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\*brg\* 93

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A fanzine for the August 2016 mailing of ANZAPA (Australian and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association) and a few others.  
Published by Bruce Gillespie, 5 Howard St, Greensborough VIC 3088.  
Phone: (03) 9435 7786. Email: gandc001@bigpond.com (new email address).  
Member fwa.

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## Vote today!

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Just repeating my message from the OBO, mainly because nobody seems to read the OBO — **vote today!**

Yes, I know voting fatigue has set in all over the English-speaking world, but ANZAPA needs you to vote in this year's

Anzapopoll. Voting forms accompany the OBO, and I'll send out electronic forms (.doc and .pdf) as email attachments. It's a very simple form this year, because I'm a very simple OBE.

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## Mailing comments

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### Mailing 291: June 2016

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#### **Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer: QUOZ 48**

##### **Claire:**

34 pages! How do you do it, Claire? I can write only 500 words an hour, even when I'm writing at white-hot speed.

As I said in a Facebook comment that received no replies, how is it that all the Americans I know are rational, well-meaning people but the nation as a whole seems to be completely nuts?

I found it very difficult to find a GP who could provide me an answer for any of the ailments that beset me from October 2014 to April 2015. I did get help when finally I was referred to a specialist after suffering two long bouts of dry cough. Your problem seems to be — *which* specialist could help you? I just hope that you feel a lot better before, during, and after your upcoming Australian trip.

There are lots of instant coffees that are much cheaper and less satisfying than Nescafé in Australia, where bottled Nescafé is quite a strong coffee. Also, I always put in two teaspoonsful. I can't afford to drink good coffee (ground beans) all the time — it's \$50 a kilo. I really cannot afford the \$100 a month I spend on good coffee from Jasper Coffee in Fitzroy, but spend it anyway.

I wish I could remember what 'cis' means, as used here. Something to look up on Google when I'm on the other computer. Or I could ask Elaine, who usually Knows Things that escape me.

You quote a great line by Le Guin: 'Since we have lost purity we might as well enjoy confusion.'

**Please, NEVER DONATE APA MAILINGS TO A LIBRARY OR ANY OTHER SEARCHABLE SOURCE. The reason we are still trading paper fanzines rather than electronic fanzines is because WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT NOBODY**

**BUT ANOTHER ANZAPA MEMBER HAS ACCESS TO ANZAPA CONTRIBUTIONS.**

I have to keep Doing Things in order to survive financially from month to month. Otherwise I could retire.

Your list of favourite classical pieces seems okay to me. But I haven't heard Reich's *Tehillim*. Maybe it's on one of the Kronos Quartet CDs I haven't played yet.

You could always ask *me* about the Best Fannish Cat Ditmar Category story — or, better still, Lucy Sussex, who was highly involved in the 1991 campaign.

The most startling aspect of my 1973–74 overseas trip was travelling directly from New York to London without having Melbourne in between. Everything in Canada and USA seemed much bigger than any equivalent in Australia when I travelled to Toronto in 1973, so everything in Britain seemed downright tiny during the last month of my trip (London and Birmingham). Things in Australia seemed (in size) exactly halfway in size between USA and Britain. I had not known that the gas guzzlers shown in American movies of the fifties and sixties were real cars, not movie props, until I hit North America. In London, it was hard to get used to the fact that most of cars on the road were Mini Minors, Mini Coopers, or Beetle VWs. I had great trouble squeezing into the front seat of Chris Priest's Mini.

I can't make any comments about Brexit, because I really don't know a lot about the debate. (The quality of international coverage in the Melbourne *Age* declines every week.) I was not surprised by the result, though, because in the previous week I had read two novels, Dave Hutchinson's *Europe at Midnight* and Iain Pears' *Arcadia*, which are based on images of an idealised ancient Britain sharply contrasted with images of a grubby, modern Europe. I suspect many people who voted for Brexit voted for an image in their minds of a Britain that never existed (or at least not for 200 years) but which was supposed to spring back into existence if Britain detaches itself from nasty old Europe.

Did anybody ask the pro-Brexiteers to whom Britain was supposed to sell stuff in future? Or who supply Britain with goods at any affordable price? Almost as soon as Britain joined the EEC, Australia unashamedly went seeking markets in Japan, Korea, Singapore, America, and now China. Now we have little need for strong trade ties with Britain.

I haven't heard about 'the pig thing'.

Of your choices list, I like Sean Tan's *The Singing Bones* (which has been released here for at least six months), Barbara Vine's *A Dark-Adapted Eye* (which might have won the Booker Award if it had not been thought of as a genre mystery); *The Dressmaker*, *Ex Machina*, and *Hail, Caesar!*

I've bought *Three Men in a Boat* after it was discussed in ANZAPA. It's always in print from Penguin.

I don't read graphic novels, so I've had to skip that part of your books discussion.

I enjoyed Kaaron Warren's *Through Splintered Walls*, with 'Sky' the standout of the four novelettes.

I enjoyed *The Three-Body Problem* up to a point; have bought *Luna: New Moon* but haven't read it yet, and haven't seen a copy of *Glorious Angels*, although Justina Robson's books used to be well distributed in Australia. Most of your other choices have not been released in Australia.

You say that *The Sparrow* was released 19 years ago! You really know how to shock a feller. It seems but yesterday when I read it.

I got through about 70 pages of Robinson's *Aurora* before giving up.

