



BUNDALOHN QUARTERLY

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for members of FAPA, ANZAPA and OMPA

5th October: Yesterday I think might have been Be Kind To Victorians Day 'n Canberra. The Australian Capital Territory has the most stringent car registration rules in the country, most likely because they have the smallest car population in the country and therefore have the time to be stringent. In Victoria, after the first registration, you re-register your car each year simply by filling in a form and enclosing cheque for amount stated; unless you happen to be transferring the registration of a secondhand car you've just bought, in which case you must get a roadworthy certificate from an authorized mechanic. In New South Wales, every year you must get a roadworthy certificate from an authorized mechanic. In the ACT, you drive your car to an enormous establishment at Dickson where a horde of ruthless grim-faced mechanics swarms over your poor heap, checking out every last little detail of structural and functional components, and everything has to be absolutely perfect or you don't bloody-well get registered so there! If they find anything wrong with it, be it badly-aligned headlights, a spot of rust, some perished rubber, horn not working (I've never used the horn! - it's pretty close to illegal to use it anyway) or whatever, you get a permit to drive the car home or to a garage - and that's all - and when you've had the faults rectified you bring it back and they test it all over again. Fun.

Ever since I arrived in Canberra people have looked at the VW and said it would never pass the test. Knowing the beast pretty well, I could only agree with them. Besides which I didn't have the money to both register it and get things fixed. A few weeks back I got a loan from my friendly credit union, and started thinking about registration. I arranged for the Third Party insurance, and booked the car in for new tyres all round, headlight and wheel alignment, repair of non-functioning windscreen wiper and a few other odds and ends. It was to go in first thing yesterday morning. Then, on Tuesday, the boss said since there was nothing happening this week we might as well have a couple of days off, so I rang the mechanic and said I'd take the car out to Dickson first and then bring it to him for the service we'd already arranged plus whatever else they found wrong with it.

Before I left yesterday morning I had a look at the windscreen wiper, asked myself what John Campbell would have done, and proceeded to fix it. Then I drove over to Dickson, and all those mechanics rubbed their hands with glee when they saw the dirty red beast with its Victorian number plates (they hate Victorians) and, pulling out their calipers, slide-rules and microscopes, gave it the works. The very last mechanic said Park it over there and take these papers in there. So I did, and on the way in there I glanced at the wad of papers and discovered that my magnificent little machine was in their opinion fit for registration. I nearly cried. All the nasty things people have said and I have thought about my trusty little heap were wrong! I felt very ashamed, and apologized humbly in broken German to my little red friend as I screwed the gleaming new ACT plates onto him/her. (Think it's a him actually.)

I decided it would be a good idea to get the new tyres anyway, and on the way out to Fyshwick I cornered a bit too quickly at one place and skidded all over the road. I'm still not sure whether that was YDX-837's token retribution for thinking nasty things about him, or just confirmation that those new tyres are a good idea. As I write, the tyres are being fitted, and as a small token of affection I've ordered a tune-up, too. It's the least I can do. After all, the beast has lived with me longer than Diane did.



Speaking of whom... As keen followers of my private life will know, Diane and I have a divorce coming up real soon now. I had a terse little communication from the Supreme Court of Victoria, Matrimonial Causes Jurisdiction, about three weeks ago to the effect that "this suit has been set down for trial for the sittings of the Court at Melbourne commencing on the 1st day of November" - which, depending on how many other cases there are before ours, means we might legally be put asunder before the year is out, or just as likely, that our number won't come up before the legal vacation and we'll still be in holy deadlock until about March next year.

Anyway, Diane rang me last week, and she was bubbling over with excitement. Her firm thinks she is a first-rate worker (which she is) and is showing its appreciation by sending her on a fortnight's all-expenses-paid holiday to Fiji. I was excited, too, and pretty envious, since although I've seen a lot of Australia I've never been out of the country. I asked if she needed anyone to carry her bags or like that, and she said no and if she did there were other people she'd rather and so on and so forth, and it was great talking to her. But, um, there was one tiny, ironic detail that required attention. As her Legal Spouse, I have to Bestow My Consent In Writing before she can get a passport. Now I might be an absolute unmitigated fink of the first water - as the Supreme Court of Victoria will testify, when it gets around to it - but I am a gentleman-fink. I could not refuse my friend and legal spouses this small service. But I could bargain with her. I said, Have dinner with me in sinful Sydney on your way to Fiji and I shall gladly sign the necessary document. She agreed. What else could she do? So if you are looking for me, Sir, Madam, Miss, on or about the 27th, I shall be in Sydney, dining with my wife.

Yesterday the necessary document arrived for me to sign, and with it Diane enclosed a copy of her passport photo, and I looked at it and thought Hell, what's a beautiful bird like that doing separated from a nice bloke like myself? and I remembered why and sighed a bit and put the photo in my wallet. Such is life, as Ned Kelly or Shakespeare or someone once observed.

Ho hum. So I came home with the necessary document and signed it, and cracked a '68 Kaiser Stuhl claret to celebrate getting the car registered, and after a while I stopped celebrating and started writing a few letters and switched on the drink heater because I wasn't typing very well and I thought I could do with some coffee. I was feeling happy for Diane, happy the car was legal again, and I felt good getting some of the mound of letters answered, and I was happily typing away when suddenly the typewriter died, the lights went off and the kitchen seemed to be on fire. It was. The water had boiled away, the drink heater had melted a bit, and a few odds and ends in the immediate vicinity were on fire. Now that's the second time I've done that; the first was about twelve years ago; so I should know better. I was a little irritated with myself for being so stupid. I found a torch and looked at the meter box outside, and it was unlike anything I've seen before and I couldn't figure out where the fuses were. So I walked back inside and swore a bit, and when I'd calmed down I asked myself what John Campbell would do. I decided John Campbell wouldn't have let it happen anyway, so I asked myself what I would do. I replied, Take a volume of West Indian short stories, a notebook, a pen, cigarettes and matches, and go up to the local restaurant for a couple of hours. This seemed an excellent idea, so I did, and I wrote some pretty strange letters in that notebook. It might have been something to do with the hock I was drinking. I didn't read any of the West Indian short stories because there was something wrong with the printing - it was sort of blurred, if you know what I mean. When I woke up this morning I was in my bed, so I guess I came home last night.

A couple of hours ago I rang the Electricity Authority, and they had a couple of blokes up on my roof within ten minutes. I'd blown the main fuse apparently. So now the place is electrified again and I can resume a normal life. But I must see if the financial department can stand the cost of an electric jug or kettle with a thermostat gidget, and I'd better get a kerosene lamp or some candles or something, too, in case it happens again. That restaurant is expensive.



11th October: Someone - me, I think - remarked in a recent fanzine: "Life is wonderful. If it did not exist we would have to invent it. Come to think of it, maybe that's just what we do in the long run." I just thought I would quote that to remind myself that, although my powers of invention have been flagging sadly lately, I should stop carrying on like a miserable twit and try to act like that witty fellow and optimist extraordinaire who goes by my name in the fanzines.

The trouble, as those who read my cruddy stuff and bother to think about it will know, is that I have no stable emotional life. I don't even have a stable. (Oh, shut up.) Not that I had such a thing in Melbourne, for that matter; I had a vacuum, overlaid with a few friendships, many acquaintanceships and more things to do and worry about than I had time or inclination for. I brought the vacuum with me intact to Canberra, and I haven't been short of things to do and worry about - but I have only a handful of acquaintanceships, some of them maybe developing into friendships, and I tend to be downcast rather more often than I was in Melbourne.

Today, at least until midday, I felt as dejected as I've ever been. You don't need the details; just take my word for it. And note that I say dejected, not depressed. Having learnt the distinction, I can honestly say I haven't been depressed more than about half a dozen times in the last decade. Then, at lunchtime, I walked up to the post office and there was a note and a cheque from a fellow optimist, Alex Robb, and a delightful letter and most thought-provoking article from George Turner, a bill from someone or other (another fellow optimist?), and the 25th mailing of the Australian and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association. All of this amounted to about 250 pages of interesting reading, and I was late back from lunch after skimming through it all, but as I walked back to work there was a certain je-ne-sais-quoi jauntiness in my step. (I get it in the middle of the back sometimes, too. Encroaching middle age you know.) And not only that: I felt good. (If there were no fandom we should have to invent it.) Despite the indescribable frustration of attempting to make sense of the proceedings of the Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory, I still managed to feel pretty good all afternoon. But a little of the morning's mood remained, and I wondered whether to take a couple of hamburgers and a flagon to the drive-in and watch the two sequels to "The Magnificent Seven", or go to my favourite restaurant and read some melancholy tome, or just sit at the typewriter and get quietly pissed talking to myself (and you, dear reader) on stencil. I chose the latter course, not only because it was the cheapest, but because I thought I might become ever so slightly maudlin sitting alone with my flagon at the drive-in, and because my favourite restaurant has run out of Orlando Barossa Cabernet and has (quel toupet!) installed a tv set.

