

FANEW SLETTER EIGHTY-FIVE

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WHERE WAS FANEW SLETTER A FORTNIGHT AGO? The question, gentel reader, is not so much "where was FNS?" but "where was the FNS editor". I can answer that one easily by reporting that Valma and I were spending a generally pleasant week driving along the Murray Valley and visiting such famous places as Mildura, Swan Hill and Echuca. A good time was had by all... I took the name of Christopher Priest in vain at Beulah West and at an art gallery in Echuca stated that I was too an artist and modestly admitted that I had won a couple of second prizes at an art show only a couple of weeks before... Also raided the Catholic Ladies Opportunity shop in Kerang of all its surplus Doc Smith books. It was an exciting holiday I tell you.

MELCON 15: Seventy-one or so people attended the small convention put on by Leigh Edmonds and Paul Stevens the weekend after A-CON. The venue turned out to be quite novel and reasonably comfortable for the number of people who turned up, though any more might have crowded the place a bit. The main attraction was Bill Rotsler who seemed to spend most of his time drawing little cartoons for people or drawing bigger cartoons for the masses. Programming was light with plenty of time to sit and talk to each other and it seems that on the whole the members did do just that.

High-points of the convention were Elizabeth Foyster giving an illustrated lecture on "Chatting up birds at conventions", a closing panel which actually seemed to fire for a change, Bill Rotsler crouched over an overhead projector doing cartoons to order and the Lee Harding talk.

Of these items, all were enjoyable with the exception of Lee Hardings talk which upset more people in a shorter time than has happened in Australia in many years. The talk was not recorded and I gather that Lee spoke off-the-cuff so that there is no written version, so that if you weren't there you miss out. What it was all about was a lot of hard words directed to the way sceince fiction is organised in Australia.

Right next to the meeting room on Saturday evening the restaurant opened and with it the bar so that for the duration of that evening members had the option of taking in the programme, which suddenly got way behind, or sitting out in the restaurant/barr and chattering. A good arrangement.

The convention made just a touch over \$250 and after the convention paid for itself the modest profit, in the order of \$35 helped to pay for Bill Rotsler's room at the motel.

The convention finished on a reasonably high note with a repeat of the puppet show which had been played at A-CON the week before. For the organisers, however, the convention ended on a sour note for although it was announced during the programme on late Sunday that some attendees had not registered and would they please do so, they were forced to approach Michellene Tang and ask her to pay a membership. She refused to do so. This type of behaviour places people organising conventions in a very difficult position. To my knowledge this was the first time it had happened at an Australian convention since so far conventions and fandom have been based on honesty.

I mention this since the refusal to pay membership fees affects everyone attending the convention. It is not the organisers who suffer since conventions are non-profit things which are paid for with the money collected in memberships. And perhaps this is something that future convention committees will have to worry about now.

CORRECTION! CORRECTION! WILDER CORRECTS A CERTAIN MELBOURNE WRITER

I was pleased to see all that good stuff about THE LUCK OF BRIN'S FIVE but very sad about the NOTE. The certain Sydney Fan, whom we shall call by his pseudonym KEN OZANNE, did not volunteer to assist me with astronomy etc, he was asked. He gave me an immense amount of really good valuable assistance, then got snowed under with work or whatever it is he does up there in the mountains. Things moved very fast with the publication of the novel and I gave away the idea of having a short appendix on the planet Torin. BRIN'S FIVE carries the following acknowledgement:

"I would like to acknowledge the help given by Ken Ozanne, astronomer and Science Fiction Wizard of Faulconbridge, New South Wales."

NOTE To Ozanne, wherever you are: your copy may well be chasing you around the US. Let me know if you don't get it by Christmas. (Cherry Wilder)

MOST UNUSUAL SF EXPERIENCE OF 1977: Would you believe hearing Erich Von Daniken playing 'Sentimental Journey' on the mouth-organ?

Yeah, and that's not all. It happened on a program for German Television entitled 'Erich Von Daniken... This Is Your Life'.

And for all fans of Sheridan Le Fanu there was a four part version of that well-known creepy 'Onkel Silas'... But it wasn't as creepy as the old British black and white movis. (Cherry Wilder)

INTERNATIONAL LANGEN MINI-CON: This occurred on or about 9th July and was attended by Alan Sandercock (Australia), Sue Trowbridge (USA) Wilder (Alpha Centauri) and Horst Grimm (Germany). Also in attendance were sundry kids and Lola, the most beautiful tortoiseshell and white cat in Europe. A feature of the mini-con was the Ken Ozanne Memorial Scrabble Game. Sandercock won... beginner's luck. Toasts were drunk and an attempt made to materialise Jan Howard Finder or atleast a wombat. (Cherry Wilder)

PROFESSIONAL STUFF: Paperback rights to Geroge Turner's novel Beloved Son have been sold in the US to PocketBooks for \$10,000.

A note from Andy Porter, publisher of ALGOL, asks if I can mention that he has a cheque for the sum of \$26.02 for Arthur Burns. The latest address Andy has for him is at the Australian National University and if you can help to put one in contact with the other I'm sure they would both be pleased.

CONVENTIONS AND MEETINGS: Currently happening, and continuing until next weekend in Melbourne is the OPEN LEAVES COMIC FESTIVAL. Main events will take place on the weekend 2nd, 3rd and 4th September with films on all evenings and on Saturday and Sunday items of interest to comics fans and collectors starting at about 1.00 pm.

The cheapest you can get out of the event for is \$5.00 and that entitles you to three evenings of films. The address is, OPEN LEAVES BOOKSHOP, 16 StKilda Road, StKilda (what us old-timers remember as High Street, StKilda). An exhibition of comics art is open for inspection every night this week and there will be a slide show on Wednesday evening, perhaps a bit too late for notice here.

Remember that UNICON IV with guests of honour in the form of Brian Aldiss and Roger Zelazney, will be taking place next easter at the Ormond College, Melbourne University. With such stars appearing the membership rates have been ammended somewhat and currently it is \$8.00 and will remain so until January 1st when it goes up to \$10.00. Send money to Box 106, Union Buildings, Melbourne University, Parkville, Vict 3052.

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian SF Foundation will be taking place in November, three of the board will be standing down and nominations of others interested in holding a position will be sought, sometime late in September.. As usual, the contact address for the Foundation is GPO Box 4039, Melbourne, Victoria 3000.

The September meeting of the NOVA MOB will be held on Tuesday 6th September at 2/36 Princes Street, StKilda starting at 7.30. Lee Harding will lead a discussion on "The Role of the Editor in SF".