



THE GRYPHON 12 OCTOBER 1964

THE GRYPHON (which was formerly called SATURA) is published monthly by John Foyster, PO Box 57, Drouin, Victoria, Australia. Lee Harding and Mervyn Barrett are Staff Photographers, but it's becoming increasingly hard to get them off the dime. Illustrations are by J. Bangsund, W.K. McLelland and Anon. Heading by J. Bangsund. THE GRYPHON is available for trade or comment. Avoid the So Long Chollie when possible.

jf

The February 1964 issue of an Australian magazine named OZ was recently found to be obscene. The following is a newspaper report of the Stipendiary Magistrate's decision.....

the gryphon

"Mr Locke said the issue contained articles that were filthy, disgusting, offensive, libellous and blasphemous.

"He said a number of defence witnesses with academic and other qualifications had given evidence that the magazine was a work of literary or artistic merit by the use of satire, puns, style and calligraphy.

"Mr. Locke referred to the evidence of a Sydney University Professor of Philosophy, Professor J.K. Stout, that 'four-letter words never corrupted anyone'.

"No reasonable person doubts that indiscriminate use of four-letter words is likely to deprave,' Mr. Locke said.

"It is hightime the publication of this stuff was stopped.

"And stopped in a manner which will show the law's determination to vindicate itself to those who set themselves above it,' he added.

"Mr. Locke said the defense witnesses, experts in their own particular field, had claimed young people would not be depraved.

"That evidence is rejected,' he said.

(continued over)

"Such evidence is contrary to life and is an insult to the intelligence of the court.

"No reasonable person doubts that depravity corrupts just as no person doubts indiscriminate use of four-letter words is likely to deprave."

"Mr. Locke found the magazine obscene and that it unduly emphasized matters of sex, crimes of violence, including rape, and horror."

THREE CHEERS, three cheers, I repeat, for Mr. Locke, and for all those REASONABLE persons who hold his views. Three cheers for those who reject the evidence of expert witnesses in favour of their own uninformed prejudices. Three cheers for these DREARY people. And loudest hisses to those who have taken the trouble to determine whether in fact four-letter words do "tend to deprave and corrupt". And you too, George S. Patton.

AND ON THE HOME FRONT:

You may just have noticed in the last issue of SATURA a passing reference to that sensitive flower of Australian fandom, Graham Stone. Mr. Harding and myself inadvertently flashed our torches upon Mr. Stone's activities and he responded instantly. He handed the last issue of SATURA over to the Postal Authorities as "obscene".

I had thought that perhaps it might be worthwhile turning a searchlight upon Mr. Stone's activities in this issue. But Graham is such a shrinking violet that it would be a shame to spoil his fun. So we pass lightly over his action and hope that he got a lot of fun out of it, and that eventually the Australian Science Fiction Association will become a big powerful organization that will function as a pressure group on the SF magazines and force them to publish Great Science Fiction and all goodies like that. Maybe one of them will even have a column by Mr Stone. Maybe.

SCHEDULES, SCHEDULES, WHO'S GOT A SCHEDULE?

Although THE GRYPHON will be a monthly it might just be a little irregular. At the moment plans are for the November issue to come out fairly early in November, the December issue late in December, the January issue early in January and the February issue late in January. One dare not guess any further.

A SMALL CORRECTION

It would be a little more accurate to state that I have reason to believe that Graham Stone handed over etc. However, I'll now find out whether the incident did occur, or whether it was just a report.

Another small matter; although I do not indulge in name-calling, I do let my opponents know what I say about them.

This issue has been so well-planned that we have the

LETTERS

right here.

HARRY WARNER 423 SUMMIT AVE HAGERSTOWN MARYLAND 21740 USA

The photographs are splendid. Curiously, I looked at the odd tree several times before I spotted the human figure and after I saw that individual, I immediately began to see the tree as a giant serpent.

Strange, how something can come from out of the past to throw light on an even more distant event. Until I read your reprint of the Veney article, it had never occurred to me that Spaceways might have had an important impact on Australia's fans. I knew that they hadn't seen many fanzines at that time, but I don't believe that any of them came right out and said that this was the first big American fan publication to reach Australia. In my capacity as a historian, I would feel somewhat better about this article if I were certain how much Veney was writing from memory and how much from reference materials. If I were sure that he had a foundation for everything he says, it would save me much shuffling through scattered and repetitive notes when I reached the Australian portion of my work; I could simply paraphrase this with a few supplementary items, for it sounds like a virtually complete story of those early years. One fan whom he failed to mention is Marshall McLennan. I keep wondering if he's still up and about. I used to write one letter to him every summer and receive one letter from him every winter, long after I'd lost contact with the other Australian fans of that era. But it must be a decade at least since the last word from him.