Oh hell. Ethel Lindsay will be annoyed with me again, because I have Mentioned Liquor. I think Ethel is a real sweetie, and I'm dying to meet her one day, but the lady has absolutely the wrong slant on alcoholic beverages. Sometimes I have the wrong slant after alcoholic beverages, but that is a different matter. And Ethel is not the only person who has a mistaken impression of me in this regard. Australia's most popular young lady fan of the moment, Miss Oliver of Sydney, said something in a letter recently about not knowing whether I meant something I had said to her at Syncon or whether I was "sloshed" at the time. I would have everyone understand that whether I have been drinking or not, I invariably mean what I say - even if you don't know what I mean. Ethel's main complaint, I think, was my recounting the exact label and vintage of various wines that loom large in my liquid life, and I have tried to bear in mind her admonition - not because I am ashamed in the least, but because this sort of thing used to bug me in the James Bond books, and because one day someone might realize that I drink an awful lot of muck and begin to think I'm not a connoisseur at all. (Dare I admit, for example, that at this very moment I am just finishing off a bottle, which I started an hour ago at the top of this page, of an unlabelled 1972 fruity semillon moselle? I dare not. Pretend I just made it up.) (But if your weird taste matches mine, I recommend you join the Canberra Private Cellar Club and invest in a gross or three of this stuff. At 66 cents the bottle it's a steal. Lovely stuff.) (The club has an excellent Walkerie burgundy at 94 cents - 1971 vintage. Just don't come complaining in five years time that you can't afford these beautiful things, okay?)



As you probably gathered from Scythrop 27, I am a little confused at present about the future of that magazine. There are times when I think it should be just whatever comes when I sit at the typewriter - something like 27, with maybe an article if there's one around I feel like publishing, maybe some letters, that kind of thing. Pretty informal, like the present publication.

Then there are times when I feel that Scythrop should live up to the sort of things John Berry said about it in *Amazing*. Forgotten now exactly what he said, but it was rather nice and rather hard to live up to.

I've been toying with the idea of making Scythrop my one omnium-gatherum apazine, distributing it through the three organizations I seem to belong to and sending it to a few other people who seem to like this kind of thing, and starting a new magazine altogether for the sort of material that Scythrop (and ASFR before it) has traditionally published. The only trouble with that, apart from anything else you can think of (and I've probably thought of that, too), is that I would want to call the new fanzine *Scythrop*! Perverse, isn't it? But I like that name; it sounds good and it's symbolic of all kinds of things to me.

Complicating the whole business is the fact that I want to publish some books, when I can afford to, and they do take time.

Anyway, my thinking at the moment is that Scythrop should go back to publishing Scythrop-type material, even if it appears less often - let's try that sentence again: I just remembered that there have only been seven issues in three years. Even if it appears less regularly than I would like, shall we say. The informal material, and the kind of article that I would tend to regard as a little too personal for Scythrop, will appear here. Notice that I deliberately say "here" rather than *Bundalohn Quarterly*. "Here" could be *Philosophical Gas*, or *Lodbrog*, or the *Limp-falling League Gazette*, or whatever title appeals at the time, but since I've sworn a solomy swear (was that you said that, Rick? - it's beautiful) to put a BQ in every FAPA mailing (and only missed one in three so far), it will probably be here.

So. Something I would like to publish here is an article by Shayne McCormack. Shayne conned me into writing an article about my life and hard times for her new fanzine, so I immediately retaliated by asking her for a similar article. This was to be published in Scythrop, but it doesn't fit with the special nature of no.28, and no.29 looks a hell of a long way off, and Shayne keeps on living and having hard times and changing and growing up and so on, so if I don't publish it right here and now it will be quite out of date before you see it.

Shayne is a sweet kid, in a lovably boisterous kind of way (and even as I write that I realize that the boisterous bit isn't as true as it was, say, six months ago, so it's just as well I'm publishing this now). She organized Syncon 72 almost single-handed, and she is a regular dynamo when it comes to organizing just about anything. This view of the lady is not entirely shared by everyone who knows her, but they have the disadvantage of being too close to her. I mean, you know what they say about a prophet in his own country and all that, don't you. We who are afar admire from afar, unstintingly. It's a fact of life. Half of Melbourne fandom started feeling a proper sort of respect and affection for me when I left and came here. (The other half just felt a sort of relief.)

Amongst those close to Shayne are Lyn and Bob Smith. Bob was chairman of Syncon and Shayne spent a fair amount of time at the Smiths'. Lyn... well, Lyn sort of became a little stinting in her admiration for Shayne during this period. But everything is fine again, now that Syncon is safely over. Lyn rang me a few weeks ago and said Shayne had spent some hours sitting in a kind of lotus position beside the extensive Smith collection of Heron Books (lovely looking things they are), reading the Heron edition of Nietzsche's *THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSTRA*. Aha! I said, Shayne is one of the *Herrenvolk*! Lyn is one of the few people in and around fandom I could safely subject to a rotten pun like that, and she is still speaking to me. Anyway, enough of this introduction. Also sprach McCormack (ein Artikel für alle und keinen):



Anyway, he sold me a Concordance, thrust a couple of copies of something called The New Forerunner into my hand, mentioned that there was going to be a science fiction convention at the end of the year and disappeared. It was mid-1969. I read the book a few dozen times and loved it, read the magazine once and considered it somewhat boring, and didn't think much about the convention at all. Names like Chandler and Graham and Harding and Foyster meant nothing to me. Then I found out there was to be a Star Trek episode shown. That was my downfall.



Sabina and I went to Syncon I. I'm afraid I don't remember much about it. We had a bit of trouble finding the hall. I remember seeing a double-decker bus parked on the grass, and walking into a hall filled with chairs and displays and books. I clearly recall being kissed by a man later identified as Noel Kerr, and meeting Peter Darling and, I think, John Bangsund. There was a discussion on fanzines, the names of which I still can't recall because I was bored, and I was infuriated with that man who went on talking about UFOs when the Star Trek episode was due to start. I loved watching it when it came on, of course. Then we went to Peter Darling's for dinner, and Noel Kerr tried to get me interested in ANZAPA and wanted me to give him my address (for ANZAPA, he said), and I think I remember Jack Wodhams (mainly his laugh). Then I went home and didn't bother to see the rest. As far as I was concerned, the best was over.

Shortly after this I decided to print my first fanzine. Fandom had started to set in. I received fanzines - Windus, Australia in '75, SF Commentary. The first fanzine I ever received in the mail was Alex Robb's Windus. I especially treasured SFC because it had a photo page which I used to look at again and again so I would recognize everyone when I went to my next convention.

I doubt that Terran Times no.1 will ever become a collector's item, unless crudzine collecting ever really takes on in a big way. It was small, terribly badly printed and amateurish in the extreme. I adored every moment of it. I don't think I have ever enjoyed producing another fanzine quite as much as that one. It was, after all, the first thing I had ever printed. It was fun. It was also a mess. Terran Times ran for five issues, is now defunct, and who knows how many more fanzines I will publish in the future - but I digress.

That SF Commentary with the pictures in it, and the fact that the next Melbourne convention was planning to show another Star Trek episode, made Sabina and I decide to go to Melbourne. It was my first trip interstate, my first true convention, and I was 19.

I remember how excited I became as the time drew nearer. I had everything planned, everything organized, but as usual that devil in my life that ensures that all my plans go astray was sitting there grinning evilly and throwing spanners left right and centre. It was Good Friday Eve, I had to get from Elizabeth Street to the Oxford Square bus terminal, and there wasn't a taxi to be found anywhere: they were all busy with the Easter Show. I panicked. Ten minutes before the bus was due to leave, and I was still a couple of miles from the terminal. Sabina was already there, having mild hysterics. Five minutes to go, and I was still more than a mile away, running along the streets with my huge bag, and building myself up into a right hysterical case. Well, I finally gave in and used that last resort I thought I never would. I cried. I just stood on the footpath and cried. Two men in a car stopped and asked me if I was all right, and I sobbed out my story, and they said, hop in, we'll take you there. It shows the terrible state of my mind that I jumped in without a second thought, and those kind unknown gentlemen tore down William Street at 10 miles per hour, telling me to keep watch for the bus and that they would chase it if I saw it. But I got there in plenty of time: the bus's air conditioning had broken down and it was late starting.

That was the start of a wild weekend. We stayed at the YWCA in Melbourne and commuted each morning by train to Murrumbidgee to attend the Con. How I found the theatre is another story. I merely followed someone who was carrying some science fiction books, and sure enough, he led us to the theatre. Murrumbidgee, sadly, is not terribly clear to me. This is understandable: my mind was in a whirl the whole time. I recall sitting at a table, eating rather thin stew from a paper plate; the stew had been cooked in a large pot on the theatre's stove by Mervyn Binns. Then there was a lovely buffet in one of the back rooms of the theatre, where I talked to a host of fascinating people. I remember seeing 2001 in that theatre full of fans (and what an experience that was), and thoroughly enjoying METROPOLIS with "Scheherazade" as musical background. I recall meeting Lee Harding for the first time, and what an



effect he had on me! Wow! But then, Lee has that effect on just about all young and innocent female fans. I had an intense desire to wander around where he was and sit beside him and talk to him the whole time, but I thought he might think I was a bit pushy so I didn't do that until the next convention.

Well, that Melbourne Convention hooked me on fandom for good. It's a heady experience, as I'm sure you know, but for this female it was sheer heaven.

Since then I have been to two more Melbourne cons, one in Brisbane, one in Adelaide and another in Sydney, which makes a grand total of seven. Each one was great in its own special way. Don't ask me which one I enjoyed most: that's impossible to answer. Adelaide I loved, but that was a rather unique convention, perhaps not really a con at all. But I wouldn't mind more of these non-cons.

