

THE CHRONONHOTONTHOLOGICAL REVIEW

NUMBER ONE

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It is the twenty-eighth day of June as I write. Diane and Leigh Edmonds are watching television - what programme I don't know, and I suspect that they don't care very much. There is a profound air of lethargy about this place. I have work to do, but can't bring myself to it. So there are people who still haven't received ASFR 18, which was finished before we left Elsternwick last November? So they won't mind waiting a little longer. There are galley proofs to be checked for the next PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER? There's all day tomorrow not touched. Foyster, Edmonds and Porter are waiting on Bangsund contributions for their fanzines? They should know by now that I only write when I am inspired. Tonight I am uninspired, I don't feel like reading a book, I've spent half the afternoon asleep, and I can't listen to a record because the lounge room is occupied. Therefore I will type up a fanzine for ANZAPA.

We seem to have spent an inordinate amount of time lately - Diane, our regular guest Leigh, and me - playing a card game called Coon Can. It is a simple and rather childish game, but relaxing - rather like draughts, in fact, at least in these respects. Today the other Lee, Harding, was here - as is usual on a Saturday - and he asked where the name came from. I said my grandmother had always answered this by saying, "Because any coon can play". My grandmother was never a reliable source of etymological information, so I still don't know where the name really comes from. I would guess that it originated in America and has uncomplimentary reference to the negro race. Do you know? Perhaps there is a clue in that lovely old pome:

Card games are played by any coon,
But only God can macarcon!

Our fifty-dollar tv set broke down some weeks ago, and life has been somewhat different ever since. I haven't really missed it, since I never watch much at

any time, but I think Diane has missed it a bit. I like to see MARTY, and there's the occasional film worth seeing (though if it's on one of the commercial channels I usually skip even that), but Diane likes all the sf shows and all kinds of tear-jerking things that I can't stand. However, lately we have been trying to get near a tv set every night. And so have a lot of other people we know. Two weeks ago Bert Chandler rang me at work and said he expected to be on television, since he had been interviewed by the THIS DAY TONIGHT crowd. Every night since, we have tried to watch TDT. So far no luck - Bert must be in the slush pile, waiting for a day when nothing happens. Or perhaps they've rejected the thing entirely. Meanwhile it's nervewracking to have to make arrangements every night to visit someone with a tv set. We have missed a couple of nights already, and it's sure to be on one night when we're out of range of a set.

Not that it matters much. Bert was rather cynical about the interview. The interviewer knew nothing about sf, or how a writer ticks, or the sea. Bert described to us how the interview starts, with him reading a quotation from one of his books, then a closeup of his table littered with various paperbacks bearing his name, then back to him walking to the door of his cabin and putting on his nautical coat and cap. Up onto the bridge, where, said Bert, "they wanted me to say something nautical, so I said, Steady as she goes. In fact, in a situation like that, I would say, Watch yer fuckin' steerin'."

It's been a great time for egoboo lately, what with Dick Bergeron telling fandom (in SHAGGY) that I should be scooped up by some enterprising fanzine publisher as a columnist (which resulted in one invitation to write a column - from Leigh Edmonds), Andy Porter saying that I am the long looked-for successor to Walt Willis (which I don't believe for one moment, though I certainly appreciate the compliment), and Roy Tackett suggesting me (among others) as a candidate for TAFF. Roy rather spoilt this compliment by including Leigh Edmonds, Pete Weston and some spurious Scandinavian as his other suggested candidates. (Joke, Leigh!) Seriously, I think John Foyster is the most qualified and suitable Australian to be a TAFF candidate. If Ted White's proposal goes through, and the TAFF quest automatically becomes Fan Guest of Honour at the World Convention, then this demands candidates of the highest calibre, and I honestly think that John is the only Australian fan who could fill the bill. Oh, sure, I'd love to go, but sparkle as I might occasionally on paper, I am not the life of the party, and I rather feel that American fans would think they'd been swindled if they imported me to the WorldCon.

