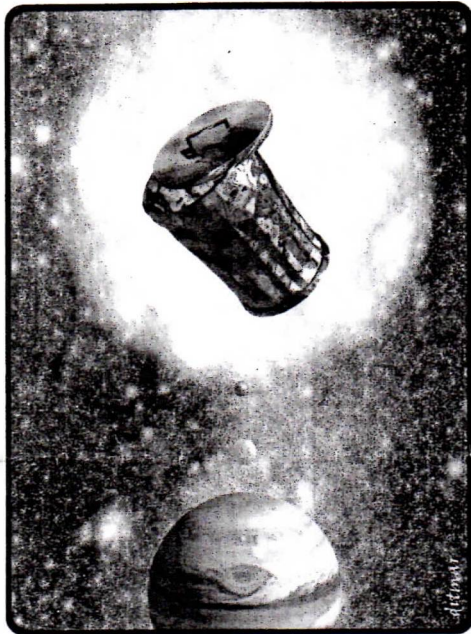


# Out of the Bin



'Space Bin' Artwork by Ditmar

Issue #25

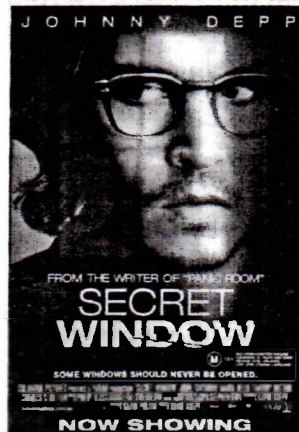
June 2004

A Newsletter from MERV BINNS  
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## MERV'S MOVIES

There are a few movies coming up in the SF and fantasy genre as well as various other categories that I want to see, even if my better half does not. One I saw on my own was **SECRET WINDOW**, starring Johnny Depp. His performance as a psycho writer was as delightfully demented as ever, but the plot, from a short story by Stephen King, was to put it politely, unappealing. I did not like the way it developed although there were clues on the way through to what was really going on. The ending of a story that Depp's character had written was in dispute, which was translated into the ending of the movie.



Of course the ending was the crucial part of the movie, but I hated it and I did not think that it was necessary to end it that way. But I suppose that is typical of a horror writer like Stephen King. I must admit I have only read maybe one King book, which was more or less SF, but I have seen a few of the movies made from his writing which I have appreciated to some degree, but not this one.

A few weeks ago I got to see the movie **VAN HELSING**, starring Australian actor Hugh Jackman, who is currently wowing them on Broadway, New York in his role as Peter Allen in *The Boy From Oz*. Jackman as you may remember also starred in the comic orientated movie **X MEN**. Two other Australian actors costarred, with David Wenham ( as Faramir in *The Lord of the Rings*) in a very different role for him as a eccentric weapons expert, a la Q in the *James Bond* movies. Richard Roxborough played a very different type of count to his one in *Moulin Rouge*, as the infamous Dracula, hamming it up wonderfully. All comic strip stuff with spectacular special effects and altogether a very enjoyable load of codswallop.



## LETTERS AND FANZINES RECEIVED

I have been neglecting responding directly to friend's letters and fanzines, so here I go, finally:

Noel Kerr only lives a few blocks away from me, but he likes to comment on my missives in writing, so the least I can do is respond likewise. As I am just about to cook a steak and kidney pie myself I have to mention Noel and Irene's cocker spaniel dog Stan, who took advantage of one they left on the table and scoffed it all down. Stan's letter of appreciation to the makers, Campbell's Soups Australia, was quite hilarious. Yes Noel, as I have already said, a further edition of My Memoirs is very close to completion, just be patient and Helena is too busy with that to do any publications of her own. (These days, anyhow, nothing I write ends up being entirely mine!) I am glad you have been able to at least try and catch some fish and yes, as I have not dangled a line for a long time it would be nice to go fishing with a friend. Catch a few yabbies for bait and we will try the Yarra River some time.