I have written about all these conventions, and I don't feel like repeating myself here, but some of the small and big things I remember with pleasure from them would include: standing in line, mouth watering, for a gelati cone ... handing Lee a plate with one meatball on it ... sitting back listening to John bashing out tunes on an old piano ... sitting in Lyn and Bob Smith's lounge room discussing plans for Syncon 72, surrounded by cats and Mozart ... watching John hand Bruce that special golden Ditmar I had worked so hard to find ... eating breakfast in Jan and John Ryan's kitchen, with Jack Wodhams, Peter Darling, Robin Johnson and Jim Morgan wandering round in pyjamas ... that theatre in Brisbane with the canvas seats ... my first visit to the Space Age Bookshop.

But this is silly. You all have the same kind of memories, I'm sure, and they are just as dear to you. Fandom is a memory-maker, a dream-creator, and a marvellous way of life. I have enjoyed two and a half years of it, and hopefully will enjoy many more.

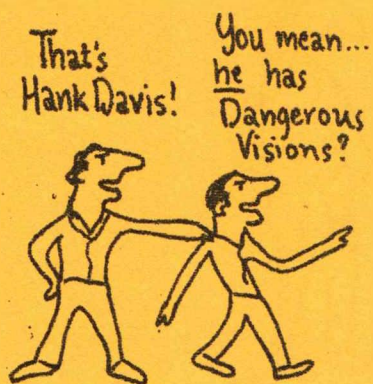
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(JB:) Ah yes, that 1970 Melbourne Eastercon. I remember it well. I gafiated shortly afterwards, if I recall correctly, but it was nothing to do with your ignoring me for Harding, Shayne, and let's not talk about it anyway. The following very bad drawings I did for Noel Kerr's Somerset Gazette at the time.

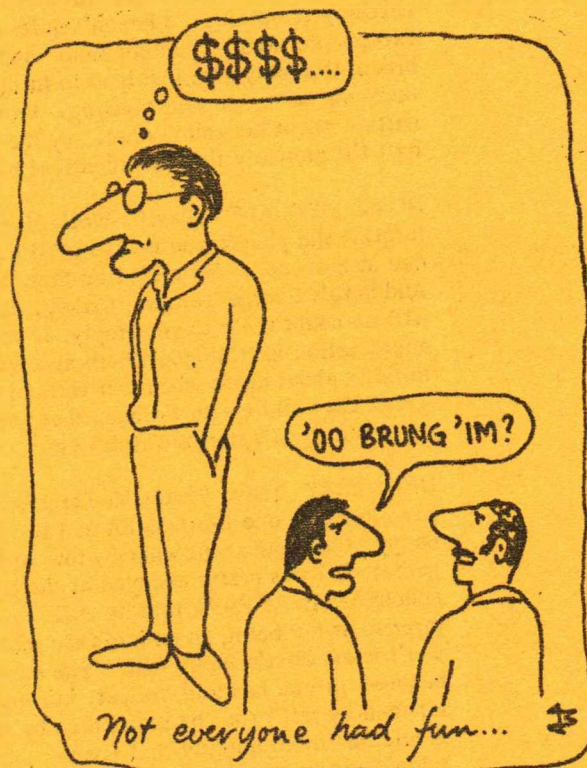
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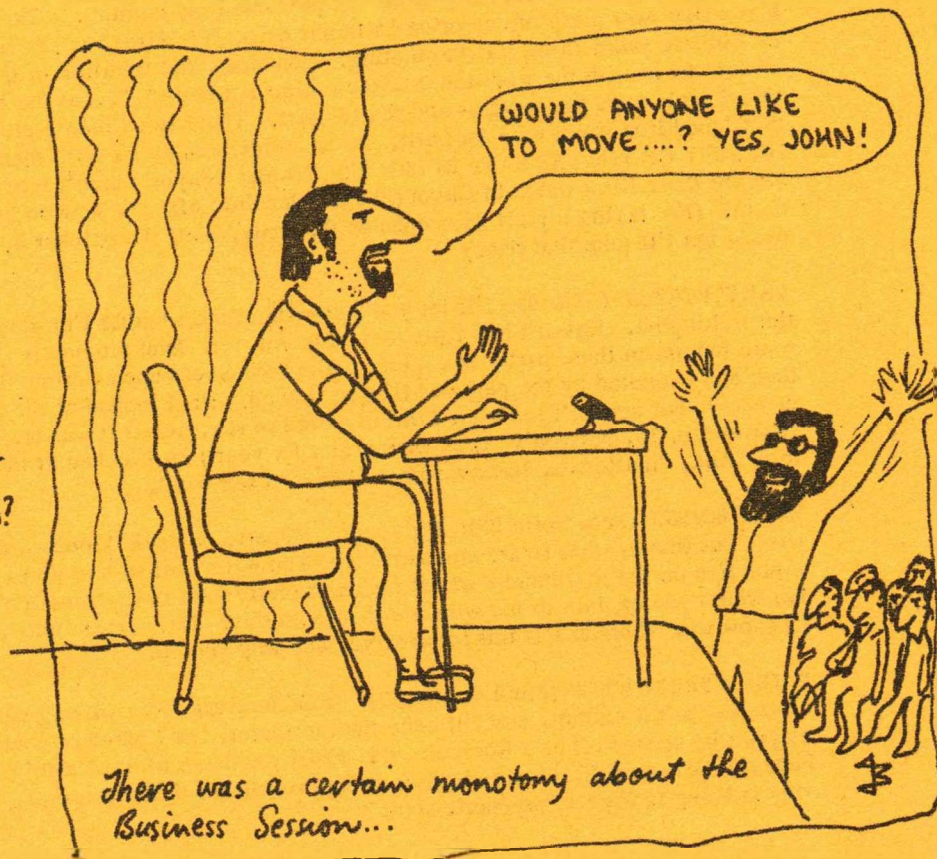
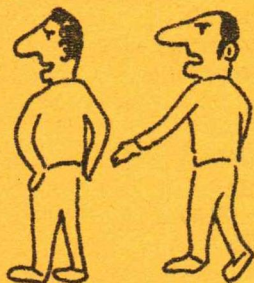






I heard someone say he was Harlan Ellison.

How come he's so quiet, then?





26th October: I don't know whether it's great minds thinking alike. Maybe I'm just catching something. I haven't quite read half of FAPA 140, and already I've found two people saying "you betchum" and one of them also saying "writhings" - two little bits of wordplay I've indulged in in these pages, and no-one will believe I didn't pick them out of the current mailing. Probably get a little further on and find someone's written about his grandfather. By the time I've completed not quite reading the other half I'll probably find this identical paragraph.

NORM METCALF (Devil's Work 21 & 22): Alexander Matthew Robb! Great lunging lurgi! - the people you meet in FAPA. He's back to his old address, by the way - the one at Eastwood. He talks like that, too. Nice young feller, as Christians go. ::: And here's George Turner. Crikey, old Down Under Week in Boulder, Colorado. George will no doubt reply to your reply, if you sent him a copy, but I think his "lack of appreciation for Campbell both as a writer and as an editor" will be something for you to think about again when you've read his contributions to JWC: AN AUSTRALIAN TRIBUTE. And I wish I'd been there to see his reaction to your question, "Have you read Campbell's stories which" &c.

DICK ENEY (Rave Review & Target:FAPA): For my sins I now have three copies of Rave Review, one from OMPA and two in this bundle. (Did everyone get two?) Not happy at all now about what I wrote in Philosophical Gas about this, but as you probably gathered, I was pretty annoyed at the time. Foyster didn't like my piece, and has announced in ANZAPA that he will say more about it real soon now. He also expressed surprise at my being an enthusiastic soldier. Must watch them commas. ::: Hell, I don't know what's wrong with "You can get to Melbourne quicker by air than by train" because no-one has told me yet, but my guess at the time was that it should be "by air than by rail" (or "by plane than by train" but I don't like the rhyme). Maybe it should be "more quickly". I got the job anyway, which was the important thing. ::: I don't possess a concordance, and my knowledge of the New Testament isn't as chapter&versish as it was once, but there is an excellent example of the old use of "prevent" in there somewhere. Oxford quotes someone writing in 1648: "I went... to Geneva, where I found... my fame had prevented my coming." The local newsagent had a sign over a bin of cut-price ballpoint pens: "Bic biros ~~59c~~ 25c". ::: Your piece on Chinese sword flicks was fascinating. How does "the tradition of the Chinese knight-errant" fit in with the traditional Chinese class structure? "...at the bottom of the social scale were the servants and the soldiers. There is a Chinese proverb to the effect that 'good iron is not used for nails, nor are soldiers made of good men'." (Vinacke: HISTORY OF THE FAR EAST IN MODERN TIMES) Maybe I didn't read closely enough, but are these films made in China (Peoples Republic of), and how do you get to see them? (I'm laying myself wide open to the reply. Well it's quicker by plane than train, but I'll take that risk.)

ANDY PORTER (TCU 6): I'll let you know sometime whether I'm glad you kept me on the waitinglist. Haven't had time to decide yet. ::: John Brosnan is also a singer of some renown in these parts, and a priest who Pronounces upon Certain Things now and then and is quoted by the papers. He gets around. ::: I looked at the colophon, as directed, but couldn't see what I was supposed to see, unless it was the note about Australia in 75, but you've been saying that for years; so I looked at the first paragraph, too. Aha, "masters... left over from 1966". I see it all.

