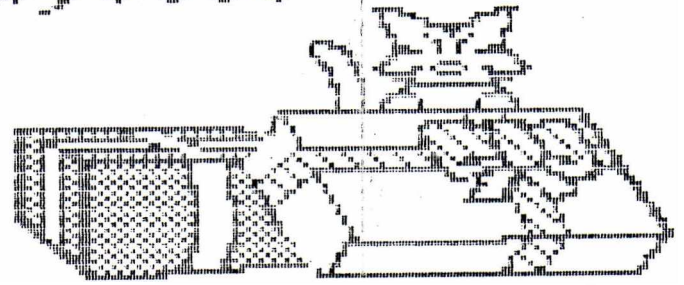


# Gunny's Gazette

Christmas  
1988

The Newsletter  
You Get When  
You Get No  
Letter !!



Greetings! Sorry I haven't been in touch very often but it really HAS been quite an eventful year... and it's hard to believe that it's nearly over. Anyway, a very merry Christmas to all the readers of Gunny's Gazette throughout the world (This newsletter now reaches such exotic locations as Canada, England, Finland, Israel, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, The U.S. of A., Wales and West Germany. Oh, yes, and bits of Australia, too. I hope you're all well and wish you all the best for 1989.

MERRY CHRISTMAS !

## JAMBOREE

The year began at the World Jamboree in Sydney. There was quite a build-up to this before hand, with Melbourne being overrun with scouts on tour, most of whom seemed to be American. My family and I hosted four young Dutch ladies and I acted as tour guide and chauffeur, driving to such places as the Healesville Wildlife Sanctuary and Phillip Island. It was after viewing the penguins waddle ashore that we met up with a van full of German scouters which led to an international sing-along back at The Gunnery.

The Jamboree itself had a terrific atmosphere of goodwill and friendship. Everyone had a great time and made lots of new friends. I later described it to people who weren't there as 'a party that lasted ten days with 14,000 people who are all your best friends'. Even the massive thunderstorm, which managed to flatten half the tents on site, did not ruin the wonderful atmosphere. (Fortunately for me, the flash floods missed my tent by a few inches and I stayed nice and dry) The whole event was an experience I would hate to have missed. So many people from different cultures, all enjoying themselves together, gives you hope for mankind.



## WANT TO BUY A HOUSE?

For those of you who have stayed at The Gunnery, my holiday house in Dalyston, some sad news. I'm selling it! That's right; no more dusty bedrooms, no more smoky woodstove, no more cold, wet, midnight trips to the outdoor toilet. Well, the maintenance was getting beyond me; the wooden boards were deteriorating faster than we could keep them painted, the garage was leaning at an even more alarming angle, the TV ariel had been bent by the weight of several parrots and magpies (so you could only pick up one channel and that was all squashed up and dark) and it was a major expedition just to mow the huge lawn. So, I'm moving out: I've had an offer for it (quite a good offer, really) and hopefully it will be sold by Christmas.

But that's not all: I've been building another house! This one is just down the road in Wonthaggi. It's on a smaller block of land, but it's made of BRICK with a "Decrabond" roof, so it won't need painting. And it's NEW and it's fully carpeted and it has built-in wardrobes and it has an indoor toilet!! (With SEWERAGE!) I'm not totally breaking with tradition, however; the toilet will eventually be decorated in a most eccentric



manner and I'm retaining the Visitors Book, of course.

I doubt if The Gunnery II will be habitable before the middle of January but with a bit of luck I'll be able to store my furniture there (in the garage) until the house is completed. I'm only keeping the best of the furniture from the old place (My iron bedstead, cedar chest of drawers, the dining table, etc.) while the rest of the junk I'm leaving for the new owners (the old refrigerator, the old TV, the old wardrobes...) I've also bought myself a rather nice lounge suite which I'll have to pick up soon.

# Birthday Party

Last June, I turned thirty (frightening, isn't it?) and, along with friends of mine; Tom, who was also having a birthday, and Jocko, who was having a flat-warming, we held a Seventies Party. Everyone had to come as a celebrity from the 1970's and there were some pretty horrible clothes. We played lots of old Punk, ABBA, Bee Gees and several long-forgotten disco hits. We must have been trendsetters, because it wasn't that much longer afterwards that some Melbourne nightclubs started having Seventies Revival Nights! But we thought of it first!

