

Written and produced by PETER TOLUZZI for as wide a distribution as possible; I intend to run this zine through APPLESAUCE, ANZAPA, and APES; also, if I can arrange things, it will be distributed with Merv Binns' newazine AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION NEWSLETTER and John Foyster's fan news zine CHUNDER! Copies will also be available from SPACE AGE BOOKSHOP, GALAXY BOOKSHOP, and BLACK HOLE BOOKSHOP, and from me personally. Contact me at 29 MOIRA CRESCENT RANDWICK 2031 (phone 6654739). Dated 22/12/78.

This zine (of which there will hopefully be succeeding issues) is something I have been planning for a long time. I think it obvious to most conscientious fan that some discussion, and possibly changes, are needed regarding the Australian S F Achievement Awards (popularly known as the Ditmars). A lot of discussion has been going on, especially just prior to A-CON 7 and just before and after UNICON IV, but this has been in fanzines, apazines, at club meetings, by corresponance ... in short, in many different formats, and it has been well-nigh impossible to know of all the suggestions made. I hope that this zine will serve to bring together as much discussion and interaction as possible, as well as letting fans outside of Sydney what is being done or talked about for next year's awards.

The first point I must make is that this zine will be in two distinct parts: a report from Blair Ramage (Chairman of the Awards Sub-Committee) on nomination and voting procedures for the 1979 Awards to be given out at SYNCON 79; and, not to be confused with the first section, some of the collected suggestions and feedback on the Awards discussion which Blair has received. This will also include some of my personal suggestions and a plea for feedback (and I should point out here that I am speaking/writing as a Concerned, Well-Meaning fan but not in my official capacity as Con Chairperson ... as such I have no authority whatsoever and can only make suggestions).

So: this section contains my personal rave; it may not be very well structured as I am typing direct to stencil (both because I hate typing things twice and because I feel it is urgent to get this out as soon as possible). There are a lot of matters to discuss; most are covered by tradition, for which I have respect but not slavish obedience. These include: rules for eligibility, categories and definitions thereof, who should handle the awards (the ConCom or the Australian S F Foundation, as has been suggested by some), and the name and format of the Awards. Now, this is not meant to imply that I want wholesale changes made in all of these categories (traditionalists breathe a sigh of relief), but merely that these topics need discussing ... let us do something because we want to, not because it's always been that way.

NUMBERS: At this stage, the SYNCON 79 plans to give out four Ditmars and one special award, the William Atheling award. According to the constitution of the ASFS we are bound to awards in categories announced at the bid-winning Business Session; my memory of the UNICON IV Business Session is understandably hazy, but Blair informs us that 1979 DITMARS nomination forms already in circulation list four categories: the three traditional (International Fiction, Australian Fiction, Fanzine) plus a new one, Best Fan Writer.

Now, I hadn't realized that the ConCom was required by the Constitution to give out three or four Ditmars, at most... I had envisaged awards in the four categories mentioned on the previous page, with the option of splitting the Best Australian Category into two awards, Novel and Short Fiction, if sufficient nominations were received. This seemed ideal - promoting and fostering the reading of Australian fiction while not losing the fannish emphasis on the Awards, which I consider essential. Obviously, we cannot do this... if we insist on giving an award to the best Fan Writer, we must either make this a special award, not a Ditmar; or give only one award at most to Australian SF. The other option is not to give an award to the Best Fan Writer: I think that the fact that more nominations have been received so far in this category than any other indicates the acceptance of the idea. Still, here is my first call for feedback: should Best Fan Writer be a regular or irregular award, and should it be a Ditmar or a special award (as is the William Atheling Award)?

A sampling of other opinions expressed so far which I have seen:

Blair Ramage (in ASFN 3): Wants to keep the fourth category open until some nominations come on, leaving the option of splitting the Best Aus SF category until the last moment (to which John Foyster replies that he doesn't like the idea of leaving the awards so much to the discretion of the ConCom); Blair also suggests some works worthy of nomination for the ATHELING, and asks for opinions on the idea of dropping the "year of publication" criterion for eligibility in favour of "year of distribution in Australia".

MERV BINNS: (in ASFN 4) suggests Best Aus Long Fic, Best Aus Short Fic., Best Aus Fanzine, Best Aus Fan Writer ... dropping the Best International Fic. award. He also suggests (with reasons) a total of SIX awards to be given, with the other two to come from Int. SF, Best Author, Best Non-Fic, Best Dramatic Presentation (when appropriate), Special Award (again when necessary). He also suggests abolishing the William Atheling Award.

