



R A T A P L A N E L E V E N

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RATAPLAN is produced and edited by Leigh Edmonds of PO Box 74, Balaclava, Victoria 3183, AUSTRALIA for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. Copies are also available for articles, letters of comment, pretty pictures and money (\$1.60 for four issues).

A U S T R A L I A I N ' 7 5

G E O R G E

I N W H I C H D ' A R T I P O I N T R E
S U F F E R S A N U N T I M E L Y R E L A P S

Those faithful readers who read last issue will remember reading about the unfortunate circumstances which lead to D'Arti Pointre's extended stay in hospital. For those who did not read RATAPLAN 10 we will simply say here that Pointre was the victim of a massive psychological shock which he received when reading a copy of RICHARD E. GEIS, it seems that his sensitive nature was profoundly abused by the manner in which Dick Geis chose to write about himself.

Readers of that particular issue will also remember that we were severely distressed by this tragedy and took a pledge not to imitate Mr Geis's extremely personal style. We could not help but feel responsible for Mr Pointre's condition and while we have not been able to see our way clear to pay any medical expenses (Mr William Wright, a life long friend of Mr Pointre is looking after that matter we believe) we have taken upon ourselves the matter of Pointre's happiness while he is in convalescence by paying him frequent visits, taking him flowers and Marvel comics and taking him selected fanzines to read.

As you may appreciate, we have of necessity been very careful to give Mr Pointre only the most wholesome of fanzines, ones which we have personally read through to ensure that not one word of of a disturbing nature is contained therein to offend and abuse Mr Pointre's still recovering sensitive nature. It is true that we have found this to be an extremely time consuming task but we have felt it to be worthwhile because if we were not to do it Mr Pointre might not have had the courage to take up reading fanzines later on and because we felt that the steady reading diet of E.E. Smith and J.W. Campbell which Mr Wright had been feeding Pointre was most unbecoming to his nature.

It was to have been with great pleasure that we announced here that Mr D'Arti Pointre had recovered from his frightful experience and was ready to start work. We know that friends and admirers of his throughout the world have been looking forward to such an announcement, but it is not to be. We have the saddest duty to inform our readers that at the last moment Mr Pointre took a turn for the worse, the doctors are not sure whether he will live at this early stage.

What, we hear you asking, has happened? What has caused this dreadful calamity? We regret to say that the fault is, once more, our own. If it had not been for our unpardonable negligence Mr Pointre would have been well and with us today. It is with unspeakable shame that we must confess that in one case, one single case, we did not read every word of a fanzine we gave Pointre.

The fanzine concerned was Mr Bruce Gillespie's Science Fiction Commentary 30, a fanzine which we had been waiting for for a long time and which, when we received it, felt impelled to pass it straight on to Pointre as something special to celebrate his recovery. We did take the precaution of reading several pages of it, those listed in the index as containing mentions of Leigh Edmonds, and found them quite harmless and even

interesting.

Harmless indeed!! It was reported to us that upon reading several sections of this fanzine Mr Pointre went beserk and had to be controlled by six of the toughest gentlemen employed by the hospital and was of necessity locked in one of the padded cells on the premises reserved especially for poor souls tormented as Pointre is. We have not been able to visit him as yet following his unfortunate relaps but we have had the unhappy experience of standing outside his cell and listening to the pitter-patter of his puny fists as he tries to break his way out of his prison.

As we have already stated, we hold ourselves partly to blame for this turn of events but we feel that Mr Gillespie should also take a share in it too. Afterall it was his fanzine which did this loathsome thing and how were we to know that after twenty-nine issues Gillespie would do a sudden about-face and turn his back on all that is clean and pure in fanzine publishing. Since this unfortunate event we have forced ourselves to read the whole of this issue, the greater part of it we found to be quite harmless but there are sections which sink to the lowest and foulest depths of self-exhibition and worse. We have known Mr Gillespie personally for quite some time and had formed the opinion of him as being a good and clean living fan not given to the excesses of his latest production. We do not believe that he would do this sort of thing if he was in full possession of his faculties.

With this in mind we recently spoke to a friend of ours, a doctor who specialises in rare fannish diseases. In the course of our discussion it turned out that he and we had been thinking along similar lines and in his research he has traced this new virus to the United States of America and further more has isolated the state of Oregon (on the West Coast) as the probable starting point. He has told us that he is working on a cure at this very moment. Dare we hope that his researches will reveal an antidote for this disgusting and loathsome disease before it becomes totally out of controll? We can only hope.

