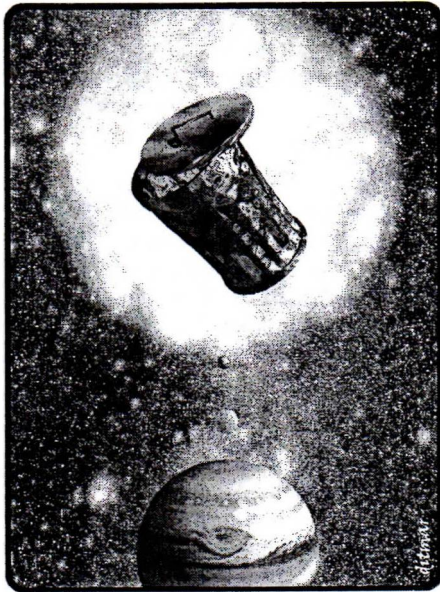


Out of the Bin



'Space Bin' Artwork by Ditmar

Issue #17 October 2003

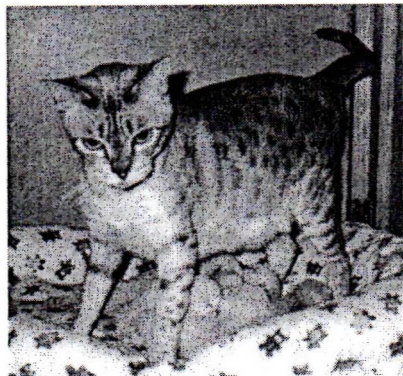
A Newsletter from MERV BINNS
(edited and produced by Helena Binns)
PO Box 315, Carnegie 3163, Victoria, Australia

Phone: (03) 9502 8818
e-mail: merubinns@oplusnet.com.au

Dear Readers,

October has been an eventful month for us, with some enjoyable experiences and others we could have done without, such as being struck down by a mystery illness.

Early in October I helped old friend John Straede to move some furniture out of a house he vacated not far from us in Carnegie, down to his and his wife Truda's property (and cattery) in Bunyip, in the country about 100km from Melbourne, in the Gippsland area of Victoria. An hour's drive by freeway most of the way. Truda is a multi-award winning cat breeder who has created a unique new breed – The Australian Mist, which has been featured on Burke's Backyard and other TV shows. Since we both appreciate cats, it was a pleasure for us to see so many beautiful examples of the Australian Mist and other breeds.



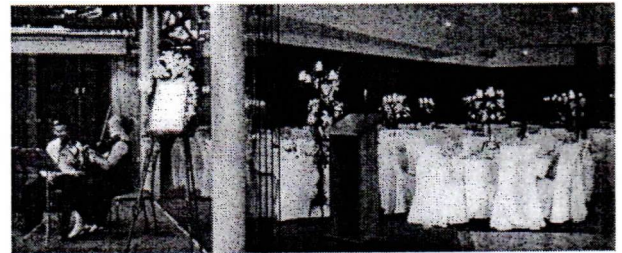
In the 'maternity ward' at Truda's cattery, an Australian Mist mother cat with her litter of new-born kittens

John, Dick Jenssen and Helena and I have been regularly sharing some meals together over the last year or so, but alas it will not be happening so much in the future. However we still see a lot of Dick who lives in the same street as us and we will be spending a little time with John and Truda at Bunyip about once a month.



The wedding party by the edge of the lake and on the steps of the reception centre in the Botanic Gardens

On October the 18th we went to the wedding of the younger daughter of one of my first cousins. The wedding was held in a very traditional old style bluestone church, St John's in Toorak Road, with a high spire and a classic interior of columns and the high vault supported by redwood beams. It was a nice service, the bride and groom and attendants all looked great.



A violin duo set the scene for the wedding reception, playing Mozart as the guests enjoyed the view of the Botanic gardens and the lake at sunset. Later in the evening as things became a bit less formal, a rather noisy rock band played popular tunes for the guests to dance to.

Then we went to the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, where the celebrations were being held in the restaurant come reception centre there. A very nice setting at the side of the lake with the ducks and swans swimming around and if you looked into the water you could see the large eels swimming about. I even danced with Helena (the dance floor opened out onto the terrace with its view of the gardens and lake) and we enjoyed the night.

The next day Sunday, at home we spent the time relaxing from the night before, but we both woke about 5AM on the Monday morning feeling very ill. We then spent one of the worst days either of us had experienced, running to the toilet, vomiting and generally feeling bloody awful. And apparently nearly everybody else who attended the reception, including the bride and groom were also very ill (and they had to postpone taking off for their honeymoon). We still do not know what the cause was. It was suspected to be food poisoning at first, but now it seems that one of the guests who was ill at the reception may have passed on a highly contagious viral infection to the rest of us. Tests are being conducted and as government regulations now require all caterers to retain samples of the food served at such functions, we will eventually discover the cause one way or the other. It is very disappointing that something like this should happen at what should be a very happy time. We are both still suffering from the lingering after-effects, which have left us feeling queasy for a few weeks afterwards.