Peter TOLUZZI (in ASFN 5) suggest five Ditmars (Int Fic., Aus Long and Aus Short, Fanzine, FANwriter) plus the Atheling; strongly opposes dropping the International Fiction award on the grounds that it promotes interest in voting, and conscientions voters will hopefully read what they're voting on, and hence this all promotes reading of Aus fiction (well, it makes sense to me!); tosses up the idea of an award for best Artist (Fan); and proposes (complicated) eligibility rules based on Specialist SF bookshop distribution in reasonable numbers for paperbacks, prozine serialization for novels, and general bookshop availability (and hence Public Library availability) for hardcover books.

SYNCON '78 Panel on Awards: Suggested naming them the Southern Cross Awards, discussed new physical formats (one of which is shown in ASFN 4) formed a steering committee to discuss the future of the awards (consisting of, I think, Blair Ramage, Merv Binns, and Jeff Harris), thought briefly about having the Australian SF Foundation handle the awards.

JOHN FOYSTER (CHUNDER! 10): Replying to a letter from me, complains the SYNCON Awards committee appears to be destroying the traditions of a decade in the awards we plan to give - I assume he is referring here to the Best Fan Writer Award - and objects to our effecting such changes in a constitutional climate. He also thinks discussions have been too limited in forum and suggest a publication such as this one...

In an early APPLESAUCE mailing Blair suggested that a copy of all award-nominated works appearing in fanzines (and hence perhaps hard to obtain widely) should be sent to him; he would attempt to see that photocopies of the work were as widely distributed as possible. This idea was roundly trounced by the other apa members who thought it too impractical; but the intent has merit. My feelings are that any faned would/should feel honoured if a work appearing in his zine were nominated for an award, and he (upon being told of this fact) should do his level best to ensure wide-spread distribution of the zine or article in question; this appears the best solution feasible.

ANDREW & JANE TAUBMAN: (In APPLESAUCE 6) allude to a possible award for Best Australian Fantasy, suggest "release or publication in Australia between 2 and 14 months before the National Con" as eligibility criteria, and propose naming the awards after Captain Chandler, to be known popularly as the "Berties" (ouch!).

Jack Herman and Irwin Hirsh are also among those who strongly favour the abolition of the Best International SF award from the Ditmars.

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This is by no means a complete list of the suggestions I've seen - I don't have time or room to list them all - but it is reasonably comprehensive; it gives some discussion in most of the areas which would appear in need of scrutiny and possible change.

Now, my major purpose in producing this zine (apart from publicising this year's awards) is to generate some feedback and wide-spread discussion among the interested parties; hopefully this can serve as a forum where many ideas come together. That, of course, depends entirely on you ...

As I see things, the major areas in which we need discussion are: How many awards to give, in what categories, which are to be Ditmars (as opposed to special awards), which should be regular awards and which one-offs; eligibility rules; what to call them, and whether a standard physical format is necessary or desirable.

A couple of further points: I repeat that I am not advocating wholesale massive changes to the Awards; if, however, anyone makes an effort at next year's NatCon Business Session to change sections of the Constitution dealing with the awards, this discussion will hopefully mean that any such proposed changes have been well thought about by most. (That was a ghod-awful sentence; sorry.) I have my own personal opinions on the matters above - essentially unchanged from my suggestions made in ASFN 5 - but this is not intended as my zine but as a forum for feedback.

So: if you have strong opinions on any or all of the matters I've discussed, write to me and tell me your opinions; send copies of your letters wherever you like (ASFN, Chunder!, apas, etc.); when and if I get enough feedback, I will publish a further issue of this zine ... hopefully before Easter, but that will depend on feedback. One other point ... the next issue will probably have a smaller print run and more limited circulation; If you would like to see further issues, and would not normally be likely to do so, write to me and tell me and I'll see that you get a copy. And, for this issue, please try to circulate it among any interested friends you might think of. Send all feedback to the address on page one.

