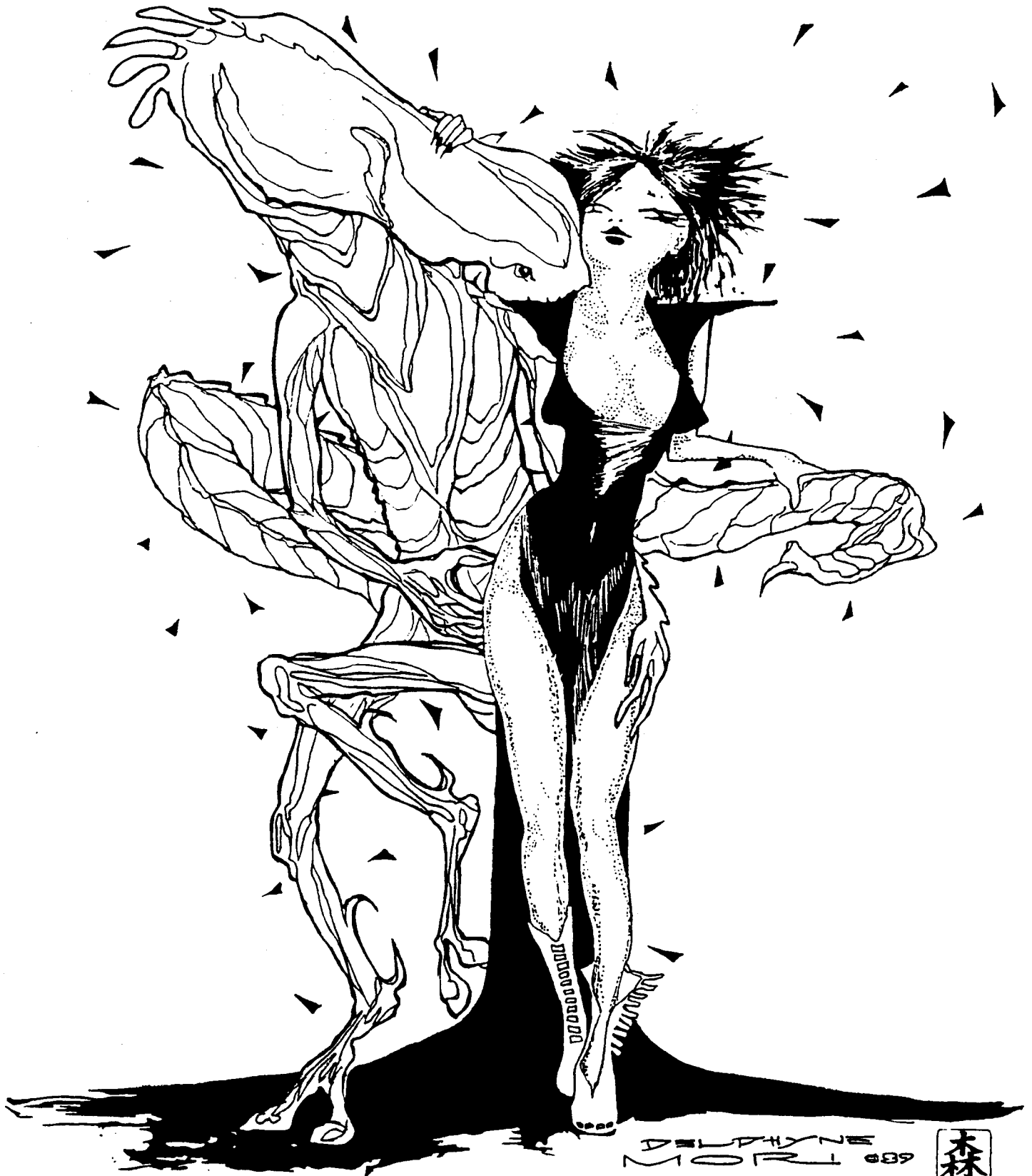


LEFT



DELPHINE
MORIN 689



The Occasion :: Danse Macabre, the 1990 National Australian SF Convention
 The Location :: the Embassy Room, Diplomat Motor Inn, Melbourne, Australia
 The Date :: Sunday, the 15th of April (Easter, 1990)
 The Time :: roughly between the hours of half past five and half past six in the late afternoon/early evening

The Inspiration :: Jerry Kaufman, while in Australia in 1983, talking about the idea that he & Suzle Thompkins had come up with for a "live issue of their fanzine..."

The Cogitation :: (upon hearing of the idea, and some of the details of its implementation) "What a fantastic idea. But I wonder if you couldn't do it a little differently, though... like so, and so, and... but what a great idea!

The Opportunity :: David McDonnell, fellow member of the Danse Macabre anarcho-syndicalist commune, calls for ideas for programme items for the convention.

The Circumstances :: so there we are, all the technical equipment set up, all the props to hand and most of the contributors ready to go; the only thing we were missing was...

The Audience :: - most of the potential members of which were around on the other side of the ~~plaza~~ hotel, watching the extraordinarily extraordinary performance artist Stelarc strut his direct electrical stimulation motor neurone laser mechanical arm stuff - the very raw materials of which both sensawunda and the more daring cyberpunk novels were made - gosh.

The Worry :: Could we even expect an audience at all? Would Stelarc finish on time? Should we just publish and have a damned good time, anyway?

The Answer :: Of course we should - and we did! (To start off, though, the audience was very, very small... "intimate", I'd call it, although Terry Frost [see below] had another way of looking at it.

The Artwork :: Most of the illustrations you've seen or are about to see were created during the run of the event, most of the time as a response to what was happening or being said, either up on stage or in the audience.

