

\*brg\* No. 10 for ANZAPA is a magazine written and published by Bruce Gillespie, 59 Keele Street, Collingwood, Victoria 3001, Australia (note change of address) (phone (03) 419-4797) for the February 1994 mailing of ANZAPA.

If you are not a current member of ANZAPA and are wondering why you are receiving this little fanzine it's because I did not greet you properly when you took the trouble to appear in the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Mailing of ANZAPA. Later in this issue I comment on your contribution.

## THAT'S ALL I HAD TO SEE FOR ME TO SAY

### MAILING No. 153, August 1993

#### Perry Middlemiss: HARD YAKKA No. 3

ANZAPAcON II was the best convention I've been to since before Aussiecon I. It was not a true relaxacon in the American style (*no* program at all). Good. The program items came at the right time, and were entertaining. Perry, you were a fine MC.

Highlight of the convention was the appearance of Gary Mason, plus his slides. Gary's mellowed with the years, but the slides show that none of us has improved in appearance. (I admit that Lee Harding has changed little.) Irwin's slides were also entertaining. So was seeing for the first Antifan film for the first time in many years.

The ANZAPA collation and the roaring restaurant night and the endless natter and the appearance of people I hadn't seen for anything up to ten years gave an extra buzz to the event. Australia should bid for a Corflu or Ditto (see Lucy Huntzinger in the latest mailing).

Alan Stewart was always there

in the background providing backup. He has his reward: an ANZAPA waiting list. Welcome to all the new/old ANZAPAns.

Also congratulations to Kim Huett for tracking down former members; some of the Believed Lost have even rejoined.

#### Alan Stewart: YTERBIUM No. 25

I've never used an ATM machine. Perhaps it's because I would need to memorise my PIN number to use one. I find it very hard to remember numbers.

At the beginning of December, the Fitzroy branch of what was the State Bank closed. In the compulsory move to the Collingwood branch of the Commonwealth Bank, the system severed the connection between my Visa Card, which I need to operate my ordinary account, and the ATM computer. Three weeks of complaining and fuss ended only when the Commonwealth finally sent me a new Visa Card (only a few weeks after issuing me the old one) and ordered me to destroy

all earlier cards. Friends were telling us that the Commonwealth's policy on overdrafts is much nastier than was the State Bank's. The Great Bank Swindle of the 1980s continues.

#### Books Read since the Last Time I Listed 'Books Read'

(i.e. the last week of July 1993)

\* = Recommended.

\*\* = Highly recommended.

- \*\* *Missing Joseph* (Elizabeth George) 1993
- \*\* *Death Qualified* (Kate Wilhelm) 1991
- *Seven Kinds of Death* (Kate Wilhelm) 1992
- \*\* *Justice for Some* (Kate Wilhelm) 1993
- \* *The Hills Are Dancing* (Kate Wilhelm and Richard Wilhelm) 1986
- \*\* *One Foot in Heaven* (Hartzell Spence) 1941
- \* *Force and Fraud: A Tale of the Bush* (Ellen Davitt) 1865
- *Crosstown Traffic* (edited by Stuart Coupe, Julie Ogden and Robert Hood) 1993
- \*\* *The Ganges and its Tributaries* (Christopher Cyrill) 1993
- *The Golden* (Lucius Shepard) 1993
- \* *Evolution Annie and Other Stories* (Rosaleen Love) 1993
- \*\* *The Invention of the World* (Jack Hodgins) 1977
- \*\* *Cruel and Unusual* (Patricia D. Cornwell) 1993
- \*\* *Fraud* (Anita Brookner) 1992

- \*\* *Up On All Fours* (Philip Hodgins) 1993
- \* *Friday the Rabbi Slept Late* (Harry Kemelman) 1964
- \*\* *The Hollowing* (Robert Holdstock) 1993
- \*\* *Deathdeal* (Garry Disher) 1993
- \* *Selected Poems* (Elizabeth Riddell) 1992
- \* *Terror Australis* (edited by Leigh Blackmore) 1993
- *Intimate Armageddons* (edited by Bill Congreve) 1992
- \*\* *The Age of Innocence* (Edith Wharton) 1920
- \*\* *The MD: A Horror Story* (Thomas M. Disch) 1991
- \*\* *Works of Edith Wharton* (incl. \*\* 'Ethan Frome' and
- \*\* *The House of Mirth* (1905)
- \*\* *Complicity* (Iain Banks) 1993
- \*\* *Murder at Home: Crimes for a Summer Christmas No. 4* (edited by Stephen Knight) 1993
- \*\* *Night of Light* (Philip José Farmer) 1957/1966
- \* *The Ern Malley Affair* (Michael Heyward) 1993
- *Stand on Zanzibar* (John Brunner) 1969
- \*\* *Burn Marks* (Sara Paretsky) 1990
- \*\* *Dark Verses and Light* (Tom Disch) 1991
- \*\* *Mortal Fire* (edited by Terry Dowling and Van Ikin) 1993
- \*\* *The Shooting Party* (Isobel Colegate) 1980

I read far too many review copies in 1993: reviews for *The Melbourne* (recently renamed from *The Melbourne Report*) and *SF Commentary* (a mighty edifice of a column, although I had to leave it out of the most recent issue). Only when I turned to the great American writer Edith Wharton did I recover the joy of reading Great Novels. There are other highlights, but 1993 belongs to Edith Wharton. And to female writers in general: Patricia Cornwell just gets better, and Sara Paretsky is always fun to read. In the October mailing I published the result of all that reading of Kate Wilhelm. The article has still not been published elsewhere.

As for *your* list, Alan: I've read

only *The Weird Colonial Boy*. My review appeared in the most recent issue of *SF Commentary*.

I haven't seen any of those movies except *Diva*. (I'm one of the few people who doesn't like it.)

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**Lyn McConchie:**  
**FAN'ATIC No. 35**

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Jean sold me a copy of *Farming Daze* during ANZAPACON, but I confess that I haven't read it yet. Best of luck for it in America.

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**David Grigg:**  
**GRILLED PTERODACTYL No. 3**  
**FANFARONADE No. 2**

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I suspect that I have a copy of *foolsgold* No. 3. But how could I ever find it in our house?

I would like to keep up to date my list of everybody else's versions of songs written or recorded by the Rolling Stones. (Last week I bought *No Alternative*, an anthology of indie/alternative/grunge bands performing mostly unlistenable songs, but sure enough, there was a group called the Goo Goo Dolls with quite a good version of 'Bitch'. Another for the list.)

King Wah was still an excellent restaurant during the 1980s, then slowly disintegrated during its last year. The door has been closed for more than two years, but nothing has been done with the premises. Sally and John and we visit the Eastern Inn in Clifton Hill quite often. The food is good, especially compared with Chinese restaurants in the city, but it's too far off the track of most fans to establish it as a gathering spot. (Unless, of course, you want to join us on a Friday night. If so, ring first (419-4797), since quite often we fail

to get there.)

I listen to radio so persistently that I find it hard to believe that anybody could have avoided the original *Hitchhiker's Guide* series. It was already popular on radio and had been repeated several times before the TV series or the books began to appear.

And thanks again for the invitation to your forty-second birthday. On my fortieth birthday, Jenny Bryce gave me a mug that said: **'Life begins at 40.** And so does cosmetic surgery, bladder trouble, high fibre diets, liver spots, hair replacement treatments, sitz baths, eczema and senility.' Ho ho ho. True. My hair thins and goes grey. (No hair replacement treatments for me.) Liver spots appear. Incipient senility gets worse. I'm on a diet that might prevent me becoming totally obese by the time I'm fifty. But *that* birthday is now only three years away!

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**Michael O'Brien:**  
**MODULE No. 102**

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It would have been a triumph for ANZAPACON to lure the elusive Michael O'Brien from Tasmania. If you had arrived, we could have set up an impromptu panel about the 1968 Melbourne Conference.

What is the connection between the 1968 Conference and mowing lawns? I'll give the answer next mailing.

I like your list of Ten Favourite Films better than the ones chosen by the Collected Radio National Audience. I've seen all your films except *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (but Dick Jensen tells me it is now available on laser disc) and *La Dolce Vita*. All the others are favourites of mine, but only a couple are on my list:

- 1 *It's a Wonderful Life* (Frank Capra)

- 2 *This Sporting Life* (Lindsay Anderson)
- 3 *The Birds* (Alfred Hitchcock)
- 4 *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick)
- 5 *The Leopard* (Luchino Visconti)
- 6 *A Canterbury Tale* (Michael Powell and Emric Pressburger)
- 7 *Mon Oncle* (Jacques Tati)
- 8 *Singing in the Rain* (Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly)
- 9 *The Trial* (Orson Welles)
- 10 *Wings of Desire* (Wim Wenders)

Since February 1989, when I last made an attempt at a Top Ten, two films have entered: *A Canterbury Tale* and *Wings of Desire*. The two that dropped out were Orson Welles' *Othello* and Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Since 1989 I've become a fanatical admirer of the films of the Archers (Powell and Pressburger), so No. 11 would now probably be *I Know Where I'm Going*, with *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* not far behind. (Yes, I like *The Red Shoes* a lot, but not enough to pick it in my Top Ten.)

Jan Epstein, a Melbourne critic, called *Wings of Desire* the best film of the last twenty years. My list does not dispute that claim. It has two films from the 1940s, two films from the 1950s, five from the 1960s (although I sneer at sixties films), none from the 1970s, and *Wings of Desire* from the 1980s.

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**Bruce Gillespie:**  
\*BRG\* No. 8

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Keith Glass has not rejoined 'High in the Saddle'. I don't know what's happened to him, since he doesn't seem to be performing around Melbourne at the moment. Dave Dawson has a new partner, whose name I've never caught.

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**Weller:**  
**BURY MY SOUL AT EXIT 63**

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I didn't think anybody could write a funny report about her own mammogram, but you managed it, Weller.

'Wet Dogs'. If asked for a name for a truly horrific horror movie, that's what I'd pick. 'The Weekend to Hell' was very funny; also the basis for a good working script for a horror movie: *The House of Spiders*.