'Simple lists'? In Word, I can type in the entries, then use Sort under Tables (although Elaine tells me it has migrated elsewhere in later versions of Word) to generate an alpha order. In a spreadsheet I go crazy trying to fit items into those little boxes, which often don't want to accept longer names. The main reason for not cataloguing our incoming books under any system is that neither Elaine nor I has ever had the time to put together the basic book list. I would be more likely to generate indexes of my fanzines and scan the early issues for efanazines.com.

Thanks for the trip report. I'm almost satisfied with the notion that I will never again be able to afford to leave Australia to visit overseas fans, so I really enjoy the travel tales of people who can do so.

Thanks in particular for describing your walks beside water courses and lakes in Chicago and Seattle. This is something you can do for hours in Greensborough.

Always good to hear about Seattle, and to note that you've caught up with Randy since his brain surgery. He's doing a remarkable job of recording his current life's experiences on Facebook (and, though links, on LiveJournal).

I would have to forego all those beer halls

and craft breweries, however. I'm not supposed to imbibe more than one standard drink a day, and usually don't feel like drinking more than one cold beer over dinner when we visit restaurants.

I hadn't heard of the Tasmanian flooded flying spiders.

**Mark:**

I remember the Royal York Hotel corridors from 1973. They were full of people most of the time, but if you didn't collar the person you wanted to talk to and have that conversation, you would not see her or him for the rest of the convention. Except for Jerry Lapidus, Susan Wood, Mike Glicksohn, and Jerry Kaufman, who always seemed to be passing me while I was going the other way.

My 1970s *Commonwealth Style Manual* and *Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors* prescribe clear rules about when to use italics and when not. For instance, large pieces of art are *italicised* and smaller pieces of art and drawings are shown 'in quotes'. The main change I've noticed over the years in book publishing (as opposed to magazine and newspaper publishing) is the decreasing number of foreign phrases that need italics and the decreasing use of italics for books and film titles. I try to stick with the rules I've learned, but am not always consistent.

I like Grimwood's phrase about Stross: 'an explosion in an ideas factory'.

Yes, I want those 'unrealised print fanzines' on eFanzines.com to fulfil that function, because I know that they would be sent to me through the mail if postage rates were not prohibitive. I need to be able to print them, even if I do not do so very often.

The trouble with National \*brg\* Day would be that its date, 17 February, is much too close to a raft of other public holidays in the early part of the year: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Australia Day (26 January), Labor Day (second Monday in March), and Easter (which can be as early as late March).

Thanks for further Gillespie winner's statistics. If you publicise these figures, people will say 'All this, for someone who can't write a quarter as well as Cat Sparks?' But if Cat, Terry, Sean, Margo, or Shaun had ever ventured into fanzine publishing, they would probably have beaten me time after time in the fan writer and fanzine categories.

I'm afraid I don't check much when writing for ANZAPA, which is why whenever I show

a copy of \*brg\* to Elaine before the final version, she provides rivers of red to scour the text. I believe I've checked everything in an issue of *SF Commentary*, until Elaine takes a look at a few pages of 'I Must Be Talking to My Friends'.

The worst of the 1975 Hugos Banquet presentation is that David Grigg confided to me some time later that *SF Commentary* lost by only a few votes to Dick Geis's *Alien Critic*. When I told Elaine, she said that she and the people with whom she was sharing a flat in July/August 1975 did not receive their Hugo ballot forms, although they were paid-up members of Aussiecon. If they had received their ballots, they would have voted for me, and I might have won. It would be nice to have at least one Hugo Award to add to the trophy cupboard, but now that will never happen (unless, of course, I suddenly develop a Cary Grant voice and begin making my own podcasts).

Erica Lacey is now a fully qualified nurse and is working in Darwin or somewhere far north. She's on Facebook, as 'Erika Lacey'.

If I had my fanzines catalogued and stored properly, I could answer your questions about *Tomorrow And ...* 8 and 9. I do remember that it was very difficult to keep together the bits of these issues because of the differing shapes of the two parts of each fanzine.

I still have the Jack Finney collection *About Time* under its British title *I Love Galesburg in the Springtime* (Pan Books, 1965). It's one of the earliest books I bought after beginning to receive a studentship income in 1965 ... and I still haven't read it, although I love *Time and Again* and (less so) *From Time to Time*.

The main reason I resist change is that nobody (except Roman Orszanski and Murray MacLachlan) ever offers to explain what has changed, and how I might be part of it. In the old days (15-20 years ago) Dick Jenssen would visit our place and set up new programs and explain them to us. It's much more difficult for him now he is confined to his unit most of the time because of hip pain. So most of the devices I see in JB Hi Fi mean nothing to me. The fresh-faced youngsters who provide the staff at JB are unlikely to be able to imagine the ways in which I don't understand the functions of these devices. There seems to be no neighbourhood organisation where I can ask, 'What hardware and software are you using now? Which do I need to use in future?'

I received most of the early Alastair

Reynolds novels as review copies from Gollancz in Britain, but that service has now ceased. I found the novels very unsatisfactory, so handed quite a few of them to Merv and Helena Binns, who love Reynolds' work. I still own a couple of his books of short fiction.

Thanks for your tribute to Dave Hartwell. I've been waiting for someone to send me a thorough discussion of Hartwell's career and his influence on SF, but I haven't received one yet.

We heard a great version of the *1812 Overture* the other day on 3MBS, but I failed to write down the name of the conductor or orchestra. It did remind us that it is still enjoyable if some orchestra takes the trouble to play it with enthusiasm.

## **Diane and John Fox: RHUBARB 61**

### **John:**

I hope you didn't have as much trouble changing to Telstra as we did. We did not choose to do so. Telstra bought Pacific Internet (Pacnet), so we have to change to broadband.