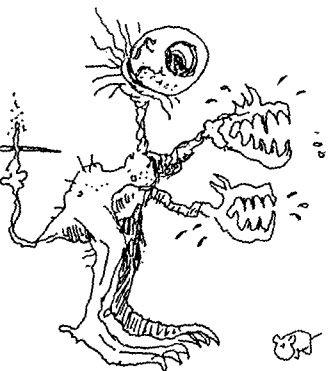
Artwork not drawn live (indicated below with an asterisk) was either specifically commissioned for the fanzine or, in one case, released for it.

Work ranged in size from the enlarged 1.5 X 3m [approx. 5' X 10'] front cover, to some of the smaller A3-sized cartoons. Overhead-projected transparencies were in colour, and some of them moved or had moving parts [see p.17 - harumph!]. Most of the artwork has been presented in rough order of appearance, where possible; editorial discretion has had to be exercised at a couple of points.

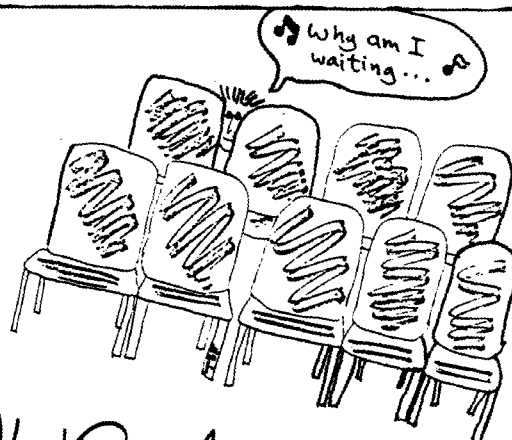
At the commencement of the fanzine, John Packer took up position on stage and began to draw the back cover, placing up each A3 sheet as he completed it. As the fanzine drew to a close, John placed the final panel of the final sheet up for display, now part of a finished whole.

ARTIST :: CREDITS

Tom Cardy	::	3*
Terry Frost	::	2
Ian Gunn	::	4,10,12,14,14,17
Joan Hanke Woods	::	Cover*
Kerrie Hanlon	::	11
Teddy Harvia	::	7*
Craig Hilton	::	15*
John Packer	::	4,13,Backcover
Bill Rotsler	::	16*
Phil Wlodarczyk	::	2,8



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 by Roger Weddall, who may
 be reached at...
 P.O.Box 273, Fitzroy 3065
 AUSTRALIA



OUR AUDIENCE

BAD CABLE SHOWS FROM THE 1990'S (# 1)



THE EDITORIAL

Good afternoon and welcome; welcome one and all to the 'pages' of Australia's very first "live fanzine".

As it is the first time that a fanzine of this sort has been produced in Australia, perhaps a word or two about the nature of the concept might be in order... but rather than load you, the readers, down with a mass of explanations, I think it might be more fun if instead we launch straight into the fanzine - whose name, appropriately, is Lhyfe.

Lhyfe comes to you courtesy of what I feel is just some type of cosmic accident, although in deference to the beliefs of a few of you present I will admit to the possibility of its being at least in part the work of some sort of nobler being, some "higher" form of existence or consciousness....
[Last remark accompanied by a rubbing & polishing of editor's knuckles upon editor's shirt-front.]



In this, the premier issue of Lhyfe, we will be looking at the general topic of conventions, and the good and bad and strange times that people have at them. Although please... don't become angry or complain if we end up straying a little from the subject, because sometimes Lhyfe's just like that.

Also in this issue we will be looking somewhat elliptically at an event that for all practical purposes marked the beginning of modern Australian fandom - all as seen through the eyes of someone who wasn't there to see it - and we'll have a few interesting letters of comment, I'll bet, from people who'll want to take up with what they'll have just seen in the previous three quarters of an hour. All this and more... but I've waffled on for quite long enough. It's more than time to introduce the first act of this three-ring circus: the mellifluous magic of maestro Marc Ortlieb! Take it away, Marc.

HAS STEWARC FINISHED YET?



Jan Gunn

THE LIVE FANZINE CONVENTION BLUES

by Marc Ortlieb

When Roger asked me to do something for a live fanzine, my first thought was to say no. My second thought was to inflict my lead-fingered guitar playing and tone-deaf singing on a real, live audience. Perhaps I should have stuck with my first thought but, what the hell, I've lugged the guitar all the way here and it's almost in tune, and so why not.

The first number is sung a capella and, having done a little Italian at night school, I'm now capable of translating that as "without a key". It is the tale of a neofan's first encounter with a convention and it goes something like this.

A WORLDCON

(To the tune of "Maria" from West Side Story)

A worldcon!
I've finally got to a worldcon
And now I feel my life
Will never be the same again.

A worldcon!
A dinkum Australian worldcon
With famous b.n.f.s
And Hugo presentations too!

A worldcon!
With Le Guin as the Guest of Honour.
Just one glance and I know I'm a goner.



MARC ORTLIEB
- THE MUSICAL EQUIVALENT OF A TYPO!



A worldcon!
I just can't believe it -
A worldcon!
A worldcon
A worldcon
A....
The most beautiful feeling I've ever known...
A worldcon!

I had two reasons for doing that without accompaniment. For a start no one will accompany me when I start singing. Secondly it means that you are going to be so relieved to hear something drowning out part of my voice that you won't notice the bum chord changes.

Anyway, our young neofan is so taken by Aussiecon that he decides to put out his own fanzine and, like anyone who knows no better, he immediately starts pestering all of the big name fans that he can for articles. Having discovered that Bruce Gillespie is the most respected of contemporary fan editors, he decides to attempt a zine something like SF Commentary. His musical tastes have also matured somewhat and so he drags his guitar to the next convention and can be found busking in the hucksters' room or hucking in the buskers' room or something like that.

