

DORMOUSE NINE

Produced by Marc Ortlieb of 70 Hamblynn Rd Elizabeth Downs S.A. 5113 AUSTRALIA for FAPA. This is a MAO'S TRAPP PRESS PRODUCTION, being typed on a typewriter which is still badly in need of a service. The more things change, the more my typewriter types "n" for "h". The date for this stencil is 7/10/81, which, for the sake of argument, we'll say is October the Seventh rather than July the tenth. This fanzine supports Los Angeles in '84; Melbourne in '85; Atlanta in '86; Ashby for DUFF; Glicksohn for DUFF and Minneapolis in '73, but not necessarily in that order.

STAIRWAY TO MELBOURNE

to the tune of
STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

There's a faned who's sure
That there has to be more
So he's planning a Worldcon in Melbourne
When they get it he knows
That they'll come there in droves
And they'll each of them get what they came for
There's a feeling I get
Looking down to the South
When my spirit is crying for wombats
In my thoughts I have seen
Anti-fan on the screen
And heard voices that call me Down - Under
Have a Con Down Under
If there's a letter for your fanzine
Don't be alarmed now
It's calling you to Australia
Yes there are others who are bidding
But in the long run
There's but one choice that's Australia
Have a Con Down Under
The urge is growing and it won't go
In case you don't know
the '85 bid's for Melbourne
Dear faned that's the way the wind blows
You should all know
The best alternative's Melbourne
And as we organise our bid
The States will be so glad we did
There is a city all should know
That wants the Con and it will show
How great an Aussie Con can be
You needn't take the word from me
DUFF winners and pro writers too
Can each assure you it is true
Melbourne's the bid that is true blaë.
And they're planning a WorldCon in Melbourne.

But enough of this blatant propoganda. (Besides, what am I doing publishing a heavy-rock filk in FAPA. Silly me.)

The historian in me never ceases to be amazed by the rise and fall of ancient civilizations, or of centres of Australian fan activity. I mean, I remember a time when Australian fandom meant Melbourne, Faulconbridge, and the occasional mutter from Brisbane, Adelaide or Hobart. True, at that time Bangsund lived in Canberra, but he didn't really count, as he was considered to be a transplanted Melbourne fan even then.

The only other mention of Canberra was the noting of something called the Canberra Science Fiction Society. I have vague recollections of sending a few of my early fanzines to them and receiving no reply whatsoever. (Mind you, looking at some of my earlier efforts, I think I know why I got no reply)

Well, the current of Australian fandom swept on, now creating a fan centre, now tearing it down again. A short-lived Adelaide fan empire sprang up, flowered and died. The colossus of Melbourne fandom ground on, but was diminished by the rising of the star of Sydney in the North. A barbarian empire grew up in Perth, spreading its own peculiar styles of writing through the more established civilizations of Sydney ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ eventually influencing the older Sydney empire to the point that there was a distinct cultural fusion. Melbourne endured its own minor upheavals which seemed to come from within rather than from the borders.

In these troubled times, the little backwater of Canberra rested peacefully, unaware of its destiny. Slowly however, refugees from far places began to settle there. From the barbarian wilds of Northern Queensland came Jean Weber. Sydney yielded Neville Angove who had grown sick of the hedonism brought on by the contact with Perth. Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown left Melbourne, unwilling to participate further in the civil wars which seemed destined to plague that once great Empire. Perry Middlemiss left his home in the decaying ruins of Adelaide fandom, going ahead to scout out the possibilities of this Canberra. Hari Seldon couldn't have planned it better, for lo and behold there had come together the nucleus of possible greatness. Gradually more fans joined the swelling ranks. We need not speak of Gunnell from the West, or Evans, the military plotter who joined K the Canberra axis, suffice to say that this group did start to think of a convention. Thus was circulation one born.

ENCYCLOPÆDIA FANACTIVA First Printing.

Somehow I got the impression that someone didn't want me to get to Circulation, though why an airline company should be concerned with one poor science fiction fan is beyond me. None the less, the usually punctual TAA informed me that my aircraft had been delayed, and that I wouldn't be getting into Canberra until about eleven on the Friday evening. This wasn't particularly pleasing, as I had only the weekend to spend there. Though the convention weekend was a long weekend in Canberra and Sydney, it wasn't for Adelaide. Thus I had to leave at five o'clock on the Sunday afternoon. One and a bit evenings is not really enough time for a convention.