Closer to home, this same friend has told me that he believes he can cure Mr Pointre with a new secret serum he has invented so that by the time you get to read the next issue of RATAPLAN we hope to have Mr Pointre with us again.

S L E E P I N G B E W D Y M A T E

PART I.

Once upon a time a baby girl was born on a station way out in the back of the outback. The parents, James and Elsie Brown, had wanted a boy who could run the station when he grew up and his old man got fed up with it but anyhow (they had a Winfield and) decided that a little girl was better than nothing so they got on the pedal wireless and arranged for a christening. They got the pastor up from the Alice and invited everybody for five hundred miles around, even the poofers from the scientific site over in the ranges because they were dinkum aussies, as much as poofers could be.

The christening party was a do that the folks of the outback would not forget for a long time. By mid morning over four hundred people had arrived and were into their eleventh keg. That was only half of the expected number and the dust caused by the still arriving station folks cars could be seen for thirty miles. Abbo's from eight different tribes put on a combined corroboree in honour of the child and there were demonstarations of Scottish and Irish dancing in front of the home-stead. Out at the stock yards the buckaroos rode wild horses and steers and while the rest of the men were gathered around the kegs the womenfolk worked in the open air kitchen to cook eighty steers and several tons of vegetables into the christening dinner.

The flying doctor 'plane arrived at midday with the pastor and everybody gathered in the front yard waiting for the christening to begin. Just then the poofers arrived in their pink landrover and were welcomed by the crowd with cries like "Piss off yer bloody poofers!" Fortunately these greetings were shouted in friendly manner because if they hadn't many a man would have been punched to pulp. (It's difficult enough to survive as a sexual deviant in too a great a part of todays society but in the outback it is impossible unless you fight exceedingly well. The poofers in this story earned their right to "matehood" in a legendary bar brawl in Mount Isa which had the waiting list to the hospital at an all time record of twenty-seven). Mr Brown made them welcome with overflowing glasses and they told him that they had some presents to give to the child. He jumped up on a keg and yelled for a bit of peace and quiet. The baby was brought out and the first poofter rose:

"Well, as you all know I've got a doctorate in biology and with the serum in this syring I give the baby longliveity," he said as he plunged the needle into the babys' bared bottom. The loud cheering drowned out the crying of the baby.

The second spoke. "I also am a doctor of biology and with this serum I give the baby beauty," he announced as he drove his needle home and the crowd cheered once more.

"I am a specalist in child psychology and with these books I have written the parents may learn to bring the child up with the gift of happiness," the third poofter said as the crowd laughed and cheered as Jim Brown staggered under the weight of several dozen books.

The fourth rose and said, "I have a Masters in geology and with this deed to a claim I have staked out I give the baby a wealth in hydrocarbons and rare metals." Again the crowd cheered.

The fifth and final poofter rose to speak. "I am the....." He got no further because his voice was drowned out by the sound of a chopper coming in to land. The machine was painted black all over and the folks recognised that it belonged to the bad hermit poofter who lived over in the hills by Coopers Creek. Rumor had it that he had studied toxins and para-normal powers at a university in one of the big cities down south and he was not well liked.

The crowd moved back and the chopper landed. Out lept the bad hermit poofter dressed in a black kaftan and wearing white pancake makeup with violent red lipstick on his face. He minced up to the cowering parents and the still crying infant, glowered at them and screeched for all to hear;

"Whaddya mean by not inviting me to this christening. I'll teach you not to

invite me to the biggest thing going on in the area since the Stevens wedding thirteen years ago." He fixed his glare on the baby. "When this kid's eighteen she'll prick herself on a record player needle and die! So there!"

A cry of dismay came from the crowd. Some of the more hardy menfolk moved forward to stop the clad figure but he disposed of them with a few karate chops, climbed into his chopper and flew off.

There was complete silence except for the wailing of the child. The folk stood unmoving, horror on their faces.

"I am the haed of the research establishment," spoke the fifth poofter. "While I or any of my colleagues are not conversant with certain para-normal disciplines and cannot remove the curse, I believe that by obtaining a Commonwealth Grant and instituting a research program at this early stage we will be able to alleviate the effects of it to some extent so that events may reach a happy eventual outcome."

