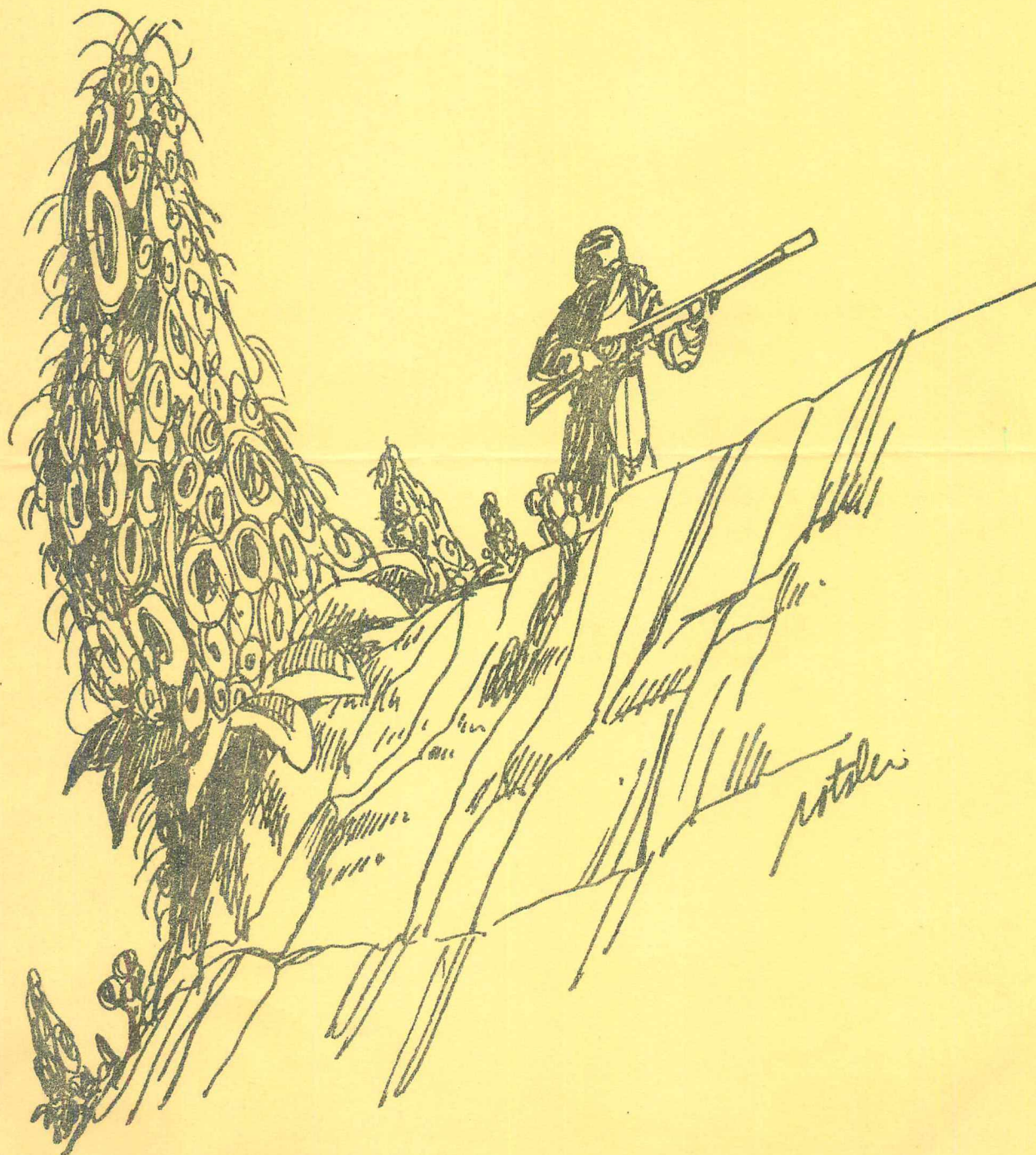


THE MENTOR
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THE HISTORY

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This is the August, 1980 issue of THE MENTOR. It is edited by Ron L. Clarke of 6 Bellevue Rd., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. Postal address is for letters: PO BOX C377, CLARENCE ST, SYDNEY 2000, Australia. Fanzines to the house address, please. This issue is COPYRIGHT (c) by the authors. The vol Molesworth piece is copyright (c) Laura Molesworth. Cover artwork this Rotsler. Lastish Sue Clarke.

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This last is being typed at 10 pm on the night of 19th July, 1980, shortly after Chris & Cathy left for a cold bed on their Anniversary.

This has been an R & S PUBLICATION

RON'S ROOST.

Well, its two months since the June issue of TM. A lot has happened in those months. One item was the Battlestar Galactica movie which premiered on TV on Channel 7 and the series started the following week. Blake's 7 continued on Channel 2 with Blake himself offstage. Dr Who also continues on 2 in the 6.30 pm timeslot.

The odd horror movie turns up at about 10pm a couple of nights a week and the housewives have a good time with sf movies at midday - Day of the Triffids. The Stranger Within are a few of them. Channel 2 recently finished Sky, an English serial for children which was pure sf.

On the mundane front - I went on strike with about 33,000 others for two days in the last fortnight - the first time since Federation that the Federal Public Service has gone on strike. Frazer has much to answer for.

Because of the long train journey to work (3 hours round trip) I've been getting through the sf. (Though I do sleep on the way in - its on the journey back that I read.) The latest books I've read include Zelazny's The Dream Master, and This Imortal; Baxter's Aust S.F. 1 & 2; Zimmer Bradley's Star of Danger and Endless Voyage; Yarbrow's Time of the Fourth Horseman; Anderson's Time and Stars; Asimov's ed Extraterrestrials and Eclipses; Brunner's The Atlantic Abomination; Destinies #1; Adams Castaways in Time; Garret's Takeoff; Bayley's The Soul of the Robot; and Arnason's The Sword Smith. A pretty mixed bunch.

A writer whose books I've read only recently and who, before I had read them, I didn't think I would like was Swann. After reading the first novel, I have kept an eye out for the rest. First class fantasy.

One of the reason's the lettercol is short this issue is that the bi-monthly schedule means that letters from overseas will not reach me before about 8 weeks to ten weeks. I do not know if I can keep up bi-monthly - maybe quarterly will be more suitable. We'll see.

Why no illos? Mainly because I haven't been able to get to a place which will cut them for around three dollars.

Fanzines received: THE CYGNUS CHRONICLER v2 no 3 - Neville J Angrove; SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST 18 - Skel & Cas; SIKANDER 2 - Irwin Hirsh; EUROPA AND THE ROO 1 / Hag and the Hungry Goblin 4 - Derrick & Christine Ashby; THE SPACE WASTREL v1 no 2 - Loney & Warner; SF ECHO / Moebius Trip 27 - Ed Connor; RESOLUTION 4 - Jackie Causegrove; NOUMENON 37 - Brian Thruogood; SF HORIZONS - Harry Anduschak; STAR JAWS - Allan Beauty; ZELOT 4 - Ragnar Fyrj. THE WASFFAN 20 - Roy Furguson; Q36c - Marc Ortlieb. And I have one of Eric Lindsay's ERIC B LINDSAY in my bag.... don't know the number off hand.

Hmmm. I like the balance for this issue - some sercon, some humorous and some peasy... especially liked the one by Bert Chandler. - Ron.

THE AUSTRALIAN FANZINE EXPLOSION

Ron L Clarke

PART TWO 1972 - 1979

The first part of this article was published in The Penultimate Blimp number 1 in February, 1972 and covered Australian fanzines from 1964 to the end of 1971. A short piece covering 1972-1973 will be disregarded in order to get a wider perspective.

Material for this listing comes from my own collection of fanzines, and so there will be some issues I am missing, and indeed some fanzines. A fair number of fanzines do not have dates - some dates I obtained from postmarks, others I could't obtain; so those I will be glossing over.

I am not including APAzines in the listing, unless they were sent separately to me (which makes them, as far as I am concerned, general circulation).

In 1971 there were 22 fanzines published, of which 8 were new titles. The total number of issues published was 118.

In January, 1972, the only fanzine published was THE MENTOR 21. February saw CHAO 8 by John Alderson, and THE PENULTIMATE BLIMP 1 was put out by Ron Clarke. March 1972 saw THE FANARCHIST 7 by David Grigg; Leigh Edmond's RATAPLAN 8; Bruce Gillespie's SF COMMENTARY 26 and Ron Clarke's THE MENTOR 22. May saw COR SERPENTIS 3, put out by Monash Uni sf Assn; the first issue of MITHRIL by Dennis Stocks of Brisbane, Qld, and the 4th issue of THE KRAKEN WAKES by Albert Colmstock. In June, SF COMMENTARY 27 came out. The fanzines published ranged from small zines (Pb and KW) to largest ones, like MITHRIL. All but RATAPLAN were genzines.

SF COMMENTARY 28 came out in July, as did a special poetry issue of WOMBAT. This 'special' issue of WOMBAT was edited by Ron Clarke: Shayne McCormack laid down her editors mantle for this issue (, actually, co-editors mantle). Things started to hot up in the fanpublishing world in August - the first issue of CANBERRA'S NINI HII? came out. It was edited by Helen Hyde for the Canberra SF Society, at PO Box 544, Civic Square 2600 and would run monthly for nine issues without a break. John Alderson sent CHAO 10 out; Bruce Gillespie put out SFC 29 and Shayne McCormack, perhaps annoyed at Ron Clarke, put out the 5th issue of Terran Times.

September 1972 saw the 2nd issue of Ron Clarke's M31 - this time in A4 - which was not repeated (neither the zine nor the size), and David Grigg put out the first issue of TOUCHSTONE.

October had seven fanzines published - NINI HII?, CHAO 11, MITHRIL 2, RATAPLAN 9, SF COMMENTARY 30 - and two new fanzines - CHUNDER 1 and SOMETHING ELSE 1. CHUNDER attempted to fill the place in Australian fandom for an sf newszine coming out at regular intervals, and succeeded quite well. John Foyster put out regularly until January 1980, at which time he was up to vol 4 - and I am not sure just how many single issues, but they were coming out about one per month, sometimes less. SOMETHING ELSE was a new zine of Shayne McCormack's - and it is still around, though somewhat irregular.

