

The Rubbish Bin(ns)

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A personal 'zine produced by Merv Binns

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MERV'S BIRTHDAY MERV AND HELENA'S ENGAGEMENT PARTY, JULY 1997

*Noel Kerr, Irene Kerr, Margaret Dume, Chris Michaelopoulos, Merv Binns, Helena Roberts,
Tanya Kemp, Peter Kemp, Barbara Staffieri, Jack Westphal and Gwennie Naug*

(Photo by Wynne Whitford)

AN EDITORIAL: PAST AND FUTURE

A TRIBUTE TO MY FRIENDS

FANZINES RECEIVED

AN EDITORIAL : PAST AND FUTURE

Dear Readers,

Over the years I have made a few half hearted attempts at producing fanzines, apart from my pride and joy *AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS* and I have helped produce a few fanish missives, con booklets and such. Now I have a computer to play with I can finally let my head go. All I need is the money to pay for printing or photocopying and the postage. My printer is not very good, but one cannot look a gift horse in the mouth and my friend Dick Jenssen lives just down the road, with what looks like to me state-of-the-art equipment, including a super whiz-bang printer. Dick has already helped me format and print a lot of this and Alan Stewart did the rest, while Bruce Gillespie has been scanning things for me. Even if I do get a modem and start sending and receiving E-mail, and set up my own website, I suspect I will continue to produce more issues of *RUBBISH BIN(NS)*, at irregular intervals. We sf fans have always had the right ideas about keeping in touch with our friends, but the computer revolution has made it even easier.

Talking about electronic revolutions, unless people are lucky enough to have some great friends like my wife Helena and I have, who have given us our computer and lots of help and advice to go along with it, I am sure the larger part of the population cannot afford to buy computer equipment, let alone get on the net.

Now they are telling us that in a few years we will all have to buy new TV sets that will not only have vastly improved pictures and probably incorporate all the things your computers, videos and CD players do for you as well. That sounds great, but how do they think the average person is going to be able to afford them. People on low incomes and even middle incomes, will find it impossible to buy them at \$3000 and more, which is the figure mentioned. We can get a temporary thing which will convert our present sets for a not insignificant few hundred dollars, but eventually even those will be useless. Surely the people responsible for this and the government, must realise that it will be an economic disaster for the industry, as people will not

buy them, just as most of us have told *FOXTEL* and their cable-TV mates to get lost. We will get our news and information from the radio, if that is still around. At least we still have AM as well as FM radio, and find other ways of entertaining ourselves at home. Or will they just have to keep some of the old style TV transmission still operating? I know, "keeping up with the Joneses" is the name of the game, the way the capitalist society works, but the logic of this deal escapes me.



All my life I have been a great believer in science, which I thought had the answers to everything. I was obviously influenced by the little bit of sf I was able to read and the popular science books and articles I read as a kid. Buck Rogers comics, Vol Molesworth's "Strata Rocketeers", "Out of the Silence" by Erle Cox as a radio serial, *Popular Science Magazine* and things like that. I loved looking at the stars, mixing up any chemicals like my father's garden pesticides and my mother's cleaning stuff and just a general interest in the world around me. My side had won the war and they won it with superior science such as radar and the atom bomb. Science had all the answers. I did well at school in science and memory subjects but I was a dead loss at arithmetic and all other mathematical subjects and poor at English and expressing myself, so when it come to a career in chemistry or any other mathematically related job was out. My wife Helena also wanted a career in science and she had the brains to pull it off, but in her school days women were not encouraged to do such things. As the century rolled on my faith in science grew and my belief in such things as going to church and religion in general was stretched to the limit. I have always been interested in religion as part of history and mythology, but it has always seemed like something dreamed up by witch

doctors and shamans to appease the masses. I think my belief in science became all the religion I needed. Although I must admit that the way all things seems to fit into an overall plan and evolution seems like experiments gone wrong, while the fantastic universe we live in, with astronomers steadily coming up with amazing discoveries, does make me wonder about it all.

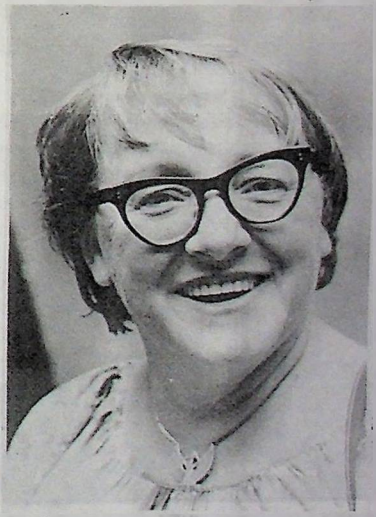
The scientific advances made in my life time have been astounding, to put it mildly and most we may take for granted as being good for us or in some cases have reservations about them. Television, space travel, computers and antibiotics I do not think anybody can dispute are a great boon to us all, but we do have reservations about atomic energy and genetic engineering for example. Despite these things, I still have great faith in science and I believe that it will find answers to the problems facing us such as pollution and the greenhouse effect and that good will come from genetic engineering in the long run, with the control of diseases, cancer and even perhaps longevity. Call me a dreamer or optimist if you like, but that's me!

