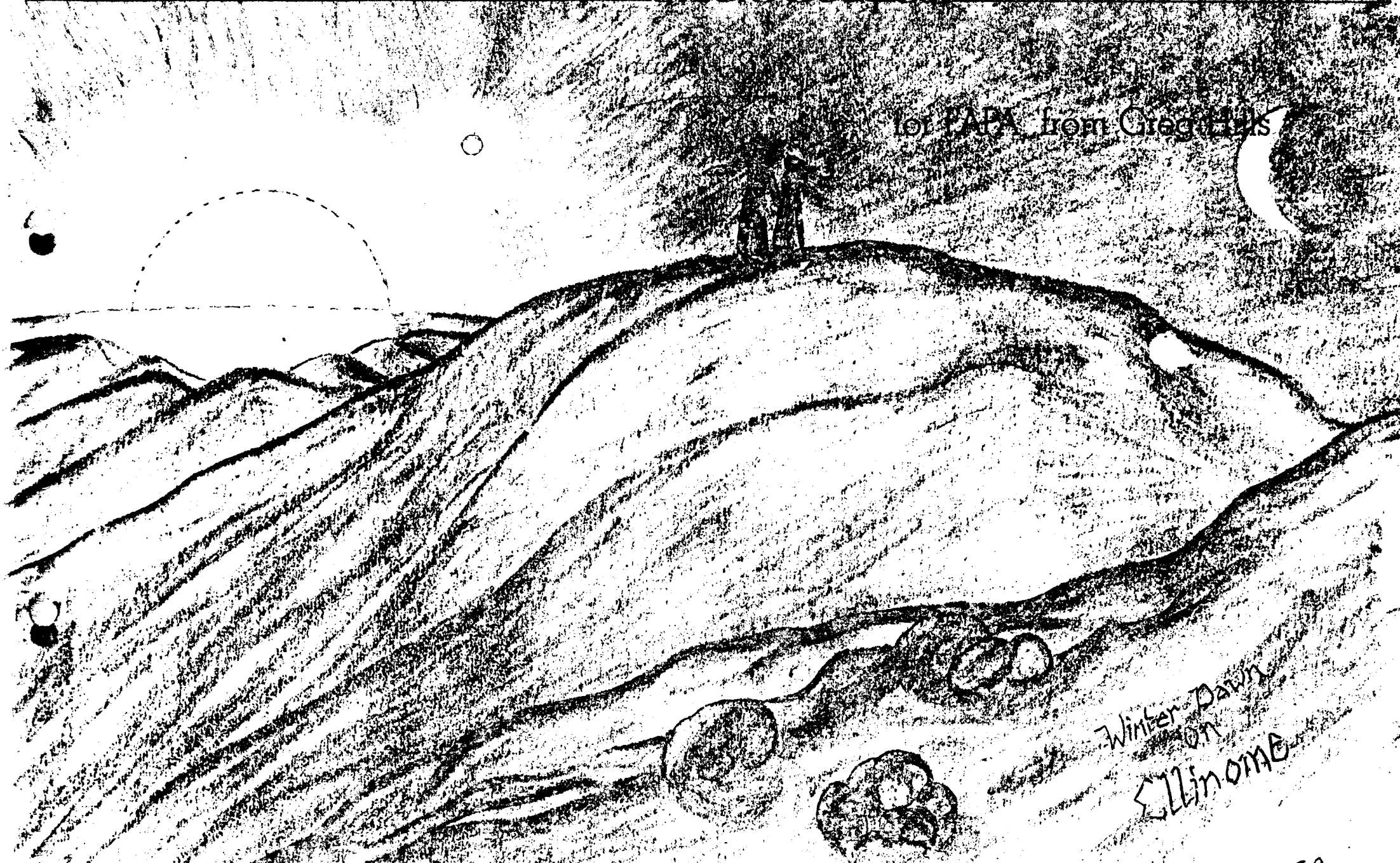


shooowoooy

for PAPA from Greg Hillis



Winter Dawn  
on  
Ellinome







## ON THE RISE AND FALL OF FANDOM

I am a fan. I don't think many people reading this will doubt that statement. More specifically, I am a fan of *science fiction*---or at least of what I perceive sf to be.

