

iOTA 05

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iOTA is the little efanzone put together by Leigh Edmonds who can be contacted electronically, and in almost no other way, at hhandc@hemsleypark.com.au.

This little efanzone is produced as a progress report on my current project to research and write a history of Australian fandom, focusing on the period between 1956 and 1975. *iOTA* is a research tool and document, containing some of the material and thoughts that will be used in writing the history. It is also a place where I publish bits and pieces of the writing and art of Australia's fannish past to help introduce you to the rich vein of material that previous generations of Australian fans have left us. If you want more details about this history project you'll find them in the first issue of *iOTA*.

iOTA is more or less available for 'the usual' but two things bring its editor the greatest fannish pleasure. One is great gobs of egoboo and the other is a contributions to the discourse of understanding and writing a history of Australian fandom such as commentary on items published in previous issues of *iOTA*, suggestions of further sources for research or individual contributions on the general topic of this efanzone. If all else fails, issues of *iOTA* are put up on *efanzone.com* fairly soon after I've completed them.

There have been shorter colophons in the history of fandom.

Thisish's Cover

After our venture to Britain last issue we are back in Australia for this one, towards the end of 1953 and an early product of the AFPA Roneo 500. To look at, this cover is nothing special with the primitivism of its artwork, but look again at what has been achieved with a simple wax stencil and a stylus. Apart

from one blemish, the artist has managed to scrape away the wax without damaging the thin and fragile backing - which is a real achievement I can tell you, as one who has tried and failed miserably at this seemingly simple task. Mel Pettingill is credited with this achievement and he deserves a round of applause. The rest of the layout is pretty nifty too, despite all being drawn straight onto stencil. It shows that the editor of this fnz was beginning the master the art of fanzone production with the tools available to him in the early 1950s.

Editorial - of sorts Reflections in this year's Ditmar nominations

I feel a bit more heartened. For the past few weeks my main mental effort has gone into putting the finishing touches to a book that will never be printed. It is the second volume of my planned three volume history of Australian civil aviation. This history of Australian fandom is being done between the second and third volumes. Although I finished the text of the aviation history back in last November (note that the first issue of *iOTA* was published in December) it has taken until now to get close to hitting the 'publish' button. This will be my second ebook, the first one was the first volume of the civil aviation history. I don't miss all the problems that go with publishing a paper book but I do mind not having something to put on the shelf alongside the paper books that I've written.

The reason I'm feeling heartened is because I decided to have a look at the Ditmar nomination list for this year. No, I don't intend to actually read the stuff on the list, my last attempt to

catch up with what's new in stf was thoroughly underwhelming (which might explain why I'm currently re-reading *Second Stage Lensman*). What I found interesting was the way in which the stf community in Australia has thoroughly gone over to the electronic medium in the past decade or so (since I last looked, anyhow). There is some stf that you can still get in hard copy, and this seems to be mainly the fiction itself. The fiction is now mainly available in electronic form but it is still word based; made clear from the way in which the first three categories this year are based on word length (Novel, Novella, Novelette and Short Story) and the 'Collected Work' category is also based on words, not length but how they are selected.

The category I found most interesting was, as you might expect, 'Best Fan Publication in Any Medium'. My first observation is that, judging by the nominations, the paper fanzine, or even an electronic facsimile of it like *iOTA*, is no longer popular. What we have in this years nominations are some podcasts, some blogs and a set of some short transcribed interviews. That's what interests fans these days, apparently.

I found this crop of nominations surprising but, when I pause to think about it, entirely logical. Fans have adopted the latest technologies available to them for their purposes and podcasts and blogs are among the most recent. What separates these from something like facebook or twitter is that they are still the work of a person or a collective with the aim of expressing ideas and attitudes towards stf and the stf community in a coherent whole, rather than more general and atomised mumbling. Good for them, and if and when new technologies emerge I expect that stf enthusiasts will find and use them in the same way that fans

have been using the latest technologies available to them since the 1920s and 1930s.

The podcasts are interesting because they remind me of the experiments that fans made in the 1950s and 1960s into tape recording. The technique of talking through a microphone into a recording device hasn't changed between then and now, and I don't know that the material talked about has changed much either. The change has come in the means of reproducing what was recorded. In the good ol' analog days the result of a recording session was a reel of tape, a couple of reels if you had a couple of tape recorders and the time and money necessary to make copies. This limited the distribution of those recording sessions to only a few friends, with the result that sound recording could not compete with the ease of running off several dozen or hundred copies of a fanzine on a duplicator. Hence the survival of the fanzine beyond that sound recording technology.

A similar comparison might be drawn between the blog and the letter or the perzine. A blog is, generally speaking, one person typing words on a keyboard, usually their personal thoughts and reflections on what they have read and experienced. A blog is more like a letter because it can be as long or as short as the writer needs to express what they want to say, and it can be produced as often as the writer has something to say. It has the personal feel of a perzine but none of the limitations of that kind of fanzine in terms of having to produce paper copies.

I am led to wonder if the inability to make many copies of tapes or letters created a different expectation about the perceived audience which created, in the mind of the producer, the need for a different kind of content. For a tape or a letter the producer had

to think be aware of their very limited audience, usually one already known to the producer, resulting in a more personally focused production. These new modes of distribution mean that anyone connected to the www can now listen to or read that output, so the producer has to think in terms of a much more general and anonymous audience, resulting in a different focus to the production. This would make podcasts and blogs more akin to the old genzine than anything else.

To me the blog is preferable to the podcast because it takes the duration of a podcast to gain all the information available in that production but I can scan a blog much more quickly to find the information and enjoyment in it that works for me. The other thing I prefer about the blog is that there is always a certain amount of artifice in writing which is not possible in a podcast. When I listen to *The Coode Street Podcast* and hear Jonathan Strahan talking there is no mistaking that voice and personality. It comes across vividly because that is the Jonathan in-the-flesh personality, undrafted and unedited. On the other hand, when I read *Earl Grey Editing Service* the Elizabeth Fitzgerald I find there is a construction mediated through her fingers on the keyboard. She can make it up and make her life, work and thoughts more interesting and vivid than they could be if she just spoke them. I always thought that one of the great pleasures of good fan writing was the writer's ability to construct a persona in a fanzine that was an extension of their real selves, a sort of essence of personality that was not the mundane reality of that person. (To some extent, the letter from Vol Molesworth, written from his hospital bed in 1940 and found later in this issue, was an attempt to do this.) Then again, talking into a microphone and

writing on a keyboard are both forms of performance. Maybe I need to think about this some more.

The simple point I want to make about the 'Best Fan Publication in Any Medium' category is that the people nominated in it are not doing anything different from what earlier fans did, just that the technology at their disposal is different. A tape and a letter could only be reproduced with difficulty and at great expense in time and money. These days reproducing those forms of expression is simplicity itself and available to just about anyone with a computer with decent software and some skill in using it. (I have the software on this computer that I could use to make a podcast - and I might use it to publish some interviews later on.). The same with a blog. In both cases, hit the button and it is published.

The other thing that is also instant and easy is feedback. Hit the 'reply' or 'respond' button and type in a few words, and it is done. Of course, computer graphics and web design also help to make the nominations for this year look pretty good on the screen, but I am not sure that looking good is as rewarding as substantial content, to me at least.