MR SERCONZINE FAN

(To the tune of Bob Dylan's "Mr Tamborine Man")

C D
Hey Mr Serconzine Fan
G C
Write a LoC for me.
G C D
I'm not ready to put out another zine yet.
C D
Hey Mr Serconzine Fan
G C
Write a LoC for me.
G C D G
In my next three Heinlein reviews I'll be copying you.
C D
Though I know that Isaac Asimov
G C
Is just a lot of hype;
G C
Dime-a-dozen tripe
G C D
With a style that don't stand up to T.S.Eliot's.
C D
Still I write a learned paper on
G C
His adjectives and such
G C
And on why he sells so much
G C D
To those dreary college kids too stoned for thinking



(The following verse is dedicated to Bruce Gillespie.)
Take me still protesting through
The works of Philip Dick,
Through the prose that makes me sick,
Though I know that pretty quick I will be praising.
For even in my zines I must appease the latest trend
If I want the thing to end - through the graces of my friends -
A Hugo winner.

Though you might hear someone saying that
The whole thing ain't worthwhile...
You still can raise a smile,
'Cause you know it won't be you
Who will be losing.
It's just the fools who publish zines
In which you write your trash
Who'll be eating last week's hash
While looking for the stamps to post next issue
(Not sung during the fanzine.)

Well, we all know how disillusioning fandom can be. Having published several issues of a fanzine, our hero discovers that fandom has changed, and without so much as consulting him. Naturally he has developed beyond his early naïvety and, with this development has come a corresponding refinement in his musical taste. I really shouldn't even attempt this song. Richard Thompson is my favourite guitarist and, were he dead, he'd be turning in his grave at the thought of what I'm about to do to his tune.

DOWN AT THE CON HOTEL

(To the tune of Richard Thompson's "Down Where The Drunkards Roll")

G
See the fans out walking
D G
The fans they look so fine
C G
Dressed in cloaks and chainmail
C D
Their silver daggers shine.
G
It's their idea of fun;
D C
It surely isn't mine
D D sus D
Down at the con hotel
C D
Down at the con hotel.

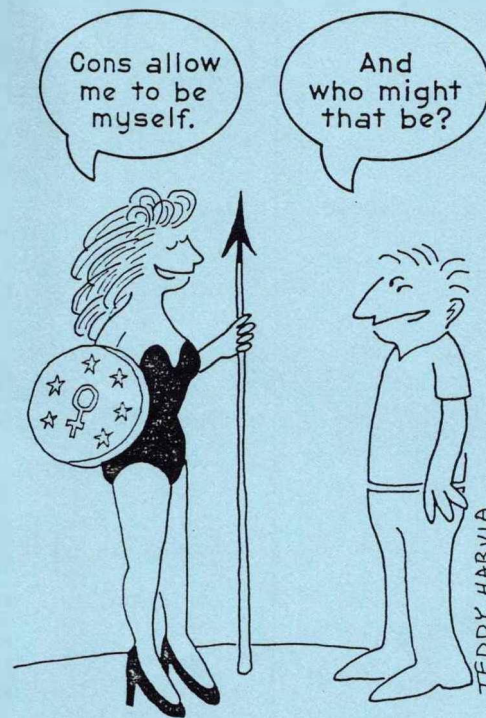
There goes the hotel liaison
She looks a bit upset.
The hotel's been complaining;
The con's not started yet.
She's due for nervous breakdowns,
That's a solid bet.
Down at the con hotel.



See the huckster standing
 And looking all around.
 He's looking for some buyers;
 Fans are all he's found.
 What he wants are suckers
 Who'll buy gimmicks by the pound
 Down at the con hotel.

You could be a spaceman
 Who's never been in space.
 You could be a cleric
 With dignity and grace.
 You could be Darth Vader
 At least that would hide your face
 Down at the con hotel.

There goes Wilson Tucker
 There goes Joe Haldeman
 There go Shaw and Glicksohn
 And there goes Antifan
 Soon they'll be all smoothed out
 And pickled to a man
 Down at the con hotel.



It doesn't get any better! Our once-fresh, young fan is now truly an old fan and tired and he is last seen in the bar, singing boozily and slowly in a voice that is almost bad enough to fit into the filk tradition.

THE CONVENTION

(To the tune of Bruce Springsteen's "The River")

Em G D C
 Well I come to this convention; I wonder why I did.
 Em G C G
 Been coming to conventions since I was just a kid.
 C G Em
 Been hooked on science fiction since I was just fourteen;
 Am
 From all your stone dead faces
 G C
 I see that you know what I mean.
 Em C
 And so I go to conventions
 D G
 Though I know conventions are dry
 Em C D
 Like I come here to give this one a try.

I started off as a neo, at the very first Aussiecon,
 But nowadays it seems as if I never gone
 Cause those memories have faded and all that's left is the con before
 And I sleep through all the panels; they're such a fucking bore.

Em G
 But I remember a time when it was fresh and bright
 D C
 And masquerades and talks, they were my heart's delight.
 Em G
 Every con I'd approach with eagerness



C G
And I thought every one a great success
C G Em
Now those memories come back to haunt me as I play another verse
Am
Is this con much better than the one before
G C
Or is it something worse?
Em C
And so I go to conventions
D G
Though I know the panels by heart
Em C D
I'll go back to conventions again
C
And again....

Thank you for bearing with me. Now I'll hand you back to Roger.

P.S. The Official Tigger Songbook, containing all of the above songs and others, plus artwork by Bob Shaw, Craig Hilton and Sheryl Birkhead is available from P.O.Box 215, Forest Hills 3131, for \$2-00 plus \$1-00 postage. Profits go to the usual fan funds.

Thank you, Marc. And so we've followed our mythical hero through his fannish career, from spellbound, starstruck neofan, to furiously fanatical fanzine editor, to old fan and tired but still coming back to conventions for more... maybe only out of habit.

One might, however, feel well justified in asking the question: "Is that all there is?" Does one have little choice but to sit back - hopeful of one's place in the annals of fannish history - and fade gracefully into the background? Or is it possible to come through the other side of it all with the stars still intact in one's eyes, and with the enthusiasm still to publish one's fanzine... if not, perhaps, quite as regularly.