The seventh issue is much more difficult to comment on. I'm not complaining but attempting to explain, in case you feel harshly about many fans who don't even try in my manner to tackle the task. For instance, the Proust quotation: this is typical of the contents of this issue, and what can your reader do about it? He can hardly argue with the basic point that Marcel makes or attempt to prove that it could have been better shaped in words. He can adopt my evasive procedure through which I frequently fool a fanzine editor into thinking that I'm commenting on his material when I'm really just talking about myself and my reactions with only the vaguest connections with the real matter in question. I could relate how I've finally, on my third attempt in the past 20 years, succeeded in reading all the way through REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST (except for the final 25 pages, which I

should knock off tomorrow), and I could wonder why Proust hasn't received more attention in fanzines, and I could reveal my utter abhorrence of the sort of people the Proust work is about coupled with a happiness in finding an author who takes the trouble to put down things about a person's mental processes and emotions that rarely find their way onto paper and which reassure the reader, when he finds them, that his own mind isn't as different and that his own emotions aren't as foolishly unique as he'd feared. But all this would not really be commenting on that part of that page of SATURA.

Of course, you don't help matters any by giving so much space to 370. What can anyone say about a sentence like: "Anent my comments on the 'natural' functioning of the mind, it is a simple matter to enlarge these to include the apportioning of value-judgments to human enterprise, in accordance with the normal mode of the brain."? The most plain and comprehensible remarks he makes this time are those about the nature of fan. I agree with him as far as the nature of fan goes, but I feel that it is the nature of man, too: the fan or college student is superficially aware of certain things, but the coal miner or policeman is just as superficially knowing about certain other things. I'm not sure that the fan who is mistaken for a genius because he manages to sell a story to a good-paying market is any less a hypocrite than the coal miner who is mistaken for a hero because he yanks a child out of the path of a truck on a busy road one afternoon.

It would be nice to know why you ran Banned in Boston. Did you simply want to epater le bourgeois, or to demonstrate graphically what sort of writing they do on the decadent continent, or to prove that you know really censorable writing compared with which this is really quite dull, or because you felt impelled to translate some writing that you thought was good?

"Thus, when anything occurs in our life which makes some stir, messages come to us from people situated so far outside the zone of our acquaintance, our memory of whom is already so remote that these people seem to be placed at a great distance, especially in the dimension of depth. A forgotten friendship of our school days, which has had a score of opportunities of recalling itself to our mind, gives us a sign of life, not that there are not negative results also." (The Sweet Cheat Gone (C&W ed.))

Both Bill Veney and Wug Hockley will be seeing this issue, I expect, and perhaps they will be able to enlighten you on the matter referred to in your first paragraph.

(continued on page 19)



I REMEMBER AFPA!

Sgt. Smith, sir: you have inferred that the subject of science fiction is taboo within the pages of THE GRYPHON. How so? Was the impact of Dr. Jenssen's soul-searching in SATURA 6 so easily forgotten? And if Mr. Foyster is averse to the mention of sf in his esteemed magazine, WHY, then, did he commission Australia's Leading Science Fiction Writer* to provide him with certain mss. pertaining to the early days of organized Melbourne fandom - offering as a bribe an enormous LOAN of several hundred musty pulps from his own private collection?

Obviously there is no such taboo. If people don't mention sf in these pages then they must have something more important to discuss. At the moment I haven't, so I propose to do some redressing of a sort. Those of you who still persist in maintaining a marginal interest in The Genre may find some interest in what follows. Others are advised to seek elsewhere within these hallowed pages.

Of necessity this will be a strictly personal report. Unlike many long-term fans still extant I have only a vague knowledge of the violent days of the resurgent Sydney fans, and so cannot satisfy those many readers who have expressed an interest in local fan feuds. The period of which I am to write stretches from mid-1952 until the latter half of 1954 - hardly a long life span in fannish affairs. But those two years were possibly the most important period in Australian fan publishing,

* Me, by points only. There was a time when I could proudly boast that I was the ONLY practising sf writer in Australia - but that's all changed now. (Mr. Chandler must be excluded from any such survey on the grounds that he is actually a spurious British immigrant.)

.....

OPPOSITE: FANDOM PRESENT GLOWERS AT FANDOM PAST

Rear: Mervyn Barrett, John Foyster, Chris Bennie
Front: Bob Smith, Jill Dudding

Behind the camera: Mervyn Barrett (he gets around)
This is really fandom of two years ago, I suspect.

for they saw the sudden disappearance of the sophisticated, semi-professional fannish newsheet that had governed the field up until that time, and the introduction of many, many fanzines of a new and different variety, from all parts of Australia. Because this will be a personal account of those hectic years it is only to be expected that a few mistakes might be made, an act misconstrued here and a situation reported out of context there. This, then, will be only one facet of that particular time, and I for one would appreciate seeing further installments by those involved, and with better memories than myself.

To begin, then - a little

BACKGROUND

From 1939 to 1959 no sf mags or pbs were imported into Australia in any quantity. The few local fans who were around in those drought years were of two kinds: those carried over from pre-war days and those who somehow stumbled upon the numerous fan-groups in the major cities. Sydney boasted the oldest and most organized: the Futurian Society of Sydney. It was also the headquarters for the Australian Science Fiction Society, a 'postal register' begun by FSS leader Graham Stone, as a means of keeping the more distant fans informed and in contact with the 'headquarters'. In the beginning Stone performed this task admirably, although there were those who declared that, in later years, the Society has exceeded the authority which the FSS had originally invested in it, and had become instead a personal plaything of Mr. Stone - but I don't know about that.

