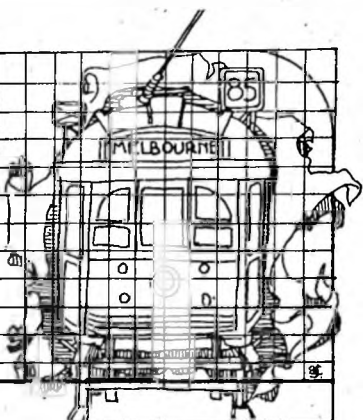


The Antipodean Announcer



Issue No. 1 January 1982.

LET'S MAKE IT MELBOURNE IN '85!

Australia may be Down Under to people who live in the Northern Hemisphere, but when it comes to running enjoyable and unusual conventions, Australian fandom is On Top. That's why we're confident that we can run one of the best Worldcons ever held.

1985 is the year we're bidding for. The place is Melbourne, Australia. Let's make it Melbourne in '85!

Science fiction fans have good reason to remember Melbourne and the conventions it can run. Melbourne is the city where AUSSIECON, the extremely successful 1975 Worldcon, was held, a convention widely regarded as one of the best in recent memory by those who attended. Many of the same people who were on the AUSSIECON committee are now on the bidding committee for Melbourne in '85.

We can promise you a Worldcon that will be different from any other you may have attended before, including AUSSIECON. Different . . . and better. It will give non-Australian fans the chance to meet a range of friendly and interesting Australians. Australian fandom is quite different from fandom in the United States or Britain, with its own distinctive character, not to mention distinctive characters.



For Australian fans, it will offer the opportunity to talk to fans from all over the world in person, instead of just by mail, not to mention attracting well-known authors to Australia, who in turn will be able to meet the growing number of Australian science fiction writers.

And we can promise all fans a programme that will be full of entertainment and interest, with items different in kind and quality from those you have seen before. At the same time, there will be plenty of provision for time and areas where you can just relax and talk.

Because the 1985 Melbourne Worldcon will certainly be somewhat smaller than recent Worldcons held in the United States, it will for that very reason be more relaxed, more intimate, more enjoyable. It will be easier to find people you know or want to get to know, easier to move around, easier to have fun.

Those who come to Melbourne in 1985 from overseas will no doubt make it part of a reasonably long holiday in Australia, almost certainly the holiday of a lifetime, enabling them to tour Australia and get the feel of its fascinating landscapes, wildlife, and people. For Australians, that means that overseas fans and writers will be with us for much longer than the usual period of a convention, giving us that much better an opportunity to get to know them and to show them the hospitality for which Australians are reknown.

There's nowhere else quite like Australia. There's no experience quite like attending a World Science Fiction Convention.

Let's bring them together to create a Worldcon that will be remembered fondly for years to come:

Make it Melbourne in '85!

Melbourne in '85 Bidding Committee,
GPO Box 2253U,
Melbourne 3001,
Victoria, AUSTRALIA

The Committee

John Foyster (Chairman)
Peter Darling (Secretary)
Christine Ashby (Treasurer)
Derrick Ashby
Paul Stevens
David Grigg

The people presently forming the Melbourne Bidding Committee for the 1985 World Science Fiction Convention have been known to each other for a long time now. This means that as we work together on the bid we are able to concentrate upon our own responsibilities and leave other worries to people whose habits we understand. For example, Christine and Derrick Ashby between them have responsibility for raising money for the bid. This means that the rest of us might give it some thought and effort, but we leave the lying-awake-at-night-worrying-where-the-next-\$100-is-coming-from to Christine and Derrick. Nevertheless, we work collectively as well as individually.

Our basic working pattern at the moment is for the whole group to meet together, once a month, to report progress on various aspects of the bid and to make decisions in overlapping areas of responsibility. Groups of us work on the bid rather more frequently. Christine and I work on the question of overseas agents. Derrick, Peter, and David handle the data filing system. Paul, David, and I handle PR. And so on. If there's a task around, there's a group working on it.

Nor do we work in isolation from folks not formally on the committee. David and I, for example, work closely with Steph Campbell on advertising design, which always seems to mean that Chris Johnston is involved—and so is anyone else who happens to be around at the time. There are many similar examples. But underlying that work pattern is the basic notion of a division of responsibility which was spelled out in our introductory news-sheet. Our committee consists of people with well-defined jobs. We aim to keep it that way, so that there's not much chance for people to sit around and chew the fat.