I wanted to say something about comics. Where's that article... Aha: "The subject of adventure comics has taken a fair beating by now, but Mr Richler ((in HUNTING TIGERS UNDER GLASS)) quotes from some fairly staggering ones produced by American Nazis. Cries the STURMTROOPER: 'Jew Commies Tremble... Nigger Criminals Quake In Fear... Liberals Head For The Hills... Here Comes Whiteman.' Whiteman, with a swastika on his chest, battles with 'The Jew From Outer Space' and also with Supercoon, whose chest emblem is a half-pooled benene." Or incredibly nasty it's almost funny, isn't it? The odd thing is that when our superheroes overcome vicious communists and nazis or woolly-headed pacifists and liberals, we don't think it's nasty. Or do we?

Enough of this meandering. Let's see if there's anything in the last mailing to comment on.

OFFICIAL ORGAN / LEIGH EDMONDS

There is such a thing as fannish ethics.

If, for example, you continue to delay sending out the mailings, it would be ethical for us to visit you and get the stuff out ourselves. But it works the other way, too. If people send you their contributions uncollated, then you should politely return them. It is surely enough work for you to do your three or four pages of Official Organ and assemble the mailings, without having to collate individual contributions. Hell, the fifth mailing contained 76 sheets of paper: if no-one collated his contribution, that would be 2280 sheets you would have to sort out. Much too much. Send 'em back, I say. ::: I'm not sure how we stand legally in regard to supplying mailings to the National Library. I think it's probable that each individual member is under an obligation to send his publication (if it is three pages or more) to both the National Library and his local State Library. If we ever get to the maximum of 30 members, obviously we will have to make provision for the National Library, since I don't think any of us would like to see that worthy institution to all intents and purposes a member.

A LA CARTE *3 / KEN BULL

If only you were as rich as I'm not interested in Hurricane Hawk. ::: There you go, telling us

not to insult people just because we don't share their enthusiasm for their hobbies, and yet you say religion is for morons. Anything you like to mention, which enjoys any sort of following at all, must be based to some extent on morons, since they (if you are correct) statistically make up a large proportion of the population. You wouldn't be able to collect comics, I wouldn't be able to read most of the books I see, and none of us could afford newspapers, if it wasn't for the support of the moron/mass market. It's world that makes the love go round, as someone has said. ::: You say to Gary Woodman, "As a complete science fiction fan, surely you're a fan of Buck Rogers, Brick Bradford and Flash Gordon". This is a bit like saying to Alex Robb, "As a Christian, surely you're a fan of Chiang Kai-Shek". Gary can speak for himself (you've probably noticed), but as far as I am concerned, the fact that I enjoy reading some books which are labelled "science fiction", while this perhaps entitles me to be called a science fiction fan, certainly doesn't mean that I am uncritically enthusiastic about the vast mass of garbage which shares this label. I don't intend right now to give you an essay on Why I Read Science Fiction, but I can tell you here that sf amounts to only perhaps 20% of my reading, and that I don't regard it as a hobby. Fandom is a hobby, yes, and fan publishing, but you don't have to read sf to take part in and enjoy these hobbies. Other members of this Association have said, "Aha, Bangsund likes Colonel Pawter and Pogo: he's a comics fan after all!" I'm not, and I notice that even you have some esoteric critical standard which allows you to decry other comics fans' tastes. ::: I have read both Dennis Wheatley and Sergeanne Golon - one book each, and that will suffice, thanks all the same. Looks like music is where we agree. Ken.

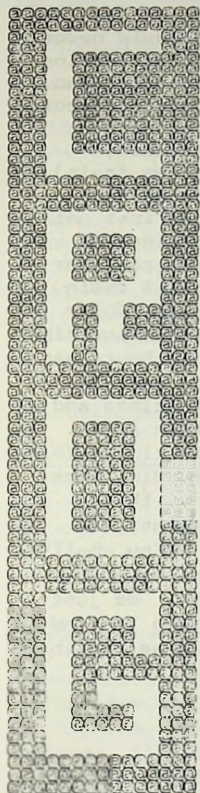
ASFR 20 / NMH 6 & 7 / ME

That buff paper is really easy on the eye. Isn't it. I must make up my mind to use one colour, and

stick to it. I wonder how many people deciphered the inscription on page 18 of ASFR. I wonder if John Foyster will reveal where that drawing was first published. The drawing at the head of NMH 7 was intended for RATAPIAN: Alexy Leigh didn't use it. Bob Toomey's address has changed again: now 101 Mayflower Road, Springfield, Massachusetts 01108.