Anyway, I arrived in Canberra, to be rather disappointed by the size of the Airport. Canberra is Australia's capital city, yet the airport was smaller than that in Adelaide, and as for the facilities, well, let's put it this way, if I had to describe them to meet minac, I'd be thrown out on my ear. There just aren't many facilities there. (I guess the politicians don't need them. They don't have to sit around bored in airports. They get RAAF planes laid on for them.)

The taxi service was pretty abysmal too. There were about ten people waiting for taxis, and only two taxis. Eventually the drivers organised a sharing, so that the taxis were filled by people going in the same direction. Fortunately the Hotel Ainslie, venue for the con, was the first stop.

As far as cruddy looking hotels go, the Ainslie scored quite nicely. We had been warned in advance not to expect the Hilton, and it was a notch or two above the Salvation Army Hostel. For a start it had a bottle shop and a bar, and besides, it was full of fans.

The theme of the convention was science fiction and art, with the emphasis on all forms of art. Considering that the convention mascot was Peter Toluzzi, the tendency for rock music to rate high on the programme came as no real surprise. (Peter's title was mascot rather than guest of honour. This, as those who know Peter will readily testify, was quite appropriate. Peter is small and furry and likes to be patted, but don't take my word for it. He is running in the 1932 DUFF race. Why not vote for him and find out.?)

Considering the proximity of Sydney and Canberra, and the fact that Sydney fan rabid convention fan, it came as no surprise to find that Sydney fan composed about half of the attendance. (Ouch! Did I write that sentence?) As a matter of fact, nothing much surprised me at Circulation, other than the presence of Mike Schaper, a Perth fan who had managed to make his way over, and that was a particularly pleasant surprise, as I hadn't previously met him.

Since I had arrived particularly late, I got to do little but natter to the folks sitting in the hotel corridor. There was a brief gathering in Peter's room, and I got to tell little bits of my U.S. trip, while carefully saving all the best bits for the trip report. Peter had equipped his room with stereo facilities. The music helped drown out the sound of the football players who were sharing the hotel with us. I met John & Diane Fox for the first time. That wasn't bad, a tiny Canberra convention, and yet I was able to meet three Aussie fan publishers whom I hadn't previously met.

Included in the generous room rates (\$12-00/night for a single) was breakfast, and I was certainly surprised by the number of fans who were up in time to eat it. This could well have had something to do with the football players ~~xxxx~~ who'd beeb up and shouting since about seven a.m., or it could merely have reflected that old fannish reluctance to pass up anything free. I had to be up because I'd foolishly volunteered for a panel at ten that morning. I had breakfast with Womble, a Sydney lady who is fast developing a reputation as one of Aussie fandom's greatest drinkers. She looked a little the worse for wear, but still managed to put forward a cheefferly facade.

It is at this point my convention memory takes over, i.e. I can remember roughly what happened, I just can't remember when it happened. The day started with the opening ceremonies, complete with the usual snippets on where to find food, and who to see about various things. Then Valma Brown, Peter and I spoke briefly on the nature of fandom, X and I got the chance to promote L.A. in '84, Melbourne in '85, Atlanta in '86, and Minneapolis in '73. For some reason the only memberships I enlisted were for the latter. Valma instituted the CRUNCH A SAO FOR MELBOURNE campaign. All sorts of other interesting natter took place, and I found myself in the hucksters' room, talking to Leigh Edmonds, and buying a couple of silver rings from Cindy Smith, an ex-patriate American who produces beautiful jewelry. The nicest was one of Maralyn Pride's rocks set into silver. Maralyn is one of our best artists, and she has done some beautiful pebble paintings of dragons and of Australian fauna. Joyce Scrivner has, I believe, a platypus done by Maralyn, so ask to have a look if ever you're in Minneapolis.

I didn't get involved in the programme at all that afternoon, and probably spent the time talking to various people. I do recall annexing the hucksters' room for games of Oh Shit and Hearts, so that's probably what became of that time. Sigh. Southern fandom has a lot to answer for. If I recall, the whole subject of cards came out of my mentioning the Hearts tournament at Deep South Con.

That evening we ate at the hotel, or at least, a large proportion of us did. It felt so much like a banquet that I expected someone to get up and make a speech criticising the food. Leigh was surrounded by Valma and Judith Hanna, who ordered oysters and made lewd comments about Leigh's fate later that evening. The hotel took pity on Leigh and announced that they'd run out of oysters. All in all it was an okay meal, though the ~~wax~~ wine left me feeling a little sleepy.