I began reading sf in the way many of my generation did in New Zealand, alone and unknowing that Out There were others who also read it. In moments of introspection, naturally, I hypothesised this, then bolstered the hypothesis with the fact that no distributor was going to import all those books unless he was going to sell them to enough people to make it economic. But I didn't know even one person other than myself who read it. There were vague adult shapes who drifted around the shelves in the shops and the library, but who takes any notice of grownups? I was after people like me---my own age.

It was not until I grew older that I began to find the fellow readers I was looking for. I met them while ignoring the kiddies who fossicked through the shelves with greedy eyes and empty pockets. But meet them was all I did---neither side had any thought of carrying it further than that. Why? We already knew what the other's opinion would be (so we thought); there was no purpose served in wasting time talking about it. So we didn't.

Then I grew older still. I became a librarian (student) (call it library assistant, actually---one of the people who spent their free time in the library helping the school librarian). And after a year or so fell in with a sf reader from Canada. This was the first 'fannish' meeting and association I had. Over the next three years we would meet up outside the gates after school and until our routes seperated, bicycle the same route home, deep in earnest debate and argument.

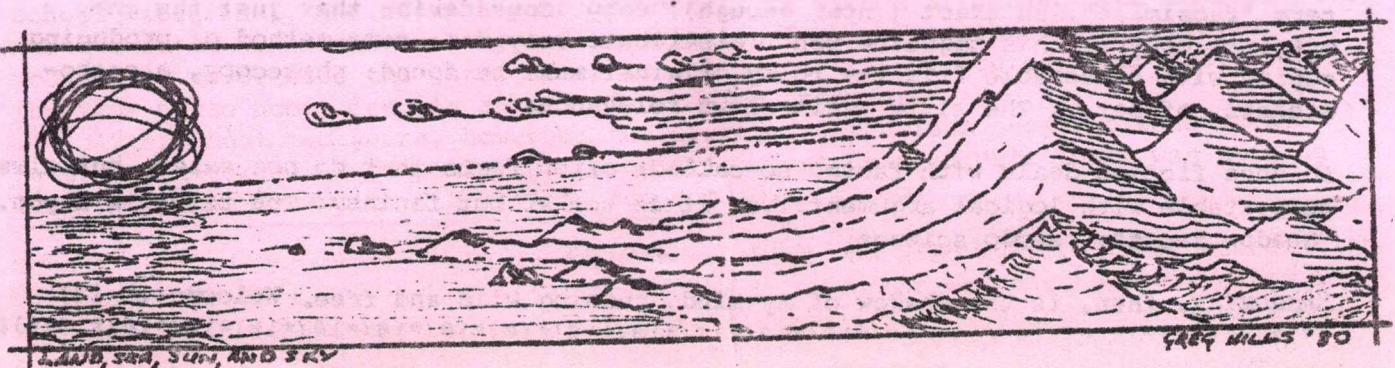
After about two years, however, the flush of enthusiasm began to wane as our interests diverged. Eventually the association just petered out. There was nothing left---it seemed---worth discussing; too much else to do.

Then I went to University, and my first year there was also my first real association with other readers. By chance, four avid readers were thrown together in a clump in the allocation of first-year student rooms in the hostels. I shared a room with one, another had a room adjoining, and the fourth had a room whose door faced mine in the hallway. It didn't take long before we all discovered each other. One of us dragged in an old friend who was in another hostel, and our little group became five. I suspect that made a kind of threshold number, small enough for united thought, large enough so we didn't run out of permutations to argue about: in fact, we continually made new combinations.