We were offered a one-price scheme that included our home telephone service and internet to both our computers. There was no talk of a free TV or T-Gateway, whatever that is. The changeover process involved Elaine in about 14 hours of phone conversations with various techos from Telstra who were as puzzled by the lunacies of Telstra set-ups as we were. The entire process took three months.

I like the art-pieces you've created with Derwent coloured pencils. I had no idea Derwent pencils were still manufactured until I read somebody's Facebook post.

I hadn't heard the song 'The Truth Walks Slowly' or even heard of it, but that's because Victoria's recent Coalition and Labor Governments had banned fracking from Victoria. Thanks for the warning of the battles we in Victoria probably still have to fight.

### **Diane:**

Thanks for the last episode of your Never-ending American Trip and the photos. I realise I have never travelled anywhere near the height you reached during that bus trip, so probably would suffer similar physical pain.

Thanks for the description of Denver, even if tracking down antibiotics was your main item of business.

Thanks for the mention of a collection of Piranesi's *Prints*. If we had any room on the shelves left for art books, that's a book I would like to have.

You provide a good list of 'books about books' and 'essays and reviews'. I hadn't heard of most of them, but I have heard of Joe Queenan. I own a selection of his books released up to 20 years ago, but his books no longer receive reviews or release in Australia. I must hunt up *One for the Books*.

I'm pretty sure I did read a review of Margaret Atwood's *Negotiating with the Dead*, and might have bought a copy if I'd seen it on a shelf. Her essays are not as interesting as her novels. I own a copy (still unread) of *The Heart Goes Last*.

I've seen nothing in the press about the Karen Lindskoog book. Any material about C. S. Lewis's life still seems to attract sensational magazine articles.

I like the idea of a Haiku Harvest. I haven't seen the Beilenson collections.

It seems very strange to be reading here comments on **Treasures 2** and **3**. They did appear much too long long ago. I am sure the contributors to *Treasure*, such as Robyn, John, and William, would appreciate your comments. Can I run them in the letter column for **Treasure 4** (whenever it might appear)?

I cannot see the wisdom of continuing with comments on a mailing that appeared some years ago. Why not give up on the intervening issues and begin your next mailing comments column with 292?

### **Leanne Frahm:**

## **THE VICTORIAN CHRONICLES 1**

Leanne, it's wonderful to have you back in ANZAPA after all these years. I had heard very small bits of the epic story of your migration from Slade Point, Queensland, to Altona, Melbourne, so it's great to have the whole story here before us.

Thanks, in particular, for telling us about Kerry's last days. All I had heard from Sally was that Kerry had died. I did know that you have retired from pro and fan writing to help Kerry with his business, but I did not realise that you would still have to keep the business going even during Kerry's health crisis. I would have thought clients would be *more*

helpful and would pay *more* quickly once they knew your difficulties. At least you had the Leukaemia Foundation on your side.

Thanks also for the story of how you discovered Altona through Jen. Because we don't drive, we rarely visit Altona, although we realise that the train trip there is probably shorter than the trip north to Greensborough. Congratulations on being a 'damn the torpedoes!' kind of woman.

If Gary is chained to the idea of an apazine with lots of colour illustrations, he is chained to a hard master. If he simply sent his file through to Copy Place, they would charge a fortune for the colour pages, but they would print the 26 copies of *Hard Disk* in no time. If he returned to black-and-white printing, such as I use for *\*brg\**, he could have his fanzine printed by Copy Place very quickly for a reasonable amount. But no! he has taken on the task of publishing a fanzine that takes (on my count) 26 hours to print.

I suspect it was John Foyster who did all the cruel throwing out of members in 1980, not Gary.

### Michael Green: ABSTRACTIONS 15

Michael, you're never going to produce any creative writing if you pursue the fabulous travelling lifestyle portrayed in every issue of *Abstractions*. Or if you spend much of your spare time watching films and TV programs. Real writers (of which I am not one) spend most of their spare time writing. Indeed, many real writers say that writing is more like a drug than an occupation — it's an activity they can't do without. (I also don't fit that category. I write when I have something to say and when I have some idea of who is reading me.) In other words, the writing life is not a sane, balanced lifestyle; but it *is* a way of life.

At some point in my school life, I learnt that Wonthaggi Mine was important in its day because it produced black coal, which burns easily, compared with that soggy brown stuff that's still dug up in the Latrobe Valley. I've travelled through Wonthaggi only once in my life, when I was a child or early teenager, during a family journey to visit friends in the Latrobe Valley, and we certainly didn't have time to visit the old mine.

We've had a bat (or maybe a family of bats) in a nearby tree for several months. They enjoy squeaking away to each other at night, sometimes until 2 a.m. Thanks for your

account of Robert Bender's talk.

I had never heard of a 1954 TV version of *Sherlock Holmes*. Thanks to Dick Jenssen, I've been able to watch all episodes of the later British series starring Jeremy Brett.

I trust you will be able to return the black-and-white cat to its real owner. If it has a collar, it has probably been microchipped. Our Harry was returned to us from Werribee only because one of the people he stole food from had the sense to take him to a vet, who read his microchip.

Glad you caught up with Robert Sheckley's *Mindswap*. Sheckley is often mentioned as a major influence on Douglas Adams when he wrote the original *Hitchhikers' Guide* radio series. Sheckley's best work comes out of a period that also produced the best short stories of Philip K. Dick, Damon Knight, and quite a few others.

