2242

Source — St Coriander Library Special Archive, via Transpoint Independent Archive (TIA)

Background — This item is a painted reproduction (called an "iconograph" by Ho and her contemporaries) of the original package cover design for a product called Septriq: The Seventh Window™. It is thought to have been originally designed somewhere between 2002 and 2006 as part of what was called a "jewel case" package for the original "oracular" software. The antique image was donated to the St Coriander Library by Dabney Fanneraq when she Elevated in 2239. Ms. Fanneraq was the prototypical Septriq fanatic in St Coriander and is thought to be the first to use it as a daily personal oracle. She was also the

author of a slatedoc called The Secret Oracle, which explained various ways in which Septriq could be used as a “personal soothsayer.”

The rendition featured herein was programmed and painted in 2242 as a practice exercise by Iris Ho, president of St Coriander’s Faithful Replication Society during its “low years” immediately following the Lost Rembrandt Scandal of 2239. The painting became part of the St Coriander Library’s Special Archive some years later and thus this copy found its way into the Transpoint Independent Archive.



“My dear Elevated Aunt Dabney [Fanneraq] used Septriq on a daily basis and once asked me — because I was the “family SCIAK person” — if I knew how it appeared on all standard slates fabbed by the Central Fabrax. After admitting my ignorance, I decided to look into it.

“The trail led to a Dunnetix engineer on the Nevers 2 team. The version of Septriq found on St Coriander slates was original-

ly a ‘hobby project’ of a group of her fellow engineers who used it to explore the idea of “intelligent oracular entities” in interface design for SIs required to interact with humans. Since then, Septriq has been installed in all Dunnetix SIs. Engineers from United Entities also included it in the freeware package for their ThoughtDancer Excel line.”

[Source: unpublished conversation between SCIAK fellows Pojorolli and Cho circa 2258]

Oprah 5 Interview with Igan Twins



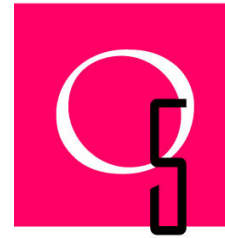
Date – Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 2217

Source – Clans Dunnigan archives, via Transpoint Independent Archive (TIA)

Background – Early in its broadcast on Channel O5, this timedelayed interview was terminated online under curious circumstances. The anti-Dunnigan Felk media clan, which controlled distribution for Channel O5 media products and held a controlling interest in Oprah 5's Genecopy Asset License, claimed foul play by media terrorists. The truth seems otherwise. Evidently Oprah 5, frustrated with her owners' dictatorial methods and nearing the end of her license period, had tried to replace the scheduled "An Oprah 5 Thanksgiving" program with this live interview by overriding the distribution satellites. Expensive blackmarket media tech and

topnotch hackers required. Clans Dunnigan complicity must be realistically suspected.

Oprah 5 was never seen again; the Felk-owned aircraft that was returning her to New York disappeared over the Rockies. Victoria and Donella raised an outcry, calling for a criminal investigation of Felk interests and seemed to win the high moral ground in the incident although no charges were ever brought in the case. Rumors were rampant: Oprah 5 never left North Castle; her license clock has been removed; her appearance has been altered; she has been Refurbed; she became a shadow Dunnetix media strategist.



DATE

25 Nov 2217

SUBJECT

05 interview with Victoria
& Donella Dunnigan

LOCATION

Plaid Salon, North Castle,
Dunnigans Wall (WG.
US.NM)

INTRODUCTION

OPRAH 5 — They're beautiful, they're powerful, they're incredibly energetic, and at 67, look like 27. In fact, they look younger than a third of their 302 children. I met the former Igan twins several years ago at the WorldGov gala celebrating the opening of Transpoint Station out between Mars and Jupiter. At that time, they looked their true ages.

Today, we're all here at the celebrated North Castle on Dunnigans Wall. Outside, a Thanksgiving Day snowstorm is raging, but I'm sitting warm and cozy in the charming Plaid Salon with a crackling fire and Victoria and Donella Dunnigan.

It's easy to forget that I'm sitting with half of the engineers responsible for the ubiquitous PuppyVac, the PickaParrots and all the rest of the whimsical Dunnetix appliance lifeforms. What few remember these days is that the Dunnigan rise to fortune and fame began with their controversial Arm of Fortune jackpots at Las Vegas, Colorado. They have certainly made the most of their winnings, money that has led to innovations like Universal Converters, Opus Refurburators and the controversial Nevergates.