We decided to start a club, and got one---count them---one reply in response to our intensive advertising campaign (one notice in "G'Nuz", the hostels newspaper). And a fringe reader, at that. Our club died stillborn, though soon after we began, one by one, discovering other readers.

And around the middle of the year, after 'Confed', the club, died, there came a rumour that a sf magazine had started up in New Zealand. We heard this by way of one of the original four, whose brother was 'in' on the new zine's initial mailing list.

Two of us discussed a joint subscription late in the year. It came to nothing, and it was not til two years later that I finally subscribed to NOUMENON.



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So where is all this leading to? Well, for one it shows that I haven't always been so liable to fannish activity as I now am. I was exposed to several gateways into fandom for several years before I actually took one of them. For another, it shows that present New Zealand fandom is very young by overseas standards. Less than five years ago, there was nothing except the sporadic failures of the various school-and-University clubs that tried to start. Even today NZ fandom is very small: perhaps 100 people who could be called 'fans' in any real sense (and most of them are club fans), perhaps 20 who could be called active fans. There are probably only about 300 involved at all so far, but we are growing. (I do not count those whose only participation has been subscribing to NOUMENON or attending one or the other con).

The two WellCons each attracted about 110 people, and each ran a gross profit in the region of \$2000. About 170 people in New Zealand have so far attended a sf con held in New Zealand. Both cons were sercon in programming, fannish in atmosphere (because of the small size, this was almost unavoidable). Both produced enjoyable Convention Booklets.

The average age of New Zealand fans is perhaps 21---dragged up by the fact that after an almost barren stretch between 22 & 28, there are a number of fen in their 30's & 40's (these include such 1950's fen as Mervyn Barrett who have again become active with the revival of NZ fandom). The majority are under 20. We are a young fandom in more ways than one!

So far only two cities have what could be called real sf communities. and of these only Wellington has a sf community that really qualifies by what I guesstimate to be US standards of size, etc. Auckland is getting there, but is too fragmented so far to count. Dunedin has an active club but is small and almost entirely without tradition or momentum yet. Christchurch has only a small club that is liable to die at the drop of a fan.

We have a national sf organisation, the ~~XXXX~~ National Association for ~~XX~~ SF. It has only about ~~XXXX~~ 100 members, of whom half are fans in any sense. Almost all the active fans, however, belong to NASF (only a couple of the organisers of the Auckland Uni SF Soc, and Brian Thurogood---whose claim to fanac is dubious now---do not). They belong to other clubs, as well...

Older FAPs with good memories are probably thinking back and back now, and reminiscing. On a small scale, and with minor differences (such as the relative success of NASF as a central body compared to NFFF), this resembles the situation of the US fandom of the 30's. We even have an apa, young, small, and struggling...in which most of the fanzine fans are interested.

Now I have heard various people at various times bemoan the coming collapse and disintegration of US fandom: they point to all the fringe groups and splinter fandoms that are appearing; they point to the massive infiltration of 'outsiders' off the street into the cons; they point out...but you know the whole rank of arguments.

To many modern US fen it must seem they are living in the last days of fandom, besieged by the barbarian hordes. I've seen them yearning for the Good Ol' Days. Modern fandom is their idea of hell, almost.

Folks, from this island time-machine it looks like sheer heaven! Hundreds and hundreds of fanzine fans; thousands of convention fans---and hundreds of conventions---clubs in almost every city; apas galore; and every possible shade and use of fringe interest that I might be interested in (Tolkien, McCaffrey, fantasy, etcetcetc. Do you realise how frustrating NZ is for the person who, regardless of interest in sf, also wants a place where fantasy can be discussed with other fantasy fans? This is an area NASF at present tries to cover, but doesn't cover more than indifferently poorly). And all so big that you can lose yourself in the anarchy without fear of ever running out of places to 'go' and 'see' (reminds me of the anecdote in a British fanzine about the guy who wanders off to 'look at' a tree that is hindering his surveying. He gives it a thorough 'looking at', alright, with the little axe he carries...). Heaven!