REDD BOGGS (Bete Noire 23): I give up. Mozart, Breugel, Wordsworth I am familiar with, but who or what is/are cogeners? ::: You never fail to live up to Thoreau's injunction on the masthead - which makes it pretty hard to comment on your writing - but would you explain to me why one should do this? No, forget "one". I would like to know why Thoreau felt this imperative, and why you do.

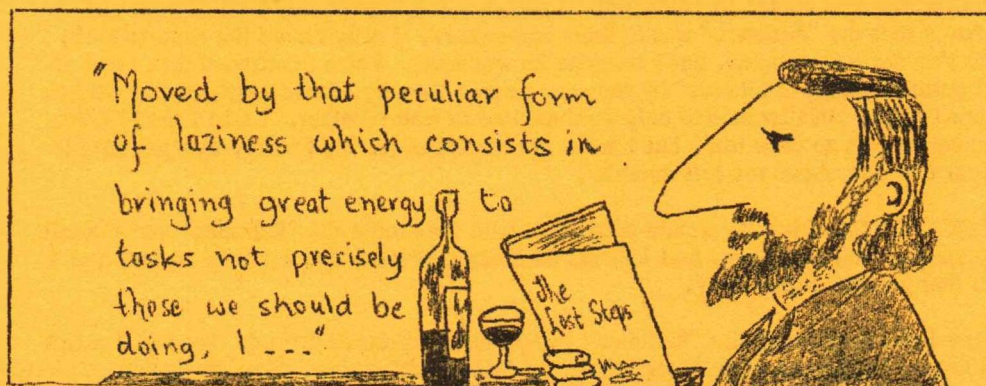
PAUL WYSZKOWSKI (Blind Starling 7): Dick Eney says your writing proves Joseph Conrad wasn't a mutant, and I'll echo the sentiment, but Conrad of course was a mutant; he started off as a Korzeniowski. (Will yer listen to the lamin' of the man, bedad!) Lovely stuff, Paul. Pit abou th line missin fro th foo o eac pag thoug. Why is being in love a "psychotic state"?



JACK SPEER (Synapse): "Life is made up of interruptions. The tortured soul, yearning for solitude, writhes under them." One of the nice things about apas is reading other folk's writhings. "Do you know what it is to yearn for the Indefinable, and yet to be brought face to face, daily, with the Multiplication Table?" You betchum. :: The corruptions quoted - "I could care less", "the weather could matter less" - are not current in Australia, but we have a tradition of understatement, sometimes to the point of contradiction, which parallels this kind of talk. Somehow, I feel, there is a connection between this understatement and the use by John Foyster and Harry Warner (and me) of "of course" to which you object. Speaking for myself (as is oft my wont), "of course" might mean "of course not" or "as you now know since I've told you", or it might just, of course, be an irritating habit. :: My copy of the Temple Classics edition of Gullible's Travails is the fourth printing, June 1901. I doubt if it is a duplicate of an 18th century edition. It differs in many ways from John Hayward's 1934 edition (Nonesuch Press / Random House), most notably in omitting the chapter headings and in Knocking Down the Many Capitals in the Text. After which pseudo-scholarly discursus I'd better admit I've never read either copy. (Bedad, there's a third edition out there: Carl Van Doren's "Portable Swift". Doggone, eh? - and similar exotic expressions.) My copy of The Swiss Family Whatsisname is "Translated from the best original Editions ... With full-page Plates and upwards of two hundred engravings in the text", is likewise unread (but I've poured over the pitchers, of course), and oddly, neglects to name the author anywhere. Why, I wysst not - nor dost I wot now.

Time for dinner. Better dust them wots off and put me trousers on (we have Certain Standards in these parts), then I'm off. Another spot of cevapcici and drop of the old '66 Seaview would go down well, I reckon. Don't go 'way - I'll be right back.

Right back, as I said. That spot of cevapcici would have been nice, too, but when I went out to the car I discovered that le beast rouge had developed un tyre flat, which meant I couldn't drive over the border to Queanbeyan where my favourite restaurant is. (You are surprised at my command of la francais? Je speak the language like un native. Would you believe un native de Pakistan, peut-etre?) So I walked up to the Lucky Chinese Restaurant in beautiful downtown Kingston, where I dined on sweet&sour duck, and consumed a half-bottle each of '71 Kaiser Stuhl Riesling and Burgundy. The Lucky Chinese Restaurant is operated by a gentleman of ancient south-western Chinese descent named Constantinos Somethingopoulos. He has a much more copious menu than the joint at Queanbeyan, but only passing-average wines. Still and all. Had a letter recently from Sebastian Martínez in Madrid, in which he mentioned that Luis Vigil had taken a couple of days off to cross the border and see "Clockwork Orange". I have to drive six or seven miles from here into New South Wales to get cevapcici and good wine at a reasonable price. Small world. Over dinner I read another chapter of Carpenter's THE LOST STEPS. A chapter is all I can take at a time. It's too close, too true, too beautiful, too disturbing, to read more than that in one go. As if the essence of a FAPA mailing were to be distilled into ten pages. Too much. I don't feel like reading or writing anything more tonight, pardonnez-moi (as we say back home). I shall sit and meditate on Alejo Carpenter and the essential nobility/futility of life for an hour or so, and retire. Meantime, have a blank space, or an illo if I can find one that will fit.





23rd October: Okay, so Sebastian Martinez and Luis Vigil live in Barcelona, not Madrid; so what's a few kilometres between friends? I made a much worse mistake, through relying on my faulty memory, in Scythrop 26, and I must write pretty soon to the two gentlemen concerned and crave their forgiveness. If you didn't pick the mistake, fair enough; if you did, just let it rest, okay?

There are those who refuse to believe that I have French blood in me, but it's true. My grandmother's maiden name was Prelongeau, or something like that, and she was born on the Ballarat goldfields. She married an Englishman named Holyoak. Her mother was a protestant Irish lady named Hodgkins or Hodgkinson (no-one seems to know which). My father was born in Denmark, where my other grandmother came from (though her family seems to have spent a lot of time in the Faeroe Islands), but the Bangsunds come from Norway. According to the Times Atlas there is a place called Bangsund about eighty miles maybe north of Trondheim, and I guess that's where we came from in the first place, but these days the Bangsunds infest the town of Tromsø, way up north beyond the Arctic Circle. So that's how I come to be 25% English, 25% Norwegian, 25% Danish, 12.5% Irish and 12.5% French. As good old Fred Nietzsche hath said (In The Use and Disadvantage of History), "Where races are mixed, there is the source of great cultures" - and if you reckon I've proved him wrong, I don't want to know about it.

At present there are three Bangsunds in Australian telephone directories; all in Melbourne, and one of them is my mother, one my wife and the last me. Next year there will be only one. Apart from we three, the only other Bangsund in Australia is my grandfather, who lives in a world of his own in a Baptist old people's home in Melbourne. He is over 90, and as far as I know the oldest Bangsund in the world. Over the last decade I have seen him and talked to him on various occasions, but he has just smiled, chuckled a bit and said "oho" or "ah yes" in a thick Scandinavian accent, obviously not knowing who the hell I was. Pretty sad, but how can we tell what sort of world an old man lives in? One day I must sit down and try to remember that house in Carlisle Street, Preston, where he and my grandmother lived, and bring back a small part of my life which I have largely forgotten. I have grown up Australian, and almost unconscious of ancestry, but there are things in my character that are not Australian, not English, and I have the feeling I might find some clue to them one day in my early memories of Captain Sigurd Johan Bangsund. (Oh yes, he was a sea captain, and there's something of that in me, I know. I think my father wanted to go to sea, but he never did, and I will never know why. The closest he got to it was clambering around visiting sailing ships in his youth. He was fond of telling me how he climbed the tallest mast of the tallest sailing ship in the world - the København - when it was in Melbourne. That ship was sighted only once after it left Melbourne; its disappearance is one of those many mysteries of the sea which arouses my sense of wonder as much as any science fiction ever written.)

One day a couple of years ago I went into a men's clothing shop in Spencer Street, and the proprietor asked me if I was a seaman. I was rather astounded and said no, and he explained that most of his customers were seamen. I mentioned that my grandfather had been captain of the little steamship "Reliance" which used to run from South Melbourne down the bay to Sorrento and over to Portarlington, and he became very interested. He disappeared out the back of the shop and came back with an armful of thick scrapbooks containing thousands of photos and newspaper cuttings of ships and insisted that the "Reliance" was in there somewhere. I didn't have the time to look, and I've never been back, but I imagine he was right. I also mentioned that I had an oil painting of the "Reliance" by someone named Gregory, dated 1919, and he said he knew Gregory but that he had only ever painted in water-colour. I said I would bring the painting in to show him, but I never got around to it. As I write, that painting is about two feet above my left shoulder.

There are a lot of people around Melbourne who remember the "Reliance" and Captain Bangsund. Now and then I feel I should look some of them up, but they are old and I am four hundred miles away.

When I was very young the "Reliance" caught fire and was destroyed. But I still recall seeing it, berthed at South Wharf where the "Argonaut" is now. (How about that, Carolyn?)





## Retired Sea Captain Takes Emergency Command

From his home in the nearer hills, where he lives in retirement, Captain R. Kilpatrick, former master of the paddle-steamer Weeroona, senses the salty tang, and he often goes "down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky."

But sometimes Captain Kilpatrick is not altogether satisfied with his visits. He yearns for the familiar feel of the "wheel's kick," but he has no "tall ship, with a star to steer her by."