CHUNDER 2 and 3 came out in November '72, as did another long running sf zine, this put out by the Sydney Uni SF Assn., Union Box 126, Sydney Uni, 2000 - ENIGMA v3 no 3. Along with NINI HII? 5, and CHUNDER, SF COMMENTARY 31 came out in December, 1972.

GIRL'S OWN FANZINE 1, put out by Susan Smith (now Clarke) in January 1973, and NINI HII? 6 by Helen Hyde were the only fanzines out in that month. February saw CHAO 11, ENIGMA v4 no 1, SF COMMENTARY 32, and TOUCHSTONE 2. March was another full month, with NINI HII? 8, MITHRIL 3, SF COMMENTARY 33 and KANGAROO FEATHERS 1 - edited by David Grigg for A'75. April 1973 had NINI HII? 9, RATAPLAN 11 and PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 20 by John Bangsund - an Apa zine which issue was apparently on general distribution. GEGENSCHNEIN 9 also came out that month.

May had five zines at least published - ENIGMA v4 no2, edited by Van Ikin; GEGENSCHNEIN 10, GIRLS OWN FANZINE 2, PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 22 and SF COMMENTARY 34. June's output was far smaller - CHAO 13 and THE PENULTIMATE BLIMP2. In July came out NINI HII? 10, SF COMMENTARY 25/27 and SOMETHING ELSE 2. The genzines continued in August, with ENIGMA v4 no3, GEGENSCHNEIN 11 and PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 24.

GIRLS OWN FANZINE 3 came out in September, 1973, beating BOYS OWN FANZINE 3 by three years. Ron Clarke put out THE MENTOR 23, Dennis Stocks MITHRIL 5, Gary Mason NEW FORERUNNER 14, John Bangsund PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 25 and Leigh Edmonds RATAPLAN 12, which seemed to exhaust Aussie fandom, because no zines came out in October (except CHUNDER).

John Alderson continued putting forward his unique views with CHAO 15 in November, and Bruce Gillespie put his views in SF COMMENTARY 39, not to mention the members of Sydney Uni with ENIGMA v4 no4. Sue and Ron Clarke decided to see if their new marriage could stand co-editing, and put out ARK 1 in December. Leigh Edmonds sent out BOYS OWN FANZINE that month, as well as RATAPLAN 13. John Bangsund published his last issue of SCYTHROP with the 28th issue.

January, 1974 dawned with no fanzines being published, and February saw only ENIGMA v5 no1. ARK 2 came out in March, as did GEGENSCHNEIN 13 and OSIRIS 1 - a new zine put out by Del and Dennis Stocks. GEGENSCHNEIN 14, OSIRIS 2 and RATAPLAN 15 came out in April '74. May 1974 saw an upsurge, with GEGENSCHNEIN 16, OSIRIS 3, RATAPLAN 16, SF COMMENTARY 40 and SOMETHING ELSE 4. June and July were back to two each - MITHRIL 7 and OSIRIS 4 in June (both by Del & Dennis Stocks) and OSIRIS 5 and Ron & Sue Clarke's new zine, SIMON 1, in July. August was another slow month, with CHAO 15, OSIRIS 6 and FORERUNNER 33 (3rd series), edited for the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation by Sue Clarke.

For the year leading up to the World SF Convention in Australia in 1975, the output of zines seemed to show where all the fans were putting their energy - not into fanzines. September was OSIRIS 7, and SF COMMENTARY 38.

October was FORERUNNER 34 and OSIRIS 8. November has ENIGMA v5 no4 and OSIRIS 9, and December, FORERUNNER 35, NEW MILLENNIAL HARBINGER 14 and PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 26, both the latter by John Bangsund.

Two fanzines put out in 1974, but with no date, were THE EYE 1, edited by Kim Lambert, for the Sydney Uni Tolkien Soc, and THRILL 2, a trekzine put out by Mandi Munro, of 4/199 Falcon St, Neutral Bay 2089.

January 1975 dawned with FANEWSLETTER 21 (Leigh Edmonds), GEGENSCHIEIN 20 and a new zine from John Bangsund, FIRST DRAFT 1 resting in the mailbox. February was back to the usual, with OSIRIS 11, PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 29 and SF COMMENTARY 41/42. March wasn't too much of a change either: ENIGMA v6 no1, FORERUNNER 36, OSIRIS 12 and PHILOSOPHICAL GAS 30. April saw GEGENSCHIEIN 21 and OSIRIS 13.

Fandom in those days was a small group, as can be seen by the number of zines published and the same people putting them out - oftentimes more than one title. May 1975 saw GEGENSCHIEIN 22 and OSIRIS 14. June - ENIGMA v6 no2, FORERUNNER v1 no2 (4th series) edited by Shayne McCormack; and OSIRIS 15. All three being Clubzines (seems individuals were too busy financially with said Worldcon, to afford fanzines).

July 1975 was down to but one title - OSIRIS 16. August saw four zines: CHAO 16, FORERUNNER QUARTERLY (edited by Sue Clarke for the SSFF, and which was about 100 pp), OSIRIS 17 and SF COMMENTARY 43 (a special Tucker issue).

The world Convention in Melbourne injected some needed enthusiasm into the fanpublishing world. In September three zines were published - CHAO 17, FORERUNNER v1 no3, and a new zine - SOUTH OF HARAD EAST OF RHUN. The latter was a LOTR Zine, and was put out by Jon Noble, 26 Lucinda Ave, Springwood NSW 2777. October saw four fanzines, three of which were clubzines, of which two were from the SSFF: FORERUNNER v1 no4 and FORERUNNER QUARTERLY no 2. The other zines were CHAO 18 and ENIGMA v6 no3. November saw FORERUNNER v1 no5, and a new zine - MAD DAN REVIEW, or as it changed its name to: MINADOR, edited by Marc Ortlieb, of 23 Crittenden Rd., Morphetts vale, S A 5162. December was back to those reliables, CHAO19, ENIGMA v6 no4 and SF COMMENTARY 44/45.

Two undated zines also published in 1975 were THE EYE 2 and GIANT WOMBO 1, another of Leigh Edmonds' fan zines.

Nineteen-seventy-six saw another publishing boom with the number of fanzines being published rising. January saw FORERUNNER v2 no1, FORERUNNER QUARTERLY (newzine and genzine respectively), GEGENSCHIEIN 26, SOUTH OF HARAD...5, and STUNNED MULLET 4 (John Bangsund). February saw FORERUNNER v2 no2, GEGENSCHIEIN 27, SOMETHING ELSE 5 and a new zine, TELMAR 1, edited by F Seymore and Karen***

Blair Ramage's CHUSHINGURA 1 came out in March, as did ENIGMA v7 no2, MAD DAN REVIEW 3, and TELMAR 2. A fanzine which caused much enthusiasm and is still going today and the first from New Zealand for many years - NOUMENON 1 appeared edited by Brian Thumgood, 40 Korora Rd., Oneroa, Waikake Is, Hauraki Guld, NZ. April was a bit of a let down with only CHAO 20 and NOUMENON 2 coming out. May saw GEGENSCHIEIN 28, NOUMENON 3, SF COMMENTARY 46 and SOUTH OF HARAD....7. June showed a decline in numbers with ENIGMA v7 no 2, MAD DAN REVIEW 4 and NOUMENON 4 being published. July saw only one zine, and a new one at that - NEW GENESIS 1, ed Allan Bray, 5 Green Ave, Seaton, SA 5023. August picked up a bit with DATA 1 (trekzine newsletter) edited by Sue Clarke, MAD DAN REVIEW 5, NOUMENON 5/6 and SF COMMENTARY 47. DATA is the newszine of the Sydney based trekkie group, ASTREX, and was the first of its kind since TERRAN TIMES ceased regular publication, and was the forerunner of what was to come.

September was a bleak month, but five zines arrived to turn away some of that bleakness: BOYS OWN FANZINE 3, DATA 2, ENIGMA v7 no 3, NOUMENON 7 and the

first issue of SCIENCE FICTION CLUB NEWS, edited by John Parks, of James Ruse Agric. High School, NSW. October saw FORERUNNER v2 no 4, MAD DAN REVIEW 6, SF COMMENTARY 48/50, SOUTH OF HARAD...8 and another trekkie zine, STARSTRUCK 1.2, also edited by John Parks. November was only brightened up by a new zine, MARC 1, from Marc Ortlieb, and NOUMENON 8/9 from Brian Thurgood.

The last month of 1976 was when the trekkie presence began to show itself - first issue of TREKKIE TALK - newzine of AUSTREK, of 28 Hasdon St, Eaglemond, 3084. Also out that month were ENIGMA v7 no 4, FORERUNNER v2 no 3, NOUMENON 10 and STARSTRUCK 3.

Nineteen-seventy-seven was when the trekkies began to hit their stride. DATA 4.1 (Sue Clarke), NOUMENON 11, and TREKKIE TALK came out in January. Published in February were DATA 4.2, MINADOR 1 (Marc Ortlieb) and Austrek's trekkie genzine, SPOCK 2. In March the sf genzines also came out together: DATA A vied with ENIGMA v8 no 1, NEW FORERUNNER 15 (Gary Mason), NOUMENON 12, SF COMMENTARY 51 (the last issue received by me, although I understand he still publishes the odd one), SOUTH OF HARAD....9, and a new sf genzine, in offset, and well produced: EPSILON ERIDANI EXPRESS 1 (Neville Angrove, PO Box 770, Canberra City, ACT 2601).

Austrek's genzine, BEYOND ANTARES 4 (ed Sue Clarke) came out in April, together with other trekkie pubs BULLETIN OF THE SA STAR TREK FAN CLUB 1 (PO Box 195, Glenelg, SA 5054), which went to no. 3. MINADOR 2 also came out, as well as NEW FORERUNNER 16 and SPOCK 3. From then on trekkie pubs vied with normal sf ones for exposure. For the rest of this article trekkie pubs will be shown thus *.