Keeping in touch with old friends is one of the reasons I continue to produce my missives, so it is great to hear from someone such as New York fan **Andy Porter**. Back in 1981 when Space Age Books was still limping along, I wrote to Andy agreeing to act as agent for his zine *SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE*. It looks as if Andy is like me and never throws any letters and such away, as he has found and sent me my original letter to him, of June 19<sup>th</sup> 1981. It reminds me of the good times I had in fandom, Space Age and in particular my overseas trips and attendance at conventions and meeting fans in the USA and England. I attended a party at Andy's home in Brooklyn, in 1973 and I remember the view of the Brooklyn Bridge from the end of his street and eating a bagel and cream which he bought me. After a break, having sold his zine SF Chronicle in 2000, mainly it seems due to illness, but no doubt also because after a very long spell it was probably getting a bit of a drag reporting all the SF news, Andy has produced a personal zine *MONADNOCK*. The first issue, which he has sent me, includes a few nostalgic interludes and reports on fan friends and the passing of some unfortunately, plus news and fans' birthdays as he did in SFC. I can see where he is going as I have gone there also. Once a fan writer and publisher always a fan publisher writer. I have always felt compelled to tell people what is happening in my world, fandom and whatever interests me such as SF books and movies. It is a way of keeping in touch with people but it is also more than that and probably just another aspect of the urge to create something. Maybe that is also why I enjoy cooking and gardening. At any rate, good luck Andy and thanks again for sending me your zine.

**John Hertz** continues to send me all the copies of his zine *Vanamonde* and despite the fact that it deals almost entirely with comments on other people's writings, presumably in their APA zines, including people I know personally, I do find interesting comments on conventions, fandom and such. John also sent me a copy of his report on last year's World Con in Toronto. I attended TORCON II in 1973, when local fans were bidding for the 1975 World Con, so reading John's report brings back some great memories for me. Meeting all those fans and all those authors, WOW, it was great! We will be producing a report covering what I can still remember of my trip around the planet including Toronto, in 1973, in due course. Time marches on, but I see quite a few names of fans I have met or seen at cons years back such as Dave Kyle, Mike Glycer, "Filthy" Pierre, Art Widner, Craig Miller, Mike Glicksohn our Fan GoH in 1975 and more. Thanks again, John. I will most likely never get to another SF World con but it is great to read about them and to remember the ones I did attend.

Canadian fan **Murray Moore**, from Mississauga, Ontario to be specific, has kindly sent me the first issue of his zine *MOZ*. Murray, it turns out, knows and has met a lot of Australian fans and I guess that is how he came in contact with me. Some of us sure get around a lot and he mentions a few people I know but have not seen for years. Most fanzine publishers are rather reticent about publishing photos of themselves, unlike myself, Bill Wright and perhaps others I cannot think of, but I was pleased to see Murray's self portrait on the front of *MOZ*. I think it just

helps to get to know friends you correspond with. He rambles on interestingly about things he has done and places he has been. Like many of my contacts he is much more widely read than I am, but we do share the enjoyment of SF of course and movies it seems. Like me, he rarely sees a movie a second time in a theatre, but he was compelled to see *The Fellowship of the Ring* a second time. And he will have been surprised at *Return of the King* winning the Best Picture Academy Award, but it did and good luck to Peter Jackson and all. Yes, long movies used to have an intermission and do you remember double features, with an interval for drinks and ice creams in between? Thanks Murray and do keep sending me *MOZ*.

Thanks to **Jan Howard FINDER** for sending us your annual *State of the Wombat Message*, which I must admit we are late mentioning. Does anybody else do such a complete coverage of their activities during the year? I will not endeavour to comment on it all apart from saying that Jan leads a very full life. I am glad he liked the *Harry Potter* movie but I sympathise with him on *The Lord of the Rings*. Helena, being a somewhat of a *LotR* expert, pointed out the discrepancies to me, other than the obvious such as the exclusion of the character Tom Bombadil. However, I think we both agree that the movies must be considered as a separate entity to the books and we both enjoyed them as such. Good luck, Jan, on all your travelling around and I hope we get to see you in person again in the not too distant future.