For most of my life I have been a royalist. Coming from British, Yorkshire origins I have always had a strong feeling about being part of the British Empire, and when it started to fall apart and there was talk about Australia becoming a republic, I was disappointed and dead against it. Over the last ten years or so though I could see the writing on the wall, and I was fully aware that most strong ties between Australia and Britain and the Crown have crumbled away, so when it came to the crunch I had made up my mind to support the republic in the referendum. To my great disappointment and dismay the moment was lost, in my opinion because of few dumb people who did not like the way the government wanted us to choose a head of state. They forgot about the main reason for the whole thing. Or so it appeared. Now most people my age and even younger, will never get the opportunity to see our country standing alone. "Thank you" Mr Howard for putting it in such a way that would make people uncertain what they wanted and so smother the real reason for the referendum. In the long run I suppose it only confirms what most people think of politicians and letting them choose the president did seem to be an

option a percentage of the population could not swallow. It just worries me that if the President is elected by all of us, politics must enter into it and I agreed with Bob Hawke and Malcolm Fraser and in fact most politicians it seemed, that the way the present government wanted to run it was as good as we would get. After all, we could change it in the future if we did not like it. Becoming a republic was the main event, which got lost in the shuffle!

I guess I am at the age when people in my life, be they friends or those I have come to appreciate through reading their books or fanzines or watching on the screen, are leaving our world. A few authors now have died over recent years who helped shape my ideas about sf itself and many other things. I had the pleasure of meeting many authors during the Space Age Years and at World Conventions both here and overseas. I can never forget my first World Con in Toronto, Canada. There was Isaac Asimov in the flesh, and Ron Graham got us into I think the "First Fandom" party, where I saw or met almost all my sf writing heroes such as Poul Anderson, Harry Harrison, Robert Silverberg, Bob Bloch, who I later invited to be my GoH at *CINECON*, plus many others, including Marion Zimmer Bradley, whose *Darkover* series I read and enjoyed very much. So it was with regret when I heard recently that Marion Bradley had left us and an absolute icon in the fan world, Walt Willis also.

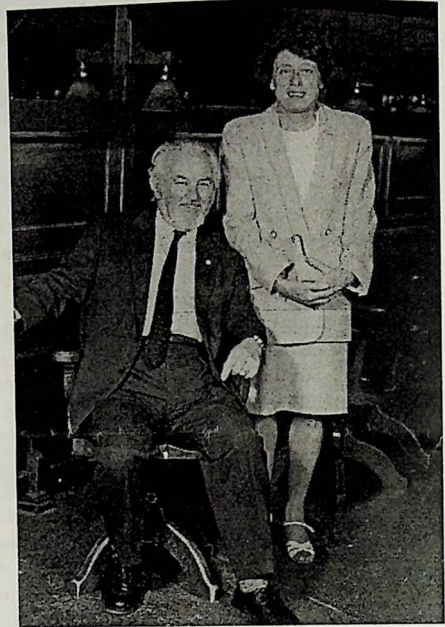
Photo by Jay K. Klein



Marion Zimmer Bradley

MERV'S MEMORIES

Just prior to AUSSIECON THREE two well known people in Melbourne sf circles left our world. ANDREW BROWN, who was only 38, died on July 8th, my own birthday incidentally. It just so happens that I lost both my parents just after my birthdays, and I have five friends with birthdays close to mine, not to mention young cousins, but I deviate. Andrew was an active fan back in the '70s and '80s, whom I met personally at cons and at Space Age. He took part in the making of the AUSSIECON bid film that was made in 1983 and I have photographs of him dressed as a Frankenstein-monster look-alike, when we were filming on Brighton beach. Andrew was a rather tall lad who was often seen wearing a T-shirt stating "I Don't Play Basketball". He was the co-editor of the original *THYME* sf news magazine along with Irwin Hirsch, but dropped out of sf fandom becoming involved with the music scene, though he will be remembered by sf fandom with much affection..



Colin Watson and his wife Marie.



Mandy Herriot, Justin Ackroyd and Andrew Brown.