May fanzines received showed the beginning of the avalanche - CAPTAINS LOG 3 * another newszine of Austrek, DATA 6.1 *, NEW FORERUNNER 15 and ORNITHOPTER 1 (Leigh Edmonds). June '77 had CAPTAINS LOG 4*; COMPUTER PRINTOUT 1* (edited by Judy Baumann for the Qld trekkie club, DATA 6.2*, NEW FORERUNNER 18 (Gary Mason), NOUMENON 13/14, and SPOCK 4*. July really showed the presence of the trekkies: CAPTAINS LOG 5*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 2*, DATA 7.1 & 7.2*, and TAU CETI 1* - edited for the S A S F Fan Club. All trekkie zines.

August was slightly different - CAPTAINS LOG 6*, SPOCK 5* and TAU CETI 2* came out, as well as MINADOR 3 and NOUMENON 15. September wasn't much more different, with CAPTAINS LOG 7*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 3*, DATA 8*, and TAU CETI 3* published, along with EPSILON ERIDANI EXPRESS 2 and NOUMENON 16/17. In September, a new zine came out, THE CYGNUS CHRONICLER 1, edited also by Neville Angrove, as well as the now perinials, BEYOND ANTARES 5.7*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 4*, DATA 9* and SPICK 6/7*. November followed with COMPUTER PRINTOUT 5*, DATA 10.1* and, lastly, GEGENSCHWEIN 32 (Eric Lindsay). Of course, there were undated sf fanzines out in these periods also, but the above gives some guide for the overall publishing for the period.

STRANGLER ELEPHANT'S GAZETTE 1 (and the only issue I've seen) is the only zine put out solely by Paul Stevens in the period covered. It came out in December, together with MINADOR 4. Also published in 1977, but undated, was EVENT HORIZON n1 no 1, by the James Ruse Agric High.

1978, and the trekkie zines were a flood: January had CAPTAINS LOG 8*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 6*, DATA 10.2* as well as genzines like NOUMENON 19 and STARSTRUCK 6. February was a good month for the Postoffice, with ARIEL 1 (Marc Ortlieb), CAPTAINS LOG 9*, CENTRAL CONTROL 2* (Pat De Vose, Qld), COMPUTER PRINTOUT 7*, DATA 11*, NOUMENON 20, SOUTH OF HARAD.... 10, and SPOCK 8*.

The clubs were really into pubbing (probably because they supplied the

for budding faneds to publish the zines) and March was no exception - CAPTAINS LOG 10*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 9*, THE GYGUS CHRONICLER 2, DATA 12*, GEGENSCHIN 33, and lastly (where were you?), THE MENTOR 24. April was no less busy, with CAPTAINS LOG 11*, CENTROL CONTROL 3*, DATA 13*; and then came FORERUNNER 19 and NOUMENON 21. Eric Lindsay's GEGENSCHIN 22/23 held out against the rising tide of CAPTAINS LOG 12*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 9* and DATA 14 in May. The tide turned slightly in June '78 with ANARKALI 1, a new zine from Margeret J Arnott, PO Box 51, Thebarton, SA 5031, a slim zine of 14 pp. AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS 1 (edited by Mervyn Binns, of 305/307 Swanson St, Melbourne 3000) was published, together with NOUMENON 22/23 and CAPTAINS LOG 13*, and COMPUTER PRINTOUT 10*.

The flood of zines continued in July with ARGO VAVIS v3 no 2 (published by the LaTrobe Uni SF Assn), AUST SF NEWS 2, BEYOND ANTARES 7*, CAPTAINS LOG 14*, EENTROL CONTROL 5*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 11*, and DATA 15*. It was in this month that FANEWSLETTER published its 100th and last issue - Leigh Edmonds at last throwing in the towel with this newszine, after a long (and to the readers, rewarding) run. In August was published AUST SF NEWS 3, CAPTAINS LOG 15*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 12*, DATA 16 & 17*, NOUMENON 24 and SCYTALE 2 - a clubzine edited by Peter Toluzie for the Uni of NSW SF Soc.

The remainder of the year was much like the first half: in September were published ANARKALI 2, AUST SF NEWS 4, CAPTAINS LOG 16* and NOUMENON 25. In October there issued into the mails: AUST SF NEWS 5, CAPTAINS LOG 17*, CHAO 21, DATA 18*, THE HAG AND THE HUNGRY GOBLIN 3 - a fanzine put out by Derric & Christine Ashby; NOUMENON 26, ORITHOPTER 3, and lastly, SASTREK NEWS 2* - put out by the Adelaide trekkie club. November saw BEYOND ANTARES 8*, CAPTAINS LOG 18*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 13, and EPSILON ERIDANI EXPRESS 3. December was an average month, with AUST SF NEWS 6, CAPTAINS LOG 19*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 14*, GEGENSCHIN 36, NOUMENON 27/28 and TAU CETI 5*.

There were three fanzines undated in 1978 - all were new: ERIC B LINDSAY 1 (personalzine of Eric Lindsay), NEW ORC CHRONICLES 1 (edited by Gragor Whitey), and TAU CETI 1-4* (Sastrek).

January, 1979's fanzines holds good for most of the year. Fanzines received were THE BLACK HOLE 5, edited by Andrew Brown of Victoria, CAPTAINS LOG 20*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 15*, ENIGMA v10 no 1, ERIC B LINDSAY 2/3, GEGENSCHIN 37, ORITHOPTER 4 and SASTREK NEWS 4*. February saw AUST SF NEWS 7, CAPTAINS LOG 21*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 16* and DATAS 20, and 21*.

FORERUNNER v1 no 10, edited for the SSFF by Jack Herman, was a "new" zine on the scene - this would be the fifth incarnation of FORERUNNER - editors included Ron Clarke, Gary Mason (he 'renamed it New Forerunner), Sue Clarke, Shayne McCormack, and Jack Herman, over the years since 1968. Other zines out that month were AUST SF NEWS 8, CAPTAINS LOG 22* and SASTREK NEWS 5*. Another trekzine, CENTROL CONTROL 7 also appeared.

April saw another upsurge of publishing, with AUST SF NEWS 9, CAPTAINS LOG 23*, COMPUTER PRINTOUT 17*, COR SERPENTIS v2 no 2, ERIC B LINDSAY 3, FORERUNNER v1 no 11, GEGENSCHIN 38 (the last issue) and TAU CETI 7*. May had a new fanzine, FUBSY MARSUPIAL FANZINE 1 (Derric Ashby) and also out were CAPTAINS LOG 24*, DATA 22*, NOUMENON 29/30 and FORERUNNER v1 no 12. June saw two new zines: BUNCHY WATCHES FANZINE 1, from Leigh Edmonds (actually one shouldn't count these - they are really only an evolving series of one personalzine), and WAHF-FULL 1, from Jack Herman. He followed this up with FORERUNNER v1 no 13, and Shayne McCormack managed to break from her bookseller activities and brought

out SOMETHING ELSE 6. Trekzines out included CAPTAINS LOG 25*, together with that offset genzine/newszine AUST SF NEWS 10 July saw the 11th issue of AUST SF NEWS, NOUMENON 31, CAPTAINS LOG 26*, NOUMENON 31, TAU CETI 8* and two new zines - RUPTURED ROO 1, from Mark Sharp (W. AUST), and LOG OF THE USSS QUEST 1*, from the Qld ST Club.

August was down to two fanzines, AUST SF NEWS 12 and DATA 23*. September 1979 perked up with AUST SF NEWS 13, CAPTAINS LOG 28*, CENTRAL CONTROL 9, FORERUNNER v2 no 4, LOG OF THE USS QUEST 2*, MAD DAN REVIEW 6, NOUMENON 32 and TAU CETI 10*. October saw two new zines - SIKANDER 1, from Irwin Hirsh, of 279 Domain Rd., South Yarra, Vic 3141, and STARGAZER 1*, from Betsi Ashton, Dersert Cottage, Hakcham West, SA 5163. Also out were CAPTAINS LOG 29 and DATA 25 & 26. November saw the trek zines also out in force, with BEYOND ANTARES 9*, CAPTAINS LOG 30*, LOG OF THE USS QUEST 4* and SIMON 4* (from Sue Clarke). SF fanzines were represented by AUST SF NEWS 14 and CHUNDER.

The last month in this survey is December, 1979. I think it shows well enough the composition of the fanzine scene in Australia for 1980: AUST SF NEWS 15, CAPTAINS LOG 31*, CHUNDER v3 no 12, FORERUNNER v2 no 7, SPECTRE 3/4 (edited by Perry Middlemiss, PO Box 98, Bruddle St., Adelaide, SA 5000), WAHF-FULL 3, and another new fanzine - THE VICTORIAN TIME MACHINE v1 no 1, edited by Adrienne Losin, c/- Croydon High, Croydon, Vic 3136. A Dr Who fanzine, There were four undated fanzines put out in 1979: CLOSED CIRCUIT 1*, edited by David Richardson, GIANT WOMBO 2 (Leigh Edmonds), OPAL 3 (Keith Curtis) and TREKKIN' 1* a newszine from Karen Rodrigues, of Springwood, Qld.

There are three zines I don't know the year for: DELTA 1 (ed Steve Palmer, Vic), DOUBLE D 2 & 3 (ed Del & Dennis Stocks) and ZERINZA a (6pp offset - from Anthony Howe, of Gordon, NSW).

These six pages cover many fanziens over many years. Some zines only appear once, others are still being published. Some new zines are from fans who have been in the fancene since 1966 - others are new-comers whose editorial talents have not, as yet, matured.