These days, the female half of the founding members of the Clans Dunnigan and Dun-

netix LLC spend most of their time with their children. In my tour of North Castle, I had an opportunity to visit the interior “yard” where fifty 5-year old boys and fifty 5-year old girls are playing and learning. I’ve never seen such chaos. Watching the two moms with these kids, though, I have to tell you that Victoria and Donella have the patience of saints and seemingly enough love to go around. And if being the mothers of three tiers of 100 pod-borns, now ages 41, 22 and 5 isn’t enough motherhood, this year Victoria and Donella proudly gave birth to two natborns, Robert Orville Miles Dunnigan and Diana Faye Lorris Dunnigan, who are a few yards from us right now, crawling around with Wilburt, their PuppyVac ‘shepherd’.

INTERVIEW TEXT

OPRAH 5: Ladies, I want to thank you for inviting me to your castle to celebrate Thanksgiving Day with you and your families. I hear we’ll be having turkey with all the trimmings ... and none of it out of MenuMasters. And thank you for wearing your hair differently so I don’t embarrass myself by getting your names mixed up. You really *are* identical, aren’t you?

DONELLA: As identical as identical specs and nearly identical lives can make us. Here are a couple mnemonics, just in case: Donella’s hair is Down and Dark. Victoria’s hair is Vibrantly Viridian. And you’re right about the food, Oprah; it’s all out of the North Castle kitchens. We didn’t take you there on our tour this morning because the place is hopeless chaos right now. I hope you’re hungry. You look gorgeous, by the way.

VICTORIA: Did we mention that the turkeys are raised right here in the Tusas mountains? In fact, they’re descendants of the wild turkeys that were here when we first arrived in St Coriander, back in 2074.

OPRAH 5: No, you didn’t say anything about that. But I didn’t spend a year putting this interview together to talk about turkeys. You two just look striking. You were certainly, uh, well preserved, when we met at the Transpoint gala, but my eyes are having a hard time reconciling the difference I’m seeing today. I want to know what it feels like to be truly young again.

VICTORIA: The Opus Refurburator people won't let us talk about what actually goes on in their clinics, of course. But I can tell you that getting forty years younger over a couple weeks' time takes a little getting used to. And it would be a hormonal nightmare if our hubbies hadn't gone through it at the same time.

DONELLA: They told us we'd get hornier, but mere words can't quite prepare you for the experience of being assaulted by raging hormones again. Not after they've tapered off and your brain is finally more in charge than your glands. You don't really realize how much hormones rule your life until something like this.

OPRAH 5: Better than what the nanochems can do these days?

DONELLA: Well, we can't say about that. Dunnigans aren't very fond of procedures that stir up our brains.

OPRAH 5: Which came first, the idea of Refurb jobs or the idea of going the natborn route after all these podborns?

VICTORIA: Funny you should ask that. Donnie and I had been on a tour of some of the new Nevergate construction sites. Kind of an old-fashioned whistlestop tour. There are a lot of them and they're all over the planet. We probably put 50,000 miles on the mollers in less than a week. The night we got back we were completely exhausted, but the menfolk just had to get a horse's mouth recap before they'd let us sleep. The talk was about stuff like supply problems, construction delays and local political nonsense. Then Donnie drops in this huge nonsequitur: all of a sudden she's telling them about all the pregnant women we saw in Bangkok.

I'm sure it was just a probabilistic anomaly, but big-bellied, waddling women really seemed to be everywhere. I'm frowning at her and Donnie stops in midsentence and looks over at me. Bang! We had this simultaneous bioclock moment. I rolled my eyes at her and shrugged. Donnie nodded back. One of these little twinnish communications, you know? So then I looked at John and Michael and said these exact words. "Gentlemen, start your engines. Your aging wives want to get pregnant."

DONELLA: Vickie and I have had a lot of strange moments together, but that one is definitely in the top three.

OPRAH 5: You've got me on the edge of my seat. So did you ...

VICTORIA: Tsk, tsk, tsk. Don't go there, Oprah. But no, we didn't. Our hubbies liked the pregnancy idea instantly, but Michael suggested we ought to take the time for a Refurb before we actually got ourselves pregnant. We all agreed on that. Getting pregnant at 65 or so is still a shaky proposition.

