

Saturday morning started with the book auction. Tony Peacey was to have been the auctioneer, but as he was rather late Ian Nicholls filled in. Both Ian and Tony (after he arrived) did good jobs in flogging off books. At about 11 am Jason Cooper gave a talk on SF and the Occult. This was mainly about astral projection. He finished off by flinging out symbol cards for astral projection to members of the audience one at a time, explaining each symbol as he did so. Unfortunately he seemed to have as many cards as there were members of the audience. The card flinging trick wore a bit thin after half an hour. To be fair to Jason the subject is really one that goes better with a smaller, more involved audience. As there were still more books to sell the auction continued during lunch.

CHUNDER! volume 2, number 5, August 8, 1978: page 2

The first session after lunch was the SF quiz run by Ian Nicholls. There were some complaints about the level of difficulty of the questions as most people could only manage to answer less than half of the questions. The quiz was won by Sally Underwood (who happens to have the largest SF library of any fan I know of in WA). The quiz was followed by something different for a convention - a talk by a schoolteacher, Mr A G Chappell on his theory of the break-up of the fifth planet of the solar system to form the asteroid belt. The talk was concise, well presented and easy to follow whatever the merits of the theory. He followed this with his suggestions on how Venus could be moved into Earth's orbit by hitting it with asteroids. Considerable discussion ensued on this subject. The next speaker was Ian Nicholls on the SF of Robert Heinlein. I did not hear much of this talk as I was collared by a visitor to the convention for a while, however I understand Ian was well up on his subject as he is covering it as part of his coursework at teachers college.

The afternoon finished off with the film "Metropolis" which none of us had seen before. A truly remarkable film and one of the highlights of the con. One lady attending remarked that she had been waiting 25 years to see it. Those of us who could afford it then transported ourselves to the Welcome Stranger Steakhouse in Perth City for the banquet and fancy dress party. The food was good and all present enjoyed the evening. The costumes were well done. We had Doctor Who (Russell Hampton, whose hairstyle happened to be natural for the part), Jason Din Alt (Warren Hughes), Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia (Craig Peek and Linda) plus various characters from Dungeons and Dragons. In the fantasy section Paul Presbury won a prize as a wolfman and Sally won a prize for her two entries. Ian Nicholls as Dr Stone (D&D) won the prize for most original costume. Tony and Gloria Peacey were the hit of the evening with their spectacular entrance as a 1930s type spaceman and spacegirl (complete with brass breastplates) and won the prizes for both best SF entry and best group. A special award was made to Stephen Dedman for his entry as an exterminator from Zardoz, mainly for wearing very little on a very cold night. Later at Sally's place a least-dressed competition was held which Sally won.

Sunday morning was commenced with a film "No Blade of Grass", an ecological disaster movie which I quite liked. After the film Graham Mann, president of UNISFA, gave a talk on SF special effects in films and tv shows. Interesting and informative for those who are not readers of the various magazines which have covered this subject. After lunch the Bodoman competition was held. This was organized and judged by Sally. From the book "Bodoman of Sor" by Norma N Johns (not to be confused with "Tarnsman of Gor" by John Norman) the aim was to best imitate the 'imbecilic nurk' expression of the bodoman Darn Rabot, so of Brere Rabot. There were many creditable entries but Tony Peacey was judged to be the best.

Sally then gave a talk titled "Are Fans Mad?" (no argument there) on psychology and SF. Sally is well qualified to speak on both subjects. Two more competitions were then held. These were the Darth Vader sound-alike and Tusken Raider Yell contests. Jason Cooper was the judge and there were plenty of contestants. The proceedings were recorded (to be used for blackmail later). Graham Mann won the Darth Vader contest and Doug Thorp (a reluctant contestant since he was really there to sell games from his shop Simulations) won the Tusken Raider Yell contest.

The final event of the con was the film "Terminal Man". It took an hour after that to tear everyone away from the computer games, which was the last thing to be packed up. Personally I consider SWANCON 3 to be a success and I believe it was enjoyed by all those who attended.