Even as Joseph Nicholas could never live in Australia because of our lack of access to the British weeklies, many Australians could not live in America without access to the ABC or SBS news, or to *The Age* or the *Sydney Morning Herald*. I like to find out about the important events in most of the rest of the world without doing too much research. I abandoned the local edition of *Time* when it could no longer be relied upon to report all those interesting events that were missed by *The Age*.

The only useful newspaper I found in America twenty years ago (during My American Trip) was the *Houston Chronicle*, not because it was a good newspaper, but because it filled space by printing at random huge numbers of small items picked from the wire services. During the four months I was in America, it was the only American newspaper that carried any information about Australia.

I did find in the large cities, however, a service that's unavailable here: newsagents carrying the British weeklies only a day after they are published.

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**Jenny Glover:**  
**THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT**

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I thought people being shot in

parks only happened in American series about Los Angeles. Spooky. The main danger of walking in our local park is being met by vast, fast, slobbering dogs. A sign in the park tells people to keep all animals on leads. Instead, the locals treat it as a dog exercise yard. If I see any dog in sight, I walk around the park. (I have a deep fear of dogs in general, and of leapers and bouncers in particular.)

I find it expensive to get bromides made. While the *Melburnian* editor, Phil Pianta, is kind to me, I can get a limited number of them done free. I've had some made for the Roger Weddall issue (only a year late, but perhaps out Real Real Soon Now). Perhaps I should publish a few pages of Oz fan photos. Anybody want to gather the photos and lay them out? I don't have the money to buy a scanner; or rather, I do have the money, but spending it would wipe out the amount I've saved to publish the next *TMR*.

For all I know, *Sylvania Watters* might be accurate (but of Sydneyites, not Melbourne persons). Fans are hardly typical Australians. Most of us read books. Many of us are literate. Many of us have escaped from the football religion (although a number still seem afflicted by the cricket religion). Those of us who have spare cash tend to spend it on books, computer games, videos, magazines, CDs, and more books, while large numbers of typical Australians (those still employed) (those who would admit they are typical Australians) seem to spend money on their cars, houses and furniture, or even a bit on the races.

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**Lin Wolfe:**  
**MY BUTCHER IS A  
SCIENTOLOGIST**

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The trouble is that you weren't kidding when you said 'hello' and 'goodbye'. I still haven't heard how you got on in Canberra (especially the 'lust' bit).

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**Perry Middlemiss:**  
**BLUE No. 1**

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A fan who doesn't like cats? You should have yourself preserved and placed on display at the next national convention. I don't have much choice about liking cats. And yes, ours are all neutered, although Oscar doesn't seem to realise this, since he keeps trying to rape Theodore. Cats are peculiar (even a little queer).

If Elaine and I competed to find out who reads the most books each year, I would always win. That's because Elaine reads *New Scientist* every week, every word, which leaves little time for reading books. I don't read every word of the magazines I buy (including *Rolling Stone*, *Gramophone* and *Q*) but skim them for the information I want. I've long since given up reading the sf magazines.

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**Justin Semmel:**  
**PURPLE TOUPEE No. 2**

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Why spare us 'common or garden type angst'? I've filled entire fanzines with it.

Angst is good copy. Value it. Enjoy it. Toss it up in the air and play with it. *You can't drop all those hints without telling us what all your pain and suffering is about!* Have mercy on us gossip-maniacs, Justin.

I had completely forgotten about the early 1970s incarnation of *The Metaphysical Review* until you reminded me of it. I think there were only three or four issues, but it worked quite nicely. The present incarnation of *TMR* has never quite achieved the style of the first. *Supersonic Snail* was a late 1970s version of my non-sf fanzine. Given the current schedule of *The Metaphysical Review*, *Supersonic Snail* would have been a better title for it.

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**Leanne Frahm:**  
**SLAYDOMANIA No. V**

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There, there, Leanne. The nasty lady did not even mention your story in her review of *Terror Australis*. I bet she didn't even read it. The stories she actually talks about were every bit as bad as she said. Bill Congreve's story was putrid, as was Leigh Blackmore's 'The Hourglass'.

I haven't reviewed *Terror Australis* yet for *The Melburnian* or *SF Commentary*, so I can't quote my review. *Terror Australis* is a lot better than Bill Congreve's *Intimate Armageddons*, which has only Rosaleen Love's non-horror story 'Holiness' to give it a lift. Marie de Gornay might well have enjoyed, if she had had the patience to find them, your story (memorable, but not as rich or subtle as the story in *Mortal Fire*), Terry Dowling's 'The Daemon Street Ghost-Trap' (my favourite story in the book), Paul Lindsey's 'The Wolves Are Running' (although he had a much better story in a recent *Tirra Lima*), Louise M. Steer's 'Losing Faith', Sean Williams' 'Twist of the Knife', Greg Egan's 'Neighbourhood Watch' and, of course, the gloriously over-the-top 'Anzac Day', whose missing last paragraph nearly caused a

great rift between Cherry Wilder and the editor and publisher.

Elaine and I have just signed up with the Life. Be In It diet plan because it was the only one highly recommended in a recent *Choice* article. It was recommended because it does not sell fancy foods and it does not try to get you to lose weight fast. (It was also the only program whose representative told the *Choice* researcher that she did not need to lose weight.)

The idea of the Life. Be In It program is to lose weight slowly and keep up one's BMR (basal metabolic rate) with regular exercise. If there's no permanent lifestyle change, the flab will go on again. The dieter is supposed to eat as much as he or she likes — of the right foods. We can have a 'night off' once a week. We've switched to fruit and ricotta cheese for snacks, since our snacks (dare I admit it?) of margarine, peanut butter and honey sandwiches seem to have been the main flab culprit. I now put in my cup of coffee a sugar substitute called Splenda instead of real sugar.

Why couldn't we do this on our own?

- Because some of the elements of the food pattern were surprising to us. For instance, I'm supposed to leave fruit juice alone, although sometimes I need it for its sugar hit. Haven't stuck to that one. We wouldn't have known about a tasty low-fat cheese like ricotta without talking to the dietitian. It's no good going off particular foods; there must always be substitutes available.
- Because the program offers a doctor's examination plus a weekly consultation with the dietitian until the aimed-for weight loss has been achieved, plus lots of information about nutrition and exercise.

We've just begun. The kilos have started to come off, but there are an awful lot of them to lose. Elaine and I were recommended to lose 20 kg (over

40 lb) each. Over the next six months, not over a few weeks. We'll see. I haven't had a permanent weight loss of any kind since 1982, and overall I've put on weight regularly since 1979. Any diet that reverses the trend will be a miracle.

So congratulations on losing 45 lb!

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**Family Hryckiewicz:  
Q76**

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Sounds as if you, Richard, are equipped to write one of those science fiction stories about the difficulty of communicating with aliens. Now all you need is one of the dinky little translation computers.

Elaine is dislikes perfume so much that once or twice she has almost walked out of a concert rather than stay near the source of the perfume. At the Kronos Quartet concert, I had a seat a fair way from Elaine, so we were able to swap seats at interval. I barely noticed the offending perfume.

Elaine is also allergic to wheat, but not to gluten. She found this out by paying close attention to specific elements in her diet. This has enabled her to track down some particularly virulent allergies, such as those to beef and veal, and to raw tomato.

A proper allergy analysis should put you off almost everything in your current diet, then reintroduce items one by one. This is a good way to lose weight quickly, but (as I found) the weight goes back on again as your diet returns to normal.

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**Dick and Leah Smith:  
WORDSMITHS 4**

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The nicest image in the mailing

is certainly that of the Rain Train spraying while walking itself down the driveway. I don't know if such devices are sold in Australia.

Elaine is the digger in our family, which is good, since we would never have done anything with our new block of land if she hadn't been. My mental block is not so much against digging as against bending down to pick up the endless variety of junk that has come out of the ground in the new garden. Until I lose girth, I will not bend.

Our garden, as some may remember, was a car park for a few years, and before that a house. But long before *that*, from the late nineteenth century to 1911, were two tiny houses. When they were pulled down, most of the bricks were dumped into the ground as a solid foundation for the new house. So far, Elaine has dug up five large skiploads of bricks and other material, including broken china dolls and willow pattern plates, and pre-1900 coins.

Despite the junk in it, despite its being covered by houses for nearly a century, the soil is fertile and well drained. Early this year Elaine grew all our vegetables for nearly four months. She's planted a whole lot for the new season, and we're already eating our own potatoes and radishes. We've had silver beet (Swiss chard) growing continually throughout 1993. Some vegetables taste much the same as those bought in the fruit shop, but home-grown carrots taste much better than bought; so do tomatoes, silver beet, radishes and pumpkins.

Sorry to hear that you fell ill during the Australian trip. I hadn't heard how the last part of it went, so I'll wait for your DUFF report.

Another horrendous cat story! I can hardly bear to read

on. Max returned okay — good. Our Sophie once disappeared for eight days. When she returned, she had hardly lost any weight. Because she smelled strongly of machine oil, we guessed that she had been shut in a factory and ate mice the whole time. We've never found out the real story.

As a fanzine fan, I'm prepared to be 'hostile and elitist' in guarding the sanctity of the fan lounge. Sounds like fun. The only trick is to reach another worldcon so that I can sit in the fan lounge.

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**Sally Yeoland:  
LE CHAT PARTI No. 4**

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I've already told you in person how much I'm enjoying your story about before, during and after meeting John. More of an epic than a Gillespie fanzine sob story. Funnier than a Bang-sund fanzine. More astonishing than a Royal exposé.

No wonder you escaped from Hobart. What a horrifying fate they had planned for you. I would like to meet the people you mention in your article, such as Barbara Lonergan. I had not understood until I read your article why you have a connection with John Hepworth.

Also I would like to meet the Sally of the late 1960s. I realise that she's not completely different from the Sally of the 1980s and the 1990s, but she certainly led a wilder life. From what I remember of myself during the sixties, if we had met then I probably would have disapproved of your lifestyle and been bemused by your politics. I still had all that changing to do from 1970 to 1973. I was very shy, even after joining fandom, and I didn't drink alcohol until December 1972.

