



LARRIKIN 15, AUGUST 1987, 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). Is Ronald Reagan really itching for a fight with the Iranians or is it only that he's just as stupid as we always thought he was? Without the help of contributors, Pam Wells in Britain (as agent), Marc Ortlieb (mailing labels) and Dave Collins (page 1) and ATom (page 8) for artwork, what you are reading would not be possible. All rights revert to contributors after publication. This fanzine is available for written contributions - articles, letters of comment, postcards etc. - fanzines in trade (one to each of us please) or artwork. If there is a big "X" of any description next to your address on the mailing label then I'm sorry to say you won't be hearing from us much longer unless we hear from you; correspondence-wise, that is.

Roos for the Brownlow

ON THE JOB Perhaps the best way of describing the job of a Sound Editor is this: she or he is the person who takes - Irwin - badly recorded, off-miked, muffled and distorted sounds and transforms them into a crisp clean film soundtrack, for which the sound recordist and mixer get all the credit. It wasn't until I started working in the film industry that I learnt what a Sound Editor actually does, and that despite having edited the sound on a film or two at college. I'm often meeting people who tell me "For years I've watched film credits and wondered what a Gaffer or Best Boy does." All I know is that for years I could've said the same thing about Sound Editors.

Having worked with a few of them I've come to the conclusion that Sound Editors are A Funny Lot. In their own world. Not quite there. Etc. You would be too if you sat in a room all day trying to find the perfect door closing sound effect, or being concerned that the street atmosphere doesn't sound just right, all the while paranoid because no-one understands the work you do. Directors are hated because they never give the sound recordist the time to pick up sound effects when on set; producers despised because they set pathetic post-production schedules and for two months will consistently say they have neither the time nor the money to extend the deadline; music composers resented because all he or she has to do is mention that they have a doubt about getting the music together in time for the final mix and the producer is on the phone to the executive producers asking for more time and money; and sound mixers disliked because they sit there and shout about how some minor sound effect has been forgotten while all the Editor wants to

do is go home and sleep off the effects of having worked 120 hours a week for the past fortnight trying to meet the mixing deadline.

With all this within their psyche Sound Editors never seem able to get their job out of their minds. You go down to the pub for lunch, and their ears are constantly pricked up, listening to the sounds around them. You'll be chatting about the goings-on in the Cricket Test and suddenly someone is regretting that they didn't bring along a recorder as "that background pub chatter would be great for a scene in reel five." You get back to the office, and someone rings the editor about getting together on the weekend and in mid-sentence the editor will stop to listen to the traffic atmosphere out the window.

I've just finished assisting two sound editors, Rex and Owen, on a tv mini-series called Dusty. The series is about a champion sheepdog and his owner and the farm they work on, and despite its having an Australian setting has been sold to French tv but not to an Australian television station. Of the two editors Rex is the atypical sound editor, while Owen is the exception to the rule. This can mainly be attributed to the fact that Owen fell into sound editing when he really wanted to become a film editor. This is much the same as me, only doing sound assisting when there is no film assisting to be had.

As with any other job sound editing has its own shorthand jargon. When someone wants a dog barking sound effect all they ask for is "A dog bark." A horse galloping sound effect becomes "A horse gallop." And so on. One time, just after we'd been discussing the latest on the football scene and how it was great that Collingwood weren't going too well this season, and how all Collingwood barrackers are a lower form of life, Owen found that he needed a magpie call. "Hey Rex!" he screamed. "Have you got a good magpie?" It took all my willpower to not scream back "There's no such thing as a good Collingwood supporter", but I managed it.

We were working in some newly designed rooms, being, in effect, the product testers of the rooms for the producer. One result of all this was that when we'd matched chairs to the various tables, benches and editing machines, we had one stool which didn't match one work-bench. My stool and my work-bench, worst luck. The stool was about 12 cm too tall, so that every time I worked at the bench I'd come away with sore knees from having to press them hard against the edge of the bench and, depending on what work I was doing, a sore back from having to bend over from that great height.