(This leads me into a paragraph on an idea that I have recently been mulling over more generally. About energy investment in a fan publication. If you look at *Wastebasket*, which was produced in 1953 using the available technology of the time, you see words on a page which might not seem much different from the words you read on your computer screen today. The difference lies in the reproductive techniques that the editor had to learn to get those words onto the page. First the skills of cutting stencils, which are considerable, as shown by the editor's

improvement demonstrated in *Wastbasket* over his earlier *Perhaps*. Then there is the process of printing, collating, and posting which do not exist in any of this year's nominations. The energy investment in producing an issue of *Wastbasket* was much higher than that necessary to produce an episode of *The Coode Street Podcast* or a post on the *Earl Grey Editing Service*. I'm not quite sure what this means, but I'm working on it.)

Moving on to the rest of the nominations, a couple of observations.

It seems strange to me that, since a great deal of the fan publication nominated this year is not strictly 'written', there is still a category called 'Best Fan Writer'. Since some of the most interesting work in the Fan Publication category is not written, perhaps a better category title should be found for future years.

Perhaps the most striking observation resulting from my quick scan of this year's nominations is that there seems to be almost nothing fannish in any of the fan categories. Everything seems to be about stf. I have no objection to this, but it leads me to wonder if the modes of communication available to fans in earlier generations created a different sense of community to the way in which currently used modes create a common sense of purpose and interest. Something more to think about.

And finally, the 'William Atheling Jnr Award for Criticism or Review' (Do people these days know who William Atheling Jnr was? Perhaps renaming the award in honor of George Turner, who was Australian and also highly influential in his time, might be an idea.) This is not a category that has interested me in the past but what heartened me this time was that, although some of the nominations take the form of blogs, there were also some

ebooks that are not being made available in hardcopy. Even though our topics of research are different, I feel heartened because I am in good company.

The Question of Questions

Remember the get-together of old fannish friends I mentioned a couple of issue back, 03 if my memory serves me right. Word of this history project has spread and a couple of the fans there asked me the question, in one way or another, 'When are you going to come and interview me'. To which I answered, 'When I know what the questions are.' The response to that was a look of puzzlement, as though I had just spoken in tongues.

The idea of the 'question' is key to the business of oral history and a lot has been written about it. It is not a simple business, contrary to general understanding. Only by asking the right questions, and the right kind of questions, is an oral history interview likely to result in the interviewee offering the right kind of answers - by which we mean answers that contribute to a better understanding of a person's life and experiences and, by implication, wider human lives and experiences.

This is a matter of technique and it can be taught, or it can be learned through hard experience. The best answers come from the most open questions which encourage an interviewee to wander around in their memories and perceptions. Achieving this is not as easy as it sounds and normally requires that the interviewer have a good working knowledge of the topic being discussed and understanding many of the details of the times and events being discussed to help interviewees when they come to memory roadblocks. For example; 'That might have been in 1953. What was going on then?'

Thus, it is not a fruitful exercise to go into any interview cold (and memories of some of the interviews I've done in those circumstances still give me a chill). The fact of the matter is that, while I have a vague knowledge of most of the history of Australian fandom, I have yet to develop the 'lived in' understanding necessary to conduct worthwhile interviews. In other words, my general knowledge of the history of fandom in this period is not as well enough developed as it needs to be before I venture out to record some of you.

The other problem about going into interviews cold is in not understanding the answers you hear. This has happened to me more times than I care to remember because, by not understanding the answer, I have missed the opportunity to open up areas of knowledge and experience in the interviewees' mind that I did not even know that existed. This realization usually only comes long over the interview is over and the opportunity to follow up on that line of inquiry has been lost. This is still likely to happen no matter how much research has been done, of course, but less often the better informed I am.

So, in trying to find an explanation to this problem that was more articulate than my own, I went back to Elton to see if he had anything to say on this topic. He didn't, probably because the areas of history in which he worked were long before living memory so there was nobody to interview, with the result that his comments on the research process didn't include this problem.

It did lead me to a passage which relates to another problem I'm currently having; Rob Hansen's *Then*, a history of British fandom. I'm working my way through it, but it's not easy going and I was puzzled about why this was so. The topic should have

been interesting, but my reading experience was far from being interesting and rewarding.

Elton has some comments on this, which I hope don't give the impression that I am overly critical of most history of fandom because it is amateur. Elton says some very complimentary things about amateur history, but he also points out some reason why it tends to fail.

By way of introduction, at this point in the text Elton has just finished writing about the different kinds of history - political, social, economic, and so on - and concludes that there is no kind of history or topic of history that is better or more important. What is important is, to put the word in his mouth, technique.

(By the way, Elton has been put back on the shelf but along side him sit Carr's *What is History?* and Tom Griffiths' recent *The Art of Time Travel, Historians and Their Craft*. Choices, choices!)

This does not mean that there are no distinctions to be made, but only that the distinctions do not depend on the dominant interest or the main line chosen. The differences to which the critical mind should address itself lie solely in the manner of execution. They are not confined to the degree of art displayed, to the competence of explanation or skill in description. The writing of history requires powers not universally available, but the name of historian need not always be denied to the man who cannot write well. What matters are the differences shown in the intellectual treatment of the questions asked. And here the fundamental distinction is that between the amateur and the professional. This is not always

an easy distinction to make, for it is not identical with that between men who earn their living by the study of history and those who engage in it by the side of other occupations. The distinction I have in mind rests between the man who has learned his job and the man who, sometimes with touches of genius, comes to it in a happy spirit of untrained enterprise: crudely, the distinction between those who think that research means reading a lot of books and those who have grasped that research means assimilating into oneself the various and often very tiresome relics of the past. Examples of both are found inside as well as outside the academic professions.

The hallmark of the amateur is a failure of instinctive understanding. This expresses itself most clearly in a readiness to see the exceptional in the commonplace and to find the unusual ordinary. The amateur shows a tendency to find the past, or parts of it, quaint; the professional is totally incapable of this. On the other hand, the professional, truly understanding an age from the inside - living with the attitudes and prejudices - can also judge it; refusal to judge is quite as amateurish a characteristic as willingness to judge by the wrong, because anachronistic, standards. By all these criteria, Lord Acton was an amateur, and so he was, a prince of amateurs. Very wide reading and self-consciously deep thinking may have attended him; but he was for ever expressing distress or surprise at some turn in the story, was alternately censorious and uncomprehending, suspected conspiracies and deep plots everywhere. In short, he lived in history as a stranger, a visitor from Mars. The profession lives in it as a contemporary, though

a contemporary equipped with immunity, hindsight and arrogant superiority - a visitor from the Inquisition. How is such professionalism created? G M Young once offered celebrated advice: read in a period until you hear its people speak. But it is amateurishness of a drastic kind because it is superficially professional. Who ever knew or understood people just because he heard them speak? The truth is that one must read them, study their creations and think about them until one knows what they are going to say next.

I do not mean to deny that what I have called amateur history can be very good, not only entertaining but useful and stimulating. Still less do I mean to doubt that professional history can be very bad, sterile and stultifying in the extreme. But the emotional criterion, which measures the response evoked by the historian, is a partial guide and provides no firm standard. The criterion I have offered here has about it a quality of precision. The best amateur history, however entertaining, cannot enlarge the understanding or deepen the participation because it is written from the outside, through a veil woven out of strangeness and wonderment. At its best it achieve sympathy and romantic love, but it cannot penetrate to fundamental explanation; at its common bad, it is sentimental, ignorant, and an insult to the intelligence. That really fine amateur historian, G M Trevelyan, achieved both.

