

LARRIKIN

LARRIKIN 3, AUGUST 1986, an integral part of the all-new Richmond Fannish Revival, is edited and published by Perry Middlemiss (GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, AUSTRALIA) and Irwin Hirsh (2/416 Dandenong Rd., Caulfield North, Victoria 3161 AUSTRALIA). This fanzine is available for a pot of Carlton down the local, written contributions - articles, letters of comment, postcards etc. - or fanzines in trade (one to each of us please). No subs please, but, if you're struggling, send \$1 for one issue to get started. If you haven't already voted IRWIN HIRSH FOR GUFF then we suggest you do so. Apart from that worthy cause, this fanzine supports the Australian Government's recent decision to severely restrict gill-netting in Aussie waters, thereby saving the lives of many dolphins and seals. Many thanks to Pam Wells in Britain for all her help as agent. All rights revert to contributors after publication.

CIVILIZED SUNDAYS

Each week the Sydney Morning Herald's Good Weekend magazine devotes a page to the way an Australian spends his or her Sunday. Due to the Herald's tardiness in dropping around for an interview, I have decided to share my Sunday with youse larrikins.

Let me start by clarifying my attitude to Sunday. The Bible makes it plain that on the seventh day He rested and if it is good enough for Almighty God, then it is certainly good enough for me. My Sunday usually starts at 11.00 am when I hear the video recorder switch itself off. After a few minutes internal debate on the question of whether I am ready to face the day, I drag myself from the steaming bedclothes and throw on my old woollen dressing gown (or, if it is summer, I slip on my off-the-shoulder blue velour number). Then begins the long trek to the kitchen, pausing only to start the tape rewinding.

Those who have visited my flat, in the upper reaches of suburban Canada Bay, know that the wires (power cord, speaker lead, etc.) which run across the hallway are cunningly hidden beneath an old floor mat which features a picture of the Sydney Harbour bridge. That the mat is old is evidenced by the fact that the view of the harbour it depicts contains no representation of an even embryonic opera house, let alone any of the office buildings which have been added to the Sydney skyline in the last twenty to thirty years. Nevertheless, this rug is the basis for my claim to inhabit the largest flat in Sydney, since I do not know of anyone else who has to cross the harbour bridge in order to get from the bedroom to the kitchen.

Upon arriving in the kitchen, I warm the left-over croissants in the oven and start the coffee going. By the time breakfast is at the right temperature, the tape is rewound and I am ready to begin phase two. This consists of relaxing in an armchair while watching "Business Sunday" and "Sunday", which Channel 9 insist on

presenting at the completely unreasonable times of 8-9 and 9-11 am respectively. Capturing these programmes on video also allows the luxury of fast forwarding through the pathetic advertisements for Telecom (if the network is so terrific, why does it take five to ten minutes to get a response out of directory assistance?) and B.H.P. (the Big Bastard), making its usual subtle plea to its share holders not to sell it out to Hacca. Fast forwarding through the ads and the previews of the "Sunday" 'cover story' and 'feature' means that the three hour transmission time compresses down to roughly 2 1/2 hours viewing time. Unfortunately, "State of the Arts" (on auntie ABC) starts at 1.20, so I usually have to hold the last ten minutes or so of "Sunday" over until afterward, unless there is one of the semi-regular spots with John Howard denying once again that the boys in the party room have got the knives out and that it is getting hard for him to put his coat on; in which case I fast forward through that as well.

Circa 2 pm, the hiatus in televiewing leads to the usual toss up between having a shower or lunch. Depending on the seductiveness of Saturday night's left-over casserole, I eat and wash or wash and eat. In the present instance, last night's culinary delight was a chilli con carne of such bowel burning intensity that I ended up having a shower before and after. Next comes the big outing of the day, when I journey to the Drummoyne laundramat to pick up yesterday's washing from Hector (although his business card calls him Roland, presumably for tax purposes).