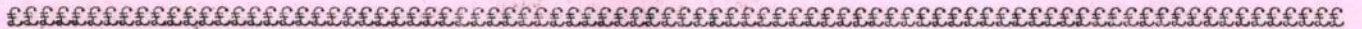


BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER: My apologies for the terrific offset problem on the last pages. I told myself to slipsheet, but forgot. I'm very good-at-forgetting things. I've forgotten to go to bed sometimes---sitting up reading, talking, fabaccing, or whatever until suddenly I look out the window and see the sun rising. Not that I'm one of those strange people who can go for years on 4 hours a night of sleep; if I run under 6 hours for more than three or four days in a row, or skip a single night, I regret it later. Pounding headaches, general malaise, and general unfitness for living. On the other hand, I can take months of 7-hour nights without more than a couple of pouches and (believe it or not) a general increase in randiness. Don't ask me why; I just do not know.

Mind you, sometimes when I've been sleeping longer than usual for a week or so I find it impossible to get to sleep---lying awake until dawn, bored stiff but too lazy to get up and make the hours productive. If such a night happened when I did not go to bed, I would probably count it as 'forgetting' to go to bed. When I'm in for an insomniac night, nothing seems to put me to sleep. I've not tried strong sophoriphics or other drugs, but the relatively innocuous 'sleeping pills' and draughts I've tried just do not work.

Other times, for no apparent reason, I just cannot stay awake. This may happen at any time, in that there is no apparent correlation with the amount of sleep I've been getting. Really bad news when one is hitch-hiking..one thing a hitch-hiker who has a goal to reach cannot afford is unplanned sleep. On a hot Sunday with work in the morning and two hundred kilometres to cover, with almost no cars stopping, to stop and 'rest' becomes almost an irresistable compulsion when I'm in such a state. I normally like hitching---the scenery is great, the people you meet interesting (and in New Zealand a lone male is almost 100% safe from molestation; as are females in pairs), and New Zealand is just sized so that each major city is one day's skilled hitching from the next. I've never, no, correction, only once, failed to make such a hitch in one day. That exception was when I got trapped in the city of Hamilton (which is almost impossible to hitch out of---anyone will pick you up & take you in, but not out again! The best hope ~~is~~ is to get a lift right through and out the other side. If dropped in the city, catch a cab out to somewhere well beyond the limits). Then I slept over the night, and finished the major part of the hitch in double-quick time the next day (I was unemployed at the time, fortunately).

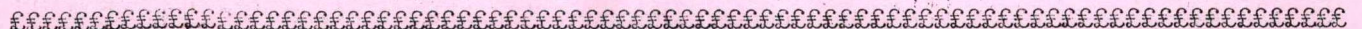
Which has nothing to do with sleep, but did strike me as of interest.



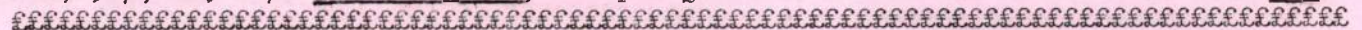
CURIOSITY STRIKES: I have noticed that one way or another I have been getting a number of FAPazines. So I sat down and listed them, as far as I could find and remember. Results as follows:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| FA's 166--172; Officialdom.             | ORNITHOPTER 6, Leigh Edmonds.       |
| Misc, NASA stuff, Andy Andruschak.      | THE BEST OF THE LIMERICK, B.Kanter. |
| ORANGE CANDULAS etc, Andy Andruschak.   | QUACKLE SENATOR PROXMIRE, A.Andr.   |
| DYNATRON 71, Roy Tackett.               | SHADOW FAPAS 1 & 2, misc.           |
| DAMBALLAs 39 & 40, Chuck Handon.        | DISINFORMATIONs, Arthur Hlavaty.    |
| SF TEACHER, Keith Walker.               | GOD OF THE MONTH CLUB, a/a.         |
| TNEFF, Owen K Laurion.                  | LE MOIDRE 38, Boyd Raeburn.         |
| MAD SCIENTIST'S SIARY, Brian E Brown.   | HAWAII, Seth Goldberg.              |
| WHAT THE DORMOUSE SAID 7, Marc Ortlieb. | ?????, ????? ??????                 |