About 1900 years ago people were probably saying of Christianity exactly what you have said about Scientology, that it "is a 100% sickly fraud". I don't believe any movement or belief is 100% sickly, fraudulent, wrong, right or anything. But I admit that I find Scientology rather more repulsive than your brand of religion. ::: When you say that the "old religion" is not absurd, perhaps you've put your finger on the trouble. Life is absurd, and no religion yet devised quite comes to grips with its absurdity. Perhaps the basic absurdity is that men have these deep longings which you speak of, and cannot understand why they cannot be satisfied. Religion provides not the satisfaction, but the assurance of satisfaction in some time and place of which we have no knowledge. "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine - Oh what a foretaste of glory divine!" So we used to sing and believe. Ken seems to think that religion is something for the ignorant masses, but it is obvious that you are not ignorant, Alex, and many people who are or were immensely greater human beings than any of us have been religious. There is some truth in that catchphrase about religion being the opiate of the people (which was said by a Christian, oddly enough). I think perhaps one could put this on a more dignified plane by paraphrasing Nietzsche: Religion is something we have in order not to die of the truth. But the naked truth can be lived with. It is not necessary to escape from life's absurdity through physical or mental suicide. My withdrawal from Christianity was a gradual process, speeded up a bit by studying in a theological college. And not just any theological college, but one conducted by the Churches of Christ, whose (in fairness to their beliefs) earthly founder was a gentleman named Campbell (!) who, among many other helpful things, said that Christians should practice "in essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity". His predecessor by many centuries, one Paul of Tarsus, stressed that love is greater than faith or hope. I've lost the faith and the hope, but I like to think I've retained something of the love. ::: At the risk of repeating myself, I think it's odd that you should say on the same page that Nihilism is a poison and that "Jesus Christ fills the void". Nihilism is, to me at least, the recognition that the void exists - that nothing matters ultimately. Christians tend to say or think, "If Christianity is not true, then nothing matters", and I suspect that this is the way you see the void - as something to be feared, something to be avoided (good word) at all costs. But there are people who know the void, who have been there, who realize (in good ol' Fred Nietzsche's words) that humanity is "a noise on dark streets" - and they know that Jesus Christ fills the void, but they know that there are lots of things which will fill the void, that it is not necessary to take refuge in any faith, nor in any neatly mapped-out way of life. This view of life proceeds from "Nothing matters" to "Nothing matters ultimately, but there are things which matter to me personally". To me, for example, money, security, fame, while nice optional things, do not matter; love, peace and honest communication do matter. Nihilism is a poison? Okay, I agree. But, like weed-killer, it's okay if you know how to handle it. Taken one way, it can cause death; taken another way it can clear away illusions and false hopes.

In the Beginning was Chaos; and when Men developed sufficient brainpower to think about things, there was still Chaos. But Men said, Let us call Chaos Reason. And they did. And Men said, Let us call Reason God. And they did. And Men said Let us forget Reason and have faith in God. And they did. And Men said, Let us forget God and do as we like. And they did. But Men would not recognize Chaos, and could not forget God and Reason, and they were troubled.



Mailing Comments resumed, 30th June. And I assure you it was very late when I finished that last page.

EOS #4 / RON CLARKE Sorry I couldn't keep the Harbinger up for you, Ron. You see, when there are a hundred or more spare copies of each of the last five issues lying around because I can't afford to post them, the time has come to do a bit of thinking about what I'm up to. And I've decided to save my money (funny phrase that) for SCYTHROP, and just run fifty copies of this present publication. In fact, I suppose the Harbinger was a sort of dry run for SCYTHROP. ::: The third sentence in your comment rather eluded me, Ron. Does it bear explaining? ::: Last Friday I received a telegram from Perth, addressed to "Thomas Har-ker". What insanity have you loosed among us?! ::: John Foyster, for the record, was Guest Editor of ASFR 19. I resumed with 20, as you probably noticed, and ASFR has now amalgamated with SF COMMENTARY.