For those long years the Australian reader had to survive on an irregular diet of the BRE ASTOUNDING, the occasional BRES of the THRILLING Group, and the few British paperbacks which found their way into local bookshops - more often than not of abysmal quality. One was left to search for the 'unusual' and the 'off-trail' amongst the available hard-cover books in order to supplement the meagre ration (ah, the junk we read in those days. I remember Ian Crozier's library ... Dennis Wheatley, Harry Edmonds, Micheal Harrison, Rider Haggard...).

And I can recall many a Saturday afternoon spent in scouring the suburbs, searching for the occasional BRE ASF in one second-hand bookshop and another. The chance of coming across a genuine American pulp of the sf variety was remote - one could but drool over the few battered copies of G3 AND HIS BATTLE ACES and become frustrated by the annoying duplication of so many copies of DIME DETECTIVE and THRILLING WESTERN. Did G.I.s really have such appalling tastes?

(This was a situation similar to an earlier period of the

Harding life: the desperate schoolboy search for the glittering American all-colour comics during the war years. In those days the words 'Printed in The United States of America' possessed a wondrous magic. Our own poverty-stricken publications could never match those fabulous products - but that's another time and another tale...)

We did eventually get our own local sf magazine - THRILLS INCORPORATED first appeared in 1950 - and it was a bloody awful thing. The nearest comparison I can think of is the short-lived American 'slick' FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION ("juv in s content & generally not recom." DHTuck) which saw two issues during the boom of '52. The material in THRILLS was on a comic-book level. The writers were inexperienced and illiterate - although ONE of them did bring a breath of notoriety to the magazine when he filched some stories from PLANET and THRILLING WONDER and presented them under his own by-lines - most notably Bradbury's "Marionettes, Inc." Somehow the publishers managed to survive this and many other minor catastrophes, and even published the first works of local authoress Norma Henning and in the last year or so seemed to be making a sincere effort to improve the quality of the stories in the magazine. In all it saw 23 issues, the last in June 1952.

A dismal picture for the aficionado. Those fortunate enough to have 'discovered' the ASFS could avail themselves of such international services as Ken Slater's OPERATION FANTAST and wallow in as much imported sf and fantasy as they could afford - or shell out even more and move up into the tempting bracket offered by such British book dealers as Ted Carnell and Ken Chapman. And for the non-fans there existed, in Melbourne, still another supply source...

Old Man Franklin kept a booming paperback and marriage-manual business at the tall end of Bourke Street, where the Southern Cross Hotel now squate in all its sugary splendour. At the rear of his shop, in what used to be the Western Market, he also ran the largest lending library in the city. Some time prior to 1952 he bought up a lot of pre-war pulps from somewhere and had them all individually bound, and opened a special sf section of said library. The joining fee was a whopper, and indicated the importance placed upon 'American Magazines' in those days: £2/10/0, as against 10/6 for regular library membership. In those dry days before the '59 deluge (when most publishers must have dumped in Australia the accumulated backlog of five year's publishing), dozens and dozens of eager fans must have found their way to Franklin's and cavorted happily amongst the hundreds of volumes to be had. By some method available only to a crafty bookseller, Mr. Franklin took out subscriptions to ASTOUNDING, AMAZING, FANTASTIC ADVENTURES,

THRILLING WONDER, and STARTLING (apparently he had never heard of GALAXY ... and the others), and had each issue bound and placed in the library - and THIS at a time when there was no way for an individual reader to place a subscription for an American fiction magazine. Later, we found that there were ways ... such as arranging a sub through Chapman or Carnell in England.

For a fifteen year old fan (such as I) this was indeed treasure trove unearthed. I can recall week-ends - and WHAT weekends! - struggling home on a tram loaded up with five or six hardcover STARTLINGs or THRILLING WONDERS (even in those days the very mention of the word 'Ziff-Davis' was offensive to my ears. ASF was all right - but it didn't have the letter columns....).

Did I hear someone mention letter columns? Migod - but they were marvellous! I thought at first that they were some sort of personal joke on the part of the editor - but I soon found out otherwise. After that, the sf world seemed even more remarkable.

It was maddening to read the letters out of sequence, back-tracking and side-tracking the various feuds in progress, but I waded through those pages - sixteen, sometimes twenty, never less than ten - with as much interest as I devoted to the stories preceding them.

A tentative letter to Ken Slater, prompted by a mention in San Merwin's fan column in SS, and I had Arrived. I became yet another Australian Member of OPERATION FANTAST and settled down to await my first parcel of American mags.

Even now I can clearly visualise the contents of that historic posting: an issue of THRILLING WONDER featuring "Abercrombie Station" by Jack Vance (pseud. for Henry Kuttner), superbly illustrated by Virgil Finlay, issue no. 13 of NEW WORLDS and no. 3 of SCIENCE FANTASY (two British magazines not seen in Melbourne at that time), a copy of the very first WONDER STORY ANNUAL, and two Avon paperbacks - Wylie's "Gladiator" and Merritt's "Ship of Ishtar". Hardly an impressive lot - but then I WAS rather low on cash in those early days. But before THEY arrived other interesting events had occurred....

I received a letter from Rog Dard in Perth, welcoming me to OF as Aussie rep. He gave me the address of Melbourne's big, big, BIG contact point: a Mr. Race Mathews, of No. 8 Barnett St. Hampton. So after exchanging a few short letters with Race and receiving an invitation to visit him, I one Sunday cleaned myself up and went - in suit and collar and tie on an exceedingly warm summer's day, to meet Mr. Mathews.