Back home safely, it is time to start thinking about tea or, if I was particularly lazy on Saturday, about the week's dishes which are still in the sink. From here on, it is all downhill: a little bit of typing, the first half hour of "Letdown", "Family Ties", an hour of aggro with "60 Minutes" (or rather "48 Minutes and 12 Minutes of Commercials") and then a choice of the Sunday night movie, if the ratings are on, or else a quiet read if they are not.

Alright cultural confession time - yes I have been watching the Ring Cycle (a teutonic tautology, if ever there was one). Frankly, a horde of hoons singing their lungs out into each other's faces isn't really my glass of tea and if the ABC wasn't providing subtitles, I would have given up halfway through the first broadcast ("Das Rheingold", for those of you who don't got no culture like what I do). However, on the basis that:

- (a) I have never seen a Wagner opera;
- (b) this is supposed to be an outstanding production;
- (c) nothing like this will ever be seen again in Australia; and
- (d) it is free and in my own living room,

I was persuaded to at least give it a fair hearing. After sitting through it for ten weeks, I am forced to say that Bizet's "Carmen" remains the only opera I've got time for.

The active part of Sunday ends with a ritual brushing of my teeth fillings and a dextrous use of a tooth pick to fish out any particularly large bits of food out of the holes in my gums where my wisdom teeth used to be. Finally, it is off to sleepy vo-vos, secure in the knowledge that if they drop the big one while I'm asleep, I will go into the afterlife well rested.

BY ROYAL DECREE We can't, really, let this issue pass without
 making some mention of the Royal wedding. Now
- Irwin - that we have the royal decree to stick our
 tongues out at little girls, thanks to our
future king, we should be grateful.

On the day of the wedding I was at my parents' place clearing out my old room. I opened a draw of a desk and the words "The Royal Wedding" struck me. Wondering what it was I took a break from room-clearing to inspect the object a bit closer. It was a letter Dave Langford had sent me in July 1981, when I was co-editor of Thyme (the fannish newsletter). Typed onto a special commemorative Chuck and Di airletter was all the hot news of the day.

One item stood out as being particularly appropriate to that day. Dave had signed off with: "Tasteful airletter form courtesy of local post office who didn't have any other sort. Cheeky sods are charging extra for this special form, which has less typing space than the standard ones: poot. Thus it is that all the really dynamic news I would otherwise have included is eclipsed by smiling Royals and Royals-to-be."

I looked at these photos, one the official engagement photo (you know the one, where Chuck was standing on a step so that he appeared to be half a head taller than Di), the other of the happy couple and the Queen. I'm not sure why, but for some reason the British Post Office allowed the world to see some rather fixed grins from Chuck and Di, and a 'we are not amused' look from the Queen. I can only conclude that Jeffrey Matthews, the airletter's designer, is not a hardened royalist.

Though, to be really effective, I think Matthews should've hired Dave to provide that added touch. That or ol' Liz is a closet fan. Why else would she be thinking "Just a goddam hobby", eh...?

While we don't normally bother with introductions to articles, there comes a time when circumstances dictate that it must be done. This is one of those times. And this is one of those introductions.

The following piece forms part of Justin Ackroyd's GUFF report and was first published in a very limited circulation apa called FRANK'SAPA, in England in 1985.

RANDOM DAYS: AN IRREGULAR TRIP REPORT

- Justin Ackroyd -

climes.