BLATANTLY UNYCLEFT MAGAZINE #4 / GARY MASON Your comment on the sub-ject of screwing shelves brings to mind a time a couple of years ago when John Foyster felt obliged to refute accusations about stuffing ballot boxes. ::: I have the feeling that Bob Toomey is pretty well settled back in America. He's writing away like fury, and some impressive people have been making enthusiastic noises about his work. However, I think this "bastion of freedom" has quite an appeal for him, whatever freedoms may be lacking. Whereas in his Harbinger article Bob was thinking "what if it had been me?", in recent months tragedy of the most lunatic and incomprehensible kind has struck at his immediate family. I haven't asked his permission, so I won't go into detail about this, but I think Bob wouldn't mind the quiet repressed Australian way of life right now.

SHORT RATIONS / JOHN FOYSTER Short indeed, and I wasn't terribly interested in the Exposing of Woodman. I had the same feeling about this as many people seem to have had about the Blish blast at Moskowitz in ASFR 16. You'll have to do better than this in FAPA, Big John.

BONZER #5 / JOHN RYAN One way out of your difficulty would be to institute a NON-POTMA, but maybe there wouldn't be anyone worth considering for it. Mick Jagger?

WHY BOTHER? #4 / JOHN BROSNAN Why do you hate Thomas Hardy? What did he ever do to you? Animals and children I can understand hating, but why good ol' Tom? He was a nice old bloke, even if he was a monarchist/capitalist/liberal/Protestant, and he got an O.M. from King Edward: what more recommendation could you ask for?

1st July. Blimey, into the second half of 1969 before I've quite got used to 1968. Diane depressed me the other day by pointing out that 1968 would never come again. I don't want to believe her, because I left some important things back in 1968, and I'd hate to think I'd never recover them. L J Harding Esq, author of renown, assures me that I am the most consistently inconsistent person he has ever met. Not to let him down, we have decided to move again. We've had some good times at the Gully, but honestly it's just too much, travelling forty miles a day (half the time not getting a seat on the train), getting home in the dark for half the year, and so on. At present we have a choice between catching the 7.36 or the 7.59 in the morning; the first gets us into town 15 minutes earlier than we need, the second about 15 minutes later than we should arrive (and if you think my arithmetic is bad, consider that the first train is express part of the way). At night the first train we can get is the 5.27, though we finish work at 5. This reaches the Gully about 6.25. Add the time it takes to drive to and from the station, plus time for picking up mail and food, and we're away from home for about 12 hours each day. Add a minimum of two hours for feeding and domestic rituals, and I'm left with about two hours to keep up my correspondence, publish fanzines and run a business. So we've decided to sell up and take a flat in town again. No reflection on our former co-slanshackers, but by ourselves this time. This is what we had intended to do last year, but some acquaintances needing somewhere to live, we let the house. And they paid their rent for 6 of the 19 weeks they were there... On Sunday, when we visited our estate agent, he said yes, he remembered the house well - he'd sold it last year. "You what?" we cried. Sold it, he said, but the people in the house told him they had a lease and wouldn't tell him our address, so he didn't follow it up. We just sort of groaned. All that time I was out of work and we were trying to find both the house payments and our share of the flat rent, we could have had the house sold and the car paid off and.... Arghhh!

Back to the mailing comments (yawn):

JOHN BROSNAN, I haven't finished with you yet, chum. Your memory of our first meeting has become confused with the second. I deny in any case having been embarrassed about The Black Triangle, but that was the first occasion, and if memory serves me it was in the Orpheus coffee lounge in Hay Street (the CTA was later). BUT, the worst part of your memory, so-called (sound like Pat a bit there, don't I?), is that you have tried to blame me for your filthy mind! Cor! Still, your version is quite entertaining. ::: You told me about Max Shulman a couple of years ago, and I think even pressed a copy of one of his books on me. I couldn't read it. But don't be dismayed. It's a crushing experience when you lend a book to someone, expecting to go up in his esteem for having discovered such a delectable thing, and learn that he finds it unreadable. I'm not saying you did this to me, but I've done it at various times, and most recently to Don Symons when I lent him Oliver StJohn Gogarty's AS I WAS GOING DOWN SACKVILLE STREET, which he found unreadable. It's all right when Harding says Ursula LeGuin is awful, because you know that Harding is dense anyway, but Don Symons - well, I respect his taste. There are some people I never lend things to: John Foyster is one of them. If he hasn't read it, it's obviously not worth reading. Even in the exceedingly rare instances where John agrees with me, he makes me feel that I've missed the point of it altogether and like the book for entirely the wrong reasons.