We want a lean and hungry bid.

John Foyster

'The Antipodean Announcer' will be distributed free at major conventions around the world, or is included free if you subscribe to the bid newsletter, 'Kanga Ruse', which costs \$10 for two years. The 'Announcer' will contain items of interest about Melbourne, Australia, and Australian fandom as well as original pieces of fan writing. 'Kanga Ruse' will contain detailed information about the progress of the Melbourne in '85 bid.

MELBOURNE IN 1985

Some Australian Fans You May Know...

by David Grigg

Over the last twenty years, Australian science fiction fandom has been growing explosively.

From a situation in the sixties when it was possible for every member of Australian fandom to know all of the others, at least by name, in the eighties there are thousands of Australian fans of various degrees of activity and interest. But if there is one thing that can be said about Australian fandom, it is that it has regularly thrown up a remarkable number of extremely talented individuals, fans whose names have become well-known throughout the world of science fiction fans.

But Australia is a long way from other major world fan centres, so the Australian fans that overseas fans are most likely to have heard of are the ones who have either published fanzines with a world-wide distribution or those who have been fortunate enough to travel overseas and attend conventions in other countries.

Many new Australian fans probably also only know the names of some of the more well-known fans. This article therefore sets out to give you my impressions of some of the better-known Australian fans, to fill in some of the background.

The quality of Australian fanzines has often been remarked upon. Without doubt one of the greatest of Australian fanzines, still remembered with respect, was *Australian Science Fiction Review* (named long before Mr Geis' publication!), published between 1966 and 1969. *ASFR* was one of the first fanzines to take criticism of science fiction seriously, and its hard-hitting reviews and analytical articles, enlivened by the editor's rare wit, attracted attention, enthusiasm, and contributions from professional authors and fans from all around the world.

The remarkable author of that remarkable fanzine was John Bangsund, justly one of Australia's best-known fans. I met him in 1970, just after *ASFR* ceased publication. I think I went along with Carey Handfield to buy some of the books he was selling, but instead spent an afternoon listening to him talk. He was, and is, one of the most charming and erudite people I know, and one of the most witty punsters. Through meeting John that day, I was drawn into fandom. That was not at all unusual. Scores of people who would never have otherwise have done more than read science fiction books from time to time have been brought into fandom by his influence.

When *ASFR* ceased, John Bangsund went on to produce a whole range of sparkling personalzines like *Scythrop*, *Philosophical Gas*, and *Parergon Papers*, as well as contributing to a number of Australian and American amateur press associations. Almost always, his contributions are the most eagerly awaited in any apa.

Small wonder, then, that many people who came to Australia in 1975 did so with one of their professed main intentions that of meeting John Bangsund in person.

John is still here, still as fascinating and charming as ever, and still publishing and writing. There's an article by him in this issue.

Rather less well-known, but who deserves much greater recognition than he has received, is Mervyn Binns, who has been quietly fostering Melbourne fandom since the 1950s, when he began running the Melbourne Science Fiction Club. Merv worked at McGills bookshop then, and meetings of the MSFC were held in a sort of attic at the top of the bookshop's huge warehouse. I came into fandom too late to use the infamous hydraulic lift that served this sanctuary, around which many fannish tales had been spun, but I remember climbing instead up flights of stairs past mouldering newspapers and magazines to the clubroom, which somehow managed to mix together the functions of a table-tennis stadium, a picture theatre, a library, and a duplicating room. Merv Binns was responsible for running all this.

Eventually, the MSFC was thrown out of that clubroom (it was, to put it mildly, a terrible fire-trap) and Merv left McGills to go into business for himself as a specialist science fiction bookseller, founding Space Age Books in the early 1970s. Space Age has remained a focus of science fiction fandom in Melbourne since it opened up, carrying the MSFC with it as it moved premises to its present prominent location in one of Melbourne's busiest streets.

Without the years of hard work put in by Merv Binns, it's hard to imagine that Melbourne would really have a science fiction fandom at all.

Mervyn presently publishes *Australian SF News*, a top-quality newszine, and has attended a number of World Conventions overseas.