Race was sitting out on the front lawn when I arrived, engrossed in "The Onslaught From Rigel" in WSA, and after a rather uncertain handshake was exchanged, he took off his dark glasses and escorted me inside. He was a remarkably baby-faced youth of eighteen, long and lean and lanky, with legs that sprawled out upon carpets like a tarantula. We chatted of things sfictional for a few hours, and I left with a vague promise that I would attend a fannish gathering he had planned at his home in a few weeks'time - this was to be the unofficial inaugural meeting of what was to become known as the Melbourne Science Fiction Group.

As a result of my enrolment with OF, I eventually became a member of the ASFS (No. 151, I think), and looked forward to Stone's monthly mailings with interest. They usually contained: a copy of 'STOPGAP - a letter, circular or publication', the 'official' journal of the club(?). Produced by Stone, it was a semi-foolscap affair, intensely sercon, and confined itself to prozine and book reviews and reports of Sydney happenings - but chose to avoid any of the more controversial topics of fan politics. There would also be: publicity handouts from FANTASY and GNOME Presses and other publishers, as well as an occasional copy of VERTICAL HORIZONS, a fanzine(?) published by a Sydney femme group, and SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW - most definitely not to be confused with an American publication recently mentioned in these pages. Published by Rex Meyer, SFR was an excellently-conceived and produced publication. It mostly ran to twelve quarto pages and appeared irregularly but at least every few months. A battery of literate reviewers dissected recent prozines and hardcovers - the average review running to 250 words and was generally well received by the local fans.

(An indented word here on the general policies and appearance of Australian fanzines at this time. Those mentioned above exemplifies the general approach: semi-foolscap and quarto size, the former averaging eight to twelve pages, without illustrations or headings - type-script throughout. The general atmosphere was serious and restrained and, for the most part, devoted to the discussion and furtherance of the sf image glorious. This was a pattern which had earned for Australian fans a generally stuffy and unapproachable personality. Rog Dard who was geographically removed from all this, remained an exception and, by consistently writing for American fmz and participating in American fandom, often seemed like one apart from the rest of Australian fandom.

Past history was only vaguely different to this picture upon my entrance into the national scene. The 'Futurian Press' had published a few absurdly pretentious short-story booklets ("Blinded They Fly" by Vol Molesworth

and "Zero Equals Nothing" by G.B.Stone and Royce Williams) on their hand-operated press, as well as a few lightweight fanzines (?): Nick Solnsteff's WOOMERA and Arthur Haddon's TELEFATH. There had also been the first installment of Vol Molesworth's OUTLINE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN FANDOM, and possibly a few more titles I've forgotten for the moment..)

My enthusiastic correspondence with Rog Dard revealed two important things: the relentless was being waged upon him by the Perth Customs Department, and the mystifying structure of Australian Fan Politics. From what I could gather there had been a schism within the Sydney group at some time or another, leaving a sharply divided fandom. On one side you had the Haddon-Veney-Cohen + Dard, and on the other side you had the all-powerful Stone-Molesworth junta. A while later a guy called Lyell Crane came along and tried out the role of peacemaker but only succeeded in complicating the situation further (instead of two halves we now had three thirds). But this is as far as I can go with this misinformation. More exact information could be obtained from Bill Veney, or Rog Dard. Or.....Graham?

I first met Dick Jenssen on a Brighton bus en-route to Mathews' get-together. I can't for the life of me remember HOW we spotted each other as sf fans - but I do recall that we waxed enthusiastic over our favourite stories for many miles. As it turned out, he was also a member of Old Man Franklin's 'special' library, and was surprised to discover that it was I who was given to scribbling rave notices alongside various stories I found overwhelming. (Like, in those days we were KEEN, fellas..)

I believe Dick was my senior by two years. Even now you wouldn't know it.

Race's function was a great success. Many of the old-timers turned up: Bob McCubbin was there, and I'm pretty sure Marshall McLennan and Wog Hockley were, too. From then on the group held monthly meetings at members' homes in rotation - those members who had decent homes and whose wives/parents et. al. were tolerant enough to allow the onslaught of eighteen to twenty fans plus supper afterwards.

And who was responsible for founding the Melbourne Science Fiction Group? Can't rightly say - I missed out on the formative meeting - but Jenssen was there - maybe he can enlighten us. As I recall the original IDEA was a sort of collaboration between Bob McCubbin and Race Mathews, but apart from that the picture blurs a little.

When the Group had grown out of all common sense we decided

that 'official' quarters were necessary, and we finally settled on VAL'S Coffee Lounge, a convivial spot in the very heart of busy Melbourne.

It had a reputation, too. At first we thought it was rather exciting holding club meetings in what appeared to be a front for a bordello, but as time went by other truths became apparent, and we didn't feel quite at ease amongst the numerous consorting lesbians whirling around our tables. One night I forced down a late meal of ham and eggs swimming around in some godawful fluid that just could have been jissom - and swore that this was the last time I would ever etcetcetc.