Thank you **Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer** for sending us *Banana Wings*. You are our only contact with British fandom, other than Dave Langford's *Ansible*. It is interesting to read other fans' stories of how they got into reading SF and various fannish adventures. There seems to be a subtle difference in the things that fans in the UK, USA and Australia take an interest in, but we all have more in common than not. In Australia we have to deposit our zines with the national libraries, but they do not hassle us too much. I think they see zines mentioned in other zines and decide that they should have them.

What can an old perv like me say about **Tim Marion's** zine *Terminal Eyes*? As well as an appreciation of feminine beauty, we share an interest in movies and I am very interested to see his views on movies we have seen, both in *Terminal Eyes* and letters that he has written me. TE#12 has a number of things of interest to me. The Martin Luther King speech is as you point out is even more relevant than ever. And talking about the incursion in Iraq, our government and particularly our Prime Minister Mr Howard, has very strongly aligned us with the United States. However a large percentage of the Australian population, and in particularly the Government opposition party, believe that this *blind* agreement with the USA and in particular Mr Bush, is just too much. Bush's condemnation of our Labor Party and Opposition leader Mr Latham's threat to bring all the Australia troops home by the New Year if he wins the election, was a flagrant breach of protocol. I have taken a lot of interest in the American Presidency, particularly from John Kennedy onward, and I must admit that I was not very impressed with any of the other incumbents apart from Clinton. Bush the Second, though, it seems is an



unmitigated disaster. Our ex-Prime Minister Bob Hawke expressed on the TV news exactly how I feel about our relationship with the USA, in that we are two countries who have a lot in common, but even siblings will disagree on many things. We do not have to necessarily toe the American line, just because we are such close friends. Ronald Reagan passed away early in June and all I can say is that if nothing else his term of office was a very interesting time.



I just realised that I have overlooked #11 of *Terminal Eyes* but as I am running out of space and time for this issue I will only comment briefly. Firstly the accompanying *Jupiter Jump* certainly paints a very frightening picture, but then I see Mariah Carey mostly uncovered on your cover of TE11. Wow!

I see when looking at the back cover that Bill Wright has been at work and sent you to Mars along with me. Is that a *Doonsbury* on page 7? I loved his strip and I still have one or two of his books somewhere. A letter noticed from friend Elaine Cochrane and high praise from Michael Waite who himself produces the most spectacular zine ever. You both produce exceptional zines for sure

Getting back to TE#12, I agree with Tim that *Underworld* was a good movie of its type. Pure comic book stuff, just like *Van Helsing* but certainly a consistent and clever concept and like many other movies now, making the most of today's mind-bending special effects. Other information on movies and shows on TV got a bit frustrating as much is about things we have not seen here and most likely never will. The Hammer film version of *Hound of the Baskervilles* with Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing was quite good, but the Peter Cook and Dudley Moore version was even worse than the Basil Rathbone Sherlock Holmes movies. (As much as I enjoyed those as a kid!) We have a set of DVDs of the Jeremy Brett TV series



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which we thoroughly enjoy and he just lives the part of Sherlock Holmes like nobody else has or ever will. I am looking forward to seeing the *Hellboy* movie, but I have not seen the comics. I have taken an interest in Ron Perlman since *TV's Beauty and the Beast* and I want to see him hamming it up again. While on comics, I saw an interesting program on cable TV introduced by *Dr Who's* Tom Baker on the World's Best Ten Comics. A colorful brief survey with comments by Stan Lee and others on famous comics from the Japanese *Manga* to the most popular top one *Batman*, followed by *Spider Man* and *Superman*. I have found most comics somewhat juvenile but although I have been interested primarily in the art work, I must admit the ideas and plots can be quite intriguing.