This was not a good thing when it came to the next programme item, which featured some excellent audio-visuals by the Transfinite people but also some rather extended sections of reading from assorted stories dealing with future art. Rather than interrupt with my snoring, I wandered out and nattered to people. I did though stay long enough to watch a section of animation done using the four slide projectors computer linked. It was most impressive.

The evening continued in Jack Herman's room with a comfortable poker game. Common sense prevailed, and the games limited themselves to five card draw and five and seven card stud. No wild cards, though I have the feeling we did play a few low-ball variants. Players included Ken Colbert, Amanda Munro, Cathy McDonnell, Jack, myself, and, if memory serves me correctly, Gregor Whiley. I could be wrong. Still, it was a nice game, and, all things considered, I didn't mind missing the costume parties etc. Besides, I came out of the game ahead.

By the time the game folded at about one a.m., most of the action had ceased, and all that was left was a quiet slightly drunken conversation in the corridor. I participated for a while, and then went back to my room for a well deserved collapse.

The next morning was a repeat of the first, with numerous hung-over figures slumped over cereal bowls. Those of us who had lived the life virtuous had no difficulties in facing a fine breakfast of bacon and eggs. The more queasy of our attendees limited themselves to toast and coffee, and were careful not to crunch too loudly on the toast. There were various small group discussions, including a good one on women sf writers and their subject material run by Joy Window from Sydney. After lunch Peter Toluzzi and Leigh Edmonds presented a panel on science fiction and music, Peter playing his standard rock-orientated selection, while Leigh attempted to raise our ~~consciousnesses~~ consciousnesses by playing a wierd assortment of really avante gard material, including a lovely piece of water music by someone with an unpronouncable Japanese accent.

By this time I had to seriously think about leaving for the airport, which was only fifteen minutes up the road. I conned a lift with Stev Gunnell. I got to sit in on a little of the fandom discussion before heading off.

Having dropped me at the airport and gone back to the convention, Steve was a little shocked to find me sitting in the function room watching Tony Power's film on the making of the second anti-Fan film. So was I. TAA had stuffed up again. I was due out on a five p.m. flight to Melbourne, and then to Adelaide. Unfortunately, that was the weekend that all the Commonwealth Heads of State were visiting Canberra, ~~prior~~ prior to returning to ~~Melbourne~~ Melbourne for their conference. I was bumped off my pre-booked seat, and placed on a flight to Adelaide via Sydney, which would get me home four hours later than the flight I had been booked on, without allowing me to spend time in Melbourne airport phoning a few people I wanted to speak to. The two hour layover in Sydney was no fun at all, as all the people I might have phoned were still having a wonderful time in Canberra, prior to the next day's picnic. To say that I was not amused is an understatement and a half. To describe my feelings upon getting back to Adelaide and finding that my guitar had been sent to Brisbane would take stronger language than I am willing to use in a family apa.

Still, it was an excellent convention, for all its brevity, and it allowed me to catch up with lots of the Sydney people I'd missed at TOLKON, the '81 Sydney convention that managed to combine the Annual University Science Fiction Convention and the annual Syncon. It also provided my last chance to develop all sorts of interesting rumours with Judith Hanna, who leaves for Britain in the near future. Still, such is life, and, from the success of Circulation I, I certainly hold hopes for some more excellent Canberra conventions in the future.

THE FANTASY AMATEUR Naturally the temptation here is to go through the membership list and say "I met you, and you, and you, and you..." but I won't. Suffice to say, greetings to those I did meet. It was really nice to have done so, and I hope to do it again. (For the record, I can claim to have met twenty seven of the members, plus two halves, having met Peggy Rae, but not Bob, and having phoned Urian Earl Brown while I was waiting for a plane in Detroit. On the waiting list, I can count five people I've met.)

Bruce Pelz talked me into signing Foyster's petition, an act about which I had mixed feelings, considering certain disagreements John and I had while he was CBE of ANZAPA. Still, I guess I really should let bygones be bygones, right John???

Unfortunately I didn't get back in time to send off the ballot.

ART WIDNER Fascinating, but rather you than me. I think I'll limit my travels to places where the natives speak English ~~as better now badly~~. I will resist the joke about the spitting llama, as it doesn't really work when written anyway.