The purpose and ambition of professional history is to understand a given problem from the inside. This may well involve tedium, pettiness and pedantry, the main faults of the professional. He lacks the amateur's saving grace, for he is not

doing the thing just for the love of the thing and cannot rescue himself from depression by romance and sentiment. He is struggling, sometimes, grimly, with the often repulsive reality of life, and if he is a petty man or a pedant he will soon convince the reader of that. But even at his worst he cannot fail to add to learning, understanding and knowledge; he contributes to truth. Thus, good or bad, he feeds the mind, while the amateur satisfied the senses. In so far as historical study is an intellectual enterprise - and that is its highest form - the professional has it every time. He is doing a job and producing results; the amateur is having fun. But there is no need to be puritanical about this. The good professional, too, has a good deal of fun in doing the job; the sad thing is to read so many professional historians who convey nothing but an agony of the spirit.

(G R Elton, *The Practice of History*, pp.29-31.)

1952 - Australia's First Convention

One of the little tasks I need to undertake for this history project is to find reports of as many of the conventions that took place in Australia before Aussiecon. It seems sensible to start with the first one and the only one I could find was written for overseas readers. There may also be a report written in a local fanzine and I wonder how it might be differed from this one.

1st Aussie Con

Enthusiasm Surprised Organizers

by Vol Molesworth

Sydney, Australia, 20 March, (CNS) - The First Australian Science Fiction Convention, held on Saturday, March 22, in

Sydney, was a great success. No less than sixty active fans attended, including delegates from country areas of New South Wales, and interstate. The pitch of enthusiasm came as a wonderful surprise to the organizers, and augers well for future development of activities 'down under'.

The Convention doors opened at 10am, and within a few minutes thirty fans were looking over the exhibits which lined the hall. The first exhibition was an historical survey of science-fiction, arranged by Graham B Stone, organizer of Australian Science Fiction Society (our equivalent of NFFF). This consisted of magazines and fan publications dating back to 1926. Mr Stone gave conducted tours of the exhibit and explanatory talks to newcomers.

The next stand was Futurian Press, where Vol and Laura Molesworth briskly wrote orders. The third stand, was occupied by Convention auctioneer Arthur Haddon and his assistant, Bruce Purdy, and here the fans whetted their appetites over the 150 items on display.

The fourth stand was occupied by Australian Fantasy Foundation, which preserves and conducts the Library, now containing 100-odd books and 200-odd magazines. Here Librarian Ian Driscoll displayed a choice selection of items, and recorded 23 applications for membership.

On the dais, master-of-ceremonies Roy Williams kept a running fire of commentary over the PA system, and read congratulatory cables and telegrams, including messages from Tom Cockcroft in New Zealand and Roger Dard in Western Australia.

At 11:30 the Official opening took place. Chairman William D Veney gave a welcoming address, following which Vol Molesworth spoke on 'What Is Science Fiction?' and Graham Stone on 'What Is Fandom?'.

At 12 noon the auction began. Bidding was keen, the highest price being £1 (about \$3) for a copy of *Galaxy*. In all, the auction raised £35, about \$100. This will offset the expenditure, which included hire of the hall, PA system, film projector and amplifier, printed matter, refreshments, etc.

As each fan entered the hall he received a 20 page printed souvenir programme booklet, featuring booster ads from all over the science-fiction world, and a copy of 'What Is Fandom?', a duplicated booklet issued by ASFS, and a copy of *Stopgap*.

In the afternoon, a business session was held, with William D Veney in the chair. Reports were received from the various organizations and groups, and questions were fired from all parts of the hall. Many resolutions were carried, including one that the only Australian pro mag, *Thrills Inc*, should endeavor to publish stories on a more mature and serious level. Incidentally, among the new faces was Norma K Hemming, a pro writer who has had stories in *Thrills Inc*, and *New Worlds*.

Another resolution welcomed the appearance of science-fiction in general magazines which do not normally publish fantasy.

It was unanimously agreed that there should be a Conference later this year and a Convention next year.

After a dinner at the Mayfair, attended by 40-odd fans,

the Convention resumed in the evening for films, projected by Ian Driscoll and Lex Banning. These included scientific documentaries and fantasies, one in color.

A local airline company arranged an 8ft display of a lunar landing, illuminated by black light.

The Convention broke up at 11pm, but groups of fans kept talking till 2 and 3 in the morning.

Several informal gatherings, and much hot debate, occupied the Sunday, the main group meeting at Bill Russell's flat in Bondi Junction, where the history of Australian fandom was discussed in detail.

On Monday, March 23, an 'open' meeting of the Futurian Society of Sydney was attended by twenty-five fans. The visitors had a chance to see Australia's oldest and most active fan club in action, and several highly contentious issues were keenly debated. The stage has been set for a round of activity in the following weeks.

The Convention Chairman (Mr Veney) has announced that proceedings were recorded by a stenographer, and that an official roneoed report will be published within a few weeks. This will be 10 or 12 pages, and will be sent all over the world.

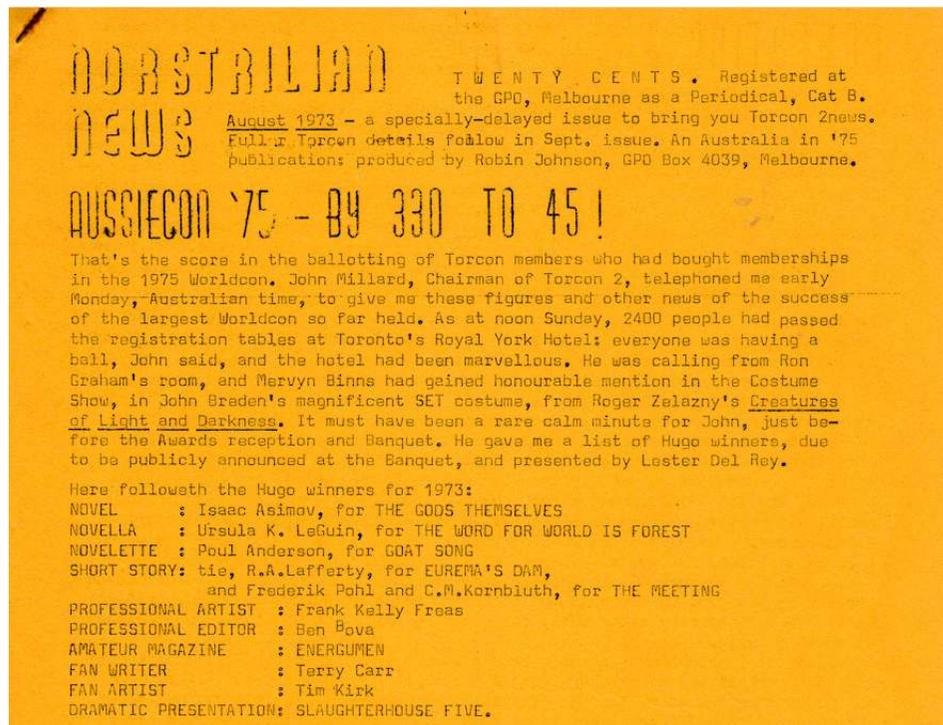
Some of the visitors remained in town for the normal Thursday night gathering at the Katinka, in Pitt Street. Here we get about 30 fans and femmes, talking, auctioning off magazines, etc.