These and other rhetorical questions may be asked and even answered as we bring to centre stage one of the stayers of Australian fandom for...

AN INTERVIEW WITH BRUCE GILLESPIE

ROGER WEDDALL: We've been talking - and singing - about conventions, Bruce, and you've certainly been to a lot of them, but first I want to ask you about a convention you didn't attend - the Australian National Convention held at the Melbourne Science Fiction Club during Easter, 1966. First of all, the obvious question: why *didn't* you attend that convention?

BRUCE GILLESPIE: I was, and still am, a shy person.

[Sounds of much disbelief from RW.]





BRG: I hadn't then joined fandom. I saw some advertisements for the convention. They were duplicated on little slips of paper and put in all the sf books sold at McGill's Bookstore. McGill's was the only shop in town with a decent stock of science fiction. Little did I know that the man behind the counter was Mervyn R. Binns, president, secretary and organiser of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club.

I read the very entertaining account that Charles Higham wrote in The Bulletin about the 1966 convention, but made no attempt to get in touch with the club until I had finished my Arts degree.

RW: But tell me, why is the 1966 convention so famous?

BRG: It was the first sf convention of any kind in Australia for eight years. During the Dark Ages between the 1958 and 1966 conventions a few people such as John Foyster, Bob Smith and John Baxter were producing fanzines, writers such as Lee Harding and Wynne Whiteford were selling to overseas magazines, and Mervyn Binns was organising the Melbourne Science Fiction Club in the upstairs loft in Somerset Place behind McGill's. Apart from that, however, there really was nothing else.

John Foyster organised the 1966 convention. People somehow crowded into the Melbourne SF Club; though they did more than just crowd together. At some point in the proceedings the attendees decided that Australia desperately needed a national magazine of the sf field. Lee Harding pointed at John Bangsund and made him editor. At that stage, John had read almost no sf and had attended the convention only because he was a friend of Lee Harding and John Foyster. That magazine was the first series of Australian Science Fiction Review.

On another occasion, John Baxter made the suggestion that Australia should work towards holding a world convention. This was merely a jocular suggestion, and nobody took it seriously but Kevin Dillon. Without comment Kevin got up and walked straight down to the front of the gathering and shoved a twenty-pound note into John Baxter's hand. This was Kevin's donation to the cause.

RW: What would that be worth now... two or three hundred dollars?

BRG: Probably.

RW: Now that happened a good two or three years before Andy Porter seriously suggested that Australia would be a good place to hold a World Science Fiction Convention....

BRG: Let me think... it was in ASFR #18... the spiral tower of the Melbourne Arts Centre had been designed but not yet built, and John Bangsund drew a little doodle, a sketch of the tower, as a rocketship, blasting off, and below it he wrote 'Melbourne in...' I forget the year. It was a joke, but Andy Porter saw it and wrote back supporting the idea as a serious bid. The rest, as they say, is history.

RW: That almost makes my next question redundant. Trivial things such as World Science Fiction Conventions aside, however, why was Australian Science Fiction Review so important?

BRG: Because it was the renaissance of Australian fandom. Copies were sold regularly on the counter at McGill's. I bought it there for one-and-a-half years before I wrote to John Bangsund.



Other copies were sent interstate. Eric Lindsay, I believe, joined fandom because of a copy he bought in Adelaide, although he lived in Sydney at the time. John Brosnan found a copy in Perth, and wrote to John Bangsund. Peter Darling and Gary Mason in Sydney found a copy, and wrote to John. John and Diane, his first wife, took off for Sydney one weekend. The party that was held in their honour was the beginning of the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation.

It's hard to describe how good ASFR was. Take all the better qualities of the current ASFR and add to them the sparkling literary personality of John Bangsund. The result was a friendly, fannish fanzine that also stuck to the highest critical ideals. Foyster, Harding and Bangsund wrote most of the early issues between them. The highlights were the Cordwainer Smith issue, most of which has been reprinted by the current ASFR; issue #10, which introduced George Turner to the world; the reviews section of each issue; and... the letter column. Every famous person in professional writing and fandom wrote to ASFR: Aldiss, Moorcock, Delany, Keith Roberts, etc., etc.. ASFR was Ursula Le Guin's first fanzine contact.

RW: Was ASFR your first fanzine contact, then? How did you get involved in fandom - you were living in Bacchus Marsh at the time, I understand...

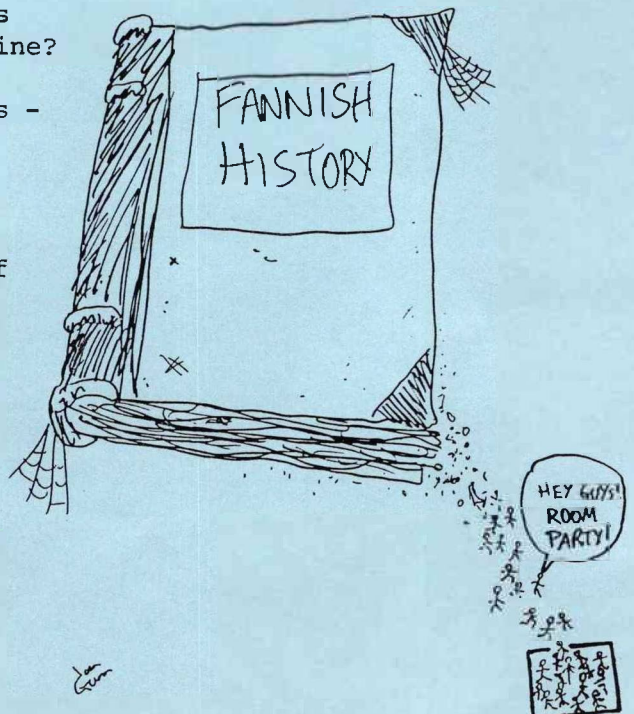
BRG: Harry Harrison once wrote to me that Bacchus Marsh sounded like it was a drunken bog. Yes, I was living there when I joined fandom. Eventually I wrote to John and became an ASFR subscriber. I sent two articles about the novels of Philip K. Dick. John rang from Ferntree Gully to suggest that I come to stay for the weekend.