ROY FERGUSON

LOOKING AT SCIENCE FICTION (Tokenism Part Two)

Two freebie review magazines were mentioned in the last issue: both are handouts for bookstores and cover most varieties of books on the popular market. Neither have dates or numbers, so I can not advise you to look for particular editions. First up is BOOK ADDICT (edited by Jack Handley, correspondence to PO Box 432, Bondi Junction, NSW 2022), which features about five pages on science fiction and science fiction books by Nev Angove. This starts with a potted two page history which is fast and furious (I'm not quite sure why anyone would suggest that the Australian sf awards are 'mistakenly called Ditmars' (my underline), and I've already indicated to Neville that his list of 1969 Ditmars is incomplete because a few years ago a convention committee carelessly dropped John Bangsund's name from the list), and then there are three plot-summaristic reviews. BOOK SCENE (edited by Peter Barrett, correspondence to PO Box 12, Rockdale, NSW 2216) has a much longer section on science fiction (just over fifteen pages) edited by Thomas Burkin. This section begins with a four page introductory essay, then has a pile of reviews, followed by a couple of pages on the Hugo Awards. The reviews range from informative to insulting ("But give it a whirl up the telescope, it's a good night's read." Why should one now accept what was regarded as embarrassingly childish in 1945?), and although BOOK SCENE is available on subscription at \$15 a year it is hard to see science fiction fans getting value for money in terms of the quality of the contents.

George Turner's BELOVED SON has copped a few more reviews. Since I refuse to pay \$2.00 for a magazine devoted to the dregs of the world's publishing, printed on secondrate butcher's paper, I am unable to report in detail upon the careless plot-summary masquerading as a review in AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW. Damien Broderick's review in the July 24 HOURS is embarrassing in another way. The quality of the review I leave for the reader to decide, but perhaps also the reader might muse on the sensibility of describing a book as 'a gratifying turning-point in Australian science fiction' but spending the substance of the review exclusively rubbishing the book. In the same issue of 24 HOURS Graham Stone has a two page article on telepathy in SF, as an introduction to a new ABC-FM serial. This article is alarming in two ways: it confuses science with science fiction, and it suggests that science fiction came to a sudden halt in 1953. Under the circumstances it is not perhaps surprising that Graham Stone's review of BELOVED SON in The Australian for August 5 again shows this confusion: indeed there is little suggestion in this review that George Turner's book is about people at all.

Penguin sent me a bunch of their books: I may review these in the next issue. The April 1978 edition of GALAXY contains 'The Queen of the Afternoon' by "Cordwainer Smith". Readers would be unwise to confuse this author with the chap who died in 1966, for 'The Queen of the Afternoon', while including some of Linebarger's ideas, is clearly written by one of the most hamhanded writers since Dwight V Swain. It is interesting to note that the story is set a couple of centuries after 'Mark Elf' (Saturn, May 1957) but in John Pierce's 1975-published chronology 'The Queen of the Afternoon' was dated some thousand years before 'Mark Elf'.

NOOZ

Don't forget the SF writer's workshop in Adelaide Oct 6-9, with George Turner and John Emery: details from Jeff Harris, 95 Second Ave, Joslin, SA 5070. SWANCON 4 to be held 4-6 March, 1979, Sally Underwood to organize. Australian Star Trek Convention on March 10-11, 1979 - details from John & Karen Lewis, PO Box 110, Rockdale, NSW 2216. And Merv Binns and Robin Johnson aborted their Australian Science Fiction Club, which spares you at least a page of vituperation in this magazine. SYNCON '78 report in the next issue of CHUNDER!, I am hoping.

CHUNDER! volume 2, number 5, August 8, 1978: page 4

EDITORIAL THINGIES

If you have been receiving CHUNDER! for some time, and haven't yet responded in any way, this is probably your last. All subs are being honoured at the 12½¢ per rate. If you know of anyone likely to be interested in reading CHUNDER!, send me a name & address - it is easy to get out of touch... CHUNDER! will usually run 4-6 pages, depending more upon time than money: contributions (up to half a page) relating to club or personal matters are therefore invited - in the next issue, Peter Warling Vs. the TRS-80 Monster.

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FANZINE REVIEWS (continued)

This essay, which began in the previous issue, discusses the contents of fanzines, and deals with ANZAPA 62, NOUMENON 22/23, ANARKALI 1, MAYA 14, SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW 25, and GEGENSCHWEIN 34. In the earlier episode I dealt with the straight SF contents, science & pseudo-science, and personal info: NOW READ ON

A most important ingredient, for most fanzines, is the letter column: SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW has its letters scattered amongst the other contents, but most editors prefer a separate section. The importance of letters is not restricted to their appearance in the magazine: they are also evidence to the fanzine editor that someone cares about her/his publication. In recent years in Australia (and possibly to a lesser extent overseas) the amount of letter-of-commenting seems to have declined dramatically: oldtimers like John Bangsund and Ron Clarke have published genzines this year which have met with a barrage of silence. When one has spent up to \$100 publishing a magazine, that return is discouraging - which is why you don't see too many regular genzines these days - indeed, are there any outside AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS and CHUNDER!? (BOYS OWN FANZINE is, of course, in the works...) John Alderson, for example, seems to find it more rewarding to scatter his writings through other people's fanzines, which deprives us all of the concentrated dose of Alderson which has the same sort of impact as a cold shower at 5 am. As the art of letter-writing declines fanzine editors have to turn elsewhere. But nevertheless the letter-columns in MAYA and GEGENSCHWEIN are quite fine examples of how it may be done.