I HAD A WONDERFUL TIME AT THE WORLD EXPO IN BRISBANE THIS YEAR - NOT QUITE AS BIG AS EXPO '86 WAS IN VANCOUVER BUT I LOVED EVERY MINUTE OF IT - EVEN IF YOU DID HAVE TO SPEND MOST OF THE TIME STANDING IN A QUEUE. SO MUCH TO SEE AND DO - VERY WELL ORGANISED. I LOVED TO WATCH THE NIGHTLY FIREWORKS DISPLAY - SAW IT FOUR TIMES INCLUDING ONCE FROM ABOVE ON THE MOUNT COOT-THA LOOKOUT. GREAT FUN!

I recently attended yet another Science Fiction Convention in Melbourne (It was called ZENCON), where I was nominated for the Best Artist Of 1988. Well, I didn't win, but at least I got a nomination. I did manage, for the third time in a row, to win a prize in the masquerade competition. My friend from Queensland, Blake, and I entered as characters from the French Cartoon strip "Asterix The Gaul".



Blake played the part of Asterix, while I played the enormously fat Obelix, thanks to a huge pair of blue and white striped, foam-rubber-padded trousers which my mother had been talked into making for me.

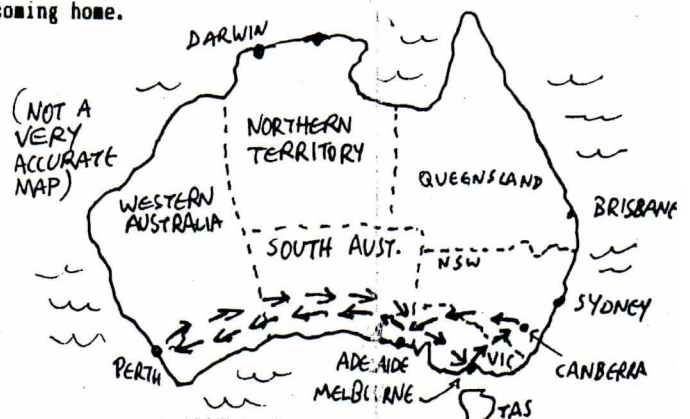
The Guests Of Honour were Michael Keating and Paul Darrow from the British TV series Blake's 7, and were most amused by our antics and presented us with a medal and a video movie. Later, when I was in the men's washroom attempting to wash the orange dye out of my hair and beard, they walked in to discover me stripped to my underpants and my whole head orange, as well as my hands, shoulders, the sink, the walls and about fifty paper towels. Whenever they met me afterwards they always referred to me as

"our friend with the orange head". I'll never live it down.

This year, I've got into the habit of seeing a lot more movies than before, and I'm now, along with a few of my friends, one of the frequent patrons of the Valhalla Cinema, a delightful old theatre that shows all sorts of old films. Each Saturday there is a \$2 Matinee; a cartoon, an episode of an old serial from the 30's or 40's, and the main feature is usually a comedy/ science fiction/ adventure. One weekend there was even a 24 hour Science Fiction Marathon which I managed to stay (fairly) awake through. All good fun and there are a few nice cafes nearby to recover in afterwards. At the moment the Valhalla (so called after Norse Mythology - it's where the old heroes go when they die - in this case movie heroes) is running a festival of the worst movies ever made. I'm trying to work up the courage to see a few.

**TELEPHONE UPDATE** Telecom Australia in it's infinite wisdom, has decided to change all the telephone numbers in my area, so if any of you have my old phone number or one of my address cards, you might want to update them in case you're ever in town and want to call. My new number is (03) 807 4180 (The (03) is just for long distance calls from outside Melbourne.)

Nothing much else happening in the near future. I hope to be attending two more science fiction conventions before and during Easter next year - one's in Canberra, the other's in Perth, and we'll be driving the entire 8,000 kilometres with four of us in a small van. It's our Four States In A Week Tour, and then another week coming home.



So that's all for this edition of Gunny's Gazette, I hope you're all well and wish you the best for a very merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year. (And don't forget, there is always a spare bed, a cup of coffee, a meal and a tour guide on hand for any weary travellers passing through Melbourne. It's a nice spot for a holiday. We'd love to see you.)

P.s. Sorry if this arrives late ... it took a while to get my Christmas cards printed - AND I lost my address book!!!