What does the future hold? The following figures may illustrate a trend:

Fanzines Published (by number of titles)

Trekzines: *

1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
18	20	15	15	19	18	25	24
$\frac{1*}{19}$	$\frac{1*}{21}$	$\frac{1*}{16}$	$\frac{1*}{16}$	$\frac{3*}{22}$	$\frac{7*}{24}$	$\frac{9*}{34}$	$\frac{12*}{36}$

NEW Fanzines Published During Year (Total)

Trekzines: *

1972	1973 n	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
7	3	4	6	8	5	6	8
$\frac{1*}{7}$	$\frac{1*}{4}$	$\frac{1*}{4}$	$\frac{1*}{6}$	$\frac{1*}{8}$	$\frac{3*}{8}$	$\frac{1*}{7}$	$\frac{4*}{12}$

Total Number of Issues

Trekzines: *

1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
41	51	49	58	64	52	58	73
$\frac{1*}{42}$	$\frac{1*}{52}$	$\frac{1*}{50}$	$\frac{1*}{59}$	$\frac{4*}{68}$	$\frac{39*}{91}$	$\frac{43*}{106}$	$\frac{47*}{120}$

The trekkie influence shows up in the above figures, of course, but perhaps the tables below, reproduced from Part One of this article, and published eight years ago may be of interest:

Fanzines Published (by number of titles).

1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
4	2	2	2	11	10	13	22

New Fanzines Published During Year.

1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
4	-	2	1	8	5	9	8

Total Number of Issues.

1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
22	6	5	38	24	28	41	118

Contrasting these figures with those on page 7 shows some interesting facts... Fanzines published (by number of titles) has risen fairly steadily since 1964, forgetting about those of trekkie origin. On the other hand, new fanzines published have stayed nearly even, and the total number of issues published seems to follow something like a 10 year cycle.

The above facts suggests several points to me. One is that, except for those few fans, such as Leigh Edmonds and myself who tend to put out zines with new names and then drop them, there is a rapid turnover in fanzine publishing. This is, of course, backed up by overseas experience. As fans come and go, so do fanzines, which rarely last past their first five issues.

I consider the trekkie influx to be something unique - and, rather than be absorbed by sf fandom, and its devotees breaking off to continue into sf reading generally, they have stuck together. How long the phenomenon will last is still unclear. The release of STAR-TREK THE MOTION PICTURE and its somewhat fizzle does not seem it affected its fans anything untoward.

Hopefully, the bidding for the WorldCon in Australia again in 1983 will stimulate fandom as it did in 1974/1975. A general upsurge in clubs accured around that time and most are still in existance, as are the APAs and the clubzines. Some fans have held on - it does not seem all that long ago that I saw Marc Ortlieb's first fanzine! That greybeard, John Foyster, is still around and fandom still exerts its influence on fans -- they leave, come back, leave , come back - as witness Bob Smith.

Yes, fandom's something of a family, some come, some go, and some stay on. And to most, it is a happy time.

HIS & HERS

STARTED LONG AGO

by John J. Alderson.

Back in the days when men lived in beehive huts, the right hand side belonged to the men and the left hand side to the women. Well, at least this seems apparent from modern research. The Nguni grass hut of Natal is so divided, and the thatched beehive huts of South Africa of the Sotho, Xhosa and the Thembu are also so divided. The custom applies also to the huts of the Mongols, and there is traditional evidence for the same practice in Ireland where they also build circular thatched huts, and later stone bee-hive huts.

The wattle-and-daub huts of the ancient Britons (well, that is, of Roman times, for the Britons were ancient even then) are familiar enough from the descriptions of our school days, and I have myself seen the circle of stones which held the thatch down in the old city of the Men of the Dee, Davan of the Picts, or Devana of the Romans. For the best part they are covered with heather, which I was there burning to make it grow fresh shoots for the grouse. Such such beehive huts were used all over Europe. The ancient prytaneum in Athens was such a structure, retained as such and in such a shape as it was a sacred building when the rest of Athens was rebuilt in stone. The Vesta of Rome was of the same nature, and both housed the sacred fire of the city within which they were built.

One can easily assume that the man coming in from the hunt, and throwing down his spear and club as soon as he got in the door in the general way in which we are educated to believe men act, and his wife saying to the children, "Now don't go near daddy's things, you know what a grump he is!" And in the process of time the right hand side of the house became that of the man and left the other side to the woman. Some people would be even chauvenistic about this and say it was the man all over taking the best side of the house... as if there was or is any best side of the house. The fact is that men are mostly right handed and when walking through a door and wishing to set down what they are carrying will naturally set it down on the right.

On the other hand, a woman, carrying a baby on her hip or arm does so on the left hand side and thus leaves the right hand free for other things, and when so burdened going through a doorway, automatically turns left to put the baby down. And this division of such a house works out well for the man could throw down his best bison-braining club without worrying about braining his baby or seeing it used during the evening to boil the pot, and the woman could be equally happy about the safety of the little children. This it must be remembered was before the undoubted benefits of electric light. One can only regard this division as a happy and practical convenience in a house without dividing walls.

Bee-hive huts were later split in two, so to speak, the two halves put a distance apart and the space between walled in. In some parts they began to be built in timber, stone, mud, brick, and later still squared off.

One may still see the rounded ends in some old thatched houses in the U.K., particularly Ireland. Two features remained. There was one entrance, a door in the middle of what was now the wall. The hearth was immediately before one on entering, but slightly to one side, and so effectively cutting the house into two rooms. The right hand side remained the side of the men, the left became the kitchen.

In the so-called strongly male-dominated Viking times the women's portion of the house was at the rear of the long-house. In the hall the men gathered and cooked and ate, and here too, the food was stored. The woman's part of the house was sacrosanct, so were the women. They could divorce their man with scant ceremony if he struck them.

Until the end of the 18th century the houses of Holland, and Sweden were very uniform. The men were sea-farers and farmers and were away from March until the end of November each year; that is, nine of the twelve months. The houses were in three parts, in reality three houses set end on end. In the centre one, which had doors either end but otherwise no opening, was the hearth. Here the family and the servants cooked, ate and slept, and the women did their cooking, washing and spinning. One end of the three rooms was used for the storage of textiles, dresses, the loom and other implements. The other end was used to store food. It will be seen that the 'hall', once the place of the men, had become a storehouse, and the men merely possessed the right to live in the centre around the hearth during the winter. In modern Sweden the woman becomes virtual owner of the house on marriage and absolute owner of the house on the exit of her husband from her bed, regardless. As one Swede told me, "We Swedes are very pig-headed people." It may explain why all the men haven't migrated to either a more reasonable climate or where they can be assured of somewhere to shelter during winter.

The Greeks of New Testament times almost lived in the house on sufferance. The house was given over to industry run by and controlled by the women. As the Roman architectural writer Vitruvius nicely puts it, the Greek men had one room set aside for their use where they could entertain their friends without bothering the women! One may thus search in vain through the New Testament for a prominent Greek man who was not either a Jew or a Roman official, and homeless and unemployed they spent their time, as recorded in Acts, either telling or listening to some new thing.

One is somehow reminded of women of the Victorian era who dressed like birds of paradise and their men in a uniform of sooty black, and who also had a room where they could take their friends which they called their den. No wonder so many migrated to Australia and America!

The Prophet allows his followers to have several wives, provided he loves them equally. This, translated into Arab terms means he has to provide for each wife a house and etc. equal to the first, and not greater. Which could be one reason why Arabs do not all possess their allowed four wives! The woman's quarters in an Arab house is not restricted as usually assumed in the West. There is a free entry of women, and men can visit it accompanied by, or with permission of, the husband. Also the women can, and do, venture into the rest of the house and sit beside and talk with the men. They are, however, usually veiled, which represents, by the way, total seclusion of the house. Like the snail, the Arab woman carries her house with her in the shape of her veil.

We had a local, a few years ago, who lived in a house with a chalk

line drawn down the centre, one side being his and one side being hers. I don't believe they spoke, either. None of this stopped this man being endorsed by one of the major political parties and running several times for Parliament. Had he been successful he may have partitioned the country for us.

In the Australian countryside one may still enter a house through a front central door. This does not mean that either the right or left side is his. It seems that by tacit agreement the sheds belong to the man and the house to the women; but he is allowed, as a piece of charity, to watch telly in the lounge and to sleep in the house. Most farmers when they have visitors talk to them outside unless they are regarded as just as much the woman's visitors as his and they enter the house. For a man to bring visitors who are solely his into the house is rare.

But it is the suburban house which fill me with gloom. All, I seem to remember, have a porch. One walks into the porch to find oneself facing a blank wall with the door on the left, and I get this uncomfortable suspicion that everything on the left is the woman's and the man has nowhere, except perhaps the garage (if the wife hasn't a car) to call his own. Frequently this is jammed with discarded furniture.

This may be why so many Australian men are to be found down the pub.

- John J. Alderson.

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This fanzine supports the call for
"Australia in '83" as it believes
that this country has the talent
and dedication to run another
Worldcon. There are both enough
and dedicated fans and readers
of science fiction to put on a
first-class Worldcon and will,
I believe prove again to the world
that Australia can do it.

S W O R D S A C R O S S T H E P E C O S

or

'Mayhem On The Mudflats'

by

TERRY JEEVES

The sleek black convertible two-tone sports model thout slewed round the corner by the feed store before screeching to a six-legged emergency stop in front of Ma Jong's soft drink and bingo parlour for distressed heroes. From the duplex saddle above its steaming flanks appeared an ill assorted pair. Tumbling into the dust came the lean, hard-bitten (by many a flea) Eldritch the Unmentionable and his faithful but slow witted body-servant, 'Spoongum'. They landed side by side with a pair of sickening thuds, counterpointed by the cantankerous clanking of rusty body-armour.

Quick as a striking snake, Eldritch snapped to his feet, took three quick steps, twisted his spurs together inextricably and again crashed to the ground. Spoongum crawled to his master, removing from a secret pocket hidden behind his left knee pad, the de-spur'licating iron which he carried for use on such occasions. Within a scant thirty minutes he had performed a task which would have taken a lesser man half an hour. The tangled spurs were unlinked and Eldritch revived by a liberal application of smelling salts.

Regaining their feet, the two super heroes strode into Ma Jong's saloon, their entrance a signal for all activity to cease and every eye to swing in their direction, singly or together as the case may be. Even the pianist ceased his slaughter of the Russo-American friendship ballad, 'Mike Huntry, Tissov Thee'.