In earlier days, drawings filled up holes in fanzines, but a decade ago some fanzine publishers began to get fancy, and became concerned about the visual appearance of their publications (sometimes at the expense of their readability). Amongst the present group of fanzines, SFR and MAYA use black and white carefully and with taste, while Eric is a little overenthusiastic about multi-colour in GEGENSCHWEIN. ANARKALI has given rise to a dispute between John Bangsund and myself: the idea of using Bill Rotsler's cartoons that way is excellent, but the reproduction is so bad that the effect is lost (I said hand-cut, John B. argues for horrid electro-stencil - this I can not believe.)

Perhaps the most idiosyncratic of contents are those reporting on the lives of science fiction fans as such (not thier personal lives). Only MAYA, amongst the group under discussion, has contents of this kind - Bob Shaw's story about pissing on Chris Priest's shoe, and two pieces by Gene Wolfe and Mike Glicksohn. Since most of my own general fanzines have published this sort of material, it is not surprising that I find the MAYA pieces the most enjoyable in the whole pile. Indeed, the difference between CHUNDER! and AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS is that C! focusses upon science fiction fans and what they do, while ASFN focusses upon science fiction (a subject of exceedingly limited interest). Speaking of science fiction fans.

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GUFF FUNNDIES ONE

A six-weekly newsletter put about by Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 103, Brunswick,
Victoria 3056, AUSTRALIA concerning the progress of GUFF 7/8/78

FUNDS: So far a mere thirteen Australians have voted for GUFF, another two have made donations and what with the deposits that the candidates made the Fund in Australia now stands at an "interesting" Seventy Nine Dollars. Dave Langford, trusty British Administrator, tells that they will soon have Forty Pounds stored away (I wonder what that is on real money...). One of these days I'll get too and find out what the air fare is to Britain these days so that we know what sort of target we've got to meet, it will be around the One Thousand Dollar mark so we have a fair way to go yet.

RAISING FUNDS: So far most of the people who have voted have been generous and sent more than just the bare \$1.50. However, even if those who are yet to vote keep up this admirable habit an awful lot of people are going to have to vote or a lot of people have to be very generous. While we don't discount either of these as unlikely or not to be encouraged we have to get the money other ways. Traditionally there has been a mail auction and auctions at various conventions. Personally I'm not going to run a mail auction because they seem to be a lot like very hard work even if they do fill up the letter box. If any kindly soul out there want to run an auction for GUFF through the posts and can convince me that they know what they are doing and are trustworthy then we'll have one and perhaps print progress on that here.

Auctions run at conventions may be more hassle at the time but they seem to work fairly well and generate amusement as well as money sometimes, I know that often the prices bid are enough to make anybody laugh. This being the case the holding of auctions with the proceeds going to GUFF is an activity to be encouraged, unfortunately I won't be at the convention in Sydney either this month or most likely in January so I'm going to have to leave that up to others of good will and initiative to get going.

However I will be at the convention in Melbourne next Easter and there will be held a MONSTER GUFF AUCTION with some things you never expected or hoped to see up for bids. As always, GUFF is inviting donations of material to be sold off to profit GUFF and praise and thanks will be heaped upon the head of people who help out. Old fanzines are particularly sought...

Another thing we would like to do would be to set up small "Trash 'n' Treasure" stalls at conventions, run very much along the lines of ordinary affairs of this type. Another thing these stalls could sell off will be cakes, tarts, jams and that sort of thing. Ofcourse we intend that at the EASTERCON the GUFF candidates will have for sale examples of their homecrafts.

Any people with suggestions as to how to raise more money have only to write to me with their suggestion, if the ideas are workable and raise money they will be copiously thanked, if not their letter will be filed away with thanks anyhow.

GUFF PRONOUNCEMENT: Although GUFF exists to bring fans in Australia and Britain closer together by sending over a fine specimen of Australian Fanhood for the British to view, there is no reason at all why fans in other countries should not take part in the process of getting the lucky person to the WorldCon. It seems more than likely that in the end it is all of fandom that benefits from such activities and so if a fan in the US, Canada, South Yemen or anywhere else wants to vote and give money and any other kind of support we actively encourage them. We hope, however, that people who are not familiar with the activities of all the candidates will simply make a donation of money and goodwill and whatever else they think will help and leave the voting to those who are in a position to make a considered choice.