Hmm. Quite an interesting assortment, even where I got the zine for reasons other than involvement in FAPA (DYNATRON, SF TEACHER, ORNITHOPTER, BEST OF THE LIMERICK, DISINFORMATION, GOD OF THE MONTH CLUB, TNEFF, MAD SCIENTIST'S DIGEST, HAWAII, WHAT THE DORMOUSE SAID). Oh, by the way, folks, I read the apa mailings reaching me. If I'm going to spend the money to belong, I might as well get the milage from it!



DAMN THE POST OFFAL: Somebody Out There is trying to make overseas fanac too expensive. Come to think of it, they are trying to make all fanac too expensive. Examples: minum rate airmails to: Australia, 35¢; USA, 50¢; UK, 60¢. Per 100 grams, not per 1/2-ounce... Internal NZ standard let: 20¢!





ON TYPER MAINTENANCE: I have just been fiddling with this machine's platen setting. Recently it has been looking 'faded' around the tops of the capitals, as if wrongly positioned. So tonight I whipped the casings off and took a look. Sure enough, a set of four screws allowed me to move the platen forward or back, thus adjusting the position of key impact. After some fiddling (along with adjusting the small doodads that decide whether capitals shall type like this or like this) I had it typing exactly right! Even impact across the whole blade of the letter. Wonderful; even had the capitals perfectly adjusted.

So I slapped the machine back together and ran a test sheet of paper.

Somewhere along the way, something had slipped: the fade was worse than ever! So I cursed and stripped it down again, this time slightly over-doing it. When I put the thing back together, it didn't slip. It typed exactly as I'd adjusted it. Now it's the bottom that tends to fade. And the full stop ('period'?) is now badly adjusted; when I use it on the lower case, the upper case stop also impacts visibly. Argh!

Furthermore, whereas before when I typed too hard the middle of the 'o' rarely fell out because a flap of stencil held it in position at the top, now if I type too hard the middle of the 'o' falls right out!

I think the moral here is let well enough alone: better a fault you are used to, which is not too noticable to others, and which has one or two advantages in some situations, to a fault you know is the result of your own incompetence and which is all too noticable in places...

~~~~~

One thing about manual typers: they are one hell of a lot easier and safer ~~xx~~ for the amateur incompetent to fool around with than electricis.

~~~~~

AUSTRALIA IN 1983!

I have now received two DENVENTION II Progress Reports (nos 1 & 2). Am interested & impressed by the myriad of minutae that go into a Worldcon. I thought WellCon B was an intricate enough affair; and I guess it was...for a tiny Con, budget \$2000. For a WorldCon, with a budget running into the Hundred thousands, the problems seem similarly proportioned.

Still & all, I think Down Under has the people who can put together even a modern, complex WorldCon. And retain the relaxed air that goes with Oz & Enz Cons. The bidders have the support of Australian & NZ fandom, and the help of several conscientious opposition persons. Without the latter, the bid would be much weaker and more loosely coordinated. The Committee have much to thank people such as John Foyster for, I suspect...

For a single lousy buck sent Down Under to the right place, it is possible to become a Friend of Ain83. The place is PO Box A491, Sydney South, NSW 2000, AUSTRALIA.