That weekend - the third weekend of January 1968 - coincided with a gathering of everybody who was anybody, at John and Diane's place. The ostensible reason for the gathering was to meet George Turner for the first time. Actually it was a day-long mini-convention. That's where I met Rob Gerrand for the first time, George Turner of course, and also Tony Thomas, Lee Harding, Leigh Edmonds, Paul Stevens, John Foyster, Elizabeth Foyster (as she was known then), and Jillian Miranda, who was less than 1 year old then, and who is now 23 years old.

RW: You mention having sent articles to John Bangsund; how did you progress to the production of your own fanzine?

BRG: I always liked the idea of fanzines - magazines in which the editors actually wrote what they wanted. The problem was how to get the money to publish the first issue. I tried out a few ideas in the first mailings of ANZAPA. Then, at the beginning of 1969, I stopped being a student, and became a teacher at Ararat Technical School. I had a salary at last - \$70 clear per week.

Those two years were the worst of my life. Anybody who fails teaching at a country school is a real failure as a teacher. But I was bound by 'the bond' - I was supposed to teach for three years as penance for being supported by the Education Department while at University.





When not being a rotten teacher, I put all my energy into beginning SF Commentary. The results looked rough at first, but the response was astonishing. By that time, ASFR had died, and something like it was needed. I couldn't write as well as John Bangsund, but many of his contributors helped me out. There was a huge amount of support from overseas contributors. I did eighteen issues in two years!

RW: Is there any reason, apart from hating teaching, for all that activity?

BRG: [waving vaguely in the direction of Marc Ortlieb.] Marc once worked out a law of fannish activity. The activity generated during the first year in fandom equals the next five years in fandom, and that total time equals the next ten years, and so on. Recently, I published The Metaphysical Review #14, which took about three years to assemble. To me, it only seemed like a few fannish months. But in the three years between January 1969 and December 1971 I published 24 issues of SF Commentary.

RW: Back on the subject of conventions, Bruce. What sort of differences do you find between conventions past and the conventions of today?

BRG: None. The only differences are in the convention attendee. I enjoyed conventions a great deal more in the 1970s - but then I was still single. I fell in love - really in love - for the first time at the Syncon held in August 1972, and lost my virginity at Torcon, the World Convention held in Toronto in September 1973. Conventions were a lot more fun then.

My Significant Other - Terry Frost's immortal phrase - might not attend conventions, but the fact of having a Significant Other makes a difference to the way one approaches conventions.

RW: Hmmn.... It would be tempting to quote some of Terry's more recent phrases & sentences on the matter back at you, and see where that takes us, but it looks as though we're out of time. Thanks very much, Bruce. [Sounds of wild audience applause.]





And now, *another* person who needs no introduction. Michelle Muijsert will reminisce with us about...

THE BEST OF CONS, THE WORST OF CONS

by Michelle Muisert

©A&!! TECHNOLOGY!



The first con I attended was affectionately known by fans of the day (circa 1982) as DunnyCon. In fact its name was HalleyCon but its location in Dunedin led to a certain amount of toilet humour, perhaps supporting the often stated but implausible Australianism that New Zealanders are more English than the English themselves. Anyway, DunnyCon is fondly remembered by me both for its primacy in my fannish experience and for a couple of the sillier events in my fannish career. For one thing, it was the con where I was most nearly arrested. I had met Graham Ferner, a young man destined to be a major and anarchist influence on my fannish career, earlier that evening. We decided to celebrate our mutual tendency towards chaos by throwing fireworks down onto the hotel carpark from a balcony at about 2:00am. Our intoxicated peer group were amused but the local police weren't. Fortunately they believed our story about the nasty people in the room above....

This had the effect of making us much more circumspect at the following evening's room party. A group of 11 or 12 partied on until about 3:00 or 4:00 then dropped off to sleep in various attitudes around the room. At about 5:00 Graham and I decided to exercise our newly discovered passion for the first time. Why not, we thought. Everybody else was asleep. Unfortunately the bed creaked. A lot. Heaps, even. We didn't realise *how much* until one of the other fans coughed discreetly but forcefully. As the steam cleared we realised that the whole room party was awake. Our fannish reputations were made.

DunnyCon was also the first place that I saw the dreadful porno videos that helped make Frank Macskasy a legend in Kiwi fandom. One was an incomprehensible golden showers number featuring lots of black shiny stuff but everybody's favourite was the Viking movie. Lots of golden-plaited, beefy maidens romping cheerily with huge warriors. It was so good that Frank used to play it backwards after we'd watched it through; we enjoyed it even more then.

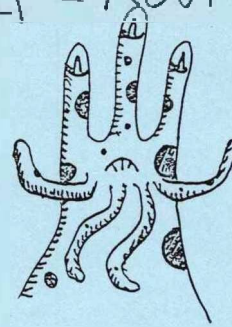
My second and last con in New Zealand was WindyCon '83. Perhaps best described as one of those cons where things go to pieces, particularly relationships, it was quite a bash. A number of titles go to WindyCon: most mobile party, for a start. Shortly after midnight one evening friend Graham decided to load all the good party stuff out of his room - pillows, alcohol, marijuana and so on - into a lift. He then proceeded to tour up and down the hotel stoned out of his brain for about three hours. Every so often he changed lifts, confounding the night manager who was in intermittent pursuit until said manager turned off the lifts.



