

LESLEIGH'S ADVENTURES DOWN UNDER (and What She Did There)

Lesleigh Luttrell



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AND WHAT SHE FOUND THERE

LESLEIGH LUTTRELL

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WELTANSHAUUNG PUBLICATIONS

to

Leigh Couch

and Leigh Edmonds

Published by
Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell
525 W. Main
Madison, WI 53703

price: \$1.00 -- proceeds to DUFF

Weltanschauung Publication #88
April, 1974



Steve Hales '79

I. Let's Pretend

One thing was certain, that I had had nothing to do with it -- it was Leigh Edmund's fault entirely. For it was he who first suggested that I might run for DUFF, the newly conceived Down Under Fan Fund. Leigh first wrote me in October of 1971 to tell me of his idea that I might like to run in the first fan fund race to bring an American fan to an Australian convention. I would never have thought of it. But it isn't hard to talk me into doing things, and besides I was flattered. Imagine, someone thinking enough of me to want to pay my way to a convention that far away!

How flattering that letter was! "You would be my first choice," Leigh wrote. "I'd be interested in your comments anyhow since I met John Foyster last night and he threatened vicious reprisals if I didn't get somebody nominated. I told him that I'd write you today and he put his boxing glove away." Besides, who could resist the idea of a free trip to Australia?

I must have thought the idea over for a day or so, walking around the campus at the University of Missouri in Columbia, muttering, 'Australia' and 'Imagine, me!' to myself at intervals. Finally, I decided it wouldn't hurt to try it. So I wrote to Leigh, and several fans I thought might want to act as my nominators. After much correspondence back and forth between Columbia and Australia, as well as between Columbia and Culver City, California where Fred Patten lives, I found myself a genuine, official DUFF candidate. The other DUFF candidates were Buck and Juanita Coulson (who were forced to drop out of the race when they decided they couldn't afford a trip for three if they won) and Andy Porter. Now, it is a bit disconcerting to have to run against your friends for a prize like a trip to Australia, but I decided that at least it gave the voters a choice. Also, it gave me something else to do that spring, while I was deciding what graduate school to go to, how on earth to finish up my coursework at the University and write several papers in time to graduate so I could go to graduate school, publishing fanzines and in general being the secret mistress of Columbia fandom.

Not that I had all that much to do as a DUFF candidate. A few hours trying to decide what on earth I could say about myself in my platform were the most work I did. Most of my campaigning was done by my friends in fandom. Now, I'm sure I don't have more friends, or even better friends than most of the people who have been in fandom for awhile, but the fact that some of my best friends in fandom are also my relatives, and that others of them were at that time living within a few blocks of our apartment and I saw them practically every day meant that I had quite a few enthusiastic supporters. None was more enthusiastic than my mother. She put a DUFF

ballot in every letter she wrote. I honestly don't think I would have won without her efforts over here. And of course Leigh Edmonds was working in Australia, printing some of my writing (often culled from APA45 zines when I was too busy to write for him) and publishing it practically every month.

Well, I thought I had a very good chance of winning with such support, and in fact whenever I had a spare moment, I was making lists of the things one should do when planning a trip overseas. But the main reason I thought I would win was that the deadline for receipt of votes was my 21st birthday, May 31, 1972. With advantages like that, I shouldn't have been surprised when the call came, from Andy Porter, that I had won. I will be ever grateful to Andy for calling me at his own expense to tell me the news and for being so gracious about it. That kind of behaviour isn't surprising in fandom, I don't think, but it's not what one usually expects in the mundane world.

What an odd summer it was! I spent most of the time planning my trip to Australia, to be followed immediately by a worldcon and a move to Madison, Wisconsin, where I was starting graduate school in the fall. All those things take a lot of preparation, especially for someone who had never made a trip overseas, or moved farther than 100 miles before. Sometimes it was difficult to remember which trip I was doing what for. (There was a visit to the doctor, ostensibly to get my health forms filled out for the new school, but really to get a few shots I thought I might need for the trip (you really don't need any shots to get into Australia, but it's a good idea to check on what shots the surrounding countries, such as New Zealand, require for entry). There was the problem of getting a passport (it was the only time, before or since, that I've been asked to show my marriage license to anyone -- the clerk wanted to be sure the Leslieigh Couch of the birth certificate was the Leslieigh Luttrell who wanted the passport.) There was the concurrent packing of boxes for the move and suitcases for the trip. I think I did a better job packing the boxes (unbelievably, we didn't lose anything on the move to Madison,) but I made a poor job of packing the right sorts of things for a trip to Australia in what was the middle of winter there -- my packing was complicated by the fact that I had to wear some of the same clothes at the worldcon in Los Angeles, and for the first week of school in Madison. Packing is very difficult under such conditions.

Anyway, it was finally time to start the trip. I did that by leaving Columbia after a series of going away and birthday parties (both Hank and my brother Chris Couch have their birthday's in the last week of July). Hank and I drove to St. Louis on Thursday August 3, where I stayed with my parents for a few days, and proceeded to get more and more nervous as the day to leave approached. Finally, it was Sunday, the sixth. Hank, my parents and my brother Mike took me to the St. Louis airport. I had bought my own ticket to Los Angeles, but after that all my travel arrangements had been made by Robin Johnson. Thank goodness Robin is so good at doing that sort of thing, since I had enough trouble just figuring out how to get to LA in time to get to Australia, and how to get to Madison after the LAcon. But Robin is very knowledgeable about international travel, and I had a round-trip ticket from LA to Sydney, Australia in my bags as I left St. Louis that Sunday afternoon.

My flight left St. Louis at 4:00 p.m. (Central Daylight) that Sunday. I had flown to California before (in 1968 for the Baycon) but it is always an odd experience, flying, especially over the western U.S. It is difficult to decide what things below you actually are -- even the Grand Canyon doesn't look like much of anything. I've always wondered what the Canyon looks like close up, what the sides look like (you can't see them very well from an airplane). There are so many things that you can't see from an airplane.

LA International is too big an airport to walk around in apparently; anyway they have little buses which will take you from one side of it to the other, and I got on one to make my way from the domestic to the overseas terminals. I had no trouble checking in at Air New Zealand. I was rather afraid my bags would be too heavy, so I took out all the things that don't count in your baggage allowance (camera, etc.) including books to read on the flight; I was afraid they might ask me if I actually could read four books on the way to Australia, but they didn't. In fact, I had no trouble at all. It isn't difficult to get out of this country.

Since I had a little time to spare, I thought I'd call Fred Patten and let him know that I actually was on my way on this maiden DUFF trip. To my surprise, he offered to pick me up at the airport and entertain me for the few hours before my flight left. I really appreciated that, since I find airports very uncomfortable and unreal places. Actually, all of Los Angeles is pretty unreal -- I've never experienced anything like the free-ways there. Fred took me to John and Bjo Trimble's house to visit for awhile. I met Alicia Austin there, and we all talked a bit about my trip to Australia. We also talked about cats; the Trimbles had three gorgeous creatures, one of them a 'lynx point siamese' which is a cross between a siamese and a tiger striped cat. A beautiful animal.

The Trimbles returned me to the airport in time to board my plane. The process was very unreal: I had to walk through a metal detector, and have my hand luggage searched, as a small reminder of reality, but then I walked through a sort of hall, and all of a sudden I was inside the airplane -- it was very difficult to tell how I got there -- where the airport had stopped and the airplane had begun. The airplane itself was not too different from others I had been in, except for the fact that the cabin attendants spoke with an accent (it was Air New Zealand) and they explained how to use life rafts in case the airplane crashed into the sea, along with the usual instructions about oxygen masks and emergency exits. We took off after sunset, so that my last sight of the US was the lights of Los Angeles. They seemed to go on and on forever, but eventually we were out of sight of even those.

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Flying on a transoceanic flight is not like flying on a domestic, especially at night. It's very hard to believe that you are in an airplane, going hundreds of miles every hour, every minute getting farther and farther away from home, and closer to a strange new place. But inside the airplane, there is a funny little world. The cabin attendants move around, trying to make everyone comfortable, serving elegant meals and passing out pillows. But it doesn't do much good to try and sleep -- the seats in an airplane are, if anything, worse than bus seats for sleeping. It seemed a long time and yet no time at all until we are landing, a stopover in Tahiti.

Many passengers leave here, and they are met at the airport with flowers and flourishes from the Tahitians even though it is the middle of the night there. Those of us who are continuing on get off the plane and spend a few hours sitting in a flight lounge. There is little to see -- some native art decorates the airport, and the lounge is open to the the outside where many exotic looking plants decorate the airport. The air is warm and muggy and smells, well, tropical. The only thing I have ever experienced to compare with it is in the Climatron at the botanical garden in St. Louis.

Finally the flight leaves for New Zealand. Breakfast is served immediately, even though it does not get light for two more hours. Even after daylight there is little to see, except occasional flashes of ocean through the clouds. I realize that somewhere I have lost a day. It is Monday afternoon in Missouri, but it is now Tuesday morning in New Zealand.

As we began to descend I can at least see some land below; a green and brown country, full of hills and meadows, with occasional flashes of water. The airport is too far

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from the city for me to see any of it when we land. This time when I leave the plane it is bitterly cold; everything is covered with the previous night's frost. I must change planes here, but I have little trouble, other than the fact that the departure lounge is not heated. It is only a short flight to Australia, and the passengers on the new flight seem to be mainly businessmen, flying in for a week of business. This flight is not as unreal as the 18 hours I have just spent, and I am just getting used to the idea that this is all real when we land in Sydney.

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From the air, Sydney does not look much different from any other big city in the world, and it's airport is not too unusual either (like all airports, it is far from the city it is supposed to serve). But landing there was an unusual experience for me, since it was the first time I ever had to go through customs. We were given forms to fill out, and I found I had nothing to declare (though I was rather intrigued by the idea that I would have had to declare any clothing I had ever worn on a farm if I had brought any with me.) Actually, I had no trouble at all going through customs, except for an occasional curious stare at my American passport (not that Americans are that rare, I think, but mainly that one doesn't usually find them on morning flights from New Zealand.)

I knew that someone would be there to meet me, but I hadn't the least idea who it would be, or how we would recognize each other. But as I walked out of customs, I saw a man wearing what obviously was a Syncon card on his pocket, so I figured he must be the reception committee. It turned out to be Ron Clarke, who had been asked to see that I got from the airport to the convention hotel. Ron told me a bit about Australia and the upcoming convention on the drive, and it kept me from noticing too much that we were driving on the wrong side of the road. The only time I really noticed it was when we turned. It seemed odd that we should have to turn across lanes of traffic for a right turn. But it seemed right somehow that people who live on the other side of the world from my home should have to drive on the opposite side of the road.

