

SCIENCE & FANTASY

FAN REPORTER

ISSUED WEEKLY

SURPRISES AT BIRTHDAY MEETING. COURT OF ENQUIRY, NEW FAN CLUB BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

In the last three issues of Reporter, we have had a lot to say about the birthday meeting of the F.S.S. We have a lot more to say this issue, including details of all that happened.

Although numerous hints had been dropped to "come early", there were a few late comers, and the meeting did not start until well after two. Those present (in order they were seated) were Eric Russell, Arthur Duncan, David Boodle, Graham Stone, William D. Vency, David R. Evans, Ted Russell, Vol Molesworth and Colin Roden.

At the beginning of the meeting a telegram from Melbourne was read out and passed round, and appreciation expressed. No other messages were received.

The quiz was then held. It provided several amusing moments. The questions were written on small pieces of cardboard, and Eric Russell had obviously cut some of his in halves, causing questions to pop up now and again asking "Who illustrated it?" Some questions were duplicated, owing to all members contributing. A tussle developed between Dave Evans and Dave Boodle for last place, Mr. Evans winning with one point to Boodle's two.

The quiz took about an hour, and on its completion Vol Molesworth made public the announcement of the Futurian Court of Enquiry, on which opinions of both members and guests were given (see story inside).

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BIRTHDAY MEETING..(Contd.)

Time was now about 4 p.m. and Vol auctioned off a lot of his fanmags. American mags, a few English, and many Australian publications, including copies of Ultra, Zeus, Profan, Australian Fan News, Cosmos, and the first issue of Luna were sold. Since Vol allowed credit, prices sometimes went high, although no spectacular bids were made. Dave Evans bought the first Luna for 10d, after Eric Russell and Graham Stone had fought, halfpenny by halfpenny, up to tenpence.

When the auction ended, Arthur Duncan had bought a whole heap of fanmags, about twice as many as David Boadle, who was next on the list. Other fans had bought sundry copies.

A birthday cake was ushered in, surrounded by copious quantities of minor delectables.

After refreshments, talk centred on the F.F.A. and it was disclosed that there was in Sydney another science-fiction organization, as well as the F.S.S. This was the Sydney Science Fiction Association, of which Bill Veney was a member. Other members preferred to remain secret, according to Veney, and it was pointed out that the Association could not take an active part in Australian fan activities until they made themselves known. However, the club was asked, through Veney, to communicate with the F.S.S. and the matter was left at that.

Soon after this Bill Veney and David Boadle left, and those remaining spent the half hour that was left in discussing things, past and present, until the meeting was closed at about 6 p.m. making it one of the longest meetings held for a long time.

Of course, things did not run quite as smoothly as this report might seem to indicate. The latter part of the meeting was interrupted occasionally by interjections and other distractions, although there was no real disorder, and everyone was allowed his say when his turn came.

The above statements are not from the official minutes. But they are an accurate account of what went on. We have not yet gathered opinions of the meeting, besides, it is not our policy to print comments. However, we hope to have the general reaction for next week. Next meeting of the F.S.S. will be at home of Vol Molesworth on Sunday Nov. 23.

FUTLEMAN COURT OF ENQUIRY.

Passed by the F.S.S. over six weeks ago, the Court of Enquiry was made public at the birthday meeting in a special speech by Vol Molesworth.

Without comment, we will quote from Vol's speech to illustrate exactly what is meant. It would take most of Reporter's four small pages to publish all the speech, so we hope the quotes convey the idea, which is, briefly, to hold a Court of Enquiry for the sole purpose of straightening out club records, and nothing more.

"When, on retyping a section of the early records, I discovered them to be in a haphazard and unreliable condition, I mentioned my plans to a meeting of the FSS. There were two objections, but my proposal to hold a Court of Inquiry was passed with a majority of 3 votes to 2. The first objection was that it was silly and we had no right to ask a chap to come along and answer questions.' My reply to this was that if in the past, fans had made certain statements and taken certain actions that were recorded in the minutes, they were liable to be questioned for their reasons for doing so, and as to the outcome of such actions and/or decisions. The other objection was that it might 'drag up the past'. My answer to this was that it will not only drag up the past but untangle it and set it back in an understandable light.

An ex-member said: "But won't it start a lot of trouble if you got fans there and make them swear, for example, they did not perpetrate the Sydcon Hoax?" My answer was that nothing like the hoaxes, fouds, etc., would be mentioned at the Inquiry. "Its sole purpose is to clarify and complete old unreliable records...."

"Every fan asked to give evidence will be treated with the utmost fairness. He will receive a typed transcript of everything he said....he can object to a question or refuse to answer it; he may demand to see the minute book, letter file, or any other documents; he may attend the court after giving his evidence to hear what other fans have to say."

"It must be clearly understood that nobody is 'on trial'. There will be no judge or jury; the only outcome of the Inquiry will be a set of questions and answers which when combined with the existing records will present a complete and reliable record of the club's first 25 meetings. What happened in between."

EDITORIAL... It's all over, so what?

The birthday meeting has come and gone, and all the excitement has died down, and what is the result?

In other words, what use was the meeting, and what good did it do?

Actually, there was nothing spectacular about it at all. Fans came, and enjoyed themselves, and had a talk, and left.

That was all.

True, there were some subjects brought up that had not been publicly mentioned before. But these, we know for certain, would have cropped up in the near future, without the birthday meeting. The Court of Enquiry was brought up because it was a better time to announce it, and the S.S.F.A. was mentioned during a discussion.

The meeting also gave fans a chance to get together and meet others. But this, too, would have happened eventually. So the birthday meeting did not achieve much here.

What, then, did it do?

It did what it was supposed to do. It was held for one purpose only, and it did this admirably.

It marked an event.

It marked the event of the Society's second birthday, and in doing so brought to light a statement that is significant in itself, and needs no comment. That statement is an explanation as well, and an answer to everything that has ever been said about the club, and its existence. Just the one sentence:

No matter how, the F.S.S. has lasted two years.

You cannot deny that.

THE EDITORS..

Believe it or not; Owing to lack of space several items have had to be held over till next issue. Also first scores in the poll for five editors. Hurry up with your vote.

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