BERNADETTE BOSKY I think I picked up just enough of the story references to make it intelligible. Sigh. I guess, as a rider of a Yamaha barely removed from the Moped category, I'm really not ready for that sort of knowledge. Loved the story though. More please.

REDD BOGGS While in Minneapolis, I got to see Fort Snelling. They've done it up quite nicely, though I feel having tobacco chewing and spitting guides is carrying ~~my~~ authenticity and lack of hygiene a little far. Not many comment hooks, but a most enjoyable eight pages.

CHUCK NANSEN I've probably already mentioned my plans to organise a massive Australian take over bid for FAPA, engineered solely with the aim of getting me elected O.E. so I won't have to pay immense prices for airmailing the material to me. Other than that, I can't really see myself standing for any of the FAPA offices. Though Bob Pavlat does mention the lack of influence the location of the vice-pres has on the number of egoboo poll returns, I feel moving the whole shebang to Australia could change that.

NORM METCALF I'm not sure that I can agree with your points about Algol/Starship/ Unfortunately there is not a clear cutting point on the amateur-professional magazine continuum, but even so, I would tend to put Algol/Starship on the professional side. It certainly is more professional than a lot of other magazines that would lay claim to the title of professional magazine. Personally I have a preference for fanzines specifically designed for the apa in which they appear, but I realise that this is not really part of the FAPA tradition.

I think most of the fans I know would tend to place "good story" well ahead of the other criteria for a good sf movie. The only sf movie I've enjoyed recently, other than the re-make of FLASH GORDON, which I consider excellent camp comedy, is THE LATHE OF HEAVEN, and that was because it did pay some attention to the original novel. Strangely enough though, I didn't like the novel. I'm still trying to work out the logic in this, but fear that there isn't any.

It was probably Denny Lien who gave me the lines

TIME FLIES LIKE AN ARROW
FRUIT FLIES LIKE A BANANA

I don't know where he stole it, but I hope there are more like it around. Ah, I note that you consider COMI to be a fanzine. In that case, I can understand your placing Algol/Starship in that category. I guess if I could chose any novel on which to base a personal pilgrimage it would have to be ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND. Anyone know of a good rabbit hole?

ARTNUR HLAVATY Actually, Southern fandom knows that it exists, it's just having trouble convincing you bloody Northerners. (The following message or, to be more accurate, the previous message was brought to you by the South Australian Southern fandom support alliance)

ROY TACKETT Well, I don't feel anywhere near so bad about delayed convention reports, having read your Bubonicon report over a year after the convention which it mentions.

BRIAN EARL BROWN My deepest thanks to you sir. I was giving consideration to getting involved in organising an Adelaide convention for 1982, but, having read your Autoclave report, I remembered the vow I'd made after A-Con 8, i.e. never have anything to do with running another convention. You are seriously considering another convention??? Congratulations. The Masochist First Class Scroll will be on its way read soon now. The programme book did come out rather well.

RAGNAR FYRI Interesting, but is it ART????

ROY TACKETT (again) My apologies for missing Bubonicon. Next time perhaps. (Thinks- These mailing comments are getting decidedly bitty.)

ED COX Well, having seen a tiny bit of the Southwest now, though only from the air, I'd say your comparison was pretty spot on, at least for some parts of Australia. The sand etc outside Las Vegas looked very much like what little of the Australian interior I've seen. Just to keep you up with the news, there is now an Australian bid - Melbourne in '85, for the 1985 WorldCon. I'm not sure quite who we are up against, but I've heard these strange rumours about Albuquerque. Comment Roy Tackett???

JOHN TNIEL Artistic, but is it INTERESTING????

SETH GOLDBERG While I am pro-abortion myself, I think your analysis of the definition is too simplistic. A baby is certainly not a biologically independent creature after the umbilical cord is cut. Indeed, I wonder very much whether I am yet biologically independent. I depend on an awful lot of people in the process of keeping alive. The problem comes back to one which I feel is at the centre of a lot of the difficulties in modern society. Nature tends to work in continua rather than in discrete quanta. Thus, no matter where you draw the line you're going to run into problems. The anti-abortionists place the dividing line between human and non-human at one point, the ancient Spartans put it at another. Most of us moderates put it somewhere between these extremes. The trouble is that there is no "right" place to put the line, and never can be.