We eventually arrived at the Squire's Inn Motel in Bondi Junction where the convention was to be held the coming weekend. After I had settled into my room, I called Shayne McCormack, who told me the plans were for me to stay with her the next night, and that she would come and get me the next morning. Ron offered to take me around to King's Cross that night, so that I would get to see one of the more exciting parts of the city. Then he left.

I was in Australia! It was hard to believe; I decided the best way to convince myself of that fact would be to walk around the nearby business district for a bit. I visited a bank to change some travellers checks and stopped in a few stores. The whole street was very odd, full of all sorts of little shops, including meat shops, vegetable shops, as well as more familiar grocery stores. There were chemist shops and pharmacies. (I rather thought a chemist shop must be something like a drug store, but I was told they aren't quite. "Chemist shops don't sell milkshakes, you get those at a milk bar," a fan later explained to me.) It was all very strange. Even the people were a bit strange. Not that they looked any different from the sorts of people you might see on any street in a large North American city. But they talked differently. Now, I knew I would encounter accents going to a foreign country, but I hadn't the least idea what an Australian accent would be like, since I have never seen an Australian movie or television program to give me a clue. As it turned out, and as I should have expected, there was no one 'Australian accent.' But I did have trouble understanding some people. I absolutely couldn't eavesdrop on the conversations of people walking in front of me on the street, or standing near me in shops, because I couldn't understand a chance-heard conversation. I had to really listen to be sure I knew what was being said. That didn't bother me so much as the fact that the people I talked to must have noticed that I had a very weird accent. I tried to say as little as possible.

to the shopkeepers, because I felt a bit funny about being a foreigner. I had no troubles of this sort when I was talking to fans -- I had no difficulty understanding what they were saying to me, and I didn't feel self-conscious about my accent; after all, that's part of what they got for their DUFF money.

I returned to the hotel that afternoon and napped for a few hours. I was rather expecting to experience the celebrated jet lag one always hears overseas travelers suffer from, but it didn't really bother me. I think this was because my trip had started in the evening and ended in the morning -- the fact that these were two days apart didn't bother my time sense so much. Mainly I was tired because it is very difficult to sleep on the plane. After that afternoon, I never again felt a distorted time sense.

I had dinner that night in the hotel restaurant. It was rather fancy, and the food was quite good. I was amazed to find out that I could get a complete meal for only a few dollars. Even considering that would have been a bit more in American money, it was surprisingly cheap. I found all of the restaurants in Australia to cost much less than I would have expected a similar sort of American restaurant to cost. Ron picked me up after dinner and we drove out to Watson's bay to stand at a famous lookout point (also a favorite outside jump I was told.) I found the evening quite cool. Actually, it was the middle of winter in Australia, and was really quite warm for that season, but considering what the weather had been like in Missouri when I left, I was cold. In fact, I was cold most of the time I was in Australia -- yet I would have considered the same sort of weather unbelievably mild even in autumn at home. I guess it is just hard to get used to the idea of reversed seasons. (I don't think I really believed it when I learned about reversed seasons in grade school geography class; I didn't believe it until I actually experienced it.)

We drove down to Sydney harbor, which is quite pretty at night with the lighted ferries plying the waters. We also walked around the center of town for awhile, visiting a magazine stand which had American magazines 3 and 4 months out of date. Then we went to King's Cross which is the entertainment district of the city, and apparently one of the most 'liberated' in the country. There were a number of theaters, restaurants, souvenir shops, as well as pornography shops. To tell the truth, I wasn't impressed by it; it seemed much like the similar areas in almost any big US city. The thing that I found most interesting that night was the realization that not only do Australians drive on the opposite side of the road from Americans, they also walk on the opposite side of the sidewalk. Well, I expect I upset a few of the people out walking that night, by persisting in walking on the wrong side of the sidewalk. Luckily, Ron was there to remind me that I was doing something wrong. After a while I got used to the idea, but at first it bothered me even more than riding in a car on the 'wrong' side of the road. I guess that proves I am a pedestrian at heart.

The next morning, I got up and watched a little television. I have always been intrigued by the television programs I watch in other cities (generally at conventions), so I was sure it would be doubly interesting to see what television was like in a foreign country. I found there were quite a lot of old American shows (even the soap operas were several years behind.) There were also a number of English television programs, and movies, as well as a few Australian made shows (perhaps the most interesting of those was 'Bony,' based on the character created by Arthur Upfield). I was especially interested in the commercials -- one fascinating thing was that I saw several ads which had exactly the same script as ads I had seen in the US, but remade so that the people selling the product would have the appropriate accent. I also noticed that several of the game shows seemed to be very closely based on US shows, except that their prizes were worth much less than the stuff given away on television in the USA.

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Later in the morning John Alderson, who was staying with Eric Lindsay until the start of the convention, came to visit. We had quite an interesting conversation about many aspects of Australian life, including the roads, the drivers (apparently drunken drivers are a big problem), guns and the police. It was very interesting to hear John's views on things since he is a unique and interesting person.

Shayne McCormack came by a bit later and we left to see some of the more interesting things in Sydney. We drove into the city and parked near Hyde Park, which was green and full of flowers even though it was winter. Or perhaps because it was winter, if what I was told about Australian summers is true. We visited the Australian Museum, which was full of school children that morning, since Wednesday is apparently a traditional day for outings in the Australian school system. It was rather odd to see all the children wearing school uniforms. Now, I always wore a uniform when I was in grade school, but that was because it was a parochial school -- and my brothers never wore one to school, so I found the sight of bunches of little boys in shorts and school ties rather amazing.

The museum was rather like museums anywhere else in the world, only slanted a bit toward things Australian. There was quite a large display which attempted to explain the difference between placental and marsupial mammals; I was surprised to find out how many of the Australian marsupials are classified as possums (one doesn't usually think of Koalas being closely related to Pogo Possum.) There were also several displays of native artifacts from New Guinea and other places; John Alderson said they were mostly new stuff rather than things that had actually been used by the people who made them. There was also quite an impressive display of fossils and skeletons of prehistoric animals. John told me that the aboriginal population of Australia have legends concerning dinosaurs and that fossils have been found in the areas the legends emanated from. He took this to be an indication that dinosaurs must have existed at the time Australia was first inhabited by man, but I think it really indicates that the aboriginals were able to interpret the skeletons they found as the remains of once living creatures and make some pretty good speculations on what they must have looked like.

After the museum, we drove across the Sydney Harbor Bridge, and into North Sydney. I saw numerous public buildings, courthouses and the like, and was rather surprised to find then they were all red -- they are built out of sandstone the way public buildings in the U.S. are built out of marble. I suppose it only makes sense to use the building materials which are most readily available in your country.

We then drove to the Taranga Zoo, which is on the harbor but exactly opposite the main part of Sydney; apparently the best way to get there is by ferry. I saw some koalas there, and it is easy to understand why they are nearing extinction. They are such sluggish creatures that it was difficult to tell they were alive and not stuffed; anyone who wanted to kill one in the past could just walk up to a tree and club them to death. That is, of course, quite illegal now. John Alderson did mention that koalas were good to eat, although I doubt that he had any firsthand knowledge of that fact; I suspect he said it just to irritate Shayne, since he repeated the remark about almost every animal we saw in the zoo. The zoo included the usual sorts of animals one sees in zoos, with an emphasis on native fauna -- there are an extraordinary number of venomous snakes in Australia. There was also an aquarium which featured a shark pool. The inhabitants of the pool were Australian carpet sharks (not very large and mainly harmless), and 12 foot long killer sharks, as well as a Captain Cook stingray, a most impressive looking creature.

After the zoo, we drove back through Sydney, dropping John at a train station so he could return to Eric's home in the Blue Mountains. On the way, Shayne and I stopped at a pizzeria for lunch. It wasn't too unusual, except that the menu featured an



'Australian' pizzas which included bacon and eggs along with the more usual ingredients.

Shayne lives in the suburbs of Sydney, the suburbs apparently extending 30 or 40 miles beyond the center of the city. The houses in the suburbs are very small and close together, but they all seem to have big yards, and seemed much nicer in that respect than the subdivision homes many Americans live in. I met Shayne's mother when we got to their home; she was interesting to talk to, and remarked that she'd like to visit the 'States,' not to see the cities, but to see the Grand Canyon and things like that. She told me that people seldom see as much of their own country as tourists do, which is very true. That night I read through a number of Shayne's fanzines, including ANZAPA mailings, and tried to get Shayne to tell me what some of the fans I would be meeting that weekend were really like. I got some idea from the fanzines and from Shayne's description what many of the fans I hadn't had much contact with were like, but of course I had my own impressions of lots of the Australian fans, impressions which were to be tested in the next few days.

The next day I helped Shayne get ready for the convention. The first thing to do was to get gas petrol for Shayne's car, which was not as easy as it sounds since there was a 'petrol strike' on at the time (not a shortage, just a strike of the people who delivered it.) That accomplished, we proceeded onto the convention hotel with a huge load of stuff. That day reminded me of something I had learned while helping with St. Louiscon, that most of the work in putting on a convention seems to be in getting things from one place to another -- the rest of the work is getting people to the proper places. After unloading the car at the convention hotel, we did some more driving around to do some shopping for the convention, and to pick up most of the books which were to be auctioned off at the convention (they were the remainder of the Pat Terry collection.) Back at the hotel we met some of the other people on the convention committee and spent the rest of the day getting ready. I helped when I could. I was rather surprised to see that most of the stuff to be auctioned was quite ordinary sf books, but apparently they are much harder to get in Australia than in the US, and thus more valuable. Also, there apparently weren't going to be many hucksters at the convention, so anyone who wished to buy books to add to their collection had to buy them through the auction.

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I watched a bit more television that night, and read a few more fanzines, and mainly tried to get myself prepared to go to the convention the next day. It was a bit scary to realize that I was to be a guest of honor, and probably the first American fan that many of the convention attendees had ever met. I just hoped that I wouldn't make the Australian fans sorry they had contributed so much money to bring me to their convention.

* * * * *

II The Gathering of Live Fans

Friday, the 11th of August, was the first day of the convention. I got up early and went down to the convention rooms to help set up. It wasn't as complicated as setting up for, say, a worldcon, since it mainly involved putting lots of posters up in the three convention rooms and getting the registration desk set up. One of the first people I met that morning was an American, Bruce Townly, who was in Australia because his father was visiting there on business. So, I was not going to be the only American at the Syncon. I helped at the registration desk once people began arriving. That had been my job at the St. Louiscon, registration director, so I guess I am pretty experienced. The Syncon registration wasn't as complicated as the registration at the St. Louiscon. Only about 100 people registered and I think the other people working at the registration desk (mainly Sheyne) knew most of them by sight. I think a few of the Australians were a little shocked to get their first view of their guest of honor sitting at the registration desk. Perhaps they thought it was a bit un hospitable, to make me work. But actually, I had insisted on doing it. There is nothing worse than sitting around at a convention not doing anything. Sitting at the registration desk, I got to keep busy and meet people as they came in. It made things a lot easier for me -- it seems more natural to meet people as they register than to sit somewhere in a corner waiting for them to come up and introduce themselves. It has the added advantage that you know the person's name right away, since it is on the badge you hand them when they register. Much easier than counting on everyone to remember to wear their badge all the time.