I first met Leigh Edmonds at a convention in 1970, when he tried to sell me a copy of his fanzine, *Rataplan*. He was a tall, gangling young man then, with hair down over his collar, but clean-shaven, and he lowered over me as he gave me his sales pitch. I bought the fanzine. Now, Leigh seems even taller, his hair reaches nearly to his waist, he has grown a beard, and he lives in Canberra. He was then, and is now, one of Australia's very best fannish fanzine publishers, and an enthusiastic apa fan. It was Leigh who founded Australia's first apa, ANZAPA.

A member also of model aeroplane and electronic music fandom,

Leigh has published an astonishing number of fanzines (two years ago he was up to five hundred), both apazines and general distribution zines like *Rataplan* and *Giant Wombo*. He and his lady Valma Brown made a thorough-going odyssey among American fandom in 1974, when he won DUFF (the Down Under Fan Fund), about which trip he published a huge trip report, *Emu Tracks Over America*. His membership of many American amateur press associations and his contributions to other people's fanzines have brought his individual publishing and witty writing style to the notice of an enormous number of people both in Australia and overseas, and makes him one of the best known (and best loved) Australian fans.



When I first became a member of ANZAPA, one of the most serious and yet thoroughly entertaining contributions was one called *The Martian Chronicles*, by Bruce Gillespie. Bruce evidently didn't much like that title, which was picked for him by John Bangsund, punning on Bruce's then address in a Victorian town called (believe it or not) Bacchus Marsh. When I met Bruce in person at last, he pressed on me a copy of his newly-begun serious fanzine, *SF Commentary*. *SFC* is still being published, albeit irregularly, and has seen nearly seventy issues. It was the spiritual successor to *ASFR*, and like that great fanzine, has attracted attention and contributors from all around the world. It was the first fanzine in the English language to publish articles and letters from Stanislaw Lem, the great Polish sf writer, for example. But what has made Bruce's fanzines more than just brilliant serious publications is his own personality and interests coming to the fore in a column which is almost as famous as *SFC* itself, 'I Must Be Talking To My Friends', a combination letter column and personal diary.

Bruce is one of the trinity which runs Norstrilia Press, Australia's first specialist science fiction and sf criticism publishing company, which has had a number of remarkable publishing successes, such as *The Altered I*, a volume centred on the writers' workshop hosted in Melbourne by Ursula Le Guin in 1975. Norstrilia Press is currently doing more than almost anyone else to encourage quality science fiction writing in Australia, and Bruce's concern with demanding the highest standards from science fiction as literature plays a large part in this.

Living in Melbourne as I do means that it was some time before I came to know many Sydney fans well. But one of the best-known now, both in Australia and overseas, is Eric Lindsay, an unusual and fascinating bloke by anybody's standards. Like me short in stature and bespectacled, Eric lives in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, from where he publishes his fanzine *Gegenschein* and writes thousands of letters. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Eric is his passion for obtaining things either free or at the lowest possible price, even if this means building it himself.

Eric always knows the cheapest place to buy paper, stencils, duplicators, typewriters, or bathtubs, and how to wheedle an even cheaper price out of them, and where to buy a piece of equipment from a scrap dealer and then what books to read to find out how to fix it so it works.

Although Eric's fanzines are interesting, he seems to excel at conventions, and is one of the most fascinating people I know to meet at a room party and have a long yarn to. He has made a number of trips to America, and has made a name for himself as a convention attendee.

In the other direction from Melbourne lies Adelaide, where the best-known fan would have to be Marc Ortlieb, fan publisher and convention attendee extraordinary, winner of last year's Australian SF Achievement Awards for both 'Best Fanzine' and 'Best Fan Writer', and well-deserved they were, too. Marc's fanzine, *Q36*, is one of the best of fannish fanzines. At conventions he's been known to simulate an entire *Goon Show* script by himself, including sound effects. And as for an example of his writing, why, you have the next article.

This quick summary naturally leaves out many well-known Australian fans just as deserving of mention. These people and the ones I've mentioned above are the main reason I attend Australian conventions, and they make hope all of them will be there to meet, talk, drink, and party with fans from all over the world.

