

# LITTLE BLUE NUMBER 6

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This fanzine acknowledges the members of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which it is produced in Hawthorn, Victoria, and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

## INTRODUCTION

I said I liked the blue colour of previous issues, I didn't promise I'd stay with it though.

I'm experimenting with a new font as well this time – Dante. These new fonts generally always look good on the screen in the work processor but, to me at least, how they appear on the pdf page is something else. It's a clean looking typeface and suits me at present. No idea how long that feeling will last however.

## GOINGS ON IN THE GROVE

Cat update: it's still sleeping on the front verandah. We leave it some water each day and it walks across the road to its owners for food in the mornings and evenings. I've realised that I don't have any contact details for them. That isn't a major issue but might become one if the cat gets sick or carcks it. Something to look forward to I guess!

## Comments on Mailing 321

### Chez Ashby 1 – Derrick Ashby

There isn't much I can say here that will have any immediate effect, other than to wish you the best of luck and I hope all the medical procedures worked out for you. And my commiserations on the loss of your dog Bella. ☺

### Quoz 77 – Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer

**Claire** – Re "... one has to wait for presents to be read by their recipients before borrowing them": since when was that a "thing"? Certainly doesn't seem to work in our house. My missus bought me a book as a birthday present once, noting: "I thought you'd like this." "Why?" I answered. "Hmmm, okay..." she noted. I never saw the book again. I returned my thoughts to my McLaren Vale shiraz. ☺

ReYCtoBruce about me: I actually don't care if I get called a "podder" or a "podcaster"; "pod person" sounds rather ridiculous – almost something out of a 1950s sf movie. ☺

ReYCtoJack about me: It might be a tad hard for my Canadian namesake to get together with David's as he's now no longer with us. But the sentiment sounds like an interesting one. ☺

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ReYCtoMe: Speculate all you want about me chairing another Worldcon, but I can tell you categorically that it will not happen. All of the current projects I have in retirement only involve myself (and David with the podcast, and a few others with *The Alien Review* and FANAC) and I am extremely happy to keep it that way. The only time-stress I have these days is what I put on myself. Having to coerce, manage, cajole and humour volunteers is just a "bridge too far". Of course there is also the threat that my missus would probably kill me if I even mentioned it out loud. And maybe that's the reason some of my friends keep prodding me about it: not so much to see my reaction but to see Robyn's. I try to warn them off but... The explosion of a lawyer provoked is one to be avoided at all costs. Are you *really* at a safe distance to ponder on this subject? I suspect it may not be until 2024 for the British Worldcon before I can figure this out. Though we may be able to discuss it in person if you make it to Chicago in 2022. You have been warned. ☺

My more detailed comments on the Robinson novel are contained in *The Alien Review 1* (available at all good eFanzines sites everywhere). Even then I don't think I really did it justice. ☺

**Mark** – Regarding permissions for reprinting stuff for FANAC, we ask first. It's always best to keep the reply and I forward the ones I get to Joe and Edie. Sometimes we'll get qualified permission – such as old stuff is okay but not the newer – in which case we stick to that and then ask for specific permission when it's needed. I haven't had to do that as yet. I also don't recall anyone giving a blanket "NO" to any such request, at least so far. [I think Jack Herman may have something to say about this.]

*The Old Guard* was probably my number 2 in 2020 given the lack of films watched that year. As restrictions ease up and we can go back to the cinema I'm taking the opportunity – with time and the seniors' discount price – to watch a lot more. Only trouble is that the pandemic curtailed a lot of film production, so we'll just have to eke it out for a while. ☺

**The Fiery Participle 45 – Leigh Edmonds** – The scanning of old fanzines will just have to fit in around the other fannish activities I partake in – podcasting and creating new fanzines being the major part of them. But now that you have a similar overhead scanner I expect we'll be seeing the results of your work shortly. ☺

ReYCtoClaire/Mark about me: I'd be most happy to take either of them back to my hometown of Laura in South Australia. I just did a check and found out that Laura is 982 kilometres away from Hawthorn, or 10hr 41 minutes driving time – way too much to do in one hit. Better to make the journey from Adelaide – that is around 225kms and about 2hr 45min. Actually it would probably take longer to drive there as you'd have to stop in the Clare Valley for a look around at a few wineries. So the trip would take a couple of days, at least. ☺

**brg 116 – Bruce Gillespie** – \$18 to post a copy of SFC to the US! There's the main reason why I've decided to not mail any printed copies of my zines right there. That's just way too much. ☺

Re ANZAPA 318 Comments -

ReYCtoLeigh: Like you, it seems I am struggling with those old sf paperbacks of the 60s and 70s. The paper is turning some weird tan colour. And the font size! I need a very strong light to be able to illuminate the text in order to read it. The best light in the house is Robyn's tapestry lamp, which, as you might expect does tend to get utilised by "someone else". ☺

ReYCtoRoman: Creating transcriptions of podcast discussions is a slog. The ones I've worked

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through have originally come from some software of David's. I think it's attached to his Office Suite subscription. That generally does a quite reasonable job but it still requires a lot of time listening to the recording, and correcting the text as you go. I've then taken to sending the edited version to the participants asking them to edit their own side of the conversation. Then one final run-through and I'm about ready to burn the bloody thing on the spot. I have no idea of whether the whole process is worth it or not as I can't bear to re-read it. ☺