One of the first people I met was Carey Handfield. He was one of the people who had written to me after I won the DUFF race to offer me advice about what to see in Australia. In fact, I had quite a collection of letters from Australian fans which helped me when I was trying to figure out what my trip would be like before I left. Les and Carla Harding also came in early that day. Now, they were people I had heard a lot about, so I was very anxious to see what they were really like. Carla was rather quiet, so I didn't really get much of a first impression of her, but Les was extremely friendly. I was rather anxious about this first meeting since he had nominated me for DUFF at Leigh Edmond's request, without really knowing much about me. I don't know how most winners of fan funds feel, but I felt that I owed a little something to the people who nominated me (as well as all the voters). I felt they at least expected that I wouldn't make a complete fool of myself. So I was hoping I would make a good impression on the fans who I met at the convention.

Another of the fans I met that morning was the chairman of the convention, Bob Smith. He seemed to be a very good chairman; he didn't do a whole lot of work, but he was very good at talking to people and making sure things were organized. I know from experience that the chairman of a convention should be kept from doing most of the clerical and such work or else they won't have enough time and energy to carry out their essential work, which is organizing things and 'fronting' the convention. Bob Smith was quite good at speaking to reporters, introducing or speaking on panels, and doing other important things.

I met lots of other fans that day, really too many to keep track of. Among them were John and Elizabeth Foyster, John Bangsund, and Bruce Gillespie. These were some of the

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fans I was most familiar with before I came to Australia and so I was anxious to meet them to see if they were anything like my idea of them. Of course, they were both like and unlike what I expected. Probably the most exciting moment of the day was meeting Leigh Edmonds. I had been corresponding with Leigh for 3 or 4 years, so meeting him was especially interesting. Meeting someone for the first time after you've gotten to know them pretty well through letters and fanzines is a pretty common occurrence in fandom, but this was a bit different. I had never considered the possibility of meeting Leigh until he wrote and told me about the DUFF race. I found Leigh looked pretty much like I expected him to. He was a great deal more outgoing than he pictured himself in letters and fanzines, though. But I didn't really get to see much of him that first afternoon since he had just arrived after driving all night from Melbourne. He did have enough energy to get tremendously excited about the fact that I had brought his copy of the latest APA-45 mailing with me in my luggage, instead of mailing it, because he got it at least a month sooner than normal that way.

There were a few local reporters at the convention that day. One of them interviewed me, quite extensively in fact. This reporter seemed fairly intelligent, and didn't ask the sorts of stupid questions I had come to expect from reporters covering sf conventions. ('Do you believe in flying saucers?') He seemed to think the convention and my presence there were pretty newsworthy, enough so that a photographer came over later to take pictures of me. That was something that had never happened to me at a convention before.

Besides the many fans I met in person that day, I also got a call from John Ryan from Brisbane to welcome me to Australia, since he couldn't make it to the convention. To tell the truth, I was really surprised and flattered. Why should anyone be that anxious to talk to me? In fact, just about everyone I met was unbelievably nice, especially so considering many of them had never even heard of me before the DUFF race. I'm not sure if it was just a natural hospitality for a foreign visitor, or curiosity on their part or perhaps they genuinely liked me. I suppose the real reason was a combination of the three. Most of the fans I know are hospitable to a point that would seem odd to mundane people, but it is especially nice to be treated so well by people who don't even really know you.

The official opening of the convention began right on time. It was followed by a business meeting at which the site of the next Australian national convention was chosen. There were several bids for the convention, the most serious of which were ones from Adelaide and Canberra. The Canberra bid stirred up a lot of controversy, since their main idea was to have a sort of a professional conference, with a convention fee of \$100 to cover all costs. It was an interesting idea, but not the sort of thing one wants to try out with their national convention. Anyway, Adelaide won the bid, partly on the basis of the good will generated by the local con they had held the previous year.

After the meeting, I went with several other people to John Bangsund's room where we drank wine and talked about fanzines. This was supposed to get everyone in the right frame of mind for the panel on fanzines which John was to lead later that day. Most of the convention programming was small panels of that type, with 3 panels usually going on at the same time, so that many different topics could be covered. John Bangsund's fanzine panel turned out to be very interesting. He conducted it mainly along the lines of asking various people why they publish fanzines. He said he does because he is lonely, but I'm not sure he was entirely serious. When he asked me why I published fanzines (he asked every fanzine publisher in the audience) I decided to forego the obvious answer (for ego) since that is the basic reason everyone does it. Instead I said that I had always approached fandom as sort of a family project, something I did with my brother, or my mother or my husband. That is quite true, but I think some of the people attending the panel were a little surprised at my answer.

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That evening I had dinner in the hotel with a group of fans, including Lee Harding and Paul Stevens. I enjoyed it because it gave me a chance to sit down and talk to a few people and get to know them a little better. Later that evening was the masquerade. I was amazed that well over half of the people came in costume. Many of the costumes showed a lot of effort and thought had been put into them. I gathered that some of them were particularly amusing to people who knew the persons wearing the costume. Paul Stevens came as a vampire (of course) and Shayne McCormack complemented his costume by coming as a female vampire. Lee Harding came as a character from one of his own stories, and there were many other interesting costumes. There was no formal 'show' of the costumes. People just wore them throughout the evening, the way you would at a costume party. That's basically what the masquerade was -- a costume party. I was asked to help judge the costumes. That involved walking around the room and deciding who I thought had the best costume, along with the other judges. 6 prizes were given, and the winners seemed to be pretty pleased. But I think most people wore the costumes mainly for the fun of it.

I talked to a lot of people during the masquerade. It was really quite a party. The convention committee had the hotel provide a lot of refreshments (food, soda and wine) and John Alderson was circulating his home made wine as well (it was really quite good.) Some of the people I remember talking to were Paul Anderson, David Grigg and Robin Johnson. I think this was when I got an opportunity to thank Robin for all the help he had given me in getting to Australia. I also enjoyed talking to David. I had spent much of that day listening to various people's accents, and David has a very extraordinary one. Actually, it was so remarkable because to my ears it sounded as if he had very little accent. He told me that many people think he is an American when they first hear him speak, but he was actually brought up in England, and has lived in Australia only since he was 14 or so.

I got a chance that evening to begin sorting out the people at the convention. I noticed that there was a large group of Star Trek fans there. One of them asked me which US Star Trek fans I knew. I had a difficult time answering that since I had to think which of the fans I knew had been involved with Star Trek one way or another. I don't know any of the people who are only SF fans. I noticed a number of the people at the convention were what might be termed fringe fans, or neofans, etc. I guess that the convention was actually attended by just the mix of people you might expect to find at larger American conventions, only it was much smaller than the US cons. Anyway, I had a lot of impressions to sort out when I went to bed that night.

Saturday morning I got up and had breakfast in the hotel dining room. In most hotels in Australia, or at least in the Squires Inn, breakfast is included with the price of the room. And it wasn't any continental type meal, but a more American type of breakfast with fruit, cereal, toast, eggs and bacon. I'm not one for eating breakfast, so I never had more than some fruit and cereal, but lots of the fans took advantage of the hotel by eating large amounts of food for breakfast. Of course, you had to get up in time to eat it, so it's probably just as well there is no similar custom at convention hotels in America. Anyway, I ate that morning with several other early risers, including Bruce Gillespie and John Alderson.

In the convention rooms, Merv Binns was busy setting up a table of his wares from the Space Age Bookshop. He presented me with a Bert Chandler Ace Double. Captain Chandler was there at the time, and he very kindly autographed the book for me -- both sides. I had known in the back of my mind that he is a sea captain, but I didn't really think about it until I met him. I had several opportunities to talk to him about the sea during my stay in Australia. Being from the midwestern United States, the ocean is not part of my life the way it is for most people in Australia or on the coasts of North America. I found Captain Chandler's conversations fascinating.

That afternoon several of my Australian friends treated me to fish n' chips for lunch. Now, I must admit that they warned me about them, but I wanted to try them anyway. I'm not sure how authentic the meal I had was, but it was every bit as greasy as I had been led to expect. It certainly wasn't something I'd want to eat very often, but I doubt that it was any worse than a hamburger and french fries.

After lunch, I performed one of my official functions at the convention, which was to conduct a panel on the "Sense of Wonder." I'm not sure why the convention committee decided that I was the appropriate person to conduct such a panel -- perhaps because my being at the convention was a real demonstration of fandom's sense of wonder. Shayne really helped me conduct the panel, since it turned into sort of a dialogue with the audience and she was better able than I to get the fans to speak up. I made a few comments about the sense of wonder, but the most interesting remarks came from Capt. Chandler, Bruce Gillespie and John Bangsund. I don't think we actually concluded anything. I was trying to get some sort of definition out of the participants in the discussion, but I never did quite get one. I think we were talking at times about senses of enthusiasm, amazement, and intellectual excitement (certainly all part of a sense of wonder, but not quite what it's all about.) Some of the fans mentioned aspects of fandom that require a sense of wonder. Several people commented (favorably, I think) that a fanzine like Richard E. Geis was something that really evoked their sense of wonder. Well, I suppose it does, but I'm not sure that's quite what I would call a fanzish sense of wonder.

Later that afternoon I joined a group of people who were carrying the auction material down to the convention floor -- it reminded me so much of the carting around that I had to do at the St. Louiscon. After all the carrying, I sat down to watch the auction. Lee Harding was auctioneer, and he compared quite favorably with the other auctioneers I have seen at conventions. However, he had so much material to auction that it got a bit boring towards the end. I think he must have auctioned off hundreds of paperbacks without even getting through half the auction list during the two hours the auction lasted. I took the opportunity to read some of the fanzines that people had kept handing me since the start of the convention and to talk a bit with Robin Johnson.