New Zealand contains the southernmost organised fandom in the world: the two WellCons have been the southernmost sf cons ever held, to the best of my knowledge: certainly the southernmost ever held in a national capital. An interesting statistic, with an unfortunate side-effect: we are isolated. We're nearer the US than Australia is, distancewise; yet it's cheaper to get to the US from Oz than Enz! And much cheaper to get to Oz from Enzed ((proper pronunciation of the abbreviation 'Enz' used earlier)) than the US from NZ. I have a very prosaic reason for urging you to support Ain83: I still have hopes of getting to Denvention II; but if not, AUSTRALIA IN '83 offers a way to bring the mountain to me. How could you bear to disappoint me?

~~~~~  
AUSTRALIA IN '83!!

~~~~~  
AUSTRALIA IN '83!!

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AUSTRALIA IN '83!!  
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Little problems in the way of getting to Denvention; yes, indeed, there are. First I have to buy furniture and equipment (washing-machine and fridge; bed and furniture) for (adjusts tension) living, mundane comforts.

Then there is the fannish side: I have to keep up with TANJENT now or I start feeling both frustrated and a heel.

AND I now find I'm buying a 2nd-hand Gestafax electrostencilæer for \$390. But this last expense can be met by spreading the cost, and in hopes of preserving my chances for Denvention II I have decided to do this. I have promises of \$50 from two people, a probable \$50 ~~xxx~~ from NASF. That's \$150 already. Probably several other people can be found, plus \$50+ from myself. It can be done. It won't be as good (for me) as if I bought it entirely myself (the others have their own plans, altho I am the one who gets to 'keep' it), but...it does better stencils than those used for ppl & 2 of this SHADOWFAX, and control is better, too. I can't resist it...

Anyway, we shall see whether overtime, payrises (15.5% coming in January, backdated to October---and I'd better get that backpay, despite shifting Branches!), and any other moneymaking method can offset the anticipated and unanticipated expenses. I can get loans if need be, especially now: as a permanent PO employee I am going to open a PO cheque account, which has an automatic overdraft facility of several hundred dollars. I will shortly have my insurance policy to borrow against, and there are a couple of things I can sell for another hundred bucks or so. I need at least \$2500 to make it worth the effort (\$1600 travel to the US, the rest travel and living and buying for the 2--3 weeks I'll be over there if I make it). \$2000 if I scrape the cheap and nasty end. I need to save about \$1200 from pay; the rest can be found by other means. 9 months left, only 9 months to do all this...

(\*)@

I have finally had a phone installed now I have a permanent job to back me. My new number is 849644, in case anyone is mad enough to drop me an expensive international call. I handled the connection myself before finishing up at TSB. Didn't want to run the risk of somebody else fucking it up.

(\*)@

Oh, well, time to begin winding the zine down, I guess. I don;t intend to mail this untill early January (giving myself several weeks to defeat any permutations the PO might force on even airmail), but if I finish with it now it will be there, ready, for when I get a pay that will leave me with enough spare cash for the expected \$8.60 air-parcel cost. Yes, I do hope to get this in for February. I have the BBJ's \$s backstop if I fail (they'll arrive before May), I realise, but seamail is notoriously undependable. At least airmail is almost certain to arrive. Almost.

Apologies for the present crappy typing.

FA 173 arrived in good condition. It's shocking to see that FAPA is really in debt: only the money on deposit saved if from a negative bank account this time. A levy is definitely in order, and yes I support another raise next year. FAPA should now be looking at raises on a yearly or biyearly basis. I have confidence in Reagen's certain failure to cure your economic problems (I also have confidence that he will simply aggravate NZ's, too---there is a suspicious link there), so you're going to be fighting inflation on ever higher terms.

Disregarding whatever else I may have sent, I owed 8 pages of minac to FAPA before the May 1981 mailing. Well, folks, here they are. I hope you like them.

THIS MAGAZINE SUPPORTS: AUSTRALIA IN '83  
NICHOLAS FOR GUFF

NEW ZEALAND IN '84  
MY FAPA MEMBERSHIP.

\* \* \* \* A D O M B E D B U D G I E P U B L I C A T I O N \* \* \* \*