

brg 95

April 2017

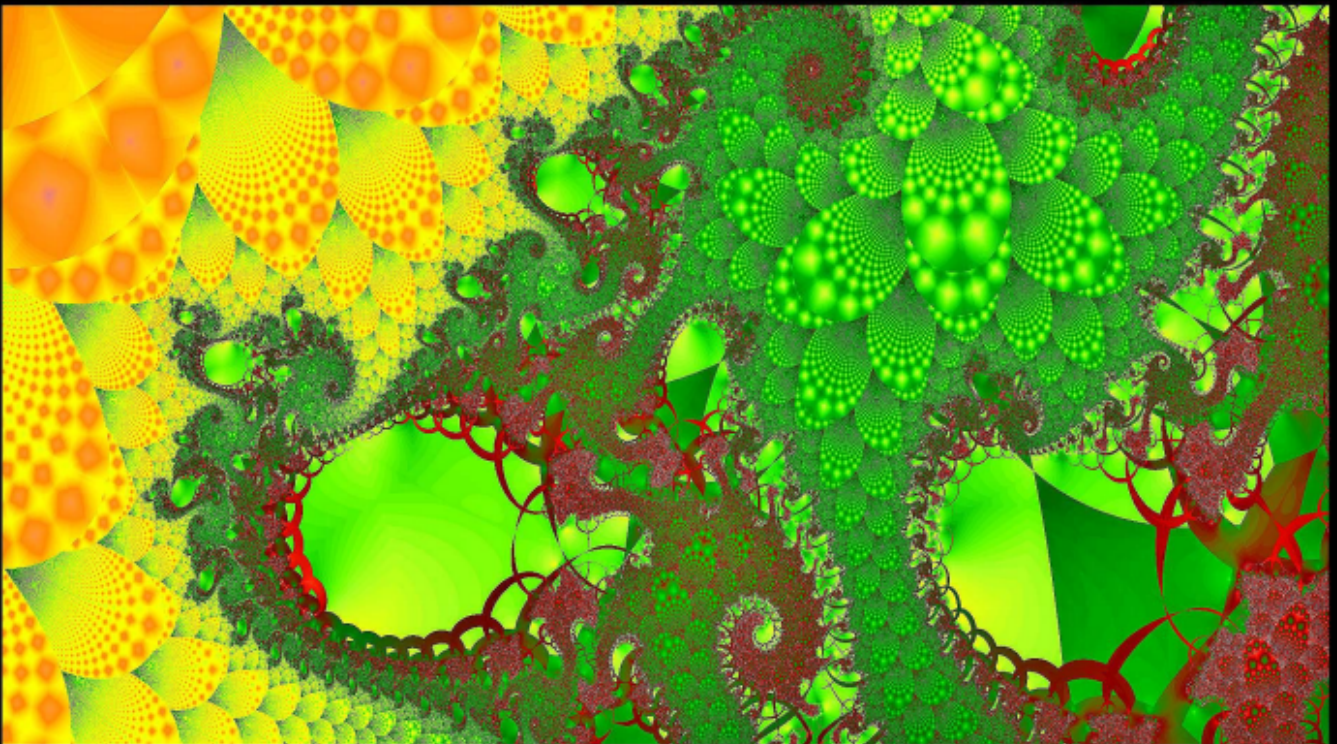


70th already?

On 17 February 2017 I had to face the fact that I'd turned 70. Surely it is merely a year or two since I turned 60?

Thanks to **Eric Lindsay** and **Jean Weber** for putting on a Birthday Event in Melbourne on the 19th, and to all those people who attended. Thanks to those who sent cards and presents, although I asked you not to. Special thanks to these greetings created for me by **Stephen Campbell** (*top*) and **Ditmar** (**Dick Jenssen**) (*below*), and **Jenny Bryce** and **Tony Thomas** (p. 2). Thanks, **Jo** and **Carey Handfield**, for the card shown on the back cover.

Happy 70th Bruce

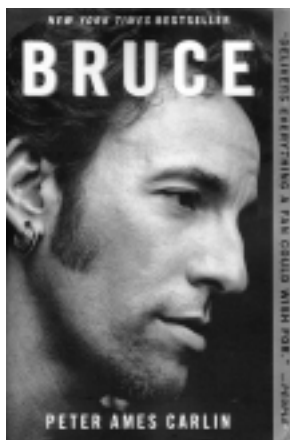


ditmar 2017

A fanzine for the April 2017 mailing of ANZAPA (Australian and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association) and a few others.

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Thanks, **Jenny Bryce** (l.) and **Tony Thomas** (centre), not only for the wonderful poem below, but also giving me the biography of the slightly-more-famous *Bruce* (right).

See below (l. to r.): **Jenny Bryce**, **Tony Thomas**, and the real **Bruce Gillespie**. (Photo: Jeanette Gillespie.)

THE THEME IS **BRUCE**

Derived from Brix in Normandy —
‘Willow-woods’, they say it meant.
Then round 1066 some **Bruce**
Invaded Scotland — bad luck, Celts.
But Gaelic girls and Normans mated
Doughty warriors were the outcome;
Robert the **Bruce**, mightiest of these,
Attempted his own medieval Brexit.



Since then the world’s deluged with **Bruces**,
Men of action, notoriety,
Actors, rock stars, spinning cricketers,
Martial artists, even PMs,
Quite in contrast to our **Bruce**,
Who chose instead to make a life
Of contemplation, cerebration,
Thousands of intimate friends at hand,
Constant presences on his shelves:
Creation privileged over action,
This is the highpoint of civilization,
The pen is mightier than the sword.

[With birthday greeting from Jenny and Tony!]



The birthday people, Mail Exchange Hotel, 19 February 2017: (l. to r.): Jack Dann, Bruce Gillespie, Eric Lindsay, Jean Weber, Gordon Lingard, Lee Harding, Robin Johnson. (Photo: LynC.)

What a time it was!

It is not, as everybody kept saying, every day that I turn 70. It seems only a short time since I turned 60.

I spent several months trying to set up an event that was (a) celebratory and (b) affordable. I would love to have invited 100 of my closest friends to a great restaurant, as happened for my 50th birthday. I thought of various ways of doing it on the cheap, but I couldn't think of a restaurant that would not be overcrowded and noisy.

Jean Weber and Eric Lindsay — and Carey and Jo Handfield — solved the problem for me. A few weeks before my birthday, Jean sent a message on Facebook to say that she and Eric would be visiting Melbourne on the week of 12–19 February to celebrate of Eric's 70th birthday (on 2 February), Jean's birthday (on the 24th), and my birthday (on the 17th). They would put on a big bash (at their expense) for their friends. But not too many of them, as Jean doesn't like large crowds.

She also emailed me, saying that she would be issuing the invitation list, but would I like to add the names of people who should be there.

Then Carey Handfield was struck by the brainwave. He suggested the long side room at the Mail Exchange Hotel, Bourke Street, Melbourne. The Meteor Inc. committee had used it several years for the AGM. The food

was quite good, and the room itself was separate from the main restaurant. Our maximum number of invitees, 50, would fit there comfortably.

Jean and Eric sent out their invitations. I added some names, but only a small percentage of the names of people I would like to have invited. The event would be held on Sunday, 19 February, two days after my birthday, but the exact day of Lee Harding's 80th birthday. Then Jean, Eric, Carey, and Jo began thinking of other people who celebrated their birthdays about the same time. Gordon Lingard (turning 60) could come down from Sydney with his wife, Jack Dann could be there with Janeen Webb, and Robin Johnson could get down from Ballarat. In the end, Valma Brown (whose birthday is the same day as mine) could not bethere. Neither could my sisters Robin Mitchell and Jeanette Gillespie. Robin could not get down from Buderim, Queensland, and Jeanette faced a hospital procedure the next day, so would not be able to eat anything. Dick Jessen, my first choice, would not have been able to descend the elevator from the street to the restaurant area, so he declined our invitation.

The pub would prepare 'finger food', plus one drink per person. (At the event, everybody was satisfied with a

good large plate of delicacies.)

On the Wednesday night Elaine and I had taken Jean, Eric, Jo, and Carey to dinner at Spaghetti Tree in Melbourne to thank them for all their trouble.

On Friday night, we gathered with the usual crew (and some) at David Jones Food Hall and then to Il Nostro Posto in Hardware Lane. Ciao now shuts on Friday nights, so we are still searching for a replacement.

On Saturday night we gathered with my sister Jeanette and a small group of my oldest and best friends for dinner.

And then the afternoon bash at the Mail Exchange! It was successful beyond our expectations. I kept meeting people I hadn't seen for anything up to 20 years. In the case of Bob and Margaret Riep, who had come down from Canberra, I hadn't seen them since a convention on Australia Day 1975. It was great to catch up with Janeen Webb and Jack Dann, rarely glimpsed since the end of Race Mathews' Film Nights a few years before.

The only casualty was Carey Handfield, our Melbourne organiser. He had suffered an accident that morning at home, and had not realised how badly his leg had been hurt until he arrived in town. He limped around for awhile and caught up with old friends, but had to retire hurt. (His leg is healing well but slowly.)

What of the people who weren't invited? Sorry, sorry, sorry. 50 was the limit for the room, and we ran out of places fairly quickly. Jean says to blame her if you feel you should have been invited.

Many of us had the same idea: why don't we put together and Old Pharts' Convention every year? Not a big convention costing squadrillions, but an afternoon at the Mail Exchange or somewhere similar. \$25 a head. No panels or events, just good food and drink and a chance to catch up with each other. Watch this space. Watch Facebook. Or wherever.

I did ask people not to bother giving me presents, but a few people disobeyed.

Elaine Cochrane spent a year stitching the amazing embroidery shown on page 3. Now it is framed and hangs on the kitchen wall. You did notice at the top the illustrations from Cordwainer Smith's 'The Game of Rat and Dragon', didn't you?

In late January, the committee for this year's Continuum/Australian national convention emailed me to say that somebody has paid for my membership. Who? I have no idea. She or he asked for anonymity. So if it's you, fellow ANZAPA member, thanks very much. I hope to see lots of old friends at the convention, which will be held at the Jasper Inn, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, Queen's Birthday weekend, 9–12 June.

David Russell gave me some bottles of Rawson's Retreat wine, **Dick Jenssen** gave me a hefty volume (Alain Silver & James Ursini, *Film Noir Compendium*), **Thomas Bull** handed me a handsome set of Mervyn Peake's illustrations for *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, **Lee Harding** gave me *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters* (ed. Richard Greene), and **Jenny Bryce** and **Tony Thomas** gave me a copy of *Bruce* and a birthday poem (see p. 2).

Thanks also for the many cards I received: from my sister **Jeanette Gillespie** and **Duncan Brown**, and from my other sister **Robin Mitchell**; self-created cards by **Dick Jenssen** and **Stephen Campbell** (see p. 1), and cards from **Werner** and **Ulla** from Germany, **Geoff Allshorn** (plus JB Hi Fi purchase card) and **Robert Elordieta** (plus JB Hi Fi card), **Yvonne Rousseau** and **Vida Weiss**; **Margaret** and **George**; **Natalie** and **Murray**; **Nic** and **Charlie**; **Helena** and **Merv**; and **Sarah** and **Jamie**. The card sent by **Jo** and **Carey** so well fits a Gillespie fanzine that I had to include it on the back cover of this issue of **brg**.

As you know, my sister **Jeanette Gillespie** is part of a very fannish-like social group, the folk music performers and listeners of Australia. Recently she and they lost one of their greatest friends, **Danny Spooner**, who has also been a leading figure in folk music in Australia since the 1960s. He was part of the Australian folk music revivalists, including Glen Tomasetti and Margaret Roadknight, and Judith Durham, who were famous long before I heard any of their records. Danny was, I'm told, a history teacher much of his life, but his real life was playing and singing all over Australia at concerts and festivals and around campfires. He and Duncan Brown performed sea shanties and working ballads every year at the Port Fairy Folk Festival in Victoria, so at this year's festival many people joined in remembering his life and work.

— **Bruce Gillespie**, 24 March 2017

Mailing comments

Mailing 294: December 2016

Christina Lake: FANTOPIARY 2

A division between the generations, even within ANZAPA? I don't own a device that would allow me to

listen to vast amounts of music while travelling by train. Even if I did, I would probably listen for only an hour or so before removing from my bag the latest book I am reading, turning off the device and spending the rest of

the trip reading and/or snoozing.

And even if I owned such a device, and listened to music during the whole train trip, I would not listen to David Bowie, or even Leonard Cohen, for more than an hour at a time. Enough!

Death of a Ladies Man is an odd Cohen album to choose for a train trip. It's the only one of his albums he's ever denounced. Phil Spector produced it, then took it away and Spectorised it. I own it only because it's by Leonard Cohen. I'm a Phil Spector fan, but something went awfully wrong on that album. From then on, the only way was up. Cohen's albums of the eighties and nineties get better and better, and *You Want It Darker*, his final album, is just about his best.