All in all, the Convention was a tremendous success, and credit is due to Bill Veney, Graham Stone, Nick Solntseff, Arthur Haddon, Lex Banning, Kevin Smith, David Cohen, Roy Williams,

for the unstinting efforts they put into the show.

(Vol Molesworth, *Fantasy Times* 152, April 1952.)

The Long and Winding Road to Aussiecon



I couldn't help but notice that in the heading for the Molesworth report on the first Australian convention it is called the first 'Aussie Con'. It seems that we were set upon the path to using that name long before anyone thought about the possibility of holding a WorldCon in Australia and, in fact, Australian fans were only beginning to learn how to put on conventions.

Among Robin Johnson's many treasures (of which more

later in this issue) are some papers about the bid for and then running Aussiecon. This is not surprising because Robin was the Chairman of the convention. The image on this page is from the first page of the August 1973 issue of *Norstrilian News*, which Robin was also editing at the time. This marked the transition from bidding for a WorldCon to actually having to run one.

1953 - Australia's Number One Fan Face

Any mention of Australian fandom in the first half of the 1950s almost inevitably includes the name, Roger Dard. He was widely active here and overseas, conducting voluminous correspondence with fans in the eastern states and in Britain and the United States. He was also a serious collector and his battles with the Customs department over Australia's wowsierist customs regulations, which prevented him from bringing in a lot of stf and fantasy material, became the stuff of legend in fandom. In this article, published in Lee Harding's *Perhaps* 1 in 1953, Roger explains how he became involved in fandom through his collecting and hints as what may have brought an end to his fanatic.

THE EVOLUTION OF A FAN

Looking back, it is hard to realize that a bare five years ago I was not a fan! It seems as though I have been one all my life, yet a review of my past activities make me realize the fallacy of this thought.

Actually, I have been reading the stf and fantasy magazines since I was a schoolboy in Sydney, where I was born and raised til I was 14. At that age, my family came west, and we settled in Perth. Here I made the acquaintance of one

Ernest Norman Dillon, and old time readers may recall many letters by Ernest in the pre-war AMAZING. His main hobby was stamp collecting, but because of an interest in the stf field, he collected AMAZING, ASTOUNDING and WONDER. Meeting Ernest was the first experience I had ever had to meet a real dyed in the wool collector, for at that time the collecting bug had not bit me. Nor was I a fan, in the accepted sense of the word, for I passed over the SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE in Gernsback WONDER, and did not join any of the other societies existing at the time. Then I gradually became infected with the fever, and I found that instead of disposing of the pro-zines as I once did, I began to keep those copies that I managed to pick up in the various second hand shops and bookstalls, and they began mounting steadily up. However, it was not until Ernest decided to get married that the nucleus of my collection was formed. Ernest decided to make stamp collecting his full-time hobby, and to give up the stf mags. He offered them to me for a song, so going down on one knee and crooning 'Mammy' in my best Al Jolson manner, I walked off with his collection of precious pro-zines.

It was too late to turn back; the madness had set in. Now only a .45 slug or a Customs officer could stop me from collecting the stf mags. As they were fresh out of slugs, they very thoughtfully provided not one, but several Customs officers to dissuade me from my folly. But that is another story which I will leave for another time. At war's end, I began getting the sft magazine sent direct to me from the US, and then an ad for 'S-F Service' in Liverpool England, which I came

across in a non-stf British magazine, put me in touch with this valuable organization. In turn, I discovered, or was discovered by such people as G Ken Chapman, Captain Slater, and E G Carnell. But the biggest discovery did not come till some time later, in 1948. Early that year, while reading a copy of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, I was amazed to find a letter by one Vol Molesworth, of Coogee, NSW. Astonished to discover there were actually people other than myself in Australia who read the stf magazines, I wrote a rather naive letter to Vol, and back came a quick reply, with a nomination of myself for the Futurians. I came of age; officially I was a fan!

By now, I was becoming emboldened enough as to timidly write a few pieces for the overseas fan-zines, but on the whole, I was content to keep pretty much in the background, until one day a fateful letter arrived from the UK. It was from Captain Slater, requesting me to act as his official Australian representative of OPERATION FANTAST. The horrible truth burst upon me, I was becoming a Big Name Fan!

From that point on things accelerated. I established the Australian branch of OF, building it up from a membership of one (myself), to one of close on a hundred, and but for the fact that Customs persecution forced me to resign from OF only this month, I had intended to make OF the biggest thing in Australian fandom. It is now in the capable hands of Dave Cohen, and I am sure that Australian fans will continue to benefit from OF membership.

By now I am firmly established as Australia's best known overseas fan, mainly as a result of the writing I have done for

the fan-zines. I have always been fortunate in the sense that while I do not consider the writings I have done to be anything special, much of it has been praised, not only by BNFs overseas, but also by the professionals. Only recently, an article of mine in the US magazine ICE, inspired Robert Bloch to compose a 24 line rhyme in honor of it. My regular news column in SPACESHIP is highly regarded, and in the words of Rog Phillips, 'makes you feel like you really know the fans down under'. One of America's largest publishers of comic-book fantasy cut their subscription rates by one third as a result of a blast in my column, against what I considered their exorbitant sub rates! If I appear to be blowing my own trumpet, please forgive me, but I feel it necessary to defend my fan writing, for a few misconceptions seem to have arisen about it. Only a short time ago, a prominent Sydney fan complained to me that my writings reflect on Australian fandom. This is absolutely untrue, and the letters I have received from US and UK professionals, including editors like Jerry Bixby and Peter Hamilton, and others, plus the comments by the reviewers in the pro-zines, make it quite clear that however poor my literary style may be (and I am well aware that I am no Walt Willis), my writings have brought about a better appreciation and understanding of Australian fandom overseas, both in the US and in England.

The extent to which I will participate in fandom in the future is, at the moment, uncertain, for persecution by the Customs has literally forced me out of the field. But that, as I remarked earlier, is another story.

(Roger Dard, *Perhaps 1*, February 1953)

1953 - Fanzine Review

Wastebasket 3, Leo J Harding, 510 Drummond Street, Carlton, N3, Victoria Australia; available for 9d per copy '(the extra 3d is for postage, chum)'.

The concluding line of the long and amusing colophon of this issue announces that this fanzine was planned to appear every three weeks or so, but this issue was the final one to be published. The reason for this is explained towards the end of 'I Remember AFPA' when Lee recounts the story of his growing conflict with Ian Crozier, culminating in:

... almost immediately Crozier convened an AFPA Court of Enquiry. Bob McCubbin mediated. I was charged with producing a magazine in direct competition with an AFPA publication! Presumably this was *Wastebasket 3*, wherein I ran a few pages of news along with the usual goonery, as well as switching from quarto to semi-foolscap. With a smug sort of satisfaction Ian displayed a copy of *Etherline* in one hand and the despicable *Wastebasket* in the other for all to see. The verdict was obvious ...

The verdict led to Lee's gafiation which, as it turned out, was a good thing. It led him to concentrate on becoming a filthy pro which resulted in an excellent and rewarding writing career that we have all enjoyed. But, perhaps ...