Yesterday Captain Kilpatrick achieved fulfilment of his and Masefield's dream, and felt the wheel's kick once again. When Captain Bangsund fell down a companionway of the steamship *Reliance* as it was drawing near Sorrento, Captain Kilpatrick, who

was a passenger, took charge of the little ship, and brought her safely home.

Certainly it was not a particularly tall ship, and, as it was daylight, there were no stars to steer her by, but the taste of navigation was quite strong enough to satisfy Captain Kilpatrick. He took the ship into Sorrento, tied up successfully at Queenscliff and Portsea, sailed safely past Gellibrand, and into the mouth of the Yarra. He berthed at South Wharf on time.

Officers at the dockhead did not notice anything amiss, although Captain Bangsund was lying in considerable pain.

Captain Bangsund fell down the companionway while he was drinking a cup of coffee, and broke a bone in his ankle.

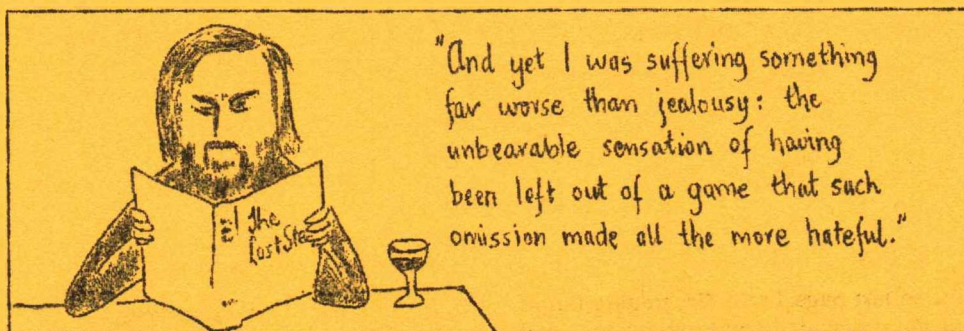


22nd October: So I finished reading ANZAPA #25, and right at the end was a little note by Leigh Edmonds about receiving his FAPA #140 "last Wednesday", and I thought, hell, that was 4th October - over a fortnight ago. So I wrote a slightly drunken letter to Gregg saying what do I do now me mailing's gone astray and similar sentiments, and on Friday took it to the PO and there was my #140 so I came home and ripped it up. No, my letter to Gregg. I can still rip up an ANZAPA mailing (though Leigh is making it a bit hard these days: 240 pages, hell) but 377 pages is something else.

GINA & NORM CLARKE (Descant 19): Um, Gina, who was the MCP who did the cover for this issue? I mean, there on the cover it says very clearly "N&G CLARKE", and on page 1 you talk about listing joint memberships alphabetically, "i.e. Gina & Norm". I have always, when referring to couples, mentioned the lady first - e.g. Gina & Norm Clarke - because this allows the lady the honour of precedence and the gentleman the honour of his full name. (Just the sort of trick you would expect from an MCP, eh?)  
::: You can still walk streets alone at night fairly safely in Australia. Being half a century behind the rest of the world has a few little advantages like this. ::: When Diane and I lived in Hilton Street, Clifton Hill, I consulted my copy of THE PLACE-NAMES OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE AT HOME AND OVERSEAS by M. J. C. Meiklejohn, BA, Sometime Adam de Brome Exhibitioner of Oriel College, Oxford (London: Meiklejohn & Son, Ltd. 1929), and decided we lived in Hillfarm Street, Hillfarm Hill. (Stuff like that fills pages very quickly, doesn't it.) ::: Finding a rhyme of any kind for Bangsund would be difficult - in English, anyway. Feel free to try. The way I pronounce my name allows it to fit almost exactly in "Ye Bangsund braes of Bonny Doon". But then, we speak pretty sloppy in Orstrilia. Paul would probably get "Wisscowskee" from most Australians, although things have changed somewhat in recent years and a lot more people take the trouble to pronounce non-British names more or less correctly. When the Bangsunds lobbed here sixty-odd years ago no-one made any such effort; all names were Australianized in pronunciation or spelling. ::: It isn't so. (You asked me to say that.) Australia does import liquors from all over the square globe. The Private Cellar Club has stuff from all over, and most of it seems to be on the latest list. Under Canadian Whiskey it lists Canadian Club De Lux \$4.75 and Grande Canadian \$4.65. (I don't stand by their spelling, you understand.) Maybe something was wrong with the last list; I notice that 30-year-old Ballantine's is now \$17.10. An Australian dollar is worth about C\$1.17, US\$1.19, officially. In purchasing power it is probably worth somewhere between US\$1.50 - 2.50, depending on what you are purchasing. Let's finish this amateur ramble in economics by saying that my salary is around \$8000, and with the exception of Foyster and a few others, Australian fans think I should be close to a millionaire on that kind of money. (And so I will be about this time next year when my debts are paid.) But this Commanderie St John: I've looked all over the bottle for fine print, and can't find any. There are three labels. The first says simply "1927". The second: "Commanderie St John / Cyprus Dessert Wine / This wine is as originally made during the Crusades by the Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, from the vines of the Commanderie of Kolossi Castle, Cyprus. / Produced and Bottled by KEO Ltd, Limassol - Cyprus." The third, on the back: "Commandaria certification mark / Issued by the Government of Cyprus." You work it out. I can't. Looking forward to getting down to Melbourne at Xmas and stocking up on the stuff: I haven't had a drop for months.

My favourite restaurant (the one with the tv set) has, as I mentioned, run out of Orlando Barossa Cabernet. But all is not lost. The chef has started making all kinds of delicious European dishes, including cevapcici (which I love very much), and the proprietor has bought in some really magnificent wines in the last few weeks. Last night I had a '66 Seaview Cabernet Sauvignon (their price \$2.30, Private Cellar price \$1.94, which is rather incredible: the usual pricing formula in licensed restaurants is twice retail plus a bit for luck) and a great mound of them beaut little Yugoslavian-type sausage things with French salad. Total outlay: \$3.70. And the chef gave me a large sample of something else he's trying out, a kind of cheese and pastry thing, the name of which eludes me - tarouk? - something like that. Beautiful, anyway. What do you pay for a simple, magnificent meal like that in America, friends? (They'd accidentally left the tv on the national channel, so I got to see a very good documentary film on Tanzania, too. A nice night's entertainment, by and large, on the whole, as it were.)





31st October: Looking at the above, I have decided I should not attempt any kind of self-portraiture again. Doesn't look like me at all, apart from the hair.

Yesterday I ran off the cover of this issue and the title page for the Campbell book, and I feel I should dedicate this issue to Noel Kerr - Australia's foremost exponent of the art of electronic stencil scanning. Take a bow, Noel; you deserve it. The cover includes an unscreened photo of Shayne McCormack and Paul Stevens, in their roles as Count and Countess Dracula at the Syncon masquerade party. A delightful couple, and before this issue is over I hope I will have something from Paul as well as Shayne to justify the cover. But why do They call them masquerade parties when no-one wears a mask? Left to myself I would call them fancy-dress parties, but that doesn't sound as good.

Today I learnt that the cover of the Campbell book will cost me \$45. How did I get involved in this thing? I still have about forty pages to go, and I should be working on them right now, but my excuse is that I have been drinking (In moderation, of course) and therefore do not have the necessary concentration for such an important job.

Dear FAPAns, will you forgive me if I do not comment further on mailing 140? I have not had a chance to read more of the mailing, and I must complete this issue in the next few days if you are to see it in February. Apart from the folk I have mentioned, I have read the contributions of Bill Bowers (lovely stuff from Sue Glicksohn and others there), Dick Geis (can't possibly comment, Dick: it's too much) and a few others. I have invited a couple of people to write sort of guest comments on some other contributions, and hope they will turn up before the surface-mail deadline. If they don't, they will be in the next issue.

A recent, and it would seem regular, correspondent is Mrs Margot D'Aubonnett, of Merewether, a suburb (I think) of Newcastle, about a hundred miles or so north of Sydney. Margot discovered fandom via a newspaper item about Bob Smith and Syncon, and has since been in regular contact with Bruce Gillespie and me. I quote from her most recent letter:

"I was rather disturbed to learn that Canberra has only one of everything. Tell me, doesn't it tend to disrupt the traffic? The queue that must extend back (especially after the pubs shut) must be very long. Pity the poor bloke at the end... or do you arrange it by the reserved tickets for space plan? Seems to me that your Civic Fathers had better read that French novel, "Clochemerle". On second thoughts, perhaps it would be better if they didn't. What went on in that particular village I'd hate to have happen in the Nation's Capital. Wouldn't be at all dignified."

The lady is obviously a trufan. That comment arose from a remark in my last letter to her that I had taken a lady friend to a disreputable coffee lounge for supper after the ballet last week, which I altered to the disreputable coffee lounge (since Canberra has only one of everything). In the same letter, Margot says she cannot imagine me as a theologian, and that she thinks of me as (amongst other things) slightly disreputable.

True, true. As a theologian I make a superb fanzine editor. A disreputable one at that. (And if you would like some interesting LoCs, write Margot at 26 Ridge St, Merewether, NSW 2291.)