Gradually what he had said sunk in and life and gaiety returned, slowly at first and then with mounting intensity the cheering grew until it reached deafening proportions. One person started and then more and more joined in until the whole crowd sang as one:

"For they are jolly good faries,
For they are jolly good faries,
for they are jolly good faries,
And so say all of us..... etc.

First Intermezzo.

The christening party lasted three days and was the longest running booze-up in the recorded history of the outback. Afterwards not very many people remembered how the bad hermit poofter turned up or his curse and those who did did only as a very vague memory in the midst of the festivities. Somebody with some forethought smashed up the record player and for some reason that neither of them could remember, the Brown's didn't get a new one or allow one to be brought onto the station. Only the poofsters over at the scientific site in the ranges really remembered what had happened as they had had to leave on the second day to do some research on a Martian conjunction. What progress they made on the problem we have yet to learn.

Eighteen years pass quickly and Betty Raquel (for that is what she was christneed) grows from a crying little brat to be a very beautiful, spoiled young woman who is lusted after (successfully most of the time) by men for hundreds of miles around.

And then it was time for her eighteenth birthday party, a modest affair due to the declining fortunes of primary producers.

PART

Several hundred guests had gathered in the front yard making themselves merry with the contents of several score kegs especailly flown in from the south for the occasion. The presents had all been stacked in the Lounge Room for Betty to open later on and everything was set for a good time. Unfortunately the festivities

seemed strained, though people did not know or remember the events of eighteen years ago there was a feeling in the air that something was going to go terribly wrong. Only Betty Brown was not affected, she enjoyed herself as usual.

Getting towards sundown people were beginning to pack it in and think about going home. Everybody had enjoyed themselves well enough, sung 'Happy Birthday', oohed and aaahed the presents (unwrapping them took an hour and a half), danced around a bit and got full but the party never got off the ground.

Night came quickly and the lights of the last car disappeared off in the distance. Betty and her mother were cleaning up the mess of paper and cards in the Lounge room and at the bottom of it all, hidden in a corner, they came across a present they'd missed earlier. It was a big box wrapped in pink paper and mauve ribbons and it had a card which read "A special surprise on your Eighteenth birthday," and was signed "A Friend". It was big and heavy and looked expensive. Betty ripped the paper off in great excitement. Without pausing to read the label on the box she opened it and there, inside, was a beautiful new Japanese stereo record player, turntable, amp and speakers, just like you could buy down in Sydney or Melbourne. How inviting it looked, how she longed to take it out, set it up and play something on it. What a pity she didn't have any records and that the homestead electricity supply was 12 volt D.C.

Her mother looked over her shoulder, recognised what it was, shrieked and fainted. Her father rushed into the room and looked at the stereo system in horror. He snatched up a nearby axe and chopped the machine into a thousand little pieces before Betty could do a thing to stop him. She was outraged. Her mind was filled only with red, vicious thoughts as she snatched up the sadly disfigured tone-arm and attacked her father with it.

A long blood red line appeared on his cheek and he fell to the floor as the deadly poison on the needle began its work.

The rage passed from her as suddenly as it had come. The weapon fell to the floor as she gazed at the bodies of her parents lying there on the floor. "Mother! ... Father!" she cried as she knelt beside them. She felt a slight prick in her knee and she looked down to see the little red mark on her skin which the needle had made before she passed out.

At that moment a tastefully painted Landrover pulled up outside the homestead. The passengers lept out and raced into the house, but they were too late as the bodies and the mess in the Loungeroom silently attested. "Too late! Too late!" one of them cried in despair and the others moved to comfort him with "There there"'s and "It'll be right"'s. The one in the blonde wig and the mini skirt took command of the situation.

"All is not lost, though they are close to death we can yet save them. What we are going to do," he explained, "is to put these darlings into a state of deep sleep which I call 'suspended animation'. Since we don't know the chemical structure of the poison we cannot make up an antidote for it quickly enough and so all we can do is put these people to sleep and keep them asleep until the dread poison wears off. As for Misses Brown, we'll put her under the sleep ray so that she will not be seperated in time from her husband and her daughter. Go and get the suspended animator from the back of the car."