Now, don't get me wrong. *Etherline* was a good, solid and worthy little newszine and without it's 101 issues we would now know only half as much as we do about Australian fandom in the mid to late 1950s. It was more or less constant and reliable but it didn't sparkle and jump it the air, clicking it's heels from the sheer

joy of life that fandom can bring. In its own way *Etherline* began to cut the ties with Australian fandom's unimaginative sercon heritage, but it lacked the energizing liveliness of *Wastebasket* which slashed at the old ways with a flashy, sharp edged saber. Judged by any standards other than those of established Australian fandom at the time, the verdict should also have also been obvious, but in the other direction.

To look at, this issue of *Wastebasket* is not up to the standard of some other Australian fanzines of the time and the illos, which are all hand drawn onto stencil, are so poor that there is no point in trying to reproducing any here. In comparison to the previous three issues of *Wastebasket*, issue three is much better, the folded foolscap format looks good and the typing is generally clean and accurate. Although the writing and presentation has a sense of spontaneity about it, all but the last page of this issue are right hand justified which means everything had to be typed out in advance to calculate the spacing to achieve that end, but there is no sense of that labour in what we read.

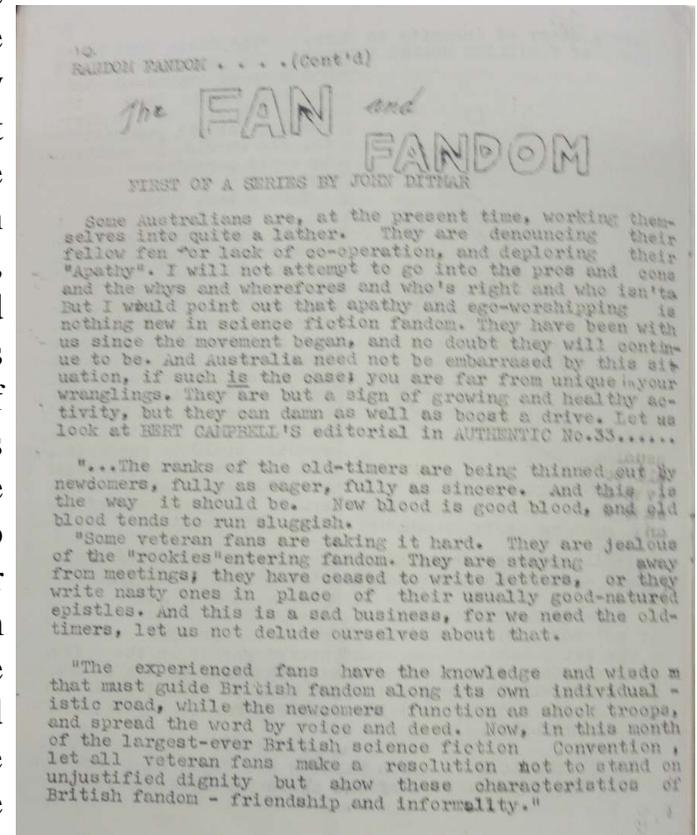
What sets *Wastebasket* in a different realm is the words. What a difference! When you come down to it, fandom is about written words and how they bind the community of fans together. Reading many other Australian fanzines of this period is like attending lectures, or some of those seemingly endless convention program items we've all sat through. Worthy and informative but hardly life affirming. On the other hand, this issue of *Wastebasket* is a pleasure to read, entertaining and exciting. As I have said, it is the policy of *iOTA* not to comment on the standard of fiction published in fanzines that we review, but it is highly tempting to break that policy this time around just to give you a sense of the

wit and cleverness of this piece of science fiction about stf.

After the fiction there is an interesting short article that opens a window onto Perth fandom in the early 1950s, followed by an excellent exposition on the nature of fandom by John Ditmar which I must get around to reprinting one of these days. (A little filler at the end of this article notes that Dick Jenssen (any relation?) has gone gafia to 'a life of square dancing, zoot-soots and soda fountains. May Ghu protect him in his living hell.'

After this fannish romp we turn the page to come to 'The Crow's Nest', several pages of serious but not sercon commentary and reviews of the latest stf. Some

are written by John Ditmar but most are by Lee and are, in general, considered and thoughtful. It sets a tone of reviewing that is pitched at just the right level to engage the reader and also help them think about the quality and content of the fiction they are



reading. Here is one short review:

THE BLIND SPOT by Austin Hall and H E Flint. Museum Press ("Books of the Future"), London, May 1953, 254pp, 13/6 Aust.

This book presents a problem to your reviewer. It is, as the blurb says, a classic of its kind; but here again pops up the question, 'Does a book that was a so-called classic in its day mean good reading for today's readers?' I myself found it hard going. Melodramatic, spasmodic writing and wooden characterization, the latter at times almost laughable, and overlong. Yet, despite all of this, it impressed me greatly. Perhaps it was because it was so far ahead of its time that it appealed to me; perhaps because I'm a sucker for this 'Old Time' type of yarn. Nevertheless, this fascinating adventure in dimensions will hold you breathless - I hope.

I could go on like this for some time. I have to admit that Lee has been a good fiend for a long time, so I'm biased. But, by Roscoe, I wish there had been less issues of *Etherline* and more of *Wastebasket*. We would have been much richer for it. At times, when reading this, I find myself thinking ahead to Lee's *Canto*, his contributions to *Australian SF Review* and also his sparkling early issues of the *Space Age Newsletter*. Perhaps, Lee has always been a faned deep down.

I can't find the keys to the bloody time machine anywhere around here just now. When I do it's back to 1953 and I'm going to pick up as many copies of this one as I can. When I return to the present I'm going to spread them around so you can all enjoy *Wastebasket* and send Lee letters of comment on them too.

Progress Report

That depends on what kind of progress we're talking about. Lots has been done, but not much in the way of making inroads into all the trawling to be done

To start, there's the finishing touches to the history of Australian civil aviation which has taken a couple of weeks.

Then there's the business of the chronology. For previous projects I've made chronologies in text files but the one I've been compiling for this history had got too big and unwieldy to be useful. So, I had to spend time relearning Access and then converting the text to data entries and then reorganizing them to make sense. It was a big project but now I can use Access to give me information in various categories and it is proving very useful.

Then there's the problems I've been having in trying to get trawled date onto filing cards in a form I can use. The software problems I'm having with this is driving me to distraction and, like the chronology, I may yet have to redo everything. This is something I still have to resolve, stay tuned

To Be Done

If I can resolve the problem of getting information from my computer onto cards in a way that works for me there will be plenty of time to get on with that trawling. Can't wait.

I'll Show You Mine

If You Show Me Yours

Health issues means that I won't be doing too much traveling in the coming few months. That means that I won't get the opportunity to visit fans and copy some of their old photographs for use in the history and also for publication here.

So, I'm wondering if another approach might work for now.

How about those of you who can, scan and send me some of the photos in your collections? As well as photos you will need to send me some description to let us all in on what we're looking at. For the moment all I'll need is photos scanned at a standard 96dpi and not too big or too many. Pick out your choice of five or six and send them along. If you're uncertain about what might be suitable, send me an email and we'll talk about it.