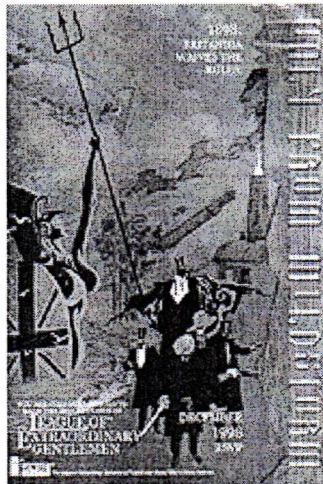


POLLY the cat, smug on a sheep-skin rug

A fortnight after the wedding, we had another visit with John and Truda Straede at Bunyip, this time spending the weekend with them. We had thought that we were both almost over the mystery illness, but Helena woke with a bad migraine on the Saturday morning and had it and the accompanying nausea right through until Monday evening, so we probably should have waited a little longer before venturing forth. Nevertheless, Truda and John are terrific hosts, and really looked after us. We were impressed to see how efficiently they look after all the cats, too, especially at feeding time, with each animal getting an individual variety of foods for its special needs. Amongst the cats in all directions a 'blue' (grey) Australian Mist named Polly, who reminded me of my late tabby Susie, took a liking to me and spent a purring time on my lap.

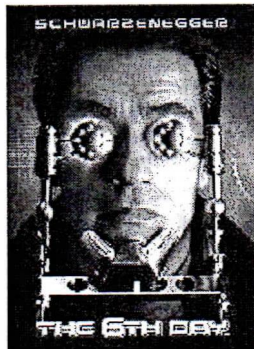
MOVIES

We read the reviews of *THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN*, which were not very complimentary, but having seen the trailer at the theatre I wanted to see it at any rate, so I dragged Helena along with her insisting it would be a waste of time. Well she was right although I did



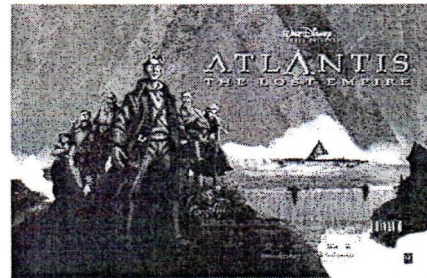
appreciate the special effects and scenery, though that certainly should not be the be all and end all of a movie. A more than silly plot as accentuated by ridiculous events taking place with no sense of suspended disbelief possible. I expect more from Sean Connery at least, who acts in the movie and produced it. Visually it does have its moments but it just grated with things like an Indian Captain Nemo wearing an improbable uniform and captaining an enormous, ridiculous looking Nautilus submarine. He is accompanied by Connery as Alan Quatermain, and other characters such as Dorian Gray, an invisible man and a woman vampire. It sounded like an intriguing idea bringing these characters together to prevent a mad scientist, played by Australia's Richard Roxborough, from starting a World War in Queen Victoria's time, but alas they made a botch of it. Watch it on TV perhaps but skip the movie or the DVD and save your money.

We caught up with the new Governor of California's movie *THE SIXTH DAY* on TV.



Not his worst and certainly not his best, out of 10 I would rate it 6. None of Arnie's movies in the general sense can be regarded as great, but you can sit back and enjoy them for what they are. This one, an SF epic about cloning, was worth watching, but you need to disregard the science or the lack of it as always. Visually spectacular at times no doubt. It never ceases to amaze me the fantastic sets they are coming up with in SF movies in particular now. I know a lot of it is art work and computer animation but it still looks good and makes it easy to suspend your disbelief in the story.

We watched two Disney animated movies late October. The very colorful and crazy Pixar romp, *MONSTERS INCORPORATED* on TV and on the weekend spent with our friends John and Truda Straede at Bunyip, we watched the DVD of *ATLANTIS: The Lost Empire*. The former is a good example of what can be done with the Pixar technique, as in *Finding Nemo* and it was a lot of fun. Even Helena enjoyed it and she is not a fan of animation and in particular, cartoons. The latter had a story line that had a little bit of *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* and *Dinosaurus*, and I thought the story had more going for it than the last mentioned movie. So with a good plot, spectacular animated scenes and interesting characters *Atlantis*



was also very enjoyable. The voice-overs included Michael J. Fox as the main young character and Leonard Nimoy as the King.

Another fantasy seen recently and obviously made for TV, as it was a 2003 made movie but not screened in theatres here at any rate, was *A WRINKLE IN TIME*. Yes, it was based on the Madeleine L'Engle

children's novel – a fantasy with elements of SF also enjoyed by adults - as part of a trilogy with *A Wind in the Door* and *A Swiftly Tilted Planet*, that was published in the 1970s. It was one of those tales that had been waiting around for the current



animation techniques to do it justice. Three alien entities appearing in human female form can do and arrange magical things, but they need some human children to help them save the universe from an evil force that is threatening it. With so many clever sfx that we are seeing in movies now, I might take this movies spectacular scenes for granted, but far from being the whole thing they just add to the fun and enjoyment of it all. I question the screening time of 7.30 to 11.30 PM time slot on a Saturday night, categorized as horror in the TV programme, as a lot of kids would have missed it and adults unaware of its significance as well. I do not believe that Channel 10 made a big enough thing of it. Let's hope it gets repeated on a weekend afternoon for all of you who have missed it.

Merv B