There were more panels after the auction. I went to the one on 'science in science fiction' led by Jeff Harris. It was actually a continuation of a discussion that had begun at a previous convention (Adelaide, I think). It soon became sort of a random discussion on various things such as, had computers been predicted in SF stories, and what can science fiction predict about the affect of computers on our future. This was followed by the famous Paul Stevens show, the part of the program I had been looking forward to the most. It was incredible, unlike anything I'd ever seen at a convention before -- yet it is a feature of almost every Australian convention. It began with Leigh Edmonds as a 'little old lady.' Paul Stevens did a monologue, Lee Harding and Valma Brown did a skit about the Space Age Bookshop, John Fryster made a speech denouncing John Bangsund and the 'cult of the individual' (he was dragged off the stage by storm troopers). John Bangsund himself then made an appearance and read some incredible but actually printed poetry with the assistance of Valma Brown. The grand finale of the show was "You Bet Your Life," a quiz show where the contestants actually did bet their lives. Paul Stevens was the MC, Shayne McCormack was his assistant, Dolly, Carey Handfield and Malcolm Hunt were the goons who dragged unlucky contestants away to their doom. Bill Wright, David Grigg, Robin Johnson and John Bangsund were the contestants who were variously shot and eaten by lions when they couldn't answer their questions. The whole thing was incredibly funny. The Paul Stevens show alone is worth a trip to Australia.

This was followed by the premiere showing of the "Australia in '75" movie. By now, most fans have probably had a chance to see this movie. It was incredible on first showing. I guess I was so impressed because it was just the sort of thing that lots of fans,

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including Columbia fandom, have sat around and talked about doing -- a fanzine movie. The star of the movie was Paul Stevens, as Antifan, but all of the fans who were in the movie were really good.

The movie ended just at the time the banquet was officially supposed to begin. Everyone rushed off to their rooms and got changed in record time. I heard a few people suggesting that we just go to the banquet without changing, but I think most people felt they hadn't brought their good clothes along for nothing. Anyway, the banquet didn't start on time. Actually, the whole banquet was rather a mess. The hotel apparently decided not to set up a separate banquet room, and held the thing in the hotel restaurant, which was already crowded with Saturday night business. The room was very noisy and the service was slow, but it wasn't worse than many banquets I had been to.

Actually, I had a nice time, since I got to sit next to John Bangsund and enjoy his conversation. The food was nice, and it wasn't cold. I got to drink some Australian wine with my dinner. In fact, I think I must have sampled 3 or 4 different kinds of wine that night, since everyone at the table who bought a bottle offered me a glass. Being somewhat interested in wine, I didn't want to pass up a chance to taste something new. After the food, the banquet was adjourned to the convention room for the speeches. John Bangsund was the toastmaster, and he gave out the Ditmars (Australian Hugos, as it were). I was asked to accept the award for Larry Niven, who won for Ringworld. I didn't know what to say, so I remarked that I could use the opportunity of presenting the award to him to plug the Australian bid. Actually, one of the Australian fans who was present at the Lacon gave him the award, which was more appropriate. The other Ditmars went to Lee Harding, for best Australian fiction, and to Bruce Gillespie for best fanzine. This was the first time Bruce had won a Ditmar for SF Commentary, and he was apparently quite touched.

I had been trying to write some sort of speech for days, and I was incredibly nervous about the whole thing. I think I only talked for about 3 minutes, and I have only vague memories of what I said. I believe I mainly commented on how nice it was to have friends, like the ones I have made through fandom. I guess the audience wasn't too disappointed, because I remember they laughed in a few places and applauded at the end. But it's something I don't want to do again very soon. After the speech Paul Stevens presented me with an Australia in '75 necklace. It is a unique piece of jewelry, made from the design for the A in '75 symbol, and I was very surprised and pleased to get it. In fact, I wore it for the rest of my stay in Australia. After the official program, I had my picture taken with Lee and Bruce as sort of a representative of the other Ditmar winner. I also got to meet Damien Broderick. We talked a bit about the women's liberation movement. Damien seemed interested in talking to me about it because he agrees with many of the aims of the movement, and wanted to talk with someone from a country where there actually was something of a movement. It was an interesting conversation.

There were several room parties that night, something that isn't common at Australian conventions, because many attendees usually go home at night. Despite their inexperience with room parties, the Adelaide people (Paul Anderson, Alan Sandcock, et. al.) gave a rather nice party. I spent most of my time listening to conversations about Australian fandom, but I left when Leigh Edmonds and John Alderson got into an argument about combines (the kind farmers use -- not that it wasn't interesting, I was just getting tired.)

At breakfast Sunday morning, I was invited to go on an expedition with some other non-Sydneyers to see the city. I spent several hours riding around the city with Alan Sandcock, Paul Anderson, David Gilgg and Bruce Gillespie. We drove through Paddington, a part of the city which is full of fantastic old houses which are ornately decorated with lots of iron work. I was told that most of it had come over on ships as ballast. We then drove out to Manley, where I stood on an ocean beach for the first time in my

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life. Not that I hadn't seen the ocean before, while attending American conventions on the coasts or while flying over it. It's just that I had never had any reason to go to an ocean beach before in my life. I'm afraid that fact rather dumbfounded the fans I was with, who were all from cities which border the ocean (as are almost all Australians). The beach and the ocean were beautiful, especially since the day had turned very warm and sunny. Some of the local people thought it was warm enough to go surfing, but I didn't think it was that warm.

The Sunday paper, the Sun Herald, included an article about me, the result of the interview on Friday. It was actually much more intelligent than the article about the convention which had appeared in the previous day's Australian, but it was a very short article considering how long I had spent talking to the reporter. It was an odd experience to see my picture in an Australian newspaper.

The program at the convention that morning had to do with comics and animation, and featured an appearance by an Australian comic artist. I missed the program, but later I talked quite a bit to Paul Power, a budding artist. We mainly talked about comics fandom in Australia and North America, and the comic and animation industries. Paul told me that there had been some animation in Australia at one time, but it had been killed off by American imports. American culture seems to have a smothering effect in a lot of places, unfortunately.

After lunch (an Australian hamburger -- I had mine with cheese, but I could have had a slice of pineapple on it instead), the auction continued. Lee Harding speeded the proceedings up by throwing out a lot of the more worthless stuff. I bought a couple of books -- one by Wilson Tucker, and The Pacific Book of SF edited by John Baxter. Lee Harding autographed his story in that book for me. Actually, I never got to pay for the books, since some generous fan added my purchase to his bill. I hadn't even talked to the man before that, but he thought it would be a nice thing to do for a visitor.

The convention attendees began to drift off to various corners of the continent that afternoon. Many of the people left for home, while a few who were staying had another party. I didn't go to it, though. Instead, I went with John Bangeund and Leigh Hyde to have tea with Bob and Lynn Smith. We actually got there before Bob did as he had been busy ending the convention. He said that he didn't think he wanted to be a convention chairman ever again, which I suppose is pretty typical. The dinner was very nice. I'm not sure what I ate, but it was rather fancy, and I think pretty "Australian." I do remember the dessert featured some fruit I had never tasted before. We must have talked for 5 hours after dinner. Mostly I listened to Lynn, Bob, Leigh and John talk about public service in Australia. Apparently, half of the people in the country work for the government, and it is much like American civil service. Bob also gave me some of his fanzines to add to my steadily growing collection of Australian fanzines. It was really a lovely evening, and quite a nice way to end a convention. It was difficult to believe that three days before I hadn't even met any of these people.

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III Australian Interlude

Monday morning I started on my journey to Melbourne. David Grigg had offered me a ride in his (tiny) car, so I travelled with David, Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown. It was quite a trip. It took us five hours to complete the first leg of the journey, the drive to Canberra. It was very difficult to get out of Sydney, in the first place. When we had finally found our way on to the main highway which connects Sydney and Melbourne, I was amazed -- it was just a two lane road, very winding and bumpy. In fact, we once got off the main road and drove several miles before we realized -- it was only when the road turned to dirt that David thought he might have made a wrong turn.

The road convinced me that Australians don't do as much intercity driving as Americans. However, the scenery along the road was beautiful and impressive. The land was very green (since it was winter) and there were sheep grazing on every hill (they have to be fed in the summer). There were lots of trees, including wattle, the tree covered with yellow flowers -- the national flower of Australia. I kept an eye out for the wildlife, but I saw only birds -- magpies and flocks of parrots. I suppose I must have asked lots of questions about the scenery as we went -- I didn't even know what a magpie was the first time I saw one.

We met John Bangsund just inside the city limits of Canberra, and he took us on a short conducted tour of the city. We stopped at Parliament house for a quick look but it is not very impressive on a closer look. I didn't mention my impression, but I was informed that it was only a temporary building and was to be replaced by something more impressive in the distant future. The building looks quite nice from a distance. We went into the building for a few minutes, and inspected the portraits of prime ministers and such in the 'hall of kings'.

We then went to Leigh and Helen Hyde's house for tea. I heard a bit more about Australia and Canberra. We also talked a bit about America. Someone came up with a map of the United States, and looked up Madison, Wisconsin on it. I think everyone was amazed at how far north the city is. And even I was surprised at how far Madison is from Australia. It made me realize what a long way I was from home (not that I had really moved to Madison yet.)

I spent the night at John Bangsund's house, as did several of the other fans who were in transit from Sydney to Melbourne. I looked at John's books for awhile. (I believe I actually read a bit of Thomas Love Peacock.) John, being a gentleman, let me sleep in his bed that night, while he and the rest of the overnight guests, shared the sofa and floor. I was glad to have the bed since it was equipped with an electric blanket, and it gets cold in Canberra in the winter, as the city is in what passes for mountains in Australia.

Tuesday morning Helen Hyde brought the carful of people who had spent the night at her house over quite early, in an attempt to see that John Bangsund got to work on time after saying good-bye to everyone, but I'm sure that he must have been a bit late that morning. After John left for work, Helen took the 6 fans who had spent the night in Canberra on a tour of the city. I'm not sure if the tour was mainly for my benefit, or if perhaps some of the other people had never been in the city before. Anyway, Helen gave us quite a tour. We drove to the top of Red Hill to get a good overview of the city, and then through some of the wealthier neighborhoods on the way to the part of town where all the foreign embassies are located. Helen made it a special point to drive past the American Embassy, which looked something like a little fortress, built completely out of bricks imported from the US. We also drove around in the central part of town, where Parliament and the other government buildings are located. I had been there the day before, but Helen pointed out a few things I hadn't noticed the previous day. She showed us the Australian-American war memorial which is a very tall pillar with an eagle perched on the top. Helen pointed out how much the perching eagle resembles a Rabbit's head in profile, which explains the monument's nickname of 'Bugs Bunny.' The British had also donated something to pretty up Canberra, a Carrillion which is set in a sort of artificial lake in front of Parliament. The lake also contains a fountain which can shoot water up to 400 ft. in the air and costs over \$2000/hour to run. I suppose the reason the fountain hadn't been on when we drove by the previous day was cost, and the fact that the road near the lake gets awfully wet when it is going full blast.