But I see parallels. In Octo-

ber 1972, while I was still living with my parents, I applied for a job in Canberra. I was interviewed affably, but in December 1972 the government changed. The job was formally readvertised, I formally reapplied, and I was offered the job in May 1973, a week after moving into my flat at Carlton Street. So I turned down the job, and went freelance instead. But it was only a series of accidents that stopped me moving to Canberra in early 1973.

Everybody needs a Roslyn Price in their life. I had several, including Lee Harding and John Bangsund (for reasons given in my essay 'How I Became a Fanzine Editor'), Owen Webster, who introduced me to wine and a certain kind of intellectual and emotional freedom that I'd never allowed myself, and Gerald Murnane, who without meaning to taught me many of the more useful skills I've needed since. Owen died in 1975, but I've kept in contact with the others.

I also became involved with the 'wrong kind of person'. The first two women I felt strongly for were married and American. One went back to America, and the other stayed there while I had to come home. I tried living with a woman whose temperament was too much like mine, so the experiment lasted two months. Only extreme luck and some perseverance led me eventually to Elaine. That story is partly told in the next *Metaphysical Review*.

I also miss *Nation Review*. There is no good Australian journalism left. *The Age* is pathetic rightist rubbish, except when it decides to sympathise loudly with a Downtrodden Group of the Week. I'm sure any number of journalists have information that could destroy Kennett right now, but there's nowhere for them to publish. All we need is another left-wing

millionaire to revive *Nation Review*.

As happened with you, *Nation Review* proved most useful when I took advantage of its D-Notice column. Not that either meeting led to anything, but one of the women I met (also American; long since returned to California, where she met and married a Tasmanian) still writes to me occasionally.

Nobody would describe me as an old softie — but there's nothing I like more than a story of meeting leading to True Love. Put the hanky away, Gillespie. 'The following week I decided to ring John at work. . . .' Thanks for this tale, Sally, and the story of meeting George Turner for the first time.

I've already written my life story in various fanzines. Can't wait for the next episode of yours.

Alan Stewart seemed interested in doing an oral history of Melbourne fandom. All (all!) he needs to do is get Race Mathews, Lee Harding, Dick Jensen and John Foyster in the same room, put a tape recorder in front of them, and transcribe the conversation. Listening to Race and Dick reminisce about the early days (including the two or three years before the Melbourne Science Fiction Club was formed) was wonderful, but I could hardly take down notes over the dinner table.

Re. the School Reunion: My point was that at school I had no friends except David Cook during the brief time he was there. The surprise was making some new friends as a result of the reunion. It was also pleasant to catch up with David as well.

I know I say this all the time, but I'll repeat it here: 'Black-and-white is the poetry of the cinema; colour is its prose.' I didn't invent that, but I wish I had. Not that my choices are

consistent, of course: five of my Top Ten Films (see the list I prepared for Mike O'Brien) are in colour, and some sections of *Wings of Desire* are in colour.

Whitlam? He was only trying to catch up with twenty years of things that needed doing desperately. His problems were practical, rather than theoretical:

- Ministers up to and including Cairns were willing and able to take actions that were unsanctioned or unsuspected by Whitlam, and sections of the government were at odds with other sections.
- The Senate could block supply, and Fraser was willing to do so. If that had not happened, Whitlam could have kept going until the 1977 election. With Hayden as Treasurer he might have won that election. It's all speculation.

Only now do we realise that Fraser prevented his own government from carrying out all the ghastly policies that many of his ministers recommended. Hawke put them all into place instead.

So I don't see current Labor as 'middle of the road'. We are faced by two far-right parties, one of them knowing what it can get away with, and one of them capable of extreme looniness. I despise all their policies, and would reverse most of them if I were in power. (The Greens, who are actually middle to upper middle-class centre left, seem far-left to many people because of the skewed nature of the current political situation.)

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**Terry Frost:**  
**THE TOTAL ANIMAL SOUP**  
**OF TIME No. 7**

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I agree with you about religions, which is why I would recommend James Morrow's *Only Begotten Daughter* for jolly bedtime reading.

Great trip report. I enjoyed

the vivid geography lesson as well as the funny and dramatic bits. I haven't read anything better anywhere about travelling over the Nullarbor.

Your article should be eligible for the **Roger Weddall Memorial Award for Best Fanzine Article of the Year**. I propose that this award should replace the Atheling Award (which I invented, so I can de-invent it), but that instead of being a popular award it should be voted on by a panel of three people who undertake to read every article published in every Australian fanzine during the year.

Okay, it's just an idea. But such an award would reward fine pieces of writing such as yours and many other ANZAPA contributions, and would solve the Atheling problem of years when nobody can think of an interesting critical article to nominate.

Yes, we might move to Adelaide (escape the Grand Prix!) if anybody there employed editors.

No, I won't ever travel to Western Australia by car. Ten minutes in a car is enough for me; an hour is my limit.

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**Jeanne Mealy:**  
**LAND OF 10,000 LOONS**

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Australian place names have one oddity: being located South, North, East or West of another town that doesn't exist. The best-known example is Neerim South in Gippsland. There is no Neerim.

Also we have the most pessimistic mountains in the world: Mount Disappointment, Mount Hopeless, etc. You can just see those nineteenth-century explorers crying into their tea after they reach the top of yet another boring, tedious, hope-

lessly disappointing mountain.

The last time Elaine and I were almost unemployed was during the 1981-3 recession. We survived because Elaine had received a legacy in 1981 and because her father helped with the house payments. Somehow we got through until Elaine got a proof-reading job and I began to get major freelance editing jobs. What I remember most clearly was feeling so useless that I spent little time on my hobbies. I seemed to have less 'free time' than I have now. I didn't produce a genzine for three years, and did little for ANZAPA. A million people in Australia have lots of free time, and few of them want it. The best wishes I can offer is to hope that you and John can hang on until your fortunes change for the better.

Thanks very much for the photos of Roger and friends. More, please.

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**Cath Ortlieb:**  
**YOU REALLY KNOW YOU'RE HOME WHEN YOU FIND A WOMBAT IN YOUR BED**  
**No. 28**

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I've never been to a football match. Your description of attending the Melbourne/Adelaide match persuades me never to bother.

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**Julian Warner:**  
**¡SPLA! No. 2**

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Elaine and I were invited to Vincon, but I didn't feel up to four hours travelling in a car to Coonawarra. A pity. I suppose I'll never see that area, or most other areas of Australia. One day when I become dictator of Australia I will reopen the closed-down railways and build

new railways to all the areas that don't have them. Nobody else might use them, but at least I might be able see Australia. (But surely there's some kind of *air* service to Coonawarra?)

Elaine says that she won't write about her life before Bruce. But keep asking her.

Friends of ours, skint at the time, paid Franklin Gothic instalments adding up to several hundred dollars for umpteen cassettes containing what was claimed to be 'the complete' Toscanini recordings. Maybe, but they were earlier, inferior concert recordings of the pieces that RCA released later on CD in its 'complete' Toscanini set.

I could certainly tell tales about the fickleness of publishers like Norstrilia Press: manuscripts unread for six months, correspondence unanswered for a year, books never sent to shops that ordered them, etc. Our excuse was that we were three people who each had a day job. Carey at one time was interested enough in NP to do most of the legwork of publishing books. What none of us wanted to do was read the slush pile of manuscripts that budding sf writers sent us. In our nine years of publishing books, we gained only two titles from the slush pile: Greg Egan's *An Unusual Angle* and Jay Bland's *Lavington Pugh*. We sought the others (*Moon in the Ground* and *The Dreaming Dragons*), commissioned them (*In the Heart or in the Head* and *Dreamworks*) or were offered them as packages (*Altered I*, *Stellar Gauge*, etc.) I suspect all Australian publishers work in much the same way.

Elaine last made haggis in 1979 or 1980. It tasted good, but takes forever to make.

Owen Whiteoak gafiated melodramatically and absolutely about three years ago.

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I never write mailing comments for FAPA, my other apa, because its average mailings are the same size as the **GIANT TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY MAILING**. Will I get through this mailing?

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## MAILING No. 154, TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY MAILING, October 1993

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### Margaret Arnott: NOTTOC

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It's a while now since Adelaide fans said that you had gafiated completely. Now here you are back in ANZAPA as a member. Welcome.

I can't bear temperatures above 21°C, so I couldn't live in Darwin. Melbourne weather without summer heat is my ideal, but some summers are not ideal.

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### Alan Bray: A BOY'S OWN RIPPING SCIENCE FICTION ODYSSEY

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It was great to meet you at ANZAPACON for the first time in many years, Alan, and to meet Lesley for the first time.

I read mainly books by Enid Blyton when I was a kid, and I recall that they were better written than the children's books you quote. I also read the occasional 'space story', but did not find what I was really looking for until I read Edgar Rice Burroughs' *A Princess of Mars*. Only when I had read all the Mars books and as many Tarzan books as possible did I begin to investigate the science fiction shelves on the 'Adults' side of the library. That was when I was thirteen or fourteen. Until then, the only real science fiction I had encountered had been on the radio: G. K. Saunders' 'Marriners' serials for the

ABC, and a few of the never-ending serials on commercial radio. None of the authors you mention could still be found on children's library shelves in the 1950s.

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### John Brosnan: SON OF WHY BOTHER? No. 4

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I've already heard a lot of this from your letters, but thanks for official ANZAPA version. I know your flat well, since I stayed there with Chris Priest in January 1974. It was the largest English residence (apart from the Aldisses' Heath House, of course) that I visited. It was the only one in which I felt I could move freely from room to room without hitting a door frame or falling up stairs.

If you're all still at Ortygia House, at least now I know how to reach Colin Greenland. I've finally been able to get hold of his book *The Entropy Exhibition*, a study of the heyday of Moorcock's *New Worlds*. And I hope to get hold of a review copy of his latest novel.

You asked for this:

- Ron Clarke is much the same as usual, but has now split up with Sue.
- Gary Mason lives in Adelaide. He turned up at ANZAPACON, very mellow and amusing and full of stories about his own and others' exploits as ANZAPA Official Bloody Editor.
- Peter Darling has been for many years married to the lady you knew as Elizabeth Foyster (responsible for the famous 'Why bother?'). We see them from time

to time at Musica Viva concerts.