Ma Jong broke the silence, "Well boys, what'll it be?" she beamed, her teeth flashing red, green and amber in the flickering light of the pile of burning ganzines in the huge fireplace. "Red-eye, 'Fayalin', 'Blog', or 'Shause'?"

"What's 'Shause'?" blurted out Spoongum.

"Whusky, with a dash of Castrol" Ma laughed, quick as a flash. In one liquid movement, she poured a libation, drank it off, and twitched a couple of gold pieces from Spoongum's pouch. Her gaze swung to Eldritch and ran slowly up and down the not inconsiderable 5'2" of the black-haired swarthy albino. "Now handsome, what about you?" she purred. Before Eldritch could answer, a fierce grip wrenched him around to gaze into the black-whiskered jowls of Burp the Barbarian. A fist the size of a number 10 (or maybe a number 11) bus slammed him back against the bar. It was followed by a flashing battle-axe which cleaved the bar in two, only a fraction of a second after Eldritch, fast as a Venusian tree-slurp, had leaped aside. The albino's great sword, 'Bumstinger', whined from its scabbard, and the battle was on.

As Burp and Eldritch circled, parried and thrust, Spooongum leaped into action against the Barbarians compatriots as they surged forward. Tables crashed over, drinks sloshed across the floor and within seconds, the place was a riot of flashing swords. A hand landed on Eldritch's shoulder, followed by two ears, three fingers and half a nose. Shrugging them off, he headed a swinging bludgeon aside and let himself sink blindly into the Berserker rage he had learned at Phred Sabaclanger's knee. Sheer stark unadulterated screaming nastiness taughtened his steely nerves to twanging point and he waded in.

Ten-and-a-half seconds later, when the red mist finally rose from behind his eyeballs, Eldritch beheld a dread scene - dozens of boidies and assorted components thereof lay scattered among the broken fragments of what had been a high-class boozing den. Only Spooongum remained standing. The body servant wagged a reproving finger under the albino's nose.

"Why do you always make such a mess of your feud?" he childed.

the ent

THE STREAKER

My heart leapt up when I beheld
A streaker in the street,
A bushy-pussied brunette
With a figure nudely neat,
With unbound breasts a-jiggle
And buttocks bouncing free;
Firm-striding like an Amazon
And calm of face was she.
Long since I lost my innocence
But yet it gave me joy;
I wish I could have seen such sights
While I was still a boy!

- A. Bertram Chandler.

IV

Early in 1951, Nick Spilntseff decided to abandon the duplicated format of Woomera, and start afresh with a 20 pp. 8vo printed magazine. The result was by far the best fan publication in Australia. The printed format and neat layout gave an appearance of permanence and dignity to the well-balanced contents. The first issue appeared in February, the second in September, 1951. The only drawback was the necessarily slow typesetting and handprinting.

During 1951, Futurian Press published two works of fantasy, Blinded They Fly by Vol Molesworth, and Zero Equals Nothing by Graham B. Stone and Royce Williams, each well received by the Press.

In the first issue of Woomera, Stone announced the formation of a new national organisation to keep Australian fans in contact. This was Australian Science Fiction Society, which was to play a major part in the coming renaissance and break all previous membership records. "Its purpose is to bring together for their mutual benefit Australians intrrested in science fiction," Stone stated. "This is to be accomplished by locating and enrolling all fans who can be contacted, making them known to each other, and issuing monthly a news-magazine, keeping them up to date on science fiction here and overseas."

To begin with, the news-magazine took the form of a printed 8vo maglet, Science Fiction Courier. Three issues of this appeared, in March, April and August. Thereafter Stone realised that printing was too slow for the rapid dissemination of information, and changed to a duplicated folded foolscap magazine, Stopgap, of which issues appeared in October, November and December.

The response to A.S.F.S. was phenomenal. An indication of the eagerness of scattered Australian fans to achieve the sense of "belonging" is given in the following membership figures:

March, 195110
April25
August40
December55

and, to glance ahead of our chronological account, the 100 mark was passed in June, 1952.

From the beginning, Graham Stone was unashamedly a "dictator". He simply declared himself Secretary and went ahead. There were no meetings and no elections. But the system worked splendidly. For the first time in years, Australian fans were united in a community organisation, and they were regularly supplied with information, at a nominal charge of 2/6 a year.

The object of A.S.F.S. was to cover all of Australia, not particularly bothering with Sydney, which, according to Stone, "could or should handle its own special local problems."³² And as the first half of 1951 drew to a close, there was mounting feeling in Sydney that these problems had to be solved. There was considerable private talk on a resumption of local activities, and a needle in the arm for the F.S.S. Library Trust. After thrashing out preliminary matters with Molesworth, William D Veney stepped into the breach and called the Fourth Sydney Science Fiction Conference for July 7, 1951, "to bring together all the local active fans, past and present, giving articulate form to the general revival of interest."

The Conference was held in the small hall at G.U.O.G.F. Building in Castlereagh Street, Sydney. Seventeen fans attended, including Jack Murtagh from New Zealand and George Dovaston from England. Veney occupied the Chair, and proceedings were recorded by Eric F. Russell. The following details were taken from a report, drawn up by Veney and Russell, but not published.

After a welcome address by the Chairman, the Conference was presented with reports from various organisations on their activities and future aims. Speaking on the F.S.S. Library Trust, Nick Solntseff said it had in stock 85 books and 200 magazines. Funds were very low, and there was only seven borrowers.

Graham Stone, reporting on A.S.F.S., said it had done what it set out to do, - that is, to bring people together. The interest shown by people out of town was "overwhelming".

The Director of Futurian Press (Vol Molesworth) said that the Press had achieved something more than the publication of a few books. Although created out of the need for dollars and the desire for self-expression, it had helped to keep the spirit of co-operation alive until such time as some sort of organisation on an official basis had been formed. The co-operation and good fellowship evidenced in the Saturday afternoon printing activities had been "one reason why he had kept his faith in fandom".

Reporting on the Futurian Society of Sydney, Molesworth said it still existed and had four members, but had not met for months. "The machinery of the Society had been kept intact."

Mr Solntseff reported that the Sydney University Futurian Society no longer existed because its registration had not been renewed with the University authorities.

Mr Macoboy reported that Australian representation at the 1950 American Convention had been effected by means of recordings.

Resolutions were then accepted from the floor. P. Glick moved, seconded Kevin Smith, that Australia be represented at the next American Convention. This was carried, and a committee of three - Veney, Smith and Stone - was appointed to this task.

The Conference was then thrown open for general discussion. Glick said that an opportunity had been missed to contact other fans when the film Destination Moon was screened in Australian theatres. He suggested that the funds of the Futurian Society be used to contact fans by newspaper advertising. Molesworth inquired what would be done with newcomers contacted in this manner. Arthur Haddon asked whether the F.S.S. was interested in

32: Stopgap, p.15

recruiting members and becoming an active organisation again. Molesworth said this "was a matter which should come from the Conference: it was for the Conference to take some action towards the club, - not turn to the F.S.S. and ask it for assistance." Solntseff said if any person was willing to take an active part in the Society, so much the better, "but he did not think it was worthwhile if all the work rested on his own and Mr. Molesworth's shoulders." Considerable discussion followed on the question of reviving the F.S.S., Stone commenting that the best idea would be for an active local group to exist in the name of the F.S.S. in co-operation with A.S.F.S. Glick argued that there was really no need for the Futurian Society. A.S.F.S. did all the important work and the Library had been taken over. The only purpose of the Society would be to provide a meeting ground on a formal scale. But if meetings were held formally the same old trouble, - lack of interest, poor attendance, - would occur. In general, there was no longer any need for the Society, - that was why he suggested its funds be used on something constructive.

The discussion was interrupted as the time for which the hall had been hired had expired. The fans transferred to the Sun Si Gai and resumed the Conference. Molesworth moved, seconded Solntseff, that Veney and Haddon be empowered to investigate ways and means of forming a club in Sydney. This was carried.

A motion by Stone, seconded by David Cohen, that a science-fiction Convention be held in Sydney later in 1951 was also carried. A committee comprising Macoboy, Russell, Stone and Veney was appointed to organise such a Convention. After a vote of thanks to the organising committee, the Conference closed.

Veney and Haddon, who had been given authority to determine how the new local club should be formed, decided that the best plan would not be to start an entirely new body, but to "invade" and invigorate the existing Futurian Society. Molesworth and Solntseff fell in readily with the plan, and three weeks later convened the 161st meeting, to which all were invited. No less than eleven Sydney fans came along, and apologies were received from four others.

As soon as the minutes had been read, applications for membership were received from Lex Banning, Harry Brunen, David Cohen, Jock McKenna, Kevin Smith, Graham Stone and William Veney. All were accepted. "After going through a revised constitution point by point, the members decided to drop associate membership and continue purely as a local club. It was felt that this was the best course now that Stone's A.S.F.S. was catering for fans outside Sydney, and the National Fantasy Fan Federation (of America), per medium of Westralian Roger N. Dard, was expanding into the Pacific area generally." ³³ A new executive panel was elected for six months, as follows:

Director: Vol Molesworth

Vice-Director: William D. Veney.

Secretary: Arther Haddon

Treasurer: Nick Solntseff

Veney informed the meeting that the U.S. Representation Committee had decided to send a group photograph taken at the Conference, together with a letter, to the American Convention. The Society decided to finance this project, and in due course the material was forwarded by air.

With regard to the proposed Australian Convention, Veney said the mechanics were such that it would be hard to stage a Convention in 1951. Banning moved that the Society recommend to the organising committee that the Convention be held on March 22, 1952. This was seconded by Solntseff, and carried.

The revival of the Futurian Society had caused a slight embarrassment to the F.S.S. Library Trust, - the ancestor, as it were, coming back to life and using its offspring's name. Accordingly the Trustees met on August 9 and decided to change the name to Australian Fantasy Foundation.