But Bill Veney visited the group while it was resident at Val's. He stopped by from Tasmania en route for sunny Queensland. I've only ever met Bill that once, and it is a VERY long time ago, yet I find that I can recall his face with alarming accuracy. Don't know why. There must have been SOMETHING terribly important about the man - perhaps it was because he gave up so much of his time to ME. Or was it the fact that we discussed Bradbury so keenly? Anyway, Bill left me with the promise that I would soon be joining a group letter circulating between himself, Rog Dard in Perth and Lyell Crane in Sydney. I looked forward to its arrival uncertainly.

The bulky envelope finally turned up - and there they were, three happy clowns disporting themselves over pages and pages of typescript. I was appalled to discover therein not ONE solitary mention of the literature I loved - but quite a lot on local fan politics and the world situation in general. Faced with such awe-inspiring supremacy, I felt that there was little I could do but append a humble apology for my ignorance of the subjects discussed, and forward it on to Roger.

After this initial shock had dissipated, I found that I looked forward with increasing interest to each new installment of the GL. It circulated for about nine months and then sort of petered out. I'm not sure why - but I think there was some dissension in the ranks. Crane was playing at peacemaker with the Stone/Molesworth junta, and Roger wasn't having any. Something like that.

Meanwhile, my little mind was busy with other things...

Shortly after becoming a member of OF I established a few overseas contacts, and then the very first fanzines began to arrive: HYPHEN, SLANT (the very last issue), SPACESHIP, PEON, STAR LANES - I was flabberghasted - and inspired.

"We must put out a fanzine" I told Dick - and he agreed.

Being the junior members of the Group it seemed natural that WE should plan this venture together. And later on, when Mervyn Binns joined us, that seemed equally logical. Almost cosmic, you might say.

By now the Group had moved into more or less permanent quarters at the Oddfellows' Hall at the top of Latrobe Street. We had the basement room and the use of a cupboard for the library in the hall outside. Hardly convivial, but in those days we weren't particularly interested in the comforts of home.

Despite the endeavors of the more voracious fans - myself included - the Group staunchly resisted any attempt to 'organize' it in any way, and still manages to do so until this day. Bob McCubbin was the self-elected chairman at all times, but there were no organized evenings and no minutes kept. We were just a bunch of guys getting together and swapping yarns - and trading a few magazines at the same time. Since then we've acquired a duplicator, a movie projector, a table-tennis table, three toilets, an hydraulic lift, an instant coffee machine (Mervyn Binns) and a taste for such refinements as THE CABINET OF DOCTOR CALIGARI and SIEGFRIED and Norman McLaren, but things proceed pretty much the same as they did in the Old Days.

While Dick, Mervyn and I were still mulling over the prospect of our fanzine and where we would get some material for the first issue, the first issue of FORERUNNER arrived from Sydney.

Doug Nicholson's effort has since become one of the landmarks in Australian Fan publishing - but at the time we weren't particularly impressed. For one thing, you couldn't rightly call it a fanzine - and it didn't fit into the FSS and ASFS scheme of things either. Doug's confessed aim was to 'pave the way for an eventual Australian professional magazine'. I don't think that he did - but the experiment was worthwhile.

FORERUNNER 1 was an eighty-page duplicated magazine bound with a clasp and with an oversize cardboard lithoed cover. The stencils were well cut but poorly duplicated. It was Doug's fault - his inexperience with handling a duplicator, he said. Later, we were to appreciate those words. The magazine printed STORIES. That's right - fiction. Almost exclusively: there was one article. Part One of a 2-part novel by Vol Molesworth, himself a professional writer of textbooks and pulp pocketbooks and loong time guiding light of the FSS, and shorter fiction by Norma Henning and others. Precedent was further set with the introduction of artwork in the discreet story headings and illustrations throughout the magazine.

I have no idea how well FORERUNNER was received overseas,

but I can imagine it bolstered the familiar sercon image of Australian fan publishing.

An image we were destined to shatter.

PERHAPS, as our brainchild was called, would turn out to be a strange hybrid. Bound by a pretentious photo-lith cover subtitled 'The International Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction' (sic) was material which, quite frankly, looked rather like one of those poverty-stricken UK fannags.

The fault was mine. You see, the Little Harding had delusions of professionalism, and that explains to some degree why PERHAPS was such a dismal failure. But I'm jumping ahead a little. Back to basics....

I had bought a typewriter with the intention of trying my luck with the promags. (Hark at him! And not yet 16). Having met poor response to my first story, I decided that I might as well turn to fanzine publishing as a sort of second string(hmmmmmm.)

We planned nothing quite so elaborate as FORERUNNER. And neither did we have the services of two excellent typistes. We only had me, a guy so inexperienced with stencils that he had me, a guy so inexperienced with stencils that he had never heard of correcting fluid. When I made a mistake I either struck it out, like ~~this~~, or ~~this~~, or crossed it out IN INK on the finished copy. ~~Yike!~~

In the original planning stage, PERHAPS was to be in the conventional semi-foolscap format (It's like digest size"said Dick. Smiling.), with typed headings and a few illustrations from Jenssen.

We didn't intend to muck about too long. We were KEEN, you understand. And my fingers were itching to get at that typewriter.