After that very short but comprehensive tour of the city, David, Leigh, Valma and I resumed our journey to Melbourne in David's car, an Escort. Now, I don't want to cast

aspersions on Australian-made cars, but David's vehicle was not made to be ridden in for hours at a time, at least not for people sitting in the back seat. Since I couldn't drive, I had no excuse to sit in the front seat, and I spent an awfully cramped 10 hours or so in the back seat. But I did see a few interesting things on the trip to Melbourne. We stopped at one of the more interesting landmarks, the statue of the Dog on the Tuckerbox (from the song of the same name.) We also drove through Glen Rowan, where Ned Kelly was captured rather spectacularly. Leigh informed me that the town is really rather ashamed of its one claim to fame, so there are really no Kelly associated tourist attractions there. That seemed rather silly to me, but then I am from Jesse James country, and we aren't ashamed of making money by exploiting our famous outlaws there.

One interesting experience was passing from New South Wales into Victoria. There was a border checkpoint, as there is in several of the western United States, to make sure no fruit from NSW, which might be infested with fruitflies, gets in to spoil Victoria fruit crops. Fortunately, we had stopped for lunch a short time before and Valma had eaten the oranges she and Leigh had brought from Victoria, as part of their provisions for the convention. I think it would have been a bit difficult to explain to the border guard that the oranges were actually Victorian, and not from NSW. I also noted an immense improvement in the highway as we entered Victoria. I'm not sure why the Victorian government spends more money on their highways than does New South Wales, but I must admit that it made a pleasant change.

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We arrived in Melbourne after dark that evening, and went to Leigh and Valma's flat, where I was to spend a few days. It was so nice to be able to get out of the car, walk around the flat and take a bath. Real luxury. But I noticed that night that Melbourne was much cooler than Sydney -- I was really glad to have the extra blankets on my bed. I suppose I should have known Melbourne would be cooler, but it's difficult to think of the South part of the continent being the coolest. I suppose that was my hemispheric chauvinism showing.

IV Space Age and Melbourne

I awoke Wednesday morning to find myself in Leigh and Valma's spare bedroom, still in Melbourne. It was really exciting to be in the center of Australian fandom. I couldn't wait to see something of the city that day. Leigh was just leaving for work when I got up, but Valma was able to stay for awhile. She introduced me to her cats, Black Billy and Spot.

The only way to open a stay in Melbourne is with a visit to the Space Age Bookshop, so Valma gave me detailed instructions on how to ride the tram into downtown Melbourne and find the store. I walked up to the point where I was to catch the tram and got up. Now, I suppose not everyone knows what a tram is -- I certainly didn't really know before I rode one the first time. A tram is an electric streetcar. In Melbourne, trams provide much of the public transportation, and they are really very convenient and cheap. However, the oddest thing about them is that they are open at the sides, so it gets rather windy and noisy when you are riding on one. But I did enjoy my ride downtown. I actually got to see a few of the local landmarks, such as the Cultural Center where part of the A in '75 movie had been shot.

After getting off at the correct tram stop, I walked about a block and came to the Space Age. It's not really a very big store, but it was crowded with all sorts of interesting stuff -- science fiction books, books about movies, comics, occult, sex books, as well as posters and other things. Since I knew the people who run and work at Space Age (Merv Binns, Lee Harding and Paul Stevens) I was able to go into the back rooms of the

shop as well. They were even more interesting, being crowded with stock which had not yet reached the front of the store. I didn't have much time to look around, though, since Paul Stevens had arranged for me to be interviewed that morning, and we had to leave for the newspaper office. The reporter who did the interview was apparently quite friendly to af fans, and occasionally gave publicity to Space Age, fandom, and the fantasy film group which Paul runs. Since the man already knew something about fandom, the interview really didn't take very long, and the questions he asked were intelligent. (I believe when the interview finally appeared, it had turned into something of a plug for Australia in '75, which was nice.)

I had been invited out to lunch that day, so Paul escorted me to an Italian restaurant where we met Bruce Gillespie and David Grigg. The restaurant was in Carlton, an old part of the city where David and Bruce worked. Bruce took part of that afternoon off to show me around Carlton and take me back downtown. We stopped at several bookstores on the way, which gave me my first chance to get a look at Melbourne shops. The central city is honeycombed with tiny little malls, full of tiny, tiny little stores which sell all sorts of things. I was really intrigued by the stores and looked forward to doing some more poking around in them.

Bruce also took me to the main post office. He went there to pick up his mail, but I wanted to see it because I had a weird desire to personally visit all the places where the A in '75 movie had been shot (so that I could interrupt the movie whenever anyone I knew was trying to watch it at Lacon and say, "I've been there!") After that, I went back to Space Age and spent the rest of the afternoon talking to Paul and Merv. We talked about the book business (like most every other fan, I have a secret desire to run a bookstore one day), and I helped Paul unpack some of the books that had arrived that day. I also got to see the famous Melbourne af club room, which is located above the Space Age.

I had dinner that evening at De Graves tavern, where Melbourne fans traditionally meet on Wednesday. There was an unusually large crowd that night, partly due to the fact



that I was there, and partly because this was the first chance for the fans who hadn't gone to the Syncon to hear about the convention. The meal must have lasted for several hours, since there was lots of conversation going on, as well as wine being passed around. The people who were still game after the dinner went over to a place called the Pancake Parlor (which is just what it sounds like) and talked for quite a bit longer. I remember talking about the next DUFF race, since most of the fans there seemed to have decided that it was a pretty good idea. I tried to get the people there to tell me what ideas they had for the future of DUFF and who they would like to see as DUFF candidates, but I don't think I got any serious answers. From the Pancake Parlor, we trooped back to the clubroom above Space Age, for what was, I believe, the official meeting, which was the showing of a lot of slides. To tell the truth, I really don't remember what they were of, since by that time I was half asleep. Robin Johnson kindly came to my rescue and escorted me back to Leigh and Valma's flat, where I immediately went to bed.

The next morning, Elizabeth Foyster picked me up, as she had volunteered to show me around a bit that day. Our first stop was to drop Julian Miranda off at the private school which she attends. Elizabeth teaches in the public schools, but she told me most of the school teachers she knows send their children to private schools. Apparently the private schools are better, and it is still very socially advantageous to have gone to the right school. Elizabeth told me practically all the Australian politicians had gone to the same one or two schools. After that we drove around the city a bit. I got a good look at the Bay, which looks every bit as beautiful and calm as the one in Sydney, but apparently is not quite as commercially useful since there are treacherous shoals at the opening. We also drove around near the Yarra river. I had been told by some Sydneysiders that the Yarra is the only river in the world that flows upside down -- with the mud on top. Actually, it didn't look much different from the Mississippi, except that it was smaller.

At the top of the street where the Foysters live are the Royal Botanical Gardens. Elizabeth and I walked around there a bit. I had never seen anything like it before, though I'm sure there must be botanical gardens in many North American cities I have visited. The whole thing was quite impressive. It's a large, and rather old park which features plants from all over the world, growing in more or less national groupings. Apparently the weather in Melbourne is mild enough year round to allow a variety of plants to grow there, making the botanical gardens possible.

I also accompanied Elizabeth to some of the local shops. I was again impressed with the fact that Australians seem to do most of their food shopping at small food shops including butchers, bakers and fruit and vegetable shops -- and what an amazing assortment of produce you can find at some of those.

John Foyster came home early that afternoon to show me around the city a bit. I had been forewarned about John's ability to walk great distances and expect people to keep up with him. Luckily for me, he didn't walk too fast that day, and I was able to keep up with him since walking is about the only exercise I get regularly as a student. We walked all over town that afternoon. We walked first through the botanical gardens, and I discovered that there was more park and public lands on the other side of it. Victoria's first government house (home of the English governor) was here. It wasn't really much different from any of the other historic old houses that local historical societies maintain, but it was interesting. We walked to the Cultural Centre, which currently consists of a large art museum -- other buildings are planned for the future. Perhaps the most impressive thing about the building is the front, a huge glass wall with water flowing down it continuously -- it's really fascinating to watch. The museum itself is large, but not yet entirely full. I only got to take a rather quick look around. I was disappointed that there wasn't more oriental art, since it seemed

there might possibly be large collections of it in a country so close to the source. However, I did find the exhibits of Australian art interesting, mainly because I'd never seen any before.

After that John and I walked towards the center of Melbourne. We stopped in an antique store (which actually looked more like my idea of a museum than the one I had just left.) We also visited a lot of book stores. Downtown Melbourne seems to be full of new and used book stores, at least one on every block. I found that rather surprising considering that most of the books weren't sold very cheaply. Perhaps the presence of several universities in the city increases the demand for books. We visited the Victoria museum. This includes a library, planetarium, museum of applied science and natural history museum, all more or less in the same building. It was near closing time when John and I got there, so we just looked at the ethnographic exhibits in the natural history museum. There were numerous displays covering the cultures of the Australian aborigines and the aboriginal inhabitants of surrounding countries such as New Zealand and New Guinea (which seemed to produce the more colorful exhibit material.)

After all that walking, John decided we had best take the bus back to his house. We met Elizabeth and Julian there and then went to tea at the Foyster's favorite restaurant. After that they took me back to Leigh and Valma's flat to spend the night. I had a lot to think about that night. Not only had I seen an awful lot of the city of Melbourne that day, but also I had had some interesting conversations with Elizabeth, about Australian society. I was especially interested in her comments on how women's roles are still pretty strictly defined in Australian society, that most of her female students thought only of being married and having their own house and kids, while there wasn't much encouragement of women on the University level. She told me it would be pretty unthinkable for an Australian woman to travel abroad without her husband, as I was. I suppose the fact that none of the fans I had met had expressed such surprise meant either that fans are a bit more liberated in their outlook than most Australians, or perhaps that they didn't expect American fans to live up to Australian standards.

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I spent most of the next morning reading in front of the gas fire. It was nice not to have to do anything for a few hours. But eventually I decided to take the tram down to the Space Age Book Shop to see what was happening. I got to Space Age just as Lee Harding was going out to lunch, so he invited me to go with him to a neighboring health food restaurant. I enjoyed eating there, but the meal did produce one uncomfortable moment. I had decided I wanted tomato juice to drink, but I had quite a debate with myself about what way I should pronounce it, the Australian or the American way. Now, I thought I could pronounce it in the English/Australian way quite easily, since I had heard it pronounced that way hundreds of times in movies, as well as since I had been in Australia. But then I thought it would be a bit silly for me to pretend I wasn't an American with an American accent. I ended up asking for tomato (American pronunciation) juice, and cause the waitress some merriment. It made me appreciate how kind the Australian fans had been in not bringing up the subject of my accent unless I introduced it myself.

After lunch I visited a few of the shops that had so intrigued me two days previously. I stopped in at the "Archie and Jughead" record store, much patronized by record buying Australian fans, and to tell the truth, I was horrified at the prices (they were very high, since most of the records sold in Australia are imports.) I really couldn't understand how anyone could afford to buy very many books or records in Australia. I suppose fans must give up meals rather more often than I do in order to buy books.