The three strongest scientists went out and within a minute returned staggering

under the weight of a large ray projector mounted on a heavy lead lined box which was the built in power source for the device. Setting the machine up in the corner closest to the door the scientists then put on special protective goggles and began their work.

A high pitched humming filled the room and a beam of yellow light laced with red and green flashes shimmered forth and was focused for a time on each of the three bodies. As this operation was being carried out the Chief Scientist explained what was going to happen. "You see, this suspended animation ray we have invented causes all life functions to cease but keeps the body in exactly the same condition which it was in before the beam was applied. The reason that the body does not die is because we have also perfected a method by which we can imprison the life force of the body within the body even though there is no life, as we understand it, there. This is the reason why these people here will not die of the poison, they have souls and so alive when the effect of the beam wears off whereas the poison, having no soul, will cease to exist."

"You're a genius Doctor Smith," the others exclaimed.

Soon the ray had completed its task and was turned off. Measurements taken by their instruments indicated that to all intents the family was now dead, only the knowledge of the effects of the ray prevented the scientists from thinking that the family was dead.

"There is, ofcourse, only one minor problem with the ray," said the chief scientist, "how do you stop its effect? Fortunately I built into the ray a trigger mechanism which will cut out its effects when a warm moist tactile impression is made to the most sensitive portion of the facial region of the body."

"A kiss on the lips!" one of them exclaimed.

"Why, yes. I hadn't thought about it in that manner."

"And I," began another, "who have been studying para-normal phenomena for the last eighteen years have places a so-called 'spell' on the young woman so that in approximately one hundred years a young man shall come along and apply such a kiss and release her from the effects of the ray."

"Very good," said another. "And now for our reward." And so before they departed, those who were so inclined performed necrophilic acts upon Mr Brown.

Second Intermezzo:

One hundred years is a long time for people to lie around while the rest of the world moves on towards its destiny. In the time which had to pass before a kiss would release Betty from the spell many strange and wondrous things happened, man reached the planets, rebuilt his world and did away with poverty and pollution. He also made an end to war, greed and hate. Unfortunately there was a side effect to all this, not enough people were getting killed and the Earth was in the grip of the terrible 'people pollution' problem.

So it was that by the time one hundred years was almost up Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and a great many other cities had all merged together and occupied about a third of the land area of Australia. This vast megapolis had grown so that it was now within fifty miles of the old Brown homestead which had been long forgotten.

On the day of Betty Browns one hundred and eighteenth birthday a couple of young surveyor happened to be driving near the old homestead while doing work for the new Reid-Murray land development project. The darker and handsomer of the two, a Mr Werty MCLVII, saw an ancient looking structure off to the right and so they decided to go and have a look see.

PART III.

They landed their vehicle in the front yard, stirring up dust undisturbed for a century. Before them was a tumbled down pile of rotting weatherboard and bricks which had once been a proud and happy homestead. They stood for a while silently beside their vehicle, aware perhaps of the age of the place and feeling the loneliness and desolation which was its heritage. But they were not there to participate in the past, they were there to arrange the future. On the ground where this mouldy pile of building materials was standing there would soon be erected a block of luxurious two square OYO flats or a modern two thousand bed hospital or a new rapid transit station or perhaps even an 'Olde Worlde' super-market. No time to stand around and feel a touch of nostalgia, they'd better take a quick look around to see if there would be any troubles in knocking the place down and then get on with their job.

Though the two men were supposed to be at work they played around the ruins like little boys, it was the most exciting place they had ever been, even better than the play houses they had played in at the Bacchus Marsh Citizens Housing Complex Number 57 (an old Bank building where they used to shut their enemies in what was left of the vault). Soon they were pulling away bits of the old walls hunting for ancient artifacts but most of the house had long ago collapsed and the contents rotted and rusted away with the passing of the years. After a while they came to part of the structure which was still standing, a dirty dusty old room with a few pictures still hanging from the walls and bits of furniture which had not completely disintegrated.

All over the floor there were bits and pieces of shattered metal and plastic and the mouldy remains of cardboard boxes, paper and ribbons. Far more interesting than all this were three dust covered large bundles over against one wall. At a distance they looked like piles of old clothes but closer up they took on the vague appearances of people. It was impossible, anybody who had been dead for as long as those piles of dust would have had to be to get that junk covered would have rotted away years ago and yet they really did look like people. With great care Werty brushed away some of the dirt and there was a mans face. He brushed more and soon there was the whole upper part of a man's body looking for all the world as if he had dies not a minute earlier. Impossible!