At about the same time, word circulated that Race Mathews was also planning a fanzine - and this was to be a Bog Deal. I had seen copies of the fabled NEKROMANTICON of Banister's at Race's home and had an idea of the sort of magazine Race envisioned. He even had a title: XANADU, and a cover design and interior illustrations by Keith McLelland, a Group member who was also a commercial artist. I was stuck with Jenssen - and it was on Dick's well-reasoned advice that I chose not to pay TOO much attention to Race's much-touted magazine, and concentrated on updating PERHAPS.

Once I realised the difficulties I would encounter typing foolscap stencils on my portable Remington (they would have to be cut in half and joined together again), I decided to abandon the 'traditional' format in favour of the quarto size. This move would

also allow a more generous use of artwork throughout the magazine - a fact received with enthusiasm by Morton Kruss (Jenssen), Martin James (Jenssen), de la Faye (Jenssen), T.L. Martin (Jenssen), Jenssen (Jenssen) and Harding (Harding). The contents were roughly laid out in Mid-November. There would be an article promised by Roger Dard and another by Bill Veney. Ken Slater also had an article in the offing. The issue would be filled out with an editorial by Harding, the first part of a serial by Martin James (see above), some odd poems and assorted artwork by the fannish Ed Alexander Enshwiler (see above), and an article entitled "What's Happened to ASF?". This much decided, I felt that it was time to prepare the local fans for our initial publishing venture. I stencilled a two-foolscap-paged PREVIEW wherein I outlined our aims and ambitions, and promised Great and Wondrous Things to come from Melbourne in the next year or so. The stencils were, of course, complete with typos, strike-outs etc. So armed, we three ventured to McGill's one Saturday afternoon and did do battle royal with Rex-Rotary.

An infernal machine, if ever there was one. From the very first turn of the handle it did its best to thwart our noble designs. Not one of us had ever used a duplicator before - and we couldn't figure out why each sheet came through with three inch-wide ink smears on the backside.

"There's ink on the rollers" Dick announced after peering and poking around underneath the machine. Mervyn just grunted sourly and set about removing and cleaning said rollers.

This took quite some time. And when they were replaced and the machine begun thumping over again - what did we find but the very same ink smears on the back of every copy.

We just couldn't figure it out. "The hell with it" I said, disgusted and tired and fed up with the whole business, "let's run page two off on a separate sheet."

And we did. And the two separate ink-smearred sheets were stapled together and sent out to roughly a hundred or more fans listed in the ASFS directory. A separate bundle was mailed to Dave Cohen in Sydney, who dished them out to the locals at the weekly meetings.

The response to all this effort was an empty-sounding nil. Not that any of us were surprised. There was enough inexperience in that PREVIEW to frighten off even the most tolerant Aussifan.

A few weeks later, just prior to the editorial board

embarking upon their Christmas holidays, Mervyn happily informed us that the reason we had been getting the ink snears was that the stencils I had used were exactly one inch too short for the duplicator. Thus, on each revolution of the duper, that much ink was deposited upon the rollers. Ugh!

Did I hear somebody nention UGH!?

Do not speak gently unto that good fanzine, sir. Ah, let me tell you something about UGH! and Bill Veney.....

LEE HARDING

TO BE CONTINUED.

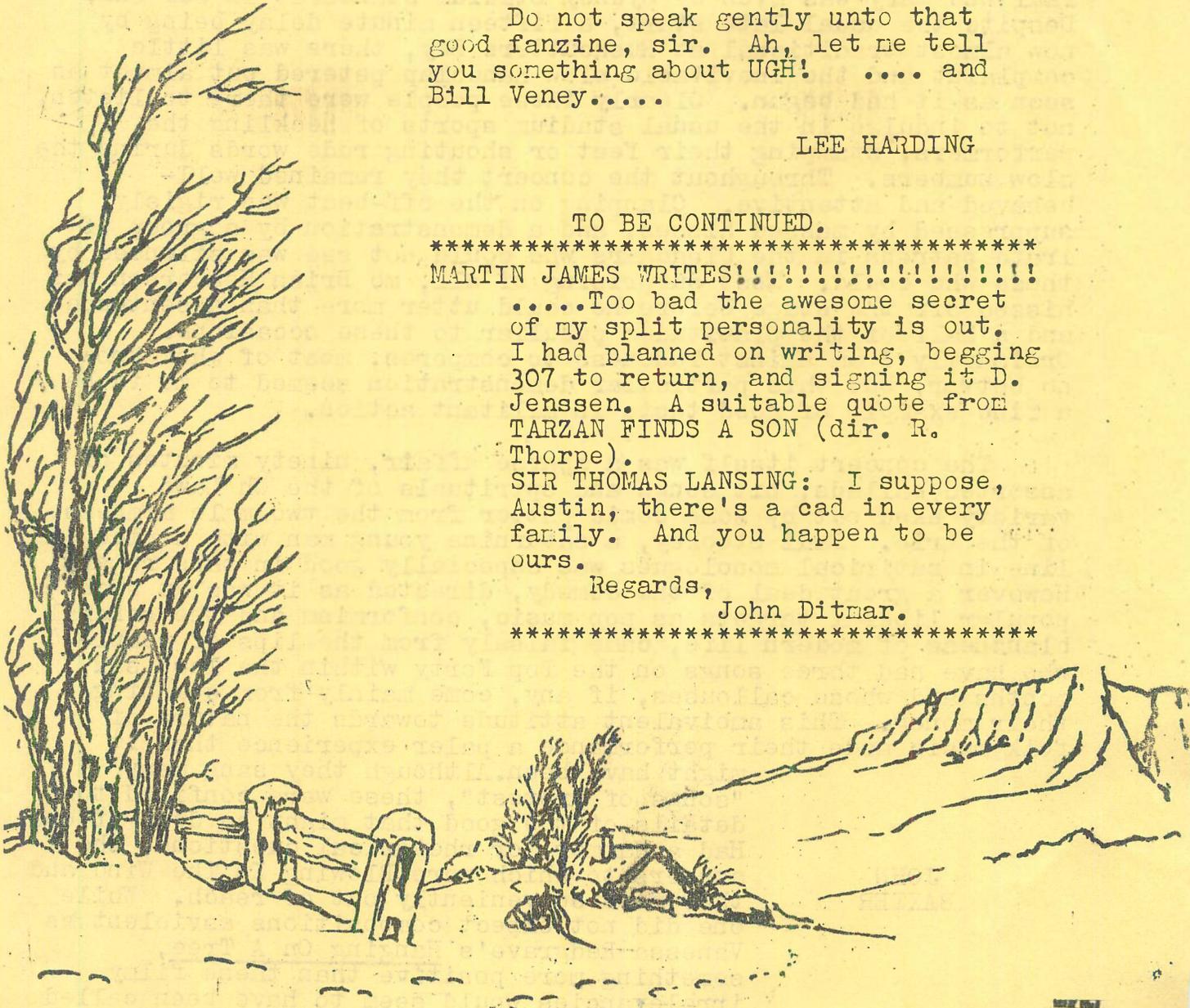
MARTIN JAMES WRITES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