I hadn't heard that you had lost your mother during 2016. Thanks very much for your vivid pen portrait of her, her parents, and their life and times, as well as your account of her funeral. All very exotic and English to me, especially that bit about being left behind and sent to boarding schools. The Dreaded Boarding School is a major theme of most of the biographies I read during 2016. I count myself never luckier than in the fact that I was not sent to boarding school when a child.

Looking forward to my copy of *Then*. Alan Stewart has received his copies from overseas.

How would I get hold of a copy of *Dark Spires*? I'm supposed to be a 'Friend' of Cheryl Morgan on Facebook, but I have not seen any posts telling me how to order the book, so I did not know it existed. And since when had Cheryl begun publishing?

Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer: QUOZ 51

Mark:

'Program' has been the official version used by all Australian publishers since the 1980s. It has been sanctioned by the *Commonwealth Style Manual* (or whatever it is now called) and therefore is holy writ. In New Zealand, they still use 'programme' for all usages other than 'computer program'. This poses a difficulty for publishers like Oxford University Press. It has long since closed its New Zealand office, so needs to publish versions of textbooks to suit both Australia and New Zealand.

I have the same difficulty with jazz tunes as you have; and find the problem even worse with short story titles. Few short stories have titles that remind you of the main thrust of the story itself. That's why I've given up concocting my Favourite Short Stories list each year. I have in front of me a list of 15 or more titles, all having earned four stars, and I can't remember the contents of more than two or three of them. Therefore I need to re-read them all again. No time for that. Not in January 2017, anyway.

Glad to see that someone agrees with my view of Worldcon ribbons. Since I'm unlikely ever to attend another worldcon (because nobody has put up a hand to organise another one in Australia), I'm not too worried about the matter.

I've only ever read one E. E. Smith novel, *Skylark DuQuesne*, because it appeared in *If* magazine after I began buying it in the early sixties. It seemed that Smith

had not published for many years, and Pohl boasted of the fact that he had lured Smith out of retirement. As I recall, there was almost no Smith in print in British paperback editions during the sixties, but I get the feeling that many of his books have come back into print during the last 20 years. Smith experts, such as Messrs MacLachlan, Jenssen, and Wright could supply full details, but none of them is currently a member of ANZAPA.

Well, I remember a 'Hugo losers' party' in Toronto in 1973, held by Joe Haldeman to celebrate the fact that he had just won his first Hugo. Maybe I'm just part of the Memory Losers' Party. Of current ANZAPAns, only Eric could back me up or shoot me down in flames.

Surely the best-known Australian fans are the people who actually travel overseas and meet other fans: Robin Johnson above all; Jean and Eric, although they've stopped travelling to USA; and Justin Ackroyd. But among fanzine fans, John Bangsund's name still has that magic shine that never fades. I just wish he was well enough to return to writing for fanzines.

Thanks for sorting out the two 'Heart of Gold' songs. I've never heard the non-Neil version.

Claire:

Vitamin D. Two tablets a day. I haven't had a cold for three years since being told to take Vitamin D every day. (Having written that, I'll probably come down with the worst cold in my life tomorrow. But that's tomorrow.)

Garry Dalrymple: TBS&E 71

This issue of *TBS&E* is far more accessible than those you usually publish. We can have only limited interest in your complete reports of meetings that none of us could possibly have attended. Reports of the highlights are more interesting. You seem to have moved toward the journal format that Michael Green uses in *Abstractions*. You also provide a vivid account of attempting to live on (it seems) much less than I earn per year. But why, then, do you have to pay a huge amount to the Australian Tax Office? I haven't had a taxable income for about 10 years.

I'm amazed that you pick up a new lounge for \$90. Reminds me of setting up my first flat in 1973, when my downstairs neighbour helped me choose and pick up four or five necessary items (lounge suite, chairs, kitchen table etc.) for about \$100 at the Brotherhood of St Lawrence store in Fitzroy.

Glad to hear that the Rudyard Kipling Society talk went well. It's always taking a chance to say you will talk at such a meeting. Will anybody turn up? Will listeners enjoy it? Will there be any questions? Etc. The only self-confidence I have in public speaking has been gained by delivering talks for the Nova Mob over the years. Must do it again, sometime, but can't think of a topic that's more than a wispy smoke cloud somewhere in the back of my brain.

The small birds in Greensborough have all been persecuted out of the area, first by the ghastly gangs of noisy mynahs, and then by various flocks of big birds, especially the ravens. We still had lots of sparrows and some wrens in Collingwood when we lived there.

Sounds as if the *Sydney Morning Herald* is being stripped of any content anybody might want to find there. The same is happening to sister newspaper *The Age*. I have no interest in share prices. I do note with annoyance that the business pages of the Wednesday *Age* occupy most of the paper.

Elaine and I no longer answer junk phone calls. It is usually enough to answer by giving our phone number. The automatic dialling function at the other end assumes it has connected to an answerphone, so cuts off the call. What makes us really angry are people who claim to be from Telstra, etc.

'We're all Mormons here.' I'll suggest that answer to Elaine. We do have a big notice discouraging door-knockers, but we do sometimes have to put up with Jehovah's Witnesses at the front door.

I like the idea of 'retail therapy'. I indulge in it much too often.

Sounds as if ASIO is on the path of your mythical cousin Anthony Dalrymple. You will never know if they have found him, whether he was your cousin, or what happened to him when they found him.

The news about Amber's fits does not sound good. I assume you've had her checked out by a vet?

Diane and John Fox: RHUBARB 64

Diane:

I started watching *Sully*, and found it dull. I suppose I'd better watch the whole film sometime, not just the first half-hour. The extras on the Blu-ray are fascinating, especially the one about filming the plane landing and rescue.

Still not sure, after reading your review, whether or not to buy *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*.

I don't recognise any of your items until I reach the category 'Science Fiction (Adult Friendly)'. I agree with you about *Gravity*, but find the ending very unconvincing.

Primer looks awful, and at first the acting and sets seem too amateurish to be worth considering. Then suddenly you realise how complex the time loops are becoming. Haunting.

Not sure why I missed out seeing *Transcendence*. Maybe because Hollywood usually fails *Transcendence A* whenever it tackles the subject. Also, none of the reviewers liked it.

You don't make a strong case for viewing current disaster movies, especially as there are so many classics of this sub-genre.

The reviews made *Noah* sound dire, and I'm afraid your comments don't reassure me. A film I need never spend money on.

None of your Horror selections sounds watchable. Not my genre, unless mixed with bracing doses of SF or realism.

I would like to see *An Evening with Edgar Allan Poe*, but suspect it won't be released in a cinema near me.

Sorry to hear your news about Larry Pickering. I've heard nothing since, but if he died, I suppose only NSW people would see it the news in the paper.

If you take the main character of *Cabaret* on face value

(instead of being merely a stand-in for Christopher Isherwood), he would have probably been killed flying with the RAF during World War II. The question viewers might ask at the end of the film: did Sally Bowles have enough wit to escape Germany in time?

Interstellar has subtitles, which I switch on when I watch it on Blu-ray.

We send and receive far fewer Christmas cards because that's our intention. However, some people, such as Sally Yeoland and John Bangsund, and Yvonne Rousseau, are ever-faithful. Also, we enjoy 'Year in Review' messages, such as those sent by Mark Lawson and his family, LynC, and my sister Jeanette and her partner Duncan.

I'm glad that you agree with me about Aussiecon 4 in 2010. I've just never put it as bluntly as you do here.

John:

Little that you say on pages 21 and 22 about Google Pixel makes much sense to me. I agree that the photos that people take on their smartphones are often breathtakingly clear and colour-rich.

Thanks for reprinting the lyrics of 'You Want It Darker'. It's a sophisticated mixture of a summing up Cohen's life's experience and throwing out challenges to God and his fellow human beings. Musically *You Want It Darker* is also very restrained and sophisticated.

Leanne Frahm:

THE VICTORIAN CHRONICLES 3

I'm surprised you say that a tumble dryer in 'indispensable in Melbourne'. We always peg out our clothes on the line. The only time when it's difficult to get them dry is during June and July, when the sun hits the clothes line in the back enclosure for only a few hours each day. We've had very few periods of sustained rainfall since October 200, when we moved to Greensborough. I realise you probably have trouble pegging out the clothes. This is my job at 5 Howard Street.

I find the only sure remedy for pain is watching a really interesting film on DVD or Blu-ray. When I had extreme lower back pain a couple of years ago, the only time I felt comfortable while awake was when I was watching a film.

You must be the only person I know who's been a motorbike rider who has not sustained some serious accident that has nearly destroyed a leg or two. I could never imagine myself riding a motor bike. It took me to the age of 14 to learn to ride a push bike, and I drove a car only twice after getting my licence in 1968. (It was very easy to get a licence in Bacchus Marsh in 1968.)

Thanks for reminding me of several more 2016 casualties. Some I've noted in my diary, and some I haven't. Speaking of Gene Wilder: I caught up with *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* only a few weeks after his death.

I will have nothing to do with touch screens, which is yet another reason why I don't have any of those little devices whose screens have to be tiddled with the fingers.

I've never heard any warnings about taking statin pills. I've now been taking them for years, with no side effects, and, as with you, a very satisfactory cholesterol

reading every six months.

If there's any consistency in what I've written or published in *SF Commentary*, it would be an unspoken assumption that the only interesting thing about good writing is the ability of the writer to use language in an original and interesting way. I've been known to pick up one book after another at Readings (which promotes Good Books that Are Good for You) from the 'New Books' table, flip to a random page in each of these books, and have discovered *every time* a big ripe squishy cliché. For many years, general readers have been told that SF writers write badly. Hah! Just flip through all the books that win the glittering prizes in Australia today. Flip through the myriad crime and mystery books that are supposed to be infinitely superior to SF and fantasy books. The same big ripe squishy clichés. (I'm allowed to use clichés like 'big ripe squishy clichés'.)

Michael Green: ABSTRACTIONS 18

Great to hear that you have officially adopted Chloe. I hope that from now on we will have a Chloe photo in every issue of Abstractions.

I'm intrigued that you can still buy an all-regions Blu-ray player anywhere. I have an Oppo that can be switched to Region A to play American Blu-rays, but it was only because Dick Jenssen told me that this service was available that I bought the machine in the first place. There is nothing in the official documentation to suggest that the player can be changed to play Region A.

The Cure is probably the least listenable pop group I've ever heard. It's a group strictly for people who started listening to radio in the 1980s.

You write a lot about recent expeditions. Thanks for the photos. Some of these journeys I would not bother with, such as attending the annual Royal Show in Melbourne. Others would be impossible for us because we don't have a car. I suppose we should simply get on a country train some weekend, especially as have our Seniors Card free rides brochures. But we never organise ourselves to do such things.

It's hard to believe, Michael, that you've never read *The Dispossessed* or *Roadside Picnic*—but they were among the Big SF Novels of the early 1970s. There were a lot fewer major SF novel releases each year then than there are now. If you want to read *Roadside Picnic*, make sure you buy the recent Gollancz SF Masterworks edition, with a new translation that is twice as long as the translation issued in the 1970s and reads much better.

Thanks very much for the definition of the Gruen transfer. Since I never watch TV programs in real time, I've never seen the ABC TV program. Elaine and I suffered the Gruen effect severely when we moved to Greensborough in 2004. Each time we walked down into the bowels of the three-level Greensborough Plaza, we would head off in the wrong direction on the bottom floor. I still get lost there sometimes.

I still have my copy of the Damon Knight-edited hardback anthology *Beyond Tomorrow*. It was published in 1968. I've still not read it, but the list of contents includes quite a few of my favourite SF stories, such as Don A. Stuart's 'Twilight'.

David Grigg: THE FRETFUL PORPENTINE 12

I tried another Ray Bradbury story last week (in Gordon Van Gelder's collection *The Very Best of Fantasy & Science Fiction* (2005)), and found, as I usually do, that he wrote in an over-sugared, over-decorated prose that quickly becomes irritating. The stories never seem strong enough to hold up the superstructure of Bradbury's 'poetic prose'. Millions disagreed with me; much of the grief expressed when he died came from the general public, not the specialist SF readership. The writing of some of the great writers of the sixties and seventies, such as Cordwainer Smith and R. A. Lafferty, is also a bit over-stretched, yet I like their prose better than I like Bradbury's.