Without disturbing the other bodies Werty instructed his companion to go at once and get some help. The man went and he stayed to keep watch and to uncover the other two. He finished brushing dust off the man and turned to the next body, his work soon revealed it to be the body of a middle aged woman, probably the mans wife. The last of the three bodies became that of a young woman as he brushed her off. The clothes of the three people had long since rotted away leaving the bare flesh of all three of them looking asif they had not been dead more than a few seconds. The man and the older woman were interesting but the younger woman was something to see, indescribably beautiful and lying there, even in death, her attractiveness was overpowering. Had she but move an inch he would have pleased

himself at her expense without a moments hesitation. But she did not move. The more he looked at her the more unbearable was his agony and before too long he had resolved that he would do it no matter what. He knelt beside her and gazed at her beautiful face. He knelt closer and touched a kiss to her lips, a kiss which seemed to hold magic.

Very suddenly everything seemed magic, this fallen down place, the room and the girl. Something mysterious had brought all this together and it felt only right that he should be there just at that moment. He was not surprised, just happy, when the girl began to breath. His heart lept with excitement when her eyelids fluttered open and she looked at him with her tawny, gold flecked, eyes, reached up and pulled him down onto her.

Postlude.

Everything turned out quite well, all things considered. There was some trouble proving the family right to the land which had been their station property but it was sorted out satisfactorily and they became entitled to receive billions of dollars in rent from the now very valuable land. Betty fell in love with and married Werty MCLVII, they lived happily for the duration of their twelve month marriage contract.

Unfortunately there was the matter of Mr and Mrs Brown. The good poofsters had forgotten to build in any trigger mechanism which would release them from the effects of the suspended animation ray but they are now housed in the National Museum where they are extremely popular with the visitors.

C O M M E N T S 1 4 1

Gregg Calkins: What is your estimate for how much longer the world's petroleum supply will hold out? I have the impression that you've given it somewhere or other but I can't remember if this is so and if it is how long you said. Anyhow, it is obvious that the supply is going to run out sooner or later, I'm just trying to figure out whether or not I should buy a new car (not having the money will probably decide the problem for me). I figure that if a person is going to buy a car they either have to sell it within a couple of years or drive it until it drops and since I would do the latter I'm just wondering which would give in first, petrol or car.

To be truthful about it, Agatha does Valma and I quite well, gets us from one place to the other without too much trouble even though she can't make up her mind about whether she should be in first or third gear sometimes. John Bangsund, however, had the indecency to bring his new car down to Melbourne on his holidays and after having ridden in it Agatha seems to ride like a tin of nuts and bolts with the lid off.

Aiming to do twenty pages a mailing sounds like the sort of good New Years resolution I should have made. My intention is to try and put RATAPLAN in each mailing as well as sending out a few extra copies and since the maximum number of pages you can post for the minimum ammount of money is 24 that is

what I hope to be doing. From the experience I had with the latest SAPS mailing I am beginning to think that not making my intention a New Year resolution was not such a bad idea. See, I resolved to do better in SAPS this year than I had done before (six pages a mailing, no more and no less unless I was really in a bad way) and when it came to hitting the January deadline, not five days after I'd made the resolution, I only got in four very badly written pages.

Maybe my FAPA contributions won't be any better written but the extra pages gives me a better chance under Sturgeons Law.

John D. Berry: It would be my guess that many fans suffer from the same sort of dilemma that you do, you either open yourself up and get hurt or you shut yourself up and that hurts just as bad. Of course when you have shut yourself in you can only blame yourself for what doesn't happen to you but since people are usually quite familiar with themselves they know how they are hurting themselves. Getting hurt by others means that you have to sit and worry about it and try and get it straight in your head, for some strange reason.

It seems that you have been/are fighting your limitations, an admirable thing to do but a thing which I cannot see as being very fruitful in the end when you come down to being like all the other seekers of fame and fortune. Not being as aggressive (probably) as you, I prefer rather to live with my limitations and to give them a gentle nudge here and there every so often so that they move back slowly and painlessly. I am not the same shy selfefacing person I was a year or two ago and if things go on as I would hope I will be able to say the same thing in a year or two. So, okay, I still get hurt by things but the resistance has gone up by gradual small measures instead of by several near-fatal assaults.