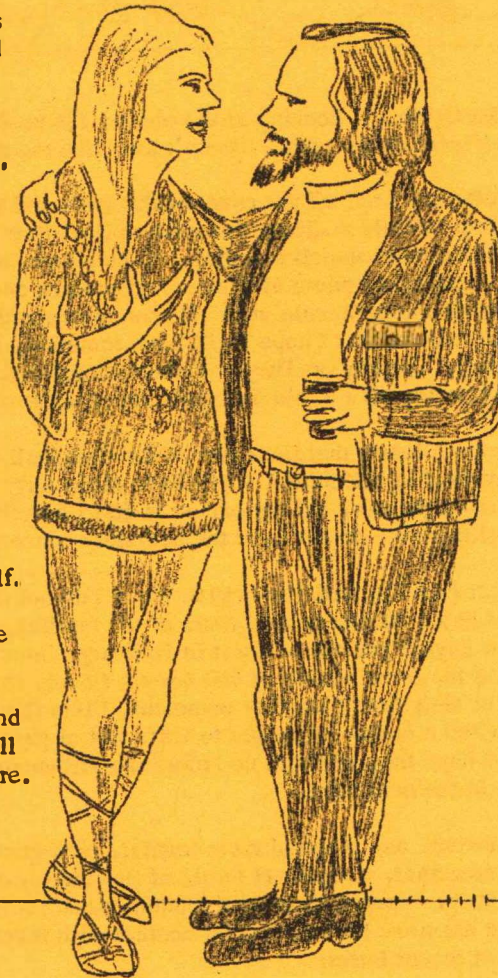
Okay, so last page I said disparaging things about the masquerade party at Syncon, and also said I should not attempt any kind of self-portraiture again - but that was last page. Lately I have gained considerable pleasure from drawing straight onto stencil, and I can't resist trying again here.

This time I have attempted a full-length study of Carla Harding and myself in a somewhat intimate pose, taken from a photo from Syncon. I have done no justice whatever to the delectable Mrs Harding, but I have tried not to disguise my own pear-shaped appearance.

In the photo Bob Smith is on my right, looking sort of disconsolate, as only Bob can look, and on Carla's left are her husband, Lee, and Miss McCormack, in as compromising a pose as Carla and myself.

It's the sort of thing that happens at science fiction conventions, I guess.

It is 1.30 am, 1st November, as I write, and I can't think of a thing to write that will fill out this page, so I think I will leave off here. A bit of blank space never hurt anyone, I always say. (What do you always say?)





1st November: A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THIS PAGE. Stop me if you've heard this one, but Noel's electrostencils arrived this week in two batches (the first I've already mentioned), and tonight when I was running off the second lot on the pages I'd left blank for the purpose I, um, mixed up the blank pages. If you are interested in the proper sequence, you can probably pick it up from the dates, but mainly the page headed 26th October should be where the one headed 22nd October finished up, and vice versa.

Somehow I forgot to explain the photo and newspaper clipping a few pages back, too. (Never a dull moment in this fanzine, folks.) Øster Ulvslev is a village on the island of Falster, Denmark, and here my father was born - or so I understand. The clipping is from a Melbourne paper, but I don't know which one. From a reference on the back of it to Sir Earle Page, "Minister for Commerce", it must have appeared somewhere between 1935 and 1937.

Any other mysteries I should clear up while I'm at it? You tell me: I'm just the dumb printer, you understand.

But I can't help observing that after a fair quantity of the rough red my drawing seems to improve as my writing falls off. When I looked at the page opposite (please Ghu it will be opposite) this morning, I was surprised how close I had come to the original, especially since I normally don't attempt to portray people-shaped people. The note accompanying the drawing, however, is something else again. (Did I really write that?)

Thoughts while typing: I note that I have quoted the same sentence from Nietzsche two issues running. I'd better find another quote or two pretty soon or you'll think I've never read the man. ::: I didn't have dinner with Diane on the 27th. In fact, I haven't heard from her since a few days after getting that phone call. Hurricane Bebe has been to Fiji and left a trail of havoc, but I have no idea at all whether Diane was there to see it. For all I know, she might have been blown out to sea and never found. I don't like the idea of being a widower so young; I'd better write to her again and see if she made it.

But I did get to Sydney at the weekend, nevertheless. On the evening of the 27th, when I imagined I would be dining with my legal bondage, I dined in fact by myself at a motel near Leppington, a few miles out of Sydney. The waitress handed me the menu and wine list. I asked her if the "Cordo Blue" was what I thought it was, and she said she thought it was, so I ordered that. And I ordered a bottle of Barossa Cabernet. (Now there's a name you recognize.) She asked if that was on the list, and I said yes and showed it to her. She said, I'm sorry, this is my first day here. I said, Not to worry, I've only just arrived myself. She brought the bottle, and poured a centimetre or two into the glass, probably because she'd heard that that's the sort of thing you do. Because it was her first day and she was trying to do the right thing, I tasted it, trying to look as connasewerish as possible. The glass was a tall one, such as you might drink Coke or pineapple juice from but not claret - not when you're dining out and paying through the nose for the stuff, anyway. I mumbled approval, and she started pouring. Tell me when to stop, she said sort of sotto voce like, The boss is watching. So I let her pour about 5 cm, thanked her politely (I can be like that when I want to, you know) and as soon as I thought the boss wasn't watching, topped it up. The claret was, of course, superb. The cordo blue was pretty good for a cordo blue, I guess, but then I'm still not sure what it was supposed to be.

Speaking of food reminds me that it's 8.30 and I haven't eaten today. Just to nark you I won't tell you where I'm going nor what I consumed when I got there.

John Foyster's latest publication, Chunder #1, arrived a few days ago. Very pleasant fannish stuff from John, LEdmonds, Paul Stevens and David Grigg. Quote: "Bangsund is very unlikely". Now he tells me.

John mentions receiving Fiawol #1 from Joyce & Arnie Katz, which publication contains an article headed "Shayne who?" No excuse for not knowing after this, J&A K. I mean, what with her photo on the cover even. As John, I think, intended to convey, I am unlikely to make Toronto.



2nd November: "What a large volume of adventures may be grasped within this little span of life, by him who interests his heart in everything, and who, having eyes to see what time and chance are perpetually holding out to him as he journeyeth on his way, misses nothing he can fairly lay his hands on!"

I think I might have liked Laurence Sterne. Certainly I like his writing, and every few years I re-read the life of Uncle Toby and opinions of Mr Shandy. I haven't read the Sentimental Journey for many years, but the above passage passed through my mind tonight as I thought about the uneventful events of this day - the little things I did and thought, the larger things I heard about. Whether it adds up to "a large volume of adventures" over the years, I suppose depends on what you call adventures.

Last Sunday Lyn cooked for two of her greatest admirers (Bob and me) Steak Esterhazy. It was indescribably delicious, and as we drank the flagon red with it we talked about Hungary, Papa Haydn and what the Count might have drunk with his steak. I suggested tokay (which will indicate to some of you just how ignorant I am, but don't let on).

This morning I asked Bob Lehane what had happened in the great wide world overnight, since I am not in the habit of buying newspapers, and he said nothing much except a mate of yours has done something interesting. Well, I wouldn't exactly call Arthur Burns, Professor of Political Science at ANU, ordained Presbyterian minister, science fiction enthusiast and associate of Cordwainer Smith, a mate of mine - but we have talked, and he's a nice guy, and only the realization that he has more than enough on his plate already stops me from pestering him to deepen our acquaintance. But yes, since I published John Foyster's interview with him in 1967 I have been sending him ASFRs and things, and I looked him up very soon after I arrived in Canberra, and we've talked, as I said. Today he's on the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald, and no doubt in every paper in Australia, because he is standing as a candidate in the coming elections - in opposition to the endorsed Labor candidate and present member, Kep Enderby. Arthur has been a member of the Labor Party for over a quarter of a century, and his advice has been sought and listened to by Labor politicians for some years.

For an ALP member to stand against the endorsed ALP candidate is nothing special, although it usually results in that member's expulsion from the party. But Arthur has done more than that. He has raised an Issue, which will be talked about in all kinds of woolly and expert terms for the next month (until the election, that is), and could very well have considerable influence on what kind of government we get next. Arthur Burns is against abortion-on-demand. (I'm not, but let's not go into that.) The ALP has more or less said it will legalize abortion, and having heard the resulting screams from those who feel differently, has shut up about the subject. Arthur has ensured that this is one subject everyone seeking office in December will have to speak out on.

So: When I left work tonight, there he was again, on the front page of the Canberra News, so I bought a copy to see whether it had anything more to say on the subject. (It hadn't, and its photo of Arthur wasn't nearly as nice as the one in the SMH.) I read the paper at home, and after exhausting that subject, discovered that Ezra Pound has died, that the outgoing prime minister has refused "politely" to see the gent President Thieu has sent us to explain his viewpoint, and that a motel not a mile from here has just opened a bottle shop and for a limited time only is offering a \$1 lucky-dip.

After reading the paper I started cleaning up this place, because my agent lady has arranged to pay an unexpected visit on Sunday to see that I'm keeping the place clean and so on like it says in the lease. A long way to go yet, too. Arranged during the day for someone to come tomorrow and hack down the jungle in the back yard. (Must remember to remove the last five months' used stencils and crudsheets from the bathroom.) After a couple of hours of this cleaning-up stuff I decided I'd rather go out and eat somewhere and read a book. So I took The Lost Steps (no, I still haven't finished it) to the Chinese place.

Would you like another Carpentier quote to go on with? Try this one:



No, the hell with it. Read the book yourself.

