

THYME

The Australasian SF News Magazine

#90

March 1993

Contributors

Terry Frost, Ian Gunn, Neil Murray, Nick Price, Alan Stewart.

Peter Bates 50 Green Street #106, Brookline, MA 02146 USA
 Donna Heenan PO Box 99, Bayswater, Victoria, 3153
 Lindsay Jamieson 6/17 Stillman Street, Richmond, Victoria, 3121
 Mark (Rocky) Lawson 9/90 Bay Rd, Waverton, NSW, 2060
 LynC PO Box 4024, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Vic, 3052
 Lyn McConchie Farside Farm, R.D. Norsewood, New Zealand
 Marc Ortlieb PO Box 215, Forest Hill, Victoria, 3131
 Karen Pender-Gunn PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130
 Lucy Sussex 430 Dryburgh Street, North Melbourne, Victoria, 3051

Art Credits

5	Thyme	Sheryl Birkhead	23629 Woodfield Rd, Gaithersburg MD 20882 USA
cover, 2, 10, 11	Thyme	Ian Gunn	PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130
3, 4, 5, 6	Artychoke	Ian Gunn	
6, 13	Thyme	Craig Hilton	PO Box 430, Collie, WA, 6225
16	Thyme	Bill Rotsler	17909 Lull Street, Raeda CA 91335 USA
1, 2	Artychoke	Steve Scholz	21 Stanlake Ave., St Marys, SA, 5042

Changes of Address:	Scott Campbell	11 Roma Avenue, Kingston, NSW, 2033
	Diane DeBellis	43 Myrtle Road, Hawthorndene, SA, 5051
	Terry Frost & Susan John	26 Head Street, Balwyn, Victoria, 3101
	David Levine & Kate Yule	1905 SE 43 rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97215 USA
	Chris Nelson	10/82 Patterson Street, Middle Park, Victoria, 3206

Address conventions: Unless specifically stated otherwise, all addresses published are Australian.

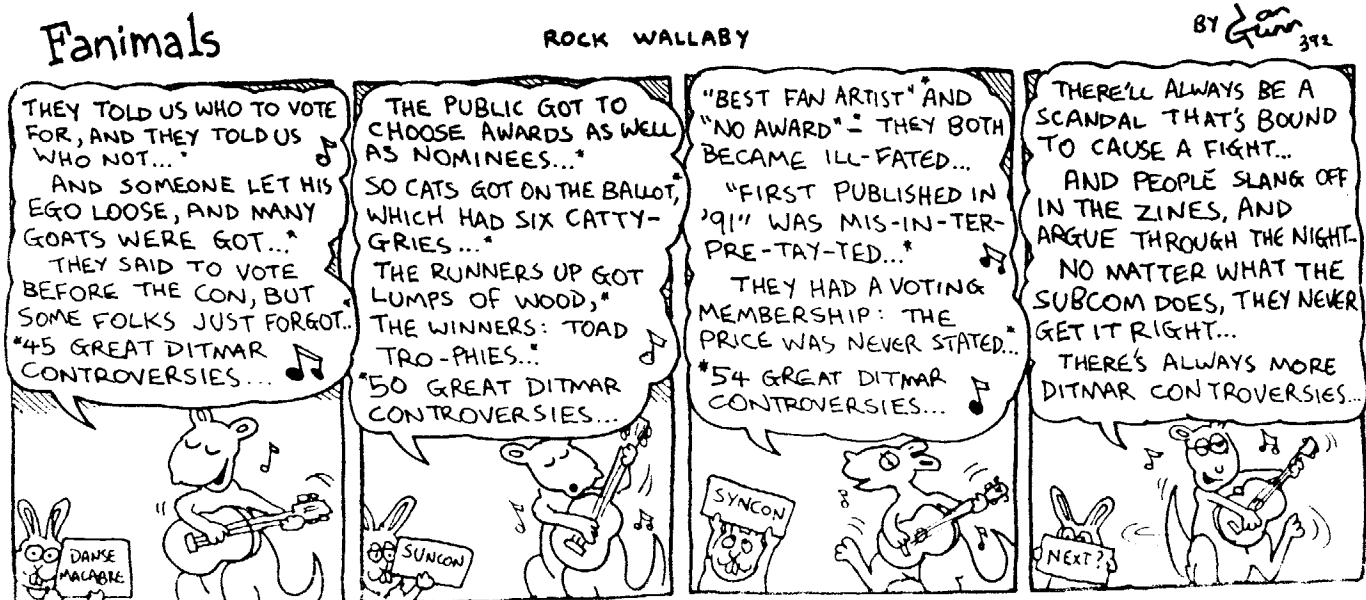
Currency conventions: \$A = Australian dollars, \$C = Canadian dollars, \$NZ = New Zealand dollars, \$US = United States dollars, DM = Deutsch Marks, NLG = Dutch Guilders, £ = UK pound.

Available for 'The Usual' (zine trades, artwork, letter, article) or a subscription of \$A 10/year (5-6 issues).
 Cheques and money orders payable to 'Alan Stewart'.

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Editorial Address: Thyme, PO Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005, AUSTRALIA

Email: Alan=Stewart@Chem_Eng2%UNIMELB@muwaye.unimelb.EDU.AU
 Phone: Home (03) 429 8354 Business (03) 344 4035



News

A giant record and collector's fair will be held at Centennial Hall, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, from 1-8 pm on 25th April 1993. The fair is limited to 230 dealers' tables, which cost \$40 (6 ft) or \$50 (8 ft) and can be booked by phoning (03) 571 3577 or (03) 848 5508. General admission will be \$2 and SF collectables are mentioned as one of the attractions.

Transworld are running a competition with a limited signed edition of The Mallorean by David Eddings as first prize, and \$200 worth of Fantasy books from Corgi as second. You have to fill in an official entry form available from book sellers, attach proof of purchase of one of Transworld's Fantasy's Finest titles (except in South Australia), answer five questions about Eddings and it closes on 2 April.

As part of the recent St Kilda Writer's Festival, of which **Lucy Sussex** was one of the organising committee, Lucy, **George Turner**, **Rosaleen Love**, **Petrina Smith** and **Paul Voermans** participated in a science fiction reading performance titled 'Future Dreams'. The scheduled launch of Paul's second novel, The Weird Colonial Boy, had to be delayed.

Fan Funds

The new North American DUFFers are **Dick and Leah Smith** who are now busily arranging to attend Swancon 18 at Easter. Voting figures available indicate a clear-cut victory.

	Australia	US	total
Smiths	38	117	155
Proctor	9	16	25
Brandt	6	39	45
Write-In	1	-	1
Hold Over Funds	<u>1</u> 55	<u>-</u> 172	<u>1</u> 227

The write-in vote received was for Mark Manning.

The Smiths take over as North American administrators when they return from their trip and the incumbent there, Art Widner, and the acting Australian Administrator, Phil Ware, will be organising a more complete report of the finalised race and reporting to the voters.

The closing date for votes in the current FFANZ race to New Zealand is 13th April. Forms will be available at Swancon, were circulated with Thyme #88, or can be obtained from the Administrators, Alan Stewart or Rex Thompson (PO Box 333, Dunedin, New Zealand).

People

The wedding of **James Allen** and **Jeanette Tipping** was celebrated on Friday 5th March. Approximately 15 fans attended and both the ceremony and reception were held at Rosalyn Court in Essendon. The couple are believed to be honeymooning in New Zealand.

Auckland fen **Keith Smith** and **Jacqui Dunford** are officially engaged and plan to marry around March/April.

Sydney fan **Michelle Hallett** appeared on the *Jeopardy* episode televised on 1st March. Finishing a creditable second she won a holiday on the Gold Coast. Previous fannish endeavours on similar shows have included **Dennis Callegari** who managed three nights on *Sale of the Century*. Apparently Peter Burns still has this on video.

The 1993 committee of Melbourne Science Fiction Club Inc. were elected late last year.

President	Apollo Zammit
Secretary	Alan Stewart
Treasurer	Glen Tilley
Public Relations Officer	Kerri Valkova
Club Activator	Derek Screen

Appointed positions:

Librarian	Karen Pender-Gunn
Melbourne Clubs Liaison	Sharon Tapner

[It's strange being second when the list is arranged alphabetically by surname. AS]

Similar elections were held at Austrek, and in December the following committee were in charge.

President	David O'Connor
Secretary	Katherine Shade
Treasurer	Sharon Tapner
Merchandise	David Scordia
Vice President/Archives	Brett Jones
Social Director	Marion MacNally
Floating/Catering	Kaye Morrissey
<u>Spock</u> Editor	George Ivanoff
<u>Captain's Log</u> Editor	David Barker

The **Doctor Who Club of Victoria** are rumored to have the following committee at present.

President	Geoff Tilley
Vice President	Richard Nolan
Secretary	Derek Screen
Treasurer	Mathew Proctor
General	Daniel O'Dwyer, Rod Scott, Michael Simpson, Phillip Nicholls, David J Richardson

Awards

1993 Nebula Awards Final Ballot

Novels

A Million Open Doors John Barnes (Tor)Sarah Canary Karen Joy Fowler (Henry Holt)China Mountain Zhang Maureen F McHugh (Tor)A Fire Upon the Deep Vernor Vinge (Tor)Doomsday Book Connie Willis (Bantam)Briar Rose Jane Yolen (Tor)

Novellas

Silver or Gold Emma Bull (After the King, Tor)The Territory Bradley Denton (F&SF, July 1992)Protection Maureen McHugh
(Asimov's SF, April 1992)City of Truth James Morrow (St. Martin's Press)Contact Jerry Oltion & Lee Goodloe
(Analog, November 1991)Barnacle Bill the Spacer Lucius Shepard
(Asimov's SF, July 1992);Griffin's Egg Michael Swanwick
(St. Martin's Press/Asimov's SF, May 1992)

Novelettes

MatterUs End Gregory Benford
(Full Spectrum 3, Bantam)The July Ward S N Dyer (Asimov's SF, July 1991)The Honeycrafters Carolyn Gilman
(F&SF, October/November, 1991)Danny Goes to Mars Pamela Sargent
(Asimov's SF, October 1992)Suppose They Gave a Peace Susan Schwartz
(Alternate Presidents, Tor)Prayers on the Wind Walter Jon Williams
(When the Music's Over, Bantam)

Short Stories

Life Regarded as a Jigsaw Puzzle of Highly Lustrous
Cats Michael Bishop (Omni, September 1991)Lennon Spex Paul Difilippo (Amazing, July 92)The Mountain to Mohammed Nancy Kress
(Asimov's SF, April 1992)Vinland the Dream Kim Stanley Robinson
(Asimov's SF, November 1991/Remaking History, Tor)The Arbitrary Placement of Walls Martha Soukup
(Asimov's SF, April 1992)Even the Queen Connie Willis
(Asimov's SF, April 1992)

Note: There are seven works in the Novella category because of a tie for fifth place in the voting, plus the addition of the jury nomination. Jury nominations were added to all categories this year.

(Thanks to Chuq Von Rospach and Clive Newall)

The finalists for the 1992 **Writers and of the Future Awards** have been announced. Quarter winners were Lisa Maxwell, Weaverville, North Carolina; Kara Wynn Long, Austin, Texas; Steve Duff, Seattle, Washington; Eric Flint, Lake Park, Illinois; and are joined by other place getters Elizabeth E Wein, Arlington, Virginia; **Sean Williams**, Cowandilla, South Australia, Australia; Vaughn Heppner, Turlock, California; Charles M Saplak, Radford, Virginia; Douglas Jole, Provo, Utah; Pete D Manison, Houston, Texas; Stoney Compton, Juneau, Alaska; and David Phalen, Junction City, Kansas. Their stories will be published in Writers of the Future Volume IX along with finalists Tom Drennan, St Louis, Missouri; John Richard Derose, Bountiful, Utah; Kathleen, Dalton-Woodbury, Salt Lake City, Utah; D A Houdek, Golden Valley, Minnesota; and Lisa Smedman, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada.

New Zealand author **Margaret Mahy** received the Order of New Zealand early in February for 'Outstanding Service to the Country'. (Cry Havoc)

The 1993 James Tiptree Jr Award for the best work of SF or Fantasy dealing with the nature of gender will be presented at Wiscon 17 to Maureen F McHugh for her novel China Mountain Zhang.

Recent genre nominations and wins for various Awards include: (Thanks Cyberspace Vanguard, CV)

Oustanding Achievement Awards for 1992 from the American Society of Cinematographers: nomination for Best Episodic Achievement: Michael Watkins, Quantum Leap.

Golden Globe Awards went to Aladdin for Best Score and Best Song ('A Whole New World' Alan Menken, Tim Rice). Robin Williams received a special award for his performance in the movie.

The NAACP's 25th Annual Image Awards saw Sister Act win outstanding motion picture, **Whoopi Goldberg** was named outstanding actress, and she was also nominated for her role as Guinan in ST TNG

Patrick Stewart has been nominated for the Best Spoken Word or Non-Musical Album Grammy for his performance of *A Christmas Carol*. Other Grammy nominations include five for *Beauty and the Beast* and the soundtrack for *Hook* (John Williams).

Cry Havoc contained the news that the UK BAFTA nominations included:

Best Original Film Music - *Beauty and the Beast* (Alan Menken/Howard Ashman)

Best Achievement in Special Effects: *Alien³*, *Batman Returns*, *Death Becomes Her*, *Beauty and the Beast*.

Best Make-up: *Batman Returns*.

They also mention the 65th Academy Award nominations included:

Best Art Direction: *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

Best Costume Design: *Bram Stoker's Dracula*

Best Make-up: *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *Batman Returns*

Best Sound: *Aladdin*

Best Visual Effects: *Batman Returns*, *Alien³*

Best Sound Effects Editing: *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *Aladdin*

TV and Film

Levar Burton will be starring in the forthcoming docudrama *Firestorm: 72 Hours in Oakland* about the fire that claimed 25 lives and 1.5 billion dollars in property in 72 hours. (CV)

Katherine Kurtz's The Bastard Prince, the third book in the trilogy begun with The Harrowing of Gwynned and King Javan's Year, has been written and should be published shortly. (CV)

Dennis the Menace the movie has finished principal photography. It's from Warner Brothers, written and produced by John Hughes. Christopher Lloyd will play a visitor to Dennis' town. (CV)

Orion will be releasing *The Dark Half*, based on the novel by Stephen King, sometime later this year. It stars Timothy Hutton and Amy Matigan, directed by George Romero. (CV)

The *Quantum Leap* animated episode has been pushed back due to budget constraints. However, airing in the US early this year will be the Marilyn Monroe episode, the two part 'evil leaper' episode, and apparently the Elvis episode has been written. Other episodes include 'Liberation' with Sam in the seventies as a bra burning women's libber, 'Blood Moon' the vampire episode, the baby and Dr. Ruth

episodes are also in the schedule. (CV)

There's talk, but no details, that 'Alien vs Predator' is under development. However 20th Century Fox is working on *Ghost in the Machine* about a woman stalked by computer controlled machines under the control of a serial killer virus. Directed by Rachel Talalay, starring Karen Allen. (CV)

Angelica Huston, Raul Julia and Christopher Lloyd have signed up with Paramount to repeat their roles and make *The Addams Family 2*. To be directed by Barry Sonnenfeld, produced by Scott Rudin. (CV)

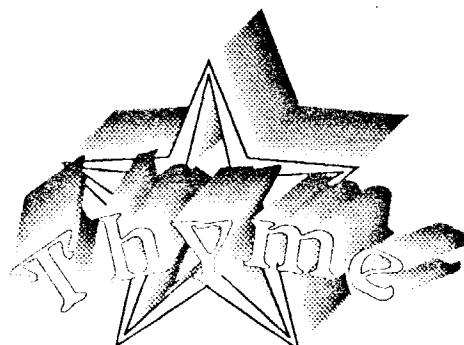
Top box office honors for 1992 went to *Batman Returns* with gross earnings of \$US 162 million.

The top ten:	\$US million
1. Batman Returns	162
2. Lethal Weapon 3	143
3. Sister Act	140
4. Home Alone 2	135 (est.)
5. Wayne's World	121
6. Basic Instinct	117
7. A League of Their Own	107
8. The Hand That Rocks the Cradle	87
9. Bram Stoker's Dracula	85
10. Patriot Games	82 (CV)

TV series in the US which haven't yet appeared in Australia, and maybe never will, include *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, *Doorways* with George R R Martin as executive producer and writer of at least the pilot episode, *Highlander*, *Time Trax*, *Space Rangers*, *Batman: The Animated Series* and *Babylon 5*.

Writing and Publishers

A competition to find the Young SF Writer of the Year is now under way in conjunction with The Australian newspaper and DEC. It is open to currently enrolled tertiary students and must be accompanied by the entry form which appeared in The Australian Computer supplement, page 22, March 2nd. Employees and family of DEC are ineligible and the prize is computer equipment. The story must be less than 5000 words and mention of computer equipment must be made. Entries close 25th May.



Lyn McConchie has sold stories including a ghost tale to the UK specialty magazine The Ringing World, a urban horror story will appear in Australian Women's Forum March zine, and another 'Tales of a Novice Farmer' to Country Living, the national NZ farming magazine.

The US pb edition of Bill, the Galactic Hero, on the Planet of Ten Thousand Bars, by Harry Harrison and David Bischoff, 5th in the series, has just been issued in the UK in Gollancz hc. Minus the 12 page art portfolio by Marc Pacella, it's also undergone a title change to Bill, the Galactic Hero, on the Planet of Hippies from Hell but Marc Pacella's wrap-around cover is maintained. Strange are the ways of UK publishers.

Starsongs, the 1993 New Zealand Anthology of SF&F Short Stories, edited by **Jean Weber**, cover art by **Chico Kidd**, will appear at in Australia at Swancon 18, Easter, and will be launched at Defcon in June. It is 100 A5 pages featuring 16 tales by different authors including **Philip Mann**, **Vivienne Plumb** (last year's winner of the prestigious NZ Reed Award), **Lyn McConchie** and **Tim Jones**.

(Thanks Lyn McConchie)

CON REPORT

by Ian Gunn

A Really Big Relaxacon

Starfest '93, Melbourne, February 20-21, Southern Cross Hotel.

Oh, horrors, here come the Americans invading our turf with their professional con-running wiles and their late-night TV advertising. Oh, woe, oh, dread, fandom As We Know It is as doomed as doomed can be. Well, no, not really, because Starfest wasn't **really** a con per se. It was a sit-back-and-be-entertained show. It was a huge crowd of mundanes-neofans-prototrekies being amazed by stuff which the average con veteran would find if not ho-hum, at least a little staid.

The costume parade only attracted four entrants. The live entertainment was woefully corny, but then you'd expect that from Trek parodies. The programming was a bit light. There wasn't much access to the main Guest of Honor (but that may have been more to do with Walter Koenig's personal tastes than the format) while the other GoH, Starlog editor Dave McDonnell, was frequently starved of attention, sitting lonesomely at his autograph table. Some of the videos contained the original commercials and were recycled from Saturday to Sunday

However, on a positive note, Starfest was **BIG**. It was estimated that over 1400 people attended, drawn in by a media blitz including tacky ads during Next Gen on

Channel Nine. The hucksters' room although, only containing tables from Minotaur Books, Alternate Worlds and Starland itself, was doing a roaring trade with customers often four deep at the stalls. Alternate Worlds assistant honcho Danny Heap claimed that this was the first con where they'd actually turned a profit - so much so that their two shops were completely stripped of Trek merchandise by Sunday. The videos featured some stuff we won't see here for years, and the GoH speeches definitely entertained (especially the bit about how gullible George Takei was when told that Star Trek VI would be in claymation. "...well, are we doing the voices?")

We were there to promote fandom. I'd guess that 90% of the paying public hadn't heard of fandom and we were out to recruit. The MSFC/Constantinople, Starwalking and Austrek had all been given tables near the entrance (FREE, I might add, future concons please note), and a paper war ensued as flyers were handed out to all and sundry. Our Learn More About Fandom mailing list ran to over five large pages and the Fandom panel generated quite a bit of interest. If ten percent of the people we gave flyers to joined our club the MSFC would almost double in size. Of course, being a Trek con, most people would be interested in Austrek, but we're picking up a few general fans from their ranks lately, so it can't hurt.

A large chunk of fans currently active in Melbourne, when waxing nostalgic, will reveal that the first con they ever attended was Aussiecon II. It was a big, confusing event at the Southern Cross with lots of American accents around, and where you didn't know anybody. In years to come it may be that a fair proportion of fandom will hark back to their first taste of congoing at Starfest. OK, so it wasn't a perfect con by the usual fannish standards but it certainly has the potential to be a shot in the arm for Melbourne fandom, and I defy anybody in this country to run an event as big.



Interview

by Alan Stewart

Dan Simmons



Alan: I read an interview with you in *Critical Wave* where you mentioned you went to Romania to research your recent book *Children of the Night*. Have you done any other similar research for other books?

Dan: Of a sort. Recently for a novella about the Sioux Indians I wandered through the black hills of South Dakota trying to find the texture and what it was like to be in a sweat lodge, trying to get a vision of the Sioux. Before that I had a whirlwind tour through Japan and Hong Kong to get contemporary texture so I could extrapolate into the future. I've got a story coming out in *Playboy* called *Dying in Bangkok*, that'll also be a novella in my new collection of novellas, and that was researched in Thailand. The collection will be out in the United States next October and should be released through *Headline* books, the distributor here in Australia, about the same time. I'm not sure if it'll be in the fall, or maybe at the first of the year.

Since *Prayers to Broken Stones* I haven't sighted any of the short fiction you might have published, and I wasn't sure whether you'd written many since then or what the situation was.

I don't have much of a backlog of other short stories. These were recently written, with the exception of the first novella *Entropy Spent at Midnight* which I published in limited edition a few years ago, which a lot of people have asked to see. I really didn't want to just reprint it in a large collection so the other four novellas were written around that theme of love and death and how they're intertwined.

It could be interesting. In *Prayers to Broken Stones* there's the teleplay 'The Offering'. I don't think we've seen that episode of *Monsters* here in Australia.

I did two episodes for *Monsters* to assure Laurel Productions I could write visually and it's fun to write

for a show that has a special effects budget of about \$15.

Have any of your books been optioned?

Several have been optioned and they've gone to the pre-production phase but then things have always folded. Right now *Children of the Night* is under option by William Aldrich, the son of Robert Aldrich, and the director they've brought in as part of that package is William Friedkin who did *The Exorcist* but they haven't started production yet.

With another short story, *Remembering Siri*, which I think was published about six years before *Hyperion* came out, just from a personal reading all the background of the *Hyperion* universe seemed to be there. Was it an extract or a stand alone short story you then expanded?

I hate to say I expanded a story because a story should stand by itself. My experience over the last few years has been that in those stories I eventually go back and write a novel around it's because I was a novelist and was never satisfied with the short version. The universe that I created for *Remembering Siri* was very expansive and actually much of it came out of an oral tradition story I told my students a couple of times over the eighteen years I taught. When you tell a single tale for half an hour a day over one hundred and eighty two days of the school year it's a very very long story. The Shrike and other elements of *Hyperion* came from this oral tale. When I write science fiction, I like to realise as much of the universe as possible but in that case I knew there was a lot more that I'd like to deal with. In fact I swore that I'd never write a third *Hyperion* book as I don't like trilogies and I don't like infinologies, but I prepared to write my next science fiction book which is about a female architect who also happens to be a messiah and the relationship with her and so forth, then after two years I realised I'd set up all the preconditions in the *Hyperion* books so there will be one final *Hyperion* book. In science fiction world building is so difficult. When you try to create a coherent universe, even three novels is not too much to use that universe before you abandon it forever.

They say the actual stuff you see in the story or novel is only ten, twenty percent of what the author's put together.

Because I've done so many books since I did the *Hyperion* books I had to go back. They're the only books of mine I've gone back and reread and my secretary and I put together a three ring binder, notebook of astronomical details of where all these worlds were and so forth about six hundred pages in the notebook

I notice that with the few books of yours I have at hand that nearly everyone's from a different publisher. There's a Tor, two Bantam, one Dark Harvest and a Headline. Has that been your choice or just the way things have gone with your agent ?

No, it has been my choice. I'd prefer to have one publisher in the United States and every country but it's an amicable relationship with Bantam Doubleday/Dell who publish my science fiction and things which are sort of hard to categorise like Phases of Gravity and The Hollow Man. Putnam prefers to publish best selling horror type novels and they tend to get best seller type horror novels from me. Love Death, my new book, which is outside of genre altogether, even though it contains one novella which is clearly science fiction and another novella which is the most horrific thing I've ever written, Dying in Bangkok, that's going to come out from Warner Books a third publisher. They're eager to publish that sort of general market.

I've heard mention of an extract from one of your books which came out as a pamphlet at a horror convention. Is that correct ?

Banished Dreams was a chapbook that I put a few scenes from the Putnam edition of Summer of Night in, they were dreams the boys had had about the future which explained some parts of the book and I'd chosen to cut it out. The editor for Summer of Night wanted to cut out what I considered all the good stuff, all the kids stuff which people write to me about, about 50 % of the book, and I put back in 49.5 % and that point five % was the chapbook for a book store in Denver.

Have you had many other problems with editors like that, where they want to cut out a lot of what you've put in ?

Everybody has problems with editors. I've worked them out pretty well but I quit working as a teacher to work on the Carrion Comfort rewrite and a publisher held on to the book for two years not knowing what to do with it. They wanted to cut it by 60 %, they wanted it as three books, then they wanted two books, and they weren't really sure what they wanted at all so I ended up putting together my life savings, my retirement money and buying the book back, repaying the advance they'd given me and going off wandering in the wilderness looking for another publisher. So I guess I've had about as much problems as you can get.

Was the idea to expand Carrion Comfort yours or did it come from a publisher ?

No it was, mine. Actually it was a proposal to Bluejay books, who'd done Song of Kali. I was going to do this large one volume mind vampire novel for them and I

handed in the manuscript after eleven months of the hardest work I've ever done, it was fifteen hundred pages of manuscript, and I handed it into the publisher one day before they went bankrupt.

Out of all the Awards you've won is there any you're particularly pleased with ?

The first book I wrote, Song of Kali, won the World Fantasy Award. Here's a book that doesn't have overtly fantastic or supernatural elements necessarily which is written about the underbelly of Calcutta, and they marketed it as horror and it won the World Fantasy Award. The first first novel to win that award I'm told. I can't say I'm not pleased with any of the awards. The Hugo award for science fiction is nice to look at, I love that chrome rocket ship sitting on my desk. Last summer I won my second Bram Stoker Award, which is a ceramic haunted house, and I've never seen it. No-one knows where it went. I got the first one because I showed up in Providence Rhode Island and put it in my suitcase personally . This one just disappeared from the face of the Earth.

We've had similar problems here with Ditmars, people have handed them back in to get engraved and the whole set's never been seen again. You've mentioned previously that Phases of Gravity is probably your favorite book, is it still your favorite ?

It's the one I was most personally involved with. I still feel I failed the least in expressing what I wanted to. So it's still in a sense my favorite child. The new book that I just finished Love Death I'm pleased with in the sense it's quite different to anything I've done. Rotating these five novellas different ways to look at the same theme and just the different styles that I was able to use in this one long collection pleases me, so I don't know if that'll last but for now that makes me happy.

Limited editions, say through Dark Harvest, which were done in the past, do you plan to continue these in the future ?

Dark Harvest published Carrion Comfort and I did a couple of other things with them, most recently limited editions have come out from Lloyd John Press which is a fellow in California who produces absolutely beautiful books. He started publishing John Cheever, John Updike and John Fowles and I think they're the kind of writer he still prefers to publish. I'm not a collector so I don't know what my plans will be for producing more limited editions in the future. But I do plan to go with someone who will produce very nice books.

I borrowed Prayers for Broken Stones from a library and was so impressed I managed to track down a Dark Harvest edition . it's a very good production.

I was wondering if you have the time to keep up with the reading you used to do.

I think I do. I'm reading all the time but I do read a large percentage of non-fiction history and so forth.

Do you plan to go back to Romania ?

Well actually I've been joking with Stephen King that if I want to make some money we'll have a Dan Simmons/Stephen King Halloween tour to Romania and Dracula's castle and people can sign up. I'll pay his way and everyone else will have to pay me and I'll arrange the details. It started as a joke but I think Steve wants to really go and see the castle now.

Have you had much interaction with him and the other writers ?

I know most of the other writers McCammon, and Dean Koontz who was very generous to me years ago when I'd just got started and I don't see him very often but we still chat occasionally. With King it was interesting because his sons had read me before he had and so did Tabitha, his wife, and when they were out in Colorado they just called and we got together and spent a day hiking in the mountains. So when occasionally Stephen King drives across country, that's his idea of a vacation, take a few days off and drive a car all the way across the United States, or motor cycle, where I live in Colorado's a good stopping place on the way across every couple of years.

I think you're about the only mainstream horror writer to tour Australia recently, none of the others seem to have visited.

Dean Koontz rarely travels, he just doesn't care to tour and I don't blame him for that. And most of the others are wise enough they just keep hunkered down over their word processors and keep writing rather than.

Article

by Mark (Rocky) Lawson

High Tech SF or: Where is the manual for this thing anyway ?

This is the scene. One of the crew of an installation deep underwater has, not very intelligently, detonated a nuclear device nearby. A shock wave ensues and the crew start emergency procedures. In this conversation, copied verbatim from the video, the male is reading from a computer screen and the female is operating an adjacent console while the station gets hammered.

Male: Stand-by.
 Female: I got it.
 Male: Switch to VFL overlap.
 Female: Check.
 Male: Binary status.
 Female: Overlap.
 Male: Ok. Adelphi fraction?
 Female: We've got 17.
 Male: Reversal of unit.
 Female: (panic) Where?
 Male: System C!
 Female: Check.
 Male: Ok. I'm on standby power. I'm good for two minutes only.

Of course this is all meaningless. I don't know what adelphi fractions, a VFL overlap or binary status might be, or why they are of such importance at a moment of crisis, deep underwater. But as the actors act out the sequence with some skill and the special effects are tolerable, I was impressed by the scene.

Later, I tried my own procedure with the washing machine.

Clothes in and set.
 Check.
 Set dial to super wash.
 Check.
 Set load dial to large.
 Check.

Somehow it did not have the same affect, perhaps because there was no nuclear shock wave, but I still like it when the actors interact with the machines in a dramatic way - when they talk technology. Another scene which sticks in my mind is in *Aliens*, the second film in the Alien trilogy, when the drop-ship full of would-be rescuers falls from the mother ship into the planet's atmosphere and the pilot, grasping her joystick with a confident smile, says, "in the pipeline five by five". I don't know what that phrase might mean, either, except as an acknowledgment that the drop ship is on course, but it sounds good. There should be more of such talk - especially for technology hacks like myself who can barely handle the Dosshell on Dos 5. ("But I clicked the 'print' panel with the mouse twice and nothing happens.")

However, even hacks like myself can recognise some problems with the way that the above film, *Deep Star Six*, portrays the use of technology. Complicated procedures tend to be forgotten unless they are practised regularly, or the operator knows the basic principles behind the procedures. Faced with operating a complicated but obscure instrument panel which they may not have looked at for weeks most crewpersons would curse and look for the manual. Not only do the crew of *Deep Star Six* seem to know how to operate all machinery on board without hesitating or referring to manuals, even in the most extraordinary

situations such as being attacked by a giant sea creature (a lot happens in the film), they do not hesitate to modify the machinery on the spot.

Much the same could be said for the two other movies I saw of Hollywood's recent underwater cycle (around 89-90) - *Leviathan* and *Abyss*, of which *Abyss* was by far the best. The other two are underwater versions of *Alien* without the style or the top-rate actors. Whatever their standing as actors all personnel seem to know exactly how to operate any machinery to hand - what buttons to push and what code words to yell. But although the use of complicated machinery and procedures lends extra drama to a tense situation, such as being in imminent danger of being eaten or blown away, it seems unlikely that the future will be full of difficult to operate equipment.

Computer software, for example, is certainly becoming more complicated but it is also (on the whole) becoming easier to use, even for hacks like myself, thanks to stuff like mouse driven screen pointers and pull down menus. Manuals are still necessary, of course, but more as a list of hints to improve use of the software and as a guide to the software's operating principles, where principles are much easier to remember than complicated, meaningless sequences. As computers can also be relied on to undertake intricate procedures, a much more likely response of a crewman of the future to an emergency will be to rush to the nearest terminal, and activate the emergency response program. Complicated equipment panels would be sealed up or hung with signs saying "Do not touch. Maintenance personnel only." Commercial aeroplane technology is certainly heading down that path, although it still has a long way to go. A standing joke among avionics buffs, and perhaps a premature one, is that soon all that will be needed to fly an airplane is a man and a dog. The man will feed the dog, and the dog is there to make sure the man does not touch the controls.

Whatever the future of aviation technology, computers could save a good deal of trouble underwater. More advanced models may even save crewpersons the trouble of dealing with a computer screen. Faced with an emergency, those aforementioned crewpeople might simply have to yell "emergency. Do something, computer, quick," before running away (monster response), or hanging on for dear life (nuclear explosion shockwave response). The computers of the future will then, hopefully, do whatever is required. The main job of the humans will be to look scared.



**Have Gull,
Will Travel!**
a column by
Terry Frost

Every couple of months I go up to Alan Stewart, the editor of this esteemed journal and say, with Jimmy Olsen brightness: "So, Chief, what do you want me to write about?" Alan adopts an expression like he's got something stuck between two rather sore molars and says "Whatever you want." This time, however he mumbled something about the Ditmar categories as selected by the Swancon committee.

Now I've only seen the categories once briefly. There's one for Best Periodical. When I heard this, I suggested that a sanitary napkin would win. The word over this side of the great Australian desert is that this one's a bit of lubricant to ensure that *Eidolon* gets another award. I don't know whether it is or not. If it is, then yet another bunch of fans have blithely ignored the responsibilities of the trust we put in them. If not, then I apologise for what follows.

Once a year, the science fiction community in this brown unpleasant land gets together and ostensibly gives a token of appreciation of excellence in the various endeavours we pursue within our subculture. In whatever idealistic pattern survives in our individual minds, we all want the Ditmars to go to the most meritorious people and works. That's cool. But when committees bend the categories toward a certain work, that's not encouraging excellence, it's politics and politics is one of the filthier games on this planet. Beside it, dwarf-tossing, mud-wrestling with people you don't like and goldfish swallowing are genteel pursuits. Politicking in what is essentially a hobby is not only as dumb as a piece of pumice, it's the pastime of insecure and limited minds. Even if the Swancon committee is totally innocent of all blame, they should be extraordinarily careful to be seen to be impartial.

If there has been some jockeying to get *Eidolon* the award, then that particular trophy isn't worth the costs of recycling the wood, metal and stone it's made from. Yeah, the recipients might get a pretty mantelpiece ornament but karmically, it would rate no higher than one of those tourist trash snow-domes you get from Falls Creek or Mt Hotham. I'm not saying that the editors of *Eidolon* had anything to do with this vague, well opened category of Best Periodical appearing on the ballot but the possibility exists that their friends and supporters may've done them a disservice by tilting the odds. For a start, it implies that *Eidolon* can't stand up for itself in a vox populi. Some well placed supporters of *Eidolon* don't have enough faith in its

excellence to let it run its own race. But this kind of thing has happened once or twice before. It probably will again. Fools endure.

The other category that has bees in various bonnets is Best Artwork. On this one, I was tempted to get a tattoo of Gort from *The Day The Earth Stood Still* illustrated on my arse and get it nominated. (But people would probably lament that not enough fans have seen it.) This category, given a loose interpretation, could include graffiti (there's a great one of the alien from *Predator* on Balaclava Station here in Melbourne), sandcastles, filksongs (perish the thought), body painting, mime, making a Mr Spock out of marzipan, or, most interesting of all, software.

The problem here, as it is perceived by the punters, is that at the last NatCon in Sydney there was much discussion about separating the Fan Artist / Pro Artist into two distinct awards. At the Business Meeting, permission for an extra award was given with the expressed purpose of splitting the Art category. This came up under the context of having Michael Whelan as GoH and was definitely worth discussing as art is too often perceived as a peripheral area of SF. Now Perth, within its rights but outside the spirit of that extra category, has broadened a single art category even further. So some of the rabble are mumbling darkly into their acne or getting all arch about the tyranny of distance and the things that a desert climate may do to the human cerebral cortex.

Perhaps the best future compromise is to include a Best Professional Artwork and Best Fannish Artwork category, keeping the spirit of the Syncon 92 resolution and yet broadening the definition of art in fandom. Why not be able to include computer art? It could be distributed as widely as the artist will permit, almost everyone can view it and with the ever increasing resolution and number of colours of computer screens, it can be every bit as beautiful as a canvas. Hey, we're all cutting-edge kind of people, aren't we?

So what do I think about the Ditmar Categories in Perth? Well, there's a difference between being wrong and being unwise. There's also the problem of limited communication across the desert between fans. I think that it's in the best interest of both sides of the country to forge stronger links. Those of us who attend Swancon, should work to that end. I'm trying not to assume deliberate finagling here. Occam's Razor says that the Ditmar Subcommittee probably didn't know about the Artwork discussions and therefore instituted the Best Artwork category. As for the Best Periodical. I think it's a good con that does something deliberately controversial half a year or so before the event. It gathers interest in the otherwise blase populace and it gives the attendees good conversation starters (while they're slumped in the chairs in the lobby of the hotel pawing through their

program books, discussing Anne McCaffrey novels and scoffing fast food / sipping chablis in the fern-bedecked hotel restaurant with people who know what deconstructionism is / sitting in the spa massaging someone's feet / waiting for their program item to begin because the chairperson is hung over).

See some of you in Perth.



In Memoriam: Roger Weddall

I would also like to add my own personal, belated note of mourning over the death of Roger Weddall. My memories of Roger, whom I met through the old Melbourne Uni SF Association, include an episode of bunny hopping together down King William Street in Adelaide during one of the Adelaide uni conventions in the 70s, and the 121 page (I estimate) letter he wrote to me while he was travelling around Europe. Looking through this epic now, 12 years or so later, I see that amongst other curious items it contains a translation of a German Superboy comic (the comic was enclosed with the letter), a hand-drawn map of a fantasy country which he was designing as part of the D&D craze of the time, and a Hungarian Tourist Board booklet. That was Roger. I shall miss him. (Mark "Rocky" Lawson)

In tribute to Roger (and to fulfil his obligations as DUFFER), a fanzine of Roger stories is being put together - stories about Roger, told by Roger etc., etc. This is in place of his Trip Report and will be sold to raise funds for DUFF.

I'd like to include as many of his postcards from the DUFF trip as possible - contributions solicited - to create a 'trip report' section. If you received a postcard from Roger, please lend it to me.

If you have a photo or a story you would like to include, please do so before the middle of March (this gives me time to compile the zine and hit them with it at the natcon over easter).

All materials borrowed/lent will be returned unharmed.

Send contributions to: Jane Tisell
4/2 Namur Street
KEW EAST Vic. 3102
AUSTRALIA

Thyme LoCs

Harry Andruschak

PO Box 5309, Torrance
CA 90510-5309 USA

Received the bundle of four zines, quite a package to arrive at my PO Box. As always it was good to receive so much news from a fandom that is not covered by most USA fanzines, such as File 770. Still, the death of Roger Weddall has been noted and commented on in many of the faanish zines here and there is no doubt he will be missed. Alas, I never had a chance to meet him in person.

An update to the several comments about the prospects of Australia winning the 1999 Worldcon bid. Actually, they should be quite good. The deadline for filing for the 1996 Worldcon has passed and only Los Angeles has an official bid on the final ballot. So you should get a lot of support from the Los Angeles fans in 1996, especially if Australia has a strong presence at the Worldcon that year. Lots of site selection ballots can be picked up there.

It does not seem as if any other foreign bids are active for 1997 and 1998. Since it will have been four years since the last overseas Worldcon (1995 in Glasgow), many US fans will be ready to support another overseas bid. As for *Space: 1999* taking over the Worldcon, I doubt it. I'd suggest making fun of it in your advertising. Start with every satirical writer you can find writing funny things about it and don't let up. And of course make sure that actual programming is about *Space: 1999* except some sort of panel along the lines of **worst SF TV**. That will give *Lost in Space* fans a chance to come out of the woodwork.

By the way, in listing my zine in Thyme #89 you told fans to write for availability. Essentially it is for trade. I have a print run of 150, about all I can afford, and just trade for about every zine I can find willing to trade with me. Postage costs are also kept down. Some day when my cash-flow improves I hope to be able to increase the print run. That situation would improve if I didn't have to spend money on such things as medical bills. Health insurance in the USA doesn't cover all the ills and problems of a 48 year old like me. And since I live in Southern California an automobile is a requirement. It takes money to buy, service and put gas in the car, as well as automobile insurance and repair costs.

I will also be spending in March driving up to Seattle to visit my mother and sister. I'll be attending Norwescon which will probably be the only out-of-town SF con that I attend in 1993. It should be enough to inspire me to write up another fanzine for trade. I have no chance to attend Westercon or Worldcon. Come to think of it I haven't been back to San Francisco since 1968. I spent three years there, 1966-68, at Treasure Island when I was in the US Navy. Great place for a

young sailor with lots of money. I lost my virginity there (many many times), got drunk a few times a week on other people's donations, and attended many of the cultural events 25 years ago. I wonder how much it has changed ?

Sheryl Birkhead

23629 Woodfield Rd
Gaithersburg MD 20882 USA

The stamp on this letter is one of a set of five 29¢ 'space fantasy' ones, by SF artist Stephen Hickman, which go together to make up a scene. Nigel Rowe stopped off at the Lynches and seemed to call Chicago...now I know what happened. Just when I used the address I HAD for him. So the Ortliebs now have two offspring to contend with.

Looking at the Canadian fan awards I don't know any of them or the zines mentioned, so close and yet so far. I'm not a media freak but I've heard the title *Babylon 5* though this is the first time I've read anything about it. Does ASFN use illos ?

[ASFN does indeed use illos if I can fit them in. The last couple of issues really haven't had that much room, except for one large illo used, or the narrow horizontal white column sections available haven't fitted the illos I have on hand. ASJ]

Damien Broderick

23 Hutchinson Street
Brunswick East, Vic, 3057

Thanks for the copy of your January mailing. It's been quite a while since I've seen Thyme and the re-appearance of ASFN is welcome. Nick Stathopoulos's in memoriam for Roger was eloquent and touching, and surely spoke for all of us; Ian Gunn's fanimals send-off was also somehow inimitably Australian and right.

The December Ansible you included took a swipe at me; I imagine that's why you mailed out to me. For what it's worth, I'll include below the text of my recent February reply to Dave Langford. If he decides not to use it in his March issue, you might care to run it in full in your own zine so Oz readers at least will see it.

My comment to Ansible was as follows:

Yvonne Rousseau's cool sarcasm skidded off the facts. True, I've just published The Lotto Effect, to the predictable derision of all great minds. Also true, though **not** mentioned, is that the original software for this stupid quest was written by Linton Rousseau, and that an earlier draft benefited from the careful reading of Linton's then pre-Foysterized sister Yvonne. Also true and not mentioned is the fact that Yvonne's husband John Foyster, who now sees right through it all, originally suggested that I look at the Lotto data as a natural experiment on psi claims (PK and/or precognition). Not true at all is her claim that Bruce

Gillespie whinged that I'd 'left out all the Scientific Explanation of how [my] conclusions follow from the data.' Actually, Bruce's review says this: 'People who want to win at Lotto will also need to read the last chapters and the Appendices. Here Broderick lost me, since I have an almost complete inability to understand anything relating to statistics or mathematics.' Despite this touching admission, Bruce concluded that my book 'gives no firm answers, but is one of those few books that can shake its readers into asking new questions.' Foyster, who does know a lot of stats, suggested a non-psi explanation for part of my results but got very sour around the bile-emitting organ when I mentioned that his terrific insight actually seems to **support** a paranormal interpretation. Ho hum.

[You just happened to be on the mailing list Merv used for the copies he sent out. The fact that the Ansible included referred to you was incidental. AS]

Sean McMullen

GPO Box 2653X
Melbourne, Vic 3001

Regarding Thyme #89, page 5, paragraph 3: if that well-known Australian SF writer is meant to be me then the facts need a little fine tuning. The story (*Killer*, Yggdrasil July 1980) was accepted by Roger Weddall, but he handed the editor's position over to Dennis Callegari before it was published. *Killer* was published under my own name, incidentally, not a pseudonym. For me at that time Roger's acceptance of *Killer* was the greatest thing that happened all year, so thanks again Roger. By the way, among the 'In Memoriams' nobody seems to have mentioned that Roger wrote SF himself. Ten of his stories were published in Yggdrasil.

Mark Manning

1709 South Holgate
Seattle WA 98144 USA

Thanks for sending the zines. ASFN: good review zine, with some of the best reviews being yours. Thyme: good newszine. I didn't comprehend why Boris Sudyuk's article was included, but Terry Frost's more than made up in delight for my moments of incomprehension.

[Boris's article was amongst a bundle of stuff handed over by Mark Loney, and as overseas information has been rather sparse in Thyme of late I thought it was worth running. AS]

Lloyd Penney

412-4 Lisa St
Brampton ON Canada L6T 4B6

Many thanks for Thyme #89 and ASFN #49. Having Ansible as a supplement is a good idea. Via the fannish grapevine and via other envelopes Langford will cover the globe with his wee zine. A shame that

much of the written material Mark gave you was unusable. Plenty of stuff dates so quickly. You're lucky though, in Canada we haven't had a newszine in a couple of years. Two fanzines tried to pick up the slack but their circulation is limited.

Magicon was a good time for me. I spent much of my time working in the Treasury department and plugging our Saturday night Slightly Higher in Canada party. People with a Canadian flag sticker on their badge made it to our party. The announcement of Glasgow for the 1995 Worldcon was welcomed by many. The choice of Gerry Anderson as one of the GoHs puzzled some. (In October Nottingham won the right to hold the 1995 World Mystery Convention ... seeing how many SF fans also read mysteries some of them are wondering how to afford to go to Britain for six weeks, with a world convention at each end of their stay).

At one time or another we take fandom too seriously, as Terry Frost says. However, we're normal in that we take pride in the things we do, which includes the work we do on cons, which is what the latest snarks in Oz fandom have been about. Fandom allows us 'maladjusted' types to do something creative and fulfilling, and if someone tries to tear our work down we're going to get upset. Sure we can say "get a life, it's only fandom", but we shouldn't expect reactions to be different simply because some work you've done is fannish in nature. Those who tear down and criticise because it's only fandom need to get in touch with reality, especially in the area of human psychology. The feuding has to tone down, but the criticism and bitching and assumption of ulterior motives has to tone down too.



Tim Richards International Language Institute
Mohamed Bayoumi St, Off Merghani St
Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt

I've been wracking my brain trying to think of what to put in a LoC to Thyme. Should I attempt any comments on Australian SF fandom when I feel so out of touch? Or perhaps talk about the everyday events of Egyptian life? Or even go off on wild tangents about earthquakes, pyramids, souqs and strange men in mosques asking for baksheesh? Maybe I should play it safe and talk about science fiction in Egypt.

To put it plainly it's not very visible. English language novels are available here but they're composed of an equal mix of detective stories, thrillers and fat glossy romance books. The only SF books we've seen on sale are in French, a language which still has some use here. (Does this say something about the relative places of SF in different cultures? Maybe not.) English language movies are likewise in wide circulation in cinemas and on TV, but we haven't noticed any SF ones yet (with the exception of *Edward Scissorhands* which was on when I arrived in Egypt, but I missed it!). Science fiction doesn't seem to exist as a genre in Arabic writing either, as far as I can tell.

Luckily for us there are a couple of libraries with some SF available for borrowing. The American Cultural Centre has a reasonable fiction section of which there is a small amount of SF. We're currently working our way through their half-dozen volumes of Nebula Award Winners. Who knows what will happen when we finish them? Back to the Asimovs, I suppose...(sigh). Why the lack of interest in SF here? One reason is religious: the Koran teaches that only Allah knows the future so anyone claiming to 'foresee' the future can be seen as blasphemous. A more powerful reason is social: most of the Egyptians I have met are honest, friendly and generous, but they are **not** people who do a lot of thinking about the future. The concept of time is very fluid here, and anything unfinished today can always be done bukra (tomorrow), insha'Allah (God willing). Perhaps this concentration on the present denies an interest in SF.

Also, lateral thinking is frowned upon in the education system here. Linear thinking, rote learning and knowing 'the right answers' is the way to succeed. But to enjoy SF I think you need a certain amount of lateral thinking, don't you? Anyway, we soldier on bravely and have been enjoying a lot of non-SF books and movies in the process (*Strictly Ballroom* is on at present). We've been appreciative of the odd fanzine sent our way as well, even if they sometimes seem like strange reminders of a dimly remembered previous life! All I can say is: keep 'em coming!

Dale Speirs

Box 6380, Calgary
Alberta Canada T2P 2E7

Thyme #89 memorialises Roger Weddall, and he seems a good chap indeed. One advantage of being involved in fanzine publication is that one has a better chance of being remembered by posterity. Roger has left a written legacy that will ensure his name crops up from time to time fifty years from now, just as we remember those who pubbed fifty years ago. Con-goers who never went near a zine may have been hearty good fellows like him, but will be quickly forgotten.

Terry Frost was on about mediafans taking over Worldcon. I for one would be delighted to see this happen. I am not a media fan, I don't own a television set and only go to a few movies a year. *Star Trek* and company may be interesting to watch occasionally at a friend's house or at a con video room, but I have nothing but pity for get-a-lifers who dress up in Federation uniforms. But then Worldcons are out of control and deserve to die an ugly and protracted death. Massive mobs, ridiculous Hugo results, costume masquerades, leave them to the media fans. Let GUFF, DUFF and TAFF be won by Trekkies. Let the fanzine Hugo go to a Trekzine, and the prozine Hugo to Starlog. Make the break complete so that the zine pubbers can go back to the original spirit and size of cons where good conversation in the consuite is valued over a costume contest with overweight barbarian princesses and toothpick-skinny Darth Vaders. Let me attend a con again where the dealer bourse has only books and magazines, not buttons, photos, RPG games, and a chap selling crystals and New Age (rhymes with sewage) geegaws. Bah humbug and all that.

Harry Warner Jr

423 Summit Ave
Hagerstown MD 21740 USA

An envelope bulging with fanzines, mostly from you, is at hand and my thanks and some comments, are in order. The January Thyme contains richly deserved nice things about Roger. Unfortunately I can't do anything for you about the additional material about him that you requested. We never met and exchanged only a few letters, so I'm not in a position to contribute specific and personal memories of him. I hope the special fanzine involving his last trip overseas will eventually appear in print. Even better would be a memorial fanzine along the lines of the one published to honor Rick Sneary last year. It contained both articles about Rick and reprints of a few of his best fanzine writings.

A movie version of Stranger In A Strange Land sort of staggers the imagination and sort of frightens me besides. If the film should inspire as many youngsters as the novel did a few decades back youth culture may undergo major revisions, probably for the worse.

Boris Sidyuk's description of SF in the Ukraine is fascinating for its disclosure of so many authors and books known to virtually no fans previously in English-speaking lands. The standard plot during the Stalin era that he describes (invention made by some Soviet scientist wanted by foreign spies to turn into a weapon against the USSR) is remarkably close to the plot that has served for countless serial episodes and movie-length features on television except that in the US it's an invention being usurped by nasty military men who want to turn it into an awful weapon instead of a beneficial device.

Australia is probably wise to seek a Worldcon for 1999 because that might be the last Worldcon. I suspect Western civilisation will crumble as soon as the year 2000 arrives for psychological reasons. Everyone has trouble in January remembering to write the final digit in the new year correctly, even though the previous year's digits were in use for only twelve months. Now think about the fact that every year has begun with the digit 1 for dozens and dozens of generations. Everyone who uses the calendar in use in the greater part of the world has a long line of increasingly remote ancestors who also began to write the year in the date with a 1. By now this has become an acquired characteristic like the inborn fear of falling or terror of loud noises. When January 2000 arrives, the culture shock involved with the new date will be too great for most people to endure. Minds will snap, split personalities will become universal, civil wars will break out, anarchy will reign supreme, and fandom will decide to postpone the next Worldcon until barbarism recedes.

Finding an article by Merv Binns in ASFN was a fine surprise. It might console him to know that Australia isn't the only place where SF series with appeal to youngsters are programmed unreasonably late at night. Maryland's public television network has been running *Dr Who* episodes at 11 or 11.30 pm on Saturdays for several years. The only possible explanation for this strange situation that I've seen advanced involves the fact that public television stations in the US don't sell commercials but do give a few seconds of publicity to the fact that this or that series has been made possible by a financial grant from some business or industry. The *Dr Who* episodes are financed by a couple of SF bookshops in the Washington D.C. area and someone conjectured that these stores don't contribute very much money and therefore the programs they support aren't shown at a time when viewership would be large.

The reviews in this issue were well done although I must admit that only one book that is reviewed seems like a volume I would like to read, Red Mars. I have been faithful to my neveragain vow which I pronounced after finally reaching the last page of the only Donaldson book I ever suffered through and I'm violently allergic to SF which "is partly a commentary

on contemporary society and its ills". Maybe I should write a separate LoC to Ian Gunn about the first issue of Artychoke but I've never been able to comment rationally on in fanzines and this issue contains only about half a page of prose, not enough material to inspire a LoC. Convey my apologies to Ian and offer my assurance that I did look at the pictures.

[ABC TV commenced screening Dr Who on March 8th, at the even more unsocial hour than Maryland, of 4.30 am. The first episode of 'Castrovalva' was broadcast and video taped by many fen. ASJ]

Postcards to Artychoke

Craig Hilton

PO Box 430
Collie, WA, 6225

I very much enjoyed the first edition of Artychoke, not least because it reminded me what a jolly rump 'Space-Time Buccaneers' was. A rough'n'ready masterpiece of comic story telling. Loved it ...like *Time Bandits* without the *savoir faire*.

Can I be the next feature artist ? It'd tie in well with the Natcon. I'll just knock up a self-portrait..

Regards and mouthfuls of fur

[No, sorry, you can't be the next feature artist. My aim for at least the first three or four Artychokes is to feature the works of artists who are (relatively) unknown to general fandom - or at least the readership of Thyme - and I'm afraid that Ditmar winning Fan GoHs don't qualify. However, I hope to feature you, and several other well-known artists in the future. IG]

Leah Zeldes-Smith

17 Kerry Lane
Wheeling, IL
60090-6415, USA

Owe you more than this note but ... Re Artychoke - how about including the featured artists' addresses so other faneds can have a crack at him or her ?

[Artychoke is very limited for space. However with every edition mailed out comes several supplements, one of which is called Thyme. It is in this zine that the addresses for all the artists who contribute to these publications are printed. You will find Kerri Valkova's address on page 2 of Thyme #89. Thyme will also print LoCs addressed to Artychoke so keep those cards and letters rolling in folks, IG]

WAHF John Bangsund, Graeme Batho, Scott Campbell, John Deane, Diane Debellis, Roy Ferguson, Tom J Fulopp, Roelof Goudriaan, Craig Hilton, Matthias Hofman, George Ivanoff, Dr A Khan, Mark Loney, Lyn McConchie, Sean McMullen, Nick Price, David L Russell, Justin Semmel, Alan Wilson, Sally Yeoland

Trading Thyme

Magazines that have arrived in the Thyme PO Box since the last issue. Full address and ordering information will only be given if it's a new zine since the last semiannual full listing was done (#89 January 1993). Thanks to all who sent them and if I've cribbed some news without supplying due credit I apologise. Thyme is available for 'The Usual' which includes air mail trade, contribution (letter, article, artwork) and editorial whim.

Black Light #2 (Feb 93)

Clubzine - edited by Sean-Paul Smith, for Gallifrey.
GPO Box 910G, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000, Australia.
Subscription: \$12 (\$10 concession).

Busswarble #3 (Jan 93)

New address: 14 Bolden St, Heidelberg, Vic, 3084

The Captain's Log #186-187 (Jan-Feb 93)

Critical Wave #28 (Nov 92), #29 (Feb 93)

Cry Havoc Dec 92/Jan 93, Feb 93

Cyberspace Vanguard #1 (Dec 92), #2 (Feb 93)

Newszine/netzine - T J Goldstein
PO Box 25704, Garfield Heights, OH 44125 USA
Available in trade and for contributions.
cn577@cleveland.freenet.edu

Data Extract #98 (Jan/Feb 93), #99 (March 93)

Doxa! Sept 92, Oct 92

Perzine - Roman Orszanski.
PO Box 131, Marden, South Australia, 5070
LoCs welcome, available for 'The Usual'.

Doxy Dec 92

Perzine - John Foyster
PO Box 3086, Grenfell St, Adelaide, SA 5000
Maybe available for 'The Usual'

Ethel the Aardvark #47 (Feb 93)

File 770 #96 (Jan 93)

Fosfax #163 (Jan 93)

The Frozen Frog #5 (Jan 93)

Ita #10 (March 93)

APAzine (AAPA) - Mark Manning
1709 South Holgate, Seattle WA 98144 USA
Available to APA members and editorial whim.

Jupiter Jump #12

APAzine (SAPS) - Mark Manning
1709 South Holgate, Seattle WA 98144 USA
Available to APA members and editorial whim.

Mimosa #13 (Jan 93)

Opuntia #11.1-#12 (late Jan 93 - late Feb 93)

Perzine - Dale Speirs
Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7
Available for trade, LoC or \$1 cash.

Our House (Bento special) Jan 93

Phoenixzine #36, #42-43 (July 92, Jan-Feb 93)

Pink #13 (Nov 92)

Perzine - Karen Pender-Gunn
PO Box 567, Blackburn, Vic, 3131.
Available for 'The Usual' and editorial whim.

Science Fiction #33 (1992)

Review zine - Van Ikin. Department of English,
The University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA
6009. Subscriptions: Australia \$A 16/4 issues.
Overseas: \$A 24/4 4 issues (\$A 36 airmail).

Science Fiction Chronicle Jan 93, Feb 93

Shards of Babel Dec 92

Stet #7 (Dec 92)

THREADS Newsletter #22 (Jan 93)

Warp #88 (Dec 92/Jan 93)

Also received: **Defcon Pr#3** (Jan 93),
Dudcon 1 Program Book (Dec 92),



For those interested, Thyme #89 had the following distribution: (Doesn't include 'one-off' 270 distributed by Merv)

Australia	155	Sweden	1	UK	8	New Zealand	9
Honk Kong	1	Netherlands	1	Canada	4	Czech	2
USA	33	Germany	1	Egypt	1	Ukraine	1 (217)

Social Calendar

6 March	Austrek	Informal meeting. St Luke's Hall, Dorcas Street, South Melbourne
6 March	Star Trek	Film marathon. 6.30-10.30 pm. AMP Cinema, 535 Bourke Street, Melbourne
19 March	MSFC	Sausage sizzle. St David's Hall, 7.30 pm, 74 Melville Rd, West Brunswick
26 March	MSFC	Karaoke night
2 April	MSFC	Handy Craft Night
16 April	MSFC	Best and Worst Night
23 April	MSFC	Video Night
30 April	MSFC	Auction
7 May	MSFC	Games Night
14 May	MSFC	Learn Your Fortune
21 May	MSFC	Coffee, Cake and Conversation
28 May	MSFC	Swap Meet

The **Nova Mob** meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6 pm for a meal at Erawan Restaurant, Swan Street, Richmond (Victoria) and further discussion later. So far organised meetings for 1993 are:

7 April Wynne Whiteford 'Bloopers in SF'

Critical Mass usually meet to discuss SF and debate first Wednesday of each month, from 8 pm at SA Writers' Centre, 242 Pirie Street, Adelaide, with dinner beforehand at East End Coffee House.

7 April	Michael Clark	Differences with the Difference Engine
5 May	Yvonne Rousseau	On <u>Hyperion</u> and <u>The Fall of Hyperion</u>
2 June	Roman Orszanski	Some Post-Modernist Writings

The **Phoenix SF Society** meets in Wellington, New Zealand, at 7.30 pm on the second wednesday of every month in the Hotel St George, cnr Willis and Boulcott Street. Their current program for 1993 is:

10 March	Science in SF	11 August	SFX
14 April	Costuming	8 September	Board games
12 May	AGM / Games	13 October	Tag Wrestling
9 June	Guest speaker	10 November	Literary Panel
14 July	Phillip Mann Speaks	8 December	Quiz / Christmas party

1993 CONVENTIONS

SWANCON 18 (1993 Aust NatCon) 8-12 April

Ascot Inn, 1 Epsom Ave, Belmont, Perth. **Theme** Apocalypse Wow! **GoHs** Terry Pratchett, Robert Jordan, Craig Hilton. **Invited Guests** Lewis Morley, Marilyn Pride, Paul Kidd **Banquet** No details. **Membership** \$A 70 to 7-4-1993, \$A 75 at door. \$A 20 per day. Child (aged 5-15 on 8-4-93) \$A 25. \$A 20 Sup. **Room Rates** Ascot Inn (Con hotel), no rooms remaining. Bel Eyre, (twin only) \$A 37.50 per person per night, inc. breakfast **Official Carrier** Australian Airlines. **Hucksters** Professional \$A 65.00, Member \$A 35 or \$A 10 per day. **Publications schedule** PR #4 late Jan 1993, Program Book deadline 22-2-93 **Mail** PO Box 318, Nedlands 6009

DOCTORCON '93 9-11 April

Auckland University, Auckland. No GoHs. Video making, writers' workshop, lots more. **Mail** PO Box 26-311, Epsom, Auckland, New Zealand.

CONQUEST 1993 9-12 April

Melbourne University High School, Parkville, Victoria. Role playing (15 games), Demonstrations (4 games), Miniatures (Painting and 8 games), Freeforms (5 games), Board Games. Open gaming area, Art show **Mail** PO Box 64, Forest Hill, 3131 **Phone** (03) 758 9097 6-8 pm ONLY

HOLODICTION '93 14-16 May

Gazebo Hotel, Sydney. **Theme** Star Trek **GoHs** No details available **Banquet** \$A 41 **Membership** \$A 95 to 30-11-92, \$A 110 to 31-1-93, \$A 130 to 31-3-93, \$A 145 to 1-5-93. Supporting \$A 35. Family memberships available. Only 50 Day memberships available. **Room Rates** No details available. **Dealers' Room** No rates available. Cocktail Party, Costume Show, GoH Talks, Panels, Auction, Autograph Session. **Mail** PO Box 157, Matraville, Sydney, NSW, 2036 **Phone** (61 2) 311 3841 **Fax** (61 2) 311 3607

STAR WALKING II 21-23 May

Townhouse Hotel, 701 Swanston St, Melbourne. **Theme** All Things Strange & Alien. **GoHs** Howard Kazanjian, Lisa Cowan. **Membership** \$A 100 (\$A 120 door), \$A 60 day. \$A 35 Sup. (Pay to SWII No. 2 a/c) **Banquet** \$A 40. **Hucksters Tables** \$A 130 pro (includes 1 membership), \$A 50 fan. Free display room (8 sq feet) for Clubs **Room rates** \$A 93 twin share, payable to 'Townhouse'. Breakfast \$A 9 (continental), \$A 12 (cooked). **Charity** Cancer Institute at Peter McCallum Hospital. Masquerade, THREADS Awards, Art Show. Auctions. **Phone** (03)-755-2361 bh **Mail** PO Box 118, Springvale, Victoria 3171.

DEFCON (1993 New Zealand National/Australasian Media NatCon) 4-7 June

Hotel St George, Willis St, Wellington. **GoHs** Larry Niven, Julian May, D C Fontana, David Gerrold, Dennis Skotak, Mark Harris, Gail Adams. **Membership** \$A 55 to 3-6-93. \$A 60 at door. \$A 25 Sup. \$A 5 voting. **Theme** It's nothing personal. **Charity** Wellington Astronomical Society. Roleplaying and Boardgaming available - special gaming membership \$A 25 until 3-6-93, \$A 30 at door. **Banquet**, auction. Short story, film/video, filk singing, cartoon, quiz, artwork competitions (con members only). **Hucksters Tables** \$A 20 amateur (club, con), \$A 80 professional. **Room rates** \$NZ 60 sing, \$NZ 75 twin/doub, \$NZ 85 triple. \$NZ 20 deposit required. **Mail** PO Box 30-905, Lower Hutt, New Zealand

WHOVENTION II: CONTROL (1993 Australian Dr Who Convention) 9-11 July

The Waratah Inn, 22-28 Great Western Highway, Parramatta. **GoHs** Lalla Ward (commitments permitting) **Membership** \$A 60 to 8-7-93, \$A 65 at door, \$A 35 day. **Dinners** Friday barbecue \$A 18, Saturday banquet \$A 40. **Room Rates** (per night) Single \$A 85, Twin \$A 45 per person, triple \$A 35 per person. **Charity** Save the children fund **Mail** PO Box 223, Wentworth Building, Sydney University, NSW, 2006, Australia.

CONFRANCISCO (1993 WorldCon) 2-6 September

Moscone Convention Centre. **GoHs** Larry Niven, Tom Digby, Alicia Austin, Wombat (jan howard finder). **Toastmaster** Guy Gavriel Kay. **Dead GoH** Mark Twain. **Rates** \$US 125. \$US 25 Sup, Age 0-8 free with guardian, Unattended Child 7-12 at 1-9-93 \$US 30. At the door: \$US 145. **Mail:** 712 Bancroft Rd, Suite 1993, Walnut Creek, CA 94598, USA. Internet: confrancisco@tgv.com Australian agent: Stephen Boucher, GPO Box 580D, Melbourne, Vic. 3001 Phone (03) 280 0111.

CIRCULATION 6 December. Canberra SF Society relaxacon.

1994 CONVENTIONS

CONSTANTINOPLE (1994 Australian Natcon/Australasian Media Natcon) 1-4 April

Southern Cross Hotel, Melbourne. **GoHs** William Gibson, Colin Baker (to be confirmed), Bruce Gillespie, Narrelle Harris **Membership** \$A 90, sup \$A 20, voting \$A 5. At 1-4-94 Child aged 5-12 \$A 40, under 5 free. **Charities** Cat Protection Society of Victoria, Royal Melbourne Zoo. **Mail** PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005, Australia.

INTERACT (SF Media Convention) 23-25 April

National Convention Centre. Contact: GPO Box 2080, Canberra, ACT, 2601, Australia.

SILICON (1994 New Zealand National) 3-6 June

Bentley's Hotel (ex Alglen), Dunedin. **GoHs** Barbara Hambly, Tom Cardy. **Membership** \$NZ 40, \$NZ 10 sup. T-Shirt \$NZ 30 **Mail** PO Box 333, Dunedin, New Zealand

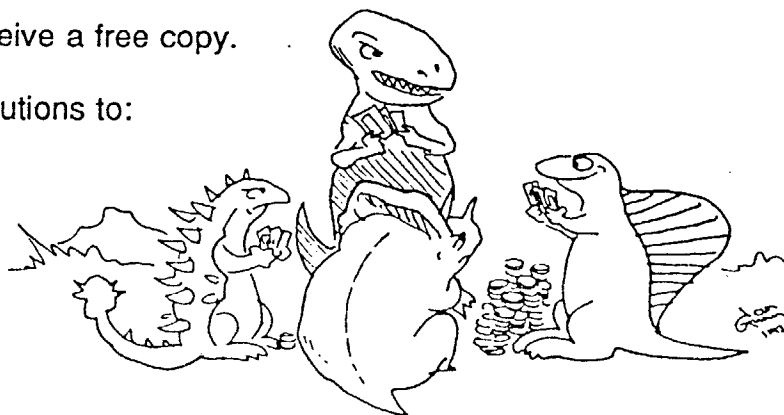
Calling all artists, budding artists and anyone who thinks they can draw in any way... Karen Pender-Gunn is putting together a colouring book of dinosaurs to raise money for FFANZ - the Australia and New Zealand Fan Fund (send a fan to New Zealand for a convention and the next year a New Zealander comes to Australia).

It's called The ever so slightly unusual dinosaur colouring book and will be a continual fund-raiser.

Contributions are welcome from anyone, just make sure they are photo-copyable, are signed, and depict a dinoasur doing or wearing something unusual.

All contributors will receive a free copy.

Please send all contributions to:
Karen Pender-Gunn
PO Box 567
Blackburn
Victoria 3130
Australia



by late March 1993.

AUSTRALIAN



NEWS

Number 51

March 1993

Edited by

Merv Binns
PO Box 491, Elsternwick,
Victoria 3185

Alan Stewart
PO Box 222, World Trade Centre
Melbourne, Victoria 3005

Science fiction and fantasy readers have never had it better. So many books are being published it is almost impossible to keep up with them. Those who can afford to subscribe to Locus or SF Chronicle at least have it all at their fingertips, but knowing what is available doesn't mean you can get hold of it or even try to read it all. In one way or another I am trying to tell readers what is coming out. I am running a little late listing all of the Australian releases, but it will be out in March and I will do an American listing in April. Meanwhile we will list all the local releases that we know about in each issue of Thyme and the books that the publishers send us, as well as reviewing as many as we can.

Things have changed a little in the last year or two. We are now seeing American and British original titles a lot quicker than we used to. Titles like Anne McCaffrey's Damia's Children was a January release from Del Rey in the USA but is already on sale here in the Bantam UK edition. The Gripping Hand by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle, which is the sequel to The Mote in God's Eye, is due for release from Harper Collins in April under the title of The Moat Around Murcheson's Eye. It would be interesting to know which one is the authors' preferred title. This parochial attitude of the British publishers has not reared its ugly head for a long time, as far as I can recall. I remember Gollancz changed one of Ursula LeGuin's titles because they considered it was grammatically incorrect. Still a rose is still a rose ..

Anne McCaffrey and Robert Jordan were leaders in the Bestseller List of SF&F books recently. McCaffrey was top of the paperback listing with All the Weyrs of Pern, which was also on local release from Corgi in January, and Jordan's The Dragon Reborn and The Shadow Rising were on release in Orbit from Penguin in Australia. Other titles on the Bestseller List included The Summer Queen by Joan D Vinge, due from Pan in April, The King's Buccaneer by Raymond E Feist (Grafton - Harper Collins), Crystal Line by Anne McCaffrey (Bantam UK - Transworld) and two by Roger Zelazny Prince of Chaos and Bring Me the Head of Prince Charming with Robert Sheckley but no indication of when we will see local/British release. The former of course being the latest title in the 'Amber' series:

Popular author for many years **Keith Laumer** died in January. He was 67. He is best known for his Retief series, a new title listed for May release is Retief and the Rascals from Baen. Other people in the field who have passed on recently include Japanese author **Kobe Abe** whose works include Inter Ice Age 4 and The Woman of the Dunes which became a famous movie. Abe was 68. Publisher and SF&F book dealer **Gerry De La Ree**, who published limited edition books including the art work of Virgil Finlay and Ed Cartier (Cartier was awarded the Life Achievement Award at the recent World Fantasy Convention), died of cancer of the lymph glands at 68 on January 24th. He had what was regarded as probably the best collection of SF&F books in the world.

The Farseekers by **Isobel Carmody** is on the short list for the Childrens Book Award and is due for current release by Penguin/Puffin. The second in a fantasy series, following Obernewtyn, it is a good example of the genre being a fantastic journey adventure. Carmody was born in Wangaratta, Victoria, and has also lived in Geelong. **Paul Collins** is putting together an anthology of SF stories by some of the best known Australian writers, such as Jack Wodhams, David Lake and Greg Egan, and other perhaps lesser known people. No release date is set for this anthology, Antipodes One. Paul has sold another story in his Calloway series to Aphelion publishers for inclusion in an upcoming anthology. His previous Calloway story was published in the magazine PC User last year, which was a breakthrough opening the door to PC User publishing further SF stories by other authors since. Following publication of The Destiny Makers by **George Turner** in February by Avon/Morrow, this publisher has also bought a story by George tentatively titled Genetic General. They are also considering doing a new edition of the Aphelion collection A Pursuit of Miracles. George will be attending Readercon in July this year and Anonova expect to be organising some signing sessions for him in the USA. The latest issue of **Van Ikin's** review magazine Science Fiction #34 arrived this week. The familiar yellow cover has been with us for quite a few years, but Van announces some changes coming up with Keira McKenzie taking over as layout and design adviser. This issue features 'SF by women' with reviews of books by Australian SF&F women writers and an article by Jean Weber. Merv

1993 Author Tours

Terry Pratchett, noted for the hilarious 'Discworld' series, the 'Nome' series and helping out with divertissements such as *Good Omens*, will be Guest of Honor at Swancon 18 in Perth at Easter. He will also be visiting Alice Springs, Canberra and Sydney.

Robert Jordan, author of the 'Wheel of Time' series, will be touring Australia at Easter attending Swancon 18. A signing session has been arranged at Minotour Books, Melbourne, for Tuesday 13th April 1993.

Julian May and **Larry Niven** will be Guests of Honor at Defcon '93 in Wellington, New Zealand, early June.

Local Releases

hc = hard cover tpb = trade paperback (C format) pb = paperback (mass market, B format)

February 1993

<i>Borders of Infinity</i>	Lois McMaster Bujold	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>My Teacher Flunked the Planet</i>	Bruce Coville	Lion	pb	\$ 6.95
<i>In the Red Lord's Reach</i>	Phyllis Eisenstein	Collins (Grafton)	hc (tpb)	\$35.00 (\$19.95)
<i>After the King</i>	Martin H Greenberg (ed)	Pan	tpb	\$14.95
<i>The Revengers</i>	Lawrence James	Corgi	pb	\$ 6.95
<i>A Time of Omens</i>	Katharine Kerr	Grafton	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Hawk's Grey Feather</i>	Patricia Kenneally	Grafton	pb	\$12.95
<i>Narnia series</i>	C S Lewis	Lion	pb	\$ 7.95 ea
<i>Truckers</i>	Terry Pratchett	Picture Corgi	tpb	\$ 6.95
<i>Witches Abroad</i>	Terry Pratchett	Corgi	pb	\$10.95
<i>The Dragon Token</i>	Melanie Rawn	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>Beyond the Sea of Ice</i>	William Sarabande	Bantam Domain	pb	\$12.95
<i>Corridor of Storms</i>	William Sarabande	Bantam Domain	pb	\$12.95

March 1993

<i>Dr Who: Transit</i>	B Aaronovitch	Target	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>Guide to the Earth and Space</i>	Isaac Asimov	Fawcett (Century)	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>Time Like Infinity</i>	Stephen Baxter	Grafton	hc	\$35.00
<i>The Broken Goddess</i>	Hans Bemann	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Stone and the Flute</i>	Hans Bemann	Penguin	pb	\$14.95
<i>Low Flying Aircraft</i>	J G Ballard	Flamingo	pb	\$12.95
<i>Unlimited Dream Company</i>	J G Ballard	Flamingo	pb	\$12.95
<i>Venus Hunters</i>	J G Ballard	Flamingo	pb	\$12.95
<i>Mars</i>	Ben Bova	New English Library	pb	\$14.95
<i>The Talismans of Shannara</i>	Terry Brooks	Legend	tpb	\$17.95
<i>The Farseekers</i>	Isobel Carmody	Puffin	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>The Witchlord and the Weaponmaster</i>	Hugh Cook	Corgi	pb	\$14.95
<i>The Invisible Man: The Life and Liberties of H G Wells</i>	Michael Coren	Bloomsbury	hc	\$49.95
<i>Dr Who: The Celestial Toymaker</i>	Davis & Bingeman	Target	pb	\$ 6.95
<i>The Einstein Intersection</i>	Samuel R Delany	Grafton	pb	\$11.95
<i>The Dragon Knight</i>	Gordon R Dickson	Grafton	pb	\$11.95
<i>A Dark and Hungry God Arises</i>	Stephen Donaldson	Fontana	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Losers</i>	David Eddings	Collins (Grafton)	hc (pb)	\$35.00 (\$11.95)
<i>Dr Who: The Ark</i>	P Erickson	Target	pb	\$ 6.95

<i>Worlds Enough and Time</i>	Joe Haldeman	New English Library	hc	\$39.95
<i>Overtime</i>	Tom Holt	Orbit	hc	\$40.00
<i>Ye Gods!</i>	Tom Holt	Orbit	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Fourth Doctor Handbook</i>	Howe, Stammer & Walker	Target	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>Battletech: Decision at Thunder Rift</i>	William H Keith Jr	Penguin	pb	\$14.95
<i>The Complete Film Dictionary</i>	Ira Konigsberg	Bloomsbury	hc	\$45.00
<i>Shadowrun: Changeling</i>	Chris Kubasik	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Fruiting Bodies and Other Fungi</i>	Brian Lumley	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Damia's Children</i>	Anne McCaffrey	Bantam Press	hc	\$32.95
<i>The Hymn</i>	Graham Masterton	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Blood Trillium</i>	Julian May	Grafton	pb	\$11.95
<i>Fortalice</i>	Martin Middleton	Pan	pb	\$11.95
<i>Red Dwarf Omnibus</i>	Grant Naylor	Penguin	tpb	\$16.95
<i>Achilles' Choice</i>	Niven & Barnes	Pan	tpb	\$22.95
<i>Dream Park: The Voodoo Game</i>	Niven & Barnes	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>Wraiths of Time</i>	Andre Norton	Pan (Tor)	pb	\$ 8.95
<i>East of Ealing</i>	Robert Rankin	Corgi	pb	\$10.95
<i>Candlelight</i>	Phil Rickman	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>Down and Out in the Year 2000</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	Grafton	tpb	\$14.95
<i>Anvil of Ice</i>	Michael Scott Rohan	Orbit	pb	\$11.95
<i>Queen of the Night</i>	Alan Savage	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Children of the Night</i>	Dan Simmons	Headline	pb	\$12.95
<i>Labyrinth of Night</i>	Allen Steele	Legend	pb	\$11.95
<i>The Hacker Crackdown</i>	Bruce Sterling	Viking	hc	\$35.00
<i>Fade Out</i>	Patrick Tilley	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>Dracula Lives!</i>	Peter Tremayne	Signet	pb	\$12.95
<i>Player Piano</i>	Kurt Vonnegut	Flamingo	pb	\$12.95

April 1993

<i>Fractal Mode</i>	Piers Anthony	Grafton	pb	\$10.95
<i>Yatterling and the Jack</i>	Clive Barker	Eclipse	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Stephen King Story</i>	George Beahm	Little Brown	pb	\$35.00
<i>Golden Apples of the Sun</i>	Ray Bradbury	Grafton	pb	\$11.95
<i>The Small Assassin</i>	Ray Bradbury	Grafton	pb	\$11.95
<i>Parasite</i>	Ramsay Campbell	Headline	pb	\$12.95
<i>Shadowrun 6: Never Trust an Elf</i>	Robert N Charrette	Roc	pb	\$12.95
<i>Gai-Jin</i>	James Clavell	Hodder & Stoughton	hc	\$39.95
<i>Domes of Fire</i>	David Eddings	Grafton	pb	\$12.95
<i>Silly Cow</i>	Ben Elton	McPhee Gribble	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Brooch of Azure Midnight</i>	Anne Gay	Orbit	pb	\$12.95
<i>People of the Fire</i>	K & M Gear	Pan (Tor)	pb	\$10.95
<i>The Samarkand Solution</i>	Gary Gygax	Penguin	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Shadow Rising</i>	Robert Jordan	Orbit	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Saga of the Gray Death Legion</i>	William H Keith Jr	Penguin	pb	\$13.95
<i>Savage</i>	R Laymon	Headline	hc	\$39.95
<i>In the Moons of Borea</i>	Brian Lumley	Grafton	pb	\$11.95
<i>Dragonflight</i>	Anne McCaffrey	Eclipse	pb	\$12.95
<i>Dr Who: Vengeance on Varos</i>	P Martin	Target	pb	\$ 6.95
<i>The Moat Around Murcheson's Eye</i>	Niven & Pournelle	Harper Collins	hc	\$39.95
<i>Crybbe</i>	Phil Rickman	Macmillan	hc	\$35.00
<i>Dr Who: The Twin Dilemma</i>	Eric Seward	Target	pb	\$ 6.95
<i>The Grail of Hearts</i>	Susan Schwartz	Pan (Tor)	pb	\$ 9.95
<i>Kingdoms of the Wall</i>	Robert Silverberg	Grafton	pb	\$12.95
<i>The Angel of Pain</i>	Brian Stableford	Pan	pb	\$12.95
<i>Nine Gods of Saffadne</i>	Antony Swithin	Fontana	tpb	\$19.95
<i>The Summer Queen</i>	Joan D Vinge	Pan	tpb	\$22.95
<i>The Earth is the Lord's</i>	James William	Orbit	pb	\$12.95
<i>From Thief to King</i>	Michael Williams	Warner	pb	\$10.95

Reviews

Reviewers: PB = Peter Bates IG = Ian Gunn DH = Donna Heenan
 LJ = Lindsay Jamieson L = LynC NM = Neil Murray MO = Marc Ortlieb
 KP = Karen Pender-Gunn NP = Nick Price AS = Alan Stewart LS = Lucy Sussex

Crystal Line by Anne McCaffrey

AS

DH

Bantam Press (Transworld) hc November 1992
 271 pages \$29.95 ISBN 0-593-02554-7

With Crystal Line, the third in her 'Crystal Singer' series, Anne McCaffrey returns to the planet Ballybran and her character Killashandra. It's an older, but not much wiser, Ms Ree who's the protagonist of this tale - still plagued by the singer's chronic memory problems and determined to stick to the old ways. An off-planet mineralogical discovery and economics force a change in her thinking, and indeed in her whole society.

The new "jewel junk" tries to liven up this story, but Ballybran seems as tired and jaded as Killashandra. Even with background knowledge from the earlier volumes there's nothing here to grab the reader and enthral. Cutting crystal, Killashandra and Lars arguing, storms in the ranges - it's been told before. A workable addition to an established serial, but not brilliant or innovative.

The Brentford Triangle by Robert Rankin

IG

Corgi pb November 1992 237 pages \$10.95
 ISBN 0-552-13842-8

In a previous preview of the trilogy's previous book I compared Robert Rankin's The Antipope to "Last of the Summer Wine meets Terry Pratchett". With this, the second of the series, a better description would be "Last of the Summer Wine meets the Weekly World News". In a wild mosaic of pop-occult phenomena we encounter the discovery of Noah's Ark, the ghost of Edgar Allen Poe, the invention of the teleport system, a levitating camel, an ancient subterranean race of Jack Palance look-alikes, the Count of Saint Germaine, mysterious video games, an invading alien fleet and a darts champion who has sold his soul to the devil.

We also see the return of those two decrepit heroes Jim Pooley and John O'mally, continually on the look-out for a free drink, when they're not playing allotment golf. Rankin's forté is the amazing range of bizarre characters he creates and the ridiculous situations he puts them in. He sets the stage with Brentford being a thoroughly mundane, slightly dishevelled, community but with so many strange happenings going on that the Fortean Society would give up in despair. Despite the spaghetti-like plot it's a light read, and good if you're after something amusing.

Winds of Change by Mercedes Lackey

Daw hc October 1992 449 pages \$US 20.00
 ISBN 0-88677-534-5

With a deft and gentle hand Mercedes Lackey brings you into her world of magic! A land where gifted with the power means carrying the burden of responsibility, of duty to land and people. A place where blood, pain and death give power to those who would misuse it.

Winds of Change is the middle book in a trilogy set in Lackey's fantasy world and it is entrancing reading. Her characters are so strongly drawn, each an individual, and each suffering from one human misery or another. But do not despair, Lackey does leaven her character's miseries with a smattering of humour and wit.

In the first book, Winds of Fate, Lackey introduced to us her two main characters. Elspeth, daughter and heir of the current queen, who desires no more than to be treated like an adult, and Darkwind a mage of no small power who has repudiated his power for fear he can no longer trust magic to do his bidding. Trouble has come to the borders of Valdemar, trouble carrying the taint of blood magic, and there are no longer mages in Valdemar who can fight magic. It is left to Elspeth to search for a mage who is willing to teach the long forgotten magic. Elspeth's journey brings her path to cross with Darkwind's. Elspeth discovers that she has magic and, with tuition, will be a mage equal to any. Always supposing she can swallow her pride!

Winds of Change continues the story of Elspeth's learning and, a strong willed and stubborn woman, she does not take easily to the role of student! It takes hardship and the death of friends for Elspeth to lessen her pride and learn what she needs to save her mother's kingdom, and to find the love that's been sitting under her nose all along!

Lackey develops the tension well, bringing her story to fever pitch time and again, but she weaves her story between too many characters for my comfort. No sooner does Elspeth's story reach climax than the focus shifts to Darkwind. I found that hard on my nerves - the story is too intense for such shifting and intertwining. She would do better to focus on one character for longer and not keep her reader hanging in mid-air so often! That small fault did not keep me from thoroughly enjoying her books!!

Starseed by Spider and Jeanne Robinson MO

Ace pb September 1992 248 pages \$US 4.99
ISBN 0-441-78360-0

This really is a Clayton's Heinlein novel - the sort of Heinlein you have when you aren't having a Heinlein. Unfortunately it's a recent Clayton's, as opposed to a mature old tawny Heinlein. It shares many of the strengths and weaknesses of The Cat Who Walks Through Walls. What isn't so evident is its debt to the Robinsons' Stardance to which it is, at least superficially, a sequel. Initially Starseed is good solid science fiction combining a look at the technology required for living in space with an examination of the personal problems that people have adapting to these radically different conditions. The use of Zen as an aid to adapting to the nature of freefall was also intriguing. There are strong echoes of the Heinlein juvenile The Menace from Earth in the environment created for the training of Stardancers. The Robinsons aren't subtle in acknowledging their other debts to Heinlein. We find references to "grokking" and a quotation from The Notebooks of Lazarus Long "It's amazing how much mature wisdom resembles being too tired."

The book, in the best of Heinlein traditions, uses a narrator and develops an interesting group of characters. It then finds an excuse to have them all screwing one another in the spirit of the latter-day Heinlein. The strangest of the quartet is Kirra, an aboriginal woman determined to become a Stardancer so that she can follow the songlines into space. I find it sad that two expatriate Americans, living in Canada, should have to develop one of the first believable aboriginal characters in science fiction. Damien Broderick had one in The Dreaming Dragons but, while Terry Dowling has dealt with many aboriginals in his Tom Rynosseros stories, none come across as real people in the way that Kirra does. Dowling is too interested in myth-making to create real people. The Robinsons obviously did their research while in Australia a few years back.

Unfortunately, towards the end, the novel descends into an underworld suspense yarn in which the narrator becomes embroiled in terrorist plots to destroy the Stardancers and take over the world. That and the *deus ex machina* ending destroy what felt like a good thoughtful action science fiction novel, in much the same way that Heinlein stuffed his good start in The Cat Who Walks Through Walls, the similarities even extending to having all the characters from the previous book becoming involved in the denouement. (I was frightened, for a moment, that Mike Callaghan was going to be there too, but the Robinsons didn't take their Heinlein worship quite that far.)

Having gotten over this need to write a tribute to the sort of crunchy science fiction that Bob Heinlein used

to write before the war, I hope that the Robinsons go back to exploring their own songlines. That the novel reads as well as it does is a tribute to their ability as a writing team. I wish they would turn their skills to more original material.

LJ

Deep Freeze by Zach Hughes

Daw pb November 1992 255 pages \$US 4.99
ISBN 0-88677-539-6

This novel can be split into three parts. The first part is like good old fashioned space opera with a pair of retired folks setting out into unknown space in their small ship, exploring for new worlds for human habitation and exploitation. When they disappear this leads to the second section, resulting in what seems, initially, to be fortunately resourced, talented members of their family (two of their children) seeking after them, resulting in tragedy.

With the loss of the second pair of family members the novel has already moved into the third phase, that of being a modern SF story - deriving from the nature of events and less due yet still dependent on the identity of the main participants principally being the other children of the old folk. Without giving anything away there is an irony in the selection of who has the final confrontation with the revealed enemy.

So to recapitulate, there are three parts or aspects - space opera, tragedy, modernity - and in a sense also a fourth part - the foreshadowed unwritten consequences of the final encounter of the book between man and alien. This is definitely not a must read book, but if you are wondering "what the hell does this review mean?", then I recommend you read the book to find this out.

LJ

The Crafters 2: Blessings and Curses

Christopher Stasheff & Bill Fawcett (Editors)

Ace pb August 1992 \$4.50 275 pages
ISBN 0-441-12131-4

The original Shared World series, Thieves' World, generally contained the same characters in the same setting for different stories. The Crafters has different characters in different settings (a trend among modern shared world series) united by a genetic bond - the talent.

With eleven interesting stories in this anthology, not by the usual big name authors, the series shows promise. I wonder if it is continually going to diversify or whether it will shape towards a situation where the talents of all the far-flung Crafter brood are required to act together

PB

Weird Family Tales by Ken Wisman

April 1993 72 pages \$US 3.75 ppd
Write: Earth Prime Productions, Box 29127, Parma,
OH 44129, USA

This is a very unusual short story collection, not because of its subject matter (although that too is unusual), but because of its unifying theme. The seven stories involve an unnamed, first person narrator embarking on strange adventures with members of his extended family. Usually he discovers that one of them is in trouble and gallantly tries to rescue them, fortified by his "unending supply of martinis" and olives. Sometimes rescue is impossible; other times his cousins or sisters just don't want to be rescued.

For example, in *Brother Endle* a lonesome giant of a dentist finds a huge cocoon growing in his study. Neither the narrator or Endle spend too much time trying to speculate where it came from. Instead, when it hatches, Endle writes back to the narrator about the progress of his new butterfly, who, it turns out, is half-woman, a nymph with butterfly wings instead of arms. With his eerie and compelling descriptive powers, Ken Wisman not only constructs a vivid image of this lady, he also reveals dramatic reasons why Endle would give in to his obsessive love.

Have you, dear reader, ever wanted to change places with another being or spirit? Just to see what it would be like? But perhaps you haven't wondered what the consequences would be. Mr Wisman explores this theme in several of these tales, notably *Uncle Endrik* and *Sissy Nin*. In the latter story, the narrator's sister, through her compassion, takes in a wounded stray cat, not knowing it is obsessed with a hatred for mankind. Nin relates how the two souls have experienced "transference". She initially relishes being a cat - who wouldn't? - then discovers the evil deeds Hecate had been doing while in her body. Suddenly the narrator realises what's happening and, using a clever ruse, tries to save Nin's soul.

The narrator's Uncle Endrik faces a similar problem after coming back from the mountains of Tibet. He tells how, through meditation, he created a demonic monk who is now pursuing him to take over his soul. Using a winning combination of research and vivid imagination, Wisman fills the tale with fearsome details of the evil spirit Maya. "'Remember he isn't real,' whispered Uncle Endrik '...whatever isn't real can be wished away.'" But not, I would add, before scaring the daylight out of you and the darkness into you.

My favorite is the two-part story *Captain Seofon*. Here Wisman pulls out all the stops, populating the tale with

a magical miniature shark showing its fin in a teacup, then growing large and nasty; vanishing wedding guests; dreams that are portals to other dimensions; and the ghost of the long-dead Captain Seofon. There is mystery, horror, and rapidly-paced excitement in this tale, as the narrator battles a deadly illusion. I think that *Captain Seofon* would make a splendid movie. The scene with the growing shark tearing up the room is as good as anything I've read in a Stephen King novella. Mix in the climatic battle with the expanding black hole and the narrator clinging, Ahab-like, to the shark and you have a great fantasy horror movie, maybe even an animated one.

These stories are classic page-turners, unencumbered by ponderous explanations or endless mystical musings. My only objection is that there aren't more of them. I'm looking forward to seeing some more of these eccentric characters reappear elsewhere. Perhaps a novel?

NM

Kingdoms Of The Wall by Robert Silverberg

Harper Collins hc December 1992 288 pages
\$32.95 ISBN 0-246-13719-3

Ever wondered what was over the next hill? Views of far distant lands with strange sights and stranger people? Consider a mountain, call it Kosa Saag. A mountain so immense it would take seven years to climb to the summit for those who could do it. Each year forty men and women are sent from their homes to ascend the mountain, few return, fewer still will tell the same story of their journey. All who return are changed. Why do this? For once a man climbed to the summit, met with the Gods, and returned, bringing with him knowledge that changed their lives for the better.

The greatest pleasure in Silverberg's book was his detailing of the people. They too are a mystery and slowly Silverberg reveals the secrets of their thoughts, lives and beliefs. A joy to discover but Silverberg dallies too much on his creations and in the beginning his novel dawdles to the point of boredom. As the pilgrims start their journey so too does the story pick up pace until in the end it rushes through to the conclusion, all the while with me now wishing he'd slow down a bit.

The closing chapters I found disappointing, as by this stage we were meeting other pilgrims who had reached the summit but wouldn't tell what they had found. If this was to engender a greater sense of mystery in the reader, in my case it failed. Silverberg had already well and truly telegraphed the ending. Overall I cannot recommend this book, parts of it intrigued me but the disappointments outweighed the pleasures.

Illicit Passage by Alice Nunn

LS

Women's Redress Press tpb November 1992
251 pages \$14.95 ISBN 1-875274-09-X

Alice Nunn was responsible for *The Multicultural Experience*, a superlative novella published in the Women's Redress collection *Mirrors*, which should have figured in the 1989 Ditmar shortlistings, but to my knowledge did not receive a single nomination. It is possible *Illicit Passage* may, er, redress this injustice, but I doubt it - not even the Tasmanian SF fans seem aware of this talent in their midst. How many SF authors live in Tasmania? One, I suspect. How many SF authors are called Alice? Two - the other was James Tiptree Jr.

Illicit Passage presents an ambitious concept: the history of a subversive and hacker, whose motto might well be 'the opportunities for bugging up the system are almost endless' (p. 11). Nunn perversely makes things difficult for herself by presenting her Gillie almost entirely offstage, recalled by security files, memoranda, and overwhelmingly the testimony of her younger, more conservative sister. The setting, the most SFnal feature of this novel, is a colony, apparently on the moon, with some historical Australian features: Gillie belongs to an underclass of 'nowts', descendants of convicts shipped off-world.

The stage is thus set for a political thriller with sentiments and savagery not a million miles removed from George Turner although I detect no obvious influence. Chicanery, genocide, pollution and truth serum all make appearances, although underlying all is Gillie's yippie humour. This feature is one infinitely improbable yet fully lived-in, because it is depicted with so much integrity.

Illicit Passage is one of those rare books more rewarding on a second read than the first, because much (though not all) obscure first time round becomes clearer when revisited. Seldom have I read a book more bursting with potential, even it seems not entirely realised in the narrative. Alice Nunn's next book should be a humdinger.

DH

Chronicles of the Custodians: by Martin Middleton

1: Circle of Light

Pan pb 1990 379 pages \$11.95 ISBN 0-330-27150-4

2: Triad of Darkness

Pan pb 1991 337 pages \$11.95 ISBN 0-330-27238-1

3: Sphere of Influence

Pan pb 1992 330 pages \$11.95 ISBN 0-330-27296-9

I am of two minds - should I recommend the Martin Middleton trilogy or not? The three books are totally derivative! More of the young boy grows up in a remote village, unknowing inheritor of great magical powers/king's son/fulfiller of prophecy (in this case magical powers). Even the writing is not too crash hot. Middleton writes in a very dry, unemotional style that is not exactly easy to read. Very hard to build up to exciting climaxes when your characters cannot get excited!

Despite (or because of) these faults I was happy to read each book as it was published. So poor writing, derivative plot, pleasant reading. I'm afraid you'll just have to make up your own mind on these books.

P.S. Martin Middleton is an Australian and currently residing in Beaudesert, Queensland, working for Coles.

LJ

Trust Territory by Janet and Chris Morris

Roc hc March 1992 261 pages \$US 20.00
ISBN 0-451-45126-0

This is a sequel to *Threshold*, which told of an US astronaut going forward five hundred years into the future à la Buck Rogers. *Threshold* was a routine novel with nothing memorable. *Trust Territory* continues the tale (and a third book is due). Nothing much seems to happen, the society it depicts is indistinguishable from that of the 20th century, and, apart from a few gimmicks, its technology as depicted is not futuristic. This story is a drag with no characters you can connect with.

AS

The Collected Stories of Robert Silverberg: Volume 1 - Pluto in the Morning Light

Grafton tpb December 1992 396 pages \$16.95
ISBN 0-586-21369-4

With fifteen stories, all copyright 1983-86, apparently half a similar volume just published in the US (*Secret Sharers*), this latest Grafton Silverberg offering is worth a look. Mainly science, but sometimes sufficiently advanced as to appear fantastical or magic, ideas and interesting possibilities are what this collection is about.

Silverberg's 'workmanlike' approach to SF comes across in his introductions and fiction here. It's a job, he puts in the hours and turns out competent prose. Above average in this case, but still a flat feel overall, no outstanding highs. One Nebula winner, numerous collected in "Best of Year" anthologies, slick and polished like *Omni* and *Playboy* where most first appeared. But no fire

Blood Trillium by Julian May

DH

Grafton pb March 1993 432 pages \$11.95
ISBN 0-586-21161-6

Emotion! Passion! Feeling! Are these essential ingredients in any book you read? If so then you can certainly give Blood Trillium a miss! Julian May's writing does not contain any of the above.

Black Trillium ended in triumph for the three sisters. After many a long and arduous struggle, they found magic, inner strength and trust in each other. United, the three sisters killed the evil wizard who killed their parents, and at the end of Black Trillium the girls were last seen, in harmony, rebuilding their lives.

So what happened between now and then? Why do the three sisters mistrust and dislike each other at the beginning of the book? It doesn't make sense. May never explains it, and the lack of motivation bewilders me. All throughout the book this happens, leaving me most puzzled and dissatisfied.

May commits other writing horrors, like the evil wizard. Safely dead at the end of Black Trillium ... or is he? Without the sisters knowing, he was transported to safety at the very last moment, there to be found years later preparing to continue their destruction. And so the battle is on. Then May does it again! The sisters unite in their desperation, battle the evil wizard and finally, at the end of the book, cause his death. Well, no, not really, he is transported to safety at the last moment, ready to return another day (and no doubt in another sequel)! Come on, Miss May, just how much are we poor readers meant to endure?!

Between poor characterisation and bad plotting, Blood Trillium is most dissatisfying reading!

L

The Catswold Portal by Shirley Rousseau Murphy

Roc hc April 1992 405 pages \$US 22.00
ISBN 0-451-45146-5

Ho hum fantasy based around a race of people who can turn themselves into domestic cats. Has all the elements of classic fairytales and little originality. There is the wicked fairy queen who sends the beautiful princess off to be killed, only to be thwarted by her wicked henchman who couldn't quite bring himself to do the deed, so leaves her to the elements to die. There is the monster who is so charmed by beauty and kindness that it reforms. There is the magic doorway to a fairytale realm, the changeling prince, the lost tribe, and the long lost heir to the throne, not to mention a fairy godmother. Prince Charming is of course the human being who befriends

the heroine and of course, only HE, is capable of rescuing her, and bringing about the demise of the wicked queen.

Characterisations are one sided, and non-developmental. Even the cat personae are not very normal, even those of the so-called "normal" cats. As for the shape changing, Ms Murphy has obviously never heard of conservation of mass. The 16-17 year old heroine is constantly changing from a human being to a small kitten said by the characters to be about a year old. I know, I know, its magic, but even werewolves and Tournier's *Cat People* preserve their mass!

Altogether a very disappointing read.

NB: The artists, both internal (uncredited) and external (Richard Hescoc) in this hardcover edition have not read the text. The portal is depicted on the cover as a fancy affair in stone, whereas it is a carved wooden door with rows of cat heads in deep relief. Both artists depict siamese cats, but no siamese cats are ever mentioned; indeed, the heroine is a tortoise shell and white kitten in cat form.

KP

A Year Near Proxima Centauri by Michael Martin

Corgi (Transworld) tpb February 1993 159 pages
\$12.95 ISBN 0-552-99527-4

Sometimes there comes along a book which is not very good, neither is it dreadfully bad. Having read it, the brain gives a mental shrug and says to itself "oh well, I've read that, what else is there to read..." Unfortunately for all the obvious care that Michael Martin has taken, this is one of those books.

The story line is simple: husband and wife entity come to live on planet they previously visited as a holiday destination. They have trouble with the builders when they decide to put an extension on their house, they visit restaurants, they have their friends to stay and they don't like to 'outback' much and they eat. The story could have been set anywhere, on a desert island, or a country town, but in this book it is a planet. The husband and the wife are alien, the picture on the cover of the strange washing on the line is enough to convince you of that. Their behaviour though, that seems a little too humanised for these characters to be truly alien. Yes, I must admit the story does have some strange twists and turns but not really enough to keep up the interest.

It's a very easy to read book and would while away a pleasant afternoon's reading but not a story to keep any real interest up. I'd be interested to read this author's work in a few years time, maybe when the need to be funny has worn off a little.

Whatdunits edited by Mike Resnick

NP

Daw pb October 1992 335 pages \$US 4.99
ISBN 0-88677-533-7

This book is a collection of eighteen short mystery stories with a science fiction theme. The editor proposed a different mystery situation to a number of writers, lesser and more well known such as Jack C Haldeman II. The situations range from those based on classic mystery situations to the more exotic dealing with cloning and virtual reality. The final product is interesting with each story prefaced by the original scenario provided to the author. This adds to the book as the interpretation of the proposed situation by the author is often as interesting as the story itself.

The number of stories and authors means that at least one should appeal. The quality of the stories is variable with some imaginative thought to be found. A lot of the color of the stories comes from the alien races involved although sometimes the physical appearance, as opposed to their culture, is relied on too heavily. The stories do throw up some of the problems that are possible when two, or more, alien cultures meet and both try to impose their own on the other. The stories also include the classic mystery figures of hard bitten cops, spare time detectives and the gumshoe transplanted from the 20th century. This means the book could appeal to non-science fiction fans and may entice them to try some more.

I would not describe this as a deep book to be read all at once, but one to dip into or read in short bursts. A book for the tram, bus or train journey where concentration may be broken and a theme must be recovered. Interesting but not a classic of either genre.

Chains of Light by Quentin Thomas LJ

Roc pb August 1992 283 pages \$US 4.99
ISBN 0-451-45209-7

It takes a number of pages to get oriented in this novel, however it is worth persevering as it is interesting. It is apparently the first book in a trilogy (The Luciferian Chronicles) but it also stands alone. It contains SF 'in references' scattered through the text.

The tale is set in a future universe where mankind occupies many star systems and uses special people linked to computers to solve problems. The main character, Luke, is one of these and he is a sleeping body around which the action centres. But asleep does not mean quiescent and his mind is certainly working. There is a slight obsession with fellatio in this book, and in a sense this is the centre of the book's being (ha, ha). Recommended.

Witches Abroad by Terry Pratchett

KP

Corgi pb February 1993 286 pages \$10.95
ISBN 0-552-13465-1

Giving me a Terry Pratchett book almost guarantees I will basically just say it's wonderful, and that you should read it. This time I think I'll try and be a little more constructive. Yes, I admit it, I liked it. I like the characters and I liked how the story runs and I really like the cat. Okay, this probably has something to do with familiarity with the characters. Knowing Granny Weatherwax and her "headology" from previous books makes her antics in this book all the more amusing. Knowing Nanny Ogg is (and I quote here) "a disgustin' old baggage" and Magrat is "a wet hen", makes the story flow better and the characters live and breathe more to me. Okay, so I would strongly suggest you read some of the other Discworld books to really enjoy this one.

So, it's the three witches again. This time it's to do with stories. They have a life of their own and sometimes the distinction between reality and stories becomes a little blurred, especially when magic is involved. All the old popular fairy tales are here and are pulled apart and retold in a strange Discworld fashion. I can't really say more without giving away the plot. It's another easy to read, fun book to while away an afternoon with. By the way, Greebo is in this story. I like this cat but I wouldn't want to own him.

Labyrinth of Night by Allen Steele AS

Legend pb March 1993 353 pages \$11.95
ISBN 0-09-919931-9

Continuing his near future novels, this one set in the 2030s, Allen Steele moves further through the solar system and reaches Mars. An expedition probing the "face" and pyramids discovered by Viking find them to be made by extraterrestrials who've left a puzzling and deadly labyrinth to be investigated.

This is well-realised hard SF. With background details such as suspended animation travel on Earth-Mars cycle ships, skin suits and tele-remote probes Steele has extrapolated well. The scientific research of the alien artefacts drives the plot, but personalities and politics direct and shape that course. Perhaps too few personnel present for a serious major scientific endeavour, but better from a characterisation point of view.

Recommended as a good hard SF read. You may not agree with some of the ideas and politics, but there's a feel that things could go like this, given that initial sense of wonder alien construction actually exists. Steele's latest book is his best so far.

KP
Age of Dinosaurs #1: Tyrannosaurus Rex by J F Rivkin

Roc pb October 1992 251 pages \$US 4.50
 ISBN 0-451-45187-2

Alan gave me this book to review as it had a dinosaur on the cover. I took one look and a shudder run up my spine. It looked dreadful. But, I have to say it wasn't quite as bad as I first thought. The cover illustrator obviously only skimmed through this book before he drew the cover. It has a Tyrannosaurus menacing four people, the one in the foreground has his baseball cap on backwards (shudder), a walkman on and looks like a teenager. The character this is meant to represent is nothing at all like that!

Yes, the characters do find a dinosaur, and a dinosaur egg, and true love and lots of jungle and crawly things. Mind you, they do take a long time actually getting to the jungle to find this dinosaur. Almost half the book is just setting the scene and getting ready to go on this expedition. The second half has to race through to get the story finished in time for the happy ending. Okay, it wasn't as bad as I thought, but parts of it were very glossed over and I had the feeling that this book tried to be somewhere between the juvenile market and the adult market and didn't quite make either. It does have a reasonable strong female character, mind you the Rex is a female and she's pretty strong too. So, not a great read but it has taught me not to judge a book by its cover. I wonder if it's going to be a series ?

Books Received

<i>Fractal Mode</i>	Piers Anthony	Ace	pb
<i>Guide to Earth and Space</i>	Isaac Asimov	Fawcett (Century)	pb
<i>Norby and the Oldest Dragon</i>	Janet & Isaac Asimov	Ace	pb
<i>Duel of Dragons</i>	Gael Baudino	Roc	pb
<i>The Talismans of Shannara</i>	Terry Brooks	Legend	tpb
<i>Aquamancer</i>	Don Callander	Ace	pb
<i>The Farseekers</i>	Isobel Carmody	Penguin	pb
<i>A Dark and Hungry God Arises</i>	Stephen Donaldson	Fontana	pb
<i>The Gnome's Engine</i>	Teresa Edgerton	Ace	pb
<i>Two-Bit Heroes</i>	Doris Egan	Daw	pb
<i>In the Red Lord's Reach</i>	Phyllis Eisenstein	Harper Collins	tpb
<i>Elfwood</i>	Rose Estes	Ace	pb
<i>Deep Freeze</i>	Zach Hughes	Daw	pb
<i>A Time of Omens</i>	Katharine Kerr	Grafton	pb
<i>The Hawk's Grey Feather</i>	Patricia Kennealy	Grafton	pb
<i>Blood Trillium</i>	Julian May	Grafton	pb
<i>The Eye of the Hunter</i>	Dennis L McKierian	Roc	tpb
<i>Fortalice</i>	Martin Middleton	Pan	pb
<i>Fire and Ice</i>	Edward Myers	Roc	pb
<i>Achilles' Choice</i>	Niven & Barnes	Pan	tpb
<i>Dream Park: The Voodoo Game</i>	Niven & Barnes	Pan	pb
<i>The Moat Around Murcheson's Eye</i>	Niven & Pournelle	Harper Collins	hc
<i>Wraiths of Time</i>	Andre Norton	Tor (Pan)	pb
<i>Brother Death</i>	Steve Perry	Ace	pb
<i>The Sorceress of Ambermere</i>	J Calvin Pierce	Ace	pb
<i>Truckers</i>	Terry Pratchett	Picture Corgi	tpb
<i>Whatdunits</i>	Mike Resnick (Editor)	Daw	pb
<i>Tyrannosaurus Rex</i>	J F Rivkin	Roc	pb
<i>Teklab</i>	William Shatner	Ace	pb
<i>Down and Out in the Year 2000</i>	Kim Stanley Robinson	Grafton	tpb
<i>Labyrinth of Night</i>	Allen Steele	Legend	pb
<i>Weird Family Tales</i>	Ken Wisman	Earth Prime	tpb

Matador 7: Brother Death by Steve Perry

LJ

Ace pb December 1992 243 pages \$US 4.99
 ISBN 0-441-54476-2

When one sees a book cover like this one has (a heavily muscled, bare torsoed, combat harnessed man posed before a flaming background) and also realise that it is but the latest entrant in a long series, you can have certain expectations. In a sense this book is a pleasant surprise as it transcends (albeit not by much) these expectations. Partly this is because it has some humour in it, partly also from the nature of the heroes' opposition.

There are some aspects of this that are not up to scratch - the technology is not adequately futuristic, the hero is exceedingly slow in coming up with an idea as to how the killer is achieving his appearances, and despite supposedly being a super-elite security expert makes some elementary blunders. (like not having video monitoring and recording of M Jorine's room, and not immediately checking the Zonn Ruins after the encounter with the truck carrying the Zonn slab).

It's not badly written and is an okay story of its type, but not the kind of book that will appeal to the typical Thyme reader, being targeted at a certain category of reader (and here I mean no disrespect, because if they are reading this then at least they are book reading which is more than many people do).

Artzine

Number 2

January 1993

Edited by Ian Gunn PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130

That consistently inconstant annual event, the Ditmar Awards, is thrust upon us again in yet another new guise that, as usual, is sure to cause a few ruffled feathers. However, in case you hadn't twigged, this here fanzine (Oops... "periodical") is all about art so I'll confine my comments to an interesting development in the Art category.

Of the 120 or so Ditmars that have been awarded since 1969, only fifteen have been handed out to artists. These have been shared by only half a dozen people; Marilyn Pride, John Packer, Craig Hilton, Nick Stathopoulos, Lewis Morley and yours truly, Ian Gunn. Marilyn and Nick share the record for most wins at four each. The award has changed its name several times with words like "Artist", "Illustrator", "Cartoonist" and "Fanartist" being added or deleted over the years.

At last years Business Meeting attempts were made to differentiate betwixt pro and fan, by recommending an extra category. This years ballot has, perfectly legally, chosen to ignore this and have one category under the new title of "Best Artwork", thus leaving "Best Fanwriter" as not only the sole fannish category, but the only Ditmar awarded to a person rather than an inanimate object. Now this is interesting.

Yes, there can be problems. An artist who pours out a large amount of artwork could, theoretically, be nominated on each and every piece but still be pipped at the post by someone who's only done one piece all year. One artist could, theoretically, take over the entire ballot singlehandedly. How do you choose? Take my own case as an example. Last year I did three ongoing cartoon strips, numerous spot illustrations and a few covers. Do you nominate one episode of an ongoing series, or the entire series? And if a *series* is eligible, why not the whole years output? Why not *Artist* rather than *Artwork*?

However, the change does open the door to some interesting possibilities. For reasons lost in the mists of time, people tend to assume that the artwork has to be two-dimensional: Not so. "Best Artwork" could include practically anything. Some of the things I'd like to see on the ballot include Paul Ewins' Starwalking Committee figurines, Steve Scholz's HongCon stage

set, Karen Pender-Gunn's soft toy Alien, Kerri Valkova's *Ethel* covers, Richard Freeland's Conjunction video, Robert Jan's Goblin costumes and Lester Tyley's Beeblebear trophies.

But, IMHO, the best, most exquisite, most fannish artwork produced last year has to be the 1992 Ditmar Award trophies by Lewis Morley. Yeah, let's see a *Ditmar* win a Ditmar!

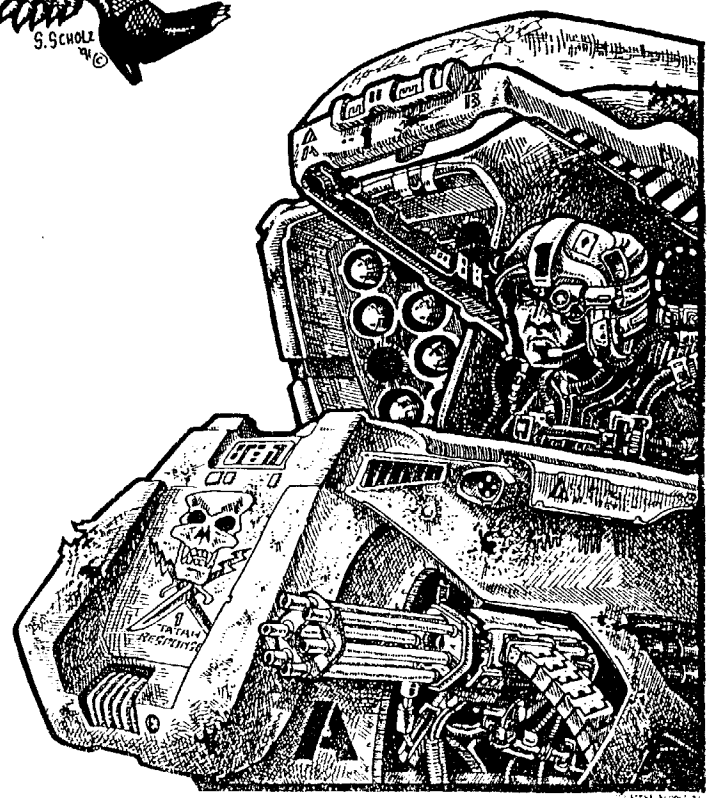
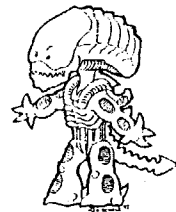
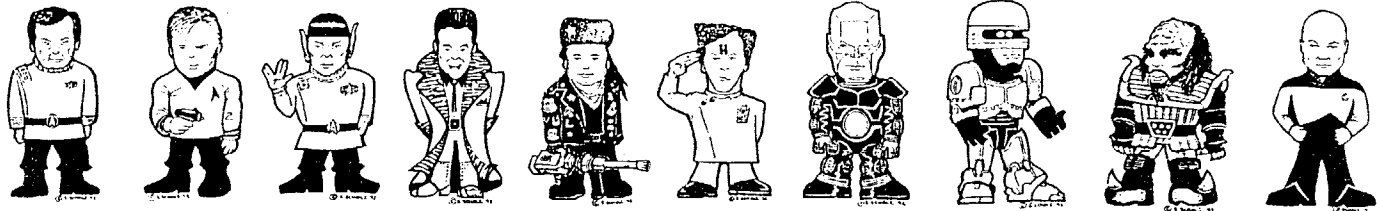
FEATURE ARTIST: STEVE SCHOLZ

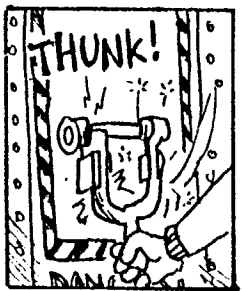
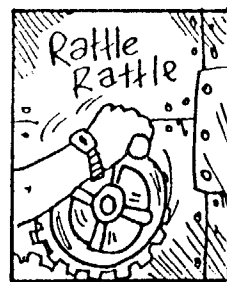
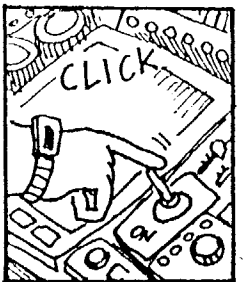
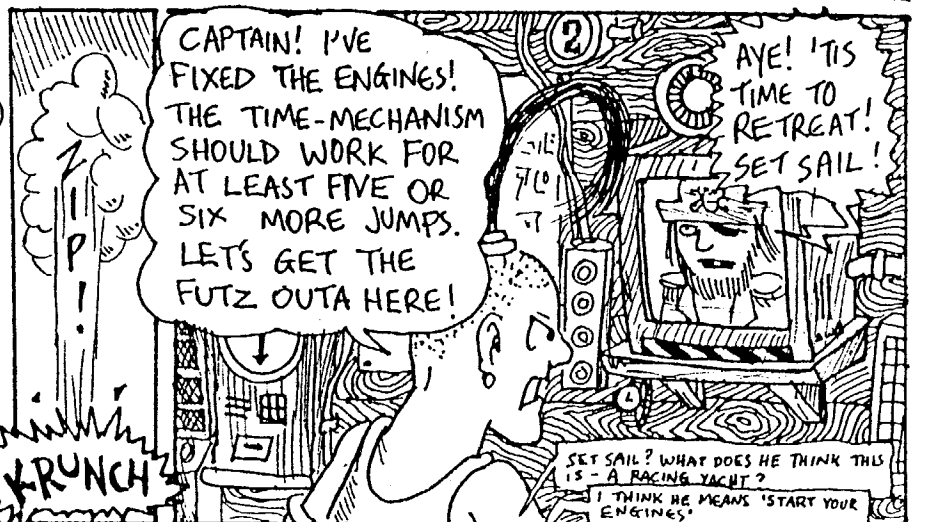
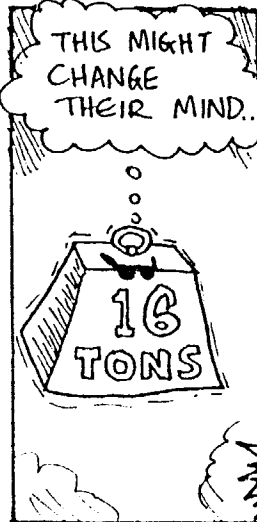
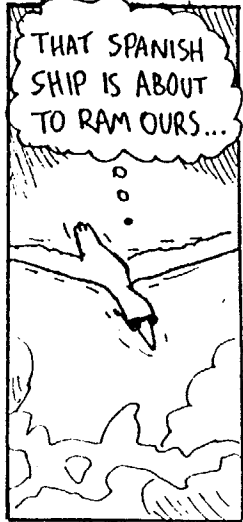
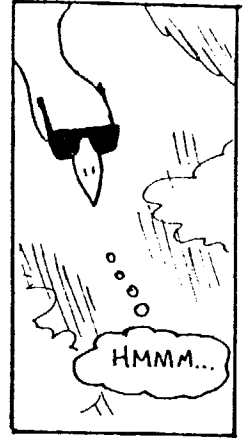
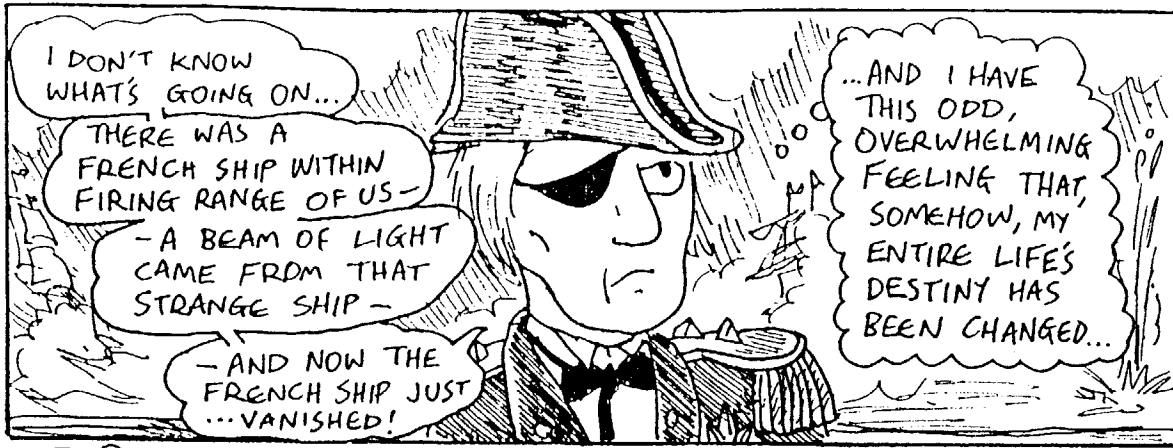
Best known as the artistic part of the evilly humorous, ASFMA winning comic *Steve And Martin's Excellant Fanzine* and falling off stage in cumbersome costumes, Steve's artwork ranges from fun cartoons to realistic finished pieces of fine art. He is a qualified secondary school design teacher, but currently works in the video rental industry where he sometimes gets to paint the shopwindows and organise displays. On the fannish front, his artwork frequently involves various Media SF crossovers (Nightbreed Muppet Babies, among others, plus the soon to be published Willow/Simpsons amalgam) and several drawings have been converted into T-Shirts.

He feels that he is yet to establish a style he can exclusively call his own, but wants to "push back the boundaries of technique" and develop his skill with brush and ink, instead of the usual tech pens.



Steve Scholz by Steve Scholz.





AND IN A POCKET UNIVERSE,
HALF AN ELECTRON AWAY
BETWEEN TWO MILLISECONDS

POINT OF DEPARTURE
1:25 PM OCTOBER 21
1805... THEY'VE REALLY
CAUSED SOME DAMAGE
THIS TIME... REPORT
FUTURE TIME-PATH
FROM THIS POINT...

NELSON SHOULD HAVE DIED...
HIS CONTINUED EXISTENCE WILL
LEAD TO A MORE RAPID DEFEAT
OF THE FRENCH... HE WILL
COMMAND BRITISH SHIPS IN
THE WAR OF 1812 AND SUCCESSFULLY
OCCUPY NEW ORLEANS IN 1814,
LEADING TO THE EVENTUAL
RECONQUERING OF THE UNITED
STATES WHICH WILL AGAIN BE
A BRITISH COLONY BY 1821...
CONSEQUENTLY, THE FIRST WORLD
WAR WILL BE OVER BY 1916... NO
RUSSIAN REVOLUTION... NO SECOND
WORLD WAR... ATOMIC WEAPONS
WILL NOT BE DEVELOPED UNTIL
2013... IN BRAZIL... ARGENTINA
TOTALLY DESTROYED IN 2020...
SPACE EXPLORATION WILL NOT BE
DEVELOPED UNTIL THE MIDDLE
OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY...

THERE ARE OTHER BRANCH
LINES OF MINOR IMPORTANCE
BUT SUFFICE TO SAY, THAT
OUR FUTURE EXISTENCE
IS IN JEOPARDY... THERE
IS ALSO ANOTHER SMALL
ANOMALY THAT MAY BE
IMPORTANT...

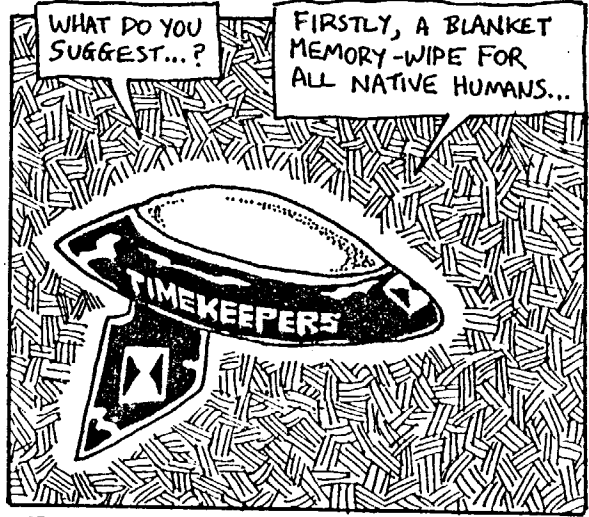
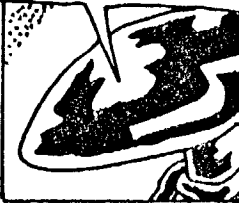
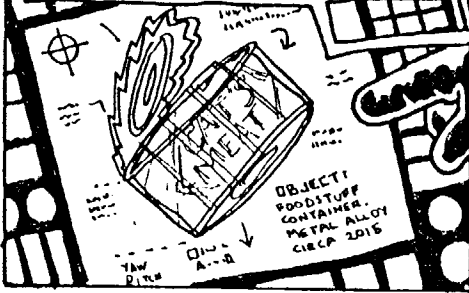


AT THEIR POINT OF DEPARTURE
THIS OBJECT FELL FROM THE
TIME-SHIP. IF DISCOVERED IT
COULD CAUSE A TECHNOLOGICAL
BREAKTHROUGH IN FOODSTUFF
PACKAGING...

... AND ITS VERY
ANACHRONISTIC
NATURE MAY LEAD
TO UNWELCOME
AND PREMATURE
CONJECTURE INTO
THE NATURE OF
SPACE-TIME TRAVEL...

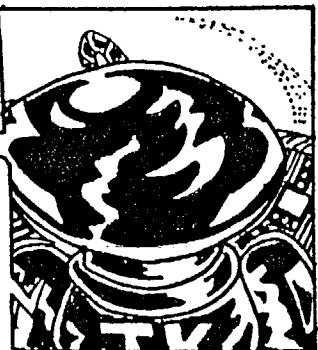
WHAT DO YOU
SUGGEST...?

FIRSTLY, A BLANKET
MEMORY-WIPE FOR
ALL NATIVE HUMANS...



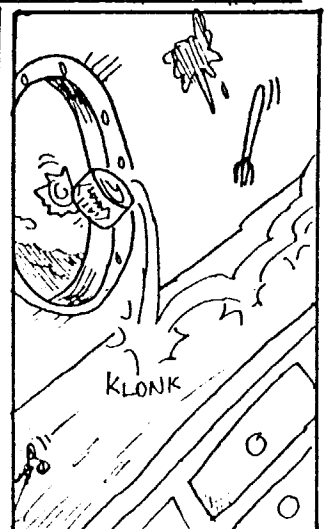
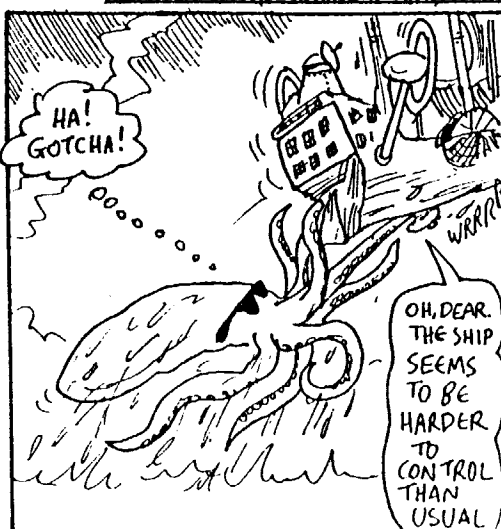
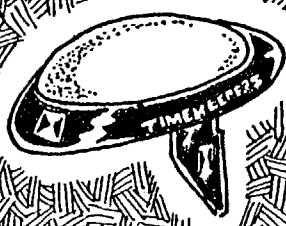
ONLY THE MOST
HIGHLY ACTIVE
MINDS WILL BE
ABLE TO RESIST...

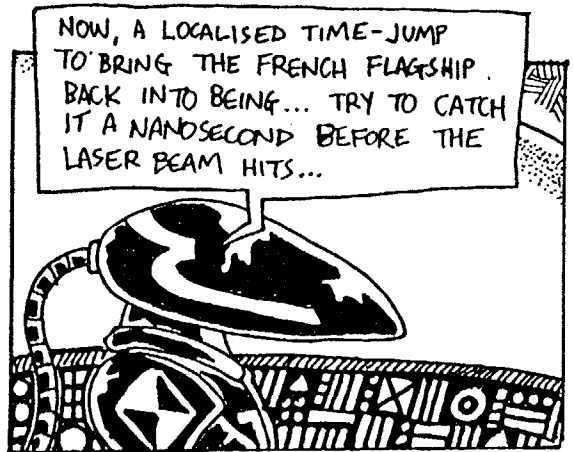
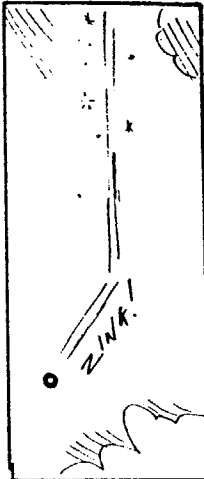
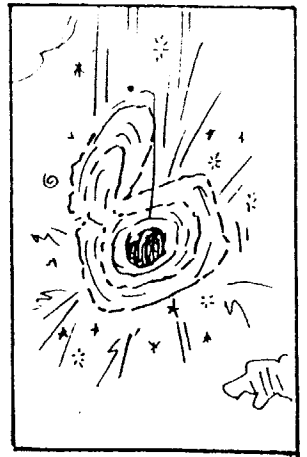
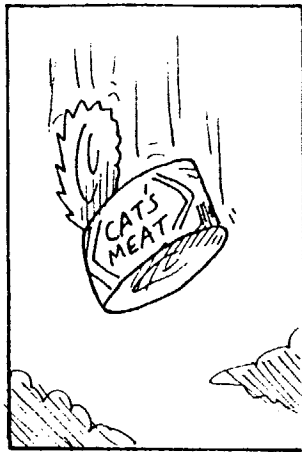
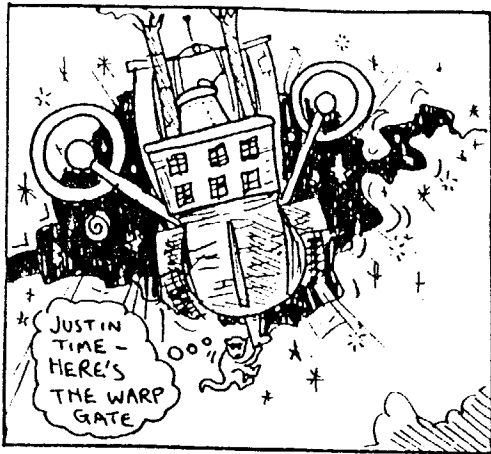
... AND ANY THAT
DO WILL SIMPLY
PUT IT DOWN TO
DELUSION CAUSED
BY EXCITEMENT
IN THE HEAT OF
BATTLE...



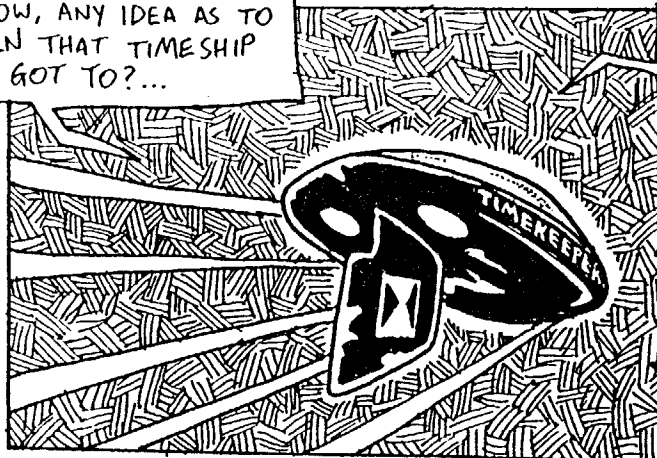
AS FOR THIS
CONTAINER
- RE-ARRANGE
THE MOLECULES
INTO THE SHAPE
OF A CONTEMP-
ORARY BULLET,
ALTER ITS
TRAJECTORY...

AND KILL
NELSON...





... NOW, ANY IDEA AS TO WHEN THAT TIMESHIP HAS GOT TO?...



... IT APPEARS TO BE HEADING TOWARDS THE 23rd OF JULY, 5189... THE SHIP'S TEMPORAL EXCLUSION FIELD IS STILL OPERATIONAL, SO WE ARE UNABLE TO MATERIALISE WITHIN THE SAME TIME-FRAME

AS EVER. PROCEED TO A NEARBY POCKET UNIVERSE FOR CONTINUED OBSERVATION



WHO ARE THE MYSTERIOUS TIME KEEPERS? WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH THE TIME-SHIP? WHAT NEW DANGERS WILL CAPTAIN SCRAG&BEARD AND HIS CREW ENCOUNTER IN THE FIFTY-SECOND CENTURY? FIND OUT IN THE NEXT THRILL-PACKED EPISODE