ReYCtoMe: Thanks for the notes on the books and reviews and podcasts. It's my way of keeping busy. You may be interested to know that Geoff Dyer has written another book, similar in concept to *Zona*, but this time about the film *Where Eagles Dare*. Must get to that one at some time. *The Animals in That Country* made the longlist for the 2021 Miles Franklin Award, but not the shortlist. It is on the shortlist for the Arthur C. Clarke Award, so that pretty much decides the fact that it is SF. ☺

Re ANZAPA 319 Comments -

ReYCtoMe: I aim to read about 100 pages a day. Sometimes I fly past that number and sometimes I read none at all. But if you can average about 100 pages then the books read will start to mount up pretty quickly. This year hasn't been as productive, reading-wise, as other recent years. I'm not sure why, though I think it may be down to the amount of reading I did over a three-month period while working on my "Short Sf in 1965" piece that will be coming up in *The Alien Review 2*, RSN. It may also be because I was shut in so much and getting a bit bored with the whole thing. I find myself wasting time on the internet or re-watching old movies. The "self-punishment" part of it all is due to research for various critical pieces or for discussions on the podcast. ☺

**The Fretful Porpentine 38 – David Grigg** – I get the hint – I'll stay off the subject of builders and repair men. Builders, fencers and the like, don't seem to enjoy small jobs. I assume they think they can make more money off the bigger ones and opt for them instead. ☺

ReYCtoJack: I worry about my kids being able to afford a house at any stage though I have to remember that I was 37 when we signed the contract on this house. At that time I think the cost was about six times my annual salary. As Robyn and I were earning around the same amount then it came to around three times our combined income. We had about half the total cost saved by then. We were a bit lucky in our timing as mortgage rates were on the way down from their heights of 17 or 18% in the late 1980s. We started at around 10% pa and that slowly drifted down. It took us about 13 years (around half the original mortgage loan period) to pay it off. One of the best days we ever had that one. ☺

ReYCtoMe: I'm not sure if I look good in a hat or if the hat has just molded to fit. The new one is rather stiff and solid at present. It needs to get wet a few times, get a good dose of Aussie sun and loosen up a bit. ☺

**Gaston J. Feeblehare 19 – Kim Huett** – How do I feel about William De Lisle plagiarising an Australian poem? Amused is about all. It just adds to the number of literary stories in this country but isn't up to the Ern Malley affair. Then again, nothing else is either. ☺

ReYCtoMe: I need to watch the second season of *The Mandalorian* along with a whole lot of other stuff. I will review it when I get to it. ☺

Leiber has always been a bit of a worry. I didn't like either of *The Big Time* or *The Wanderer* but really enjoyed *Our Lady of Darkness*. If things work out I'll be publishing on piece on Leiber in

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***The Alien Review 4*** with, hopefully, small reviews of some of his better or award-winning works – long and short. This is still in the planning stages. Haven't even gotten issue 2 out of the gates as I write this. ☺

Explaining Worldcon finances? No thanks. For Aussiecon Four, I'm sure all the relevant details were included in our finalising report to the WSFS Business Meeting. We got all of that worked out pretty quickly after the convention – about 18 months – as we were sick to the back teeth of the whole process by that time and just wanted it all over. According to WSFS Rules you have to keep reporting each year until you have finalised all of your finances, paid all of your bills, collected all the incomings and allocated all of the surplus funds, if any. ☺

**Crash of the Hard Disk 54 – Gary Mason –** ReYCtoMe: The overhead scanner comes in its own box which is probably 75cm long and about 15cm square on the base. So, when the scanner is not in use, I just pack it up and put it somewhere in this "study". It seems to work – by which I mean that it keeps Robyn happy, which is the major if not the only thing. ☺

I have hopes of getting to Taiwan either at the end of a trip to China for the 2023 Worldcon, or as part of a combined Taiwan, South Korea and southern Japan trip. Lots of ideas, just not enough time. ☺

Yes, I think the WEG was a good cover. Even Chong mentioned in passing that he thought it was good. Or maybe he said "interesting" in that slightly critical way of his. ☺

The renos weren't overly traumatic as we did them a bit at a time and paid someone to do most of them. Fence painting I can do, though I have to get myself in the mood for it. The hardest part is getting started. Once the painting starts its easy enough to be encouraged by the steady progress. In fact that, and the rather caustic comments from the missus are the only thing that keep me going. ☺

**Sparowgrass & battle-twigs 74 – Roman Orszanki –** ReYCtoMe: I have to state that I haven't yet seen the film *Atomic Blonde*; started it but didn't finish. Not sure why. I should go back and finish it. ☺

**I'd Rather Knot – Marc Ortlieb –** What may be the quote of the mailing: "Sigh. So Halley's comet will be brighter in 2061 than it was in 1986. I was underwhelmed in 1986. I'll be underground in 2061..." I'll be there as well, though, I suspect not in the same plot. ☺

Thanks to all the other contributions in yet another massive mailing. I keep reading them but am not finding anything to comment about.

And thanks to David Grigg for the day's extension for this mailing. I left my run too late for these mailing comments and needed an extra day to get them completed. No, it wasn't me who asked for the extension, I'm just grateful for it.

Stay well.