

LITTLE BLUE NUMBER 10

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This fanzine acknowledges the members of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which it is produced in Hawthorn, Victoria, and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

INTRODUCTION

Well, that wasn't what I expected. I was certain that I had uploaded **Perryscope 19** to the ANZAPA dropbox folder in time for the 325th mailing deadline, only to discover, when the mailing arrived, that it wasn't included.

Whatever happened then, I've added the missing issue this time round and checked the Dropbox receipt to make sure it really is there. My apologies in advance for the "bloat".

Trust but verify. •

One of the unexpected consequences of the dropping of COVID restrictions is the subsequent increase in bird-life in our area of suburbia. We live within about a kilometre of Swinburne University of Technology, an institution of up to 10,000 students, though not all attend at all times of course. Since the start of the University year in March the number of people on the surrounding streets has increased, so also the amount of take-away food consumed in the Glenferrie Road area. And with that comes extra food rubbish. The scavengers are back, the avian variety anyway. We just had a bit flock of sulphur-crested cockatoos fly over. Very noisy indeed. Colourful, but noisy.

GOINGS ON IN THE GROVE

If you were to drive around my local suburb at present you could easily be forgiven for assuming that we were in the middle of a robust Federal Election campaign. But as all Australians should be aware, as I write at the back end of March 2022, no such election has been called. Yet the streets and houses are awash with political advertising.

For those unaware of this I happen to live in the Australian Federal Electorate of Kooyong, a staunch Liberal Party seat since the days of Robert Menzies. The division was proclaimed in 1900 and was one of the original 65 divisions in the initial Australian Federal Election. Since 2010 it has been held by Josh Frydenberg, current deputy Leader of the federal Liberal Party and Australian Treasurer. Since Menzies created the Liberal Party in 1945 this seat has been held only by him, Andrew Peacock, Petro Georgiou and now Frydenberg, all from the Liberal Party.

The Libs won the seat in 2019 and now hold it with a margin of around 13%. By most Australian standards that's pretty good, but it was quite a come-down from the 27% margin from the 2016 election. Prior to 2019 you might never have known an election was in place in this electorate, as Frydenberg didn't advertise much. At the last State election in 2018, my electorate of Hawthorn changed hands from Liberal to Labour for the first time since 1955. And there seemed to be a change in the air. Then in 2019, with prominent civil rights lawyer Julian Burnside standing for the Greens, Josh got himself a bit worried and started to put up posters around the suburbs.

Little Blue Number 10

But 2019 was nothing compared to this upcoming election. Already Frydenberg has posters all over the place, and there are reports that he and the Libs are spending upwards of \$2million on this campaign. All of this is in response to the new independent candidate Dr Monique Ryan, who started to make her presence known in the area at the beginning of this year. Sometime in mid-March she took over a recently vacated bank building on Glenferrie Road by the railway station (see photo below) and her campaign workers can be seen wandering in and out all day from there. A quick run down my own street notes there are three of her posters on house fences and only one for the Libs. They have tended to stick to the main roads in the area and have posters all the way down Glenferrie Road, especially in the shopping precinct near me.



It all makes for an interesting time in the People's Republic of Hawthorn. The current view is that the Liberals will lose the Federal election, that current Prime Minister Scott Morrison will resign as leader of the Liberal Party, and that Josh Frydenberg will be elected as his replacement. The campaign spending here is to ensure he stops as much of the bleeding as he can to shore up his position for his leadership aspirations. It isn't going to look good for him if his seat becomes marginal.

Lots of fun.

Comments on Mailing 325

Chez Ashby 5 – **Derrick Ashby**

The title is definitely “Little Blue Number”. •

The “100 pages a day” aim is purely aspirational and doesn't include fanzines, newspapers or other such material. As you can imagine reading fanzines does take some time, especially if you are looking for something to comment on. Those big, bruising 800 page tomes certainly tend to put a dent in your reading targets. •

And thanks for picking up my error in omitting the Fred Pohl original anthology series. I forgot all about them.

Quoz 81 – **Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer**

Mark – Re Chengdu: we've had discussions regarding this elsewhere, but, in the main, I agree with your assessments of their bid and campaign. They got the vote out, as I figured they would, and beat off a lacklustre opposition. There are questions regarding China's suitability to run a Worldcon, but as we, as countries and as individuals, travel there, trade with them and play

Little Blue Number 10

against them in sporting competitions, it seems a bit of a stretch to want individual fans to not attend. It is currently my intention of going, though, as my wife says, it might just be half a dozen Western fans there spending time together in the bar. •

As you also point out there appear to have been a number of questionable practices undertaken by the Winnipeg group, or their representatives, which need to be examined. The trouble is that the WSFS constitution doesn't, as yet, have any way of rectifying these problems or of sanctioning the offenders. There might be some interesting conversations in Chicago in September about those topics. •