I must go back to early Roger Zelazny, since it seems he was at the height of his powers in the early sixties, then slipped down a slope into comfortable mediocrity by the early 1970s. 'A Rose for Ecclesiastes' was my favourite SF story in the year I read it first (1963? 1964?).

I can't see how climate change can be reversed without vast efforts being made by governments — the same governments that support all the processes that led to climate change in the first place. Still, if China changes to renewable energy sources, that could change the minds of many other governments.

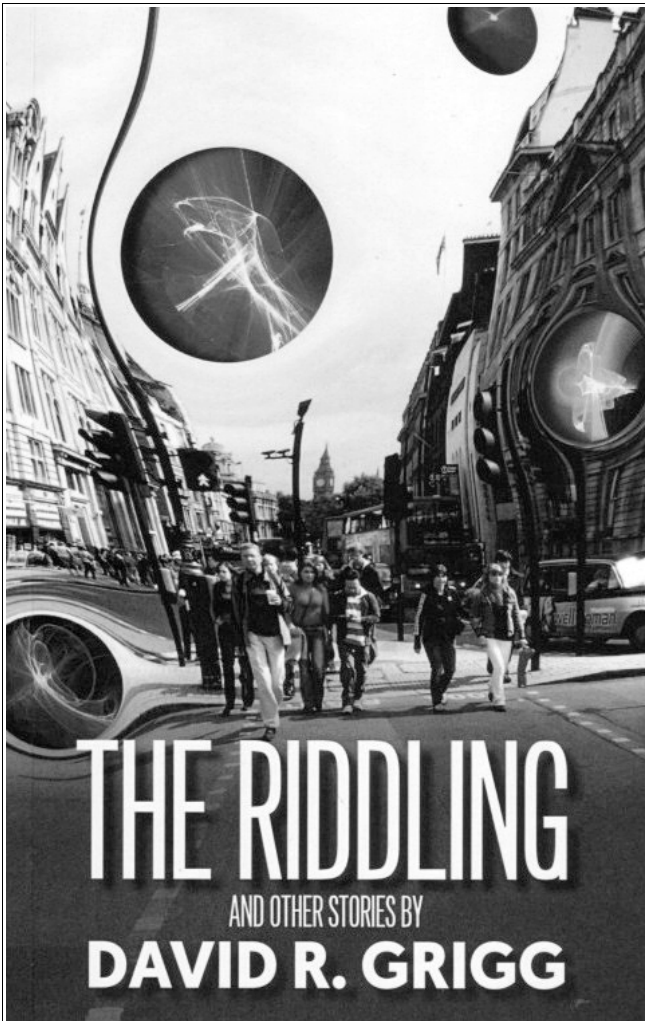
I hadn't heard of Robin Klein's medical condition. At one time, she was the most publicised children's/YA author in the world.

### David Grigg: THE FRETFUL PORPENTINE 9

Your family history of your bigamist ancestor makes a fascinating tale, David, but I cannot imagine doing the research myself, or even knowing where to start. My Auntie Bet did a lot of research on the Gillespie side of the family way back well before there was any way of working with a home computer. I'm pretty sure her family tree, written as a wall chart, is in the house somewhere, but I just don't know where.

Thanks for the review of *The Lunar Men* by Jenny Uglow. Sounds like my sort of book.

Of your movies list, I haven't seen any but *Inside Out*. I still have no idea to access Netflix in such a way that I could run movies



from it on my 40-inch plasma screen.

And, of course, I have no apps, because I don't have a mobile device on which to play them, but since they are programs, I wonder whether they can play on the Windows 7 computer?

People dependent on the age pension in Australia *do* starve if they are forced to live in private rental accommodation. I've just compiled the index for a book that shows that of the three categories of people living on the age pension, only those people who own their own houses are surviving well on the pension. People who live in good-quality public housing (of which there is still quite a bit, despite recent efforts to sell off public housing estates) can survive okay, but almost every single pensioner who is living in private rental accommodation is living below the poverty line, and many are eating almost nothing at the end of the fortnight because most of their pension is swallowed up by rent. I'm not sure when the book will appear, but I hope my contact at the publisher will send me a copy. I'll review it at length when

it appears.

Much sympathy with your back and teeth problems. Three years ago I endured just one root canal job, but that cost \$1500 then, a high proportion of my available income at the time. I can understand travelling to Benteigh to see a favourite dentist. I still see my dentist in Plenty Road, Preston East, because I began seeing him way back in the mid 1970s when he took over the practice from his mentor. However, mine is a much shorter trip: bus along Grimshaw Street, then half an hour south along Plenty Road.

I've written a lot about my back troubles of nearly two years ago. I can only suggest finding a very good physiotherapist, one who will do deep massage, perhaps some manipulation if needed, and can recommend helpful exercises. If you slog along alone, the same problems will recur.

Let me know about *Antares* when it appears. And thanks very much for the copy of *The Riddling and Other Stories*, your latest anthology. Very enjoyable, especially the longer stories, 'The Riddling', 'The Golden City', 'On the Cold Hill Side' (my favourite in the book), 'Demonslayer', and 'We, the Dead'. (I've written already that I think your strength is long stories, which is why I'm waiting to read your new novel.)

Sorry to miss the Star Chorale's *Opera Spectacular!*, but without car transport to Monash, there was never much chance of seeing your production at the Robert Blackwood Hall.

I must admit I have no interest in seeing what happened next in the *Dan Dare* comic. Now, if only you'd dug up a *Brick Bradford* story from the 1950s ...

### **Jack Herman: NECESSITY 130: ... AND THE FALL KILLED HIM**

Your title — a reference to yet another movie I haven't seen.