Thanks for your brilliant review of the 'Europe' novels by Dave Hutchinson. I was put onto these books, first by either Claire or Mark in these pages, and then by the need to read them for a recent Nova Mob discussion of the 2016 Arthur C. Clarke Award Best Novel nominations. You define the quality of these books without committing spoilers. Hutchinson's description of an alternative England offers a vivid illustration of the sentimental, unreal image that Britons who voted for Brexit probably carry around in their heads. I doubt if anybody's view about the Brexit vote was altered by reading Dave Hutchinson; nevertheless, he does reflect, in a satirical way, the popular images of both Ancient Britain and Today's Vile Europe that affected the vote. (The third volume/episode, *Europe in Winter*, is very disappointing. There is obviously much more to discover about this alternative Europe, but we'll probably have to wait for episode 4 or even 5 for the payoff.)

Kim Huett: GASTON J. FEEBLEHARE 3

Thanks for your unique Canberra viewpoint on a number of matters that grip the nation, such as restaurant prices.

The main changes in Melbourne have been the steadily increasing prices of meals and the disappearance of the BYO (Bring Your Own) licence. In the eighties, Elaine and I could go to most of our favourite restaurants and pay \$20 each — for a main dish and either entree or dessert, and for all three sometimes. We would take a bottle of our favourite red wine. If we didn't finish it, the waiter would cork it for us and we would take it home. During the nineties the price of the meal crept up gradually. Eventually all we could get for \$20 was a main dish and coffee. BYO licences disappeared, so suddenly we had to add the price of a bottle of red wine to the \$20. But Elaine could no longer drink wine, and I began buying one glass of beer for a meal or one glass of red. These days, I stick to the one main dish and coffee, with dessert occasionally, and one beer, and usually pay at least \$40, and often more. Elaine and I go out less frequently, and usually only for social reasons (such as the Friday night gatherings at Ciao in Melbourne, but Ciao no longer opens on Friday nights). Whenever I see a restaurant review in the *Age*, I note that the prices put the meal out of our price range.

I was going to ask about access to public transport for Canberra's new restaurants, but I see you've answered my question. In Melbourne, we only go to restaurants that are easily reached by PT.

I've already written about the library that sustained Robin, Jeanette, and I during our childhoods: the Claremont Library in Malvern. It was a private library, seemed to have been around for centuries, and the little old lady (at least that's how she appeared to us) was willing to allow us to borrow enormous numbers of books and not worry when they were returned slightly late. Thanks to Claremont Library I read most of Enid Blyton's books twice and all of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Mars books, and discovered real science fiction at the age of 12.

However, my ambition was always to *own* books, not merely *borrow* them, so I've not kept up my relationship with libraries — except for my dependence on Melbourne University's Baillieu Library during my four years of study there. At one stage my friend Greg discovered the complete set of *Time* magazines on one floor, so he read all its cinema reviews up until 1965.

Victoria's *School Magazine*, which appeared in different editions for the various age levels, bit the dust *under that name* in 1969 or 1970, not long before I joined the Publications Branch, which published it. At first the Grades 3 to 6 primary school version was renamed *Meteor*, and I was its sub-editor/working editor/main writer/paste-up person for a few months in 1971. The secondary version was called *Pursuit*, and I've forgotten the new name of the version intended for Grades 1 and 2. They were all being redesigned and relaunched during the two and a half years I was at Publications. In the late 1980s, most of the Publications staff were 'given the package', and the editing of all of junior publications was taken over by one person, Meredith Costain, better known to most of us as the partner of Paul Collins and co-owner of Ford Street Publishing. I suspect that the junior publications stopped altogether during the 1990s. And that is why NSW's *School Magazine* remains the world's oldest literary magazine for children. Jenny Blackford began her poetry career by selling poems to it.

Eric Lindsay: KINGDOM OF THE BLAND

No wonder I don't print at home anymore, except for the OBO, which is done at the last minute. I can't afford to print in colour, of course.

Thanks for the report on the Blue Mountains get-together. Now I know the people to contact if ever I return to the Blue Mountains, last visited in 1975, when I stayed with you in Faulconbridge.

Think of all the money I have saved by never being able to afford another printer. Elaine and I use a fabulous old HP LaserJet that Murray MacLachlan gave to us. It had been left behind in an office in which he was working, replaced by something or other although still working perfectly. It still works perfectly, double sided, but is monochrome, not colour. Thanks to your warning, I need never buy a colour printer.

I thought it was Julia Gillard who stuffed up the

Marriage Act by insisting on a marriage between a man and a woman. Julia was the last good prime minister we had, but she tripped at the hurdles of some very important matters of national importance, in some mistaken belief that she could keep some of the raving righties on her side.

Jack Herman: NECESSITY 133: THINGS HAVE CHANGED

I agree with everything you have to say about 2016, but I see no sign that 2017 will be better.

I heard two poets (whose names I've forgotten) being interviewed by Phillip Adams on 'Late Night Live' (RN) the night after Dylan won his Nobel Prize for Literature. They made the point that, regardless of what one thinks of Dylan's poetry, his poetry owes a vast amount to great poets who preceded him. They were able to quote a lot of poetry that has found its way through the mighty Bob brain into the song lyrics we know and love. (Perhaps the interview is still wandering around the ABC's downloadable vaults.)

Why the Literature Prize? Because the value of Dylan's work is in his lyrics i.e. his poems. Other people's versions of his songs usually sound better than his. He has worked with some great bands, and some of his own LPs (such as *Blood on the Tracks*) stand out musically, but in the end when you listen to Bob Dylan you're listening to the words, not his voice. (I own at least twenty CDs of other people's versions of Dylan songs. One of them includes a version by Lou Reed and Youssou N'Dor of 'Chimes of Freedom', my candidate as the best cover version ever of a Bob Dylan song. Dylan's own studio recording of 'Chimes of Freedom' is really dull.)

Other candidates for a new, trendier Nobel Literature Prize? Paul Simon is my own favourite song-writer, mainly for songs he wrote after Simon and Garfunkel split up; followed by (as you say) Leonard Cohen and Stephen Sondheim. Many of Joni Mitchell's lyrics can be read as fine poetry. Neil Young has written some magnificent song lyrics.

Thanks for the latest episode of the Melancholy Death List. I'm very glum that we recently lost Peter Weston, one of the greatest fanzine editors of all time (*Zenith*, *Speculation*, *Prolapse*, and *Relapse*), and good friend to many over the years; after three years of suffering bowel cancer; in Birmingham, England.

'Everybody's Talking' is written by the late great Fred Neil, whose best-known album, *Bleecker & MacDougal* (1964), was recently reissued as part of a 5-CD pack *The Greenwich Village Folk Scene: Original Album Series* at JB Hi Fi. Other early sixties albums in the pack, originally issued on Elektra, are by The Even Dozen Jug Band, Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, and a variety of blues performers, such as Dave Ray and Geoff Muldaur, on an album called *The Blues Project*. Of the people who appear in this five-pack, Fred Neil has by far the best voice and most interesting style.

In Melbourne cafes, the smoked salmon version of Eggs Benedict is usually called Eggs Atlantic. In Greensborough cafes, it usually served with spinach as well.

Thanks for your letter of comment to *Treasure 4* disguised as mailing comments.

I remember Arthur Rylah's mythical teenage daughter, whose delicate morals were besmirched by reading *The Group* by Mary McCarthy. But I don't remember the actual scandal that brought down Rylah.

Yes, I agree that John Collins and family could not have attended a version of *Fiddler on the Roof* starring Topol in Australia. I also saw the production starring the magnificent Hayes Gordon.

Thanks for the extra information about Jeremy Brett. Dick Jenssen regards Brett as the greatest Holmes ever, which is why he gave me a copy of the complete Jeremy Brett episodes of Sherlock Holmes. It's interesting to see various aspects of Brett's performance reproduced in later Holmes, particularly those of Benedict Cumberbatch (in *Sherlock*) and Johnny Lee Miller (in *Elementary*). Miller's performance is a super-twitchy version of Brett's Holmes (without the disguises).

I have never played a role-playing game, but I remember visiting some fannish residence in the mid seventies when Christine McGowan (as she was then), Derrick Ashby, Robin Johnson, and some other fans busy with the latest role-playing game they had just bought.

Ian McKellen should have won an Oscar for his performance in *Gods and Monsters*. I seem to remember that it became well known only a year or so after it had been released, and nobody much went to see it. Most of the reviews concentrated on the startling performance by Lyn Redgrave, seen most recently by many film-goers in the middle 1960s in *Georgy Girl*.

Some of the people you mention turned up at the Big Birthday Bash on 19 February here in Melbourne. Gordon Lingard attended; it was his 60th birthday. Robin Johnson has returned to Victoria, and is now living in Ballarat down the road from Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown; he attends MSFC meetings and other Melbourne fannish events. Terry Frost is now best known for a podcast about old movies; I read somewhere that he has made over 100 episodes. Warren Nicholls is on Facebook, and so is Shayne McCormack, but she hasn't posted much since she downloaded some of her photos of 1970s Sydney and Melbourne fandom.

I agree with you about *Arrival* — thanks for the fine review. *Doctor Strange* has appeared on Blu-ray. I'm not sure whether to buy it or not. My wall is full of many Blu-rays and DVDs I haven't had time to watch yet. And I've bought *Hell or High Water*, but haven't watched it yet. Dick Jenssen has ordered *Hacksaw Ridge* from overseas. I'm not tempted to watch *Fantastic Beasts* or *Hateful Eight*, but thanks for taking the trouble to review them.

I have a copy of *Sicario*, but have not yet watched it, and saw *The Dressmaker* at the Nova Cinema. Very enjoyable, but I haven't bothered buying it on disk.

Thanks for the trip report and nature photos.

LynC: FROM THE LAIR OF THE LYNX 95

For someone who has suffered quite a bit, you come across as somebody who usually appears bouncy and cheerful. Apart from the bronchial infection, your most

difficult experience would have been moving Roger's five carloads of things. My parents did the same for me when I was moving (a) up to Ararat at the beginning of 1969 (b) moving back to Melbourne at the end of 1970, and (c) moving into the flat in Carlton Street in 1973. For the move to Johnston Street, Collingwood, the Fabulous Don Ashby Moving Service went into action, but it was one of its last hurrahs. Elaine and I hired professional movers when we moved around to Keele Street in 1979, then from there to Greensborough in 2004.

The Bowie concert photos make it look impressive. I was never enough of a Bowie fan to have considered buying a ticket, but if Deb Conway and Tim Rogers were on the program, it must have been enjoyable.

Thanks to David, I now have a copy of the *Antares* anthology; next on the to-read pile.

A bar fridge? That would never have occurred to me, I must admit. But there was a fridge already in my flat in Ararat, and again one left in the Carlton Street flat when I moved in. That moved to Johnston Street, then to Keele Street. We've only ever had to buy one new fridge, which was replaced by a much better fridge, which Lucy Sussex gave to us after her mother died.

Forever was my favourite TV series watched last year on DVD. Dick Jenssen recommended it the week it was released in Australia. A pity it ran for only one season.

Sorry about that misinformation you were given about Corflu. The easiest way to summarise Corflu is: it's for people who still remember what corflu was used for when you were publishing your ish! The general opinion among Corflu attendees these days seems to be — you're welcome if you know about Corflu and the kind of fanzines and fanzine publishers it represents. Media fans would find little to interest them; and neither would professional writers or would-be writers who know little about fandom.

Sorry if I seem to be ignoring *your* blog. Not so. I almost never look at anybody's blogs. I never listen to podcasts. In the morning I get into my emails, and check out the ones that seem urgent to answer. Then I go into Facebook and look at all the messages from Friends that look interesting. By then an hour has gone by. That's too much time wasted. I get off the internet and start work for the day (either indexes for income, or fanzines for pleasure). My blogs are my fanzines, which are available on eFanzines.com. I don't know who reads them, but somebody must, since I've about 100 letters of comment to *SF Commentaries* 92 and 93 (and *Treasure 4*) waiting to be edited and published.

I didn't know about the legal requirement about toilet doors. Thanks for that bit of information. Good old ANZAPA, the source of all knowledge.

It's good when a cat acquires a friend. Even after seven years of Sampson being back in our house (after five years in his failed household), Harry won't accept him as a friend. Sampson is still an intruder; he is no replacement for Harry's great friends Flicker, Archie, and Polly, who still have not returned from the vet.

Gary Mason:
CRASH OF THE HARD DISK 27

Thanks for your front cover Christmas card. Of one thing we can be sure; it's not a picture of Gary Mason.

Yes, Joe Phillips' mock covers are excellent. But I'd never heard the name before.

Between your coverage of the ACT election last year and Kim Huett's, we ANZAPAns now find ourselves with the equivalent of high-quality newspaper coverage. Kim's Canberra-insider view is equally interesting.

I've lived on my own only twice in my life: for parts of the two years I spent up at Ararat attempting to teach; and from 1974 until the end of 1976 at Carlton Street. On each occasion, I went nearly crazy toward the end of my period of aloneness. This is not how I anticipated my future life when I was a teenager. Living with my parents seemed a constant annoyance. All I wanted to do when I acquired an income would be to find a neat little flat of my own, with complete freedom to play music whenever I wanted to. Absolute human comfort! But given my ideal existence, I unravalled, especially during 1976. The worst of it is that the intelligent bit of the Gillespie mind could observe the crazy bit hurtling into steep decline, but could do nothing about it.