OPRAH 5: So after your Refurbs, did you get pregnant the old-fashioned way?

DONELLA: We thought about it, but it's just too much of a crap shoot. Look at those two over there. Do you think we could take a chance with chance in this day and age? There's not one of us in this room that wasn't genespecified, to one degree or another. Why gamble with life?

OPRAH 5: I understand. So how were your pregnancies? Identical?

VICTORIA: Identical? Yes, I suppose they were. And they were pretty easy as pregnancies go, from what we understand. Swollen ankles and occasional nausea was about as bad as it got. But it's such a very different experience, carrying them hidden inside of you for all that time. With all our podborns we could see the miracle of human development taking place right before our eyes. We could talk to them and croon to them. And you'd be surprised how soon we could see their different personalities emerging. They weren't just fetuses, they were tiny sleepers. It was magical. And all that visual experience made it easy to give them names that fit their tiny personalities. Of course they might argue with us about that, now.

DONELLA: One thing for absolute certain: we wouldn't want to do pregnancy again. Once is interesting. Twice? Naaah. The natborn thing is highly overrated.

OPRAH 5: How did you decide who was going to have the boy and who was going to have the girl?

VICTORIA: Easy. We tossed a coin. That was about the only thing we left to chance in the entire process.

OPRAH 5: Three hundred designer podborns and then, at age 67, you go natural. You two are amazing!

VICTORIA: The really amazing thing is that we can still remember every one of our children's names. Some people are amazed that they're so different from each other, but of course we wanted them to be different.

OPRAH 5: Diana and Miles — you call him Miles, not Robert, right? Those two beauties seem to be very 'normal', if I can use that word. Right now they seem a little fussy, but that's pretty normal for six-month olds, I suppose? Are they hungry?

DONELLA: I think you're right, Oprah. Excellent motherly instincts. It's time for their afternoon snack. Do you mind if we let them nurse for a few minutes?

OPRAH 5: Mind? Of course not.

VICTORIA: That's one of the drawbacks of our tier strategy for rapid clanbuilding. With a hundred babies popping out of pods at the same time, four breasts are just not enough to go around. Duh. It's not a big deal to artificially trigger lactation, so we thought about doing it ourselves ...

DONELLA: For about five seconds. We did the math on how many hours a day we'd have little mouths glued to our nipples. Even being full-time cows with artificially amplified milk production, the numbers just don't work. Not even close. And think how much we'd have to eat. And, of course, we'd get zero sleep in the bargain.

VICTORIA: So as much as we wanted to nurse them ourselves, Donnie and I decided to honor the realities and get a bunch of wetnurses.

DONELLA: That was fun; trying to find a hundred wet-nurses for the first tier. It took months to get that many lined up. And we had to moller them in and get them housed on the day the first tier was born. And they weren't exactly cheap. On top of that, Kissever House was still under construction at the time and everything was chaos. If we had it to do all over again, we would have been a little more patient.

VICTORIA: But we were extremely annoyed with the Cories [residents of St Coriander] at the time. They didn't like us and still don't. And we were young, newly rich, and absolutely fearless. We're a lot older and wiser, now. Even if we don't look it any more.

OPRAH 5: Question. You have positioned yourselves as co-parents of your first three hundred podborns. You can't do that so easily with these two. Is that a problem? How do your other children react to these two little ones? Jealousy?

VICTORIA: Jealousy. That's an interesting topic. As you probably know, the kinds of jealousy acute enough to be visible to others typically have a genetic component. We've done our best to keep jealousy out of our offspring's gene mix. We think of jealous people as 'containment' types. That is, they tend to be possessive and want to irrationally protect what their emotions tell them they have. Or must have. Most tend not to be 'outreachers,' pragmatists, and innovators — the kinds of people we wanted to build our Clans around.

OPRAH 5: So you're saying that you engineered jealousy out of your children?

DONELLA: Well, we at least gave it our best shot. With a hundred kids at a pop we see quite a range along the possessiveness behavior vector. But I don't think any of our kids are what you would think of as jealous types. And as five-year-olds, they're pretty much occupied with their own affairs in any case. Plus, the older tiers don't get back here very often. They have their missions, you know.