- Robin Johnson lives in Hobart and is married to Alicia.
- I've not heard of the Dowdens since they went on the bus trip.
- Terry Hughes was one of the highlights of Aussiecon II, but he has since gafiated. Ted White might know where he lives and why he gafiated.
- Paul Stevens lives in Perth, where he works in the book section of Myer. He moved there when he married Kit, but the marriage broke up.
- Shayne McCormack has been sighted by Sydney fans, but she didn't make it to ANZAPACON.

I've never seen *Carnosaur*. I've seen most your books under your own name, but early this year Gollancz cut *SF Commentary* off its review-copy list after twenty-four years. I've sent a letter to Richard Evans reminding him that the latest issue of *SFC* is half filled with reviews of Gollancz books; maybe I'll get back on the list.

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### Ken Bull: REMINISCENCES

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Hi, Ken. Although I wasn't a comics fan, and still am not, I've always missed your contributions to ANZAPA.

Ron Clarke in *The Mentor* is currently repeating Vol Molesworth's history of Australian fandom (which is actually a history of Sydney fandom in the forties and early fifties). It's worth writing to Ron at PO Box K490, Haymarket, NSW 2000. I know of no history of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club,



but there are still people around who could write it.

Noel Kerr put those layout skills to best use in his *Somerset Gazette*, which won the Ditmar for Best Fanzine in 1970. It's a pity that he lost interest in fanzine publishing.

In 1969 it cost about \$10 a side (say, 300 copies) to have a fanzine printed offset. At that price, I could barely afford a printed cover. Today the price is about \$15 a side: in real terms, about one-seventh the cost. No wonder I've abandoned my duplicator for offset printing, and most fans now use photocopiers or commercial printers. Not that I would have much success if I had kept my mighty Roneo: duplicating ink, paper and stencils are now almost impossible to buy.

The problem with fanzine publishing is that postal costs have kept up with the inflation rate. The most recent *SF Commentary* cost \$1750 to print 300 copies of a 120-page issue, and about \$900 to post.

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**Ron Clarke:  
ANNIVERSARIES**

---

As John Brosnan and I were saying about you, Ron. . . . It's nice to find out all that information on Sydney fandom(s). Not a word of or from them ever escapes to Melbourne. Bill Congreve and Leigh Blackmore, for instance, were unknown to me until they published their anthologies. I just wish someone in Sydney would publish a fanzine, or even something that contained the personal information one finds in *Ethel the Aardvark* or *Thyme*. If some Sydneyite is publishing such a fanzine, he or she is not sending it to me.

How can you, Ron, cover twenty-five years of history with-

out including any personal information? I read fan-zines to hear about people, but you use your fanzines to put a big screen between yourself and your readers.

---

**Leigh Edmonds:  
WHAT? IT'S 1993 ALREADY?**

---

. . . especially as it only seems a year or two since ANZAPACON I. One of my few clear memories of that convention was asking you, Leigh, how you had managed to lose weight since I had seen you last. 'Lettuce,' you said. Since I could never come at a diet of lettuce, and since Elaine and I had just got together and were discovering good restaurants and better wines, I kept putting on weight. You, I presume, kept your nose to the lettuce.

I never managed to find a way into academia. Now that I have some idea of the dreadful theories they are teaching in English and History departments these days, I'm glad I didn't. The only subject I'd be interested in researching is science fiction, but Australian universities still don't like sf much. It would be nice to be paid to study and write instead of editing dull textbooks. Still, we've never been better off financially, and occasionally I find time to write and publish things that interest me. If I did not collect CDs, I would be rich.

---

**John Foyster:  
BEFORE ANZAPA**

---

Things haven't changed at all: the latest giant *SF Commentary* has elicited two letters of comment from Australians since October. The overseas copies, posted in mid December, have

already brought in a half dozen letters.

I had heard whispered rumours that you were very ill during the 1950s, but this is the first time you have written about the problem. Thanks. Along with the rest of the baby boomers, I was inoculated against poliomyelitis in 1953, but doctors who investigated my back problem (Sherman's disease) suggested that I might have suffered from a slight case of polio during my early childhood. If so, my parents didn't notice it. Sherman's disease still causes me problems.

Okay, okay, just what excuse can you and Race Mathews and Dick Jensen offer for *not* writing the history of Australian fandom? All this information in your head, and this is the first I've heard of much of it. Okay, you are all too busy; but the service of history is more important than present concerns.

---

**Leanne Frahm:  
SLAYDOMANIA No. 6**

---

Meeting you was a great delight of ANZAPACON I, and I hoped against hope that I would see you again fifteen years later. Not so. How disappointing. When I saw you at Aussiecon II, you were gritting your teeth, afflicted by all those tasks for which you had inadvertently volunteered.

We've never had an obscure phone call, but we had some heavy-breathing calls about fifteen years ago. Recently we received what we thought were heavy-breathing calls. Not so. A Vietnamese family with no English had been given our number by mistake (or, I realised later, the Sydney equivalent of our number). The first few times they called, all they could do was breathe heavily. The next

few times they asked for the person they wanted. After about five calls they realised they had been given the wrong number.

Odd how it takes a person at least the first forty years of life to discover that, yes, 'Life is a series of acts committed for survival'.

During my one-and-only world trip, I was surprised at the ease with which a person with no sense of direction (me) mastered the public transport system in each city. The main exception was New York, whose amalgamated private underground train systems still operate separately although they are owned by the one public authority. It also has a baffling system of express and local (five stops in a row) trains. In London, the main problem in 1974 was to gain any sense of direction when *above* ground, because there was only one tall building in the entire city. This situation might have changed. The easiest way to go anywhere was to abandon walking and catch the tube; it disgorged you just where the map said it would. When I was last there, Adelaide's bus system was very easy to work out. Even I managed to get around in Sydney. Melbourne's system is currently afflicted, like everything else in Victoria, by Kennettism: you have no idea how late the next bus, tram or train will be, or whether it will turn up at all. Currently trams are not even running to timetables.

The only 'sneering animosity' I reserve for smokers is when they sit next to us at a restaurant and *then* light up. No checking to see whether other people are smoking. No checking to see whether the restaurant has smoking/smoke-free zones. However, if smoke-free restaurants become compulsory, I suppose we'll rarely have dinner with John and Sally at the Eastern Inn.

Try as I might, I cannot remember any angst in *\*brg\**8. To me it seemed a nice light little zippy Gillespie fanzine. Just like this issue.

Elaine loves flowers, and plants as many of them as possible, but I can't persuade her to contribute to apas.

---

**Ian Gunn:**  
**THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE**  
**RETURNS TO HAUNT US**

---

I agree, Ian, with everything you say in your mailing comments. They make complete sense to me.

Which is not the point you are making. You don't seem to like mailing comments. But surely they are the reason for being in an apa? In the same way as the letter column is the reason for publishing a fanzine. Since I don't have time to do MCs for FAPA, I feel an outsider there. It's my fault. Because I feel much more at home in ANZAPA, I try to put some effort into mailing comments. If only I had time to do them properly.

---

**Judith Hanna:**  
**CAREER PATHS**

---

I can't find much to say to you, Judith. Sorry. If you were forced to study the state of transport in Victoria today, you would weep. What I'd really like to read is all the latest fannish gossip from Britain. Even Dave Langford is so circumspect that it's hard to read between the lines to find out what is really going on. Come back to Melbourne, Judith. Stay weeks. Let's yarn. Better still, rejoin ANZAPA.

---

**Noel Kerr:**  
**SWEET NOTHING'S SPECIAL**  
**ONE-SHOT No. 2**

---

This is the sort of fanzine/nostalgia trip that makes me glad I'm in this mailing. (But you don't mention my name, Noel. \*Sigh\*) Ken Bull remembers the old days of duplicated fanzines with horror. Only recently have I been able to graduate to laser printer/offset printing. Apart from the expense, I love every minute of working this way. This is the way I wanted to produce fanzines back in 1969, but the technology didn't exist for cheap typesetting, and offset printing was too expensive.

'Where is that excitement and expectation of the first few issues?' In the mind and spirit of the fanzine producer, Noel. I remember it well. I can't recapture it, either, but occasionally I can produce a fanzine that has the same feeling as the early ones. A real problem is that, in Australia at least, there are hardly any new fanzine producers who show the same enthusiasm that we did. (If they exist, they are not sending their magazines to me.) Ian Gunn is the most obvious exception, but I keep looking for a new Foyster, Gillespie or Ikin: someone who enjoys thinking about science fiction as well as about everything else in life.

A bit of a shock to hear about your heart attacks, Noel. Keep up your new interests and hobbies; they sound interesting enough keep you out of a hospital ward.

Nobody seems to have John Breden's address. I'm sure I wouldn't approve of whatever he's doing in Thailand, but I still wish him well. He spent so many years wandering around Melbourne waiting for something good to happen that I'm

glad he's found his nirvana in another country.

'The People You Meet' is one of those great articles that keeps me reading fanzines. Thanks very much for writing it.

---

**Lyn McConchie:**  
**FAN'ATIC No. 36**

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Re your murder mystery. All that bumf from the publishing company probably has nothing to do with your book. The editor probably did like it. Probably she (usually a she) is on the outer or is about to get the shove. What better way to put the knife in than rudely reject a novel that the lowly editor had accepted? 'Insufficiently literary.' Nothing to do with it. The publishing director (usually a he) probably 'knows' that the company 'cannot possibly' make money on a mystery novel; the lowly editor was a sentimental idiot for accepting such stuff, and what a great excuse to get rid of her!

---

**Shayne McCormack:**  
**SO YOU SAY No. 5**

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My ghod! Shayne McCormack! The person I never thought I would hear of or from again! But why didn't you automatically send me *So You Say* when you began publishing it? I'm still keeping the faith here, you know. We legendary fanzine editors have to acknowledge each other's existence, even if everybody else has forgotten us.

It's such a pity that you didn't actually write anything for and to ANZAPA. What have you been doing all these years? The last I heard, you had quit your job with Galaxy Bookshop, but I have no idea what you have been doing since.