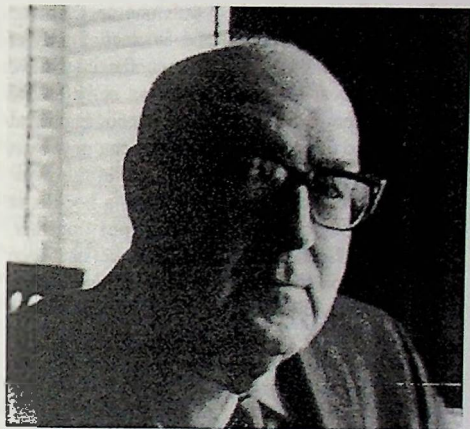
COLIN WATSON, who was one of Melbourne's most respected librarians until his retirement in 1992, died on the 6th of August. He became interested in sf fandom in the 1970s and attended a number of conventions including our World Cons, over the years. He had taken the position of Librarian for the City of Brighton in 1957 and later established The Dandenong Valley Regional Library Service, a task which began in 1971. He put together a collection of sf books there, which became the major source of science fiction, available to all other libraries in the state. Colin was a tireless fighter for the library system against government cut backs. SF fans however will remember him most as the founder of the Dandenong Valley Science Fiction Society. Colin was one of my most consistent supporters over the years and a good friend. Helena and I visited him a few months back, at his and his wife Marie's lovely restored Victorian villa in Albert Park, and on behalf of all sf fans we send her our condolences.



Colin Watson as fan.

Frank Bryning

Bruce Gillespie, Alan Sandercock,
Jack Wodhams and Frank Bryning
at Q-Con 1973.



He originally hailed from Victoria, having grown up in an area between Dights Falls and Heidelberg, which incidentally would have been an area also very familiar to my late father, who lived in Collingwood from 1914 to about 1930. Like many of us he discovered sf in Hugo Gernsback's *AMAZING STORIES*, though he was also influenced by many other writers both sf and general. Though the major influence in his work must have been his career as a journalist, like our friend Wynne Whiteford, both of whom started writing and having their sf published, in the 1950s.

A pioneer of Australian science fiction writing and a good friend, whose friendship I very much appreciated.

Some months back I started, again, to record my recollections of my almost fifty years in sf fandom. I soon discovered that I could not remember what happened exactly or when, so I put it off until I had time to do some more research. When John Foyster asked me to be on the panels at AUSSIECON 3, discussing the history of the Melbourne SF Club, I thought I had better actually do *that* research, so I got my old bound volumes of the MSFC news magazine *ETHERLINE* out and started going through them. Just prior to that I had been going through my stacks of old fanzines, in order to sort out those I wanted to keep and those I felt that I could part with. I soon found that I had a tremendous wealth of information about fandom all over.

One of the most significant things was the contact that we, and when I say we I mean all Aussie fandom, has had with one another and people overseas, through the fanzines. Surely sf fandom and the network that fanzines have nurtured over the years, from as early as the 1930s to now, is a very unique phenomenon that belongs to us alone. At any rate I can now start writing my memoirs again and fill in the gaps. Meanwhile John Foyster produced a booklet at AUSSIECON 3 that he has put together, detailing Aussie fan history that he has been able to unearth, including his own early meetings with fans in Sydney and such, *AUSTRALIAN FAN HISTORY 1953-1966 (1)*. You can expect to see more from John, myself and others in due course.

If you wish to get hold of a copy of John's publications, or wish to contact him regarding his project, you can write to John Foyster, P O Box 3086, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, South Australia.

FANZINES For Sale

I did put together a list of all the fanzines I wish to sell and I will be happy to send one to anybody on request. There are quite a few - ten pages of them. Ranging from US zines from as early as the 1950s to Star Trek clubzines from the recent years. It was an education reading through them, but they have to go, and why should I begrudge others the pleasure of reading them.

New FANZINES Received

Sydney fan and recent Chandler Award winner, Graham Stone, sent me a copy of an issue of his long established zine, *SCIENCE FICTION NEWS*, not to be confused with my Australian SF News, published in June this year 1999. In it he has an appreciation of one of the foundation members of the Futurian Society of Sydney, WILLIAM DAVID VENEY, 1923 - 1998, written by Chris Nelson. Bill's involvement with fandom dated back to the 1930s, and Ian Crozier talks about meeting him in his 1953 Sydney convention report in the MSFC magazine *ETHERLINE*. John Foyster has reprinted Ian's report in his Australian Fan History booklet. Graham also continues a history of the pulp magazine *AMAZING STORIES* and a report of the 50th Anniversary meeting of The Sydney Futurian Society, held November 1988. I am sure John F will add this to his files, as a comprehensive history of Aussie SF fandom comes together. Meanwhile you can write to Graham Stone at PO Box 4440, Sydney, 1044, New South Wales.