The reference above to the N.F.E.F. spreading to the Pacific is confirmed by the membership list published in the October, 1951 issue of The National Fantasy Fan, which includes seven Australian and one New Zealand fan, - Lewis R. Bennett, Roger N. Dard, Vol Molesworth, Rex Meyer, John C. Park, Nick Solntseff, Graham Stone and Donald H. Tuck. The February-March '52 issue lists two more - Arthur Haddon and Kevin Smith.

Once re-established, the Futurian Society quickly went ahead. Meetings were held regularly throughout the year on the fourth Monday night of each month. The venue was the Board Room in the G.U.O.O.F. Building, where the formal business atmosphere provided a welcome change from the past experience of meeting in lounge rooms and restaurants. An added stimulus was the distribution of a booklet containing the Constitution and Rules, printed by the Secretary on his newly-acquired press.

At Meeting No.162 (August 27) Cohen raised the question of publishing an official club magazine. Members felt, however, that publication of club activities was best left to individual fanzines such as Woomera, and Courier, and on Glick's motion, seconded by Solntseff, this matter was shelved for three months. When the matter came up again at Meeting No.165, the Society was so busy with the Convention plans that it was again adjourned to March, 1952. The idea was then abandoned.

At the August meeting the question of public relations was raised. It became evident that while some members favoured press publicity, as a means of contacting new fans, others feared it as a vehicle of ridicule. A motion limiting the duties of the Public Relations Officer to publicising the Society through "recognised sf. and fantasy" channels was carried 7 - 3. Glick was elected to the post.

At Meeting No.163 (September 24) Veney said that the idea of holding an Australian Convention had been that of Macoboy and Stone. He had asked Macoboy, Russell and Stone to start work, but so far, only Stone had done anything. He stated that Macoboy had refused to help and he had been unable to contact Russell. As things stood, he added, the Convention "looked shaky".

Clearly, the gauntlet had been thrown down to the re-established club. Would it take up the challenge, take over responsibility for the Convention, - an event of major national fan importance, - or let the project collapse? Glick moved, seconded Banning, that the Society should adopt the former course.

Speaking from the Chair, Molesworth said that before the Society embarked upon the course suggested, the members should realise it would mean a lot of work. Those who were not absolutely in favour of it should not support the motion. Members should consider the reputation of the Society in Overseas fandom, and under no circumstances should the Society be held up to ridicule for having been unable to make a success of the Convention.

He then put the motion to the vote and it was carried unanimously. Stone said that to prevent responsibility being placed in the hands of a few members acting as a committee and the work being left entirely to them collective responsibility should be adopted. The Society then drew up a temporary agenda for a one-day Convention, and appointed a committee comprising Veney (Chairman), Stone (Secretary), Solntseff (Treasurer), Smith (Controller of Exhibits), Banning (Films), Haddon (Auctioneer), Solntseff (Editor of Booklet), and Glick, Stone, Smith and Haddon (Publicity). The Society also decided to invite Eric F. Russell to attend meetings and co-operate. Russell declined the invitation.

The controversial question of publicity arose again at Meeting No.164 (October 22) when Smith moved that the Society advertise in Thrills, Inc. This was a science adventure publication which in some quarters was hailed as "Australia's first prozine", in others condemned as juvenile. Smith said that by advertising in Thrills, knowledge of the Society would reach a wide field and people interested in group meetings would be contacted. Stone said that a careful screening process of persons who responded would be necessary. Smith then withdrew his motion and moved instead that the Society would advertise in Thrills "in such a way as to indicate the existence of science-fiction fans in Australia". This was seconded by McGuinness, and carried unanimously. Brunen was deputed to investigate the cost of such an advertisement. He reported to Meeting No.165 (November 26) that he had met with little success: he had been quoted £20 a page, but considered this had been intended as a discouragement. The Society decided to write to Thrills, requesting their advertising rates. At the following meeting, the Secretary reported that he had despatched a letter, but received no reply. The Society also decided to contact British publishers of science fiction, whose magazines were distributed in Australia, concerning their advertising rates. This was a move which was to bear fruit in the following year.

At this meeting, the Director informed members that the Society was twelve years old. Veney moved that "we, the present members of the Society, recognise that our organisation has been in existence for a period of twelve years, and that during the recent world war the threads of our organisation have remained intact; and we resolve to support the ideals of its founders." This was seconded by Ken Marinn and carried unanimously.

During November, leading West Australian fan Roger N Dard visited Sydney, and quickly became popular at Thursday night gatherings, now being held at the Moccador Cafe in Market Street. Earlier, two visits had been paid to Sydney by another Perth fan, John C. Park.

In December, Haddon published the first issue of Telapath, a printed 12 pp 8vo fanzine. It was somewhat marred by faulty printing but indicated the general upswing in activity.

The last 1951 meeting of the Futurian Society (no.166) was held on December 28. It was almost fully occupied with details concerning the forthcoming Australian Convention. Such matters as the hiring of a hall and a film projector, catering, publicity, and the dinner, were thrashed out. Hopes were high that the 1952 Convention would be an outstanding success. The Futurian Society had thrown itself into the task of organisation with vigour. Its membership had been increased to fifteen during the year by the admission of Ken Martin, Royce Williams and Ian Driscoll.

As Veney wrote in Woomera, "Early this year we made quite a lot of plans and dreamt a lot of dreams. Many expressed doubts about our ability to carry out these plans and thought we were biting off more than we could chew. Yet, despite a few upsets and disappointments, the general pattern of our planning has been carried out exactly as we wanted."

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SUNSET IN YOUR EYES

My eyes are growing visions,
images of strange insanity
that attempt to nail me
with well-aimed prayers
to elaborately constructed myths
of degrees of freedom.
My nose intercepts
parcels of well-trained lies
that masquerade through time
as something believed to be
the degrees of truth.
My ears receive pictures
of disturbing discord that
slink between the alleys
of eternal night attempting
to find the degrees of order.
It must be the time
that men have dreamed of
since first there were men.
The dying sun weeps tears
of blood reflected in your eyes,
and I am suddenly beyond
the degrees of solitude.

- Andrew Darlington.

MENTOR'S REVIEWS:

AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION 1 & 2

Selected by John Baxter

Reviewed by Diane Southgate

These two anthologies have been reprinted many times, thus providing their appeal, and I first read them about seven years ago. Most of the stories were well worth re-reading, even though many depend to an extent upon a surprise ending.

The editor's introduction is brief, but lucid and informative, in the first volume. He makes no comment in the introduction about any of the stories, but prefaces each with a brief note, giving some details about the author, as well as some appetite-whetting comments about the story itself — a device frequently used in anthologies, and usually a very pleasing one.

The first story, Kit Denton's "Burning Spear", is a child's-fantasy-really-being-true-but-his-unimaginative-parents-think-he's-telling-fibs story; anyone who writes one of these has to be very good to pull it off, as he's competing with Ray Bradbury, John Collier, etc. This story is successful — gentle but slightly disturbing, with poetic images and multi-layer meanings.

Frank Robert's "It Could Be You" is a downer — a television show, sponsored by Nasty Big Brother, each day chooses a victim at random: the unfortunate person is not at first completely identified to the viewers, who have at first to guess who it may be. The killer of the identified victim receives a large cash prize. Naturally, some guess wrong, and multiple lynchings result, but the worst result is the terror, treachery and soul-rot, which breaks the peoples' spirit, and the corrupt excitement. This story deftly gets both across, slashing at the spinelessness of people who are willing to accept such a situation as normal, and depicting the obnoxious mannerisms of TV games hosts as it does so.

Lee Harding's "The Evidence" is a metaphysical, slightly Kafkaesque story of Divine Justice versus atomic warfare: it reminded me of a little of Mordecai Roshwald's Level Seven both in its theme and style.

Martin Loran's "An Ounce of Dissension" is one of a series concerning the adventures of the Interplanetary Librarian, Stephen Quist. I much enjoyed the depiction of his life aboard the spaceship Bookmobile with the dryly witty, slightly professorish computer, Bookoorm. In this story he encounters a world ruled by a dull-witted fascist dictator who encourages illiteracy and bookburning of the most inept kind, but before long the hero has spread enough "dangerous ideas" to ensure the tyrant's overthrow.

"The Weather in the Underworld", by Colin Free, is another downer. The Earth is freezing and a few of the rich and lucky have retreated to luxurious underground bunkers, abandoning millions of people to freeze and starve on the surface. The undergrounders have cracked

under the guilt and horror, and use drugs and electronics to prevent themselves from remembering. However, one man does, and kills his shallow girlfriend in a fit of remorse. As it is impossible to brainwash him, he is thrown out onto the surface -- where the starving inhabitants eat him. The story is fairly typical as to plot, but the style is vivid, poetic and alarming.

Damien Broderick's "All my Yesterdays" is a lightly treated variant of the immortality theme -- a little man who has lived thousands of years, and is suffering immensely from boredom and partial amnesia brought on by too many memories. He is also under the watchful eye of God, who won't allow him to misbehave, indulge in physical pleasures or even commit suicide. As well as satirizing conventional religious ideas, the story deftly depicts a rather self-satisfied psychiatrist, who doesn't believe the little man's story and ironically suggests plenty of sex as a sure cure for his woes.

Stephen Cook's "Final Flower" depicts a spaceman's thoughts and memories as he is lured and devoured by a carnivorous alien plant, somewhat like a huge sea-anemone, which uses its incredible beauty and hypnotic powers to trap its victims. As his mates desperately try to warn him and shout to him to escape, the man willingly goes to his death, as he sees in the plant the total of every beautiful experience he ever had, something worth sacrificing his life for, and this point of view is made so acceptable by the vividness of the descriptions that it seems he has made the right choice -- there is a grim irony in his mate's anguished promise to destroy the plant and avenge him.

"For Men Must Work" by Frank G Bryning is the story of a spaceman's wife who detests space and worries continually about her husband's safety. To me she seemed a drippy sort of female, with her desire for a suburban home with a white picket fence, and her hopes that her husband would get a job at the ground base (which would bore him silly); the story ends with the husband behaving heroically in a space accident, and the wife firmly resolving to "stand by her man", (poor b.....).