---

**Jan MacNally:**  
**JAN KICKED AND CLAWED  
HER WAY TO THE TOP**

---

Why the fuss about names? When we got married fifteen years ago, Elaine said she was going to stay 'Elaine Cochrane', and that's how it's been. The cats are 'Gillespie' because I discovered our vet before Elaine did, and inevitably I become 'Mr Cochrane' when we go on holiday. It's best not to puzzle people who operate tourist hotels. Nobody else seems to worry about the matter, especially as almost all women who work in publishing keep their maiden names as their professional names.

Thanks for the photos.

Where were you at ANZAPACON? I thought I might get to meet you at last.

Elaine and I mentioned getting married more or less at the same time. 'Why not?' said one of us. 'Why not?' said the other. 'It can't possibly make much difference.'

---

**Terry Morris:**  
**TUPPERWARY**

---

It was wonderful meeting you again at ANZAPACON, Terry. Nice to meet Hung for the first time. I did send you the latest copy of *SF Commentary*, just as you asked. I hope it arrived, since I haven't heard from you. Or did you send a letter to my GPO box? If so, it didn't arrive. In that case, write again to my street address (given at the head of this fanzine).

Thanks for the burglary story. Nothing gives me the horrors more than the thought of burglary, but we can't inhabit the house all the time. Occasionally both of us have to leave

the house at the same time.

I enjoyed 'Saturday Night'. There is now an entire fandom of sf poets. Are you part of it? If not, Alan Stewart can tell you how to get involved.

---

**Joseph Nicholas:**  
**WHERE WE WERE,  
WHERE WE ARE**

---

Full marks to anyone with the stamina to travel widely, but I discovered during my World Trip twenty years ago that I don't have stamina. I would love to go to Iceland. There are some British fans I'd like to see again, and lots of North American fans I'd like to see again or for the first time. But it won't happen unless my entire personality changes overnight. That seems unlikely.

Your second-last paragraph is only too true. But I don't know how to do anything but publish fanzines, so I keep doing it. I just hope there are still some fanzine fans to talk to. Most of them seem to be lost to Internet.

---

**Stanslaus Rintgip:**  
**MUSTUD PIKL**

---

Careful research by Sally Yeoland discovered who Stanslaus Rintgip 'really' is. Hi, Alex. Was it really 1974? 'Dust to dust and magazines to compost.' Best line in this mailing so far. What have you been doing all these years that's been more interesting than publishing fanzines?

---

**Singular Productions:  
ANATOMICAL STUDIES  
INTERFAECES  
GOOOOODDD  
MOOORNNING ANZAPA  
YUCKIES**

---

Miro? Yes. Now that the resemblance is pointed out, I can see a slight resemblance of style. Amazing art. Jack Miro of Ford Street, Essendon, eat your heart out.

Thanks for all the filler art, Phil. I haven't quite decided which ones to request for use in *SF Commentary*.

'Yub yub yub yub' is what I sometimes say to the cats. They look at me. 'Stoopid', they say, and go back to sleep.

---

**Gerald Smith & Womble:  
LET'S PARTY**

---

We had our machine upgraded to a 486 with a 300 MB hard disc, and I was still having problems with Ventura: it took over a minute to load. Last weekend Richard Hryckiewicz reinstalled Windows, Wordstar and Ventura *after* he deleted Adobe Type Manager and all the wonderful fonts that John Foyster gave me some time ago. The trouble is that Ventura was installing these fonts every time it loaded, but for reasons nobody has been able to work out, cannot print these fonts through the laser printer. With ATM eliminated, and Windows reinstalled minus some of the faults that had developed in the WIN.INI file, the system is finally working fast.

Sally Yeoland is the only person I know who has tried working in Word, WordPerfect and (very recently) in PageMaker. I hope she does a report on the differences and similarities

between the desktop-publishing abilities of the three programs. After all that advanced problem-solving, she'd probably pick up Ventura in two hours. It took me more than six months.

---

**Alan Stewart:  
YTTERBIUM No. 26**

---

But will we ever persuade Mark Loney to tell us the real story of the Cane Toad Ditmars? I've heard his official version, but I've also heard Roger Weddall's account of Loney's account of the actual nature of that stuff-up. Now we don't have Roger's version anymore.

Oops. Sorry. I keep remembering Danse Macabre, most of which I attended, as having been in 1989, not 1990. I'm getting nervous about Conspiracy. I keep hearing stories of GoHs like Nick Stathopoulos, who rise to the occasion with performances combining the skills of Groucho Marx, Abraham Lincoln and Pablo Picasso. What will people get from me? Nothing but Bruce Gillespie: shaker of hands, greeter of long-lost souls, rememberer of fabulous fannish trivia that nobody wants to remember.

I can't work out why you, the thinnest person I know, wants to become thinner. It sounds as if your diet is the same one that Elaine and I are trying to follow. When I reach your weight, Alan, I'll throw a chocolate ice cream party for everybody who wants to turn up.

Of your book list, I've read *Bones of the Moon* (Carroll's least interesting novel) and *Warpath* (an interesting book that should have been a lot better). I haven't seen any of your 'Films' or 'TV and Video' items.

---

**James Styles:  
JAMES JOSEPH STYLES  
PERSONALZINE No. 1**

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From what I had heard about your personal life, I wouldn't have thought you would have had time for completing a BA degree. Congratulations.

But I see you have deleted all the personal details that I've heard about only from vicious rumours. It's a great autobiography you haven't written yet, James.

---

**Bruce Gillespie:  
\*BRG\* No. 9**

---

I've already had a letter of comment on 'Where Did Our Kate Go?' although the article has appeared only in ANZAPA. The letter came from Gordon Van Gelder, Kate Wilhelm's publisher at St Martin's Press, and he points out enough factual errors that I need to rewrite sections of the article before I can publish it in *SFC*. Van Gelder's letter is pretty reasonable, when you consider that I was bitching about the recent works of one of his star authors. The trouble is that any general thesis about a body of literature is bound to be rickety. I've spoiled my own case by picking Wilhelm's novella 'Children of the Wind' as my favourite piece of short fiction read during 1993.

---

**Perry Middlemiss:  
THE BEST OF ANZAPA,  
VOL. 12, 1979/80**

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*Perry*: A noble effort: the pieces reprinted are worth resurrecting. They are presented properly. The Contents list for each mailing should be eye-opening

for people who have recently joined ANZAPA.

*Helen:* Is there any way of persuading Helen Swift to write her autobiography? 'Operations Manager for the Canberra bus service . . . drinking beer with the Transport Workers Union . . . alpine ski runs . . .' are all passed off as if they are the sort of thing anybody would do on any day of the week. 'The Infamous Four Go to Yalata' should be a chapter in such a book. (Why does one stay in ANZAPA for twenty-five years? Because every few mailings somebody produces an article as good as 'Yalata': first-class writing by any standards.)

*John B.:* And Dylan is *still* around! And has more life left in him than some of our much younger cats.

*Leigh:* I've never been in the same room with either Manning Clark or Gough Whitlam (although it was my diffidence that stopped me taking up Race Mathews' invitation to attend a dinner at which Whitlam launched Race's new book). Manning Clark seemed waffly and portentous when I heard him interviewed during the promotional tours for the two volumes of his autobiography. But that was ten years after the lecture you describe in your article, and Clark died shortly after the second volume appeared.

---

**Jane Tisell:**  
**TISELLATION No. 6**

---

Doesn't everybody eat their Tim Tams this way? Except that I eat the biscuit as well.

Actually, it's years since I've eaten a Tim Tam. Elaine used to buy a packet when she was really depressed, and we would eat the lot in a minute flat. Elaine discovered a few years

ago that she has a wheat allergy, so we rarely buy biscuits these days.

You might enjoy rye bread better than rice cakes. Our local health food shop stocks Wupperbrot Pocket Rye Bread, which we find makes a tasty sandwich wrapping.

---

**LynC:**  
**LYNX No. 17**

---

We had most of our renovations done before we moved here in 1979. For the only other batch of renovations, about five years ago, we stayed in the house. Fortunately it was the middle of summer, and the builder took only a fortnight to complete the lot, but even two weeks seemed much too long to put all the sound-reproducing equipment under dustproof covers. Any other changes would depend on falling into some as-yet-unglimpsed money bin. We'd like to go out, or up, but buying the next-door block of land soaked up all the available cash.

Collingwood Council has not mentioned cat registration in any of its leaflets. I don't know what will happen when it merges with Richmond Council. Each of our cats is neutered and wears a collar, RSPCA tag, and an ear tattoo, and is kept inside at night, so we shouldn't have registration problems.

---

**Joyce Scrivner:**  
**ROMANY NEWS No. 1**

---

Why do I have to spend about \$400 for a modem and Internet fees before you will write to me, Joyce? It seems just as easy to put a stamp on a letter as to send it down the wire. I feel discriminated against. (Okay, I'm sorry I haven't yet replied to

your round-robin printed letter/fanzine of a few months ago. I'm a bit behind in answering the ordinary old posted mail.)

Thanks for the trip report. It reminds me that I did *not* get to the Boston area during my 1973 trip, although I'm sure Tony and Sue Lewis would have welcomed me. (I have lost contact with them, but I assume they are still active in NESFA.) I would like to see upstate New York and New England in general, as well as the West Coast (especially Washington and Oregon), and the touristy places like Yosemite National Park and the Grand Canyon, but I find it a challenge to travel anywhere further than Reading's Records in Carlton or the General Post Office in Melbourne.

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**Perry Middlemiss:**  
**BLUE No. 2**

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You were going to check out my collection of ANZAPA mailings, but you never turned up. There are only two gaps in my collection, one of them for 1979/80. Years 1 and 2 of ANZAPA have been sighted within this house within living memory. 'My' year (the first time I was President) is Year 4, October 1972 to August 1973, the year in which ANZAPA came closest to folding. Maybe I'll save you begging, and promise to pick the eyes out of each of the first four years. Real Soon Now.

Before he disappeared from the 1 p.m. 3LO time slot, Terry Lane was brilliant when interviewing a person whose interests coincided with his own. Since Lane's interests are extensive, many of his interviews (especially with Erik Smith, Raphael Wallfisch, Sir David Attenborough, Lesley Howard, Terence Davies, Howard Jacob-

sen, and James Moore, author of *Darwin*) have been brilliant. Unfortunately, some subjects make Terry Lane see red, but he insists on interviewing people about them anyway.