SCIENCE FICTION A Review of Speculative Literature edited by Van Ikin, Department of English, University of Western Australia Nedlands, W.A. 6907. I have to hand two issues of this excellent publication that started in 1977. First rate interviews and reviews, with the emphasis on encouragement of the local field.

ETHEL THE AARDVARK is the Melbourne SF Club's zine. I do not know how they arrived at this title, but it sounds like something my old friends Paul Stevens or Leigh Edmonds might have come up with in years gone by, perhaps with a passing reference to the Club's original zine *ETHERLINE*. Issue # 86, dated August just received.

OUT OF THE KAJE is edited by a fairly recent new member of Melbourne fandom, Karen Johnson. A typical fanzine, but very well produced, with articles, LOCs and much more, including a fan glossary in the January 1999 issue and the June-July edition, also to hand. A pretty good effort Karen, do keep it up. Address: 35 Mariana Avenue, South Croydon, Victoria 3136.

INTERSTELLAR RAMJET SCOOP Edited by Bill Wright, who is obviously a dyed-in-the-wool "Doc" Smith fan, with his August 1998 issue dedicated to the great space opera exponent. Bill is a really funny guy and digs up some interesting stuff and comes up with some great LOCs. Dick Jenssen provides some fabulous computer generated illustrations for the covers. These two old friends of mine also put together a very nice handout for AUSSIECON 3 dedicated to yours truly, which along with Bruce Gillespie's Fan GoH speech at the con, made me realise again that I have some great friends, and they do really appreciate my past efforts in fan circles in Melbourne. Most of Bill's zines are distributed I think through ANZAPA, but if you want to write to him his address is 4/1 Park Street, St Kilda, Victoria 3182.

Dick Jenssen has also put together a publication titled *THE PLANET OF THE EGGS A Romance of Many Dimensions*, which was serialised in *Interstellar Ramjet Scoop* during '97 and '98. It combines an illustrated fantasy with a technical explanation of the mathematical devices used in the creation of his marvellous computer graphics.

Most fanzine fans will be familiar with Bruce Gillespie's output over the years with *METAPHYSICAL REVIEW* and other zines, but you may not know that his lady, Elaine Cochrane, produces her own zine, *WEEDERS DIGEST* in which she produces articles and letters from friends to do with gardening. She also uses computer generated cover illustrations produced by Dick Jenssen, which feature wild and bizarre plants and insects.

CINEMA & TV

The really great thing on the box, and well timed to follow the World Con, on SBS, is a survey of sf in many of its forms titled *THE SCI-FI FILES*. The four part series will no doubt have all been screened by the time you read this and they are great. Discussing the various aspects of sf stories such as time travel, spaceships and aliens or as we affectionately call them, *bug-eyed monsters*. Using scenes from movies, illustrations from magazines, including many of the old pulps, with comments from Arthur C. Clarke, Brian Aldiss, Stephen Baxter, Forest J. Ackerman, Lawrence

Krauss (writer of *The Physics of Star Trek*), astronaut Storey Musgrave and sf orientated biologist Jack Cohen, and narrated by Mark Hamill, we are presented with the most sympathetic and informative coverage of our beloved genre that I have seen in the visual media. No sf fan should miss this program and I do sympathise if you have missed it all.

A TRIBUTE TO MY FRIENDS

I am feeling very nostalgic at the moment and looking back on my 65 years with some regrets, but many good memories of events, and people. School days are best forgotten, as that was not a very happy time for me, but I was born anew when I discovered Science Fiction fandom. That was in 1951 and many of the people I met in the early fifties are still my friends today, including my wife Helena. (Only trouble is it took us forty years to get together.) Some people I knew then have naturally passed on, time catches up with us all, like Melbourne SF Club members BOB McCUBBIN, TONY SANTOS, KEITH McLELLAND, JACK KEATING, people I had a lot of contact with in those early days of the *MSFC*. I produced fanzines with IAN CROZIER, now living at Bright near Mount Buffalo in Victoria, who became my closest friend for a while and had quite an influence on me in various ways. We got together again recently when my wife Helena and I spent a few days with Ian and his wife JUDY. We had not met for about twenty years. LEE HARDING was another fanzine producer along with Ian and others in the early days of the *MSFC*. Many years later Lee helped me organise and run *Space Age Books*, while he began his writing career. DAMIEN BRODERICK was another club member and now leading SF author who dedicated his anthology *Zeitgeist Machi:re* to me.