WOODMAN'S AXE / GARY WOODMAN

Has it occurred to you, Gary, that ultimately (ie etymologically) you and John Foyster share the same surname? Doesn't that kick you on no end? ::: If we are to get any members from New Zealand, we'd better act fast. I have Charlie Brown's LOCUS 30 (June 10th) on hand, and it reports that we are looking for members. Since LOCUS has a circulation of 500, I wouldn't be surprised if we had an application or fifty in the near future. Maybe now is the time to introduce some kind of membership formula, imposing a maximum on overseas memberships? It would be rather awkward if we acquired 30 American waiting-listers, and gradually all of us dropped out. ::: I presume "hypocrisy" is a misprint for hippocracy (government by horses & related beasts, first instituted by Caligula; hence the donkey vote; hence definition of politician - an arse upon which everything has sat except a man). ::: I suggest you go back to the 1600s and see if you can find any of "Mozart's stuff"; young and talented as he was, I doubt if Mozart wrote anything before about 1760.

THE LIDLESS EYE OF MIKE / MICHAEL O'BRIEN

Words fail you?

THE MARSHIAN CHRONICLES *4 / BRUCE GILLESPIE

Twenty-three pages...? Whooboy, I think I'll finish there for the night; the alternative would be to say that anyone who thinks Mahler's Second suffers by comparison with anything isn't worth commenting on. I won't do that - I'll leave this curling in the typer overnight, and see what I can find to say to you tomorrow night.

I SEEN IT, BOBELINA, I TELL YER - I SEEN IT!

Mervyn Binns probably didn't see it, because I was talking to him at lunchtime today, and he said he'd given up watching for it. Lee Harding didn't see it, because I rang him afterwards and he told me so. Leigh Edmonds probably didn't see it, because we had his tv set here. Captain A Bertram Chandler, live on Melbourne television. It was a rotten interview, as he said.

Today is the 2nd of July, and I'm feeling crook (it's me back, 'Arold). To keep me out of bed, where I belong, everyone rang me tonight. An unexpected caller was John Alderson, historian and unpublished sf writer from up Maryborough way. I've only seen one of his stories, and I liked it: though John himself is, I gather, Scottish, this story had the most delightful and authentic Irish flavour to it, a little bit of James Stephens and a dash of early Joyce. He'll probably be visiting us on Saturday.

Leigh tells me he's had an enquiry about ANZAPA from Redd Boggs. This is the best news I've heard for some time. I hope Redd joins us - he'll certainly smarten us up.

(What about Bruce Gil...?) I've been stuck for something worthwhile to read lately, and a few days ago it entered my head to have a crack at Spengler's DECLINE OF THE WEST. Yes, well. I'm struggling through it, averaging about 20 pages a day. Today I've been enmeshed in the mathematical stuff, and oh, I wish I knew what it was all about.

(Couldn't bear to see the stencil sit in the typer overnight again.)

Sunday, 6th July. Diane and Leigh are watching the investiture of the Prince of Wales. I watched about twenty minutes of it, but enough's enough. If there is anything to be said for having a King, Charles III should be a good one. I wonder if Elizabeth will see her term out, or whether (not an original thought) she will step down sometime in favour of Charles? I guess that's no less an important question than whether **** ***** will really join ANZAPA. ::: John Alderson came yesterday, and we talked history and folklore for most of the afternoon. He belongs to what I would not call in his presence History Fandom. He is also very impressed with Velikovsky's ideas. I have asked him to write something for Scythrop about support for these ideas to be found amongst Celtic and Aboriginal legends. ::: Ray Fisher's ODD *20 arrived and drove me into a paroxysm of jealousy. Also Ethel Lindsay's SCOTTISHE and HAVERINGS, in the former of which is a letter from Mervyn Barrett. (What did I do with his letter to me on the Harbinger?) Also Charlie and Marsha Brown's LOCUS, full of interesting gossip as usual, and with the news that Willy Ley has died. ::: Back to Bruce Gillespie...