I thought Bill Shorten was doing his best to communicate his policies, but the media were determined not to listen to him. Almost every newspaper story seemed designed to re-elect Turnbull, and I assume that commercial TV news bulletins did the same.

And American politics still seems appalling, despite Hilary gaining some traction because of [name redacted]'s propensity for shooting himself in the foot. (It's a wonder he can still walk.)

Thanks for the stories about your father. No wonder you ended up in newspapers (albeit the Press Council) at the end of your working career.

*Boketto* — great name for a fanzine. I do a lot of *bokettoing*, especially when going for walks around Greensborough.

Thanks for the term 'zemblanity'. If I wrote novels, I could write a whole novel inspired by that title.

Thanks for the information about Katherine Johnson. I hadn't heard of her, but hope that I can see the biopic when it is released.

Guy Hamilton was a lot better than a 'journeyman film-maker' if he had the right script to play with. He directed one or two of the pre-*Suchet Poirot* movies, distinguished by their sense of humour as well as the excellence of their photography.

When Judith and Joseph said they had been staying with her mother in Albany, I assumed that her mother lived in the old family home.

I find great difficulty in remembering one detective novel compared with another, although I do enjoy particular authors. Only Agatha Christie could (occasionally) produce situations and solutions so ingenious that I can remember them years later. Everybody says that Agatha Christie novels have nothing to do with reality, but if you read her biography you find that they reflect accurately the world in which she grew up.

The British series of *House of Cards* had the elegance (and the story-line) of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, complete with a very powerful Lady Macbeth character. I gave up on the American series after two episodes: there seemed no pattern to the action, other than the slow ascent of Underwood and his very powerful wife.

To me, all fanzines comprise part of the whole fan history, so I would not want any of them destroyed. However, there has been nowhere to send them until the Monash University Rare Books Collection began to collect fanzines over a year ago. Since then, the entire Melbourne SF Club library of fanzines (other than apazines) has been donated to the Collection, with the promise that they will be archived promptly, and eventually digitised. I haven't checked the Collection's website to see if Dr Stephen Herrin has posted news of progress in archiving and digitising.

Thanks for your summary of the rocky world politics situation in 1979. Now we'd appreciate it if you take a guess at which

current world problems will get worse, and which will gradually solve themselves. Hold high the glass half empty!

Yes, I've always been grateful for various doses of grammar in school. We had plenty at primary school (especially Grade 6, 1958), then a rather light dusting of it through early secondary school. Our Form 4 (Year 10) English teacher was definitely of the old school (some very old school). She was so disgusted by our collective ignorance of grammar that she taught it, with great vigour, for the whole year. We groaned, we moaned, but we learned a lot of grammar. Meanwhile, I had picked up an interest in grammar from the fitful education in French I received from Forms 1 to 4 (Years 7 to 10). When I reached Bacchus Marsh High School (Form 5 = Year 11), our French teacher was so shocked at our lack of knowledge of French grammar that she taught it with great vigour. The double view — French grammar bringing into clear perspective much in English grammar — was very helpful. I passed Leaving French okay (Form 5), but had great difficulty with Form 6 (= Year 12 = Matriculation) French. Officially the two of us (in a Matric. class of 12) were taking lessons sent from the Correspondence School, but our teacher from the year before sacrificed several periods a week, enabling me to pass Form 6 French.

Elaine used to spread out Norstrilia Press books on the kitchen table, and paste down galleys, folios, and corrections, using milliner's glue. I did the same for the early issues of my fanzines that were typeset on the IBM Composer.

Thanks for recommending *Eye in the Sky*. The reviews in the Melbourne press made it difficult for me to decide whether I would enjoy watching it or not. It's just been released on Blu-ray/DVD.

I haven't seen the second *Huntsman* movie as I didn't like the first one much. Like you, I enjoyed *Mirror Mirror* a great deal. Must watch it again soon.

I'd forgotten about the new version of *The Jungle Book*. Thanks for the reminder. It sounded interesting, but not so interesting as to lure me into a cinema. It will be released on DVD in late August.

Murray MacLachlan, our ANZAPAn with a New Zealand view of things, recommended highly *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*. He tells me that it is full of delicious NZ in-jokes that will not be apparent to mere Australian viewers.

One of the radio critics I listen to hated *The*

*Nice Guys* with extreme prejudice, but other reviewers thought it was okay. Not one to seek out, perhaps, but one to keep in mind if somebody drops it in my lap.

I hated *Now You See Me*, which by its end made no sense, so I had no reason to see the second movie.

I gave away my copy of *Sherlock Holmes: The Abominable Bride*. It hardly seemed to be made by the same team that made the other episodes of *Sherlock Holmes*.

### **Eric Lindsay: KINGDOM OF THE BLAND**

I'm not finding a lot of comment hooks this time, since I have almost no knowledge of electronic gadgets, but I do like your: 'If General Motors bring their electric Bolt out in Australia, it will probably get called the Andrew, and be rather like an Edsel.' So Queenslanders have to endure Boltish ravings as well as Victorians?

### **Jean Weber: JEANZINE 2016-3**

Thanks for the colour versions of at least two photos I used (black-and-white only) on the OBO cover. A pity you had to ruin your page 1 with a photo of me. Thanks for the Contact photos. I did not get to meet Jukka Halme during his three days in Melbourne.

Much as I dislike the idea of touring on cruise ships, I think I could get used to the *Lindblad National Geographic Explorer* fairly quickly. It's very unlikely I will ever travel on such a ship, of course.

