

NORSTRILIAN NEWS

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F E B R U A R Y 1 9 7 3

Responsibility for election comment is taken for this issue by Robin Johnson GPO Box 4039, Melbourne, Vic 3001.

HUGO Nomination Ballots have been distributed with the Torcon Progress Report 3, as mentioned last issue, but they have not reverted to one nomination per category as I erroneously stated then. LOCUS has also distributed the forms; the correct version is the one with four different categories of story length, and three nominations are allowed in each category. To nominate, you must be a member either of L.A.Con or of Torcon 2, this year's World Science Fiction Convention: voting will necessitate membership of Torcon. I am Australian agent for Torcon: supporting membership now costs \$A3, attending \$A5 from me, or from Torcon 2, PO Box 4, Station K, Toronto, Ontario, Canada \$4 and \$7 (US or C) respectively.

DIVORCE has broken out between John and Diane Bangsund, and between Lee and Carla Harding, this month. The cases were heard in the Victorian Supreme Court on 22nd and 23rd Feb respectively.

MOVING CEREMONY. At a recent Degraeves Tavern session in Melbourne, the Bossa Nova (John Foyster) presented Lee Harding with the Nova Mob's Great Pumpkin Award for providing the most entertainment over the last year. Your 'umble servant was all choked up to receive the Chunder Award from the same hands as token of esteem for providing that worthy publication with so much material of the appropriate type.

EASTERCON. The Melbourne Easter Convention is to be held at the Victoria, 215 Little Collins St, from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 20th to 23rd, 1973. Attending membership is \$7 in advance, or \$8 at the door: supporting \$2, from: Bill Wright, 53 Celia St, Burwood Vic 3125. Guest of Honour is George Turner, SF critic of the Melbourne AGE, and a full and varied programme is planned. The Victoria is a large city-centre hotel, and an allocation of rooms is held by the Eastercon. Please apply for rooms at the earliest moment you can, as we are trying to keep members of the convention together in one part of the hotel. Twin rooms are available at about \$18 a night (exact rate not yet available). There will be a Costume party on the evening of the first day, at which prizes will be given in four categories: Best Costume

- Best depiction of fantasy or SF character
- Most humorous costume
- Best Group.

The judge will be John Foyster. Competitors will be asked to write down their names and the title of the costume on entry to the convention room on the forms provided. Each entrant will have the opportunity to display his costume to the judge and audience in his own way, subject to a 1-minute time limit. Panel discussions and talks will occupy the afternoon and any morning sessions: films are on the program for some evening and late-night sessions: at present we expect the Banquet to be a buffet or smorgasbord type. For information other than membership queries, write to Eastercon '73, 317 Swanston St, Melbourne Vic. 3001. Chairman is Paul Stevens.

LEE HARDING sends me this personal statement:

"Some of you already know that Carla and I separated six months ago. Those who knew us closely over the years were aware of the the constant undercurrent of conflict that wore away our lives. We married young and inexperienced, and somehow managed to develop completely independent approaches to life. I think we both did what we could somehow to bring our mutual antagonisms together: last year, I know, was a nightmare to us both. But towards the end of 1972 it had grown apparent to Carla and myself that our attitudes were irreconcilable. We parted - not without pain - but at least without bitterness, and I am grateful for the warmth and understanding our friends have bestowed on us in the interim. I was fortunate enough to find Irene just when things were getting really desperate. At that time Irene was still at teachers' college. We decided to pool our meagre resources and take life by the throat - which we did. We are poor but happy. I see my children regularly, and look forward to seeing Carla equally regularly when our divorce is finalised. The rest is hard work and hope. We could have continued our wasteful war for the rest of our lives, but we chose to gamble for something better. Only time and determination will show how it turns out. In the meantime, we are grateful for the kindness and understanding of our friends, particularly those who stood close and silent when the going was really tough. But when the chips are down, you always have to make your own decisions. And we did."

CLEO COVERAGE: The March issue of Cleo magazine, Australia's equivalent of Nova in the UK, and Cosmopolitan in North America, carries a well-researched four-page article by Stephanie Smith entitled 'Science Fiction - or science fact?' Ms Smith seems to have been talking to Bruce Gillespie and John Bangsund, among others. As a result of information from these horses mouths, amateur magazines and fans are given much better treatment than that usually meted out by the media.