In the meantime, let me show you some more of mine. Here are some from GelatiCon

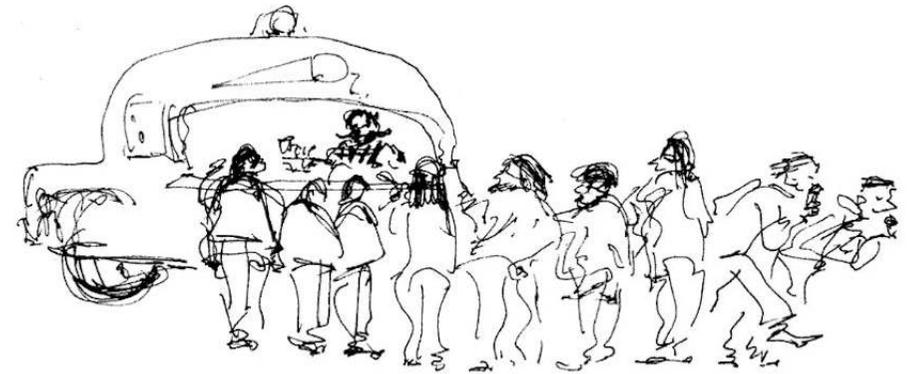


Bruce Gillespie and Donna Runic, with a supporting cast, some of whom are recognizable. Bruce is holding his gelati proudly aloft.

Here's another of Bruce. I can't remember the name of the person next to him but I still have one of his books. This looks like it was taken somewhere else, not at Melbourne University where most of GelatiCon was held.



Here's another from the same venue, you can tell from the curtains. That's Donna Runic on the left and I'm not sure about the others although the person on the right is surely Shayne McCromack.



The Gelati Con, Melbourne...

To round out this small selection of photos from GelatiCon I've lifted this Elizabeth Darling drawing from the pages of John Foyster's eFANC 15a.

Your Say

Chris Nelson sends some welcome expansions, clarifications and corrections on some of the content in the previous two issues:

Regarding *Telepath* 1 mentioned in *iOTA* 3. Arthur was trying to emulate the style of the postwar publications being produced on Vol Molesworth's brand new Adana hand letterpress: the first few Futurian Press 'books' and issues of Solntseff's *Woomera*, none of which had cover art. He was so determined to match their appearance that he bought his own Adana, secondhand but similar to Vol's except that it was slightly damaged. To distinguish his fanzine from the earlier works, he chose dark blue stock for his cover instead of red, perhaps not realising that the black cover ink would not stand out as well against blue as red.



Above: John Foyster, Jack Wodhams, Lee Harding and John Alderson. Left: Me and Peter House both eating Gelati. You will notice that half of the fans in these two photos are eating gelati. No wonder it was called GelatiCon.

You're right about the cover. I've since seen a copy of *Woomera* in the Murdoch University Library and the red cover is much more striking than the *Telepath* cover was.

Arthur didn't get around to producing the second *Telepath* until 1954. By that time, he was working for a firm that sold printing and stationery supplies, including hectographs, so he used that process.

(By the way, Kim didn't contribute *Telepath* #1 to efanazines, I scanned and sent it to Bill with Arthur's permission, which is noted efanazines. :) I haven't yet found a copy of #2 that could be easily scanned.)

Mea culpa. I should learn to read the small print.

Regarding Veney's article on early Australian fanzines. I asked Bert about *Spacehounds*. He didn't recall as much as Bill (or Ron Graham, later) wrote of it, but did say that neither he nor Bill had any idea what happened to this. It was really more a manuscript than a publication.

Ron Graham's early fanzines piece in *iOTA* 4 has a number of little errors and overstatements. *Spacehounds* again credited as first fanzine, "hand printed" - ambiguous wording that Bert confirmed really just meant "handwritten". It wasn't a single 12 page magazine, but a series of single sheets plus one "quarterly" (in the tradition of Hugo Gernsback's *Amazing* and *Wonder Quarterly*), as Veney describes.

Which leaves us with the question of what was Australia's first fanzine. Do one issue wonders count? After reading what Bill and Ron wrote I'm inclined to give the title to *Ultra* because it saw more than one issue, was, by the standards of the time, a

good fanzine which had a relatively long life, given the circumstances of the time.

A little later he states that John Devern "organized the Adelaide SFL". No, John (full name John D'Auvergne Gregor, from which his pseudonym was derived) just wrote to *Thrilling Wonder Stories* saying he wanted to start a chapter there, but this never happened.

So Ron did us all a great favour by buying up so much stuff and then leaving it to Fisher Library in his will, but he wasn't always as careful in his research and/or writing as he could have been. (But then, who among us is?)

So say we all. We do our best, and one of my hopes in publishing *iOTA* is to iron out as many inaccuracies as possible before going into print with a history. Which makes readers' comments like yours most valuable.

That said, Ron wasn't mistaking the FAA for the FSS. The Futurian Association of Australia was the first attempt by the (Sydney) fans in the 1940s to create a register of all known fans in Oz. It faded away but Graham Stone resurrected the idea a decade later with his Australian Science Fiction Society.

After I'd received this communication from Chris I wrote back to him asking for his comments on something I've been mulling over since *iOTA* 04 with the *Operation Fantast* cover and review. He has spent many years researching and writing about the early days of Australian fandom (look up *Mumblings from Munchkinland* on the interweb for the results of much of his work) and I wrote:

'You may be able to help me with something that has come

to mind of late, after publishing the material about Operation Fantast in iOTA 4. In talking to and reading the reminiscences of Melbourne SF Group members I learn that Operation Fantast was an important influence because it gave access to so much overseas sf and was also a way of establishing contact with other fans. In reading Rob Holdstock's history of British fandom I see that Operation Fantast was also considered an important entry point to fandom there. However, I do not recall reading any reference to Operation Fantast in anything to do with Sydney fandom. Perhaps it is there and I haven't seen it yet. The other possibility is that there were already fans in Sydney with sources of overseas supply that made Operation Fantast unnecessary as I recall reading about a couple of dealers being regulars at the Bridge Club and elsewhere in the 1950s. Your thoughts on this?

Chris's reply was thoughtful and informative:

Regarding Operation Fantast. Vol mentions it and/or Slater several times in his 'history'. The first is when Slater applied for membership in the FSS shortly after it was reformed in 1947. This was the first overseas application they received and Vol states that this prompted a rethink of the Society's name and vision, insofar as they decided to drop "of Sydney" from their name and admit members from anywhere in the world as associates. He went further than this in his letter of reply to Slater at the time and, happily, Ken printed portions of Vol's letter in Operation Fantast #3 (March 1948). Here's one sentence:

"We feel we could make Australia quite a useful 'second base' serving fen in New Zealand, Japan, S.Africa, S.America,

and the U.K."

That was a ludicrously ambitious sphere of influence for a body with fewer than 30 members. The global vision did not stop there, however. Perhaps with Forde and Evatt's roles in drafting of the United Nations Charter in mind, the Sydney Futurians then proposed the creation of a World Science Fiction League (in Sydney Futurian #8). This excited Jack Bowie-Read, an academic at McGill University in Canada, as his letter in Operation Fantast #5 (September 1948) made clear. Within months, however, the Futurian Society realised that it had overstretched. It didn't have the resources to contribute to a WSFL and when they advised Bowie-Read of this the whole concept seems to have faded away.

