

A special pica edition of your favourite apazine (but not mine) produced, after working hours, on the remarkable green Olympia used by Damien Broderick, myself and who knows which other eminent journalists employed by Melbourne's largest, thickest, wittiest, most smokable newspaper, The Age. Bloody thing doesn't look as though it cuts stencils too well, though.

Station identification: CROG! is published for the Australia & New Zealand Amateur Press Association by John Bangsund, 1/8 Bundalohn Court, St Kilda, Victoria 3182. Of course you knew that, but it filled four lines. Life sometimes gets like that: anything to fill in the empty spaces, the vacant minutes, the gaping... But before I start sounding like Simon & Garfunkel, have a look at this purple passage and guess who wrote it:

"Multitudes of amplifiers, tone arms, cartridges, turntables and speakers can be combined in an infinite number of ways. Discount houses vie with small specialist retailers. Little wonder, then, that the average beginner is confused. How is he to know what is genuine hi-fi and what is not? Who will advise him in a judicious allocation of his often-scant resources?"

No, you're wrong, it's not my work. I can hear John Foyster shouting the answer, and he's right - it is, indeed, that well-known local author, Damien Broderick. Few people could write that fabulous phrase "judicious allocation of his often-scant resources", and surely only Damien could have it published in an article about hi-fi equipment. The article is in the 1970 edition of The Age's HI-FI & TAPE RECORDING GUIDE. Damien has another article there, too; a reflective piece on the relative advantages and disadvantages of tape and disc as recording media.

"Just as transistor technology and the pop explosion transformed radio at a time when prophets of doom forecast its demise at the hands of television, so too, similar novel forces have created a new and booming tape industry. It is important to note the subtle way in which this resurgence has taken place. Hi-fi tape enthusiasts have by no means had their dreams fulfilled. Transistor radios did not save the soap-opera. Nor, in this country, did the threat of television produce a counter-response in the form of FM stereo music stations. What did emerge was the McLuhanesque collage of talk-back programmes, superior and inventive pop (and, indeed, banal muzak-style pop), and instant news reports. Similarly, the tape revolution has created its own dimensions, unexpected, though sociologically predictable."

That's pretty heady stuff for a hi-fi guide, and as Lee Harding could tell you, you didn't get meat like that in the seven earlier editions of this particular publication. Of course (he intimated modestly), I couldn't resist dragging a bit of the good ol' sociological stuff into my own contributions to the book, though I am the first to admit that my excursions in this direction have none of Damien's hard-hitting, post-Chomsky (or whoever we've just passed now) impact.

"Part of the price that city-dwelling man must pay for sharing the same comfortable and convenient few square miles with a million or two of his fellows is a certain lack of privacy. The man who raises a family has, perhaps, even less privacy. If the city-dwelling or family man is a hi-fi enthusiast, he has problems. This is where the stereo headphone comes into its own..." And that is where Chomsky bursts out into the night, retching. Maybe I shouldn't have tried to condemn the population explosion and the horrors of urban living in an article about hi-fi accessories. Blame Broderick.

Maybe I shouldn't have lapsed into my fanzine style in places, either, though the boss didn't blue-pencil any of it.

"We haven't covered all the hi-fi accessories available - not by what Brian O'Nolan calls 'an extended calcinous writing instrument' - but in conclusion let us mention one very valuable item which is sometimes overlooked. If you have equipment which can pick up radio or TV transmissions, whether you use it or not, you need a licence. The range is limited to two basic models, but you can purchase them at any post office, and they could save you a lot of money."

Or, at the conclusion of my very learned and technical article about quadrasonics (it is so learned and technical! - I pinched the information from a very reliable overseas magazine)...

"At some time in the future, no doubt there will be experiments with eight channels, sixteen, thirty-two - who knows how far it will go? The total surround sound, beloved for many years by the science fiction writers ((yes, I keep on doing my bit for the cause, folks)), seems more and more to be a quite feasible thing. How you install it in your flat in Bondi or house in Camberwell, will be your problem. For the near future, though, it looks as though quadrasonics could be the thing. For people who use headphones, it is bad news. We're sorry, but to appreciate the new sound it seems pretty certain that you will need two heads."

After the HI-FI GUIDE, I started work on a similar book to be called AUDIO. Well, similar field, different treatment. It's much more comprehensive but consists only of product specifications. As a job, it's marginally more interesting than proof-reading. But it's costly. I've just replaced most of my own stereo gear. Maybe I'll tell you about that on the next page.

(2.7.70)

Welcome to Anzapa, Mike. And to you, Shayne - a nice surprise meeting you again last mailing. If I were doing mailing comments I would tell you how much I enjoyed your contribution, but since I'm not, and I wouldn't want to make anyone jealous, I won't mention that it was the brightest spot in the mailing.

I just can't get going at the moment; everything I feel like writing about just now is too personal and would probably bore you to tears. So maybe I'll just say something about my stereo outfit, as I promised, then call it a day.

I felt the need for better equipment than I had, and an even greater need for some cash, so I sold everything except the speakers about four weeks ago. Mike Horvat helped me sell it, and Leigh, and Barry and Ruth; it was a sort of odd weekend. And Stuart Leslie, too; I keep on forgetting he was there. Bet he won't forget too soon, though. Anyway, the old Pioneer amplifier went first, and I had many enquiries about it. I probably offered it too cheap, but I didn't really mind; I had good service from it for six years or so, and got back about two-thirds of its original price. Eventually someone took the Labcraft turntable from me, at a reasonable price - less than it was worth, but more than I would have got for it as a trade-in. Then a young chap traded his Sanyo on my Teac recorder. The Sanyo was pretty good, too, but I'd set my sights higher, so I didn't keep it.

I went to Encel's and came home (eventually) with a Rotel 100-AMP amplifier, a Connoisseur BD-2 turntable with SAU-2 arm and Micro VF-2100/E pickup, and a Tandberg 1241 tape recorder. The speakers I kept are Celestion Ditton Tens. Together they make a good sound. Bit too good, in fact: half my records have defects that I couldn't hear on the old rig. That's the price you pay.

If anyone is interested in getting cheap tapes and cassettes I might be able to help. I've made a few contacts in the trade, and can get 50% off Mastertape, about 40% off Scotch, about 25-30% off BASF and others. Mastertape is pretty good - not up to Scotch Dynarange standard, but certainly as good as ordinary BASF, say. At \$4.50 for 1800' on a 7" reel it's hard to resist.

ooooo

I will say something personal, after all. Some of you know already that Diane left me about four weeks ago (more or less by mutual agreement). I think she would appreciate people contacting her; if you feel like writing or sending her fanzines, her official address is c/- 33 Warrabel Road, Ferntree Gully, Vic 3156. I'm not at liberty to divulge her actual address, but you can phone her at 51-7789. And that's all for this time. Ciao! (22.7.70)