### **LynC: FROM THE LAIR OF THE LYNX 92**

So Estelle did apply for the Chisholm College position at Latrobe, and has successfully taken up residence and begun her studies there. Congratulations to you both.

Thanks for the Callie photos. It's awhile since we've had a hyperdrive cat at our place. (Monty, when he was a kitten.)

I love those photos of the Mothers Day Classic 2016 — typical Melbourne this winter ... brilliant sunshine one minute (with freezing wind), and 'scattered showers' the next. It's remarkable that 26,000 people turned up on the day.

I hadn't heard of Premier's Active April. I wonder if the local Watermarc Swimming Pool was part of this? I wouldn't be much good at any of these events. It would be great if I could go swimming, but the chlorine in

the average suburban public pool hits me in the sinuses and makes it impossible for me to swim anywhere but in the sea.

I've never had the courage to join a gym — I couldn't bear to expose my physical inadequacies in such a public way.

I can't make comments on your reading list this time, as I have read none of those authors.

Yet another recommendation (to add to Jack's) for the new *Jungle Book*.

I had no idea that Smarties were still being made. I haven't tasted one since I was a teenager.

I thought I had read all of Enid Blyton's books before the age of 12, but I've never heard of the *Bom* books.

All the political parties still talk about 'caretaker mode', but over the last 20 years there seem to have been many breaches of caretaker mode. I get the impression that these days, as soon as the election is announced various sections of the public service are prodded into action to help save the incumbent government.

*Spy* did get good reviews, didn't it? I assume it's sitting around somewhere on a shelf at JB Hi Fi.

Satalyte seems to have done far too much, far too quickly, and without the blanket publicity throughout the SF community that would have ensured maximum sales. The only Satalyte titles I've even heard of are yours and Jack Dann's.

I was lucky in that most of R. A. Lafferty's best short stories were appearing in the SF magazines when I was reading them regularly, i.e. between 1960 and the early 1970s, and then some late brilliant stories appeared in the original fiction anthologies (which I kept buying long after I had stopped buying the magazines). A few writers shine in my memory of magazine reading of the sixties: Lafferty, Cordwainer Smith, Robert Sheckley, early Thomas Disch, John Brunner, J. G. Ballard, Brian Aldiss, and a few others.

The only time we took a look at cat insurance, in the 1980s, we found that it applied only to young cats and cats that had not already suffered any one of a number of conditions.

Yes, I remember when there were lots of copies of *Little Red Schoolbook* around. But I did not read it.



## Murray MacLachlan: IT CLOGS MY JETS

If only Bill Wright were still in ANZAPA. He would thrill to every deathless line of dialogue that you quote from E. E. Smith. Not that I've ever read an E. E. Smith novel, but I know that name Kimbill Kinnison, and of course know about the dreaded said-bookisms that made 'Doc' Smith famous. To dig out these quotes, Murray, you exhibit powers of gritted-teeth endurance beyond the range of mortal fans.

To exchange emails with Elaine, particularly when she's talking about her favourite subjects (such as garden plants), is a delightful experience. She discovered her ability at written repartee when she was editing at Oxford University Press in the 1980s. When she received an inter-office memo that had been passed to every office in the building, she would add her undisguised opinions on the subject being discussed. A colleague once told me that you could hear the trail of laughter around the building as each office received the memo after Elaine had written her comments.

Bob McCubbin, founder member of the Melbourne SF Club, but considerably older than the other founder members (most of whom are now 80 or older), was, I believe, a book-binder by trade. Not only did he put his own covers on the books on his own collection, but he did similar damage to many books in other MSFC members' collections. McCubbin's covered books may be considered useless to people who regard themselves as genuine book collectors, but they did last.

## Gary Mason: CRASH OF THE HARD DISK 24

Wot! No Big Cat?

I would really enjoy traipsing around that area of South Australia, all the way back along the coast to Geelong, but not being able to drive, I guess it will never happen. I did visit Mount Gambier once — in 1954, when I was seven, during our family return trip after a fortnight's holiday in Adelaide.

We passed through Naracoorte during our trip to Adelaide the same year, and stayed with friends of my parents overnight on a farm near Frances, south of Naracoorte.

The reviewers sounded so disappointed by Spectre that I didn't bother buying the Blu-ray.

I would have thought the high-brow view-

ing (compared with a James Bond film) would have been *Bambi* and *Peter Pan* — both considered peaks of Disney animation at the studio's peak period. I have Blu-rays of both of them.

When household machines stop working, usually they stop working in threes. But you had already suffered the double misfortune of two parking tickets, so maybe they count as two of the three disasters.

I have still never been to an AFL match, and have no intention of ever doing so.

You've printed that photo of Stokes, Brown, Edmonds, and Orszanski too small for me to be able to work out who the fifth person is.

Your predictions about the election results were correct. Congratulations. Turnbull with a one-seat majority, and with little authority now that the Senate composition has been declared. Shorten as conquering hero, for bringing the ALP so close to a hung parliament or even minority government. (It wouldn't have happened, of course, because Katter always was going to be the Independent who would keep Turnbull in power.)

I must remember to photocopy the pages from the Post Charges booklet that I picked up from my local Australia Post shop when charges skyrocketed on 4 January. To answer your question — four 500 g packets = 4 by 6 by \$2.75 stamps = \$43.00. Now you can see why I always break up ANZAPA mailings into sub-500 g packets, for both Australian and overseas mail delivery. I have no idea why the Australia Post staff could not have looked up their own rate cards and told you the same thing.