Emerging from the Chinese place, I felt like just a drop more to drink than the half bottle of riesling I'd had there, and I remembered the motel and its bottle shop. I am sorry to advise that it's a pretty ordinary bottle shop with nothing you can't buy elsewhere, but I bought a bottle or three anyway and had a go at the dollar lucky dip and found myself the owner of 739 ml of Morris's Specially Selected Very Old Tokay.

Having drunk nearly half of it while typing these two pages, I can report that I like tokay (thank you for enquiring), and that if Count Esterhazy drank this with his steak he was very eccentric indeed. Maybe he sat back with a glass of it, and a Specially Selected Very Old Hungarian see-gar, while listening to Papa Haydn and the band. If I were very rich it's the kind of thing I would do, anyway.

3rd November: Bob Lehané, who is one of those who read newspapers and take an informed interest in what is going on, tells me that the ALP has not said anything about legalizing abortion. The party's leader (and hopefully next Prime Minister), Gough Whitlam, has said that he favours it, but that does not commit the party. Thank you, Bob. Would you like to be political correspondent for Bundalohn Quarterly? No? Thought as much.

Alf Blair, one of my other fellow-workers, asks when he is going to be mentioned in one of my publications. Right now, Alf; take a bow. Ladies and gentlemen - Alf. But you won't be mentioned again until you tell us the full sordid story of your sordid philandering unmentionable past, you secretive old reprobate you.

8th November: I grow old... I grow old...  
I shall mail my fanzines rolled.

I have been working all day on the Campbell book, and it is a burden. Please, unless I'm rich and can afford to have someone else do all the work, if I ever announce that I am planning to publish something like this again, would you kindly remind me how long it took me to do this job and how much I came to hate the physical labour involved in it? Thank you.

Not that I hate the book. Far from it. As I have said before, I have read and re-read it many times, and I am inordinately proud of it. But, as Harding used to say, tapping his forehead (and probably still does), "It's all up there!" The book that will emerge any day now is not the book I envisaged. But, as St Anselm used to say (tapping his forehead perhaps?), "That which exists is greater than that which is merely conceived". So we press on, except at moments like this when for some inexplicable kind of relief we stop typing stencils for the book and turn to typing stencils for a fanzine.

Last Friday we were informed that our country didn't need us this week and that we should make ourselves scarce. I was pleased, not just by the prospect of a week off at the taxpayers' expense, but because I could get back to work on JWC and maybe tidy up a few other loose ends. But then Nancy Keesing sent me a list of things she would like explained in my article about fanzines for The Australian Author, and on Monday a letter advised me that my tax accountant would be visiting me on Tuesday. So I spent Monday tidying up my miserable books, and the accountant called yesterday and complimented me on my neat work. Nice feller. Parergon Books has made a handsome loss during 1971-72, and I should get a large enough refund from the tax people to pay for a divorce and maybe even mail all the Scythrops I have sitting around the place. Great. That's the way to run a business. After he left I got down to re-writing the article for Mrs Keesing, and posted it during the afternoon. It's awful. Have you ever tried condensing all you know and love about fandom - and giving comprehensible reasons and explanations for outsiders in the process - into less than 2000 words? The more I thought about this article the more I felt I could write a book about fandom and the less I felt I could convey anything of its unique character and my feelings about it in one short article. I would appreciate your comments on what I have written. With Gregg's approval I will put it through the next FAPA mailing, and the rest of you can



order a copy from Space Age Books (GPO Box 1267 L, Melbourne 3001) for 50 cents.

While you're about it, why not order a copy of the Campbell book as well - A\$2.00/US\$2.50/£1.00 - and make Mervyn Binns's day for him? It should be ready by the time you read this.

In the article I have described the Space Age Bookshop as "a kind of four-dimensional fanzine, published daily except Sundays, thinly disguised as a commercial enterprise". That's intended as a compliment, Merv, in case you're wondering. Keep up the good work.

And if you, dear reader, can help Mervyn keep up the good work, please do so. There aren't that many fannish bookshops in the world, and if sticking your neck out and mortgaging your future from your faith in fandom is a worthy thing, then Mervyn deserves to survive and prosper. If anyone in Australia is the ultimate walking talking embodiment of FIAWOL, it is Mervyn Binns. Oh, he can be crotchety and pig-headed at times - in fact he's a champion at it - but he is Australia's Mr Science Fiction, and we wouldn't have him any other way. Except maybe rich and happy, but that rarely happens to any of us. Long live Space Age! Buy something today!

Ten years ago (he said, stroking his greying beard), give or take a few months, a tall, gangling, pimply, greasy-haired youth walked into my office at the Victorian Railways Institute and asked if he could put some badly-printed notices advertising something called the Melbourne Science Fiction Club in the books in our sf section. I forget what I said to him, but I do remember thinking he was some kinda nut. I mentioned him to a lady friend (remember Karolina, PJ?) who worked with him in whatever obscure corner of the Victorian Railways they had the misfortune to be employed, and she (Napieracz was her surname - remember, PJ? - my god, how it all comes back) confirmed this impression. He, she said, is some kinda nut.

An entire decade later - one-third of his lifetime and only a little less of mine - here is that very same nut, the one and only P.J. "Bat" Stevens, saying words about his alleged life and hard times. Many of these words, I assure you, are the product solely of his own fevered imagination, but - what the hell? - I like it the way he tells it.





"No thanks," I replied, edging for the door, "I don't read animal stories."



Years later I found out that the short fat fellow was the editor of this and other rags, and that he still reads Thomas Love Peacock. Or so he says. I mean, have you ever seen anyone reading anything by an author with a name like that?

After some years, some member of the MSFC, a sadist no doubt, decided to organize a science fiction convention. This activity, which I later learnt has strong religious significance, was conducted over Easter 1966 in the mouldy clubrooms in Somerset Place, and it produced a bunch of equally mouldy fans, chief amongst them John Foyster, John Baxter and Lee Harding. And there was Damien Broderick, Wynne Whiteford, Doug Nicholson, Mike Baldwin and other mythical characters. I forget what Harding did to earn his place in the sun, but Baxter earned my undying worship by showing clips from horror films and a fantastic bit from KING KONG. I went into raptures.

Several interesting insights into the fannish character were displayed during this first Australian convention in many years. Bangsund was there. Just married, we were told by Mrs Bangsund - at length. Foyster got up and proposed that what Australia needed was a fanzine, and Harding got up and volunteered Bangsund's services and everybody cheered - except Mrs Bangsund, who seemed visibly moved. (Some years later she confided in me that she wished she had thrown Harding down the lift well.)

And so Australian Science Fiction Review was born, and the beginning of "Australia in '75." It was at that convention - or was it the next? - that I met Leigh Edmonds, a quiet lad with a sensitive fannish face and a good Methodist upbringing. (Whooboy! has he changed!) Also at that convention I helped to sweep the floor. At the next con in 1968 I helped choose the films, and swept the floor. The 1969 con saw me assistant organizer, and still sweeping the floor. At the 1973 Eastercon in Melbourne I will be big boss-man, and I will be telling other people to sweep the floor. I will probably still sweep the floor. If you are looking for me in '75, watch out for the bloke with the broom.

It has been an eventful time, the last eight years or however long it was. My first article published in ASFR 7... my first fanzine, Opus... my first fan feud, with Gary Mason (which continues, as all good fan feuds should)... and conventions, the Fantasy Film Group, parties, meetings, more parties. There have been unforgettable people like Bernie Bernhouse, who invaded the flat Leigh Edmonds and I shared one morning about 1 am with a kilo of grass and fourteen friends; the quiet John Breden with his Barbarella collection, who was responsible for turning me on to comics; Peter House, who helped inspire me into becoming a latter-day Dracula; and most of all there was the wonderful six months or so I spent living with John and Diane Bangsund, Leigh Edmonds and a cat named Grushenka.

Lastly, but by no means leastly, there has been the friendship of Mervyn Binns, who is one of the nicest and sincerest blokes you could hope to meet.

I don't mind looking 30 and feeling 40 when I think back to the fun times I've had with these people. I've got so much more out of fandom than I've ever put into it, and it was these people, the fans, who made it all worthwhile.

Fandom is not a hobby; it is a goddam way of life. And a lot of fun.

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A Disclaimer, by the editor of "this rag":

Paul Stevens, as anyone who knows him will agree, must have got a hell of a lot out of fandom if it's more than he's put into it. Paul is an institution in Australian fandom. Any convention, party, meeting or gathering of any kind from which he is absent is much less enjoyable than it might have been. On paper and in person he is one very funny fellow. But he is more than that. Not many people take the trouble, because he keeps up his fannish front in public, but those who do discover that beneath that gaunt exterior there beats a heart of pure gold. These days he gets around dressed like



some kind of cross between a minor Nazi official and a film director, and there are those - if you will pardon me, Paul - who find him a pain in the arse. But that's just the surface PJ. The dressing-up, whether as described above or in his favourite role as Dracula, is something rather alien to me, but it is an essential part of the rather wonderful man Paul really is. It is a part I did not understand until he sent me this article and I read about his early dramatic proclivities. I had not known about them before. It explains a lot. Paul is a born actor, as anyone who has seen one of the zany Paul Stevens Shows will acknowledge. But - hell's bells! - he is much more than that, and despite what he has written here I hope that real soon now he will discover that although fandom is a way of life, it is not life. Nice nubile young girls should apply immediately to the Space Age Bookshop and help rescue this essentially nice young man from the depravity into which his seniors have descended. Any man who is both admired and appreciated by Diane Bangsund and Carolyn Addison must be rather special.