The local papers simply ignored the fact that ACT now has the nation's only openly gay chief minister or premier.

Your encounter with your super fund really worries me. At some time in the future, within the next year or so I would guess, I will not be drawing enough income from freelance work to top up my half-pension. I always had in the back of my mind that I could simply switch over to regular payments from my super fund. This would empty it within three years, but at least I could keep going for the time being. But if Colonial tries to pull this sort of shit on me, I would be really in trouble. Everybody wants to put the knife into pensioners now.

There was a time when you weren't anybody in US fandom unless you contributed to FAPA. These days, according to a recent email from Robert Lichtman, FAPA has mailings with fewer than 100 pages. So perhaps the fans whose fanzines we know and love are no longer still publishing, except on eFanzines.com.

Alan Rosenthal and Janice Murray and I went to Snoqualmie Falls during my visit to Seattle in 2005. We enjoyed the food at Salish Lodge, and had a bit of a look at the falls themselves. Alan says that in his more athletic days he would go climbing around and beyond the falls — there are many great walks in the area.

Yes, as an official diabetes 2 sufferer I no longer have to do the fingerprick blood test very often — just sometimes, when I think of it. However, my blood sugar count has crept up from 5.8 to about 8 in the last six months, so perhaps I'd better go back to regular testing. Otherwise, all my tests have come in to perfection, especially the HgAC₁ test. But I am way over weight, despite walking as often as possible.

When I consider how kind you and your family were to Stephen Campbell and I, who travelled to Syncon 70, I'm ashamed to say I cannot remember that your grandfather died the night before the con. In fact, I doubt that

anybody mentioned it to us.

Enough people I know have suffered from shingles in recent years for me to take the offer of an anti-shingles vaccination, which my diabetes nurse gave to me yesterday. It's not 100 per cent guaranteed to prevent shingles, but because I've just turned 70 I was vaccinated for free.

My mother always referred to herself as 'Betty Gillespie' or 'Mrs Betty Gillespie', but never as 'Mrs Frank Gillespie'. She was born in 1918, and certainly never thought of herself as 'progressive', let alone 'bolshy'.

Very few weeks of my American trip of 1973 were conducted in winter, but I did find that 'warm enough inside' on a cold day meant being 'warm enough for shirt sleeves' (about 20), not 'warm enough wearing a jumper' (about 18, which is the temperature we set our heating system).

Thanks for the sample of May Gibbs' newspaper strip. Our family did not ever own a May Gibbs book.

I've also never owned a Tin Tin book, but I did like the panel that you reproduce here.

Who is the person giving Ryan and you the GLITF Award? Congratulations. It's especially satisfying to receive the award as a complete surprise, as happened with my A. Bertram Chandler Award.

The Carl Barks page is magnificent. More! More! (As I've written before, my *Uncle Scrooge* comics are the only comics I've kept since childhood. Admittedly, they are only the Australian Reprint Edition, not originals, but Walt Disney comics were the only comics in colour in Australia during the early 1950s.)

Jeanne Mealy: LAND OF 10,000 LOONS

I've thanked you by email, Jeanne, for all the newspaper cuttings you've sent me over the years about Garrison Keillor and *A Prairie Home Companion*, but keep forgetting to mention your generosity here. Thanks in particular for the set of cuttings about Keillor's retirement from *PHC*, and the beginnings of the new reign of Chris Thiele. The two best pieces you sent me were both written by Garrison Keillor himself. His own writing just gets better and better. And it should; he's had enough practice, having written all the programs for 40 years, plus plenty of books and magazine and newspaper articles. Not that he's really retiring; one of the cuttings includes a list of all the solo concerts he's giving during the six months after he left *PHC* last July.

Thanks for the report on MidAmericon II, and the photos. I love the 'Dave Kyle Says You Can't Sit Here' chair. Difficult to adjust to the fact that Dave himself died not long after the convention.

One of my many remaining aims in life is to meet Cy Chauvin. We've been nattering by letter and email for 45 years or more, but the closest we came to meeting was when he was leaving a lift at Torcon in 1973 and I was entering, and we said 'Hi!', and have never seen each other since.

I would have thought the best way of staying old in fandom is to stay active. Many Melbourne fans who used to be well known for either their international convention going or fanzine publishing have dropped the ball

altogether. But they do remain socially active. ANZAPA shows what can be achieved when older fans decide to write more and better than ever.

Fanzines are for public consumption, and some people's apa contributions are meant to be read only by the members of the apa. There have been plenty of discussion as to whether this is a valid distinction. We're trying to make sure apa contributions are not sent to the Monash Rare Books Collection, while all other fanzines are. We probably haven't been fully successful in separating out the apazines, but we did our best.

Although Garrison Keillor's official last *PHC* program was staged in Los Angeles, the actual last program had to be staged in Minnesota, of course, at last year's State Fair.

Thanks for the updates on your careers. I'm glad that John has contract software work, but obviously it would be great for the family finances if you could get a permanent job. In this Trump era, we're supposed to tell the cats to go out and get a job. (Thanks very much for the photos of Nixie and Rozzie.)

John Newman: LIFE ON EARTH 7

Since the default setting for American activity has always been 'Greed is good', there is a need for those who value an egalitarian society to have another look at the means by which they gradually changed the American political culture from the 1930s through to the early 1970s so that a large proportion of Americans could enjoy a civilised way of life. The real erosion of that culture occurred under Reagan, who got away with it because he seemed so nice. Now Trump's cabinet seems uniformly set on pauperising even those Americans who are still enjoying something like a middle-class existence. But middle-class, moderately contented people have money to spend on non-essentials, which is the basis of the American retail economy. If the American consumer becomes pauperised, who is going to spend money in shops?

Roman Orszanski: SPARROWGRASS & BATTLE-TWIGS 46

I haven't seen any sign of *Don Parties On* being staged in Melbourne. Did it fail in Adelaide? Or is it simply that none of the theatre companies now advertises in *The Age*? Not that I've been to a play in well over 20 years, but I like to think I know what the well-off people are doing when they go to the theatre.

No sign of *Their Finest* being shown at cinemas in Melbourne, although I suppose it was shown at least once if the British Film Festival ran here. It sounds exactly like the kind of British film I most enjoy (especially if Bill Nighy appears in it).

At least FoE was allowed to become an SRG, which wouldn't have happened if the South Australian Royal Commission had been a federal body. And I don't find much talk of setting up Citizen Juries in Victoria, either.

Cath Ortlieb: YOU REALLY KNOW YOU'RE HOME WHEN YOU FIND A WOMBAT IN YOUR BED 16

Thanks for the full story of your Over 55s hockey team visit to Hobart. At least you were able to catch up with members of your family, as well as play hockey.

I would have been the best reason for not playing hockey is the high likelihood of sustaining unsustainable injuries. I know you have suffered from quite a few during your hockey career.

Yes, let's launch that slogan: 'Melbourne: The Thunderstorm Asthma Capital of the World'. At least you were prepared, whereas 3500 other people were not.

Gerald Smith: THE EROTIC WOMBAT 3

Michael Moore knows his own country much better than most Washington- and New York-based newspaper correspondents. In travelling around the whole of the USA, he would have listened to a vast amount of the kind of opinion reflected in the pro-Trump vote. The peculiar thing about the USA is the propensity of poor or middle-class workers to vote for people whose interests are opposite to their own. Why would an ordinary person in America vote for somebody who has made \$80 billion (or whatever) from real estate? Such a person is automatically my enemy, I would have thought, unless I am also making a few billion dollars a year from robbing people. Joe Bageant tried to explore and explain this vein of American thinking in his books, but didn't offer an explanation that made sense to me. Fortunately for his peace of mind, he died before the Trump victory.

Thanks for the letter of comment on *Treasure 4*. Would it be okay to use it in the mailing comments section of *Treasure 5*?

It's difficult to describe the old Melbourne SF Club on the top floor of McGills' Bulk Store in Somerset Place, but I do have a few photos that give some idea of its ambience. It was the magic kingdom for us refugees from 1960s Melbourne — theatre seats and screen, books books books, magazines, movie posters, and a sense of being cut off from mundanity. Also a very dangerous place if fire had ever occurred while people were in the upstairs room.

I had heard that John Bangsund and John Foyster took seven years to wend their weary way up the waiting list for FAPA in the sixties. Leigh Edmonds, took, about five years, but by the time I applied for membership it took me less than a year to make the membership list. Mailings were always 500 pages or longer when I was a member, from 1985 to 1995. Not so these days.

I suspect that there is no longer a 'Mr Robinson' of Robinson's Bookshops, which are now just franchises. We have one in the Greensborough Plaza, but the books it sells are very bog-standard popular books. If it actually stocks a book I want before it appears in Dymock's or Readings in town, I'll buy it here. The shop must be successful, since it's now been going for at least four years.

Spike: THE UNFORTUNATE RHINOS

Much about the World Fantasy Convention has always seemed mysterious to a mere fan, such as myself. I've always had the impression that pro writers and editors were more welcome than fans, and that there was a cut-off for membership, so why bother trying to attend anyway? Not that these impressions were based on hard information. I did hear, but only through the realm of gossip and innuendo, that Dave Hartwell himself vetoed the Australian bid to hold a WFC about ten years ago, but I know not why. I'd heard a bit about the H. P. Lovecraft head awards trophies controversy through Facebook, but nothing about the program controversy (starring Darrell Schweitzer).

It does sound as if many WFC program items are interesting, which would be an improvement on those of the Australian conventions I've attended during the last 10 years. I would have particularly enjoyed the panel on Shirley Jackson. I've read a couple of her novels and one book of short stories in recent years, and have several more on the shelf waiting to be read. I saw a review of a biography of Shirley Jackson, but failed to follow it up.

I had not heard the name of Bruno Schulz until you mentioned it here.

The film of *Arrival* extends and improves upon the novella 'Story of Your Life'. Oddly, it deletes the most informative image in the story, the diagram that illustrates the refractive index, but still conveys the main idea (time simultaneity) very well. Amy Adams should have won the Oscar for a performance in a film in which she carries the weight of almost every scene. Instead she wasn't even nominated!

On the street map, Altona would seem to be very far from Greensborough, but if Leanne got in her car, hopped onto the Western Ring Road at its entrance, and drove until its last exit, she would find herself in Greensborough, very close to our place.

I've seen *Into the Woods* on Blu-ray. Very effective movie, because it has retained much of the Sondheim music and the atmosphere of the original stage version (which friends showed us on VHS more than 20 years ago).

David Russell is a fan who lives in Warrnambool, about 250 km down on the west coast of Victoria. He's not on the internet, because he doesn't have a computer. I have to ring him or send a letter to keep in touch with him. About 30 years ago he first wrote to me about *SF Commentary* and my other fanzines, and has stayed a subscriber and supporter ever since. Many of his pieces of line art have appeared in my magazines, as well as in the Melbourne SF Club's *Ethel the Aardvark* and other fanzines. Way back then, he sent me a photo of himself bearing in front of him a copy of *Warhoon 28* (the complete Willis collection edited by Dick Bergerson), so I knew he was a trufan. Although he seems to have a very small income, he supports many worthy fannish causes, such as the Australian SF Foundation (of which he is a committee member) and the Melbourne SF Club. He is famous for giving people astonishingly appropriate birthday presents. He turned up at our place in Greensborough in 2006, unannounced, having travelled all the way from Warrnambool and picking up some

amazing presents. We could easily have not been at home that day. Several times he has given me the most expensive bottle of armagnac he can find in Melbourne, and one year he gave us a little electric coffee bean grinder that has been in daily use ever since.

A few years ago I discovered that Warrnambool boasted not only one artist and comics collector (David), but also Stephen Campbell, a friend of mine since 1969. They have made friends, and often travel together to Melbourne for fannish events. They would not have met if I had not suggested to David that he tried knocking on Stephen's door.

Alan Stewart: YTTERBIUM 113

I was just about to say—you really ought to stay in more! But if I look back over December, I find that we went out on each of the 1st (we had visitors), 2nd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th (Elaine only), 13th, 16th, 18th, 29th, and 31st. The two weeks surrounding Christmas week were much quieter than most of the rest of the year has been.

We avoid Kit Kats like the plague, because they Put On Weight. (What doesn't?)

If ever I flew overseas again, I would take my own noise-cancelling earphones.

The OBE nods sometimes ... often. I think I've fixed your minac-due listing.

Jack Dann promises to do the Melbourne launch of *Dreaming in the Dark* at Continuum in June. It begins with some very weak stories, then suddenly the stories become interesting halfway through.

I bought a copy of *Lost Melbourne* when it came out, but I haven't explored it yet. Thanks for the reminder to read it properly.