## THE 1979 DITMAR AWARDS

Nominations for the 1979 Ditmar Awards close on March 1 1979 and nominations may be received from any member of SYNCON 79 or any member of UNICON IV or anyone else connected with Australian Fandom or known to Australian Fans and are invited in four categories:

**Best Australian Fiction:** A work of SF or Fantasy written by an Australian and published in 1978.

**Best International Fiction:** A work of SF or Fantasy published (in English) in 1978.

**Best Australian Fanzine:** An amateur magazine published by an Australian whose pages include discussion of Science Fiction, SF Fandom, or related topics, and which has had at least one issue in 1978.

**Best Australian Fan Writer:** A person whose writings have appeared in a Fanzine or Amateur Press Association wholly or partly connected with SF or related topics during 1978.

Nominations are also invited for the William Atheling Award, which will be given for excellent non-fiction writing about SF, Fandom, or any related subject.

There is no limit on the number of nominations in any category by each nominator (the number of spaces on the nomination forms is meant as a guide only); nor must all nominations be received at once. The only restriction is that no person may nominate any work more than once. Thus, you may nominate now and keep nominating until March 1, all at once or in bits and pieces.

As a guide, the following nominations have been received to date by the 1979 Ditmar Award Sub-Committee (note that these will not necessarily appear on the final ballot; that will not be known until nominations close on March 1):

### Best Australian Fiction (10 nominations received):

"to Keep The Ship" - A.B. Chandler; "Play Little Victims" - Kenneth Cook; "Beloved Son" - George Turner; "The Sentient Ship" - John Alderson (in "Envisaged Worlds" - Paul Collins ed.); "Pie Row Joe" - Kevin McKay (in "Rooms Of Paradise" - Lee Harding, ed.)

### Best International Fiction (9 nominations received):

"Godsfire" - Cynthia Felice; "Calling Doctor Patchwork" - Ron Goylart; "The White Dragon" - Anne McAffrey; "The Persistence of Vision" - John Varley (in Magazine Of F & SF, March 1978); "Stardance 11" - Spider and Jeanne Robinson (in Analog, September - November 1978)

### Best Australian Fanzine (11 nominations received):

"SF Commentary" - Bruce Gillespie; "The Epsilon Eridani Express" - Neville Angove; "Minador" - Marc Ortlieb; "The Hag & The Hungry Hobgoblin" - Derek and Christine Ashby; "Chunder!" - John Foyster; "The Eye" - William Good; "Paregon Papers" - John Bangsund; "Science Fiction" - Van Ikin

### Best Australian Fan Writer (10 nominations received):

John Bangsund; Allan Bray; John Foyster; Leanne Frahm; Eric Lindsay; Marc Ortlieb

The Willaim Atheling Award (7 nominations received):

"The Encyclopedia Of SF and Fantasy" vol. 2" - Donald H Tuck, ed.  
"Paregon Papers 10" - John Bangsund (also appearing in ANZAPA  
64 October 1978); "The Morass Of Academe Revisited" - Lloyd  
Biggle Junior (in ANALOG September 1978); Review of John Varley's  
"The Persistance Of Vision" collection by Spider Robinson (in ANALOG  
September 1978); "The Manna Crisis: An Appraisal" - Sandra Meisal  
(in "The Magic Goes Away" - Larry Niven)

This is a complete list of nominations as of December 22 1979.  
Nominations close on March 1 1979; Voting ballots will be distributed  
shortly after this date. Voting closes on July 20 1979.

Duplication of nomination (and voting) forms is encouraged, but  
official forms are not essential; all signed nominations and votes  
will be accepted. Where possible, please include the source of articles,  
short stories, etc.

. . . . .

BEST AUSTRALIAN FICTION: 1) .....  
2) ..... 3) .....  
4) ..... 5) .....

BEST INTERNATIONAL FICTION: 1) .....  
2) ..... 3) .....  
4) ..... 5) ..... $\frac{1}{2}$  .....

BEST AUSTRALIAN FANZINE: 1) .....  
2) ..... 3) .....  
4) ..... 5) .....

BEST AUSTRALIAN FAN WRITER: 1) .....  
2) ..... 3) .....  
4) ..... 5) .....

WILLIAM ATHELING AWARD: 1) .....  
2) ..... 3) .....  
4) ..... 5) .....

NAME .....  
ADDRESS .....  
UMICON IV or SYNCON 79 Membership no. (if known) .....  
If you do not think you will be known by the SYNCON 79 committee,  
please name some Australian fans who will vouch for you.  
.....

Mail nomination forms to: Diemar Sub-Committee  
PO Box 146  
Burwood NSW 2134