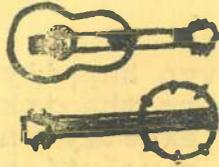
.....Too bad the awesome secret of my split personality is out. I had planned on writing, begging 307 to return, and signing it D. Jenssen. A suitable quote from TARZAN FINDS A SON (dir. R. Thorpe).

SIR THOMAS LANSING: I suppose, Austin, there's a cad in every family. And you happen to be ours.

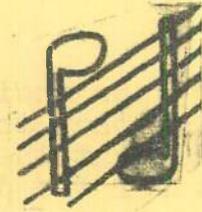
Regards,

John Ditmar.





FAKE-SONG?
FAKE-SONG?
FAKE-SONG?
FAKE-SONG?
FAKE-SONG?
FAKE-SONG?



The audience that gathered to hear the folk trio of Peter, Paul and Mary was even by Sydney Stadium standards an odd one. Despite the usual late start, a fifteen minute delay being by now almost traditional at Rushcutters Bay, there was little complaint and the inevitable slow handclap petered out almost as soon as it had begun. Clearly these people were there to listen, not to indulge in the usual stadium sports of heckling the performers, stamping their feet or shouting rude words during the slow numbers. Throughout the concert they remained well-behaved and attentive. Clapping on the off-beat was rigidly suppressed by massed hisses, and a demonstration by a group of irate patrons in the bleachers who could not see was silenced by those who could. Most surprising of all, mc Brian Henderson was hissed off the stage before he could utter more than a sentence and a half of the platitudes peculiar to these occasions. Ordinarily I am against rudeness to comperes, most of whom know no better, but this particular demonstration seemed to me to be a fine example of good taste in militant action.

The concert itself was a sparse affair, ninety minutes of assorted ballads, hit songs and spirituals of the Oh Lawd variety eked out by some comic patter from the two male members of the trio. Paul Stookey, a saturnine young man with a nice line in satirical monologues was especially good in this regard. However a great deal of the comedy, directed as it was at such popular liberal targets as pop music, conformism and the general blandness of modern life, came falsely from the lips of people who have had three songs on the Top Forty within the last six months and whose callouses, if any, come mainly from counting their money. This ambivalent attitude towards the nature of folk music made their performance a paler experience than it might have been. Although they sang many "songs of protest", these were confined to details of the good that might be done if one Had a Hammer, or rhetorical questions, the answers to which were Blowing In The Wind and therefore conveniently out of reach. While one did not expect compositions as violent as Vanessa Redgrave's Hanging On A Tree, something more positive than these filmy irrelevancies would seem to have been called

JOHN
BAXTER

for. Only on Bob Dylan's The Times They Are A'Changin' did the trio ever come to grips with the issues they claim to be so stringly concerned with. This song, blunt and idiomatic, had the bitter conviction that marks the best of modern folk music.

Of the other material, ballads like This Ship and The Three Ravens went over well, as does most melodrama. There is always an audience for the maudlin and the macabre, and folk songs - at least those sung by most American performers - cater to it blatantly. People who are struck dumb with rage by the excesses of TV soap-opera and the more sentimental pop-tunes will go into ecstasies at the plight of Barbara Allen, Mary Hamilton and other folk heroines. However in this case one wonders if the good reception was entirely due to the sentimentality of the material. This audience was so definitely on the group's side that it was ready to respond at the slightest suggestion that applause was called for. When singing along was requested they managed to muster an array of reedy tenors and sopranos that any Glee Club might have been proud of, and when in their examination of pop music the trio did a rock version of some folk tune the applause was so prolonged that Peter Yarrow felt it necessary to comment, only half in jest "It was a satire, you know."