BANGSUND BATHROOM : FURTHER DISCLOSURES: In addition to a passage in the above-mentioned article about John Bangsund's ablutory fanzine-factory, more coverage of this portion of his existence is to be found in the January issue of The Australian Author, the quarterly journal of the Australian Society of Authors. John's subject is 'The Fanzine Phenomenon', which is hard enough to explain within fandom but of which he makes a workmanlike job in these circumstances. The article has been reprinted in John's apazine Philosophical Gas, for FAPA, OMPA, and ANZAPA.

ANZAPA? - I hear a cry. This is a regular collection of small personal 'apazines', mailed out together (to save postage) by (currently) Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 74, Balaclava, Vic 3183. The Australia and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association varies around 25 members, and the interchange of comment and discussion among them takes place in the pages of their apazines. The current issue, Mailing 27, has 181 pages, and contains a voting ballot form proposing the frequency be made monthly for a trial period of six months, rather than the present bimonthly. OMPA and FAPA mentioned above are respectively British and American organisations along similar lines to ANZAPA. Leigh will gladly send sample copies for a small fee - say \$1.

A75 FILM FOUND! After a shakedown of such proportions that the Mafia are rumoured to be waiting in line for lessons, Jack Chalker and Ted Pauls have seized the film made in Melbourne to publicise the Australian bid for the 1975 World Convention from its hiding-place for lo, these many moons, namely - oh, I cannot speak its name. The film was shown at Balticon in Baltimore in mid-February, none the worse for its enforced incarceration in the US Post Awful, (consider that unsaid) to a good audience. In the next few months Jack expects it to be shown at Boskone in Boston, Marcon in Columbus, Lunacon in New York, and Disclave in Washington.

ADVENTION 2: This year's Australian National Science Fiction Convention is to be held from Friday 17th to Sunday 19th August at two residential colleges of the University of Adelaide; Lincoln College and St. Anne's College, Brougham Place, Nth. Adelaide. Attending membership is \$4.50 until 1st August or \$6 at the door; supporting \$2; (US \$2.85 - payable to Gary Mason) payable to Advention 2, GPO Box 1583, Adelaide S.A. 5001. Programme and GOH are not yet announced: accommodation is available at \$5 per person bed and breakfast in motel-like accommodation. Ad rates for the programme book have also been announced: \$5.50 a page, \$3 a half for fans and double that for pros. Deadline for receipt of ads is 1st July and sizes are 9" by 7" or 4½" by 7", to allow for margins on the quarto page.

SOLARIS SORTIE: (Lee Harding).

On Monday evening, Jan 30th, a small group of fans braved wind and rain and set forth for the Melbourne University Union Theatre, to view the Russian SF film, SOLARIS, part of a travelling Soviet film festival package. Natalya Bondarchuk, the leading lady of the film and daughter of the leading director Sergei, introduced the film to a packed house.

The film is a reasonable adaptation of Stanislaw Lem's novel. A long film, it is evenly paced in the Russian tradition, starting with scenes on Earth before the departure of Kris for the experimental station on the planet Solaris. My major disappointment was that the producers made no attempt to recreate Lem's marvelously volatile ocean deity, perhaps because they lacked the necessary cinematic technology (or the equivalent of Stanley Kubrick). They wisely chose to concentrate on the human drama, an important part of the novel which Lem - or his translators - never made convincing.

The acting is uniformly excellent. From an outstanding cast, Miss Bondarchuk must be singled out for special praise: her "resurrection" scene is genuinely terrifying. The sets are convincing, and what little we see of the ocean is well done. Unfortunately, a lot of the really important action occurs off-stage, as indeed it does in the book.

It seems that the director was determined to eschew all the traditional space effects, and he succeeds admirably. In one scene - the takeoff of a ferry rocket from inside the space station - the producers demonstrate what they can do when they need to. ((But surely, one of the least scientifically likely scenes of the film? RERJ))

But SOLARIS is definitely a film about people, with some of Lem's scientific polemics vaguely stirred in. There are many memorable moments, and everyone concerned with the project approach their roles with a degree of intelligence unusual for this sort of film. The film is beautiful to watch, and provided you can adjust to the extended timescale, continually interesting. SOLARIS is never boring, but do try to see it in an air-conditioned theatre.

