



Les souris dansent 2

Done for ANZAPA by John Bangsund

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28 November (suddenly, at his residence): Sally has written ninety-odd pages so far for Anzapa. I have written two and a half, of which what follows is all I have typed. I have no time to do more at the moment: I'm proof-reading an encyclopedia. And I was planning to list my top hundred films of 1993 in this mailing, too, dammit. Ah well: let's all enjoy reading Sally – and have a happy Xmas, OK?

ON ANZAPACON 2

I enjoyed it. If I hadn't been flat out that weekend doing an index to Austel's Annual Report (coming soon to a bookstall near *you*) I might have enjoyed more of it, but there you go. It was great seeing so many old friends again, and meeting folk with names familiar from Anzapa that I haven't met before, new-found friends. Kim Huett, for example, was all I expected her to be and more: he's a man, and a powerful deep-thinking young man at that. He reminds me of myself when I was an enigma, and I predict he'll go a long way. Where exactly is up to him, of course. Gary Mason, on the other hand, has *been* a long way, and I'm glad to have shared a little of that way with him, from St Kilda (1968) and Willoughby (1971), via Nailsworth and Mile End (1976–8), to Saigon Rose's excellent restaurant in Prahran (3 October 1993), where we had a vastly better meal than we were used to in the old days. And better wine too, thanks partly to John Rowley, whom I must have met years ago (and asked the same question: 'Related to Cedric?' – 'No') but misplaced in random memory. Great too to talk to Allan Bray again and, amazingly, to discover that his wife Lesley is a lady I met and liked back in 1970 when the world was young and anything could happen. How could I have lost track of someone like Lesley for 22 years? I can only think that that Gelati man was an emissary from some distant temporality sent here to confuse our timelines. Yes indeed: Lesley was at BofCon 1, in that old tin shed at Melbourne University. Another person at Anzapacon with whom I once shared cramped accommodation is Eve

Harvey. Eve doesn't remember me in the lift at Aussiecon 2, but I was there. We won't forget each other in a hurry now: on Saturday night Eve discovered that I am a fellow tobacco addict, apparently the first she has encountered in Australian fandom. She joined our table in something approaching ecstasy, and I am compelled to report that Gary and Sally joined us in sharing Eve's relief. Perhaps they were just being polite. It happens. Some people are extraordinarily polite in the way they treat smokers. Saying which reminds me of the last time I was in the building in Greville Street where Anzapacon 2 was held. About ten years ago I helped to organize a Society of Editors proofreading workshop there, and for my sins was a speaker and group-leader at it, along with Janet Mau and Ev Beissbarth. During a tea-break I shared an ashtray (the ashtray) with a lady named Debbi Barnes, who said 'That's not what we really do, is it?' 'No,' I admitted. 'We're all fakes, really, aren't we?' she said. Well, I wasn't about to admit that, so I just smiled and lit up another pack. And that brings me to an important point about the difference between gatherings of editors and fans, or at least gatherings like Anzapacon. In any group of editors there are always a few who feel out of place, who feel that the proceedings are above them or beneath them. At Anzapacon 2, as at Anzapacon 1 in 1978, all I felt was harmony and community. I didn't belong in every group, in every conversation, but I felt welcome whatever I did, whoever I spoke to, at home among friends. That's an amazing thing, something to be cherished. For reminding me of this basic thing about fandom, this thing that got me involved in the first place, I want to thank everyone involved in organizing Anzapacon 2, and particularly Perry Middlemiss. As I said in 1978, let's do it again. But, hey, let's not leave it for another fifteen years: by then I'll be almost 70, the very thought of which horrifies me. Yes, I know Merv Binns will still look the same, but in 2008 I may need even more than that to feel at home and enjoy myself.