HARRY WARNER JR You're not wrong about the SFC difficulties. It seems a common set of initials. In addition to Sf Commentary, and SF Chronicle, there is the Southern Fandom Confederacy and the Science Fiction Collector, both of which seem to abbreviate themselves as SFC. No doubt there are others which will spring to mind the moment I finish this comment.

Thank you for the continued material on fan history. Are you sure you won't extend your published histories into the sixties?

ARTHUR HLAVATY (again) Publishing indexes to one's own fanzine titles is indeed a last resort. I did it in ANZAPA in the October mailing.

ROY TACKETT (again and again) What is this hmmm? Some kind of conspiracy to flood the contents' page with Tackett titles???

Problems with squirrels?? How could anyone have problems with squirrels. They're incredibly cute, and it was only respect for the Australian ecology that stopped me from smuggling a couple back in my rucksack. The ground squirrels I saw in the ROCKY MOUNTAIN PARK were just as nice, but I found the black ~~squirrels~~ question mark tails of the Toronto squirrels fascinating.

My main objection to open space schools is that they tend to have anywhere up to six classes running in the same area without anything to absorb the noise. Thus you get someone trying to take a class for quiet reading next to someone holding a class discussion. In theory it's a nice idea, but it assumes total co-operation between teachers, and total co-operation between students and teachers. I don't know of a school that has so much as achieved the former condition. The one room school worked due to the small number of kids. Open space schools would stand a better chance of working with a smaller student population, and a better teacher to pupil ratio. However, it's a bloody inefficient way of doing things.

The reason behind the lower migration rate has I think a lot to do with the close ties Australians, even fans, tend to have to their cities. Besides, it is not easy to find work at present in most Australian cities. I myself would happily move to either Melbourne or Sydney if I could find a job there. As mentioned, there is a reasonable amount of interchange between Sydney and Perth, mainly in a Sydneyward direction. Since I published that guide, three more Perth fans, Damian Brennan, Barb de la Nunte, and Mark Hennessey have made the Sydney pilgrimage.

Aha. Yet another symptom of the move to the Right. Heinlein is becoming fashionable again....

DAN McPHAIL Reading this reminds me of the FAPA party at Denvention where Mike Glicksahn and I were sitting at the feet of Art Widner and Elmer Perdue. (Jack Speer had doffed his ghodhood and was sprawled on the floor.) It was quite an incredible feeling to be sitting among those who, unknowingly, had been responsible for my adoption of a totally different lifestyle. Isn't history a wonderful thing? Seriously though, it isn't often that one can be in such close contact with people who have had such an influence on one, and I certainly appreciated being there, much as I enjoy being able to read of the early FAPA in your zines and Harry's.

GREG CALKINS The other thing about FAPA is, of course, having some sort of window onto life styles that one is never likely to adopt. You seem to take what seem to me very major changes to your lifestyle with incredible equanimity. If that happened to me, I'd probably be a quivering heap on the dole office queue.

BOB SILVERBERG Now that you've got your own reproductive equipment, I would have thought that, being a famous author and all, you'd be able to find better use for it than taking it in your own hands. Haha, can I write an article on the role of the Mimeograph in Silverberg's fiction? I'm sure I could sell it to Bruce Gillespie for SFC.

GUY H LILLIAN While I agree with your evaluation of the Hugo nominations, I think you were a little easy on RINGWORLD ENGINEERS. If there were ever a novel whose only merit was that it was a sequel, then R.E. is it. The plot is overworked, and the final solution is as tedious an attempt to tie two books together as I've ever seen. Had I voted for the Hugos, I'd probably have reversed your novel choices. TESB would not have rated a place. Still, sadly, THE LATHE OF HEAVEN obviously didn't have the circulation necessary to get it the coveted statue. Fity, but Le Guin seems to be going out of fashion.

Dammit. I really should have put my name down for the DeepSouthCon Hearts tournament. I mean, it would have been nice to have taken the plaque really down South.

ROGER & ANDERS Hmm. I think I'm starting to understand your fanzine. Can I be cured? (Answer yes, if I spend anymore time in smokefilled room parties held by Peter Toluzzi.) Thanks for the support for A in '83. Hopefully there won't be any conflict in your '85 vote. If you wouldn't mind, I'll accept choice X as my Christmas gift. I do however, anticipate difficulties with customs. ~~Who gets~~
~~to sleep in the wet patch?~~

MAE Wizard. I can remember almost nothing of the Melbourne trip I mention here.