...And Some You May Not

by Marc Ortlieb

One of the basic problems faced by the Melbourne in '85 bid is that, to fans outside Australia (and to some within it), the only Aussiefen who are noted at all are those who either publish fanzines or write innumerable letters of comment and articles for fanzines. (Sure, there are artists, too, but we don't like to talk about them.) This is all very well, except that it is a basic fact of life that publishing fans are dull, boring people, whose idea of a hot time is to curl up with a stencil, a glass of rough red, and a copy of *Roget's Thesaurus*. They are the people who leave convention room parties at some incredibly early hour like 3 a.m. in order to rest up for the morning panel on Neolithic Australian Mimeographs.

In order to redress this imbalance, this article will therefore make no further reference to Leigh: 'Pass the Aeroplane Glue' Edmonds, or to Eric 'Half a Case' Lindsay. Instead, it will turn to those fans who add to the Australian fan scene that most elusive of ingredients—local colour.

When it comes to local colour, you really can't go past flesh pink. Australian fans are indeed noted for the amount of skin they will reveal at masquerades. I doubt that anyone could forget, try though they may, the spectacle of John Alderson at the AUSSIECON masquerade wearing little but a loin cloth made from a wheat sack. There are times when John takes his anthropology too seriously. Another fan who seems to be in grave danger of taking his profession too seriously is psychiatrist Francis Payne, who turned up at the last ADVENTION masquerade as 'Flash' Gordon. His costume consisted of a dirty old raincoat, a pair of trouser legs cut off at the knee, and a hairy sporan decorated with Christmas tree lights. It wasn't really the lights that worried me, but the particularly authentic leer.

Since drugs follow sex as surely as beer follows beer, I suppose the next thing to mention is how to obtain the drug of your choice in Australia. Naturally alcohol will be high on your list, probably followed by aspirin and sodium bicarbonate. Alcohol is available in various potencies and flavours in Australia. However, there are guidelines which should be observed. Avoid at all costs any bottle labelled 'Bundaberg Over Proof Rum' carried by Jean Weber. Drinkers all over the world have commented on the contents of this bottle, but my lips are sealed.

For similar reasons, avoid any bottle carried by John Alderson. John is a farmer and he objects to paying good money for anything he can make himself. Thus he has been known to make something he calls 'wine' from anything that will stand still long enough for him to get it into a fermenting vat. Christine and Linda Smith swear by his cherry plum wine, which just goes to show what being a pair of twins must do to the taste buds.

Otherwise you are pretty safe in attempting to drink anything that the locals drink. Mind you, only the most hardy of drinkers are advised to emulate the feats of John Packer, who has been known to drink flaming 'Outer Circle Over Proof Rum' followed by tequila chasers.

Filk singing is something that has been slow in taking off here. There are, however, several practitioners scattered through the various States. Western Australia has Zebbee Johnson and Dave Luckett. Dave bears an inhuman resemblance to Harry Secombe, though his size is not so extreme. He sings in a beautiful Welsh accent, writes superb filk songs, and takes the part of Neddy Seagoon in as many of the adaptations of the Goon Show as Rob McGough can manage to direct. He also plays guitar. Zebbee is one of the primary movers for an Australian filk tradition, and has plans to produce an Australian filk son fanzine real soon now.

I have not yet heard Sydney's Terry Dowling, but all reports say that he is excellent. He combines this with the ability to write superb critical pieces on Jack Vance. Melbourne's Andrew Brown is a very tasteful guitarist, but is so tall that we shorter fans have trouble hearing what he is singing.

When all of these folk get together, the results can be devastating, especially when Jack Herman wants to sing 'The Vegemite Blues', while Zebbee is itching to try out a serious piece *capella*. The arguments over this at ADVENTION had us thrown out of our filk singing room, at which point we annexed an abandoned but rather posh dining room. Australian fans are opportunists of the first class.

What else can I say about the lesser-known Australian fans? I could, I suppose, mention Kevin Dillon, who has a house full of printed material—and when I say full, I mean FULL. There's a fannish tradition that the only free space in the entire house is a five foot by three foot by three foot indentation in which Kevin can sleep.

I could talk about Leanne Frahm, isolated in Northern Queensland, who discovered fandom by seeing a John Bangsund fanzine, and who then took Australian fandom by storm, first becoming the best writer in two apas, then getting to conventions on her winnings at bingo, and finally impressing Terry Carr so much at a writer's workshop that she was soon publishing stories in American magazines and anthologies—all in the space of less than four years. Despite her success, she also manages to be one of the best-loved people in Australian fandom.