Thanks for the historical information about the RSPCA.

Five Million Years to Earth (colour; directed by Roy Ward Baker) has reverted to its original theatrical release title of *Quatermass and the Pit* on the recent Blu-ray. Meanwhile, John Davies gave me a copy of the original TV serial *Quatermass and the Pit*, plus some other Quatermass serials, also on Blu-ray.

Of your 'Recent Reading' list I've read *Arcadia* (very high on my Favourite Novels List for 2016), *The Dark Lighthouse*, and *The Riddling and Other Stories*.

Of your TV and DVDs list I've seen the new *Jungle Book* (disliked it, so gave it to a friend), *The Big Short* (****), *Hail, Caesar!* (***), *Sherlock: The Abominable Bride* (*) (a chuck-out), *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (****), *Tangled* (***), *Lucy* (****), and *The Code, Season 2* (****).

Of your films list, I've seen *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (****).

Sally Yeoland: LES CHATTES PARTIES 147

It's traumatic losing the use of a stove, but at least it has now been restored. You might remember The Great Gas Breakdown (20 years ago), in which we couldn't take a hot shower for a fortnight, or cook at all until we dug out the electric frypan. We can cook a very good dinner on it, but it's not been used since, because it is so much

harder to clean than the stove top.

Signs of John's continuing mini-strokes must be disturbing. At least you were there when it started happening.

John would have a real stroke if I suggested he live in Greensborough. But the service we receive from the electrician, plumber, gas system repairperson, and carpenter would be astonishing to people who live in most suburbs.

The *Bagpuss* introduction is wonderful. I, too, had never heard of *Bagpuss* before Claire featured him on the front page of *Quoz 50*.

If you want a copy of Garrison Keillor-and-Frederica von Stade's *Songs of the Cat* CD (and we haven't already copied it for you), it's had several reissues over the years. I've seen it in a Melbourne CD shop within the last few months, but I cannot remember which one.

I think Cleopatra has had several changes of name, and is now the 'lovely tuxedo puss' featured in Michael Green's recent issue of *Abstractions*.

In the early 1970s I once published an apazine called *Notes of a Naïf Son*. It was a wonder I was let out of university play pen in 1968, let alone allowed to trundle around on my own and try to become a teacher. Becoming 'politically aware' was a very slow process for me. I loved thinking about general matters of social importance, but it never occurred to me to question the endless benign rule of Menzies and the Libs while I was growing up. That's how Australia had been governed during my entire childhood and would be forever. Calwell was such an unlovely person (on radio and in the press) that it was impossible for Labor under his leadership to win an

election. I really was a 'little con-ser-va-tive' during the sixties. I couldn't stand the up-yours style of the extreme left, either at Melbourne or Monash universities, and I believed *The Sun* when it told me the Liberals were on the side of 'the individual'.

My change of awareness came to me during my first year of teaching at Ararat Technical School, when I took part in the Technical Teachers Association of Victoria strike in 1969. I became involved with the TTAV, listened to a lot of interesting talk about Victorian politics, and became increasingly disquieted about the continuing Vietnam War. (In 1966, if my number had been called, I would have gone off to Vietnam without any protest, thinking it my patriotic duty. That would have killed me or ruined the rest of my life.) The combination of the TTAV industrial action during 1971, after I returned to Melbourne, and the Vietnam Moratorium marches forced me to do a lot more political reading and thinking than I was used to.

Thanks very much for your story of the life of Marmalade. If only our cat friends lived as long as we do! Thanks also for the photos.

I've never happened upon the Leonard Cohen Facebook page, so thanks very much for reprinting Adam Cohen's memorial to his father. In an interview in one of the recent music magazines, Adam tells how his father suffered from very fragile bones as his cancer progressed, so all he could do was sit or lie there and offer ideas while Adam and the musicians put them into effect. Hence Cohen's breathy delivery and the laidback musical accompaniment.

Mailing 295: February 2017

Doug Bell: LANTERNE ROUGE 2: FINAL EXAMINATION

I was left with a deep loathing of doing exams after I finished university. I'm amazed to find you completed an exam to help you in a job from which you have already resigned. You must have great expectations for your future career.

Paterson played in Melbourne for a couple of weeks, but I must admit that after reading the reviews I was not tempted to watch it. You make it sound interesting. Maybe it will appear here on DVD/Blu-ray.

But what do 'real folks' hope to gain from Brexit? That's what puzzled us in Australia.

Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer: QUOZ 52

Claire:

I agree with all the ten points you've learned since you gave up work, but I still can't give up work. I do need an income.

Incompetence does seem to be the essence of

Trumpism, and I'll take your word for it that the Tories in today's Britain are just as bad.

Reading 128 books for the first time in one year seems an astounding total, one that I could reach only by never watching any films or writing any fanzines or doing anything else much of anything. I'm just a slow reader, I guess.

I did list my Favourite Books and Novels for 2016 in February's **brg**. During the last few minutes I tried applying your categories to my monthly lists, but the figures don't add up.

I read nothing in digital format, and no graphic novels/comics. During 2016 I did not re-read any books, although I intended to.

And I don't intend to read series, but sometimes find myself doing so.

The only one of your Top Ten books I've read is *Station Eleven*, which was high on my list of Favourite Novels for 2015. I have heard of almost none of the authors you mention, which probably translates as 'undistributed in Australia'. How, for instance, did you find out about Chaz Brenchley?

Mark:

I wish you would change fonts for your bit of *Quoz*.

All our families of that generation have died, so we're never going to hear scandalous stories from the past. Not that we heard any scandalous stories while endless aunts and uncles were still alive. Respectability *über alles* on both the Gillespie and Triplett sides of the family.

You do read some esoteric volumes (*Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*). I'm jealous that you can find such treasures.

Sublime insult to the other Mark: 'Mr November in the Dull Men's Club annual calendar'.

I've never seen *The Wild Geese*. I'll look out for all those old geezers if ever I see it. I still haven't got over Eric Lindsay telling me that he has also just hit 70, whereas he still looks 47.

Leigh Edmonds did send me a photo of 19 Somerset Place, all painted bright red, as it appears today. I meant to use it to illustrate Merv Barrett's article. I seem to remember using Leigh's photo somewhere else, probably the most recent *SF Commentary* letter column.

Love that inscription from Mary Doria Russell to Claire. I have the same first edition of *Children of God*. I remember enjoying it while I was reading it, although it had none of the power of *The Sparrow*. I've kept my copy although I can remember almost nothing about its story. I tried reading a later Russell novel, but gave up.

When I last had a real job (1973) I would often read a book on the tram into Publications Branch, then finish it during my lunch hour. One lunchtime I had grabbed my sandwich (or whatever), settled down with a sense of extreme urgency to read the last pages of Wilson Tucker's *The Year of the Quiet Sun*, when Eddie Gunn dropped in to have a conversation. It's not even as if Eddie and I were friends. We had barely spoken during the months I had already been at Publications. But Eddie, a solitary figure at the best of times, wanted to talk to someone, and I was it. Despite radiating unfriendliness, I let the conversation ramble on, and I just had to wait until riding the tram home to finish reading my book.

I'd prefer to write about Pete Weston in the next issue of *SF Commentary*. All I can say for now is: I agree. *Speculation* was a powerful influence on my fanzines. Pete and Eileen played host to me in 1974 when I visited London and Birmingham (during the Three-Day week); Pete visited Elaine and me in Collingwood sometime during the 1980s when he was in Victoria sourcing some material for his business; and he was a great friend when we were both at a loss for fannish company during the week between Corflu and Potlatch in 2005. Others will relate all his other achievements, including running conventions and editing anthologies.

I have on DVD the complete Joan Hickson *Miss Marple* TV episodes, and partly on DVD and partly on Blu-ray (thanks to Dick Jenssen) the complete David Suchet episodes of *Poirot*. Worth going back to, especially the early one-hour episodes of *Poirot*, with their magnificent art deco set designs and lighting. The two series you mention, *And Then There Were None* and *Witness for the Prosecution*, might have been shown on TV here, but they haven't turned up on disk.

Sharks? An obsession of a *British* newspaper? And I

thought only Australians were dedicated to wiping out these amazing creatures. I'm still impressed at reading Tim Winton's essay about sharks in his recent collection *The Boy Behind the Curtain*. He points out that the probability of an Australian being killed by a shark is almost vanishingly small (4 shark deaths in the year in which he wrote the essay) compared with almost every other possible source of mortality. If there were any consistency in public attitudes, people would kill every car that passes.

The dumping of unwanted books in a kerbside rubbish bin does not seem strange to me. People keep telling me they can't unload their unwanted books anywhere. There are almost no secondhand shops left, and even some charity shops (I'm told) don't want books at all, or are snooty about the ones they accept. The pressure is on people to 'de-clutter', which is really an attempt to shame people into selling large houses (the commission on which will finance the next car bought by your average real estate agent) in which they feel comfortable with their own things and buying horrible little one-bedroom units at nearly the amount they were paid for their larger house. Hence the disappearance in homes of the necessities of life, such as books, CDs, and even fanzines — and the need to dump such objects in the most unlikely places, such as rubbish bins.

I've already offered you and Claire your own non-ANZAPA copy of *SF Commentary*, but I was assured that 'one copy will do'. I do have some spare copies here, but in December did not have the cash to post them.

You talk about a generation separator, whereas much of the time I think of you and Claire as part of my generation. All my uncles and aunts are now dead, as well as my parents, except for two aunts who were married to members of my mother's generation. The same goes for Elaine, with only one remaining aunt, who was married to her father's brother. All of my cousins are still alive, except for one cousin who died in a road accident many years ago, and a cousin who was 80 when he died, therefore nearly a whole generation older than me.

Favourite line of the mailing: 'Inspired by the recent modern Ladybird book *How It Works: The Cat ...*'

Thanks for some background information about Dave Hutchinson. I think his publisher should have allowed him a lot more time to write *Europe in Winter*, the third 'Europe' book. It's shapeless; it doesn't add up; if he had put it aside for six months then returned to it, it might have become the book he was aiming for.

Garry Dalrymple: TBS&E 71 mco

What I like about the way in which *brg* is printed is that all I have to do is convert my desktop publisher file to a PDF and send it as an internet attachment to Copy Place in town. The exception is the OBO, which is done at the last minute, therefore has to be printed at home.

It does sound as if both your basenjjs are very old, and might not survive an operation. It must be very difficult to live with Amber's fits.

Yes, I can't remember a lot of Australian-based material in the various editions of the *Victorian Reader* that we used at our primary school. I remember the story of Grace Darling, a few Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson

poems, and not much else. Almost everything else was derived from British writers. It was only by good fortune that I discovered Mary Grant Bruce's 'Billabong' books at the Claremont Library. These days the assumptions of the characters in these books seem very snobby, but to a schoolkid of the 1950s the books offered exciting Australian-based adventures in bush settings.

Thanks for the Freecon report, but I still think the Freecon concept is flawed. People will turn up, and pay, for a convention offering good company, good facilities, and access to food and drink. They won't turn up if they expect to be bored. The trick is to keep the cost per member down to an amount that most prospective members could afford, while offering an experience they couldn't gain anywhere else. That includes sparkling program items featuring interesting speakers.

Diane and John Fox: RHUBARB 25

Diane:

Passengers is the only one of your Films Seen at The Edge that I've also seen. I thought it built its various relationships effectively during the first three-quarters of the film. The production design is magnificent. But the pathetic action climax took away much of the interest of the rest of the film. Also, I kept waiting for a *Moon*-like Big Surprise at the end, and there wasn't any. At the beginning of the film we had already been shown the incident that causes the rest of the action. A very good screenplay needed a touch of genius to convert a good film into an excellent one, and that genius was missing.

Thanks for your reviews of the two Shakespeare plays in the Sport for Jove program. It's been many years since I've seen Shakespeare on stage.

You do have a taste for some staggeringly awful movies I've never heard of. Thanks for the avoidance warnings.

You also have courage. I've never wanted to see any Ed Wood movies, even though Tim Burton's movie *Ed Wood* is one of my all-time favourites.

I had no idea that any movies had been made based on Tony Hillerman's novels. I must track down *Skinwalkers* and *Thief of Time* as well.

Angels and Demons does sound like fun. But how do you steal a bit of anti-matter?

Why have we never heard of *Death of a Soldier*? Who directed it? How did you find it? Again, this sounds like the sort of Australian movie that would do well at the box office, but has never been released in Melbourne.

The White Ribbon is brilliant, I agree. But all the violence is all off-camera, if I remember correctly. Why the R rating?

I think I saw *Of Human Bondage* many years ago on TV. I remember it as over-the-top melodrama. I've seen a version of *Rain*, I think.

Thanks for the pointer to *The Beguiled*. I'll have to try ordering that one.

I haven't come across copies of *Damage* or *Pretty Baby*, although I do have a set of early Louis Malle films.