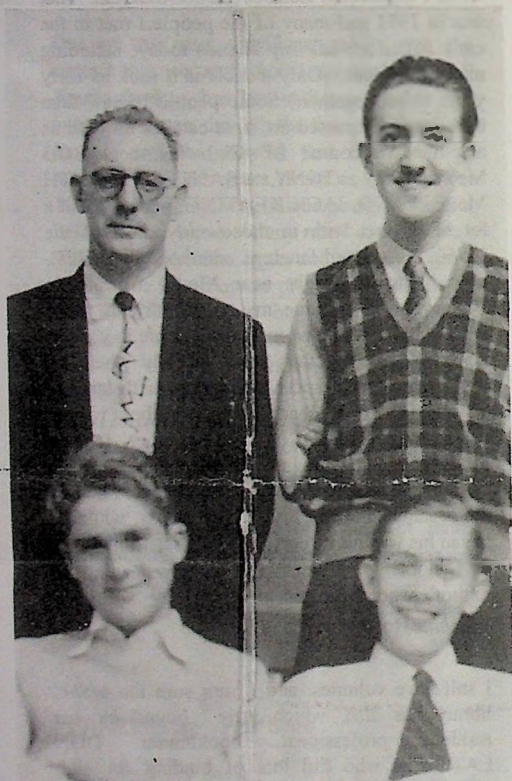
I still have volumes, and I am sure the *MSFC* library has also, which were bound by our resident professional bookbinder DON LATIMER, who did lots of binding for club members, helped out by trimming fanzines and we had film shows at his home. Ian tells me Don is still with us but I have not had the pleasure of meeting him for many years. There are many other people I knew in those days, whom I have lost contact with. Some I met at conventions

here and in Sydney in the early days. WYNNE WHITEFORD, journalist and author has been attending my parties and other functions my wife Helena and I have been at for many years, and Wynne, now in his eighties has not been well lately, but we will be celebrating his birthday with him and his lady GWAYNE, just before Christmas coming. I first met another author at *OLYMPICON* in 1956, FRANK BRYNING, who became a regular contributor to our zine *ETHERLINE* and who although he has lived in Queensland for most of his life, was a great supporter of my efforts in fandom and in bookselling. Regrettably, Frank passed away last month.

One very early friend in the sf fraternity, who now lives only a short distance away in Carnegie is DICK JENSSEN, who helped produce fanzines in the club circles in the fifties along with Lee Harding, Race Matthews and me and produced numerous illustrations for *ETHERLINE* and who is again we find doing illustrations for fanzines, following his retirement as a meteorological scientist. Striking computer graphics visions which won him a nomination for the *DITMAR Australian SF Achievement Awards*, this year, which incidently he was responsible for naming. He did not win a *DITMAR*, but it was a great joke to all of us who know the story behind that name.

RACE MATTHEWS was another early member of the *MSFC* who we saw very little of for many years. as he was a school teacher and spent the early part of his career in countryschools. He became a "political animal", eventually becoming secretary to the leader of the Labor Party and later Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. He later got elected to the Victorian state Parliament and became a minister in Premier John Cain's government. However he has not forgotten his connection with sf fandom and for a while now he has been having a bunch of fans over to his home on a regular basis to watch a video and meet old friends, who otherwise we most likely would not have seen very often if at all.

Yes. I made the acquaintance of many people during the first twenty years of the life of the Melbourne SF Club, especially during the sixties at McGill's store and friendships that endured to this day. PETER KEMP, who attended all our film shows, looked after my needs as my insurance agent and was there to help when I moved house, especially when Helena and I got together, not to forget being "toastmaster" at our wedding. Peter and wife TANYA have been attending my get-togethers for over twenty years and along with IRENE KERR, Tanya handled all the catering for our wedding and made and decorated a great wedding cake for us. NOEL KERR's and my association goes back to when I discovered he was a printer and he did most of my printing of stationery for Space Age and numerous things of a fannish nature for cons, fanzines and much more, which without his help may never have eventuated. Noel edited the Melbourne SF Club zine *SOMERSET GAZETTE*. Noel and Irene helped organise our wedding party and have also been attending my parties for over twenty years. These people are the measure of friends that we all should have and appreciate.



*Bob McCubbin, Merv B, Race Mathews and Dick Jensen in the MSFC clubroom 1952.
Photo Lee Harding*