I was to spend that night at the Gillespie house, so Bruce met me after work, and we took the tram to his home in the northern part of the city. The tram ride was lengthy,

but interesting. We passed the exhibition gardens and the exhibition hall, which Bruce told me is the largest building in the Southern Hemisphere (I'm not exactly sure what it is used for.) We also passed a number of the new high rise flats that are causing the levelling of many of the fascinating older houses. Apparently Australia is beginning to experience some of the unpleasant aspects of urban renewal.

We finally arrived at Bruce's home, which is behind a bank. Bruce's father is director of the bank, and apparently one of the fringe benefits of the job is being able to live in the adjoining house. I'm not sure if the reason for that is to discourage bank robberies, or what, but it was a nice house. Bruce asked his mother to make a 'typical Australian meal' for tea that night, so I would be exposed to some local cooking. The meal was nice, but I didn't find it that out of the ordinary. I decided that Australian food isn't that different from the kind of food I am used to. Perhaps the main differences are a greater reliance on lamb, and on some of the tropical fruits, and less variety in the food than Americans are used to, probably because there is less exposure to different national cuisines than we get in North America. Well, I had not yet been exposed to the meat pie, so perhaps I hadn't really eaten Australian food yet.

I spent the evening inspecting Bruce's collection of books, records and fanzines, and looking at the SF Commentary then in the making. I was amazed to find out that Bruce retypes all the material for his fanzine on layout sheets so that he can edit it and justify the margins. Now, I knew that Bruce justified the margins, and that several other fanzine editors do it, but I hadn't realised how much work it entails. I can't imagine having the time or patience to go to that much trouble.

V Wombats and Wallabies

Bruce had planned an expedition for Saturday. He must have heard me express my desire to see 'real Australian animals.' He had arranged to have some of his (non-fan) friends who had a car pick us up and take me to see the animals. Since they didn't arrive until nearly noon, I spent the morning proofreading stencils for SFC. Bruce said that he generally does everything by himself when putting out a fanzine, which is something I can't imagine doing. I suppose that is why he is so happy to let other people put out issues of his magazine.

Maureen and Rick finally arrived and we began our journey. Since the place we were to visit was a wildlife preserve and outdoors, I was really glad that I had borrowed a scarf and warm jumper (pullover) from Valma -- I really hadn't brought the kind of clothes that would keep me warm outdoors in 40 degree F weather. We took a long way out of town, going through the northern limits of the city. I decided that Melbourne must be an incredibly spread out city. After quite a bit of driving, we finally arrived in Healesville and the Sir Colin McKenzie Wildlife Sanctuary. Before going off to stare at the animals, we ate lunch. Lunch consisted of steak, chops and sausages which we cooked there, and bread and butter. Rich and Maureen explained that the meal was a good example of how Australians tend to overeat. I decided that Australians really don't eat more than Americans, just more meat.

After lunch we walked through the Sanctuary, which was really more of an open-air zoo, since most of the animals were in enclosures -- although the Emus were wandering all around. I'm not sure if it was because they had no particular cage, or just because they wouldn't stay in one. We first walked through the part where many of the native birds were kept. There was a huge cage full of cockatoos of various colors. All of them had apparently learned how to say 'hello' with the idea that it gained them pennies from the spectators. Perhaps the most interesting thing I saw that day was a platypus. It was kept in a glass cage containing a deep pool where it was on display twice daily. The animal seemed to realize it had an audience, as it followed a regular routine of

swimming around, digging in the mud and crawling up onto a ledge as a tape pointed out the unusual aspects of the platypus. It certainly attracted a large audience. It was the first time I had ever seen a monotreme, and I suppose even Australians don't see them very often. (I did see an echidna later in the day, but it wasn't nearly as impressive since it seemed to spend most of its time sleeping.) The kangaroos and wallabies were kept in open enclosures through which you could walk. Apparently the animals didn't mind being petted and stared at. We walked by one group of resting kangaroos, and I noticed a pair of legs sticking out of one of the female's pouches. They were very big legs, too, I really would have liked to see the rest of the young kangaroo.

I saw a number of other animals. One of the wombats was out walking around. It looked like a woodcock. There were numerous cages of birds (including owls) and some of the native reptiles. The goannas (a type of lizard) were all sleeping under stones in their enclosure and a sign informed visitors that they were provided with electric heat pads for their comfort. I suppose that's one way of keeping zoo animals happy during the winter.

After leaving the wildlife sanctuary, we drove to a nearby reservoir which was surrounded by semi-formal gardens and picnic grounds. Unfortunately, it was just beginning to rain as we got there, so I didn't have much chance to observe the flora. We did take a quick walk up to the top of the dam and got a rather spectacular view of the water-course it was damming, but we didn't stay there long. By this time it was getting rather late, so we drove back into town and ate dinner at a french restaurant, which specialized in various sorts of crepes. The restaurant seemed to be in one of the older parts of town, and was in a redecorated old house. I understood that the only thing that was saving some of the more interesting houses in Melbourne from being torn down was the fact that businesses are located in them.

After dinner, Rick and Maureen invited us to their apartment to listen to records. We listened to some classical music for awhile, but then Rick got out some of his collection of country and bluegrass music. It was really odd to hear something like that in Australia. It hadn't occurred to me that America might export some of our more 'genre' music, as well as popular and rock music. It really struck me as odd that any Australian should be as interested in it as Rick, since that sort of music has always seemed to me as the most purely 'American'. But Rick and Maureen were very enthusiastic about it, and late in the evening gave us a concert on guitar and autoharp of their version of some of the songs. It was a very entertaining evening.

VI Foyster Farm

Sunday morning, Mr. Gillespie and Bruce took me to the Spencer St. train station to meet John Foyster. On the way, we drove through Melbourne University, which seemed crowded since it is located in the middle of town. At least, there didn't seem to be much room for new buildings. Since the University only has about 12,000 students, I guess it wasn't really as big as it looked. John was at the train station, and was ready to take me on a trip to Wood's End, where Elizabeth was to meet us and take us to the Foyster country residence. Now, I didn't want to admit it, but this was to be my first train trip, and I was rather excited about it. The train turned out to be rather old. The cars were wooden, with several compartments in each car. Each compartment had 6 seats in it -- just like the trains people ride on in British movies, and just the way I had always imagined trains to be. I believe the car at one time had been rather luxurious; age had made it rather noisy but it was still very comfortable. The train took us up into the 'great dividing range' which is part of the main mountain chain in Australia. Actually, I didn't believe it the first time I was told I was in the mountains, since the mountains aren't very high at all. They remind me of the Ozarks more than anything. We saw a lot of the countryside on the trip up, most

of it still undeveloped, but John did point out an isolated group of suburban homes which had proved to be a bit too far out for the developer to sell. Elizabeth and Julian picked us up at the train station, and we drove out to the Foyster farm. I could tell we were in the country, since at one point we had to stop and let a calf cross the road in front of us. The Foyster Farm itself was an actual farm, with an old farm house, outbuildings, and a pasture with a small herd of cows in it. John's sister and her family were also visiting that Sunday, and we spent a great deal of time walking around the farm; I think I had as good a time as did Julian and her cousins. We walked through the pastures and met the cows who lived there and looked at the wattle trees that surrounded the place. We also explored the pond, which is actually a dug out clay pit, but is nice despite that.

After luncheon, the Foysters and I went for a drive. We went to an abandoned gold mine further back in the hills. We saw a few Sunday visitors panning for gold. I suspect that people occasionally turn up a nugget or two, but it is mainly done for fun. We also stopped at a small restaurant and had a Devonshire tea (which consists of scones, jam and cream, besides the tea.) This was the sort of meal I had always thought should be properly called a tea, rather than the meals I had been eating under that name, so I asked Elizabeth what exactly constituted tea. She explained that formally tea is a meal which the children of the house are allowed to share with the rest of the family, a high tea is a more formal meal where the children are not expected to speak, and dinner is a meal that children are not allowed to attend at all. I suppose I still think of tea as an afternoon snack sort of thing, despite the fact that I called my dinner 'tea' for the whole time I was in Australia.

The rest of the drive was interesting, as well. I saw some cockatoos, rosellas and even a kookabura, and a lot of countryside and older towns. We drove back to Melbourne, which took quite a while since the road was crowded with Sunday traffic. I rode in the back with Julian on the way into town. At one point in our conversation she asked me to teach her 'American' which rather stumped me (the only thing I could think of was to tell her that we call our tea dinner or supper.)

When we got back to Melbourne, we stopped by Leigh and Valma's flat long enough for me to pick up my things, as I was to spend the next few nights at the Foysters. It was really nice to stay at the Foyster's home, because it had central heating and was actually warm, even away from the heaters. Also, there was a washer and dryer there and I finally got to do some laundry that night. I was very comfortable there.

VII All Round the Town

The next morning, Monday, I was supposed to get to Space Age books rather early as a television crew was to be there to do some interviews. The television people didn't get there on time though, and when they did arrive it took them the longest time to set up. They ended up doing only about 10 minutes of interviews, mostly with Lee Harding, but they did do a minute or two with me. Fortunately, I never did have to watch myself on television, since the program wasn't broadcast until after I left the country.

I decided that I had to get some shopping done that afternoon (since I had a number of presents to buy for my family and friends.) So I got to explore some more of the fascinating little arcades in downtown Melbourne. The arcades are all over the place, in every available alley and back street. Only a few of the stores are actual department stores. I think I did most of my shopping in the book stores, but I did go into a lot of different shops that day.

Bruce Gillespie was off work that day, so he met me in town and walked back to the Foyster's house with me. We walked past the Myer Music Bowl, which is sort of an open air stage built into a hillside. It supposedly has some of the finest natural acoustics in the world. We also walked through the Royal Botanical Gardens, which still intrigued me. This time, I managed to find some of the North American flora, and I was amazed at the size of some of the trees in that part of the gardens.

That evening there was another fannish gathering for dinner at the Madelaine restaurant. The place is rather wildly decorated, but is apparently very congenial and had let the fantasy film group show movies there in the past. There were lots of people there that night, including the jeweler who had made my A in '75 pendant. He was actually an emigrant from Kansas City, which struck me as a bit coincidental. The dinner was really a bit wild, as I recall. I'm not sure why, but I suppose one of the reasons was that I felt a bit more comfortable around the Melbourne fans than I had the week before and so talked a bit more. It was a good thing to do though since Valma told me later that some people had been afraid that I wasn't having a good time until they talked to me that night. It was just that I had great difficulty telling people how much I was enjoying myself and how much I appreciated their hospitality.

After tea that evening, Leigh and Valma took me to the Ballet. (Actually, I used Carey Handfield's ticket, since he had decided not to go and offered it to me.) This was only the second time I had ever been to the ballet, so I really had no way to tell if the performance, by the local company, was very good. The ballet they performed was Cinderella, which seemed a bit silly subject for a ballet to me, but it actually was rather amusing. The ugly stepsisters are traditionally danced by male dancers, and they were rather funny. After the ballet I went with Leigh and Valma back to their flat to spend the night. I was never sure how I managed to co-ordinate what I was to do every day and where I was to spend the night, but things always seemed to work out, so I didn't worry about it too much.