An Inspector Calls has been shown twice on stage in Melbourne during the last 20 years, and the notices made it seem intriguing. Eventually I found the DVD of the film version, and now I understand. Nobody commits

spoilers when reviewing *An Inspector Calls*.

I think I can avoid *Quiet Days in Clichy*.

I have the movie of *The Hourglass Sanatorium*. Interesting, but very odd.

I've never been brave enough to watch a Jodorowsky film. Maybe someday.

I bought the DVD of *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher* when it first came out, and it's still available at JB Hi Fi. Would you like me to get you a copy?

It's Phil Dick's ideas about reality that seem decreasingly odd as time goes on. His prescience is astonishing. A non-SF reader would probably still be taken aback by the cryptic plotlines of his lesser novels, and many people dislike both his prose style and his characters. I like his prose style because he leaves out everything but the essentials. Not 'poetic', as most people think of the term, but great prose-poetry. His characters have a similar range in most of his books — mirroring Philip Dick and his wives, mistresses, and other acquaintances — but I always remember his more eccentric mutant characters, such as Hoppy Harrington, Lord Running Clam, and Mr Tagomi.

John:

I remember Conté crayons from schooldays. I was no more skilful at using them than using any other form of art utensil. Thanks for the examples of your own artwork. I particularly liked the collection of bottles, and the painting of the glass containers on a rug on the floor.

I could never stand the voice or style of George Michael, so don't know the song 'One More Try'. Thanks for reprinting the lyrics.

Thanks for the two wonderful photos from the Leura Gardens.

Leigh Edmonds: iOTA 1, iOTA 2

Not much use commenting to Leigh here, as he will not be joining ANZAPA and will not be franking any more issues of iOTA through here. But I'll send him a copy of this issue of **brg** anyway. Much of interest here, especially those bright sparks from the pre-World War II fandom, John Bangsund's memories of the Canberra post-Aussiecon II continuous party, and Leigh's appreciation of what Meteor Inc. has been up to.

Thanks, Leigh, for the photo of the doughty Meteor workers, although I should say that Elaine Cochrane, who will never allow her photo to be taken, did the lion's share of the work of carrying the boxes.

Michael Green: ABSTRACTIONS 19

Amazing to see (from the cover of *Abstractions*) that you were a member of Aussiecon 2. I didn't meet you until about the time of Aussiecon 3, when you attended the weekly Nova Mob meetings for a year or two.

Thanks for the summaries of the lectures by Alex Byrne and Alexandra Heath. I'm glad I did not make librarianship my profession — not out of any lack of appreciation of the profession, but because of the rabid attacks on it (as outlined by both speakers) during the last 15 years. Much the same process has made book

editing a dreary profession, because editors now mainly function as on-screen typesetters, with little time allowed for detailed copy-editing or expert structural editing.

Before she died, our next-door neighbour Enid had a black cat called Puss who followed her around the block, zooming up trees, skittering along the footpath, and generally having fun. When Enid died, Elaine helped out the son and daughters by finding a new home for Puss.

I gave up reading Stephen Baxter's books more than ten years ago. He started to churn them out. Each one became less interesting than the one before. However, I'm looking forward to his new take on Wells's *War of the Worlds*.

I hadn't heard of Charles Merfield, but the little section from his obituary makes him sound like someone who has been mistakenly dropped out of Victoria's history.

One of the first LPs that my father gave me when I became interested in classical music in my late teens was a Victorian version of Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, recorded in Melbourne by local label W&G. It was as good as any version I've heard since.

The Forever War was published first as a series of novellas in *Analog* before being released as a novel. The first novella was 'Hero', which won the Hugo Award in 1973. Since I no longer have the issues of *Analog* in which the novellas appeared, I can't check whether *The Forever War* is a fix-up or a completely rewritten novel.

David Grigg: THE FRETFUL PORPENTINE 13

I still have the image of Twitter that you describe ('short messages' [on] 'which pair of socks they chose to wear'). Your remarks about Trump and Twitter make me doubly grateful that I've never ventured onto that platform. I ignore remarks about Trump and his antics on Facebook.

I hadn't even heard of Julian Barnes' *The Sense of an Ending*. I admit that I remember the names of very few Man Booker Prize-winning books. I disliked his *Flaubert's Parrot* when I read it many years ago, but I did read his book about Henry James (but it was not nearly as interesting as Toibin's). Thanks for your engaging review.

Thanks very much for your discussion of *Rogue Moon*. I've read it only once, and am not sure I understood it then. I found it histrionic and over-written, as you did. But as you recount the plot, it reminds me of the main idea of the Strugatsky Brothers' *Roadside Picnic*, and one of the main ideas of Christopher Priest's *The Prestige*.

Thanks for the review of *Black Hole Blues*. Sounds like a must-read.

Thanks also for your review of *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi.

The Honourable Schoolboy is probably the Le Carre book I've liked least, but that's because I become completely confused by the twisted betrayals and wild adventures that occur toward the end of the novel. I was very impressed, though, to read in Sisman's biography of Le Carre that he undertook a very dangerous journey, mirroring the journey of Westerby, that took him deep

within the developing Cambodian theatre of the last years of the Vietnam War. Le Carre (John Cornwall) did not research his books from the desktop, but always tried to visit the (often hostile) sites of his books before writing them.

The Honourable Schoolboy is also an unnecessary book. You can jump straight from *Tinker Tailor to Smiley's People* (as I did) without having read it. The best way to experience both *TTSS* and *SP* is by watching the TV serials starring Alec Guinness. That's the greatest television I've ever seen.

I enjoyed *Bosch, Season 1* greatly, mainly because I enjoyed the company of the main characters — but was bored by *Season 2*. Same characters, a not particularly interesting mystery. I gave up halfway through episode 3.

I've never read *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, the novel, although I'm fairly sure we have a copy. I will look out for the serial if ever it makes it to DVD. Thanks for the tip.

Your distinction between 'programme' and 'program' held sway until about 30 years ago, when the entire Australian publishing industry decided to switch over to 'program'.

Thanks for the information about the 1975 Hugo results, all these years later. A curse on Jack Chalker, then! (He was a thoroughly nice bloke, but wrong in this case.) It would have cheered me over the decades if I had known that *SF Commentary* had actually come in second to Dick Geis's fanzine. (It would have cheered me more to have won.) A year later, the current procedure of Hugo nominations and voting procedures was made official, complete with the weird American interpretation of the 'Australian ballot' system. You were the last Hugo Awards administrator allowed freedom in how you tallied or announced the results.

I want to read your novel, too. (Why should LynC have all the fun?) I hope it appears soon.

No wonder Elaine and I never watch TV news. It's bad enough having to listen to occasional Trump soundbites on the radio news, but the thought of having to watch him perform is too horrible to contemplate.

Jack Herman: NECESSITY 34: ... HE TALKED A LOT

It takes a real eye for the peculiar to make yourself aware of the writings of Patricia Snow. Not that I'm in a position to challenge her assertions. I haven't read Hilary Mantel's memoir, *Giving Up the Ghost*, but would if ever I find it in a bookshop. I've picked up *Wolf Hall* several times in bookshops and read pages at random, and decided it isn't all that well written. Of course, the story is probably riveting, so perhaps I should simply look at the DVDs of the TV serial version.

Thanks for the roll call of the Lost during late 2016 and early 2017. You remind me of people of whom I'd never heard until they died (Peter Vaughn, Henry Heimlich) or people I thought had already died.

I made a simple mistake in listing 2 December as the deadline for the mailing instead of 9 December. It proved to be a very lucky mistake. I was able to send out

the December mailing before yet another episode of the *Echinoderms* indexing saga took over my life. You've never heard of echinoderms? Neither had I until I had index a 500-page book about them. This developed into a nightmare epic, because when I first saw the project I accepted it instead of returning it to the client as undoable within the time budget allowed. Having taken it on, I found it an impossible task, which led to further attempts to finish the damn thing, which meant I missed out on several thousand dollars for work I eventually did, finishing on 29 January 2017. I can't blame anybody but me, but even so ...

It's worth buying the CD of *You Want it Darker* and reading all the lyrics, or downloading them. They add up to a brilliant set of little poems, comparable to any published by recognised poets in small chapbooks.

Thanks for the compliments about *SF Commentary* 93, but I seem to have done better issues in recent years. And *Steam Engine Time* was a very satisfactory fanzine to produce during the 10 years it was published. I keep meaning to bundle up a few recent issues to send you, but you might find it much easier to read them from the <http://efanzines.com> site.

Your 'most amateurish amateur magazine' must be in my fanzines cupboard somewhere. We could have a 'humblest fanzine debut' contest.

Stephan Elliott directed a wonderful film *Easy Virtue*, which I saw last year. His new film *A Few More Men* is receiving nothing but bad reviews.

Thanks for your factoid about the Patricia Wrightson/Peter Wrightson connection.

Since you seem to be the only journalist (or journalism-oriented professional) to have examined and summarised the full extent of the sandbagging of the Clinton election bid, I'm wondering whether you sent this excellent piece (pp. 13–14) to a newspaper that might print it? I realise that it's difficult to get in the door in any newspaper in the world right now, but surely this article is so good that it should be seen by people other than ANZAPAns? (Do you write a blog? host a website?)

Try as I might, I cannot quite remember what I was doing in 70,000 BCE and therefore cannot remember why it was history's worst year.

Interesting comment on *Edge of Tomorrow*. Nothing I've heard about it has made me interested in buying the Blu-ray. But I shouldn't be buying Blu-rays at the moment.

I will probably never see *Rogue Nation*. To judge from most of the reviews I've read, I can avoid *La La Land* just as easily. But your contrary review is very interesting. It sounds as if I should see *La La Land* on the big screen (the bigger the better), but I suspect it has already disappeared from most cinemas.

Complete agreement with your review of *Passengers*, although I would add that for most of its length it gives us wonderful technological eye-candy.

I've seen no sign of *Noises Off* being available in Melbourne DVD shops. I would like to see it, because it's directed by Peter Bogdanovich.

I don't know whether *Person of Interest* or *Midnight Sun* is available on DVD/Blu-ray yet. I'll look out for them.

Thanks for your page of colour photos from Taronga Zoo. I've visited Sydney only three times (1970, 1972, and

1975), but have never been taken off to Taronga. I haven't been to the Melbourne Zoo for over 30 years.

Kim Huett: GASTON J. FEEBLEHARE 4

Thanks for the Canberra kitchen gossip.

So did Anne and Art renew their friendship at Aussiecon 2? From the OBO front cover photos, it seems that she was having more fun with Fred Pohl.

Not much to say about your analysis of national convention running in Australia except to agree with it. I trust that Leigh and you are keeping in touch. Between the two of you, you are reviving a genre that had almost disappeared: Australian fan history.

For instance, Marshall McLennan's article from *New Fandom* 5 (July, 1939) is the kind of material I thought I would never get to read. It's great to see that he and others were as fanatical about collecting SF magazines as are the members of the Fictionmags Yahoo e-list. It's extraordinary that collecting had reached such a fever heat in 1934 that somebody went to the trouble to steal McLennan's collection. Also interesting to see that the Australian censors were already banning magazines before the war, although eventually it was currency restrictions after World War II that stopped all American magazines reaching us.

Travelling expenses between Australian capital cities continues to be a problem for me. I've never attended a Western Australian convention, and have not been able to attend a South Australia convention since 1980 or a Brisbane convention since 1973. In retrospect, I realise I should have found some way to attend one or more of the great Sydney conventions of the late 80s and early 90s. Thanks to the committee of Conflux in 2008 choosing me as Fan Guest of Honour, I have been able to visit Canberra within the last decade.

You no sooner start writing about robots than you stop. I assume there will be a Part 2 next time.

Re your early reading: The *Milly-Molly-Mandy* series were written by Enid Blyton, who wrote a high percentage of everything I read between the ages of six and eleven. The 'Greyfriars' books, starring Billy Bunter, were written by Frank Richards. For some reason I did not stumble over Billy Bunter and his chums until my early teenagehood. I decided they were a bit childish for me.

I had never heard of Tom Swift until I joined SF fandom many years later. I can't remember ever seeing them for sale in Australia during my childhood, but maybe they were imported after the currency restrictions were lifted in 1959. (I turned 12 that year, so decided I was no longer a child.)

I read all the 'Secret Seven' books, but remember nothing about them. Slightly more memorable were the Five Find-outers and Dog books (the 'Mystery' series), in which the child detectives are always annoying Old Clear-Orf, the constable, by solving his cases for him. I first read about invisible ink in one of the 'Mystery' books. It's such an enduring feature of detective fiction that it turned up again in an episode of *Elementary* I was watching the other night.

**Eric Lindsay:
KINGDOM OF THE BLAND**

Thanks for the brief travel diary for 2016, although we've read the long version of these notes in previous issues. I can't remember you writing about the National Convention in Brisbane, though.