Continuing the adventures of an antipodean during his journey in northern

July 18th 1984. I spend the entire day on either trains or a ferry. Having left Florence at 5.00pm the previous day, I took the overnight train to Paris. Luckily I slept through most of the ride having perfected the art of sleeping on trains. I arrived in Paris in the early morning and transferred to the correct station for the train to Calais with the minimum of fuss. The Paris Metro

is magnificent and efficient. Yet another smooth ride to Calais where we were met with a two hour delay for the ferry. This was due to another of Maggie's brainstorms, though other than the fact that it had something to do with the privatisation of ferries I can't remember the exact details. The ferry got to Dover across a very calm channel in pretty quick time. Somehow I managed to be first through customs and for some reason they refrained from searching my bags. Maybe I look too respectable, what with a dirty back pack on my shoulders, and duty free bag in my hands. The train made good time on its run to London and finally reached Victoria Station and Joseph Nicholas and Judith Hanna's place just after 7.30. They have been a little concerned about me but I soon explained the delays and they forgave me. I had dinner then read through all the mail that was waiting. I spent the night back on the couch which some fans claim is the most uncomfortable in all fandom. I usually slept like a log on it and this night was no exception.

July 19th. I spent the day doing what all long-term travellers need to do on occasion; washing my clothes, writing letters and postcards, and visiting Australia House and reading as many newspapers as I could get my hands on. Joseph had told me that Lucy Huntzinger was still in town so I got in touch with her. She joined Joseph, Judith and me after dinner at a nearby pub. Lucy confessed that she wasn't really looking forward to returning to the States. Can't say that I blame her - both of us had fallen in love with the fannish way of U.K. life.

July 20th. Back on the trains again. This time the destination was Glasgow and Albacon where through the kindness of their hearts (or were they just desparate?) they had made me fan guest-of-honour. It was a fun trip up as there were a number of fans on the train. I spent half my time reading K. W. Jeter's "Dr. Adder", and the other half chatting with Brigid Wilkinson, Brian Ameringen and Caroline Mullan. And Roger Robinson whose booked seat didn't exist and who had to suffer by being seated in first class. I rolled up at the Station Hotel registration desk and checked in, then went to the Albacon registration table. The con committee had no idea what I looked like so, when I approached the table, I was asked "Have you paid your membership?" Being my usual cynical self I replied "No. But I'm a member." I then introduced myself and was handed a bright pink name badge which designated that I was a special guest. I soon found myself in the convention bar of the hotel, an extremely stuffy and humid room, where the windows could not be opened. Since it's usually fairly cool in Glasgow, they let the people produce their own heat, which can lead to a mild sense of suffocation, especially in summer. Also, the Station Hotel is part of the Glasgow Central Station complex and the bar's windows faced out over the platforms. I suppose the mild suffering was better than continually breathing station fumes.

I was introduced to Norman Spinrad, the last-minute replacement for Harlan Ellison, by Bob Jewett, the chair of the convention. Also on hand were Jim Barker and Julian Headlong. It soon became apparent that we were all in need of food, so went looking for some. We settled on what turned out to be pretty ordinary Chinese fare, but the company was jovial. We returned to the hotel for the opening ceremony which produced the second no-show for the

convention. The city provost, who had agreed to open the convention, did not turn up, so the ceremony was reduced to a "hello, and I hope everyone has a good time" speech which lasted all of two minutes.

From there it was off to the fan room where there was a game of blow football about to start. This version of the game involved a light large plastic ball, a vacuum cleaner, and the coupled contestants, one riding "the other horse style", trying to score goals by blowing the ball, with the vacuum in reverse-cycle, between some chairs at either end of the room. I got roped in and teamed up with Frances-Jane Nelson against Caroline Mullan and Brian Ameringen. The only product of this exercise was a pair of carpet-burnt knees where I went sliding across the floor chasing the ball. There was more drinking at the bar after this, and some good conversation and, sometime in the morning, some sleep.

July 21st. I got up in time for breakfast and went on to the first round of the university challenge where I was teaming up with Jim Barker, Julian Headlong and Colin Fine. After surveying the opposition and the ritual torture that we had to go through, we determined that cheating was the only answer. The fiends in charge had devised an obstacle course which each member of the team had to go through individually. Since we decided to cheat, we also decided that we would be the last team to go. As soon as we were given the order, we promptly tied our legs together, all four of us that is, and proceeded under the table as one unit, doing all the silly things prescribed, until finally we had to get into a boiler suit. From vague memory, Jim and I were the arms, and Colin and Julian were the legs. Of course they let us through to the next round. After all, we had the fastest time.