The Futurian Society remained in touch with Slater, members contributing occasionally to OF fanzines and, no doubt, acquiring publications from the service (as did fans elsewhere around the country). However, at some point before the 2nd Australian convention in May 1953, Dave Cohen became the agent for OF in Australia. When Cohen later began financially supporting the ex-FSS members meeting at the Bridge Club, his OF role probably contributed to the tensions between the rival groups in Sydney. Slater of course wound up Operation Fantast the following year, but by then Sydney fandom had already torn itself apart.

On the question of whether the Sydney Futurians had other sources. Yes, they did, for several reasons. The first is that they had made contact with US fans before the war and had begun receiving magazines from some of them (Ackerman,

for example) soon after the import restrictions were put into effect in 1940. Molesworth was also designated Australian representative on the Denvention committee. So they had links in place and name recognition when starting up again in 1947.

By contrast, there was little continuity among the pre- and post-war fans in Melbourne. Marshall McLennan had received mags from American fans in the 1930s, and become a member of the Futurian Society of Melbourne along with Hockley and Taylor in 1941. But I don't think any of these people played much if any role in Melbourne fandom after the war.

(In W.A., Roger Dard wasn't active until after the war either, but he was then quick to make connections by becoming a letterhack to the pro and fan magazines alike, becoming an Oz correspondent or rep to a few influential ones, including Taurasi's Fantasy Times and Silverberg's Spaceship, as well as Operation Fantast. This was mainly to build up his private collection.)

Secondly, being first cab off the rank after the war gave the FSS a head start in (re)building exchange relationships with US and UK fans.

Third, the FSS benefitted from a decision of the 1948 Worldcon (Torcon) to distribute some of its profits to English and Australian fandom. US\$150 worth of magazines doesn't sound like a lot today but it went a fair way in 1948! The Cinvencion committee the following year followed their lead, heralding it as a "Marshall Plan for fandom". I don't know how much longer this lasted, but I'm sure the Sydney fans gained

more from this than others elsewhere in the country.

So, yes, I think the Sydney fans had a few early advantages as far as building their library to attract members.

Bruce Gillespie raises a couple of more general points:

Bill Veney's 'Prewar Fanzines in Australia' is a real eye-opener. Until Kim Huett starting sending me the odd pages from prewar fanzines, I had no idea that Australians had produced any fanzines before the late forties. And here is a whole list of fanzines, many of which would be great to add to one's collection. I like the idea that the first fanzine producers were all about sixteen years old -- some of them were pretty good fan writers.

One of the most useful resources about early Australian fanzines is Chris Nelson's 'Index to Australian Fanzines, February 1939 - January 1960'. It lists all the titles, the editors, the number of issues and duration of their publication. A really valuable piece of historical research. It can be found in *Mumblings from Munchkinland* 12, published in ... well there's no date that I can see, but the internal evidence suggests the second half of 1995. It's as easy to find as typing the title into Dr Google.

Ron Graham's coverage of the same territory as Veney's is fairly boring, although not as a journal of historical record. Every generation of Australian fans seems to have thrown up natural fan writers, although the fifties seems to have been rather sterile after Molesworth stopped contributing. But I hadn't realised there had been fan writers such as John Snowden in the early seventies. For awhile it seemed that Shayne McCormack and Gary Mason were the only consistent

fan writers in Sydney during that period, with Bob Smith occasionally sending sparkling letters of comment. John Brosnan had already skedaddled off to Britain.

We also heard from Jack Herman and Mark Olson.

Looking in from Outside

It has occurred to me, more than once, that Australian fans put a lot of energy into communicating with fans overseas and there must be a lot of material in overseas fanzines that might be of interest to this history project. There could be two aspects to this, one being how others see Australian fandom and how Australian fans present themselves overseas.

The problem is, however, that there is already enough Australian fannish material to read. If you think there's a LOT of Australian fanzines been produced over the years, there is a REAL LOT of overseas fanzines, too many to even think about trawling systematically. But, perhaps a lucky dip approach might be worthwhile in at least sampling what is available.

To demonstrate this - Robin Johnson is still unpacking after his move from Hobart and has a fair few fanzines in as-yet-unexplored boxes. He came around the other day with an interesting selection of US and UK fanzines he had found, only a dozen or so, and the following three extracts are what I found in their pages. I don't know whether or not this is a good hit rate but it might be an avenue of research worth following up, a little bit at least.

Robin knows that I'm not interested in fanzines published after 1975, so there were none of them in the pile he showed me, but even so, the material found in these few fanzines is promising. (A technical history note here: when a historian says they are

interested in something that might mistakenly be taken to suggest that they are not interested in everything else. It's not that I'm not interested in fanzines from a later period, in a general sense, it's that I'm 'interested' in earlier fanzines. In historian speak 'interested' means something that they are working on and which they will pay particular attention to. Which does not stop them from a general interest in lots of other things.)

There's a couple of things that 'interest' me in these excerpts. The first is the way in which Australian fans are familiar with the fannish conversations taking place in overseas fanzines and are able to take part in the conversations on equal footing, despite living on the other side of the world. They also understand and use the fannish language of the times fluently which allows them to fit in easily. The other thing is the way in which both Molesworth and Foyster write things about themselves that they did not (so far as I am aware) write in Australia. Why is this so?

Yandro 194, December 1969, Buck and Juanita Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Ind 47348, USA. In the fanzine review column

S F COMMENTARY #5, 6 (Bruce R Gillespie, PO Box 30, Bacchus Marsh, Victoria 3340, Australia - monthly - 40¢) This continues in the vein of the lamented AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW; serious articles on science fiction, British, American and Australian. If there is a deficiency, it is humor; I enjoy reading about stf, but long scholarly articles about the use of past participles in a particular work tend to bore me. (This isn't that bad, but George Turned does speak of an inability to reach the

core of an author, which is why I generally avoid George Turner's material.) However, this is generally a good serious mag, and not as stuffy as a certain American publication. Rating... 7

I wonder what that stuffy American publication might have been? The score of 7 is not bad for an early issue, but immediately above this review was a review of Peter Weston's *Speculation 24* which rated a 9.

Voice of the IMAGI-NATION 10, December 1940, Forrest J Ackerman and Morojo, Bx 6475 Metropolitan Station, Los Angeles, Cal, bimonthly, 10¢.

