

those were the good old days! Not only that, but: Ah, now that's what I call a publishing schedule! Just about everything written or drawn for the second issue of Canto has been published somewhere or other, so if Lee ever decides to do a second issue he'll have to start from scratch. Anyway, looking through Canto - the bulk of which seems to have been written or drawn by me, under various pseudonyms - I couldn't help feeling... well, sort of sucked-under, if you know what I mean.

I mean, here I am. Eight years since I started writing things for Canto 1. In Canberra, the arsehole of Orstrilia (nice people, though; nice place in many ways, too, it's just that it's sort of... dead). Earning more than I've ever earned in my life, far more, and seeing far less of what I earn than I did back in 1964. (Sort of ironic to see ASFM voted second place in one of FAPA's egoboo poll categories. I'm still paying it off.) I am chairman of the Australia in Seventy-Five Committee, secretary of the Canberra Science Fiction Conference 1973, programme-book designer editor and &c for Syncon 72 (the 11th Australian SF Convention, 11-13 August), compiler and editor of an anthology of Australian sf for Nueva Dimension (which might later be sold to someone in the USA and the UK, with luck), and publisher of Scythrop, Philosophical Gas, Bundalohn Quarterly and god knows what else. You wanna know somethin'? It's a bloody drag. I'm fanning more and enjoying it less. All I want to do at the moment is see out my commitments (which include a book about John Campbell as well as the above), and just settle back and publish Scythrop or something for FAPA and the people in fandom who have become my friends.

And pay off my debts. There are many yet, most of them in some way a by-product of my involvement in fandom. And more to come. Most I don't regret at all. Some I do. The one I regret most is yet to come: an as-yet unknown amount for a divorce (or "dissolution" as the petition so gently puts it).

In the hope that no-one reading this ever shows it to Diane, I quote from her petition: "10. The facts relied on by the petitioner as constituting the ground specified above are as follows:- After the marriage the respondent undertook the production of an amateur science fiction review magazine and each night he would return home from work go to his study and work on the preparation of the same. Consequently there was a meagre social intercourse between the parties. the respondent was constantly spending money on stationery, postage, stencils etc. as well as buying new typewriters and duplicators." Et cetera, et bloody cetera. I don't know whether this is the first time a fanzine has been cited as prime cause in a divorce petition, but if it is I'm not particularly proud of the honour.

I don't know where I would be today if I hadn't become involved in fandom. All I know is that the involvement has been incalculably beneficial to my development as a person, that I know pretty well where I'm at right now (which might otherwise not have been the case), that I have certain short-term goals which I intend to achieve, and that in a few years I intend to more or less retire, as gracefully and unnoticeably as possible, from fandom.

Sure as eggs, some bastard will remind me of this when I'm organizing the fourth Australian Worldcon around 1997....