All three performers were plainly dismayed by the Stadium's unique features - revolving stage, primitive lighting, the placing of the huge audience - conditions which, as one performer put it, make one feel like a gladiator on a bad day. Peter, Paul and Mary is a club group. Its staging and presentation is planned so as to be most pleasing when viewed by a small club or auditorium audience. Compact and attractive from the front, the group, from behind, often reminded one of a shaky tableau at a high school fete, with leftover limbs sticking out everywhere. However they handled the difficulties well, far better than many overseas artists who have played the Stadium and been soundly defeated. Many Sydney concertgoers cherish the memory of Stan Kenton's face as, caught in mid-crescendo with one foot on the tarntable and one on the solid stage, he slowly assumed the splits. It takes a particular type of artist to work well in the round on a raised stage, and one looks forward to the visit later this year of Ray Charles, a man who is used to playing big crowds and whose work is geared to the sort of mass response that the Stadium's ten thousand can give.*

Peter, Paul and Mary is, along with the people who paid to see the group, an interesting indication of the mixed blessing that popular acceptance has been to folk music. These smart young people and the equally smart young audience seemed to have

* He laid an egg. JMB.

*****REPLY TO HARRY WARNER CONTINUED

Your effort in finishing REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST inspired me to make a thorough attempt at reading ULYSSES. By the time you read this - in fact, long before that - I shall have finished. I've made 3 or 4 attempts in the last 5 or so years, each only progressing a little over 100 pages. I'm in the high 300s now. But I find it hard to read any book intermittently, as I'm doing now. I was able to read REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST in about three weeks because I started it just before some school holidays. I think I got through three volumes in the first week and a half (volume three now has a very dirty jacket), but in the second half of the holidays, when I was attending a seminar during the day, and when I'd reached volume 5, I started to read at over one volume a day, until volume 12 where, like yourself, I bogged down for about a day. I found it much easier to read than, say WAR AND PEACE, which resisted three attempts before finally succumbing. If possible, I should like to read ROTP every year, in the way that I read the ALEXANDRIA QUARTET every 6 months. It doesn't really hurt. Unlike you, however, I really like the characters in ROTP, even allowing for the changing sex, so that I find myself probably even more swept up by the writing than you do.//// The smart answer to your last paragraph would be 'yes', but it isn't quite true, especially the last section. I disliked Lautréanont's style. I'd say the main reasons were the opinion that anything that had been bounced by all the Australian fanzines couldn't be all bad, and my own disappointment at missing out on buying a copy of THE SONGS OF MALDOROR.

PETER WHITE 75 ASHLEY RD EPSOM SURREY ENGLAND

Satura isn't arrive until after Jim Baldwin's visit to London. I suppose you sent SATURA in revenge, because I called you a silly little bastard in Spinge? Well, it didn't work. I enjoyed Satura. The article on Australian fan-publishing was quite fascinating. I enjoyed the Isidor Ducasse much more than I dare admit. In all it was a pleasant little 'zine, of a type quite rare in Britain. But the tribute to John Baxter spoilt it a little. Anyone can surely think of a sentence, a word, something nice to say about John Baxter. For example:

About a month or so ago Jim Baxter visited a Friday night meeting of London fandom. I wouldn't like to say what kind of opinions he formed. I seem to remember him giving a potted picture of Aust.; a desert full of wallabies and missiles.

How could I possibly hold a grudge against you, sir? Glad you enjoyed Squink Blogg's visit. Speaking of Mike Baldwin - but no - let the Grin One say it for himself in the next issue.

QUOTES FOR OCTOBER

A religion requires not only a body of priests who know what they are doing, but a body of worshippers who know what is being done.

To judge a work of art by artistic or by religious standards, to judge a religion by religious or artistic standards should come in the end to the same thing: though it is an end at which no individual can arrive.

Totalitarianism appeals to the desire to return to the womb.

In our time, we read too many new books, or are oppressed by the thought of the new books which we are neglecting to read; we read many books, because we cannot know enough people; we cannot know everybody whom it would be to our benefit to know, because there are too many of them.

To treat the 'uneducated' mass of the population as we might treat some innocent tribe of savages to whom we are impelled to deliver the true faith, is to encourage them to neglect or despise that culture which they should possess and from which the more conscious part of culture draws vitality; and to aim to make everyone share in the appreciation of the fruits of the more conscious part of culture is to adulterate and cheapen what you give.

The culture of an artist or a philosopher is distinct from that of a mine worker or field labourer; the culture of a poet will be somewhat different from that of a politician; but in a healthy society these are all parts of the same culture; and the artist, the poet, the philosopher, the politician and the labourer will have a culture in common, which they do not share with other people of the same occupations in other countries.

Criticism, of course, never does find out what poetry is, in the sense of arriving at an adequate definition; but I do not know of what use such a definition would be if it were found.

To set before oneself the goal of being able to enjoy, and in the proper objective order of merit, all good poetry, is to pursue a phantom, the chase after which should be left to those whose ambition is to be 'cultivated' or 'cultured', for whom art is a luxury article and its appreciation an accomplishment.

- T.S. ELIOT