I can't write anything in return, as I didn't travel anywhere in 2016. The furthest I went was out to Notting Hill for the Oakleigh High School reunion. That was about as far east of the CBD as Greensborough is to north of it.

Thanks for the warning about moving into a retirement community. Elaine's Aunt Vaisey suffered the same kind of progressive withdrawal of benefits at the village she moved into about 25 years ago. Many of the benefits that were promised in her original contract gradually disappeared. In particular, on-site 24-hour nursing care disappeared, even while Vaisey herself was suffering the beginnings of dementia. Luckily, her nieces rescued her and persuaded her to go into an old people's home, which had its own failings, but was close to our place, so Elaine and her sisters could visit regularly.

Sounds as if I should visit Hobart, but only after getting in touch with Cary Lenehan first. I often natter with him on Facebook, but I don't have an email address for him.

I've not heard from Keith Curtis since he migrated to Hobart, so I'm not sure if he'd want to talk to me or not. In the 1970s he was a great raconteur and book finder.

Helena and Merv Binns' email address is mandhbinns@bigpond.com . I'm not sure whether you will get an answer to any message you send them, but you can try.

I discovered in 1971, while researching an article for Publications Branch, from the ALP's archivist, that the 'Labor Party' has always been spelled that way, from its beginnings in the 1870s. It has never been spelled with a 'u'.

**LynC: 2016: SETTLING DOWN
FROM THE LAIR OF THE LYNX 96**

Thanks for the tales and photos of various adventures, including the photos 'Annual Cat Vaccinations' and 'Four Cats, Eating'. We want to have our three cats back (Archie, Polly, and Flicker), so we could have a similar kitchenscape. It still seems strange to have Harry as the only cat eating in one part of the house, and Sampson eating at the other end of the house. It sounds as if Callie already has the household organised.

I don't think I had seen Roger in person with a beard, and Estelle had changed a lot by the time we all met at the NGV restaurant in 2016.

Antares, Volume 1 is not one of the great SF/fantasy anthologies of the year, but it has worthy ambitions. It seems to be aimed at gathering a group of authors not currently known in the international SF scene, and presenting their work in an elegant, attractive manner. I just hope that it can be seen by those people who edit anthologies for the major publishers. My own favourite stories include your 'Nematalien' (what *does* that name

mean?), David Grigg's 'In What Furnace Was Thy Brain?', and three by Chris Capps (especially 'Indrid Cold, Indrid Cold'). Capps has a crazy inventiveness that might carry him far.

Yes, the Satalyte story seems a sad one, if only because Stephen offered a lot of hope to a lot of fine writers, and now all these people have been let down badly. All he had to do was sit down with any of the successful small publishers, consult them, and listen to their advice, and things might not have ended badly. Russell and Liz (at Ticonderoga) could have told him not to publish more than one book at a time, and make sure that each book is successfully launched before spending money on the next one. I grant that publishing using Print on Demand should place far less stress on a company than the traditional method, but the publisher still needs to pay an advance on each book, and pay for editing, layout, cover art, distribution, and publicity. The publisher needs to work out how the members of the market are, and just how he or she is going to reach them.

I had no idea that you had a Timeshare apartment at Rosebud, or that you would find it so hard to take a holiday down there. Congratulations for being able to take as much of a holiday as you did.

Thanks for your tip about the Epson Workforce. Buying such a machine might solve a problems I have with both scanning and colour printing.

Considering that we have such different tastes, our reading statistics work out much the same: 67 books read for the year, with a large percentage science fiction or fantasy. I read only two Young Adult novels however (both by Diana Wynne Jones), and no graphic novels.

I have the last series of *Sherlock* on Blu-ray, but haven't watched it yet. Perhaps it will appear on ABC free-to-air.

Your recipe for potato zucchini bake sounds irresistible, but Elaine doesn't cook much these days outside the usual evening dishes, and I'm very nervous about attempting anything new.

It took me to the age of 26 to make that final leap from the family home (my second attempt). Roger will find another place of his own, even if he has to return to your place for awhile.

**Gary Mason:
CRASH OF THE HARD DISK 28**

I've been trying to work out the meaning of your heading 'Carey Handfield Rides Again'. I know that Carey was a bit of a lad 30 or more years ago, but these days he's a very respectable married man. (When I turned to pages 6 and 7 I discovered the connection.)

I haven't had a day as bad as yours for a very long time (in 1981, when I fractured my thumb), but can see how it would happen very quickly and very decisively. But those waiting times in Emergency Department are just getting longer. Glad to hear that Ryan's show was a triumph.

My friends who are *Doctor Who* fans have not mentioned a program called *Class*. Come to think of it, they have never mentioned *Sarah Jane Adventures*. *Doctor Who* fans seem to think of nothing else but *Doctor Who*. (But why?)

As I suspected, the listeners at the Book Collectors Society had only a vague idea of what science fiction is, so I took the opportunity to try to define my own view of it. I did realise that many of my *SFC* readers would disagree with my viewpoint, but whatthehell. I write to be disagreed with, not agreed with. As for professionalism/amateurism — I was just defining ‘amateur’ as ‘done for the love of it’. I’m dismayed by people who take part in the SF community purely to further their own professional ends, and have little sense of the worldwide community of dedicated amateurs.

Thanks for reminding me that I haven’t thanked John and Diane Fox for their wonderful covers. The only trouble is that these glorious colour covers make every copy of *Rhubarb* very *slippery*. I have invented some work-around solutions to the slippery-cover syndrome.

Thanks for your memories of Lawson’s Book Exchange, to which Keith Curtis guided me during my 1975 trip to Sydney; and the name of the place where Janice, Alan, and I dined at the Snoqualmie Falls in 2005: Salish Lodge.

Choc tops were invented by somebody or other at the Astor Theatre in Prahran, and the Astor’s choc tops are still the best in the business. At some stage somebody from one of the other cinemas must have noticed that not only could the huge Astor fill every seat on a good night, but also at interval long queues of people were buying choc tops. For a long time they could be bought only at the candy shops of independent cinemas such as the Trak or the Longford. Since I didn’t set foot in a multiplex cinema for years, I’m not sure at what stage commercial choc tops began to turn up at Hoyts and Greater Union cinemas. They are very narrow, poor relatives of the Astor choc tops.

I love that photo of an old school desk, complete with ink well, slate, very old book, and a copy of *The School Magazine*. That sums up everything that bored me stupid about my primary schooling.

Thanks very much for the *Wizard of Id* fiftieth anniversary celebration cartoons. I get the feeling that the closest friends in the world are the artists who draw the daily newspaper strips.

I’m not sure I want boxed sets of the *Mickey Mouse* newspaper strips or a *Complete Peanuts* (or even a *Pretty Good Selection from Peanuts*). I seem to remember that Justin Ackroyd has tried to sell me a *Complete Uncle Scrooge Comics*. If I didn’t take up the offer, it was because I was financially embarrassed at the time. Is such a collection still in print?

Congratulations on improving the state of your household air conditioning, a necessity in an Adelaide summer. (And in most Melbourne summers.)

June Whitfield is still alive! ABC Radio was still playing *Take It from Here* episodes (early 1950s) until about ten years ago. All the other stars died one after another, so I had not realised any of the great British radio stars remained.

I’ve no interest in *Star Trek*, *Doctor Who*, or even *AbFab*, but I’ve been enjoying a couple of seasons of *Elementary*. The beauty of American TV episodes is that they are 50 minutes long, not 1 hr 20 mins, as so many of the British TV episodes are these days. If I play an episode at midnight, I can get to bed well before 2 a.m.

I don’t think I’ve ever eaten pumpkin pie, even in America. No wonder Ryan is a popular guy at Christmas gatherings.

I wouldn’t even bother with movies like *Superman: Dawn of Justice* and *Suicide Squad*. I was under the impression they were pop crap produced for 15-year-old boys.

Congratulations on casting aside the cast and being able to type with ten fingers again.

And congratulations in coming through the speeding-fine court process so lightly.

Jeanne Mealy: LAND OF 10,000 LOONS

Amazed to hear that 90-year-old Tony Bennett was out cavorting with Miss Piggy on a Thanksgiving Day float. He has just released a new CD: *Tony Bennett at 90*.

Susan Wood once wrote that the show-off males in Regina, Saskatchewan, would get around in shorts and t-shirt in minus 20 temperatures. Sounds as if Minneapolis males are even crazier than Canadians.

Maximum contrast between your Christmas and ours. Our Christmas Day 2016 was one of the hottest days of the summer (38C, over 100F). We stayed home, and switched on the air-conditioning early. Nobody visited us. We enjoyed Christmas Day, despite the heat outside.

The only way of describing the taste of Vegemite is — indescribable. Surely somebody forced you to taste some Vegemite during your Australian trips?

Thanks for the comments about *Treasure 4*. You would enjoy meeting Jenny Bryce, but I think it’s many years since she’s visited USA.

Nice to have news of people who are still alive although everybody had thought they had died years ago (e.g. Kirk Douglas, 100). On Fictionmags, we call news of such people ‘anti-obits’.

Elaine would have had that tub faucet fixed months ago — but then, we know a very good plumber who doesn’t charge too much.

John Newman: LIFE ON EARTH 8

I have never identified with the Average White Male stereotype, although I suspect I do share some of those prejudices without realising it. You describe males with power and wealth, and I have neither. But I’ve never wanted to push people around, so I’ve never applied for or received a management job. And I’ve never wanted to do any of the things that would yield monetary wealth, which means I’ve rarely earned more than a third of the average annual income in any year. The system has little sympathy for non-AWMs.

I can only agree on your meditation on Happiness, without being able to add to it. The two nouns in the phrase ‘pursuit of happiness’ contradict each other. Striving for something other than what you have seems to be the main source of happiness in Western countries. It’s not expressed as ‘right to equal happiness’. If everybody in a society were responsible for the minimum conditions of happiness in that society, most of the inequalities would disappear. But that’s a pipe-dream. (Gillespie reaches for his dream-pipe.)

I don’t see *Star Wars: Rogue Nation* or the latest *Star*

Trek movie as representing Real Science Fiction I Love and Seek. I saw the first of the new series of *Star Trek* movies, but remember nothing about it. Make sure you catch *Arrival*, though. Except for some minor action sequences, it is Real Science Fiction.

Favourite line of the mailing: 'Satalyte really does seem to have messed you around in many ways. Never work with people who can't spell.'

If you want to see what Europe will be like when it is all Brexitised, read Dave Hutchinson's 'Europe' books.

I love your account of beginning your first job in Canberra. I felt very bereft when I landed in Ararat to take up my first teaching job, but my parents had helped me move the essentials to a flat there, and they introduced me to some friendly people at the local Church of Christ. I made friends with a few of the other teachers, but I think most of them regarded me as a bit of a joke. My main help was from the Principal, who did me some real favours, although he recognised that I was still hopeless as a classroom teacher. In the end, I failed Career Step 1, and retreated to my parents' place, but landed on my feet in Career Step 2, an editor and writer at Publications Branch. But that was after enduring the two worst years of my life as a teacher.

Sorry to hear about Magic's misadventures. Very glad to hear that she survived the broken leg, and is safely back on the sofa.

Roman Orszanski: SPARROWGRASS & BATTLE-TWIGS 47

Thanks very much for the introductory material from Ted Chiang on the problems of adapting 'The Story of Your Life' to *Arrival*. What a triumph of production design, as well as script-writing, direction, and acting ability.

A pity about the idiotic climax to *Passengers*. I agree about the best scene in the film: the failure of gravity generator while the Jennifer Lawrence character is swimming in the pool.

Looking forward to *Allied* on Blu-ray, as I've missed it at the cinema. Dick Jenssen reports that it is a highly entertaining three-star movie.

I've missed *Elle* at the cinema, but it is due out on DVD (but not on Blu-ray) in two weeks' time.

Nobody else has thought of dividing his or her response to *SFC93* between the non-ANZAPA bits and the obviously apa-directed bits. Just send your letter of comment, Roman, and include both bits.

You do bear a rare honour: the only person I know who has interviewed Leonard Cohen. As far as I know, not even Brian Wise on 3RRR can boast that.

I don't ignore filmed SF when it's well done, and I'm quite open to televised SF that's as thoughtful as, say, *Arrival*. But the source of originality in SF is in the written stuff (although only in a small percentage of it). I will grant you that the radio version of *Hitchhikers' Guide* is wonderful. I think I have it on cassette somewhere in the house. But why do people sit around in clubs worshipping individual series? This makes no sense to me. The whole enterprise is Science Fiction: the individual bits of creative activity only make sense in terms of the

whole.

I'm a radio listener, but there's no audio drama left on the ABC.