Then there was the most unfortunate incident I've ever seen at a room party. Fred and Betty - not their real names - were a couple of long standing. John, not *his* real name, was a longstanding friend of both. At about 1:00am I was standing, talking to Betty, when suddenly her jaw dropped, her face flushed, she screamed loudly and ran away down the hall, sobbing.

"What the fuck have I done," I thought to myself.... It wasn't until I turned around that I noticed Fred and John standing about two feet behind me, passionately engaged in what could only be described as tongue kissing. Very tongue. Very kissing. Very wet. Actually they all lived happily ever after but a few people were holding their breath for a while there.

HELP - ROOM PARTY!



Then there was the case of the worst timing, an episode possibly inspired by a penalty in a game of truth and dare. Whatever the reason, one Peter Hassall decided the thing to do in the wee small hours was to streak from a first-floor room party, down the stairs, through the lobby, out to the pie cart across the street and back again. It was the back again that was the problem. In the minute or so that it took for Peter to get across the road and back, sprinting quickly in sub-zero, mid-Winter temperatures though he was, a Little Old Lady arrived in the hotel foyer, to be greeted by the sight of.... it could only happen in Wellington.

I went straight from WindyCon to SynCon '83 the following weekend. SynCon was a good con; one of the great ones, in fact, but sadly most of the actual incidents are lost in antiquity, otherwise known as an alcoholic haze. Greg Hills and I arrived in Sydney together with Harlan Ellison with the result that we got a lift to the hotel with the local fans. The deepest silence I have ever heard was when I mentioned in the car that I had come to Australia with the intention of living in Melbourne. Oops!

The one thing I do recall was that I had my worst case of mistaken identity in Sydney. I have a clear memory of lolling around on someone's bed, drinking beer. Someone knocked on the door and stuck his head around for a look. "Piss off," I said elegantly. "We don't want you here." Later I was informed that the head was Mike McGann and that the room was his too.

Following this I spent several years in a sensory deprivation tank known as Perth. Perth cons tend to run together leaving a watery image... of parties in the pool at the Westos. It was after one of these that I came across the coyest incident of my fannish career. A group of us piled into a shower together, still in our bathers, then into bed for a chat. So far there was no cause for defensiveness on the part of any of those present - remember, we still had our bathers on. As we lay gossiping I moved slightly to one side and realised that the person next to me was not between the sheets but in fact between the top blanket and the bedspread. What a terribly shy person, you might think. The last person you'd expect to be the coyest person in fandom would be Roger Weddall! [[...]]

Aussiecon II came as a welcome respite from the boredom of Perth. There was the Best Cleavage contest. I wasn't involved. Then again, I was the target of considerable attention as the owner of the best haircut, a slick, shiny black number with a bright red racing stripe. I was more patted than an only cat.

There was also the case of the man who showed his age most. A group of us were lying on the bed in Suite 1500 where the real parties were,



playing truth and dare in a desultory fashion and engaging in a little massage round robin. By and large we remained diffident and fully clothed. Suddenly a man of middle years bounded in the door with a younger female companion. "See!" said Bob Shaw. "They're really doing it!" I'd still like to know what it was we were supposed to be doing....

The first year we were in Melbourne - 1987 - we went to a couple of terrible cons. CapCon in Canberra was undoubtedly the worst convention I have ever been to, and the SynCon that year was so bad that I vowed never to go to another convention in Sydney. I have never before been to a con where the local fans were so divided into cliques that they wanted the visitors to organise a Dead Dog for them.

Fortunately Eastercon - the fannish one - was on the same year and preceded these two dire events, or else I might not still be involved in fandom to tell you about them. Eastercon was both the most fannish and the best con I have been to. I have covered it at length in a con report in TSW a couple of years ago and won't go into it all here. However, I will say that if you're into bizarre stories about condoms you should look up that old Space Wastrel and read all about it.



KinKon III followed the next year and was a bit of a personal disaster given that I was supposed to be on the committee and was stricken by allergic reactions to a meal eaten at Enri's famous garlic restaurant the night before the con. Still I do recall that it was probably the most efficient con I attended and certainly takes the title for the Most Misplaced piece of Hyper-efficiency. I was running a bad taste competition which was getting enthusiastic feedback from a happy, tacky audience of perhaps 70 people. At five minutes to the hour, the Day Manager signalled that it was time to close down for the next panel. On the hour the following football panel started - with an audience of three. Everything ran on time, that con, come hell or high water.

Kinkon was fun as well as being efficient and stands out in my memory as having the most consistently individual Fan GOH performance. Playing Beach Boys numbers apparently struck some chord in Greg Turkich's soul and he spent most of the con surfin' the tables. This of course was somewhat detrimental at times to panel members' possessions lying on the table, including one or two fingers but, what the hell. Vibes are vibes.

If legend is to be believed, the tackiest pick-up line ever was also used at that con. I walked into the main con venue one evening to find Jane Tisell rolling around on the floor, legless with laughter. When she'd recovered she alleged to me that Tim Reddan had actually said to a femfan: "Trust me." Some chance.