"Look", said Owen, "I'll bring in a hacksaw and we'll cut that stool down to size. I don't particularly want my assistant going on workers' compensation."

A few days later and Owen still hadn't brought in the hacksaw. When he arrived the next day I asked him if he'd remembered it.

"Oh no, tomorrow for sure."

Just then Rex walked out of his room. "Are you after a hacksaw?" he asked.

There was something wrong in the way he put the question. I looked at Owen, and he'd also picked up on the tone in Rex's voice. I turned to look at Rex and glanced back at Owen.

"Well, I reckon if we were to rub a quarter inch sound tape against the legs of this stool long enough, it should do the trick."

"I think you're right Irwin. There's no need for me to bring in that hacksaw tomorrow after all." And without batting an eyelid turned around and retreated to his room. My eyes followed Owen's back, and when his door closed I went back to work, leaving Rex standing there wondering what it was he had said.

Come to think of it, I never did get that stool fixed.

ONCE IN A LIFETIME

- Perry -

For the past twelve months my health has been the worst I can ever remember. In August last year I came down with a viral infection that had many of the same symptoms as glandular fever; mainly characterised by an overwhelming feeling of lassitude whenever physical activity was so much as contemplated, let alone undertaken. A slow walk down the street for the morning paper - usually about noon - was enough to put me out for the day.

This whole thing lasted about three weeks until I got so bored with daytime television (I couldn't concentrate on anything long enough to be able to read) that I forced myself back to work. A bad mistake. Not allowing my body time enough to recover properly meant I was destined for relapses over the next six months along with what seemed like a continuous stream of coughs and colds.

Over the past couple of months, my immune system appeared to be getting on top of all the bugs that happened to sneak in and my health problems plummetted rapidly towards non-existence. Until last week that is. Ten days or so before I'm due to spend 26 hours cooped up in a plane on my way to Europe, the first tickle in the throat started and within a day I was staring down the barrel of a full-blown case of tonsilitis. Fortunately that didn't eventuate and the whole problem settled down to one of an irritating cold. Except that my sore throat seemed not to get any better.

The trouble was, with a week to go, I had a lot of things to do and a lot of people to catch up with, in particular a day at the football and a large group of people for a Vietnamese banquet at a local restaurant on the same day. In the end something had to give and it was my voice. For the first time since I can remember my voice just packed up completely - all I had left was a faint croakey whisper. And to top it all off, Robyn and I attended the last of the AFI Award Screenings the next day; a film called THE YEAR MY VOICE BROKE. I've heard of life imitating art, but that is ridiculous.

THE LEMON PANCAKE THEORY

- Yvonne Rousseau -

Bored with the fannish habit of attending overseas conventions in order to attract several years of attention for not having produced a trip report afterwards, I am writing in advance a true and accurate report of Conspiracy '87, which I won't be attending - my observations being made additionally unprejudiced by my never having been in Britain.

The most vivid memories of Conspiracy for Australians were, of course, of cricket on the beach; they swiftly learned to explain, when dismissed from the wicket at either end, that the rain just

then had been slanting right into their eyes - although they were never adept at dodging the little pebble castles left around by children on summer holidays with buckets and spades. Within doors, they were somewhat incommoded at parties by what the Britisher, Christine Brooke-Rose, has called 'the flabby English desire to paw and fondle', combined with the delusion which Britisher, John Verney, reveals: 'I would have liked to dance, to shout, to make some kind of demonstration. A Frenchman, an Australian, would have done it naturally, but somehow I could not.' In the bar, it was another and sterner matter, the British fans proving that Britisher, Robert Morley, was correct that 'in the intolerance league, the British are still top.' Behind their pale and innocent flowerlike faces and their open and unapproachable manners, it was clear that each one granted a caricaturist's attention to the disarmingly friendly although terrifyingly-aggressive-looking American - the characteristically 'lazy', 'gross' or pathetic European - the astonished-and-aggrieved-looking Australian wearing several hastily-purchased sweaters from Ye-Olde-Crafte-Shoppe in Brighton...