OPRAH 5: You two obviously have thought deeply about how to parent such huge broods. And your first tier offspring are starting to make their own marks in the world and don't seem to be suffering from 'rich-kid syndrome'. At least I haven't seen it in the media.

VICTORIA: We're quite proud of our children. We knew the first tiers would have to take a lot of flack for being different when they got into the outside world. But they've been pretty well prepared ... they can take care of themselves. And the Clan bond is ... it's hard to know how to describe it. But it has strengthened them, too, I think.

DONELLA: As identical twins, we have a hard time imagining what growing up would have been like doing it solo. And then we went and married identical twins. So we can't quite feel what our kids feel and we honor that. And there's something about growing up in a huge brood that stimulates independence and individuality, but it's layered on top of a stratum of emotional support that's extremely powerful ... even if it's hard to describe.

OPRAH 5: I know it's almost turkey time, but two questions have just crossed my mind. How have your own parents reacted to the things you've done? That's the first one.

VICTORIA: Our parents and in-laws all happen to be here today, so you could really ask them yourselves. But if we had to answer for them, I think we could fairly say they have the same difficulty understanding their offspring that every generation has with the ones behind it. But they're tolerant and loving. They were wonderful, supportive parents to us and they're still wonderful people. We're very lucky.

DONELLA: Last question? We're getting hungry.

OPRAH 5: You two now look and feel younger than your first tier offspring. How do they feel about your Refurbs and your new babies?

VICTORIA: They're adults. We're adults. When they have issues with what we do, they seem to have little difficulty bringing them up. We're a pretty open system that way. On purpose. But so far, they seem to think that not having to worry about decaying parents in the near future is a good thing. If we can ever get Opus to bring the price of Refurbs down, it will change the world completely ... keep a huge amount of hard-earned wisdom from going to waste.

OPRAH 5: One last question. Where did you get those svelte, slinky, sexy outfits you're wearing? The lampshade half-tops are both fetching and quite practical for nursing mothers.

DONELLA: Why, they're right out of the fabrax, Oprah. This very morning, in fact. If I remember the label, they're part of this month's O5 hot fabrax fashions. Ever heard of that line? Now that we're kids again, we have to stay up on our svelte, slinky, sexy fashions from Oprah.

VICTORIA: Shame on you, Oprah: fishing for compliments like that. [laughter all around] But Diana and Miles seem to like you and you're fun to have around. We hope you'll come by again when they're bigger. Then you'll have to get down on the floor and play with them.

OPRAH 5: Just say when. And thank you two for sharing your amazing motherhood experiences and your amazing home with me. For people who have made such a difference in our world, you are extremely warm and comfortable people to be around. It has been a real pleasure.

VICTORIA AND DONELLA: Ditto, Oprah. Now can we eat?

OPRAH 5: How do you twins manage those synchronous outbursts? Very impressive. Yes, let's eat.

Lysheem's Triplehorn Helmet



Date - 2535-2537

Source - Transpoint Independent Archive

Background - This artifact was made famous by the illustrious wyvern Lysheem of Cavvito of Lyshandrik of Carrfindoy of Lyvittus of Cassimoy. The shell is believed to be a vintage World War II Swiss Army helmet that was many years later decorated with a painted image of a tigerwalla and adorned with protruding bells and valving originally belonging to brass musical instruments, possibly trumpets or cornets. Lysheem obtained it on an artificial islet known as Junkville located in the Gulf of Mexico a dozen miles out from the mouth of the Rio Grande river (see *The Luck of Madonna 13*, book 1 of the Last Nevergate Chronicles for details).

It is reputed to have received unspecified augmentations during her possession, although the nature of any such modifications has not been subjected to analysis by the TIA.

Lysheem was first observed wearing it during her attempt to repel the sorcerer Exeter's bomb attack of North Castle on Dunnigans wall in 2534. Later that year she was seen wearing it during Castle Ommergard's foray into St Coriander immediately after the eruption of the Valles Caldera (see *The Ashes of Madonna 13*, book 4 in the Last Nevergate Chronicles).

The Transpoint Independent Archive gained possession of this artifact through the generosity of an anonymous wyvern donor. It became the first item in the Archive's special Last Nevergate Collection.





My brother had a great suggestion: crank up your creative juices and **email me a caption** for this pic from a few years back. I'll put it on my new website (with full credit).

Thanks!

etellison@etellison.com