TRUST ME TOO...

you-had-to-be-there audience in-joke #1: 'TSF on the prowl'



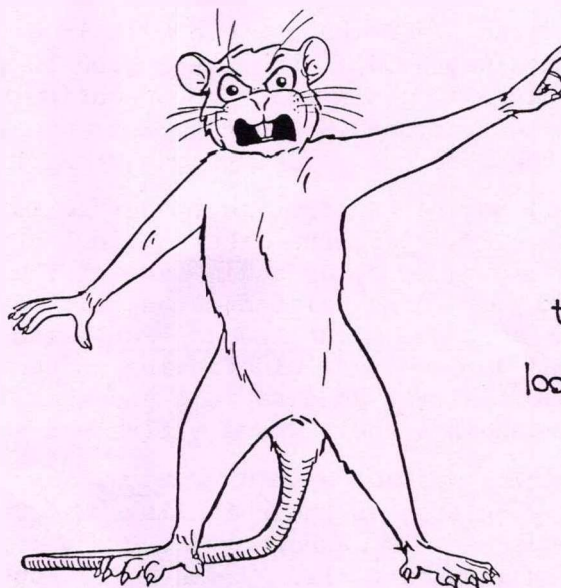


Which brings us to Conjunction last year, a reasonably seamless con which was small but fun. I think I probably had my most fannish experience at Conjunction. Late one night I was lying on the foyer floor with Eric Lindsay, Greg Hills and Terry Frost, free-associating fannish hoax, scam and one-shot plans. This was fairly profound in itself but when it became apparent that Eric Lindsay - legendary room party beast extraordinaire - had passed out, I realised that I was part of something quintessentially trufannish. Like wow, this is what it takes to become a hall party superstar in America. heart of fandom.

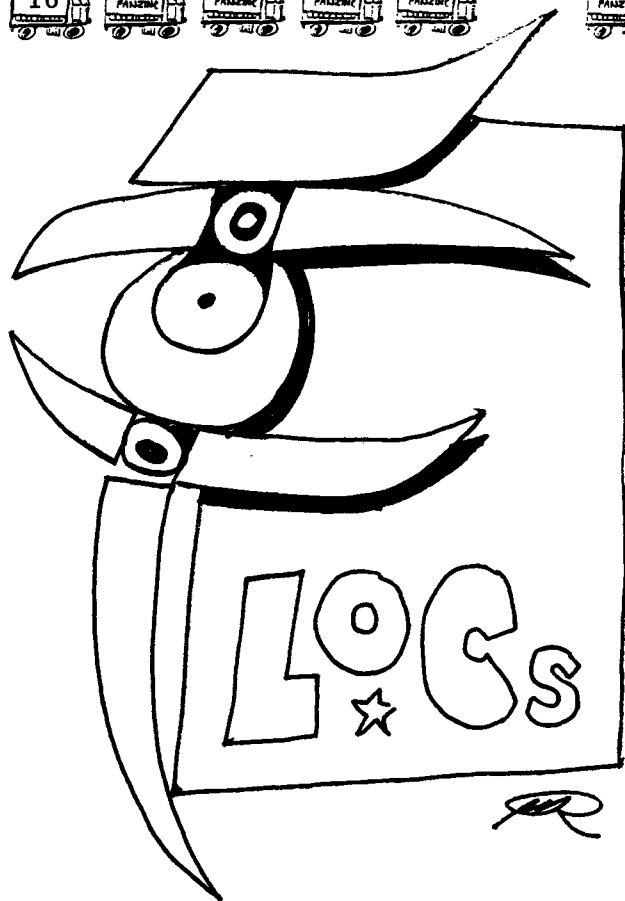
So here we are at last at Danse Macabre, from my point of view The Con Least Likely To Succeed. Two years ago I investigated the likelihood of a major NatCon bid for Melbourne in 1990 being supported by the local, fannish community. On finding that most people were too involved in their work to commit enough time to the idea, I regretfully shelved it. At that stage the plan still starred Stephen King and a cast of thousands. Ever-optimistic Roger Weddall seized the plan and ran with it. Along the way Stephen King became George R.R. Martin, the thousands stayed at home and the fans came out. The final result has been a very successful con. So I was wrong; what's new?

At this point of the proceedings there was much applause... the audience, you could say, had been "lapping it up". In providing a copy of the written text from which she spoke, however, Michelle saw fit to append a 'disclaimer', a qualification of sorts - just as, either before or after the transcripts of their 'articles', did both Marc and Bruce. Sigh... and they say that beginners are the only ones to suffer from stage fright.

Okay - you heard the man. The show's over, so you can piss off, the lot of you!



And don't go turning the page looking for any Locs!



...and so we come to the part of our proceedings that has been described variously as "the least interesting section of a fanzine" and yet also as "its very lifeblood". Yes, we're up to the...

LETTERS OF COMMENT

and our first one was from...

Chris Chittleborough [61A Gold Street, Collingwood 3066].

'You said before that you didn't want to go on at length about what a live fanzine was but then you mentioned that this was the first time that one had been done in Australia. What is a live fanzine? What's the story behind the whole idea?'

Serendipitously? and partly in answer to those questions, we also heard from...

Irwin Hirsh [26 Jessamine Avenue, East Prahran 3181].

'By my reckoning this would be the fifth live fanzine to have been put together... although the definition of what a live fanzine is does tend to become a bit blurred in places; does the publication of transcripts of a convention programme make the convention itself into a live fanzine?

'Whether it does or not, the first Live Fanzine was presented sometime during the mid-seventies at a U.S. East Coast convention. The Fan Guests of Honour were Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins, who at the time were editing a fanzine called The Spanish Inquisition. Rather than give speeches, Jerry and Suzle decided to present an issue of their fanzine, which they later reprinted on good ol' twilltone. As I understand it, the issue had contributions from close to twenty people, including all the fanzine's regular columnists.

'It was almost a decade later before the next live fanzine was put together. At the third Corflu, which was held in the Washington DC area in 1986, Ted White and one or two others edited a fanzine as the convention's programme. To the best of my knowledge the only record of that fanzine appears in the memories of the people who were there to see it being presented; I wasn't one of them.

'The next year Bill Bowers ran the fourth Corflu as one quarter of the 50th issue of his fanzine Outworlds, the other three quarters of it being a video of the convention's programme, an audio tape of the same, and the traditional fanzine consisting of words printed on paper. Part of Outworlds #50 consisted of a look back at The Spanish Inquisition, with Jerry and Suzle 'reprinting' some of that decade-or-so-old fanzine. Because I have a copy of the paper version (or section) I'm able to tell you that, amongst other contributors were Art Widner, Richard Brandt, Steve Stiles and Bernadette Bosky....