And then there was the worst interview he ever gave: with Ursula Le Guin, by phone from Portland. Ghod knows what there was in *Tehanu* to set off every buzzing button in Terry Lane's head. Ursula was as witty and delightful as ever. She did her best to give a good interview, but Lane kept butting his head against non-existent brick walls.

All you need for j is to type ASCII 173 (press the ALT key while typing 173 on the numeric keypad).

---

**Irwin Hirsh:  
NEWSPAPER TAXIS No. 7**

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Here's the awe-inspiring reason why it is a great thing to be a Fannish Historic Relic: I knew Andrew Brown when he was about five feet tall and *before* he attended ERA, and therefore *before* he met Irwin Hirsh. If that doesn't make me eligible for some kind of fannish award, I don't know what will.

Yes, I always think of killer comeback lines a quarter of an hour after I've left Justin's place.

I realise I won't make you change your mind about rejoining ANZAPA, but I can assure you that you are missing out on our best era since its first three years.

---

**Cath Ortlieb:  
YOU REALLY KNOW YOU'RE  
HOME WHEN YOU FIND A  
WOMBAT IN YOUR BED  
No. 29**

---

I wish I hadn't missed Kittycon, but I'm afraid I didn't get a lot out of Moggycon. Most people didn't know me, and I didn't know them, and somehow I couldn't find a group of people to talk to. A few of the panel items worked well, but there were some giant blank spots. It's all a matter of fannish generations: at ANZAPACON, which had much the same number of people as Moggycon, the enjoyability never stopped.

The last time I left the State of Victoria was in 1980 to travel to Adelaide for a small convention organised by Marc Ortlieb. I feel more warmly about Adelaide than I do about any other place I've visited, and I aim to get back there sometime, but it hasn't happened yet.

---

**Gary Mason:  
BUM No. 29**

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As I've said already somewhere in this magazine, meeting you for the first time in many years was one of the highlights of ANZAPACON. Somehow I had always thought that your life might be dominated by pedantry rather than geniality, but geniality won. (Except on pages 5 and 6 of *Bum*, of course.)

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**John Bangsund:  
PHILOSOPHICAL GAS  
No. 86A  
PHILOSOPHICAL GAS No. 87  
AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE  
FICTION REVIEW:  
TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY  
ISSUE**

---

Have I read most of these magazines before somewhere? Yes. In ANZAPA? That's what I can't remember. Some bits in *The Society of Editors Newsletter*, certainly. Okay, John, if you happened to have repeated bits from an earlier mailing, you'll understand if I repeat myself when replying. The worst of it is: I'll probably say the same things I said last time.

For instance: a lack of interest in sport prevents me from enjoying 'Footballs in the Sands of Time' as well as it should be appreciated.

The main reason for not writing for a living in Australia is that almost no publisher you would want to write for is willing or able to pay you a real wage for doing so. The better the writer you are, the less likely you are to get paid. An Australian might earn a subsistence wage by finding a market in New York or London, but I don't know anybody who has succeeded in such an enterprise.

So I'm almost certainly repeating myself by saying: I write because I enjoy doing it, and because it's one of the few things I enjoy doing that other people appreciate. There are some types of writing, such as fiction, that I feel I should attempt because if I succeeded I might be able to make a living from writing. But I don't like writing fiction; I do it badly; and even if I were any good at it, I doubt very much that I could make any money at it.

The trouble with the writing

that I enjoy is that doing it not only fails to earn money but it *costs* me money. In the view of almost everybody, it's an 'indulgence'. In Australia, you are not supposed to indulge yourself unless you can turn a quid from doing so. 'Good' activities must be boring and useful.

No, there's more to it than that. There's a disgusting moral element. I can't help feeling that any person should develop to the greatest extent those few or many skills that he or she was given at birth. There's my Church of Christ background; I can't get rid of it. And it's that sort of thinking that leads people, I suspect, to keep telling you, John, that you should 'write for a living'. They don't realise that almost nobody in Australia 'writes for a living'. What they *mean* is: you should be the best person you can be, which in your case means, you should write as much as you can as well as possible. To which you could reply: why should I, if nobody in this society values good writing enough to pay for it?

I agree with 'I never got the hang of it. I never really wanted to.' What always frightened me about the few writing jobs I've had is how easily I got the hang of them although I placed little value on most of the material I was paid to write.

This issue of *ASFR* is the equal of the best issues, and it's nice to have it to hand. My original copy is somewhere in the house.

Thanks for reprinting my 1976 speech. It contains the only joke I ever emitted in public. David Grigg's speech is even better. I wasn't listening to it carefully when he delivered it because all I could think about was the sunburn that covered my body after spending all day on the Portsea back beach.

Aldiss's 'Adrift in the Cryptozoic' was my favourite article from the first series of *ASFR*.

'You begin with a masterpiece; you write it down; you are left with something merely — marketable.' This is the greatest sentence ever written about being a writer.

And whatever happened to the great John McPharlin? The McPharlin who wrote the best review of *Barefoot in the Head*? The McPharlin who wrote masterly reviews of *Report on Probability A* and *The Malacia Tapestry* for *SFC*? The McPharlin whose most recent reviews were written in the 1970s and most recent fanzine articles appeared in the mid-1980s? I don't know. Even his best friends cannot answer these questions.

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**Sally Yeoland:**  
**LE CHAT PARTI No. 5**

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You really know how to enjoy your holidays, Sally. When I have time off, I never feel free to rummage around in the memorabilia. Instead I feel obliged to churn out yet another bloody fanzine.

I don't think anybody has reprinted 'Orstrilia' since I did in *SFC* in mid-1973. It ought to appear every ten years, if only to remind us of what it felt like to be part of the Whitlam era.

I keep saying I will never write fiction. But when I re-read 'Orstrilia' and come across a phrase like 'our Modest Destiny', I want to grab it immediately and write the book that goes with that book title.

'Reminiscences of fandom and other things in 1973' is the funniest and most dizzy-making toe-crinklingly nostalgic fanzine article I've read for a long while. Especially as it's nostalgia for a place and era I didn't experience. (Christmas 1973 I spent in Houston with the American lady I didn't man-

age to persuade to come back with me to Australia. I saw her last at Houston Airport on New Year's Day 1974. January 1974 I spent being rained on in Britain while I scuttled from one fanzine residence to another. I arrived home on 1 February.)

I rejoin your story when you and John came to Melbourne for your honeymoon. When I met you I said to myself, 'John's really struck lucky this time.' What I didn't realise at the time (after several years of attempting to make friends with Diane) was that I had made a new lifetime friend as well.

I would walk along the Merri Creek bike trail every day — if it were not the gigantic leaping dogs that other people take for walks along the same trail. I will walk that trail only if Elaine comes with me. She's not afraid of dogs.

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**John Harvey:**  
**GOING DOWN (UNDER)  
FOR THE THIRD TIME**

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It was great to meet you and Eve again on this trip. Your trip notes remind me of all the reasons why I probably will never travel overseas again. But keep the serial going in ANZAPA.

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**Eve Harvey:**  
**PLUS ÇA CHANGE,  
PLUS LA MÊME CHOSE**

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Although Elaine and I are now a company, we've never thought of ourselves as making a profit. We're just content to make the equivalent of two modest salaries. The only way we could make a lot of money is to work non-stop. For me, this would mean never having time for fannish activities. Also, it's no good making money unless

one invests it. (All I do is spend it.) And for this one needs a sense of where to invest wisely.

The result of our way of doing business is that we are unwilling to make long-term plans. I'm glad your plans involve spending lots of time in Australia. Maybe we can have mini-ANZAPAcns every few years.

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**John Rowley:**  
**INSERT TITLE HERE**

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John, meeting you was another highlight of ANZAPAcn, especially as I'm not sure I ever got around to talking to you much when I saw you regularly.

If you were interested in folk music, did you ever meet my sister Jeanette Gillespie? As editor of the Victorian Folk Club's newsletter, she is now at the centre of folk music activity in this state (and, it often seems to me, in Australia), but she first became interested in folk music during the early 1970s.

Australian sf is either booming (the Sean McMullen view), or the same piecemeal ho-hum structure it always was. Much of the best Australian sf is still published overseas, and few copies imported here. Much of the best Australian sf falls under the category of 'young adult fiction', and therefore few sf readers bother to buy it. Sean McMullen keeps his bibliography of Australian sf up to date: it adds up to huge numbers of authors and titles; it looks impressive.

The real situation is that publishers of young adults'/children's fiction welcome sf titles because they sell well. General publishers dislike Australian sf, because it fails to sell. There is now only one specialist sf publisher in this country: Aphelion Books. (Norstrilia Press has

come as close to non-existence as possible without actually disappearing. We'll meet orders until stocks run out.)

If you ask your average Australian sf reader which Australian sf novels or stories he or she actually values, you will often draw a blank. I have a few favourites, including George Turner's *The Sea and Summer*, Philippa Maddern's 'The Ins and Outs of the Hadhya State', Lucy Sussex's 'God and Her Black Sense of Humour', Lee Harding's *The Weeping Sky* and 'The Custodian', Leanne Frahm's 'On the Turn', and Greg Egan's *An Unusual Angle* and *Quarantine*. (And, of course, Gerald Murnane's *The Plains* and 'The Battle of Acosta Nu', no matter how much their author resists the 'sf' label.)

But many of the works that are touted as great achievements of Australian sf don't impress me much, and they don't turn up on other people's Favourites lists (for instance, the annual lists that Justin Ackroyd prints in the *Slow Glass Books Catalogue*). Talk about Australian sf in front of Australian sf readers and they say the equivalent of 'Where's the beef?'

'I wouldn't consider myself a couch potato — more a couch aubergine.' Another great line from ANZAPA.

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**David Grigg:**  
**GRILLED PTERODACTYL No. 4**  
**FANFARONADE No. 3**

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Congratulations on winning the Anzapapoll. All I was trying to do by simplifying the categories was to persuade everybody to vote. The last time I tried this system, nearly two-thirds of the members voted, but this time it was only one-third. So your proposed 25-category system might work just as effectively as mine.