Vol Molesworth, head fan of Australia, home address 'Del Monte', Kangaroo Pt Rd, Sylvania, NSW, on 12 Oct sent us a hospitaletter, all set up with titles etc ready to run: 'It seems as tho' someone had declared unofficial WAR on stefans — first Moxon (ed IMAGINTIVE STORYS) goes down with double pneumonia, we hear Mustchin is upset in a speedboat accident; Steve Taylor (co-ed AUSTRA-FANTASY) gets diphtheria; Al P Roberts gets in the way of a truck (but it is rumored Miske is responsible); and now Herr Doktor Vomsworth is superintended by women in white. ~~ Yep - down with, of all the darn things, sugar diabetes. And now I know what Kummer means by giving his spacewrecked argonauts insulin to revive 'em — I've had 30 shots at 50 down to to10 grammes per needle — and Fort! How that semi-grey stuff pumps thru the ticker. ~~Ye Gods et little fishes!~~ Only other treatment is a diet — help: I'm starving. ~~ Now down to stf: Capt Future was hokay. Whatever doubts may have arisen in my nimble mind as

to the rottenness of the World-Saver are now gone — he's super! ~~ Black Absolute not so hot. The TWS [*Thrilling Wonder Stories*] has a good cover (for a change) but is oddly reminiscent of the Oct 38 no. Dunno why! And it's a different 'World's Fair' one at that. Didn't like West Point of Tomorrow but enjoyed the Stolen Spectrum. ~~ Amazing seems to be definitely on the up-and-up again. ~~ Last nite someone was snoring and a chap through an egg at him - the goog! And that's the eggsact truth — what a fowl thing to do! He crowed over it — but the guy the egg hit couldn't see the yolk — he forgot to duck. ~~ Science-fiction plot — no! EESmith reads the Voice and I'm taking no changes! Goway Doc! ~~Sunday morning: Just read 'Revolt on Io' — pretty good. ~~ Futurian Bert Castellari, William Veney, Ronald B Levy (ed ZEUS) and Neville Friedlander will be in to see me today. Which reminds me — the FSS has been disbanded and the remnants formed the (Sydney) Science-Fantasy Club. I am Director; RBC Sec'y. Membership includes most of the ex-Futurians. We are still be to affiliated with the Science Fictioneers as Chapter No 9, tho! ~~ I am joining the Futuremen, too. ~~ Perhaps you don't know some news — Wog Hockley has definitely started the Futurian Soc'y of Melbourne with Steve Taylor, Marshall L MacLennan and Peter McBride as members. They issue Melb. Bulletin just as the (S)SFC will issue the Bulletin soon. ~~ 6 pages with members on'y writing. I have seen proofs of the first Melbourne Bulletin and it's a 4-pg hektood job with each Melbounite writing a pg. NB ~~ But more of this later ~~ As to mags, the chivoice was 100%. Say I thot you said nothing was

changed. What about Gallet? ~- Mein Gott! Uh-uh ~- Here's the senior nurse sugar-diabeticcommentatorendor!' When Senior Nurse comes with syringe, do not cringe, do not cringe. U are one with HGWells: His life, too, on insulin doth hinge.

This is a different kind of Vol Molesworth to the one who appears to have inhabited Sydney fandom a decade later, or perhaps, rather a Molewsorth that exited in person but not in Sydney fanzines. Then there's the Ackerman influence which set a tone in fandom for a long time.

'Futuremen'? Fancyclopedia makes a reference to Captain Future. Is there any more to it than this?

Lighthouse 15, August 1967, Terry Carr, 35 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201, for FAPA and a coupoe of hundred other people.

John Foyster, 6 Clowes Street, South Yarra, Victoria, Australia

I've been rather busy lately. I got married, involved in a convention and glandular fever (in reverse order). Then I decided to go to Greece, to go to England, and finally to stay in Australia and go to a local university. I tried writing professionally last year, but got quick bounces all round, except from the editors who lost my mss. Oh yeah, and our house got burned down two months after we were married.

Well, that's biography for this issue. On to Lths 14.

It had been my impression PKDick was flippant in his writing (in the way that Heinlein, to go to the other extreme, is not), and this article of his is pretty convincing in this respect. Nevertheless, some of his paras are worth reading – perhaps

more worth reading than his novels, which are, shall we say, mass-produced.

Tom Disch, on the other hand, was more than just readable. He was, to me at any rate, on many occasions stimulating.

I'm going to put off reading Metzger until later. Somehow, unbelievably as it may seem, there's a certain sameness about George's adventures, so that it doesn't really matter whether you've read the latest or not: it is still quite possible to discuss it sensibly with someone who has.

You describe the Tricon vividly, Terry...even too vividly. I've always felt uneasy when Ed Wood's name is mentioned, as though he were about to go into a telephone booth and emerge as SUPERMOSKOWITZ!

(- (Phil Dick is seldom flippant, if ever; don't be misled by the light tone he often adopts when writing serious things. Acrually, he's cursed and blessed with a finely-hones sense of the tragic combined with a sense of humor. See the following letter, for instance:)-)

And yes, a letter from Philip K Dick follows and, no, I'm not going to reprint it here.

1972 - A Hobart Meeting

Hobart always seemed to be the sleepy hollow of Australian fandom. On the North Island there were occasional rumors of get-togethers a Don Tuck's place, but we rarely found out about them. To right this wrong, here is Michael O'Brien's report of one of these meetings which was held in 1972, reprinted from John Foyster's Chunder! 5 of December 1972.

FAN DEMON'S LAND (2)

I drove over to Lindisfarne last night for the annual gathering of Hobart fandom at Don Tuck's place. Frank Hasler, who always arrives first, was sitting in a corner of Don's study reading through a pile of MONSTER TIMES. John Morrisby and Eric Rayner arrived soon after I did, and joined us in Don's sanctum for a pleasant evening of gab.

Don's young son Marcus wandered in for a few moments and showed us some of his comics, borrowing my copies of the latest TARZAN and FROM BEYOND THE UNKNOWN before leaving. Don has great hopes for cultivating a second-generation sf collector in young Marcus, who shows symptoms already.

We inspected the proofs of Volume One of Don't ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF, covered with literally hundreds of queries about various details from the publisher. Talk veered onto stamp-collecting for a few minutes, then some of us inspected the scrapbooks containing Frank's neatly-mounted collection of clippings about sf movies. Don read a letter from Ron Graham describing his visit to America, Britain, the Worldcon and the Ackermansion. All present were fascinated at descriptions of Forry's garage.

Don had a box of paperbacks for sale, and got rid of most of them. I sold a few of the pile I'd brought, but was mostly outclassed by Don't higher quality discards. Conversation wandered over a wide range of topics; television (Don mentioned with a pained expression seeing LOST IN SPACE several times recently), humor (somebody wanted to borrow

Don's stack of NATIONAL LAMPOON), politics (of course we all knew that Labor was going to win - 20-20 hindsight) and even touched on science fiction at times.

Don't wife Audrey announced supper was ready at 9.45 and got an absent-minded acknowledgment. Two minutes later she simply yelled 'SUPPER!!' from the next room and it finally penetrated through the fannish mist of words surrounding us. Conversation over tea and cakes centered first on pollution, since sever members of Hobart fandom are involved in industries currently under suspicion by environmentalists. I mentioned the two questions which I always face at Mainland conventions: (a) when is Don Tuck coming over? and (b) when are we going to have a Con in Hobart?

All present agreed they'd go over to Melbourne for the 1975 Worldcon, but apart from that, chances seem slim. The second query was greeted with the scorn it deserved: 'What, with only five of us in the city?', said Frank Hasler in amazement. Somebody suggested we should all chip in and buy an advertisement in the local paper to recruit more members before we even consider such a thing.

The evening wound up around 10.45 and we trooped off, light-heartedly agreeing to meet again at the opening night of the Hobart Casino providing we could persuade Ron Graham to pay our way into the event!

A good time was had by all.

(Michael O'Brien, *Chunder!* 5, 16 December 1972)

Memory of Fannish Places Past



Standing outside his delightful residence in Bundalohn Court, St Kilda, is John Bangsund. It is 1971 or 1972. Standing next to him is Evelyn Brown, on a visit from Brisbane to see her daughter, Valma. She has probably come down to see with her own eyes the reprobates here daughter has fallen in with. Oh, we had some wild collating parties there I can tell you!