Tuesday morning began my second week in Melbourne. I went down town by myself -- I was getting very used to the tram ride between Leigh and Valma's flat and the Space Age -- and did a bit of shopping before it was time to meet Elizabeth Foyster. She was going to take me out to lunch that day. We went to the Lyceum club for lunch, which was a unique experience. The Lyceum is a women's club which accepts as members only women who are university graduates, professionals or artists, and it is really very private and exclusive. I thought it must be something like the clubs one reads about in English novels -- except, of course, all of those are men's clubs. Most of the women who were there that day were fairly old, but Elizabeth said that there are many younger members, and it is a good place to go for anyone searching for interesting conversation. We ate lunch in the dining room and had coffee in the lounge, where there were many women sitting around talking. (I suppose that was one difference from the men's clubs of the novels -- there most of the members sit around snoozing or reading the paper after lunch.)

After lunch we walked around Collins St. which has some of the more expensive shops in town. Bruce Gillespie met us somewhere, and we started on a trip to visit Carla Harding. We took a long way out of town so that we could drive though Monash University, which is fairly new, and suburban, as compared with Melbourne University. We also drove through Fern Tree Gully, which contains one of John Bangsund's more famous residences. The Hardings live in what is practically the country, although some of the people who live there commute into town each day. The place had quite a big back yard, which was backed by a stand of wild gum trees. The Hardings' residence reminded me of my parents' house in Arnold, Missouri which is also pretty much in the country, and surrounded by a small bit of forest (although the trees are a bit different.) Like the Couches, the Hardings had a number of resident animals, including cats and rabbits.

Stephen and Eric Harding introduced me properly to the rabbits, one of whom was almost killed later in the day by a neighborhood dog. Fortunately the animal escaped with no damage except fright.

John Foyster came out for dinner that evening. The meal was something Chinese and quite good. I got to visit for quite a while in the Harding residence. I was glad to have the opportunity to see more of the Australian country-side. Carla told me that the surrounding land was the 'real Australia,' what most Australians think of as characteristic of their country and are rather proud of, though many people are reluctant to admit it.

That evening I got to see a different aspect of Australia. Bruce had acquired tickets through his office to the premiere of the movie "I Can Jump Puddles," which is a Czech film, but based on a novel by an Australian. The movie was showing at the Palais Theatre, which is one of the last of the 'Golden Age' movie theatres in the city. The entire program was rather long, since the film was preceded by a number of ads, short subjects, an intermission, and a speech by the author of the book, followed by a short documentary on his life. The movie was rather interesting. The novel had been semi-autobiographical, and concerned a young boy who was crippled and yet still learned how to lead a fairly normal life. The entire book had been translated to Czechoslovakia for the film (I think some of the audience was disappointed by this) but it was fairly interesting. It was as close as I got to seeing an 'Australian' film (which is a rather rare beast), so I was glad of the experience. After the movie I rode back to Foyster's house in a taxi which had a flat tire for the last half of the trip, so I was rather lucky to have made it back at all.

VIII My Own Interests

The next morning, Wednesday, John Foyster called early in the morning to tell me he had arranged to get me in 'behind the scenes' at the Victoria museum, since I had expressed an interest in seeing some of the things which weren't on display in the museum itself. Elizabeth drove me to the museum, and I had no trouble getting into the back. One of the senior workers in the anthropology section offered to escort me around the place. We began the tour by having morning tea with the museum staff in the basement. Then Miss Wainwright took me to see the skeletal material the museum had collected. There was a whole room of skeletal remains, mainly aboriginal, classified by state of origin. I got to look at it for quite a while. The skulls were in very good condition, and included some which had been decorated. There was also a few drawers of skulls, mainly of convicts but also of aboriginals, which had been examined by a phrenologist. He had fastened his written comments to each skull, and they were vastly amusing to read ('obviously a criminal type, inclined to violence,' 'a very primitive type.')

I had quite a long talk with Miss Wainwright. She was an experienced museum worker, but had a degree in art and didn't know too much about anthropology. We talked about anthropology in the U.S.; at least I told her what I knew of the field here. She also showed me some of their huge collection of artifacts in the basement, and asked if I could help her identify some Indian items which had just been donated by a traveller. Unfortunately, I'm not that kind of anthropologist, so all I could tell her was that I thought it unlikely the bison horn had come from Illinois where it had been purchased. She also showed me the museum research library, and got out an atlas so I could show her where Illinois is located. I guess most Australians know as little about American geography as I did about Australian geography before I made my trip.

After spending the morning among the dusty old bones, I walked to Spate Age where Leigh, who had taken the day off from work, and Bruce were waiting for me. They left it to me to decide what we should do that day, so I told them that Elizabeth had suggested a trip

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to Frankston. They seemed to think that was a good idea, though I had no idea what it might involve. It turned out that Frankston is a little town at the end of the the train line located on the ocean. So we walked to the Flinders St. Station and got on the appropriate train. This train was electric, a bit older and a lot less comfortable than the country train I had ridden on Sunday -- this train was a commuter train. It was about an hour ride to the end of the line in Frankston; Leigh and I spent most of the time discussing politics. Mainly, I was trying to explain the American political system to him, and he tried to explain the Australian system to me. I had great difficulty trying to explain American politics to Leigh. He never did seem to grasp the idea of a primary election (fans familiar with the Australian ballot system will realize such a thing is unnecessary in Australia), but he seemed to think he had the rest of our system figured out when we decided that Republican = Liberal and Democrat = Labor. I, in turn, found the idea of compulsory voting hard to comprehend. I think by the end of the train ride we were both equally confused, but it was great fun trying to explain something as complex and ridiculous as politics to each other over the sound of a noisy train.

Arriving at Frankston, we walked to a small lunch shop where Leigh treated me to a 'pie and sauce' and 'pastie and sauce.' Sauce is ketchup, of course. And a pie and pastie are sorts of meat pies. According to Leigh, who eats them everyday for lunch, these are real Australian food. We walked down to the seashore to eat. I decided having both a pie and a pastie at the same time was a bit too much, so I fed the last bits of mine to the sea gulls. After eating, we spent most of the afternoon talking, playing in the sand and looking at the sea. I really enjoyed being there by the sea; we walked out onto a jetty to get a look at the water farther out. I suppose what I enjoyed most about the afternoon was finally getting a chance to have a long, long talk with Leigh. I don't think we talked about anything terribly important. I do remember trying to teach him to say 'Arkansas' properly. I suspect Bruce was a bit amazed at how silly we were getting since he didn't say much all afternoon.

Finally we decided that it was time to go back to town, so we took the train back in, and arrived just at rush hour. We walked from the train station to DeGraves tavern for dinner. There was a much smaller crowd this Wednesday evening; Leigh, Valma, John Foyster, Michael Bredon, one other fan and myself, but we had a very entertaining meal. After dinner, Leigh, John and I walked back to the Foyster residence. We walked along the Yarra River much of the way. At one point we stopped so Leigh and John could point out the bridge under which Antifan is blown up by Aussiefan -- you could still see the crater. At Foysters, we talked a while and drank Milo, a sort of Australian Ovaltine. Leigh said he drinks it every night, but I didn't think it tasted that good -- but then I never liked Ovaltine much, either. All in all, I think this was possibly the nicest day I spent in Australia.

IX Guest of Honor

I spent most of Thursday getting ready to leave Melbourne. I spread my things out all over the bedroom in Foyster's house, and picked out the things I didn't think I could possibly get in the suitcases and then packed the rest. Bruce came over later in the day and got the stuff that wouldn't fit into my luggage, as he had offered to post it to me in Madison. I'm sure I would have never gotten it home otherwise. I spent the rest of the day reading, since this was the first time I had gotten a chance to inspect the books at Foyster's. I read some old fanzines as well.

John and I went out to dinner that night, since Elizabeth and Julian had gone to the farm. We walked to the little restaurant near his house, and had a most pleasant tea, which we spent talking about Universities. Since John was not long out of grad school, we talked about the differences between graduate schools in our respective countries,

as well as University politics (the radicals at Australian universities are mainly Maoists, I understand.) After dinner we took a cab over to Robin Johnson's flat, since Robin was giving a party mainly because it was my last night in Melbourne. The party was very well attended, mostly by people I had already met, as well as by some I hadn't yet met, such as Christine McCowan and George Turner. It was a very nice party. Somewhere in the middle of the party, a lot of people gathered at the windows, since the fireworks being set off at the Japanese trade festival were just barely visible from there. Later on the silent print of the Australia in '75 movie was shown with Merv Binns whistling 'Pomp and Circumstance' and 'Waltzing Matilda' to accompany the film. The movie was shown again later that night, since George Turner arrived after the first showing. Luckily Paul Stevens took the film away before the last late-comers arrived. I had a very interesting conversation sometime that evening with Leigh, David Grigg and Peter House about rock festivals, since there had recently been one in Australia. I'm sure I talked to many more people that night, and I had a great time. When the time came to leave, it was really hard to say goodbye. Robin said, 'See you next week,' since he was going to Lacon, but I told everyone else 'See you in three years' since it was very hard for me to think that I might never see some of them again.

Elizabeth and Julian were both home the next morning, since they were both on school holiday. We went shopping that day in Toorak at a toy store; Julian picked out some new furniture for her doll house. We also stopped at the post office so Elizabeth could pay for the radio license (all radio and televisions must have licenses, and the money collected this way pays for the ABC.) That afternoon, John took me downtown to have lunch at a Chinese restaurant. I am fond of Chinese food and had expressed an interest in eating at one of the restaurants in Melbourne -- these restaurants are mainly patronized by the students from Hong Kong, etc., and are really quite good. The one we went to was small, but had a large menu. The food was excellent. After lunch we walked around the city and stopped at a few bookstores. One of them specialized in Marxist literature, and had as a sideline a few imports such as carved boxes and painted screens, which I found more interesting than the printed material. In fact, John bought one of the smaller screens as a present for me -- it was one of the many presents I received from fans in Melbourne before I left.

We got back to Foyster's just in time to leave for the airport, where I was to catch a flight to Adelaide. Elizabeth and Julian went to the airport with us, but left for the farm shortly after that, so it was John who saw me off. We spent the few minutes before my plane left talking about DUFF and other things. When the time came to board the plane, I found it very difficult to say goodbye to John, and to realize that I might never visit Melbourne and the Melbourne fans again.