The only federal voting system I could support is proportional representation. Okay, this might eliminate a wild card like Phil Cleary, but it means that if I and 9 per cent of the population vote for (say) the Greens, the Greens gain 9 per cent of the votes. And, as the recent Senate shenanigans have proved, they can upset any party's assumption that it has a 'mandate'. If we had proportional representation, I wouldn't worry much whether or not we had compulsory voting.

The film of *The Name of the Rose* did not show how the layout of the library mirrors the medieval map of the known world. Without this map, which is the centre of the book's plot, the story has no meaning. Apart from that, the film was sluggish and boring, and watchable only because of Sean Connery's performance.

None of the programs I use has a 'nanny' of the type that you describe. If I want to erase a file, Wordstar puts in one step to ask me if I really want to do so. Spellcheck works only if I ask for it, and neither Wordstar nor Ventura has a grammar check. There is an optional automatic file saver in Ventura, but I don't want to switch it on in case it interrupts the processes of Ventura itself. Ventura is a delicate beast at the best of times, but even worse when combined with Windows.

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**Merv Binns:**  
**THE RUBBISH BINNS**

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I've taken you at your word, Merv, and stopped sending you my fanzines. Just don't complain that you never hear from anybody. All knowledge is contained in fanzines, so you won't know anything anymore.



Race Mathews has not mentioned *Bacchanalia* to me. I wonder if he still has copies of it in his garage.

So it was Lee Harding who turned Graham Stone into a lifelong Melbourne-hater! I should have guessed.

Merv, when are you, Race, Dick, Lee and a few others going to produce a history of the Melbourne SF Club? It's all there in your head. Nobody can dig out all these stupendous revelations; you lot have to sit down and do it.

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**Family Hryckiewicz:  
Q76: ANYTHING BUT  
AVERAGE  
No. 4**

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The trouble with computers is that you can go on buying toys for them forever. At the moment, CD-ROM would be a lot less useful than a modem, but I can't afford a modem. . . .

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**Roman Orszanski:  
T'APAS**

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. . . which is why, Roman, I haven't joined Internet. But I've already discussed that several thousand words ago.

For the time being, an Anzapa-E would need to be transmitted in the simplest possible format. Then the person who receives the fanzine may choose to become its page designer. Foucault would love it.

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**Julian Warner:  
jSPLA! No. 3**

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*Julian:* Does *jSPLA!* stand for Yet Another Unreadable Font? You know how to pick 'em.

Even *The Age* has gone in for

silly fonts. Between Thursday 20 January and Friday 21 January it changed from reliable readable Times to somewhat less readable Mallard. Why? Somebody in the building probably wanted to try out some fancy new software.

*Lucy:* 'Marek Polka'. Lovely book title, that. His name is Marek Palka, but your suggestion is better. I've never discovered how a man with such a name acquired a squiffy upper-class British accent. Marek is not the kind of man one asks about such matters.

*Julian:* The Guaranteed Income Scheme, which no government has yet installed, does exactly what you suggest: it combines the tax and social security departments. If your income falls below a certain level, it is topped up; if it rises above that level, it is taxed. This is the first scheme I will put into practice when I become dictator.

'The Ditmars are simply fun awards which don't necessarily associate with sercon merit.' I dare you to underline that sentence and send *jSPLA!* to Sean McMullen and Terry Dowling. (Terry got very cross with Roger merely because he wrote that the Ditmars are 'only popularity awards'. Unless they are changed to jury awards, they could hardly be anything else.)

The Life. Be In It weight reduction scheme actually seems to be working for us, Julian. It's worth investigating. Don't try to diet by yourself; all you'll do is put on more weight than you lost.

'One person's gesture of friendship is another's symbol for procreative functions.' Another great line from this mailing.

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**Justin Semmel:  
THE UNSEEING EYE**

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I wouldn't join Internet merely to tap 'realms of information'. Aesthetics before information. I would join it to find witty and articulate correspondents who don't currently write to fanzine letter columns. Are there any such people on Internet?

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**Jeane Mealy:  
LAND OF 10,000 LOONS**

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Strange that a very common Australian expression 'Too much like hard work' is so rare in America that it sounds new. I'm sure an idea for a profound short story is there somewhere, but I'm not feeling profound this week.

Ramona Koval was on 3LO, the ABC's Melbourne station with quite respectable ratings. (The federally funded ABC shouldn't have to worry about ratings, but its commissioners like to think its stations are popular as well as worthy.) She developed a witty, penetrating style. She had the only weekday 3LO program that featured good book and film review segments. So they moved her to the 'drive-time' spot (4-6 p.m.) on Radio National, which has much lower ratings than 3LO. I didn't listen to her much on Radio National. She sounded glum, and very worthy. I didn't hear any book or film reviews. This year she hasn't reappeared in the RN schedule. We 3LO fans want her back, especially as 3LO slipped badly in quality during 1993. It's much worse in 1994 now that Terry Lane has quit. (We radio listeners are fanatics compared to mere TV watchers.)

'Emew.'

A road train is a chain of linked giant trucks.

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**Terry Frost:**  
**BRING ME THE HEAD OF**  
**ORSON SCOTT CARD**  
**No. 3**

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What a truly amazing life you've led, Terry. I entered the portals of Oakleigh Church of Christ every Sunday for most of the

first twelve years of my life, yet I cannot think of any incident that is in any way as vivid or ghastly as the wedding you attended at the Kilmore Roman Catholic Church. What I remember most from many years of church-going is the struggle I had to stop myself yawning during church services. As soon as the first organ notes began, I collapsed under gigantic, all-consuming yawns which I had to hide from my devout parents.

My tiredness would lift as soon as we began filing out at the end of the service.

If *Nation Review* still existed, you could write a travel column for it. Nobody else would want this piece, since it gives the truth about Victorian country towns on a slow winter week-ends. Lovely writing. Thanks.

— Bruce Gillespie, 21 January 1994

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## NO AUTOGRAPHS AFTER MIDNIGHT: Advention I, New Year 1972

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(Few current members of ANZAPA will have read the following article, which appeared first in *SF Commentary* No. 26, April 1972. When I wrote it I was twenty-five years old, but emotionally about eighteen. Bits of this article now seem embarrassing. Other bits are much better than anything I could write now.)

The engines sounded like the outlet pipes of a factory. Their long snort came to a crescendo, they began to whistle, then abruptly the tense roar faded away, and the Boeing 727 was in the air.

It was the first time that I had travelled in the air since I was four years old, and I wasn't nervous. Not much. I was too far away from the window to see anything intelligible below. Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport lies well out from the suburban area, so there wasn't a lot to see. After the retracting wheels thudded into place, I didn't have much to do except lower the little table that is attached to the seat in front and attend to the elaborate morning-tea ritual that takes most of the journey between Melbourne and Adelaide. When I could look through the window, I could only see clouds below. Twenty thousand feet below, since we were travelling at thirty thousand feet by the time that we passed over Bordertown and lost a half an hour. By the time that we had all drunk tea or coffee, and I had read about half a page of a magazine, we began to circle over Adelaide. Adelaide looks very different from Melbourne, for Adelaide has trees along most of its suburban streets. Adelaide looked as dry as Melbourne does during

January, but Adelaide had a grid of green.

I might not have gone to Adelaide at New Year for Advention if only they had not made me Guest of Honour. I hate travelling by car, and the train journey to Sydney during New Year 1970 had been intolerable. So I decided to take a chance on our airlines, the world's safest (as the publicity leaflets say). I arrived in Adelaide only half an hour (officially) after I had left Melbourne. Alan Sandercock, one of Adelaide's convention committee members, and Robin Johnson were there to meet me. We waited for a few minutes to see whether Michael O'Brien had flown in from Hobart, but he hadn't, so we left for Alan's place.

All day we did little but meet people from Melbourne. Soon after we arrived at Alan's place, John Bangsund, his car, David Grigg and Carey Handfield limped in. They had been travelling overnight, although they all stopped in one motel room for a few hours. The road had been flat and the landscape empty. John had found a book shop in Warrnambool that stocked first editions of old hardbacks at their original prices, and he had already spent a good part of his Convention finances, which he did not really have to spend anyway. This was one Convention when nearly everybody was tired *before* it started.

John Bangsund brought a plentiful supply of wine, which he proceeded to sip while other people dashed in and out of the house. I helped to type a bit of the auction list, and helped to collate the Convention booklet, bits of which John had brought from Melbourne. Joy Window, one of the Adelaide concommittee members, arrived. Alan went to

collect piles of food and other supplies. John Bangsund decided to do his laundry. (The not-entirely-unbelievable story was that the laundry basket had piled high for four weeks. John had been headed for a laundromat a few days before, just before a contingent of fans invaded Bundalohn Court.) We went to look for an Adelaide laundromat, and soon found one. John put the first lot into the tub while David and I talked to Joy, one of the more noticeable assets of the Adelaide convention committee. Whether she wanted to hear them or not, she soon heard the complete history of Melbourne fandom, Australian fandom, overseas fandom, and *ASFR*. (Marvellous how the conversation runs when you are waiting in a hot Adelaide laundromat while young harassed housewives look at you oddly and nearly order you to give them seats.) Our most appreciative audience came from a young boy who immediately noticed that we were out-of-towners and definitely not good guys. His ear-splitting cry of 'Wheeee-eeee-eeee' quickly turned into 'Bang! Bang!' After David Grigg had melodramatically died a couple of times, and John had returned some answering fire, the kid became really warlike and tried to cut us down with some choice epithets that only children in comic strips don't know. After we had ignored being shot at for half an hour, the kid gave up. Them dang furiners.

We spent most of the day (Friday, 31 December 1971) at the still centre of a hurricane. The cars of John Hewitt and Alan Sandercock provided the active outer edge of the hurricane. After they had filled the house with supplies for the weekend, including over a hundred

dollars' worth of meat, we filled the cars with the perishables and us. Under Adelaide skies, we set off for the hills and Melville House. I asked Alan whether Melville House was as terrible as it sounded — dormitories, bunks, and cook-your-own? 'Well — er — yes,' he said. It didn't worry him any. We picked up Monica Adlington, another member of the committee, wound through the Adelaide Hills (which are ten miles nearer Adelaide than the Dandenong Ranges are to Melbourne), and finally drove down a bush track and stopped in the 'car park' of Melville House.