I didn't exactly rebel against my parents' taste in music - I extended it. We used to listen, as I recall, to 3AR, which in my early days performed the same function as 3LO does now. We listened to Tiny Snell, the Hospital Half Hour, and all kinds of things with middle-brow music in them. I grew up knowing and liking singers like John Charles Thomas and Richard Tauber. My parents didn't go in for classical music particularly, but the sort of thing they did like prepared me for it. I think I got going on classical music seriously in an effort to impress a young lady of unprepossessing appearance who played the piano rather magnificently, and with whom I was madly in love for some time. This blindness fortunately was cured; equally fortunately the taste for good music survived my enlightenment. At the height of this infatuation, in 1953, I had to choose between studying Art and Music at High School, and I chose music. Our teacher was one Mervyn Callaghan, and he almost put me off classical music for good and all, but my genuine interest survived even his less than attractive handling of the subject. On leaving school in 1954 I started buying books and records, and the first record, I remember, was Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, played by Nathan Milstein (on the flip side, the Bruch). (The first book might have been Wells's THE SLEEPER AWAKES, or possibly some of his stories.) But I didn't get properly started on classical music until after I left college and moved into a flat in St Kilda. I bought a HMV Nippergram and discovered Beethoven. After a while I traded the portable on an exceedingly ornamental HMV stereogram, and started buying stereo records. One of the earliest was the Mahler 2nd. I heard it on 3LO one night in my little bungalow in Baleclava, and I felt a new world had opened up. Being a few days before my 21st birthday, I talked my grandmother into standing me the price of the record as her tangible tribute to my coming of legal age. By the time I met Harding in 1963 and really set about record-buying in earnest I already had about sixty records, including a fair swag of Berlioz, a bit of Handel and Mozart, a lot of Beethoven and Mahler. Just before meeting Lee I had taken the step up to "real" stereo, and had bought an outfit from Alex Encel, including the Pioneer amplifier and Labcraft turntable which I still have. Lee lent me records, told me about Thomas' record exchange (now, alas, no more) and generally set me off on an extravagant burst of record purchasing which lasted about three years. My pop music phase started last year when we lived with Leigh, and it has proceeded very quietly. I'm far too old to have favourite composers, Bruce, but I would perhaps include in my pantheon Mahler, Beethoven, Schubert, Berlioz, Bach, Mozart, Stravinsky, Janacek, Nielsen, Vaughan Williams, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Wagner and maybe half a dozen others. From which you will conclude I am not a devoted Baroque man. I'm not.

The Pictorian Railways Institute Music Club presents a series of three
Programmes devoted to the music of ...

HECTOR

There's not much excuse for putting this
foldout page in, but I was talking about
music, so I guess that's excuse enough.

I was cleaning up the garage today and
found this poster, which I prepared to
publicize the VAI Music Club's Berlioz
Festival in 1964.

Now, what will I do with the other sixty
copies?

your Nielsen 6th in exchange for my Shostakovich 7th was a mean trick on my
part, but so long as you're happy... ::: Your remarks about my intelligence,
while complimentary (I think), are somewhat obscure. Still, I think we've
reached some sort of agreement on this subject in conversation. "We love life
not because we are used to living, but because we are used to loving. There is
always some madness in loving, but there is also always some reason in madness."
(And John Alderson sat there yesterday and told me what an evil man Nitsky -
er, Nietzsche - was.) Ah, Leigh, you should have some Samuel Barber!

The Victorian Railways Institute Music Club presents a series of Three
Programmes devoted to the music of ...

HECTOR



BERLIOZ

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30th
8.00 p.m.

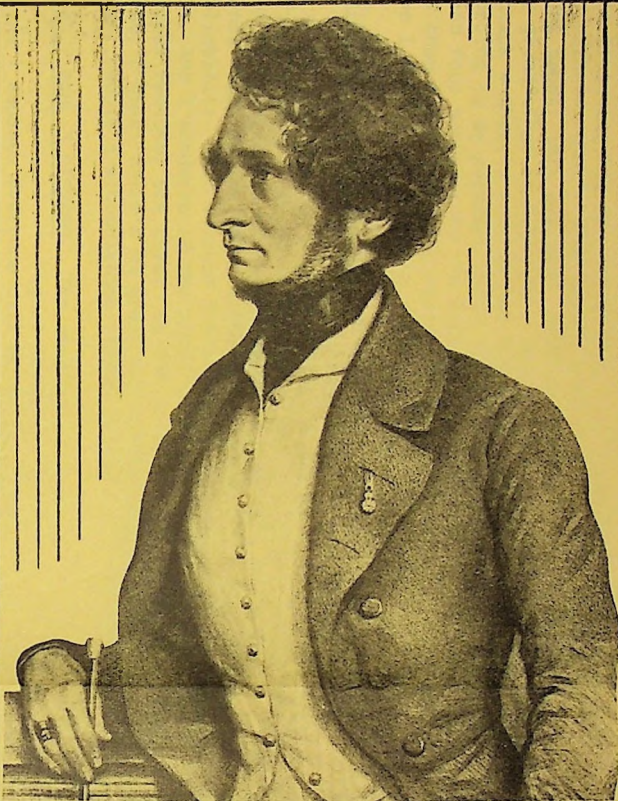
- ♪ THE FRANKISH JUDGES *Overture*
- ♪ HAROLD IN ITALY
- ♪ THE DAMNATION of FAUST