I have always taken an interest in SF and fan art and managed to accrue a few books during my Space Age days featuring such as Kelly Freas, Virgil Finlay, Tim Kirk and many others. I would like to put together a collection of the art of local fan Chris Johnson, but meanwhile I will feature a few things he did for me personally in due course. I have appreciated Grant Canfield's work, having handled most of the original zines, the covers of which Tim has reproduced. Nice to see a letter from my mate Bill Wright and I was interested in Alexis A. Gilliland's bit about the Presidential Election. I do not know much about the Democratic candidate, Kerry, but seeing him on our news I thought that he was, to put it politely, a bit wishy-washy, but I do hope my first impressions were wrong.

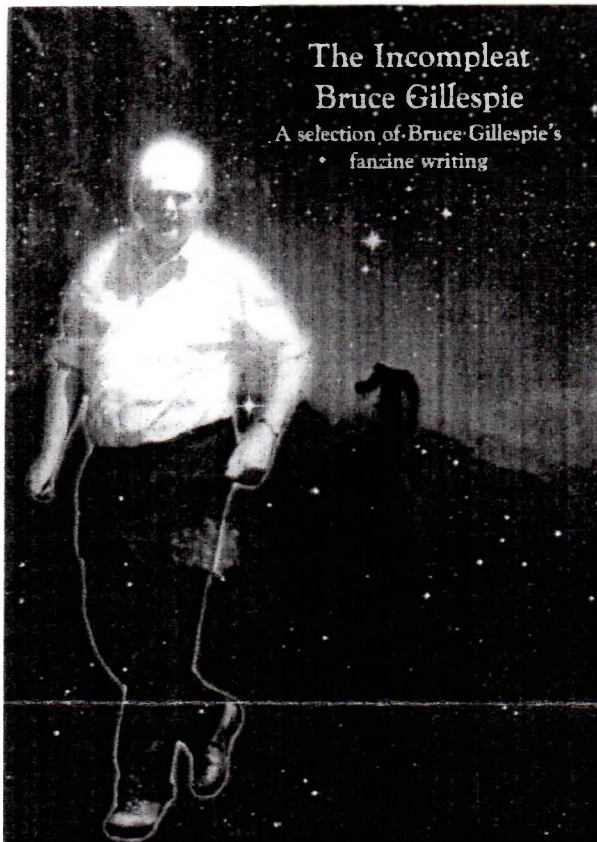
Eric Lindsay like a few other friends, would prefer us to send OoB to him by e-mail but we regret that we have just not got around to that yet. Thanks for your e-mail LOC Eric. Helena is still taking lots of photos with her camera and scanning them into the computer, but she would dearly like to get a digital camera if and when we can afford one.

I have a copy of Leigh Edmonds *A Sixer For Saps XLVI*, which I am sure I have overlooked acknowledging up to now. It is all about their cats, photos and all, reminding me that we must be due for another visit to the 'Straede ranch and cattery at Bunyip. My favourite there is the grey Australian Mist, Polly, but John's personal pair that he calls "the boys", Balinese with long creamy colored hair and red shadings, are also very friendly. Leigh has been a very busy boy working on a history of Barwon Water, which controls the water system in and around the provincial centre of Geelong, in Victoria. I assume he has been flat out getting that finished so we have not seen any more SAPS zines for a while.

I would appreciate it if anybody in Sydney can give me an address for Kevin Dillon. Graham Stone told me last year that Kevin has a Housing Department flat, which in his inimitable way he still has stacked with printed material of every form. (And I would like to add my own contribution to that.) Graham by the way has closed his mail box, but you can write to him at 205/24 Victoria St, Burwood 2134 NSW. One man's meat is another man's poison, Graham, so I can understand you not being able to get into Tolkien's *The Hobbit*.