"Beach" by John Baxter was one of my favourites -- a depiction of a city, apparently Sydney, where the people seem to have evolved into a beach-dwelling species like seals, and the empty houses brood empty under a glaring sky. As no explanation is given for this situation, the story could be called fantasy rather than science fiction. It definitely has a mysterious, haunting atmosphere, particularly in the scenes where a beach-dweller, driven by some unknown impulse, returns to the silent streets and sees inside a decaying house a horribly-smiling, ghost-pale girl playing a piano.. is she a ghost, vampire, throwback mutation, or what? And the ending, where the man returns to the sea, also remains an unsolved mystery.

Bertram Chandler's "All Laced Up" does not pose a mystery, it solves one, namely: why is it so hard to obtain genuine antique iron lace? The answer: time travellers from the future are buying it up, and paying apparently generous, but actually very low prices.... a few beads to the 'iggerant natives' by equivalent. A slight but witty story, with believable characters, especially the time traveller. Ron Smith's story "Strong Attraction" has a mildly controversial theme: a race of primitive aliens are irresistible sexually to Earthwomen: as the alien females hate sex and avoid it whenever possible, the alien males find the responsive Earthwomen equally irresistible. This idea could have been treated pornographically or humourously, but in this fairly long story the theme is taken seriously

and tragically, as the shocked husbands of the women finally understand the situation, and the women leave with their alien lovers with whom they have little in common except sexual attraction, not even the prospect of being able to reproduce. It is a very bleak story. I doubted, though, that in reality all the husbands would finally accept the situation as they did in this case. The cover illustration depicts one of the aliens from this story, rather grimfaced and scaly-looking, but otherwise presentable enough; but one of the points of the story was, the aliens were very revolting in appearance, and their sex appeal was quite literally a matter of body chemistry!

"There is a Crooked Man" by Jack Wodhams, is a marvellous short novel, bubbling with ideas and interweaving enough sub-plots to build five or six novels on. Its theme is that, no matter how technology develops, it will still provide opportunities for devious, quickwitted and imaginatively dishonest people to misuse it -- a view with which I heartily agree. Not only dishonesty, but stupidity, and unavoidable mistakes have their peculiar consequences, too. Imagine all the things that could go wrong with a matter transmitter! You could be put back together with your head on the wrong way, or mixed up Siamese-twin fashion with someone else... the awful possibilities are endless. Or the horrible things that could be done with brain transplantation... for instance, it could be a quick means of obtaining a sex change, or species change. Into a gorilla, for example, or even a racehorse -- which might revolutionise horseracing. This delightfully sardonic story is the last in the book, which might thereby be said to be saving its best for last.

Australian Science Fiction 2 doesn't quite approach the high level of its predecessor, but comes close enough to be called a classic anthology. Many of the stories are not, strictly speaking, science fiction, whereas only two stories in the first book, "Burning Spear" and "All My Yesterdays" definitely weren't. ("Beach" and "The Evidence" were ambiguous). John Baxter's brief introduction does give his justification for including two of the definitely non-science fiction entries: "Vale, Plllini!" by George Johnston and a selection from Douglas Stewart's long Poem, "Rutherford". The device of having a brief preface for each story is not used in this volume. The cover, an abstract pattern centering on a blurred skull, seems to be unconnected with any particular story.

The first entry, Olaf Rugen's "The Immortal" has an ironic title. It is the story of the first astronaut into space, who crashlands in New Guinea and regarded as a god by a primitive tribe. Unfortunately they sacrifice their gods -- a Golden Bough-type situation. This plot was also used by J G Ballard, who centered the story on the explorer who finally discovered the details of the incident. Rugen's story centers on the unlucky astronaut himself. Retrospectively, this as an alternate-universe story.

Robyn Tracey's "Siren Singers" starts as an essay on alien linguistics with speculative analysis of a language based on musical notes. It then switches to an encounter between an unfortunate Earthling and the beautiful, bird-voiced but aggressive aliens: Konrad Lorenz's theories recast as science fiction.

This is followed by another of Martin Loran's Stephen Quist (perhaps a variation 'quest'?) stories -- "The Case of the Perjured Planet", which follows the pattern of the conventional private-eye story, while

affectionately parodying the genre. Bookworm, the computer, is somewhat similar to Isaac Asimov's robot detective the The Caves of Steel. There is an impressive semi-villain, Marcus Obolsnsky, a ruthless quasi-dictator hero-worshipped by his people, but ultimately a tragic, desperate man, frantically driven to conceal a ghastly secret (planetary, not personal) by unscrupulous means. The story ends with an odd philosophic comment on the interrelationship between life and art (in this case, detective novels of the Sam Spade/Phillip Marlowe variety) and a comment on the novel-writing abilities of computers.

T F Klines "Space Poem" is really a concise short story -- a tale of the casual brutality Western man is so prone to in his relationship with apparently 'inferior' beings; it ends with a deservedly nasty alien revenge. This is quite short poem (24 lines): what it says is mostly familiar to SF readers but well worth re-stating: as poetry it isn't great, but extremely competent.

David Rome's short-short story, Robinson, also says a great deal in a short space. The theme is the old sending the young off to die in war; this is a bitter but deceptively quiet story. A fact worth noting is that in many wars children even younger than the hero of this story have been conscripted.

John Williams No Sale is really a brief satire-sketch rather than a story -- an extrapolation of the not-so-latent aggressiveness in the used-car business and in car-driving generally.

Michael Wilding's The Man of Slow Feeling has an intriguing theme -- after damage to his nervous system, a man loses his senses of touch, pain, taste and smell. Later he regains them -- but the sensations of pleasure and pain take several hours to reach his brain. If he injures himself, he has to suffer the fears of anticipation for hours between the injury and the pain. The pleasures of food and sex become dislocated for him, and only by the minutest and most attentively rigid planning can his life be made even endurable. Finally he is driven to suicide -- but is this the end of his sufferings? The detailed and sensuous style of the writing, evoking smells, tastes, etc., makes the victims wretched plight even more nightmarish.

George Johnston's Vale, Pollini! is definitely not SF, but it deals interestingly with the nature of reality in a very SF-ish way, and is a good story anyway. A group of expatriate artists on a Greek island invent a philosopher, Pollini, so that they can quote his works and thereby squelch a tiresome and cadging group of rude intellectual snobs who have been pestering them. The snobs are quite disconcerted when they hear so much about a man they have never heard of; but they are too vain to admit they know nothing of the great Pollini, and thus make themselves ridiculous to those 'in the know'.. But one of the snobs has a genuine interest in philosophy, and ends up by claiming to have met Pollini as well as read his works. It rather reminded me of those people who write in to bookshops specialising in rare books, asking if they have any copies of the "Necronomicon".

Douglas Stewart's magnificent long poem, Rutherford, of which only the first 13 stanzas are given, (rather less than half the poem) is the next entry. (NOTE: the complete poem is to be found in Douglas Stewart's "Selected Poems", published in paperback by Angus and Robertson.) Though here incomplete, this poem alone is worth one's buying Australian Science

Fiction 2. It is definitely science history, not science fiction, but deals with a matter central to the science fiction consciousness -- the discovery of atomic structure, and all that followed from that discovery. Rutherford's thoughts and feelings as he works alone in his laboratory at night are described; memories of his country childhood are evoked: the image of a water-wheel contrasted with the circular movements of atoms and galaxies, evoking mystery and a sense of Cosmic Order. He begins to realise the implications of the work he is doing on atomic structure -- the terrible power it will put into humanity's hands -- power that will almost certainly be misused.

Apple by John Baxter is an apparent science fiction story with fantasy undercurrents. It is set in a future where vegetation has grossly mutated -- apple trees are vines bearing mountain-sized apples, the edible flesh of which is mined open-cut like minerals. Man-size mutated killer apple moths are combatted by a privileged caste of professional hunters, who enter the moth's tunnels to stalk them. The mood of the story is bleak -- low living standards of the raw mining town, harsh social set-up. The moth is a female Freudian fantasy figure -- she looks like a beautiful winged girl, red-lipped, sharp-clawed and appallingly vicious -- not surprisingly, she wins, and in waspish style paralyses the hero and lays her eggs in him. (All insectoid villains in SF seem to have this nasty habit!)

Frank Roberts' A Happening is not SF but is like a Samuel Beckett story with fantasy elements. A boy has been kept alone in a room all his life, with no human contact except for a coldly sadistic couple who hate him and beat him the one occasion he tries to speak. The only non-hostile living creatures he knows are birds, with which the innocent and animal-like boy identifies totally. Eventually his keepers, fearing that he will be seen by passers-by, board up his window, leaving him in total darkness. However, he contrives to re-open the window, after years of effort, and attempting to fly away like a bird, falls to his death. It is noticed, however, that feathers had started to grow on his arms -- his total belief that he was a bird was actually altering his body. It is a very moving story, and full of ambiguities.

Lee Harding's Dancing Gerontius is also a moving story -- and another downer. Future advances in medicine will result in an increase in the number of very old people, and it will be a problem to care for such numbers. In this story, Nasty Big Brother has come up with a typically callous solution. Once a year, the old people's home puts on a compulsory party; the old people are temporarily rejuvenated with stimulants and hallucinogenics in massive doses, and further encouraged to make merry with abundant rich food, pot, drinks, wild dancing, heavy music, even sex for those still capable. The hero of this story is a former grand ballet dancer who has become too decrepit to move; rejuvenated, he is allowed the chance to give one last magnificent display of his art, until he collapses and dies from the side-effects of the wearing-off of the drugs. The over-excitement and drugs kill the other old people too, as was intended. Actually, many people would probably choose to die this way; the horror comes from the fact that in this case it is forced on them in the name of population control and by means of cold-blooded efficiency.