The rest of the day was spent either at the bar, in the fan room or at a Chinese restaurant with the Beccon committee - a group of people (which included Brian, Caroline, Roger and Brigid amongst others) who have been putting on regional cons for a couple of years - and a couple of hangers-on. I was asked (coerced) to judge a bad taste tie competition. There were some remarkable ties, especially the gent whose tie had a small tassel on the end of it. He waved it under my nose and temptation got the better of me. I bit it off. It didn't taste very good.

Hours later, I remember standing in one of the passageways, after the bar had closed and I had pilfered a bucket of ice, drinking some beautiful 12-year-old single malt scotch that Dave Ellis had supplied, chatting with Paul Vincent, Owen Whiteoak, Dave and others that I don't remember through the drunken haze. When Dave's scotch had run out, Owen produced a bottle of old rough-and-ready - a five-year-old blended scotch which went down like methylated spirits after the smoothness of the single malt. At 5.20 am I had enough sense to realise it was time to get to my room. I got there in one piece and promptly lost part of myself to the porcelain. Ten minutes later I passed out on the bed. I did enjoy that evening but...

July 22nd was another matter. I came to at about 10.15, and decided that a bath would do me the world of good and maybe reduce the throbbing in my head. I had been in the bath for about ten minutes when there was a knock at my door. I dripped my way to

minutes when there was a knock at my door. I dripped my way to the door and opened it. It was Jacquie Robertson, one of the concom, wanting to get into the computer room which was next to mine and whose door was jammed. Since I was met with such a radiant smile I gave her a dripping wet hug. She thanked me and told me that the con had been given permission to kick down the computer room door. There I was, standing in the corridor in just a towel, so what did I do? I did the only thing a self-respecting Australian fan in those circumstances would do - I tried to kick the door down.

To.....be.....continu.....ed.....

MICRO-BURST WIND SHEAR

- Kennedy Gammage -

About a month ago I was talking on the phone at the back of the office when suddenly I heard shouts ("Wow!", "Oh migosh!", "Get away from the window!"), and louder than the shouting came the sound of the wind. Out the window before me I could see the rain blowing from left to right parallel to the ground and largish airborne objects flying past. Then the phone went dead; the lights flickered and went out. There was a single convulsive shudder in the frame of the building and then it was silent. The wind stopped blowing and the rain was gone.

We all stood in the window at the front of the office looking out onto the four wide lanes of Grand Avenue. There was debris everywhere. Across the street on top of the two story brick Taymuree Foreign Auto Center there are two Gannett 30-sheet outdoor posters. Both of these had blown down, taking much of their heavy wooden frames with them - one of which had struck a car that was now parked in the middle of the street, smashing its right front end and that headlight. Soon the whole neighborhood was out in front of their buildings trading gossip. I tuned in KCBS Newsradio 74 but the cooking show was in progress.

Shortly after that, police cars, ambulances, Oakland City vehicles and newspeople with videocameras were out and about, followed by Oakland Cable TV repairmen and a Gannett crew. Power was out for two hours but finally it and the phones came back on and we had to go back to work.

I read the next day on the front page of The Tribune that an intense downdraft of cold air had broken through the prevailing layer of warm moist air, touching down in a parking lot in downtown Oakland, knocking two Ace employees to the ground and rolling them around a bit. It proceeded in an easterly direction, accelerating to a velocity of 80 miles an hour down Grand Avenue and up into Piedmont, where it dissipated in that notoriously snooty little speedtrap. Evidently one of the billboards landed squarely on the backside of some woman, knocking her to the pavement, and then flipped up and blew away. She got up, did a comical double-take, then beat feet into the nearest building.