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6th
8.00 p.m.

- ♪ WAVERLEY *Overture*
- ♪ SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE
- ♪ BEATRICE and BENEDICT

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13th
8.00 p.m.

- ♪ ROMAN CARNIVAL *Overture*
- ♪ NUITS D'ÉTÉ
- ♪ ROMEO and JULIET



BERLIOZ

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V.R.I. MUSIC CLUB

Still talking to you, Bruce (though with some difficulty - I've just turned the tape on, and I'm listening to, er, selections from OKLAHOMA! at the moment). With me it's all or noth--- What? Good grief, I must get into the habit of noting when I go over tapes: this one gets half way through that sentence and suddenly there's my grandfather translating a letter from his brother. Ah well, over to the other track - there's some Samuel Barber on it, if memory serves me. Yes, well now, according to my records, which aren't all that accurate, I have read one thousand and four books since the beginning of 1959. That's not a lot by any means - less than two a week. So don't you go trying to make out I read a lot, chum, because I don't. If you like I'll run a complete list some time.

30% BRAN (WITH RAISINS) *2 / PETER ROBERTS I was thinking about hobbies today, and particularly in regard to the hobby I would like to indulge but can't - collecting motor-cars. Lee and Leigh both say a car is for transport. Okay, that's why I have a VW: it's about the most sensible car on the market - a fine compromise between economy, speed, comfort and appearance (mine is the 1600 fastback, as I may have said before), with first-class reliability. But I would like an Alvis as well. And a Bugatti and a Bentley and... And I wondered if the truth of this is that these cars, owned not for practical reasons, are toys. As far as the more normal collecting hobbies are concerned, I guess there's no great difference between my accumulating books and other people's accumulating stamps or comics or beer-mats.

LITTLE SUPO DELUXE *9 / PAUL J STEVENS The amusing piece about the travel agent actually comes from the MARTY FELDMAN SHOW, Paul, as I suppose everyone will be telling you. :: Your enthusiasm for THE BOYS IN THE BAND has obviously alerted the vice squad to its depravity. It's people like you flapping your big mouths that bring all this censorship on us! :: Haven't read anything from your list, except the Moore stories.

SWEET NOTHINGS *3 / NOEL KERR Tough luck for whom?

APATHY *5 / PETER DARLING Robin's suggestion is fantastic. I mean, the idea of my ever having \$890 is sheer fantasy.

THE MECHANISM *5 / LEIGH EDMONDS The Shostakovich violin concerto is just about my favourite - perhaps ranking equal with Prokofiev's first. I've heard Shostakovich's second recently, and it's somewhat harder to assimilate. The Janacek SINFONIETTA is the best introduction to this composer. Harding has a record of his music which I'd like to steal: it has the SUITE FOR STRINGS, THE FIDDLER'S CHILD and THE BALLAD OF BLANIK HILL on it - all of them very engaging works. The Janacek quartets are superb. And I still think the organ burst in the GLAGOLITIC MASS is great: I promise to go to any church which will put on masses like this. I think that acquiring your Nielsen 6th in exchange for my Shostakovich 7th was a mean trick on my part, but so long as you're happy... :: Your remarks about my intelligence, while complimentary (I think), are somewhat obscure. Still, I think we've reached some sort of agreement on this subject in conversation. "We love life not because we are used to living, but because we are used to loving. There is always some madness in loving, but there is also always some reason in madness." (And John Alderson sat there yesterday and told me what an evil man Nitsky - er, Nietzsche - was.) Ah, Leigh, you should have some Samuel Barber!