Steve Kaldor's Whatever Happened to Suderov? is a satirical tale of interplanetary politics, dirty tricks, and the inadvisability of double-crossing people who take 'sacred oaths' seriously. Suderov is a rather sour and devious but well-meaning politician, contesting an election in a

Solar-system tour against a very crafty opponent. The most important vote-area is the Martian colony, which has evolved a harsh survival culture to cope with hellish living conditions. Suderov promises to instal a much-needed irrigation system even if he has to dig it himself; however, as it is far too expensive, he goes back on his word after his promise has won him the election. He later disappears mysteriously and it is suspected by his speechwriter that he has been kidnapped and forced to literally dig the wells himself, to honour his ill-kept promise.

Few of the stories in the two books deal with specifically Australian themes, though the satire of censors in An Ounce Of Dissension, the denouncement of television games in It Could Be You, and the anxiety-fantasy of The Weather in the Underworld (high-living-standard society surrounded by starving 'outsiders') all reflect Australian attitudes, while All Laced Up reflects the growing interest in Australian antiques and Beach extrapolates from the surfie sub-culture. Many of the characters in other stories in the first book are Australian, but they could just as easily be English or American -- they would best be described simply as 'Earthlings'.

The aliens in Strong Attraction have a primitive culture about the same level as Aborigines, but are in no other way similar. I suspect that the alien plant in Final Flower was inspired by sea-anemones or other exotic Barrier Reef marine life-forms, and was meant to evoke an image of these. The Immortal was set in an isolated mountain valley in New Guinea, until recently considered Australian territory, and the theme of the story derives directly from the primeaval setting. Space Poem derives much of its force from the bad relationship between whites and aborigines in the past, while Robinson and Dancing Gerontius delve into other unpleasant areas -- conscription and the treatment of the aged -- that are certainly not problems confined to Australia alone, yet have been important issues here. Whatever Happened to Suderov sardonically reflects what many Australians feel should be done to politicians, and the Martian culture is an extrapolation from pioneering conditions in the outback.

The splendid Rutherford, if it can be said to be specifically national, is actually a New Zealand poem by a New Zealand born poet; so really is neither Australian nor science fiction in a specific sense, and neither is Vale, Pollini! which is set on a Greek island: but, as previously noted, the relevance of these two entries is their illumination of the other stories in these two very enjoyable and thoughtful books.

These books are currently still available, and may be obtained, if thorough, in the . . . paperbacks in the book sale section.

- Diane Southgate.

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The editor has several sets of the above books and they may be obtained for A\$5 for the two (postage included). This is mainly for overseas readers, as Australian fans may buy them from their local bookshop. - Ron.

THE R & R DEPT.

Bob Smith Science Fiction (and that term "Sci-Fi" that I notice
Box 1019, more and more really bugs me) and me, the Fringe/Fake
GPO, Sydney. Fan of Yesteryear? That's now become a phenomena that I
find almost as alien as the world of Pop music and musicians.
There is so goddamned much of it!! More years ago than I care to remember
there was a tendency to frown upon, for example, Forry Ackerman's slick
presentation of sf, sf movies, etc. It seems to me that in the year
1980 we are up to our neck in what appears to be the ultimate in "sci-
fi" cultism. It is not the sf this greybeard remembers... (Currently
SF has a certain amount of competition from current Horror though, I
note with jaundiced glee).

I'm afraid I have to admit that Australian
politics doesn't interest me, but it has little to do with my ex-involve-
ment in science fiction or fandom, nor does it indicate a lack of
knowledge. It is simply that Australian politics is, to me, mainly
mediocre men who seem bent on killing their country with their mediocrity.
As for the Unions in Australia, if I by some extreme stretch of the
imagination became holder of supreme power in this country I'm afraid
I would be ~~Extremely~~ nasty with these greedy men. But then that is me
using my imagination, isn't it, and all us science fiction types are,
are we not, imaginative? I beleive that is the only time that politics
truly belongs within the realm of SF Fandom: when it is imaginative and
reflects the future of a country, peoples or the planet.

I keep having
this niggling idea about kicking off a story that combines mundane
Aussie suburbia and a Kafka-like terror. For Example:

Ron Clarke stepped off his usual train and trotted up the
steps of Faulconbridge Railway Station. It was a fine evening, all he
had to do was pick up a loaf of Promax at the deli, relax in the bus
for ten minutes, and hey! wasn't there a new episode of "M.A.S.H. on
tonight...

He came up to the barrier, flipped open an empty wallet to
flash his weelly ticket, walked one pace through the barrier, and stopped
dead in his tracks.

The whole goddamned Station was full of uniformed Germans and
directly in front of him an SS sergeant was holding out his hand for
Ron's wallet.

In some ways its a
little unfair of the author to say: "What is Science Fiction me Me?"
since there is a tendency to shrug shoulders and answer: "Well, if he
insists that that's him there is very little point in responding to his
article and haven't ~~we~~ been through this science fiction versus literary
writing too many times before?" We could, I suppose, point out that
John Alderson has used a kind of 'literary device' (terrible term!)
with his article to get into the pages of THE MENTOR for the apparently
sole reason of reassuring himself that what he writes is 'literature'

and the hell with you out there. Underneath his, to me, disjointed style of writing I detect a tone of lecturing that irritates me. But perhaps he has improved in the years since this article, or has he perhaps gaffiated? [John's latest is in this issue - so he hasn't gaffiated. - Ron.]

I think the number of people who are 'firm believers' in the Old Gods, etc., probably read/research reasonably deeply into it; but I believe the majority of the great unwashed are not firm believers in any great diversion from the religious norm. I have owned the Abridged Edition of The Golden Bough for over twenty-five years (£ 1380 in the Maruzen Dept. Store, Tokyo. sometime in 1954) and have never read it, although its had a heck of a lot of dipping into! Modern man would no doubt find most of Frazer fairly alien and in no way part of life in the second half of the Twentieth-Century; but one wonders what the Old Gods of the old people would have to say about Modern Man's taboos, cults, beliefs and myths. For Modern Man has 'em, in abundance! All stemming mainly from the City, the Womb, that contains MM. What would He know of the Spirits of the Woods and Forests?

[Well, I've read The Golden Bough - also Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female - and they both took some getting into, but both books were written to prove (or demonstrate something - Frazer to show, logically, the threads weaving towards his goal. In the instance of those books, one has to read them in their entirety to get the point. - Ron.]

And talking of cults, myths, taboos and whatnot, Australian Fan History Part Three was read with the usual bewildered fascination. I always get the itch to roar back down those years and thrash 'em all with one of American Fandom's more irreverent fanzines of that period. A one hundred percent diet of Serconism is awfully hard to take!

....Dare I tell you the name of my last fanzine... THE PATCHED CAT NEWZINE, devoted to the white spotting genetics in the Persian cat, but By Ghod! I slipped the odd tiny bit of science fiction in and even had the beginnings of a zippy lettercol... Ho Hum.

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The science fiction hero; yes, indeed! For his amazing loin-power, consider the unending heritage of pulp science fiction, that was written for no more than the vast majority of male workers stuck in dead-end jobs with personalities no more prepossessing, where the dreams were of unreachable sirens of sex-appeal, of those voluptuous maidens that gave out more than the women they met in day to day life, tired drudges that saw no more than an endless meal ticket... The situations may have changed, we may have become more liberated, we may see beyond more than the next meal on the table (and if you can believe such debatable premises) yet our favourite reading is still governed by this image, and no amount of Star Wars, of Close Encounters will ever change the position; and I'd say that all else John Alderson has been given to understand springs from that one fact, that sf has been written by frustrated writers for their equally frustrated readers. The killing machine that would flinch from a barking dog, the galaxy wanderer that hurries home to the fireside as soon as the works hooter goes, the mental prodigy that pushes his finger

along the lines of print, that hammers on the TV set when it goes on the blink; the amazing will-power that can't refuse a second helping; the iron endurance that faints at the sight of blood; the fast-talking con man that takes refuge in endless "er...er...s" or even an "oh, ah?"; its precisely because the virtues displayed, the regions travelled are so far beyond our own capabilities, our experience, our understanding that we love SF so much!

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Had a bit of a grin over The Role of Men in Science Fiction, even if the description of the hero that John gives to me fits more the James Bond type than an sf hero as such (though I suppose JB stories are a sort of fantasy, are they not?).

Then I thought, referring to his remarks about our hero's wife or girlfriend, how many can I think of who are wed? The only one who I could think of was Conan, with a family yet. At least in fantasy many of the heroes had girlfriends, but they nearly always die, somewhat as the girls in westerns invariably got written out by either dying (a) of TB or (b) from a stray bullet, or deciding (the fools!) to go back East to 'finish their education' (and no ribald comments from the back there). Perhaps then the sf hero has to do what a man's gotta do, too?

On the other hand, are fantasy figures necessarily a bad thing? Don't we all fantasise? Admittedly most of us do not see these fantasies in book form, but of John's closing remarks (rising to the bait, aren't I), after all, there are probably more men than women reading sf, so....? Maybe they too like the sort of hero which John pokes fun at. Personally none of them have ever really appealed to me that much, nay, not even H. Solo, late of the Millenium Falcon (gasps from the audience). And speaking of H.S., did you ever meet Dave Baldock when you were in England? Harrison Ford in his SW role looked to me so like Dave, facially I mean, that I almost expected him to whip out a drawing pad and start dashing off illustrations!

As a child I played in graveyards, simply because they were about the only green places available to me in our city — there were parks, but a longish way off. Besides, the graveyards were so peaceful, and one could read the stones... we had the good old-fashioned sort in our area, with marble urns, weeping cherubs, obelisks and so on. The present sort, with rows of flat square tablets recording names is really not too inspiring. Incidentally, one of the ones I'm talking about, in Gateshead (I bet Harry knows the one, it's next to Saltwell Part) was laid out in a grid system, numbered 1st Ave, 2nd Ave (or was it Street?) etc. Hence, here in the US where many towns have streets numbered rather than named, I have to grin. (But then I have a macabre sense of humour in part).

Married heroes? Well, there was Kimball Kinneson and Dick Seaton. Though all of Asimov's heroes that I can remember didn't even have a girlfriend. I suppose they had other things on their minds. — Ron

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