And then there is always the feeling in the back of my mind, 'who's fooling who?'

Jack Speer: Your 'Civil War' game has provided me with more entertainment than anything else in the mailing except RICHARD E. GEIS ofcourse. I played it through a couple of times to get the feeling of it and then played it through a couple more time since there wasn't anybody else around to play it with. The South won the first game when Harrisonburgh fell in December 1863. The division at Harrisonburgh was the last Federal division and it had held out at Pittsburgh for three months before marching to Harrisonburgh in the hope of being able to hold out waiting for reinforcements. The South also won the next game when the North ran out of time. Then I went and played a game with Paul Stevens, he was the North and I was the South and time ran out when I had still not completely occupied two of his states.

At first neither Paul nor I thought too much of the game but when we thought about it a bit we were surprised that you had managed to fit so much into such a simple game format. Neither of us know much about the war, I know nothing, but your layout does do a reasonable job of giving a good simulation of how things should go.

We are interested in the more advanced games but not if they take too much longer to play. Paul has a game called 'Luftwaffe' which takes hours to set up and play and we just don't have that much time.

One of the more enjoyable things about FAPA is the vastness, the complexity of the Constitution. Other apas seem to muddle along on a page or so of rules which

nobody worries about anyhow but in FAPA the Consitution is really something. And a good thing it is too, it provides enjoyment and education for the members. In its own sweet way the SAPS constitution is fun to read just to find out what changes the OE has made to it since last time but others are bland, that's the best you can say for them. Bangsund, Stevens and I once rewrote the ANZAPA Constitution but when it came to be voted on all the best parts were deleted, the clause which gave the activity requirement in words instead of pages for example.

Peggy Rae Pavlat: Now that Valma is working for Ron Smith I have come by one of the most interesting pieces of Americana that I hoped ever to see, a US ballot form. You may take this sort of thing quite lightly seeing as how it is your normal ballot form and you get to see them quite often. But to me it was fascinating.

Ron wrote over to whatever part of California he is registered to vote in and got a great stack of forms and booklets but it was only about two days before the election that they came and he couldn't use them. For some reason he showed them to Valma and she gave them to me. Being a person who likes to share things I took all the stuff along to work and we spent a good morning going over it all and trying to make some sense of it.

The most staggering thing of all was the ballot form with eighteen (I think) different proposals of one sort or another (one was to change a law regarding pot). Then there were lots of people standing for election for different jobs and right up in one corner were Nixon, McGovern and Spock. The most enjoyable reading was the little, not so little really, book filled with arguments for and against with rebuttals for and against all the eighteen proposals which I stillhaven't finnished reading. Since Ron would have been an absentee voter I at first assumed that only absentee voters would have gotten the book but that seems stupid because everybody should be informed about such things. So, do all voters get these books? How long before the election do they get them?

Reading further into this issue I find that the little that Lesleigh Luttrell tried to explain to me about US politics did no good at all. The first thing I'd like to know is why should the Democrat Party have to bother about absentee voters in the first place. Lesleigh said something about being a registered Democrat or Republican (Democrat I think) but at that time I assumed she meant she was a member of that political party and now I'm wondering if she meant something totally different. What she might have meant is something that puzzles me. I'm beginning to get the impression that the US Federal and State Governments don't do any worrying about elections at all, they don't keep lists of who can vote and who can't. The parties worry about the lot and all the Governments do is staff the polling booths and count the votes. Perhaps you should explain it to me, carefully.

In Australia the Government takes care of the lot, you can be a member of the Labor Party but it means nothing apart from your interest in what that party works for, and if you are really dedicated you can even distribute 'How to Vote' cards on the day of the election.

Thinking about it a little more it seems to me that whatever it is that you do about getting people to vote in your elections (people canvassing for voters) stems from your non-compulsory election system. It seems that there is something to be said for compulsory voting afterall.

And before I leave the subject there is

another thing I just realised. When an American politician canvasses for votes not only is he asking people to vote for him, he is asking people to vote in the first place. They must have to work a whole lot harder than Australian politicians.

Roy Tackett: When Nixon got re-elected I began to feel more happy about living in Australia, McMahon might have been an A-grade twit but luckily he wasn't even good enough to screw the country up properly. Anything that was bad had just sort of grown that way over the years. