

THE THOUGHTS OF CHAIRFAN



In which Michelle gossips, grizzles and gets just a bit catty. I guess I'm a feline fan.

A One-Shot pawzine produced November 1989 for Conjunction and for distribution to The Space Wastrel mailing list. Any correspondence will be printed in TSW. Produced by Michelle Muijsert at: P.O. Box 428, Richmond, VIC, 3121, Australia.

<<<< MY EXCUSE FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS >>>> So I've been quiet (relatively), non-productive and basically absent BUT like all good fen I have Reasons. Last year I was sick. It may sound extreme to say that I was sick all year but it's true. Nothing serious, obvious or operable but nonetheless increasingly ill. Tired, depressed, headachey and disaffected. I could've gone on like that for years, getting worse and worse, had not Mark read a book on Candida Albicans (yeast infection in the gut and elsewhere) and allergies. Radical alteration of diet followed and now I'm Markedly Better. Not perfect - I've come to depend on the occasional swings into Mania and Depression - but once more able to cope.

This year has often seemed to be a case of Life's a Bitch and Then You Die. Work has been truly, roolly amazing and I have staggered from deadline to deadline, as well as making two overseas trips on their behalf. Actually I got sucked into the 80s psychology of You Live to Work. As a 70s person who believes you Work to Live I'm somewhat embarrassed to admit this but at least I'm recovering quickly. For those of you who think that overseas trips for work are fun I'd just like to debunk this myth. This year I've spent 8 weeks in Northern Ontario (in two stretches of three and five weeks), which is to say the Canadian Outback. The town was really fucking boring - I mentally christened it the Place Where Dags Collide (the ass end of nowhere, that is) - and it's really fucking exhausting to live, sleep and eat work. Endlessly on one's guard against: swearing, getting involved in political or religious discussions, making smutty jokes, telling the client they're dickheads, complaining about one's employer, losing one's temper or indeed stating one's honest opinion on anything.

I did get to see Toronto (nice and middle class but not terribly interesting), San Francisco (at least it was still in one piece), Calgary (pretty but I don't own a bandana or cowboy boots), and at last to spend a week's holiday in London (FAB) on the way home in September. I'd like to say that this last makes up for all the other shit but I think some of the scars of care, worry and dedication to the job are permanent.

<<<< SO I TOO AM AN ENGLISH-FANDOM-O-PHILE >>>> I spent a week staying with Eve and John Harvey, had a fabulous time, enjoyed meeting some locals fans and generally LOVED London. I'm a convert. Definitely. In fact I had thoughts of accidentally-on-purpose missing the plane home. And now I can't wait to go back. Sigh.

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John and Eve were great hosts and particularly endeared themselves to me by feeding me Indian food and gossiping without reserve. I admire the latter quality immensely and was pleased to meet quite a number of such admirable people. I spent a couple of days lurking about with Geo Bondar who very kindly showed me round the city and also considerable surrounding countryside. He amused both of us by taking me to see Jane Austen's home which is largely a non-fannish and unintentionally funny hoax. (Go see it and you'll see what I mean.) I love hoaxes.

I won't tell you about Geo and the saki because he said I shouldn't.

I had been especially looking forward to meeting Avedon Carol, Pam Wells, Owen Whiteoak and Rob Hansen and found that they all lived up to expectations except for being physically lifesize, after all! (But I still view the unmet Greg Pickersgill and Dave Langsford as being at least eight feet tall.) Also met a number of other fun people and came away convinced that Pom fandom is a friendly, cheerful place to be. I will also believe everything I read in Owen Whiteoak's fanzines after being involved in several delightfully whimsical and raucous conversations under the affluence of incohol and English pubs. My most poignant and outstanding memory is of John Harvey holding his hands out in front of him in an approximately masturbatory position exclaiming about "this throbbing machine in front of you". Of course it was just that the excitement of talking chainsaws had overstimulated him.

Cheers!

<<<< THE THRILL OF BEING A EUROPERSON >>>> My enthusiasm for things Olde Wordly on my return finally prompted me to check out and regularise the little examined Dutch side of my personality. Although I am Aotearoan, my father was Dutch, with the result that I was born into Dutch citizenship. On enquiring at the Dutch Consulate just what this meant in terms of Travel Documents, I was delighted to find that I had enquired just in time to be issued with one of the new European Community passports. So now I'm all set to explore the new One Europe late next year with a One Europassport. This gives me an immense feeling a freedom - a great feeling by anyone's standards.

<<<< EAST MEETS WEST >>>> Apart from the One Europe initiative in the West, there is of course the Open-the-Floodgates initiative in East Europe. Millions of people experiencing the great feeling of freedom. This is enough to make one feel positive about being alive and goes some way to make up for the mediocrity of the 80s (in Oz the mediocrity). For once I'm approaching a New Year replete with good vibes about the future - looking forward to the return of the Naughty Nineties, A European decade.

>>>> On the local scene however there are allegations that it's all over...

>>>> IS AUSTRALIAN FANDOM DEAD???

So where are the issues in Australian Fandom? Marc Ortlieb alleges, with his characteristic and endearing lack of gravity, that we have hoaxed our fandom out of existence. He lends weight to his argument by propounding it in a British fanzine (Geo Bondar's Marital Rats of Shaolin - probably #5). Nothing happens any more, cries Marc woefully. But is life that simple? Is there not some complicity here on Marc's part? It seems to me that Marc and his fannish contemporaries are at least partly to blame for this lull in Older Generation fanac, for they are part of the Fannish Baby Conspiracy.

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Indeed the issue of Melbourne fandom may be seen to be preoccupying the Older Generation each Friday at dinner. They're very sweet but I wouldn't refer to them as hoaxes. In the meantime, the Newer Generations of fandom in Melbourne, Canberra and Brisbane are happily throwing conventions, running clubs and exchanging their own zines. Surely our mission is not to decry lack of activity in increasingly domesticated middle-aged fen - thereby coyly but patronisingly dismissing the efforts of the young - but to rescue these untamed youngsters from frivolous semi-media-fandom to responsible and serious trufandom. If they'll let us.

Very soon however, some of us Oldies are planning zines to give the false impression of movement at the station. In the new year, look for a new Space Wastrel, a Greg Hills publication, a Roger Weddall production and possibly a trans-Hemispheric one-shot in support of GUFF. For now, though, we're off to Conjunction with the youngsters.

<<<< NOTHING EVER HAPPENS IN MELBOURNE >>>> Here at the Rogers Street Collective, Julian Warner is taking to Melbourne fandom like a drunken duck to weedy water. Not satisfied with pubbing every Wednesday with Perry Middlemiss and co, perpertrating anal jokes on an unwitting Friday night dinner crowd and moving in to/with the thick of Alan Stewart's computer gaming obsessives, Julian has allowed himself to be carried off by Melbourne fandom's most eligible fem. Yes, boys, you can stop speculating about your chances with Lucy Sussex (I was approached by THREE fans in one week for my advice about asking Lucy out - talk about popular!). She's taken. Or maybe she's taking. Anyway Julian appears to be enjoying it.

<<<< HER BRILLIANT CAREER >>>> Speaking of Lucy she's having a fantastic and productive year for writing. Not content with publishing a children's book (The Peace Garden) and editing a collection of stories by a 19th Century Australian woman (The Fortunes of Mary Fortune), she also has a collection of her own SF/Fantasy/Supernatural stories in the pipeline as well as having another completed juvenile novel sitting in her editor's To Be Read pile. At this rate I fully expect the short stories to be published under the title "Lucy At the Speed of Light".

<<<< WHO SAID NOBODY EVER MOVES OUT OF RICHMOND? >>>> Me and I was wrong. Elite Richmond fandom's power base is being undermined! Sometime(s) Rogers Street Collective member Roger Weddall has moved to yuppy Albert Park while well known Larrikin about town Perry Middlemiss is off to London early next year. Likewise Steve Johnson of the MSFC mafia departs Alan Stewart's mini-slan-shack for the Big Wet Apple very soon. Greg Hills is taking his place but he's already an exclusive Richmond fan so we're down three and counting. We're seeking self-satisfied, good quality fen to swell our Richmond ranks. We offer a welcoming social environment complete with restaurants and, of course, the traditional Richmond branch ALP bribe - whisky.

<<<< WORLD'S MOST POPULAR AMERICAN GETS AWAY >>>> Mark Linneman, popular Melbourne restaurant and wine fan (also reads SF but not in public), has got a job back in the States and leaves late January. I'll miss the guy considerably. Close friends Bruce Gillespie and Elaine Cochrane are said to be devastated though Bruce's initial reaction is rumoured to have been the less than sentimental exclamation: "Think of all the restaurants we won't be able to get to now!"

You can tell when he's talking to his friends.

<<<< GENUINELY GA-GA ABOUT GUFF >>>> After having a diffident flirtation with DUFF a few years back, Mark and I have decided that

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what we'd really like to do is win GUFF. In fact we want to win GUFF so much that we've decided to cross the boundaries of good taste yet again and campaign for ourselves. We'd really love to go to the Netherlands and the UK. I'm teaching myself Dutch in anticipation and we've both already learnt English!!

You may reasonably ask why you should vote for us? We've both been active fans for around a decade in a number of capacities. Mark is the number one fannish gossip in Melbourne and Secretary of the Australian Science Fiction Foundation. I was active in club fandom in Wellington, have served on three convention committees and edited the Move To Melbourne newsletter. Together we've edited The Space Wastrel, thrown many fannish parties and formed the core of the infamous Rogers Street Collective, hoaxers extraordinaire. We're outgoing, active and reliable. If you don't like me, think what a nice person Mark is. Please vote for us.

<<<< SUCCULENT DREAMS >>>> Julian Warner informs me that famous non-basketball-playing fan Andrew Brown has isolated Australia's only legal hallucinogenic cactus. Not only does it make you high, it gives you smooth, glowing skin from the inside out.

<<<< YUCK >>>> Some people think I'm joking about the generally sewerish nature of Julian's humour but they'll realise it's more like gagging after this classic which he sprung on us at dinner the other day.

Apparently Jules and a group of friends had been watching a truly terrible fantasy movie full of anachronisms. At one stage an actor drunk deep of an unfortunately modern looking goblet.

- "Is that period?" queried one of Jules' mates.

- "No," quipped the Warner, "just red wine."

<<<< ANOTHER FANNISH BABY IN THE OFFING? >>>> Local BOFFins LynC and Clive are said to be in the process of buying a house. Recent experience in Melbourne shows that this is frequently an early warning of pregnancy. I'm dying of curiosity. What will they call the offspring, if and when - BabyC?

<<<< WORLDCON CONFUSION PREVAILS >>>> Naturally there's been a fair bit of WorldCon speculation in this part of the rotation. Or world, if the Americans will allow us to call it that. Yes, there was a Perth bid but, no, it doesn't seem to be extant. Yes, it does appear that there is now a Sydney bid for 1995. This, though, is hardly likely to get unfirm support even in Australia given Sydney's general tendency towards cliquishness and apparent inability to find enough responsible fans to host an efficiently run NatCon. However rumour has it that the situation is getting more complicated. Moscow in 95 is starting to look like a real possibility as glasnost/perestroika and free travel blaze their way across Eastern Europe. And then there's the Britain in 95 bid. Is it for real? What sort of support is it getting in the UK? Many British fans seem to feel that Brighton had aspects of a debacle and shouldn't be repeated. We Anglophilia wait with baited breath...

<<<< AUSTRALIAN SF FOUNDATION INCORPORATED ANNIVERSARY >>>> Mark Loney, Secretary of the ASFF, tells me the Foundation will celebrate its first 12 months of incorporeal existence by doing something! It will produce a zine called 'The Instrumentality' from time to time, to be edited by Greg Hills. Greg's being co-opted onto the committee for this purpose as all current committee meetings have their hands full attending meetings. Golden Oldies may recall 'The Instrumentality' in a previous incarnation when it was published by the much more active unincorporated ASFF.