There is another old friend who was an early member of the *MSFC*, VAL MORTON. Val is a bit older than me, but that does not stop him from covering long distances on his pushbike almost every day. He periodically calls in to see Helena and me and has been giving me his unwanted books to sell for many years and I also have a few old LP records in my collection thanks to Val, another willing helper when Helena and I moved here to Carnegie. ROMAN MAZURAK I would estimate joined the club in the 1960s, a quiet and unassuming bloke who was a regular attendee of the club meetings, film shows, Space Age conventions and always seemed to be there when any fannish gatherings I was involved with were on. Roman has been a friend indeed, which Helena and I do appreciate very much. There are many other people whose friendship, support in my bookselling, convention running and fanzine activities is appreciated and whose company I have enjoyed such as JOHN FOYSTER, JOHN BANGSUND and SALLY, LEE EDMONDS and VALMA BROWN, DARYL MANNEL, RUTH and ANDREW MURPHY, PAUL COLLINS, SEAN McMULLEN, CATH and MARC ORTLIEB, MARILYN PRIDE and LEWIS MORLEY, MARGARET (ARNOTT) ORCHARD, SHANE McCORMACK, GRAHAM STONE, that well known Sydney fan I have known since the early '50s and there are many others interstate and overseas. The late ALAN BRAY from Adelaide was one of my longest friends outside the Melbourne fraternity. DON TUCK who for many years resided in Tasmania, and put together the Hugo Winning *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY*. Don, who now lives in Lilydale Victoria, provided me and my co-editors/publishers, with information, author listings and more to publish in our fanzines, all subsidiary to the fantastic job he did with the encyclopedia during the sixties and seventies. The late RON SMITH who moved here from the USA, was a bookseller, editor, publisher, Hugo Winning fanzine producer and a great help to me in various ways when I was running Space Age Books.

CEDRIC ROWLEY, a Mister Fixit of the first order, first started showing us his ingenuity by keeping our old movie projector operating during the sixties and fixing any other machinery that broke down about the place including my refrigerator. Cedric was another regular attendee at my gatherings until he moved to Queensland. Cedric was also one of only two people who helped my father and I close down

Space Age Books. It was a big task moving all the stuff out and I do not know how we could have done it all without Cedric and Sydney fan KEVIN DILLON, who happened to be in Melbourne at that time. Kevin was a familiar face at conventions through the years. He was a somewhat eccentric collector of sf and all sorts of printed material. I have been in contact with him over the years, but most recently I hear that he had to leave his home, lose all his massive collection and was in need of accommodation.

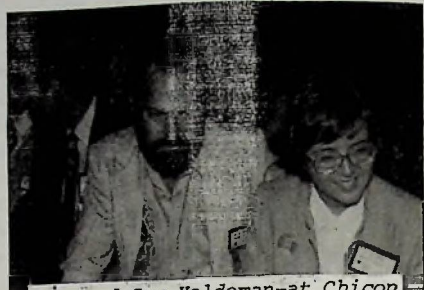


Merv Binns & Merv Barrett at Wellcon, the first New Zealand SF con, in Wellington 1980.

It was great to meet our old friend MERV BARRETT and his wife JANET from New Zealand during *AUSSIECON 3*. Merv was the *MSFC* movie projectionist very early in the game, before going to England. In 1973, on my way to *TORCON*, the World SF Convention being held in Toronto, Canada, Merv showed me around London and introduced me to fans there. He was my host in 1980, when he invited me to be the Guest of Honor at the first New Zealand SF convention. Another friend I first met in the sixties is ROSS COZENS, who moved to the USA to find suitable employment and I spent some time with him in Chicago in 1973. For many years up to only last year. Ross was sending me all the American SF Book Club titles that I wanted. It was a great imposition I know and I do sincerely appreciate what he did for me over the years. I did meet a lot of fans and authors on my overseas trips such as CHARLES BROWN, editor of *LOCUS* and ANDY PORTER, editor of *SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE*, who both

helped me a lot when I was producing *Australian SF News* and they introduced me to many other fans and pros. JOE and GAY HALDEMAN I first met at *TORCON* in 1973, and took me to lots of room parties and all, along with that infamous American fan JAN FINDER, who is currently touring Australia. It was great to entertain the Haldemans when they came to Australia and all the other authors who Space Age Books had the pleasure of taking care of a little on their visits. I met the late ROGER ZELAZNY again at *Bubonicon* in Albuquerque in 1979 following my visit to England for *SEACON* and *NORTHAMERICON* in Louisville. The late A. BERTRAM CHANDLER was also at Louisville. I kept in touch with Zelazny and BRIAN ALDISS following their Australian visits also. I will cover the visits of all the authors who graced the Space Age premises with their presence in my memoirs in due course. FORREST J. ACKERMAN I first met in Toronto, but he had been sending us columns for *ETHERLINE* and other zines since the 1950s. He entertained both Helena and I on our separate visits to Hollywood, lots of other Aussie fans who have visited also.