Re shepherd's pie: there is a lot to dislike about Tex-Mex food. I'm happy to say I can now add your recipe for Tex-Mex SP to that list – sounds revolting. I'd eat it if I have to but would rather not. Minced lamb in a shepherd's pie for preference. •

Re J. M. Walsh: Austlit, the Australian literary bibliography database, lists 12 works by Walsh as sf, mostly short stories with three novels: *Vandals of the Void* (1931), *Secret Weapons* (1940), and *Vanguard to Neptune* (1952). There may well be others as not all entries in the database are categorised by genre. •

Re the 1987 storm in southern England: Robyn and I were travelling in the UK/Europe that year and had been persuaded that taking a hovercraft flight from Dover to Calais would be a good experience. Well, it was certainly an experience, though not so much a good one. We caught the last "flight" out and were blown a far way up the French coast so that the trip took much longer than normal. The water in the Channel was also rather "choppy", and, as a hovercraft tends to skim across the top rather than ploughing through the waves, the craft rapidly turned into a vomitorium. Not the best travel experience I've ever had. Oddly enough I didn't have any "out-of-stomach" experience, though Robyn had turned a rather fetching shade of green by the time we landed.

Claire – You "factcheck" your mailing comments? Performance above and beyond I reckon. I thought the whole idea was just to rabbit on until you filled up the requisite number of pages, and then let it go at that. Must be time to lift my game. •

Regarding male readers reading women writers: it was back in 2014, when I read 48 books during the year (this is prior to my new reading resolutions) and, on looking back at the end of the year, came to realise that I had read only one by a women writer. I resolved to do better. Now the split is about 60:40 (still in favor of men) but slowly getting closer and closer together. I take this as an example of gathered data helping change behaviour by reminding me that I need to do better. I may well have not noticed if I didn't think to collect that statistic. Oh dear, I can see now that I also have actually "factchecked" something. It's a disease. •

Re the **Perryscope** index: I did actually produce this more for myself than for anyone else, and then I realised that I could actually run it through ANZAPA and not have to worry about receiving LocS commenting on the uselessness of the publication. I have had the need to look things up in it on more than occasion. Sometimes just to remind myself that I had actually reviewed something, sometimes to check the score I gave it, and sometimes just to remind myself not to re-use a photo. All good reasons for its existence I reckon. •

The Fiery Participle 24 – Leigh Edmonds

Good to hear that the Zoom problem has been fixed. I find it a bit odd that you haven't received any comments on the FANAC talk you gave. Though I'm starting to think that there really is a psychological thing going on with electronic publications of any sort (either fanzine pdfs or Zoom sessions) in that people tend to forget about them very quickly and therefore don't think to respond. With a printed fanzine you can leave it in a pile of zines to be commented upon and get to

Little Blue Number 10

it sooner or later. It sits there as a physical and visual reminder. With something electronic it becomes transitory and disappears far too quickly. •

Maybe the approach to your final Australian fandom work is to set up a Kickstarter fund. Now I'm not expecting you to hit the \$40M+ mark of Brandon Sanderson but if you got, say, 50-80 people interested and investing you could offset the costs up front and have some good idea of how many copies you'd need. Count me in for one when that time comes. •

Rhubard 94 – John and Diane Fox

Diane – I can pretty much date my joining fandom at the time of Aussiecon in 1975, so we are contemporaries in that regard. Your comments on the reasons why Australian fandom shrunk in the 1960s are very interesting. It will also be interesting to see how they gell with Leigh Edmonds' views in his Australian fannish history. Aussiecon did a lot to kick off fandom in the mid-1970s and there definitely seemed to be a feeling that society was opening up at that time. The combination of progressive politicians such as Whitlam and Dunstan, the end of the Vietnam War, the overall increase in living standards, the changes in society brought about by broader immigration policies, and the widening of education opportunities all played a role. But how much? And how much to each one? •

The Fretful Porpentine 42 – David Grigg

Good cover; and I do seem to recall a lot of those books. Your year's reading stats put mine to shame. •

Necessity 164 – Jack Herman

Barty lets go with a "prime-evil" roar. I wonder if that "adjective" could be better used for the triumvirate of the Former Guy, Bojo and Scommo. Maybe the first, the next two are just incompetent and out of their depth. The Former Guy just had no idea of how it all worked, but, rather like Abbott, he had an agenda. And that made him more dangerous. •

Re cost of housing: you would think that a simple check of the figures – mortgage rises versus wage rises – would lead people to only one conclusion. But it seems not. Now it's a matter of all the other incompetencies that may, or may not, dump the current Federal Government at the next election. And for so long we've been told that problems of home ownership is one of the key factors in election wins and/or losses. •

I have to say, Jack, that your list of people who have recently carked it makes for some depressing reading. It's not so bad if they are older than me, downright awful the other way. •

Re "THE Dark Ages": you know the idea, never ruin a joke with the facts. •

Podcasts: I can also recommend **The Rest is History**. Short and sharp and to the point. •

