

Out of the Bin



MERV at the Barbecue

Photo by Helena

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A Newsletter from MERV BINNS

(edited and produced by Helena Binns)

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Dear Readers,

Although I am writing this in May it may be quite some time before friends are actually reading it, as "my editor", Helena, is working flat out on formatting Part Two of my Memoirs. Scanning and cleaning up a lot of old photos is quite a job and rewriting and correcting a lot of my stuff is also very time consuming. We had hoped to have it out in time for *CONTINUUM II* in June, but time and costs will delay it for most likely a month yet.

For a long time now we have been posting out things with the address labels glued on the envelopes with "Uhu stic", without any problems, but now from our most recent mailing two envelopes have been returned with the labels missing. We have no idea who has missed out, so if haven't got the February, March and April issues of *OUT OF THE BIN* (#21, 22 and 23), we will be happy to send them to you. We particularly wanted everybody to know about **MERV'S 70th BIRTHDAY PARTY, from 1PM on Sunday the 11th of July** (which is why we've used the same photo again, up front this time) at our place, **21 Oakleigh Road, Carnegie**. BYOG as usual and contributions to the barbecue would be appreciated! Write, e-mail or phone 9502 8818 to let us know if you can come.

I have finally been able to find some SF books that I am enjoying reading. After the Sean Williams and Shane Dix space operas I have started on **Alastair Reynolds** *Chasm City*, having read *Revelation Space*, the first in the *Inhibitors* sequence. Boy, I thought Sean and Shane's epics were "super science", but Reynolds goes even further. His concepts of space and time and aliens is simply mind-blowing. I will have more to say about his books when I have read them all.

Many friends have asked me over the last few years if I have heard from my old friend **Paul Stevens** and I had to answer "no". A fan from Perth, where Paul has been living since 1985, told me that Paul had "gafiated" and did not want anything to do with fandom. However another friend, **David Russell** attended SWANCON in Perth this year, looked Paul up for me and found him still working in Myers. So in due course I hope to be in contact with him after many years.



PAUL STEVENS 2004

Photo by David Russell

I was sorry to see the passing of one of my favourite actors, **Peter Ustinov**, in April. I loved him in all his roles, even as nasty characters such as Emperor Nero. He was not a really spot-on Poirot from the point of Agatha Christie's description of her creation, but he was Ustinov and that was enough. He was a great interviewee and I recall seeing him on *Parkinson* and on local TV when he

was in Australia. He co-starred with Robert Mitcham and Deborah Kerr in the Australian movie *The Sundowners*. Lee Harding was fortunate to have the job as a still photographer during the making of that movie and we take the liberty of using one of Lee's photos of Ustinov taken at that time.



PETER USTINOV on the set of *The Sundowners*.

Photo by Lee Harding

THE PARTY

(With Photos by Helena)

On April 30th, authors Russell and Jenny Blackford invited all of Melbourne fandom to a party at their home in Albert Park to meet visiting American author

Greg Benford and his partner **Elisabeth Malartre**.



GREG BENFORD & ELISABETH MALARTRE

Helena adds: It was nice to meet Greg's partner also. Elisabeth, who teaches at the same university as Greg, is a biologist and writer, and has collaborated with Greg in exploring the possibilities of alien life-forms etc., as in their SF novel *The Martian Race*. Greg regaled an attentive audience with interesting and often amusing anecdotes, including an account of how closely certain details of his book *Timescape* reflected the real world of academic life. Jenny and Russell did a great job of entertaining and feeding the fans, and everyone brought drinks, so a merry time was had by all. One of the highlights for me was seeing Sean McMullen set off on his motorcycle with Greg Benford riding pillion, for a night-time sight-seeing tour.

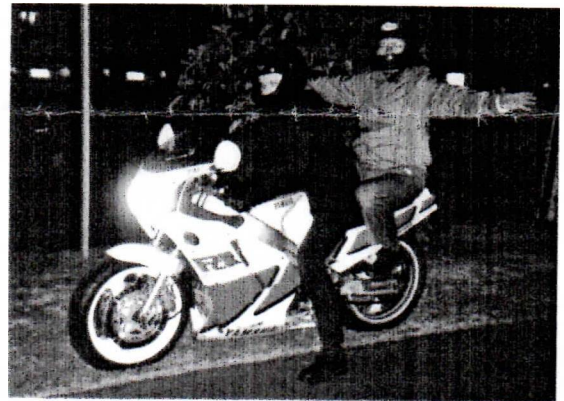
MERV & HELENA



JENNY & RUSSELL BLACKFORD

A good crowd turned up, including quite a few local writers. Greg was Guest of Honour at CONFLUX, the Natcon in Canberra the weekend before, and had also been GoH at the Worldcon AUSSIECON III, in Melbourne in 1999. He and Elisabeth stayed with Russell and Jenny in Melbourne for a couple of days after CONFLUX and saw some local sights with them before going on to Adelaide. It was nice meeting Greg again, and getting together with friends.

After sneezing all day Sunday after the party I finished up with the 'flu, which really laid me low and kept me from doing my gardening work for a while, but at least I got a lot of reading done over the following week or two.



Stunt Writers: SEAN McMULLEN and GREG BENFORD



BRUCE GILLESPIE



From left: GREG BENFORD, ROB GERRAND, JENNY BLACKFORD, MERV BINNS



BILL WRIGHT and THOMAS BULL