The Serious Programme Items and the Celebrity Introductions went, of course, much as usual; and Russell Blackford was not after all destroyed by his Lemon Pancakes habit - which at Eastercon made his team late for a Quiz which they were sure they would otherwise have won, and which more recently at St Kilda's Danube restaurant caused him to defy the waitress's command to have an apple-based dessert instead. Britisher Edmond Crispin assures us that Gervase Fen (who surely closely resembles most inhabitants of Britain) is addicted to out-of-date Americanisms; combine this with out-of-date American Damon Runyon's information that 'different guys have different names for dolls, such as broads, pancakes, and cookies and tomatoes, which I claim are not respectful' - and one sees how easily an international misunderstanding could have been brought about by requesting lemon pancakes in Brighton.

LETTERS FROM OUR MATES (issue 13) - compiled by Irwin -

Although it was a little late in arriving, any postcard from Walt Willis has something worth quoting:

...I was fascinated by the Foyster story of the book avalanche. This could of course have been avoided by the ingenious solution to the book storage problem devised by H. Ken Bulmer --- the Single Transferrable Bookshelf. All you need for this is one stout shelf 1mm longer than the width of the room. Wedge this between the walls and fill it with books. Fill it real tight. Then take the shelf away and start again. Not only does this allow you to have all the spines level, it imposes a salutary discipline on your reading habits, it being necessary to move the shelf under the book you want to, as it were, take out. And it discourages borrowers.

Speaking of keeping things tidy, somewhere, sometime, someone has to come up with a repository of fanzine titles which have already been used. At the suggestion of Marc Ortlieb we were considering changing the name of this fanzine. Mike Glicksohn managed to head us off at the pass:

I do hope you haven't already changed the name of LARRIKIN to TAPEWORM since that title has already been used for a fanzine, certain issues of which are probably now quite valuable. Jay Haldeman published six or seven issues of that title many years ago

and among other things one of them contained the first appearance of what was later to become Joe Haldeman's first professional science fiction sale. I imagine there are some completists who, had they known that, would avidly seek out that issue for their Haldeman collection. (Sealed bids may be sent to me at my usual address.)

Several years ago, on one of my returns to Britain, I went out with a group of London fans to try the infamous curry I'd been reading about in so many of the fanzines of the time. As it happens, I'm one of those macho hot-food types who enjoys really hot food so despite being warned by the knowledgeable Brits I ventured to try the hottest available curry on the menu. To my surprise it was quite edible, not the liquid fire I'd been led to expect at all, although certainly hot even by my standards. On the other hand (or elsewhere), the next day I discovered that whereas constant exposure to chili and hot sauce had built up an apparent immunity in my mouth, the other end of the digestive system was not quite so prepared. That stuff burnt like hell on the way out! And all the beer in the world wouldn't have helped me at that moment. You can tell Marc Ortlieb he got off lucky!

I share Irwin's ambivalence towards the concept of zoos but when the zoo is well done (as the Toronto zoo is) with lots of space for the animals as closely resembling their natural habitat as possible then the positive aspects far outweigh my negative reaction to seeing a natural creature encaged. (The Toronto zoo is probably one of the top two zoos in North America and I recommend it without hesitation to anyone who likes zoos in any way at all. But it requires several miles of walking to see even a goodly part of it so it isn't for the faint of heart or short of breath.) As it happens, Doris and I spent last Saturday at the zoo and picked up applications for its Adopt-an-Animal program. (You get an official adoption certificate for a specifically named animal along with various other perks not available to the general public. I was tickled by the line "Of course, all the adopted animals remain at the Zoo," just for the brain-dead with good intentions.) The fees at our zoo run from \$20 (which will get you an arrow poison frog or an eastern box turtle etc) all the way to \$2500 (for an African elephant or Bengal tiger.) I'm toying with the \$100 for a capybara since I've always thought they were mistreated (in a non-physical way, of course) by most zoo visitors who tend to ignore them completely or, even worse, laugh at the poor guys. After all, it isn't their fault nature made them almost as silly (and silly-looking) as a wombat, is it?