It is doubtful whether the film will ever have a commercial release in this country. We can only hope that the Soviet Embassy will import a print which will be made available for local film societies.

((The Russians appear to have solved the problem of realistic colour film. The colour is excellent in SOLARIS. RERJ))

CHANGES OF ADDRESS: I have been threatened by Alex Robb for getting his new address wrong last time, so here is the authorised version:

Alex Robb, 15A Mona Road, Darling Point, NSW 2027. Alex is selling copies of CARANDAITH 7, the latest issue of Alpaj's beautifully-produced fanzine, for \$1 a copy, and gives his coa as: Alpajpuri, PO Box 28, Vashon, WA 98070, USA.

Other COA's: Shayne McCormack, 147 Toorak Rd, South Yarra, Vic 3141.

Lee Harding, 2/29 Gurner St., St Kilda Vic 3182.

John Breden, 2/900 Hampton St, North Brighton Vic 3186.

VICTORIAN PORN RAIDS: The Victorian Vice Squad, under orders from Ray Meagher, defeated candidate for the premier's seat vacated by Sir Henry Bolte, who took over the position of Dick Hamer as Chief Secretary, has been seizing large amounts of pornographic material recently. One of the victims of the seizure has been Ron Smith, whose Open Leaves Press has been putting out some of the more tasteful material of the genre. The previous Chief Secretary (Minister responsible for the police) had made a de facto agreement with publishers and sellers which has now been upset by Meagher. The previous incumbent just happens to be the present State Premier, Dick Hamer, who is believed to be very embarrassed by the initiative of Chairman Meagher (pronounced Marr) and the display of the Meagher intellect. The porn, by the way, is still pretty softcore by US standards in that the models, like the public, don't seem to be too excited. Evidence of a change on the national level in censorial attitudes is that the controversial new Marlon Brando film, LAST TANGO IN PARIS, is to be shown here uncut. The upcoming Victorian State Elections may hopefully give Meagher his comeuppance.

FANTASY FILM SOCIETY: Next two screenings for members only at the Madeleine, 234 Collins St, Melbourne, are : March 5th - SON OF FRANKENSTEIN and NOSFERATU and April 2nd - BELLE OF THE NINETIES and MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE. Membership should now be renewed(\$2) and there is a screening fee of \$1 per show, payable only through. Space Age Books, 317 Swanston St.

CONTACT is the title of the newsletter of the Philadelphia in 1977 Bidding Committee. I have a limited number of copies of the first issue for Australians who may be interested in a sample of this. Looks like a good place to advertise conventions. Cost is \$1 for 10 in North America, or 5 elsewhere, from Ted Pauls, Committee vice-chairman (Chairman is Don Sobwick), 1448 Meridene Dr, Baltimore MD 21239. He solicits news etc, and may consider trades.

OMPACON, the British Easter Convention, has already attained a membership of 280 and the hotel (the Grand, Bristol) is filling up. Membership is 50p from Fred Hemmings, 20 Beech Rd, Slough SL3 7DQ. Information from CHECKPOINT 30, the fortnightly newszine produced by Peter Roberts, 84 West Town Lane, Bristol BS4 5DZ. I am now Peter's agent in Australia and copies are airmailed for \$1/8. Peter sells NN in Britain at 50p/5 by SAL.

NEW CLARKE NOVEL from Gollancz in June is titled RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA. Given Arthur C. Clarke's residence in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), this may perhaps be thought not SF - but this is given the lie by the blurb quoted in LOCUS 132. He's back in the orbit of Jupiter, with an alien artifact that sounds made for Kubrick: a geometrically perfect cylindersome thirty miles long by twelve across.

HUGO VOTING RULES have scored three resignations from the Committee of the 1973 World SF Convention in Toronto. Mike and Sue Glicksohn and Andy Porter have all resigned so that their respective magazines are eligible for the best fanzine Hugo, and themselves for best fan writer. This from LOCUS, re-valuation rates not yet announced by Aussie agent B.R.Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne 3001. NN agent in USA, LOCUS Pubs, 3400 Ulloa St, San Francisco, CA 94116: \$1/5, \$2/10.