So the *Scrooge McDuck* panel you show here is from 'Lost in the Andes' and not 'Seven Cities of Cibola' (my favourite comic read during my childhood)?

I still hope that you might make a flying trip to Melbourne that involves a restaurant meal with ANZAPAN and other fannish friends.

Thanks for yet another letter from Alison Carriage. I'll send her the latest *SFC*, and have also winkled out the issue of *SFC*, No. 82, that included tributes from me and other people to John Brosnan after he died in 2002.

## Jeanne Mealy: LAND OF 10,000 LOONS

I hadn't realised that you had been left to do the job of Working Official Editor of Stipple-

Apa. I'm surprised you've stayed with ANZAPA all these years, given the amount of work involved in staying with one apa, let alone two.

Thanks for the short report on Minicon. It was one of my fannish ambitions to get to a Minicon, but obviously that will now never happen. Give my best wishes to people I know from the Twin Cities area.

Yes, you do need a fully professional and reliable petsitter service when you go away from the house. We were lucky in our choice of petsitter when we used to go away during the 1980s, but we haven't been away together since 1991.

It must be great having a \$2 theatre for catching up on films. The closest we have in the Melbourne area is the Nova Cinema in Carlton (just 2 km from the city centre), which offers \$7 tickets on Mondays. I see very few films at the cinema, but I do try to turn up at the Nova on Mondays. So does everybody else — the queues can be very long.

I don't think my father was ever more upset than when, many many years ago, on a country road a dog ran out under our car and was killed. There was nothing we could do, and all my dad could do was to try to comfort the family of the dog. These days, almost all dogs I see around our suburb walk on leashes.

### **John Newman: LIFE ON EARTH**

Doesn't the Malcon Walking Tour have a good old-fashioned weblink as well? Those funny little patterns, such as the one in the bottom left-hand corner of page 1, mean nothing to me.

When I was a kid, I was told that no human would travel into space until at least the year 2000 — the year in which I would turn 53. I wouldn't be going. Then things speeded up, so that the most exciting space events of my life were the release of *2001: A Space Odyssey* in 1968 and the real moon walk in 1969. Then things slowed down. When I saw *Star Wars*, it was 1977 and I was 30 years old. Yes, it was an exciting piece of cinema, but it seemed to have nothing to do with any real prospects for space exploration. I didn't contain any original SF ideas, only rehashes of ideas that had become familiar to me during the early 1960s. The real importance of *Star Wars* was in speeding up the action in Hollywood blockbusters, leading to the cur-

rent situation where events whizz by so quickly it's impossible to tell what is happening. Fortunately, every year I find one or two films that really are SF films — usually films set on Earth rather than in space, featuring a small number of characters and not many special effects, but including some interesting ideas. *Midnight Special* is my current favourite SF film seen during 2016.

I haven't seen *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* yet. None of the reviews has made it sound interesting, because they all say it's just a retread of the first *Star Wars* movie.

My sister and her partner report from Guildford that the very recent rains did provide a lot of necessary new moisture. The Loddon River had been dry, but is now running well again. But I suspect we will have an early spring and the countryside will dry out again by summer.

It sounds as if Magic has fully developed catty instincts and methods. Elaine has to put up with Sampson leaping on her back every now and again and wrapping his paws around her neck. She would much rather get on with her work. Harry lives in my half of the house, but all he does to interrupt me is to ask to be allowed out the back door.

### **Roman Orszanski: SPARROWGRASS & BATTLE-TWIGS 43**

Melbourne does not seem to have had any recent conferences or one-day events similar to the *Beyond Energy Superpower* panel. Or perhaps such events are now not reported by the *Age*, no longer a centre of thoughtful comment.

Thanks for a report on Continuum 12, the convention I attended for only two hours, half of it in the dealers' room and the other half at the opening ceremony/chatting with people. There was little on the program that interested me, I couldn't afford the convention anyway, so I attended only the cheap first night. However, I did discover later that Continuum probably has faced severe financial problems because it had to compete with Comicon on the same weekend. So far I've received no firm news about Continuum 13/Natcon.

Thanks for printing your Critical Mass talk. If only more of them could be published. If only some Nova Mob talks could be published. However, everybody in Australia who claims to want to discuss SF has become very slack about writing their talks or offering

them for publication.

I had never heard of James Corey or *Leviathan Wakes* until you published this talk. But my heart sank as I read your sentence 'The setting for the whole series started as an idea by Franck for a massively multiplayer online role-playing game'. I'm allergic to games, as you know.

To judge from your quotations, the style seems fairly repellent, but the style of (say) Weir's *The Martian* might seem off-putting to the casual reader, but is appropriate to the story being told. I do have a house full of books still unread, so I probably won't buy or read *Leviathan Wakes*.

**Cath Ortlieb:**

**YOU REALLY KNOW YOU'RE HOME WHEN YOU FIND A WOMBAT IN YOUR BED 164**

I can't quite see the point of continuing your notes about Continuum 11 now that Continuum 12 has happened, and Continuum 13 is coming up in 2017. However, except for Michael Green nobody has reported in detail an Australian convention for many years, so your notes on Continuum 12 will be quite valuable when collected.

I'd prefer to read about the continuing adventures of Cath, Natalie, and the Ortliebs.

I'll take a look at *Cleverman* when it appears on DVD. The reviewers like it very much.

**Lucy Schmeidler: OZ SF FAN**

Alan Stewart hopes to be able to hand you your August ANZAPA mailing at the Worldcon. Not sure yet whether this will happen.

I must admit I don't know what a 'seder' is. A consultation job for Google (or the *Oxford English Dictionary*)?

Our Theodore (who died in 2002) was a dumped tiny kitten who strode into our house and decided that we were his people. It helped that fluffy Oscar fell in love with him at first sight, and they were friends until they died within a few months of each other.

To me, all fanzines are part of the grand pageant of fannish history. But I don't find things interesting unless they have a history — a pattern, a story, posterity.

I must dig out my file of *Eidolon* to read your articles. Thanks for reminding me of them.

Yes, our Sampson is very happy with his

current home, and has no desire to go out the front door. I'm not sure whether he would explore the back garden if he were allowed to. He and Harry are constrained by the cat enclosure, which gives both of them a section of garden without any possibility that they can go hunting birds.

When I arrived at Corflu in 2005, the first person I met was Robin Johnson, who had decided to attend on two days' notice. A week later, when I came in the door to Potlatch, the first people I met were Eric and Jean. Once you rarely met Australians at American conventions; now you can't avoid us.

**Gerald Smith: THE EROTIC WOMBAT 1**

'Erotic wombat'? Is that Karen's pet name for you?

You couldn't get a greater contrast between two ex-Olympic Villages: that of Melbourne (1956 Olympics) compared with that of Sydney (2000 Olympics). You say that Newington is 16 km from the centre of Sydney, and began life as an Olympic Village for the 2000 Games. Greensborough is 17 km from the centre of Melbourne, but it tells you a lot about suburban spread that it was *not* where the Olympic Village was built for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games.

Instead, the village was built at West Heidelberg, about 5 km closer to the city. It's not clear why housing that was considered acceptable by world-class athletes became, within a few years, a slum — the home of a distinctive community of poor people. Were the West Heidelberg houses sold to landlords who charged only cheap rents? Or were they sold so cheaply that even relatively 'poor' Australians were able to buy residences that would be unaffordable elsewhere? Either way, West Heidelberg quickly became a byword for poverty and crime. The area has since been renamed Heidelberg Heights.

And Newington has remained a 'pretty darn nice place to live'.

You raise a great point about the contradictions we Australians find in the USA from day to day. How can a country that can imagine a Presidency such as that presented in *West Wing* fall so low as to imagine someone like Trump in the White House? America has a deep well of intelligence that is being simply shucked aside at the moment, revealing rivers of madness and stupidity.

For the Blu-ray edition, *Five Million Years to Earth* returned to its original title *Quarter-*

*mass and the Pit*. The colour photography, fully restored, is magnificent. I didn't know that a movie had ever been made out of *The Quatermass Experiment* (as *The Creeping Unknown*). Now to track it down.

The only reason I haven't read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* from cover to cover is that Elaine's edition is a three-volume late nineteenth-century or early twentieth-century edition in very small typeface. And the many many footnotes are typeset in an even smaller typeface. Elaine, who has read it cover to cover, reports that it much of the wittiest writing in the English language.

### **Spike: THE UNFORTUNATE RHINOS**

Let me correct you on one item of fannish history: whenever the Hugo Losers' Party began, it was certainly before 1976. I attended the Hugo Losers' Party in 1973 at Torcon, since I had just lost the Best Fanzine Hugo to *Energumen*, but it was understood, even then, that the Hugo winners were allowed to attend as a gesture of fannish niceness from the losers. Joe Haldeman, who had just won his first Hugo for 'Hero' (the seed novella of *The Forever War*) was the star of the party.

It seemed to me in Melbourne, watching her career, that during the seventies Susan Wood was primarily an academic, first of all in Regina, Saskatchewan, and then in Vancouver. Her fannish achievements were many, but fandom was not her main way of life. It occurs to me that for a continuing (post-MidAmericon) Susan Wood Project, many of her academic colleagues could be approached for material. Perhaps they have been.

We haven't had wildlife problems as spectacular as yours during our years at Collingwood or here at Greensborough. The only wildlife who really disturbed the cats inside the enclosure were one or two cat intruders who, at various times, have hopped over the fence and *looked* at ours through the wire.

Harry particularly hated Victor, who visited from a block over the back. Victor looked almost exactly like Harry when we arrived here, but Victor stayed slim and athletic, while Harry advanced to various degrees of plumpness. Elaine met Victor's person, and they talked in the street from time to time. A few days ago Elaine heard that Victor had died a few months ago. Not really from old age, since he was only the same age as Harry. He just got thinner and thinner and died.

I've stumps me, too. I cannot remember the link I made between Claire and Bachman Turner Overdrive.

Janis Ian's Toastmaster song is very good, isn't it? I suspect it hasn't appeared on any of her CDs. It would have been great to hear her sing it in person.

### **Sally Yeoland: LES CHATTES PARTIES 144**

Thanks very much for printing Nigel Rowe's presentation speech to John for his Lifetime Achievement Award. I hadn't seen a copy of it elsewhere. It's interesting that more than 30 years since John last wrote an SF-audience fanzine, he is still probably the best-known Australian fan. My run of *Australian SF Review* (first series) is my second most valuable printed possession after the run of my own fanzines. Faced with disaster I would probably grab it first. If lost, it would be impossible to replace, whereas I know of a few fans around the world who have fairly complete runs of *SFC*, *Metaphysical Review*, and *Steam Engine Time*.

Thanks for your summary of the battle with your manager at SIO. We read about the struggle in episodes in ANZAPA, as I recall, so it's interesting to have here the capsule version.

Whenever I laugh immoderately while looking at emails and the net, Elaine knows that I have come across yet another cat video or kitten video.

— **Bruce Gillespie, 4 August 2016**