Gaston J. Feeblehare 23 – Kim Huett

Re the idea of talking to me for an hour about anything: as long as I've done the research I'm okay. But I've never been interviewed for anything longer than 5 minutes for a Worldcon video a bit prior to Aussiecon 4 in 2010. And I've never been guest-of-honor at a convention and had to suffer the pains of a personal interview. I'd be lost I reckon. Most of the stories I could tell would be about the Worldcon bids and the con-running and most of the ones that stay in the mind are ones I'd rather not talk about. •

Re Wikipedia: I think if I ever get back into editing it definitely will be in the area of Australian

Little Blue Number 10

Literature. Everything else is just too fraught with idiots. •

Re US Postage: the problem I currently have is that it all seems so inconsistent. Some things turn up and others don't. •

Re space travel for tourists: Leigh Edmonds is probably the best person to comment on this, but I suspect that cheap travel didn't really arrive for the bulk of us until the 1960s – 747 Jumbo maybe? So current space travel options will remain the domain of the ultra-rich. That's okay, I'm too old now anyway. •

Sketchy 11 – Christina Lake

Now that I am a retired gent I find I have a large amount of time to do just about everything I want. So a usual day will start with me at the computer writing up short reviews of whatever film I saw or book I read the day or two before; checking emails for letters of comment; making notes for articles I want to write; or just doing any of the other stuff that fanac requires. My reading is usually in the afternoons and evenings. You'll be amazed what you can actually get done when you don't have to work for a living. •

By the way the target of 100 pages a day is purely aspirational. •

The lunch project has taken something of a back-seat to other things so far this year. But I have plans to restart it in the week before Easter. There are still a large number of places at which to eat. •

Kingdom of the Bland – Eric Lindsay

Re changing the front of the house: the local council isn't against anyone renovating their house to either modernise it or repair it, their aim is to attempt to maintain some sort of standard streetscape. Too often you get people buying a house in an area in which they want to live, then bull-doing the whole thing and replacing it with something that is totally out of place and character. This does tend to diminish the suburb as a whole which results in people not wanting to live there. I don't understand the concept of doing such a thing. The best building renovations in the Melbourne CBD are those that have incorporated the old, existing building facade or surrounds into the new design. Builders too often take the easy option, rather than the one that will actually still be good to work in and look at in 20 years time. There are too many rectangular "shoe boxes" in the city that really look ugly. •

Crash of the Hard Disk – Gary Mason

I wonder how you came to have the Service NSW app downloaded when you haven't been to that state? We were there a couple of times within a two-month period and so left it on my phone. We did get pinged a few times during our week in the area around Orange but they were just for close contacts. Nothing came of it. •

Stay with the Golden North Ice-Cream. It's the best. •

Re Wikipedia and ANZAPA: I promise you there will be a page associated with it when the time comes, and that time is probably when Leigh finishes his history of Australian fandom. That will give me the required external secondary sources to include details and the links I want. The problem we have with a lot of our sub-culture interests is that there isn't a readily available source of information about them; outside the sub-culture. I'm going to need that to fight off the deletionists. •

MOZ 30 – Murray Moore

Little Blue Number 10

Welcome back. We're on track to be in Chicago for the Worldcon this year. I'll probably be spending a lot of time in and around the FANAC table – either that or the bar. Drop by and say hello. •

Hold that Tiger! – Terry Morris

It's good to hear some pleasing news about the removal of railway intersections. I haven't been impacted by any here in Hawthorn, though there are a couple I go across occasionally that I'd like to see removed. A friend of mine living in Caulfield was glowing in his praise of a nearby removal. •

Not Falling, Flying 1 – John Newman

And another, welcome back. •

Good luck with selling the house. I have yet to have that experience, as this house I'm currently in was my first. The whole idea is rather daunting. •

As to retirement, yes what I do is much more interesting than the stuff I had to deal with at work. Plus I get to set my own priorities and deadlines. Well, with a fair amount of input from the in-house Project Manager. The money while working was good. The lack of stress and strain is better. •

You Really Know You're Home When You Find a Wombat in Your Bed 197 – Cath Ortlieb

Robyn and I also visited the Otway Flyover this year. Had a great time. We had a few days in Lorne and drove over using the phone GPS as a guide. Let us say that it was an interesting drive: lots of dirt roads and two sets of wallabies attempting to commit suicide by car. I wouldn't have wanted to get stuck out there in the middle of the National Forest as the number of cars passing was minimal. •

Ytterbium 139 – Alan Stewart

We shall have discussions about scanning fanzines for FANAC from time to time. The early part of 2022 has been a bit hectic for me but it is starting to settle down now. We can chat over a beer. •

I am starting to think that New Zealand is going to be a lost cause for us for a while. I just can't see how we can fit it in until 2025 at this rate.

Les Chattes Parties 178 – Sally Yeoland

The new technology to allow streaming on old tvs is a real bonus. We'd be lost without it. •

The Glenferrie Road Lunch Project needs to be restarted. Probably after Easter.

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And that's it for this time round. Others read and enjoyed. Stay well.