Jocko's devil-may-care attitude to producing fanzines seems close to the attitude of the Festival of the Photocopier fanzine producers. It's great that these people have decided to bypass the computer altogether. But where do they buy their typewriter ribbons? Where do they find milliner's glue, which is needed to paste up their page designs?

I stopped riding a bicycle in 1963 when we moved from the suburb of Syndal to the (then) country town (now a suburb) of Melton. The first time I rode my bike, the tyre was punctured by bindi-eyes (three-cornered jacks). There was no way of avoiding them on country roads, so I gave riding a bike, and have ridden only once since then.

Thanks for the story of Berth Appleroth and Aeroplane Jelly. As usual, all knowledge can be found in ANZAPA.

Thanks for all the extra information about nuclear waste storage ('WA ... was the other side of the world from the reactors, and they expected it to leak'), especially the story about Lucas Heights. None of this information ever hits the newspapers, or even ABC news programs.

E-apas are not the same as print apas. As soon as you put the contents of an e-apa online, its contents are not safe from scrutiny, no matter how one tries to make the information private. Like ANZAPA members, producers of 'zines' operate on the principle of offline inaccessibility.

No wonder I rarely get involved with organisations (at least, none bigger than the Australian SF Foundation). Your account of various machinations in the anti-nuke world lost me in the first column.

I received a few early Justina Robson novels as review copies from Gollancz, but found the prose fairly dull.

Cath Ortlieb: YOU REALLY KNOW YOU'RE HOME WHEN YOU FIND A WOMBAT IN YOUR BED 168

The weird events in the Bourke Street Mall seemed distant to me. ABC Radio suggested not going into the city on that Friday afternoon, so we didn't. Bill did, and was stranded on the north side of Bourke Street. He was able to go to the MSFC in Coburg, not join the others at the David Jones Food Hall. However, you are the first person I've met who was involved personally in those events.

Thanks for the information about Natalie's attempts to find work. On the few occasions we've met at David Jones Food Hall, I haven't known what to talk to her about.

Carey and Jo find it convenient to go to the Greensborough Hoyts, which is very close to our place, and not too far from the new home of Carey and Jo. I can't comment on any of the films or TV shows you mention as I haven't seen any of them.

Lucy Schmeidler: OZ SF FAN

Thanks for your two-line poem: 'Hope is dead./Maybe I should feed the cat?' That's why Elaine or I, and sometimes both of us, gets up by 7 a.m. Harry needs his breakfast. Sampson needs his breakfast (but not as loudly as Harry does). Human servants, look to it!

We often need minor repairs, but we have to pay for them ourselves. But we don't the extreme weather events that hit you every winter.

I'm not sure why Mervyn Barrett's comments about the great days of the Melbourne SF Club should be hard to relate to. Since you've been reading ANZAPazines for many years, you should have a pretty good idea of the importance of the Club to Australian fandom. Many of us have described the early conventions held in the upstairs loft that was the clubrooms, and we've also published photos of this magic kingdom. The Club was a refuge from ordinary suburban Melbourne life, a place full of book shelves, theatre seats, projector and screen, posters, coffee-making facilities, all made of wood, with gloomy light coming in at one end. But it had only one narrow exit, via a landing and two steep sets of stairs, so it would have been very dangerous if fire had broken out while people were at a meeting. The later Club rooms in West Brunswick had some of the same atmosphere, but we had access only on Friday nights and Saturday afternoons.

Great Expectations also received the best Charles Dickens film adaptation ever, the one directed by David Lean in the 1940s. The 1950s film adaptation of *A Tale of Two Cities*, starring Dirk Bogarde, was fairly pallid.

Erika Lacey posts on Facebook these days. She is a very busy nurse, living in a north Queensland city.

I agree that 'life is too short to read boring books', but I still find myself reading some books under obligation to review them. Some of them prove to be interesting books, of course, but the sense of obligation spoils the experience.

Aussie-pronunciation 'chulps' for 'tulips'. I like that one.

I'm told that cash has almost disappeared in Norway and Sweden. I use cash for most amounts under \$50, but I notice that shoppers in front of me paying at (say) the fruit shop register will flash their cards for quite small amounts. I use only credit card.

Glad to hear that you are somebody else who caught the publishing bug in childhood. I didn't have access to any kind of duplicator on my first attempt, age 11, so could use only carbon paper. My luck was that my friend Ron's father owned a duplicator (mimeo) that we could use for our proto-fanzine in 1961.

I don't think Colin Steele's 'The Field' is meant to be read all at one gulp. I find it useful to run my eye over his reviews every now and again, and pick out something I might have noticed earlier.

Thanks for the succinct definition of 'mimetic fantasy'. That's my favourite kind of fantasy, since I rarely read the kind of 'heroic' fantasy that is written in mock-Tolkien prose.

I also enjoyed Jo Walton's *My Real Children* greatly, and was surprised it didn't do as well as *Among Others*.

Thanks for the other short book reviews. I read and

enjoyed Lucy Sussex's *Thief of Lies*, but haven't read any of the others. I hadn't heard of the Lyn McConchie books you mention. I usually enjoy her writing, and wish that she could return to ANZAPA.

Spike: THE UNFORTUNATE RHINOS

Yes, you do have a witty band of co-workers. Elaine did so too, when she worked at Oxford University Press way back in the eighties. We seem to have lost touch with them.

Thanks for your account of the San Francisco Women's March. The Women's March nationwide must have been a magnificent occasion, but how do you take up arms, month by month, year by year, against two houses of Congress seemingly dedicated to kowtowing to Trump and destroying everything in America that might benefit women?

Thanks for your memories of Hilary Bailey, Peter Weston, Sarah Prince, and Kate Yule.

I've never met Hilary Bailey, and know little about her, except that she was an editor of *New Worlds Quarterly* and a well-respected author.

Peter Weston is somebody I will talk about in *SF Commentary*, since he had a huge influence on the beginnings of my magazine.

Sarah Prince I met only through a few of the Yahoo e-lists, but I did not get to know her. Wally Weber has posted on Facebook a powerful piece, telling about the years she and he lived together.

Kate Yule visited our place with David Levine on the Garden Visit a few days before Aussiecon 4. Since I had by then trading *SFC* for *Bento* for some years, it was great to meet them both. Also, Kate was in the Secret Garden apa (then email list) with Elaine. It would have been good to attend the farewell service in Portland.

Thanks for your MidAmericon Report. In the circumstances you found yourself (at the Hotel Phillips) I would have simply crumbled and resigned myself to a lonely-at-night convention. Sounds as if you had a great time concocting your own version of the Con Party.

I'm a fan of Olaf Stapledon's *Sirius*, but had not remembered the names of the two main characters. Nice bit of detection.

I've rarely seen as large a chorus of approval for a film as I have recently for *Hidden Figures* — not only from newspaper and magazine reviews, but also from friends. Now to find time to see it before it leaves the cinemas.

Rowena Cory was Paul Collins' partner when they moved to Melbourne in 1975. They had already begun publishing *Void* as a magazine when in Brisbane. In Melbourne, they closed the magazine and set up Void Publications. They sought authors, such as Wynne Whiteford and Jack Wodhams, who had not been published in SF for a long time, and publishing a series of original fiction anthologies with *Worlds* in the title. I had a story published in the third volume, *Envisaged Worlds*. In order to finance their publishing, they ran a secondhand bookstore in St Kilda during the 1980s. They formed a publishing/artwork partnership with Stephen Campbell and Chris Johnson. Somewhere along the line Paul and Rowena unhitched as a couple, and Rowena began living

with Stephen Campbell. They had two children together. Then the cooperative broke up, and she and Darryl Lindquist got together, moved to Brisbane, and had several more children. Rowena became Rowena Cory Daniels, and has published quite a few novels under that name. Since by genre her books are heroic fantasy, I don't have copies of them. I caught up with Rowena at Aussiecon 3 in 1999 and had a long yarn. If she was at Aussiecon 4 in 2010, I didn't see her — but that could be said of several hundred people who I now know were there.

Somewhere in the 1990s Paul Collins and Meredith Costain got together, bought a house in Ford Street, Clifton Hill, and became Ford Street Publishing. After nearly 40 years of non-stop hard work, Paul became a successful writer, and he and Meredith have quite a lot of success with their publishing (mainly YA SF and fantasy).

Alan Stewart: YTTERRBIUM 114

All your talk of expensive beers is lost upon me. I can't even afford glasses of wine anymore. It's a pity that Randy Byers isn't a member of ANZAPA. He introduced me to some pleasant (and cheap) boutique beers when I was in Seattle in 2005.

You're quite welcome to a second copy of *SF Commentary* 93 (hand delivered) if you want to keep your ANZAPA mailing complete. Most members of ANZAPA do not receive the print copies of *SFC*, but some download from efanazines.com.

Of your Recent Reading list I've also read Gene Wolfe's *The Land Across* (**) and Ted Chiang's *Stories of Your Life and Others* (****).

Of your TV and DVDs list, I've seen *Predestination* (****) and *Minority Report* (****). I haven't seen any of the TV series you mention. I've never heard of most of them.

If your Films list, I've seen only *Arrival* (****). I got halfway through *High-Rise* but haven't yet watched the second half.

Sally Yeoland: LES CHATTES PARTIES 147

You sum up my reaction to the Bourke Street Mall killings much better than I could. I don't see how the police could have stopped him earlier in any way other than shooting him, but I can understand that the police remain nervous about such a solution. They weren't to know that the driver was likely to do anything other than scream and shout a lot.

Surely 1994 was the year when the states agreed that the Australia Day holiday would be transferred from the nearest Monday to the actual day, 26 January? Australia Day Long Weekend was until then a popular date for holding non-national SF conventions, and most people forgot its significance. When people like Howard and Kennett tried to whip up whitefellers into patriotic fervour on 26 January, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were reminded of everything they have lost since 1788, and objected strongly. The only legitimate date for

Australia Day is 1 January, the anniversary of Federation in 1901.

'An Orstrilian Notional Anthem' remains as funny as ever to somebody who lived through the Whitlam era. It's a bit embarrassing (and completely incomprehensible to most people) when Bill Wright tries to organise a convention crowd into mass singing of it.

Thanks for the link to Stan Grant's response to Australia Day.

I must remember, if and when we ever need more assembled bookcases, that 'Sally knows somebody who sells assembled bookcases'. No more flatpacks at 5 Howard Street!

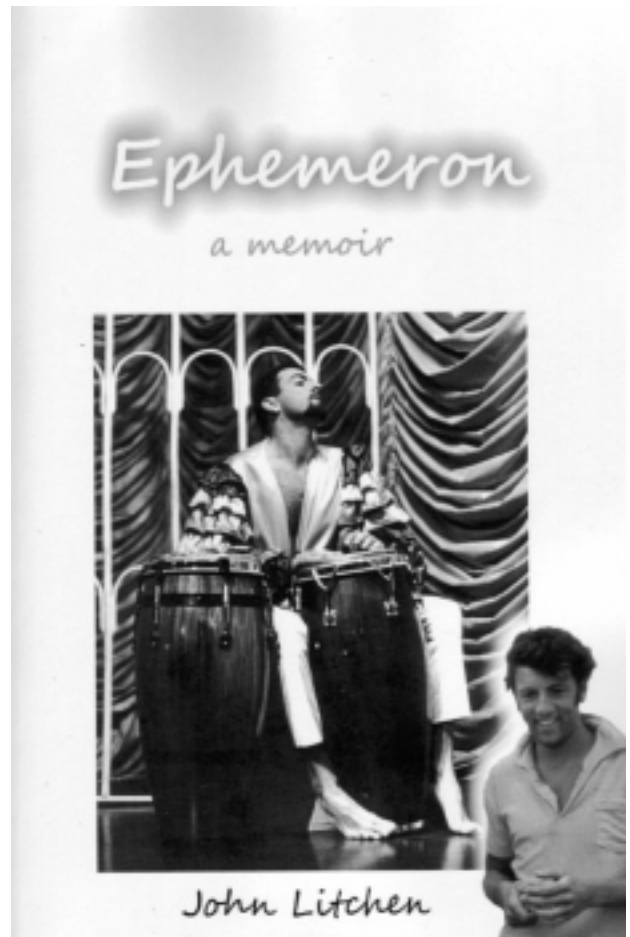
I can listen to entire CDs of Joan Sutherland (and Joan Hammond) or Maria Callas. They transform anything they sing into something magical, unmatched by any other singers.

John Litchen continues to publish books of his own personal writing. The latest, *Ephemeron: A Memoir*, includes all the 'My Life and Science Fiction' columns that have appeared in my fanzines. I'll send John some money and ask him to send you and John a copy.

You have very good taste in cartoons, and somehow can scan them successfully into *Les Chattes*. Thanks for this selection, especially those by Tandberg.

20,600 words, before editing, in two weeks. Thanks, everybody, for writing such entertaining stuff for ANZAPA.

— Bruce Gillespie, 5–18 March 2017



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