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The flight to Adelaide took about an hour, but because of the time zone change I got to Adelaide only half an hour after leaving Melbourne. It was rather amusing to watch the stewardesses rush about trying to get coffee and tea served before the flight was over. I suppose the airlines felt the stewardesses had to do something to justify their presence on the flight. I was met at the airport in Adelaide by Alan Sandercock and Paul Anderson. We stopped at Alan's house briefly to drop off my luggage, since I was to spend the weekend there and then drove to Paul's house for tea.

Paul lives up in the hills. Unlike those near Melbourne and Sydney, the mountains in back of Adelaide are quite close to the city and the suburbs stretch up into them. The area where Paul lives is really rather wild and scenic. We had tea with Paul's parents, and spent most of the evening reading fanzines. I read through Paul's file of AFR, while Alan read a number of American fanzines. Alan and I finally started back to his house. On the way, we stopped at a lookout point from which I got a fantastic view of the city lights. We drove down through the center of town, which at that

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time on a Friday night, was crawling with young couples looking for some night life. Most of them seemed to be just looking in store windows or listening to the radio. When we got back to Alan's house, we watched a bit of television. Not too surprisingly, the Friday night fare was a rather bad monster movie, and an episode of "Thriller." The program was hosted by Mr. Deadly Earnest, who was made up horribly, and professed to take his show quite seriously. I also read through a pile of Alan's film magazines while the television was on.

The next morning Alan's mother made porridge for breakfast. As I had always suspected, porridge is the same thing as the hot oats I eat for breakfast occasionally at home. After breakfast, Alan and I drove downtown. We parked at the University and then walked a few blocks to the central business district. As in Melbourne, central Adelaide was full of little arcades, though there are not quite as many since Adelaide is a much smaller city. We also explored the University a bit. It was fairly deserted that morning, but seemed a nice place. We stopped in at the Union bookstore, which was the only thing open on campus that day. After this, we drove to the beach. The beach we visited featured a large historical marker commemorating the fact that Europeans had landed there for the first time in South Australia. The beach was also marked by a large jetty. Since the day was nice, there were lots of people standing or sitting on it fishing. I didn't see anyone catch anything, but they all seemed to be having great fun.

Back at Alan's house, I spent the afternoon reading his file of Australian fanzines. I really hadn't got a chance to do much reading while I was visiting in Melbourne, and it was a nice break, as well as being interesting to review the last half dozen years or so of Australian fandom. That afternoon we also visited another fan, John Howitt. He had quite a collection of comics. I looked through his Australian Disney comics, and we spent a while talking about comics. John also played a tape recording he had made of the Adventon which had been held the previous New Year's. The tape included Bruce Gillespie's Guest of Honor Speech, and a few other interesting bits.

That evening there was a party at Alan's house. Most of the Adelaide fans were in attendance, including Gary and Lynne Smith and Jeff Harris. From the conversation at the party I gathered that every fan in Adelaide except Paul Anderson is, in some way or another, connected with the University. The University talk made me feel right at home. The party was interesting, since it was the only chance I got to meet many of the Adelaide fans, many of whom had not been at the Syncon -- including Gary Mason who had moved to Adelaide from Sydney only a short time before. During the course of the party, Gary offered to be treasurer for the convention Adelaide was to hold the next year, since that is his perennial job in Australian fandom. The party ended up with everyone watching the opening ceremonies of the Olympic games on television. Almost all the fans I had met had told me how sports mad Australians were, but besides a few threats from John Foyster to take me to a local football match, I hadn't really seen anything of Australian sports, except for driving by a few local bowling clubs. (I am of course talking about Australian football, and lawn bowling.) However, since I too was interested in seeing the opening of the Olympics, I didn't take this to be a symptom of the Australian sports madness. The Olympics also reminded me that it really was summer in the other half of the world.

The next morning was Sunday, and I spent it reading the Sunday papers. In the early afternoon we drove over to Paul Anderson's house again. Since it was daylight this time, Paul and his parents gave me a tour of their garden and greenhouses, where they grow orchids. It was most interesting. After this we set out on a drive to the Barossa Valley. We took a scenic route which wound up and through the surrounding mountains. The roads were narrow and windy, like real mountain roads, but of course the mountains weren't anything like the Rockies or other big mountains (anything which has trees all

the way to the top can't be a real mountain.) Since it was Sunday, none of the wineries in the valley were open, but the drive itself was very pleasant. We drove by several of the wineries, and stopped at a sort of tourist attraction, a family crypt located on the top of a hill. A number of people were up on the hill, since one could get a nice view of the valley from it, so we climbed up to have a look too. We drove back to Paul's house for tea, and again spent much of the evening reading fanzines. This time I read numerous ANZAPA mailings. Jeff Harris came over later in the evening, and we talked about conventions and things until it was time to leave.

Monday morning I was to leave Adelaide and go to Sydney, as the first leg of my trip back to the U.S. Alan took me to the airport that morning, and I discovered that my plane was going to be delayed. I bought a few things from the newsstand and passed the time reading the Australian edition of Time magazine. It was really the first time I had read about what was going on in the U.S. since I had left -- nothing seemed to have changed much. Finally the plane arrived and I was able to leave the Adelaide airport.

It isn't possible to fly directly from Adelaide to Sydney -- one has to fly through Melbourne on the way, so I actually got to stop in Melbourne once more before leaving Australia. Luckily I didn't have to change planes, but could take the same one the rest of the way. Laura Moleworth and Bill Wright met me at the airport in Sydney. Bill is actually a Melbourne fan, but had stayed in Sydney between the Syncon and the time he left for the Lacon. We stopped at the International Terminal on our way out of the airport to make sure that Bill and I could leave for Los Angeles the next day, and then drove to Laura's house where I was to spend the night. Laura and her children David and Lyn showed me some of the more interesting of the many interesting things that filled their home, including books autographed by Heinlein, Sturgeon and Clarke, the history of Australian fandom written by the late Vol Moleworth, and an aboriginal skull they had gotten somewhere.

Laura made a 'baked dinner' that night. Both she and Bill described it as typical of the best sort of Australian cooking. It was certainly one of the nicest meals I had in the country. A baked dinner is a leg of lamb with vegetables -- Laura cooked potatoes and pumpkin along with it. There was to be a party at Laura's house that night, sort of a farewell party for me. People began arriving shortly after tea. Eric Lindsay and Blair Ramage arrived first, closely followed by Shayne McCormack, Margaret Oliver, Bob Smith and Captain Chandler. Several of the people who couldn't make it to the party called to say goodbye to me. Shayne showed me some of the photographs that had been taken by the official photographer at the Syncon. Bill Wright had given me some of the pictures earlier in the day. I was really happy to get them, since I didn't take very many pictures, and I'm not a very good photographer to begin with. Shayne and Bob talked about putting out a photographic report on the convention. Certainly they had a large enough collection of pictures to choose from for the report. We also talked a bit about Melbourne and Melbourne fans. (I made the mistake of saying I like Melbourne a bit better than Sydney. I still think Melbourne is the nicer city, since it is less 'American' than Sydney.) The party broke up fairly early, though, since everyone had to go to work the next day. Shayne and Eric promised that they would see me in a year at the Torcon. Everyone else said something about seeing me again in three years (except Bob Smith who assured me he will have gaffiated by 1975.) Since Bert Chandler was one of the last to leave the party, I got to talk to him a bit. We talked about science fiction writing and the SFWA. Captain Chandler remarked that he thought some of the best writing currently appearing is in the fanzines, which I thought was rather nice of him. I talked to Laura a bit when everyone had left. I had met her at Syncon, but this was the first time I had really gotten a chance to talk to her. We talked about Australian fandom in the past, as well as the future of fandom in Sydney and elsewhere in the country. Laura remarked on how difficult it is to get Australian fans to join clubs, since it really isn't part of the Australian culture to have clubs

³⁹ for everything as we do in the U.S. It seems like the idea of clubs and conventions must really be attributable to American fandom, since these are rather common things in American life. It was a most interesting conversation, and added to the large store of pleasant memories I took to bed with me that night.

* * * * *

X Shaking

Tuesday, August 29 was the longest day of my life. It was many hours into the day before Bill Wright arrived and we left for the airport. It was still Tuesday as we boarded the flight, and it was Tuesday the whole time we were on the airplane. It took almost 24 hours to get to Los Angeles. We stopped first in Noumea, New Caledonia. The sun was just going down as we landed, and I got some rather spectacular views of the island and the sunset. It was dark by the time we took off again, but it was still Tuesday when we arrived for the second stopover in Fiji. As we arrived in Tahiti for our third stopover, which lasted for several hours, the sun was just coming up on Tuesday morning. And it was Tuesday evening when I arrived at LA International.

It seemed to take a dreadfully long time for the plane to land in Los Angeles. When I finally did get off the plane I had to go through U.S. customs. Most of the people on the plane were Americans returning from Tahitian vacations, and I didn't get too much attention from the customs agents who were busy with the returning vacationers. In fact, I didn't even have to open my suitcases for the customs agent, which rather surprised me (I guess I just don't match the smuggler profile.) Finally I was through customs and could go out into the airport. I wasn't sure if anyone would be waiting for me, but sure enough when I came through the doors, there was quite a welcome committee: Hank, Terry Hughes, Chris Couch and Claudia Parrish. I was so excited about everything that had happened to me in the past three weeks that I don't think I shut up once during the time we were collecting my luggage and walking to the convention hotel (which was located conveniently right at the airport.)

When I ventured outside the hotel the next day, it suddenly hit me that it was summer again. And summer in Los Angeles is hot. I suppose if I hadn't spent most of that weekend in an airconditioned hotel, I might have suffered from the heat as much as I had from the cold in Australia. But since Americans believe in making their buildings as air tight and free from seasonal variation as possible, I never did find out how difficult the readjustment to summer would have been.

The LAcon itself was quite a contrast to the Syncon. It was a huge convention, in a huge hotel. Big conventions have two advantages. The more people attending, the more people you are likely to see that you want to meet (although the more difficult it will be to find them -- I don't think I would survive a big convention at which I didn't know any of the people I wanted to meet by sight, since I would never find anyone.) The other advantage is that a big convention can afford to put on a pretty impressive program. While I find the type of program that most conventions feature -- the attendees talking in more or less formal sessions about various sorts of things -- quite interesting, I also really appreciated the type of programming the LAcon was able to do. The film programming looked quite good, although the only movie I got to see was Targets, a movie I'd long wanted to see since it was one of Boris Karloff's last films and Peter Bogdanovich's first. They also were able to put on a fantastic series on the history of the animated cartoon, which included several mornings of cartoon programming, as well as a panel featuring some of the big names of the field. Certainly I wouldn't want to go to big conventions all the time, but the LAcon program proved that there are advantages to having big cons once in a while.

However I didn't spend most of my time at the program of LAcon. Much of the time I spent in the huckster room helping Hank run our huckster table. Actually, we had a lot