I could even mention the shy and talented Chris Johnston, a first-class artist and cartoonist, who when asked to draw a cartoon in exceptionally bad taste for Paul Stevens' DUFFZINE, agreed to do so, provided his name was not mentioned, despite the fact that his style is so recognisable that no one could possibly mistake it for anyone else's.

I think I'll leave it at that, though. Australian fandom is certainly more than fanzine deep, and the best way to get all of us together to meet overseas fans is for us to run the Worldcon in 1985. There's no choice, really: it's Melbourne in '85!

Any Questions?

Mary Ann Denny, New Jersey, USA:

'Being a fan of science fiction and also of Australia, I'm sincerely interested in your bid for the World Convention. . . . I would be interested in buying T-shirts if they are available. . . .'

**We'll have T-shirts, badges and other promotional material ready within a couple of months, and we'll announce their availability here or in 'Kanga Ruse'.*

Amy Carpenter, California, USA:

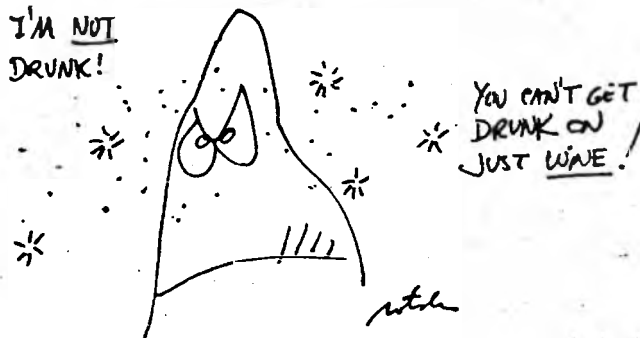
'I got one of your flyers at Denvention, and would like to be on your mailing list. I'd also like to be a pre-supporting member, if possible. . . . Good luck with your bid.'

**We won't be offering pre-supporting memberships as such, though we may eventually set up a 'Friends of Melbourne' scheme. For the present, you can support us by subscribing to the bid newsletter, 'Kanga Ruse', for \$10 per two years, with the 'Announcer' thrown in free.*

Peter Toluzzi, NSW, Australia:

'I obtained a copy of the Melbourne in '85 flyer, and was quite impressed. . . . I note—with no surprise!—that it is "Melbourne" and not "Australia in '85". Regardless of this fact, I do hope you'll let those others of Australian fans who choose to support the bid know how they can do so actively. I for one wish the bid total success. . . .'

**Certainly we'll let anyone who wants to help know what to do. The 'Melbourne' part of the bid is not there to exclude other Australian fans, but just to emphasise that we are taking the responsibilities of the bid on ourselves. It also means the committee can remain small and tight. Until we really get going, the best way to help is to spread the word and let everyone know we're serious about this bid.*



The most contentious drug in Australian fandom at present is nicotine. Australian conventions have, over the last few years, taken to segregating smokers and non-smokers, and of designating non-smoking areas. It is not a good idea for a smoker to try to enter such 'no-go' areas, as non-smokers are becoming increasingly militant, and outright civil war might break out over the issue.

Still, some Australian fans do smoke, and you can safely attempt to bum a fag from John Bangsund, Linda Smith, Leanne Frahm, or Peter Toluzzi, to name a few. Be careful when accepting a cigarette from Peter, though. He has a nasty habit of smoking things other than tobacco. He has, for instance, introduced the foul habit of smoking clove cigarettes to much of Australian fandom.

Let me see, now . . . sex, drugs, what comes next? Oh yes. Rock and roll. Music plays an important part in the lives of many Australian fans, whether it be the avant garbage that Leigh Edmonds somehow defines as music, or the mass-produced electric crud that Peter Toluzzi is addicted to. Since this article is supposed to be about fans, though, I think it is a good time to mention filk.

Tarantelia and Triantelope

by John Bangsund

There I was, stuck again in the pique-hour traffic in Hoddle Street. The truck in front of me had a little sign on it, which I had had time to read, re-read; inwardly digest, spin countless conceits about, and read again out of sheer boredom. 'Joe's Body Works', it said.