I have not read much fantasy at all, but I managed to get through that and *The Lord of the Rings* and loved them. We seem to agree on some movies at least, but I must say that *Hellzapoppin* is at the bottom of my list. It goes down as the only movie my parents and I walked out of many years ago. I have never seen *Turkey Shoot* or *Escape 2000* as it is also called, but comments in movie listings are not very complimentary. I watched *The Tunnel* on TV a few years back, which I remember being impressed with many years earlier and as you say, it had its moments.

Thanks again to **Edwina Harvey**, now back on deck after her eye ops and sending me *The Australian Science Fiction Bullsheat*. At least we know about all the goings on in fandom even if we can't always get to them. But yes, we will be at **THYLACON** in Hobart next year and I thank all those people who have congratulated me on being chosen as a Guest of Honor for said con. We will be at **CONTINUUM 2** in June as we have luckily paid our memberships well in advance.



**Bruce Gillespie** and **Elaine Cochrane** regretfully have to move from their home in the Melbourne inner suburb of Collingwood, due to the fact that being a fairly old house, repairs were not practical. We will no doubt hear how they get on and where they move to in due course. Bruce has been invited to attend the **CORFLU** convention held by fanzine and APA fans in San Francisco in February 2005. A fan fund has been set up for that purpose. The organizers of this fund wish to point out that they do not wish to impinge on the established fan funds, but they are appealing to the fanzine and APA fans in this case in particular. Enquiries to **BBB** ("**Bring Bruce Bayside**") **Fan Fund**, Unit 4, 1 Park St, St Kilda West, Vic 3182 .

It is not surprising the respect and admiration that fanzine fans world wide have for Bruce, who has produced so many sophisticated publications, not only about SF writing and criticism but the writers and fans and our history. The latest to hand was *SF Commentary #79* which is devoted entirely to the life and work of American author and fan **Bob Tucker**. Since then Bruce has given us a contributor's copy of the BBB fundraiser publication *The Incomplete Bruce Gillespie*, a collection of some of his most memorable articles (with photos, including a couple of ours), and his Fan Guest of Honour speech from Aussiecon 3. It also features a spectacular Ditmar cover in colour depicting Bruce "star-walking". We recommend it highly. It is well worth the price of \$10. (As well as being for a very worthy cause!) It is not just the contents of Bruce's zines but the production that sets such a high standard. As a very busy freelance editor, that is not so surprising I guess, but how does he find the time? Regrettably, moving house may curtail some of his personal writing and publishing for a while, but we hope not for too long.

Boy, am I way behind in responding to letters, as indicated by an e-mail from **Margaret Orchard** dated March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004. Glad you enjoyed the LotR movies and that your home is coming along. It has been a bit difficult trying to remember all the events in the '70s for my memoirs, but I have up to 1975 covered and that part will be out very soon. I am a bit confused about the Adelaide cons later on and I may prod your memory for help with that in due course.

A long letter received from **Lyn Smith** is way overdue for a reply. Thanks also, Lyn, for your recent call. We are very pleased to hear that you have recovered from your life-threatening illness. Thanks for the few details about Bob, because although you often know people as fans you know little about their background. Your musical tastes parallel mine a little but my major interest in classical has always been the Russian composers such as Tchaikovsky, Rimsky Korsakov, Borodin and all, but my knowledge and experience is still growing. I have hundreds of LPs of shows, movie soundtracks, which have always been my major interest, plus the classics. Most of those I got hold of when Space Age Books was importing and selling records. Many classical and other recordings I have acquired and not yet played, since I got together with Helena. Not to mention CDs Helena has bought me. Thanks again for your comments.

Thanks to the Melbourne SF club for copies of *Ethel The Aardvark*. **Bill Wright's** *I.R.S.#219* is the latest we have seen, but as we missed out on seeing Bill for a while I think we may be missing a few recent issues. It was great to learn that some of Ditmar's early computer work in the 1950s was a world first. His article on Hal Clement's writing and in particular the science therein, was a great tribute to the late giant in the SF firmament .

That's all for now, folks! We will tell you about **CONTINUUM II** next time, and how my party went in the one after..

**Merv B**