Various people of course did run our movie projectors, but we owe most to GRAHAM SHANNON who put us in contact with a unique movie man, the late HARRY DAVIDSON, who had all these marvellous old movies like *METROPOLIS* and *FAUST*, and hundreds of old Australian films, largely news and documentary, which are now held by the National Library. Graham got two 35mm projectors from him which he installed in the club. That finally led to the club being forced to vacate McGill's store, and that is another story, but we must thank Graham for some great experiences in movies during the late 1960s. Graham was also a Russian style base baritone singer, and those fans who attended the Melbourne sf convention held at the Victoria Hotel in 1973, could not forget Graham's part in the musical play we staged, *JOLE PHAUST*, as "*Isaac Clarke*". Talking about projectionists, JIM NESS was a very well known man in the business who organised the infamous *Flash Gordon* debacle at the *Astor Theatre*, which eventually led to him introducing me to Mr and Mrs KERR who allowed us to screen the serial in their private theaterette and who owned 305/307 Swanston Street, where Space Age Books operated for twelve years. Paul Stevens, dad and I often attended private screenings for media personalities that Jim organised.

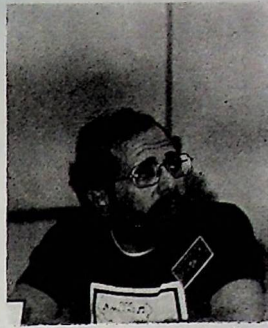


Joe and Gay Haldeman-at *Chicon*
photo Andrew Porter

Tucked away in our shed is an old record player and speakers I built with the help of an MSFC member in the 50s, Ian McLelland. He was the first friend who helped me with electronic stuff, but not the last. The man I owe most to in that quarter is BOB ROGERS, who has been answering my calls for help for probably twenty years at least. He has fixed radios, record players, TVs, video players and he even gave me a computer. It turned out to be bomb, but at least it gave me a start. Bob has given me numerous bits and pieces of stuff not to mention his valuable time over the years. And he bought hundreds of books from me as well. How do you thank someone like that.

Getting back to my old mate Cedric Rowley, when he saw the old computer that other friends such as JOHN STRAEDE and Alan Bray had tried to help me with, he set out to upgrade it for me when he was down from Queensland in 1997. He got it so far before he had to return to Queensland, but it needed more attention. An old friend of my father's and mine, JACK WESTPHAL, did a lot more to it. While we were waiting for Jack to finish upgrading it, a book buyer, CRAIG WYTON turned up. Being a computer expert himself he offered to take it away and work on it. To cut it short he again replaced it almost entirely with an old one he had and tossed in a printer and CD unit for the computer as well. That still left us a bit up in the air as we did not know how to use it nor fix up anomalies with the programme. Enter our old friend Cedric again who went and saw Craig, picked up some missing bits, bought us a few discs and "voila!", after twenty years wanting a useable computer I, and my wife Helena, who is spending half her time playing chess on it and the other half playing "FreeCell", have a working, if somewhat antiquated computer operating. Even as I type this, there is another potential upgrade on the horizon. How do we thank these people and others like BRUNO KAUTZNER and Dick Jenssen, who have given us help and advice along the way?

There are many people in fandom who I have shared good times with at conventions and so forth such as BILL WRIGHT, and he has long been a supporter of my activities and attendee at most of my functions. He and Dick Jenssen even put together an illustrated zine in my honour at AUSSIECON 3. Thanks Bill! In the early days of the MSFC I have already said that I helped produce various zines with other fans, but most recently my friend ALAN STEWART. When Alan began editing *THYME* he asked me if I would like to resurrect *Australian SF News*, and combine it with *THYME*. We have now been working together for five years. Thanks Alan for giving me the chance to keep *ASFN* going which I would not have been able to do on its own. He has been doing a great job with *THYME* and I hope he can keep it going for a long time yet. Alan and some other MSFC members also helped Helena and me in our big move. At various times numerous people have helped me with contributions to *ASFN* along with photos, reviews and proof reading, like the late GEORGE TURNER who helped me a lot with advice on the writing, grammar and such in *ASFN* in the '70s and 80s. More recently I can add BRUCE GILLESPIE to the list, who has been reproducing photographs for me with his scanner and putting me in touch with people.



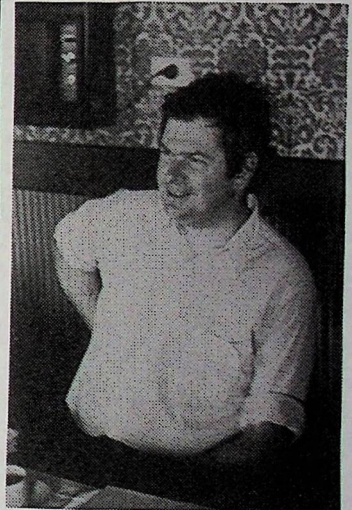
Jan Fänder



Marilyn Pride
and Kevin Dillon.