Zoos seem to be the favoured topic for our letter writers this time around. Dave Collins has a sad tale to tell.

I remember visiting Southhampton zoo when I was a boy and finding it a terrible experience. The big cats were kept in cages smaller than my lounge while chimps were kept in cages where little imagination was used in giving them things to climb on (a couple of pieces of wood and an old car tyre hanging from the roof). But the saddest thing for me was a baby elephant left on its own in a compound with a moat round it. The poor creature spent all its time standing on the edge of the moat, one foot hanging in the air, trying to reach across to the public. I got great delight a few years later when the elephant made a break for freedom and spent a couple of days loose on Southhampton Common.

After a lot of protests and a few demonstrations the zoo was finally closed and the site now stands empty. I would like to see more British zoos closed as they just don't have the space needed. I

would be interested in seeing the size of one of your zoos and comparing it to one of ours.

Many years ago the management of Melbourne's zoo recognised that some of the enclosures left a lot to be desired. The saddest were the bear enclosures, which were just a slab of concrete with a small concrete hut at one end. All four or five enclosures were exactly the same, except for the polar bear enclosure which was painted white. Eventually these enclosures were deemed to be the useless things the public knew them to be, the bears were relocated (Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo?) and a lot of time and money was devoted to getting the enclosures right. Late last year the first of those new enclosures was opened and now, for the first time in years, the Melbourne Zoo has a bear on display. Here's Pamela Boal:

I got the impression from tv wild life programmes that Australia was beginning to be very aware on conservation issues and had some successful programmes running. I should not have thought the Australian zoos would long be behind Europe and the rest of the world where enclosures rather than cages are becoming the norm. Nor should I be too despondent about breeding, China has now managed to breed 100 pandas in captivity (well the pandas breed, the Chinese people provide the captivity) it is the loss of habitat not the capturing that endangers the panda. Because of the loss of habitat it is a sad fact that if some species (this applies to birds as well as animals) do not breed in captivity they will not breed at all and will be extinct, so while breeding programmes might have started as justification after the event there is now a genuine need and one that is ever more successfully being fulfilled.

Sue Thomason has written with a problem:

I'd be grateful if you could tell an ignorant Podean (well, if you lot are Antipodean I guess that makes me geographically a Podean?) how official a name for "New Zealand" is Aotearoa? Like, if I use it as a postal address should I include the English colonial imposition of a name in small print, or will the GPO recognise and expedite mail addressed to Aotearoa alone? Also can you clue me in on the political implications of using the indigenous name? I speak as one who witnessed mail addressed to CYMRU arriving via CYPRUS (though that may have had more to do with bad handwriting than anti-Welsh sentiment...)

I became aware of the term "Aotearoa" only when I started receiving fanzines from the land. Given that, I suspect it would be best to still use "New Zealand" when addressing mail to the place.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Chris Mier, Lyn McConchie and Peter Smith, who writes "What's this? Harry Warner saying Alkan died at the hands of his bookcase? A nice story but a story only. One of the many apocryphal tales, like poor Marie Antionette saying let them eat cake. Fiction is sometimes stranger than truth."; Mark Winkler, Linnette Horne who still seems to be suffering a little from her last trip across the Tasman. Mandy Brewin and Stewart Jackson who tells us that "compared to the Victoria Park throat leapers Sydney cockroaches are but babies."

LANGUAGE

- John McPharlin -
the name of 'Lucky'.

Lost dog: three legs, blind in left eye; large scar in throat; bullet wound behind right ear, left ear missing, tail broken in two places; recently castrated; answers to

The preceding has absolutely nothing to do with what follows, but I saw it in the Sydney Morning Herald this morning and I just had to share it with someone. What I really want to talk about is (are) words, which also happens to be the name of Alan Peterson's weekly column in the S.M.H. and I recommend it to those fortunate enough to be able to get a hold of the best news rag in the country. I love the English language, despite what I may do to it after a few beers, because it embodies so much of our cultural heritage in its lexicon. Of course it must be borne in mind that, unlike the dead past in a history book, the language is a living, changing thing and so it occasionally goes out with the wrong sort of boy. I'm referring particularly to Americans, who have been responsible for the propagation of some unfortunate choices of expression, as well as most of the uglier neologisms of recent times. It is little wonder that England and the U.S. (and by implication, Australia as well) have been described as nations divided by a common language.