I talked later with the young woman who works down the street in the 76 station. She was outside when this strange meteorological

phenomenon occurred, and she told me she was scared to death, holding onto the pump for dear life. Rumours that her feet were pointing due east toward the Piedmont border cannot be confirmed.

LETTERS FROM OUR MATES - compiled by Irwin -

We start off with some words from someone who certainly appreciates one of the finer things in life, Walt Willis:

One of the pleasant things about getting to know Australian fandom is that one can talk about cricket ... If you dare to express surprise at people in N.Ireland playing cricket, I will draw your attention to the fact that our village team of Sion Mills in County Tyrone once beat the West Indies touring team. More than some national sides have been able to do. Thanks, Irwin, for the invitation to your Wedding Anniversary party. A paper anniversary sounds wonderfully fannish and I was thinking of extending it; but symbols of that kind seem scarce in fandom. How about naming them after famous annishes: "All the great-grandchildren gathered for their Quannish Wedding."

The first loc we received was from Marc Ortlieb:

I guess I should loc LARRIKIN 1, but my letters tend to be less pithy than pithweak. Nice to see Perry back in the writing again. I'm not sure that I should let Cath get a look at his piece on sporting injuries. She has won the Caulfield Women's Hockey Club's Most Injury Prone Player Award two years running, and is considered a sure bet to get it again this year, following her recent injury.

Your anniversary party was pleasant. That was where Andrew Brown and I started working on our theory of holey jeans. Why is it that the left knee always wears through first? (Hmnm, thought. Please specify standard of dress expected should you invite to another like that. Whoever opened the door for us took one long look and said "You must be some of Irwin's science fiction friends.")

Harry Warner also had problems with our instructions in the colophon of issue 1.

...the orders to keep locs "short and pithy" are tough. I've forgotten the knack of writing short locs. It occurred to me that I might supply the latter element by quoting famous passages. But when I tried to run through a few of them mentally, like Othello's "Ah, the pithy of it all", and W.S. Gilbert's "Pithy, pretty maiden" and some forgotten poet's "How doth the pithy bee / Improve each shining hour", I began to fear I might somehow misquote a few words.

Judith Hanna thought that:

LARRIKIN 1 was a Good Thing - good to see the Aussie vernacular let out for a run in this benighted foreign land ((England)) where

they start complaining about the heat as soon as it tips 75°F. That is, as soon as it stops being freezing bloody cold.

I see also that you're making a bid to be Ideologically Sound, with your statements of support for Greenpeace and Amnesty International. Dear boys, you have a fatal handicap when it comes to the Ideologically Sound vote. It is well known that no Patriarchal Oppressor, equipped for exploitative Penetrative Sex, can be really Ideologically Correct. No matter how often and humbly he repeats "I am lowly abject Scum".

Besides, you write about Sport. Admittedly, six a side cricket is a change from the World Cup Chauvinism which has been raging over here for past weeks, even in CND's national office. True, Perry's talking about playing it, not watching it on TV. (And CND staff lose scratch soccer matches to Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign). Until you write a thesis demonstrating the Proletarian Function of Cricket in the Class Struggle, and its contribution to the Coming of the Revolution, I fear it will remain Revisionist. (It is, of course, past time that the same was done for football).

It has been, only you had to be listening to the second "Coodabeen Champions" show this year, on Melbourne's radio station 3RRR.

WAHF - Stewart Jackson, who is back in Oz after his overseas jaunt, and has brought back with him a taste for some concoction called "'82 Mouton Cadet", and a supply of genuine WH Smith envelopes. Craig Hilton who provided a by-mail examination of Perry's Cricket Thumb. Brian Earl Brown who wrote, along with a few others, that "I've still not figured out how cricket is played", Pamela Boal, Dave Collins, Jean Weber, Linda Gowing, Jack Herman, Lucy Zinkiewicz, Chris McCreanor, and Phil Collins. Paul McCartney, Peter Gabriel and Sting didn't write. Next time round: letters on the second issue.

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