The Melbourne fans maintained a stunned silence for fully one minute. I felt very comforted that I had brought enough money to stay at a motel if the need arose. The house, surrounded by trees, and halfway down a valley, looked ordinary enough. By its side stood two brick buildings that looked like old stables. When we looked inside we found that they had been old stables; they were now 'dormitories'. Ironwork bunks decorated the insides of the dormitories. 'It's just like Camp Waterman,' said John Bangsund faintly. (Camp Waterman is the boy-scout-cum-torture-camp so favoured by parents from the Churches of Christ. I managed to avoid going to camp at Waterman during my entire childhood.) We unpacked our gear, and I picked a bunk that looked a little bit secure. I didn't expect to get any sleep for the rest of the Convention, so the choice didn't matter much.

Melville House is one of a number of guest houses in the hills. They are owned by some association of university groups, which hire them out to university associations for conferences such as ours. We only had to pay 50 cents per night for accommodation, and the committee charged a separate fee of \$2 per day for food. Joy and Monica, plus various male friends and indefatigable helpers, prepared the meals during the entire four days of the Convention, and did not complain once or get annoyed with the Convention attendees. Somehow the dishes were done, the place kept clean, and the food always arrived. One of those Adelaide-managed miracles that made this the best Australian convention yet.

Eh? Yes, I said that this was the best Australian convention yet, despite all the opposite indications. Australians thrive on discomfort, perhaps.

On Friday night, people found their own food, although Monica and Joy managed to provide some soup for people who had nothing. People I hadn't seen for nearly a year made their appearances: Robert Bowden, who had arrived at 3 a.m. the previous morning, and suitably dishevelled and hirsute, had grabbed one of the few bedrooms

inside the house; Ron Clarke and Shayne McCormack from Sydney, the fabulous co-publishers of *Wombat*; Barry Danes and Sabina Heggie, also from Sydney; Blair Ramage, about whom more will be said; and, nearly unrecognisable, Stephen Campbell, the wild artist from Nelson in southern Victoria. We 'saw the New Year in', and I talked for an hour or so to Kevin Dillon, without whom no Australian convention is complete. At 1 a.m. one of the committee members arrived at the Convention with his (then-current) girlfriend. His girlfriend wanted very much to meet John Bangsund, about whom she had heard a great deal. John Bangsund had made his 'bed' as comfortably as possible, had sprinkled 'Grigg repellent' all over the nearby bunks, and had retired at about 10 p.m. The lady wanted to meet him anyway. Some people decided to wake up John. After debating the matter for awhile, they tramped across to the dormitory and put on the light. Several people ducked under the covers when they saw that — gasp! — a lady was present. John Bangsund slept on. 'Wake him,' said one person. 'Turn off the light!' moaned Barry Danes, or one of those tired Sydneysiders who had come 800 miles. Somebody tried to shake John awake. When everybody had nearly given up, John put his head out of the blankets, said 'I keep telling you fellows: no autographs after midnight', and fell back asleep. The committee member's girlfriend got her interview.

When I came back to the dormitory at 2 a.m., the lights were out, and most people had begun the long night's struggle to get some sleep. I decided that I might get thrown out if I put on the light to change into pyjamas, so I slid into my sleeping-bag and hoped that my clothes wouldn't get too bedraggled. The bunks creaked. An hour passed. The muttered jokes subsided. Some people moved into the house. I fell asleep, unbelievably. Next morning, I felt completely refreshed, and I didn't have a bad night's sleep during the Convention. Maybe I would have enjoyed Camp Waterman after all. (I've since worked out that I felt so well during the Convention because I didn't have to use my brain for a whole four days.)

Next morning, the strange pattern of convention meals began. A few early-risers assembled in the kitchen by 8 a.m. As more people joined them, some people put on eggs and toast. A few more brought out some plates. Joy and Monica woke up and began to cook. Everybody finished breakfast by 10 a.m. Lunch and tea, much better organised, occurred at similar strange hours. Who cared? Nobody cared about anything much for a whole four days. Such luxury!

Advention became an Unconvention, the convention-without-a-program. However, the program unravelled very slowly, and on New Year's Day the committee made a valiant and largely unsuccessful attempt to keep to the program. Everybody registered, the committee introduced itself and other people, and the first panel started. Paul Anderson, Bill Wright, Robert Bowden, Alan Sandercock and I began to debate the merits of various magazine, anthology and book editors. At this point Lee Harding walked in, fresh from his journey, and began to ask curly questions from the audience. Robin Johnson (also in the audience) began to answer the questions, and Blair Ramage (another member of the audience) had his say. The panel sat at the front of the room and looked politely interested. We didn't need to say much at all. We should have been warned, and cancelled the rest of the program.

Alan tried to continue John Foyster's idea (from *Gelaticon*, the 1971 New Year's Convention) of programming concurrent panels. However, nobody wanted to hear my panel on the relative merits of the writing of Bob Silverberg, Philip Dick, Brian Aldiss and others. Quite rightly they wanted to hear Adelaide committee member Jeff Harris's panel on 'Pseudo-Science in Science Fiction'. This was the most interesting 'serious' event of the convention, as Jeff deftly demolished most of the pseudo-scientific ideas upon which sf stories are based. The program remained steady for most of the day, but the rot had already set in. Most people watched Richard Fleischer's *Fantastic Voyage*. Tea was (not too) late. Most people were outside enjoying the last of daylight-saving-provided sunshine, but I began my Guest of Honour speech anyway. At the end of this exciting event, myriads of fannish fans invaded the room, all wearing plastic propeller-capped beanies. Arnie Katz would have loved them. The infinite beanie, live from Adelaide. Well, fifteen beanies. The first part of the auction, conducted by Monica Adlington, followed in a very jovial way. However, the interstate travellers were becoming more and more tired. *Five Million Years to Earth (Quatermass and the Pit)*, even more horrifying at my third viewing than at the first, sent people (literally) shivering to bed, and I don't think anybody bothered to start a midnight hike.

We had had cool January weather (about 60°F), but on Sunday the sun came out. So did the bushflies. So did the people — out of doors, I mean. So much material remained unauctioned that Lee Harding mustered some spirited bidding for piles of musty pulps and comics. The bidders sat on a grassy

parapet in front of the house, shielded their faces from the flies and their wallets from the auctioneer. A motorbike mysteriously turned up. Some people went for a ride on it. Two of them came back bloodied . . . they had run into a gate. The glissando of the roar of a motorbike, the hum of the flies and the voice of Lee Harding gradually disengaged our brains. When Alan Sandercock tried to return to the program, he ran into some steady opposition. (We had already had a barbecue lunch. This didn't help anybody to stay serious.) Alan set up a panel on the outside porch of the house. The panel had the topic 'Robert Heinlein — the Man You Love to Hate'. I seem to remember that the people who sat on the panel were Alan Sandercock, John Hewitt, me . . . and Blair Ramage. (Blair had the most fun of anybody at that convention. He's the only person I know who has ever come to an sf convention and talked non-stop about science fiction, and about nothing but science fiction. He deserves a Most Devoted Fan of the Year award, or something.) Blair was the only person among the audience or the panel who wanted to talk about Heinlein. Harding, Bangsund and company did not want a panel at all. The rest of the panel members, in their sleepy and contented states, could not think of all those brilliant reasons why Heinlein isn't a very good writer. Blair told us why he was. Harding and Bangsund made jokes at the expense of Heinlein and Blair. The rest of the panel tried to pretend that they were miles away. John Hewitt took out his camera and began to photograph Ron Clarke who was taking photos of the panel members. The audience, especially Lee Harding, con-

ducted the panel discussion among themselves.

Mild lunacy followed. I think Alan Sandercock probably shrugged his shoulders at the whole damn lot of us at that stage, but since Alan doesn't let anything annoy him, he kept going. John Bangsund, who had sipped a fair bit from his personal flagon during the day, began to play the piano. He slipped into his Victor Borge routine, as scraps of tunes turned into the 'Third Man Theme'. Some of us gathered around the piano to listen. Merv Binns began to whistle. We looked astonished. How many other hidden talents does Merv have? Merv began to sing along with the piano. Our jaws dropped lower. Lee Harding came in. While Merv whistled and sang, Lee Harding began his Fred Astaire routine. The convention became a sing-along and mainly stayed that way. After the impromptu concert, we had dinner. Everybody received one meatball, so Harding spent most of the night making an attempt to get another meatball in his spaghetti. The committee-member's girlfriend arrived, so Lee Harding and John Bangsund promptly sat her between them. Toasts to Tolkien's birthday and Asimov's birthday followed. For a hushed audience Lee Harding played the first strains of the 'Eroica' Symphony on his teeth.

Afterwards, Alan tried to tell people about Australia in '75, but somehow it seemed neither the time nor the place. The only people who listened attentively were members of the Australia-In-75 committee. There followed a panel suitable to the occasion, when Dracula (Paul Stevens) interviewed a cretinous monster (Merv Binns), a lunatic film director (Lee Harding) and a drunken

film critic 'who really doesn't know much about films but I know a lot about cookery' (John Bangsund). Some Adelaide fans decided to dispose of the Dracula menace for all time. They tied sticks across broom handles and charged Dracula. Unfortunately they didn't have any garlic as well. Dracula survived.

Those people who could still see watched Byron Haskins' very good sf thriller *The Power*, and most people retired at 2 a.m., which was when others began their 'midnight hike' that finished at about 5 a.m. Fortunately I had been asleep for several hours by the time they returned.

On Monday some of us got up fairly early (say, 9 a.m.) and had breakfast. 'What if', said John Bangsund, 'the whole world has been destroyed, and there is nothing left over the top of the hill?' 'That'd really test the ingenuity of sf fans,' said somebody else, not quite receiving John's message: that the Convention members had become so contented and self-sufficient that they couldn't possibly want to return to the mundane world. 'No,' said John. 'Do you really think that sf fans would build generators and buildings and start a new world? Of course not. They would sit down and talk about science fiction and watch movies and look at comics, just as usual.' Some weeks later John said that as he drove across the Little Desert, halfway between Adelaide and Melbourne, he felt that he wanted to turn around and drive right back to the valley.

— Bruce Gillespie, 8 May 1972