What I particularly love is playing with words, as Spike Milligan did in the Goon shows or as Victor Borge has done (his 'phonetic punctuation' and 'inflationary language' sketches are both masterpieces). How about Billy Connolly's comparison of the linguistic appeal of the word 'vagina' with the boredom of the word 'penis': "Vagina sounds like a romantic Caribbean island, Penis just sounds like a village at the arse-end of Cyprus".

There are four books which should be standard for every word fan: a dictionary (the Shorter Oxford for preference, of course); "Roget's Thesaurus" (in the standard format, not this new 'dictionary' version...what a load of rubbish); "The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations"; and "Fowler's Modern Usage". For anyone who has already worn out the entertainment value of these (if that's possible), may I also recommend: "The Superior Person's little Book of Words" by Peter Bowler (Methuen, 1979). Rather than attempt to describe this book at any length, the following quotation, which is my favourite (and yes, I have read all the way through this book, even though I'm only quoting from the 'A' section) should serve to convey its flavour and style:

Avuncular,a. In the manner of an uncle. An interestingly ambiguous - indeed multiguous - word, since there is no fixed or universal pattern of behaviour for uncles. An experimental canvassing of the author's acquaintances revealed a widespread assumption that avuncular behaviour was benevolent, mildly paternal, gently jocular, mature and dignified. However, one respondent admitted to having an uncle Morris who was twenty-three years old, wore a gold ear-ring in his nose, played viola da gamba with an innovative rock group and had recently been expelled from the Hare Krishna movement for tattooing indelicate mandalas on the soles of his feet.

Now that I've rambled this far from my original intention, I might as well go on talking about books - a French one this time. I never could understand why it was called the language of "love" when it only had one word for both "like" and "love" (or maybe that's why)

and at school I always wondered where the stronger words were kept. Well, I've since discovered them in a book called "Merde! The REAL French You Were Never Taught at School" (Angus & Robertson, 1984). With the aid of this ever useful book, I can say not only, "Le chien de ma tante est dans le jardin" (my aunt's dog is in the garden), but also, "le sale cabot a chie partout dans ma piaule" (the rotten old mutt has crapped all over my room). While that may not always be an easy one to work into a conversation, a phrase which does come in useful when dealing with a stroppy frog is, "ta salope de frangine est une vraie pouffaise, elle se fait sauter par tout le monde" (your bitch of a sister is a real scrubber, she gets laid by everyone). While I must admit that this is not quite in the same class as, "my hovercraft is full of eels and my nipples are exploding", it is nevertheless a good one for clearly marking out your territory and making it clear that you are not going to "come quietly" in any brush with petty officialdom. Bon appetit.

AN EDITORIAL OF SORTS 2

- Perry -

As the sharp-eyed and elephantine-memoried among you will have, by this time, no doubt figured out, the entire editorial staff of this magazine will

shortly be skipping the country for parts north of the equator for three months or so. This is due in large part to the fact that a sizeable number of British fans achieved mass moronism a few years back and spontaneously decided to run a World Science Fiction Convention in Brighton in late August of this year. Both Irwin and I decided to attend and, not wanting to let a good opportunity go by, also check out sizeable proportions of Europe and Britain as well. For my part, this will take somewhere in the vicinity of fifteen weeks; it's a tough job but someone's got to do it.

The obvious consequence of all this is that publication of LARRIKIN will be suspended from this issue until probably January 1988. Fifteen issues in as many months is a fair record and one that both Irwin and I intend building on next year. We'll see you then. Cop ya.

PRINTED MATTER



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