Bill Wright



Bruce Gillespie



Lee Harding

Many people have endeavoured to help me and support me in my endeavours. Not only in the fan activities like organising conventions, club activities such as film shows and even by just being there, but specially in my bookselling activities. Many simply by buying lots of books from me and putting all the business my way that they could and in some cases direct financial help and you know who you are. I hope that in the past I have adequately conveyed to you how much I have appreciated your sincere efforts to keep me on track. In the late 1960s I had been employed by booksellers McGill's Newsagency for almost twenty years, but the job was becoming overwhelming and I had been hoping to open a shop of my own, specialising in science fiction. A casual mention to the Sydney business man and book collector extraordinaire, the late RON GRAHAM, of my ambitions and Space Age Books was born. He gave me my chance, but things got screwed up and Space Age had to close and I lost all I owned. It did not help that Ron died and the family wanted the money lent to me



A 1960s John Foyster.

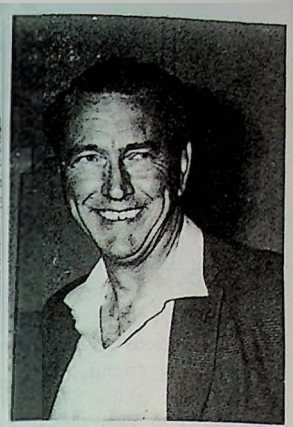
by Ron. During the Space Age years I made a lot of new friends, not least the people I had working for me and I also regarded most of my customers as friends.

Lee Harding was there as I mentioned before, then along came Karen, Susan, Anne, Maureen, John, Steven, Beverly, Justin, Lawrence, Alex and I am sure a few others that I have forgotten. One in particular you say! That big name fan who got dragged off by his wife to that place that may as well be on another planet. Perth, appears to have disappeared off the face of this planet. No, I have been saving him for last, my close friend and confidant for almost twenty years, PAUL JOHN STEVENS. Paul first turned up in the *MSFC* in the early to mid sixties and I roped him in to help me run the club. When Space Age came into existence it seemed obvious that he should be there with me and he was a great help in many ways. We had some great times together in the shop, attending film previews, going to conventions and parties and he filled a gap in my life as someone I could talk to about almost anything. No doubt we had a lot of common interests. He was my front man with fandom. You could say he was my conduit to what was going on during the wild and frantic fan activities of the seventies and to a lesser degree early eighties. As the S.S. Space Age was sinking he left and I could not blame him, but I not only lost my business and all my assets I had lost a friend. No doubt I placed a bit too much on his friendship as people have told me, but he filled a gap for many years.

As time went by and I was endeavouring to run a mail order bookselling business from home, while I cared for my ailing elderly father, I relied a lot on my friend Jack Westphal, who came over most weeks for dinner with us and brought a video and was always there when we needed him, like feeding the cat when we went away fishing. Perhaps I have not indicated to Jack how much I did appreciate his friendship. Then along came CHRIS MICHAELOPOULOS who helped me care for Dad and became almost part of the family and I could never thank him enough for what he did for Dad and me. Being Best Man at my wedding however seemed to be a sort of symbolic good bye as he handed me over to the best friend I will ever have, the love of my life, my wife Helena. I have not seen either Jack or Chris for months. It is a pity that guys who are friends before they get married drift apart afterwards.



Robin Johnson



Wynne Whiteford

Yes, I have made many friends in sf circles, both fans and customers. JOHN and MONICA LITCHEN for instance who along with Cedric Rowley moved to warmer climates in Queensland. John bought lots of books from me, but was also a friend and confidant beyond average friendship over the years of our acquaintance. The same goes for ROBIN JOHNSON who was a friend in need indeed and he knows how much I appreciated what he tried to do for me. Likewise TONY SANDER, another old *MSFC* friend from the '60s, now living in Sydney, but still a loyal friend and supporter, endeavouring now to help me sell some of my old books via the Internet. Financially or business wise, many people like the late COLIN WATSON and Frank Bryning, and many others who bought books from me or endeavoured to help in my bookselling efforts. KEN OZANNE for instance and KEITH CURTIIS, whose expert knowledge regarding the real worth of old sf and f volumes has been invaluable and he did a great job for me as auctioneer at CINECON, as he did for many other cons.

With the end of the century and the millenium on the horizon I just wanted to let people know that I have valued their friendship over the years. I want to wish you a very Happy Christmas for 1999 and a Great New Year and I hope we all can survive the ever changing world around us. We have all lived through amazing times, but being science fiction devotees, as most people reading this are, has helped us a little to understand them. Now let us enjoy more "things to come".

THE NEXT ISSUE OF RUBBISH BIN(NS):

I had hoped to include my comments on AUSSIECON3 World SF Convention in this issue, but delay in getting photographs printed has forced me to plan a special issue on the con for January 2000.