'The next live fanzine was an issue of Mimosa, which is edited by Dick & Nicki Lynch. Their live version of their fanzine was presented at Chattacon 13, held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in January 1988. The live version was titled Mimosa #3.5; the on-paper version titled Mimosa #4. Contributors included



Julius Schwartz, Ron Goulart, Charlotte Proctor and Bob Tucker (telling the story of his first meeting with Lee Hoffman - not the first time I'd read Bob telling that story and it probably won't be the last).

'As for the fifth live fanzine....'

That really *would* be instant feedback, wouldn't it? Thanks for the historical background to our little piece of performance art, Irwin.

Ian Nichols [111 Zebina Streeet, East Perth, 6004] also had a few comments to offer on the matter of historical context...

'Although I'm not usually one to quibble, I would take issue with one point of Michelle's reminiscences. Describing Perth as a sensory deprivation tank, she's neglected the complementary, other side of the Perth convention coin. Take for example the occasion on which a well-known Sydney fan who, armed only with a warm bottle of massage oil, half a litre of over-proof rum and three young, local fans, with only two leather mittens between them-'

The rest of Ian's letter was as interesting as it was - shall we say - revealing but *unfortunately*, completely lacking any legal advice as to the technical definitions of the terms 'libel' and 'slander', we must progress on to what Roman Orszanski [P.O.Box 131, Marden] had to say....

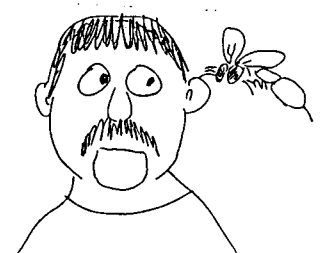
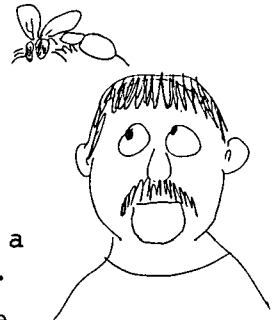
'All this talk of conventions, and especially Michelle's list of Bests and Worsts, reminds me of my favourite: a small, friendly con held in early '76. Anaconda was held in Claudia Mangiamele's mum's place in Carlton, with only a dozen or so people there. No set programme, and we spent our time listening to classical music on the radio, playing chess and scrabble, and sipping various teas, all weekend. Most civilised, with nary an untoward incident - although there was that rather nasty episode with the Gunpowder Green....

'There's a lot to be said for small cons: no need for GoHs, hotels, programming or film programmes; there's just the essence of a good convention: interesting people, fun & games. Best of all, there's no need for a concom!

'Nowadays, of course, every sub-fandom seems to want its own con. Good luck to them! I've never seen the point in catering to a range of narrow fandoms which don't seem to have much in common. If we want to, we could focus on those related fandoms which have close, historical links to the fannish mainstream:- model aeroplane fandom; classical music fandom; or even rat fandom. Not to mention tea fandom or Keats & Chapman fandom! Surely any of these fandoms have a much closer link to fandom than do the local trekkies, who-ees or Freddies. I reserve judgement, of course, on fans of Danger Mouse....'

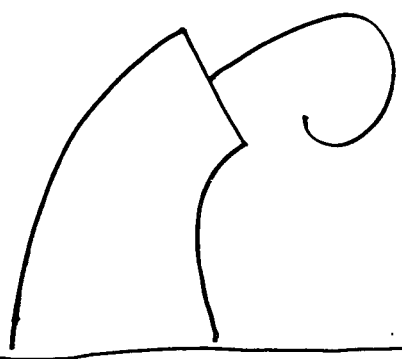
On that rather contentious issue we must leave Roman, because our time draws quickly to a close. *Danger Mouse??* [Looks quizzically at Roman.] Briefly, we heard also from Michelle Muijsert, Geoff Roderick, and Lucy Zinkiewicz with a Change of Address: 'In two days' time from now I will be living at 24/123 Victoria Street, East Brunswick 3057, and the telephone number will be (03) 380 8285.' And that, I think, brings us to the very end.

You have been reading the premier issue of Lhyfe; we now return you to your regular programme. Thank you. [Applause, and fade....]



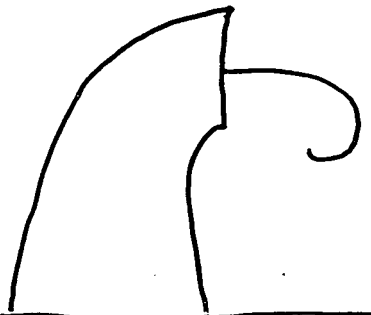
TRIFFID

n: SENSITIVE, SUAVE,
BRAVE, INTELLIGENT
POISONOUS MAN-
EATING PLANT.



JLP.

I LIKE
CONVENTIONS..

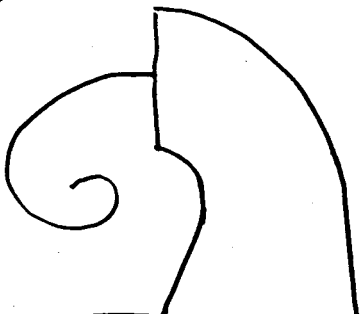


I LIKE MY FOOD
PROPERLY
LABELED.

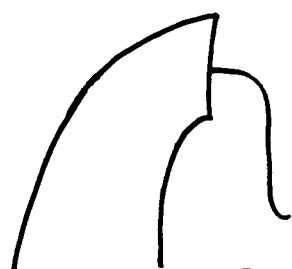


JLP

I ONCE WENT TO
A DEAD
DOG
PARTY...



BUT THEY ONLY
HAD CHIPS!



JLP

AND NOW MY
FAMOUS VANISHING
TRICK.



FIN