Thanks for appearing in BQ, Paul. Don't let it go to your head.

And now it's Friday, 10th November - in fact almost Saturday, 11th November. Today I was sitting, sort of dopy-looking and bedraggled, in my chair when I noticed a rather distinguished-looking grey-haired lady walking up my driveway. Who, I thought, could that possibly be? I went to the gate and the lady smiled at me and said, "Nancy Keesing". I sort of turned to jelly inside and asked if she would please to come in.

Believe it or not, I am not in the habit of entertaining Australia's leading literary persons in the squalor of my own living-room, and if I thought I were about to do so I would certainly attempt to look as un-dopy and un-bedraggled as possible. Moreover, I would make sure I were wearing socks. But it obviously mattered not at all to Miss Keesing. We talked for a couple of hours about science fiction (she likes Kurt Vonnegut), fandom (she doesn't understand it), literary persons, the future of the novel, Alejo Carpentier, permissiveness, the necessity for Australian-ness in Australian writing, Flann O'Brien, Lennie Lower - oh, all kinds of things. I am still rather in a daze and wondering whether I imagined it all, but there are Craven A filter butts in the ashtray to prove that I didn't. Not since I lunched with Phillip Adams and was driven back to work by him in his E-type Jag - and before that, licked all over by George Turner's Great Dane - have I felt so honoured and humble in the presence of one whose name shall resound in the annals of Australian Literature.

Don't mind me. I'll get over it. And you needn't call me Mister. I survived learning that Gretchen had mentioned me in a conversation with Sir Steven Runciman, so I guess I'll survive this afternoon's experience and remain the lovable bloke I have always pretended to be. (But no autographs after midnight, y'unnerstan?)

During the day I also read, from cover to cover, all one hundred pages of Tom Collins's Is no.5. God, how it all comes back! Those early days of SAPS, I mean. By crikey, eh? The strange thing is that although I have never been a member of SAPS, nor even read a mailing, Tom managed to convey a feeling about that apa which got through to me as though I had been in it right from the start. Top marks, Tom Collins! (Um, is that a pseudonym?) (Australian literary in-joke.) No, that was a magnificent thing, Tom, and I enjoyed it immensely.

I sort of thought it might appeal to Bob Smith, too, so I left it with him a fortnight ago when I was in Sydney. I also left with him Dick Eney's things from FAPA 140, and a few days ago I received the following piece from him.

But what will I do if Patrick White ever comes to my door? Ask for his autograph? Show him my Ditmar?









Hagerstown Letters?), Owen Hannifen, Dick Schultz, Ruth Berman, Wally Weber (and WRR)? And ain't it positively uncanny to dwell on my ten-year-old grizzle in SAPS about The Coventranian Gazette because it was a FAPazine, and you do remember "Coventry", don't you...?

Strange the things you discover. If the articles and reminiscences were written specially for Tom Collins and Is5, then there were a couple of surprises. I had always assumed (a bad fannish habit) that Ted White and Jack Harness were somewhat older than they appear to be, and Jack was certainly older than me - but t'ain't so, apparently. "And Now a Word from our Founders" had a lot of familiar history, since something similar was attempted when SAPS reflected on its fifteen years, as I recall. But the attitudes of some BNFs alter over the years, it seems, and is apparent in the pages of Is. But I guess we all change in some way.

Nowadays the only science fiction I read almost is from those years when it still had the thrill that BHHoward mentions. In other respects I tend, like Earl Kemp, to find the future shocks of this day and age sparking a kind of perverse sense of wonder that very little current sf is capable of. Sad, ain't it?

CERTAIN aspects of Dick Eney's Target:FAPA nipped my mind back also, but for somewhat different reasons than sf- and SAPS-orientated ones. First reaction on looking at and reading "Sword Flick" was that Dick had suddenly discovered the illustrations in the Chinese equivalent of hefty Japanese magazines devoted to the period tale. About twenty years ago in Japan I used to admire something similar.

However, even allowing for translation or the writer's use of the English language, there are certain aspects of "Sword Flick" that I find a trifle hard to follow. The manner in which Chih Shih-fu dismisses the Sung Dynasty makes me suspect that this piece was written with the approval of the Party. "Political corruption" there may have been during the Sung Dynasty (and what makes that period so special?), but it is generally recognized as being a time of reasonable cultural advancement and little interest in things martial. It is quite possible that the improvement in printing technique during this period of China's history, if nothing else, made it possible for Shih Nai-an (my spelling is a little different from Dick's) and his fellow writers of "social criticism" to communicate their "message" in the shape of created heroes to the masses at a later time in China's history.

I would also suspect that the sword flick director's "desire to maximize the audience's pleasure" is firmly guided by how the Party wants the masses to interpret the history of their country.

WATER MARGIN has 108 conveniently created heroes for the Red Chinese propaganda experts to work on, but nowhere in the article does the author substantiate the existence of all these "knights-errant" who must have been the despair of many an inn-keeper.

Most of what the writer describes is uncannily similar to the Japanese chambara (sword fight) elements of jidai-geki - the period film - but in the majority of Japanese period films there is firm historical accuracy for the audience to hook onto. And substitute Zen for Tao and you have the Samurai warrior. (Hmm. Summat rotten in the province of Hopeh, methinks.)

I am quite willing to believe that the sword flick is popular in China, since millions of Japanese (and I) used to thoroughly lose ourselves in the period movie, but I question the motives of the Red China government in allowing their versions to be produced and shown to their millions.

And as for that comparison with the American West... Well, if the Japanese period sword movie can be conveniently compared with the West (by some dedicated and slightly mad film critics), I guess it's inevitable that the Chinese sword flick would go the same way. However, although the Americans might glamourize their West



on the screen, the number of westerns with a message is, I think, rare.

I would be interested to learn just who that article was written for, and why.

Re Dick's Rave Review: No comment necessary, indeed... except that the idea of this Boardman being a school-teacher is a frightening thought to me.

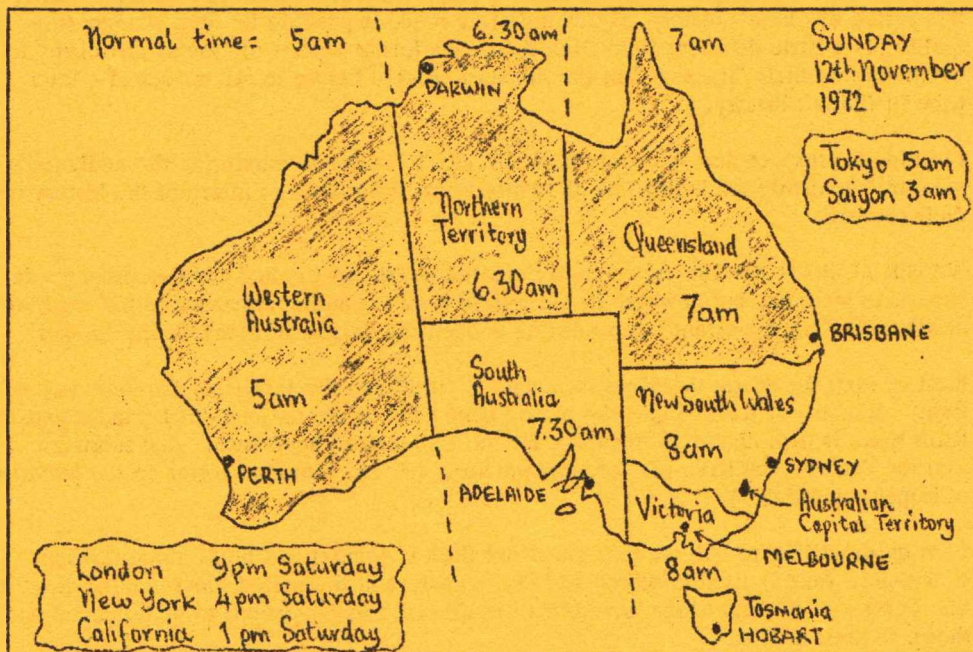
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Bob has assumed throughout his comments on "Sword Flicks" that they are produced in the People's Republic of China (or Red China as he calls it: you can say what you like in Bundalohn Quarterly, folks). I have re-read the article in Target:FAPA, and I still can't see it obvious anywhere there that this is so. Maybe I'm just dumb; maybe Bob knows more about it than I do. Your explication would be appreciated, Dick - including, maybe, some biographical data on Chih Shih-fu. Ta.

12th November: Daylight Saving Time is 8 am, and I have staggered to the typer at this ungodly hour to join in spirit the collating party which is going on right now (if my calculations are correct) in Walnut Creek, California. Hope you're enjoying yourselves, folks!

My time calculation is based on the premise that California is normally eighteen hours behind the eastern states of Australia, and when those states which do so switch to daylight saving time, California is nineteen hours behind us. Ergo, 8 am Sunday should be 1 pm Saturday at Gregg Calkins's place. (If I'm wrong about this, break it gently. I would hate to think my sacrifice was in vain.)

Having absolutely nothing more at this stage to say to anyone in FAPA, ANZAPA or OMPA, I will fill out the page with a crude map of Australia showing normal and daylight-saving time differences, just for the hell of it, and conclude. See yez.



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