'Half his luck,' I thought, for the umpteenth time.

There isn't much variety in the reading-matter affixed to the rear of Melbourne's road vehicles. I saw a 'Honk if you love Jesus' on a bumper once. The driver sat, quite undismayed, in as deadly a pool of silence as you get in Hoddle Street. For a while there was a craze for occupational messages: 'Old lawyers never die—they just lose their appeal' was one of the few I liked. And then there was an outbreak, a rash, as though suddenly everyone had come down with it, of one simple message in the Italian-Australian dialect: 'You toucha my car, I breaka you face.'

The first time I saw it I thought it was hilarious. The next few thousand, most of them on ageing rusty Valiants, ranged from ominous to boring, depending on the driver's physique and road behaviour. I got the impression that most of the cars that sported this message were not driven by Italians. That would make sense. We Australians, on the whole, in our simple untutored fashion, are instinctive racists. We can happily speak of boongs and dagos and pommy bastards with absolutely no intention of giving offence. That the people so labelled should take offence just shows how odd they are.

Thinking some such thoughts as these, I nearly ran over my landlord in the driveway of our house. Gino is a wonderful landlord, in his own special way one hundred per cent Australian and one hundred per cent Italian. He has a small market garden in our back yard, and he tends it lovingly the year through. He lives opposite our place. Every few weeks he gives us an armful of vegetables or a bottle of his home-made red wine, or drags us over to his place to meet relatives of his we hadn't suspected or to celebrate the arrival of new grandchildren. Outside his back door, in the paving (that's his trade), is a carefully crafted map of Australia. Gino belongs here, is as Australian as I am, and I was born in this suburb.

He drives a Tcyota Land Cruiser—and a Valiant or two, but mostly the Tcyota—and they don't have bumper stickers. That's not his style. He looks like Frank Sinatra's second cousin, and that's enough warning not to touch his car.

Gino comes from up the bush somewhere out of Naples. He's a hard-working, handsome-looking bloke in his early sixties. From a little distance you'd swear he was in his mid-forties: Sally and I love him.

To distract his attention from nearly being run over, I got talking to him about the spiders in the car-port, and pointed out a couple of them to him. They're nasty-looking beasts, the spiders in our car-port and garage, jet-black, venomous-looking things. From time to time there are reports of sightings in Alphington of the deadly Sydney funnel-web spider (*Atrax robustus*), but I'm sure it's these things that are sighted. They spin messy funnel-shaped webs, and look like scaled-down cousins of those Sydney killers, but I am fairly sure they are common black house spiders (*Ixentiscus robustus*), animals to be greeted with respect, but not lethal, and quite unaggressive.

As Gino said, 'S'okay spide'—not at all like the ones he's used to back home. Tarantulas, he meant. I loved the way he said it: 'turrantoola'. There was a whole folklore and byway-history of music in the way he pronounced the word. People of my age and older sometimes still call the harmless (but large, furry, and scary-looking) Huntsman 'tarantula'—or 'triantelope' (a lovely word, uniquely Australian; my Uncle Frank Steele, who is well into his seventies, moved into a new house in the outer suburbs recently, and he told me when I called on him about the trouble they were having there with triantelopes).

'Whereabouts in Italy do you come from?' I asked Gino. He said a name I didn't catch; and said it was in the hills outside Napoli.

'Ah, Naples,' I said.

'S'right, Napoli. Is name after Napoleon.'

'Napoleon?' I said.

'S'right—Napoli-on.'

'But, Gino,' I said, 'Naples, Napoli, was there for two thousand years or more before Napoleon was born! It's actually a Greek name' (I should not have said that) '—Neapolis—it means "new city".'

For a moment Gino did not say anything. He looked idly at the sky, his lean jaw jutting out, his craggy chin pointed towards some indefinite spot in the heavens from which proceeds all definite and indisputable knowledge, and he said, very genivly, 'Is name after Napoli-on.'

I just had to agree. What is scholarship between a man and his landlord, after all?

'I make a you barbecue this summer,' Gino said.

'Great!' I said.

'S'right,' said Gino.

WANT TO GET BACK IN CONTACT? If there was someone you met at the 1975 Melbourne Worldcon that you'd like to get back in touch with, write to us and we'll publish your name and address here with the name of the person you're seeking.



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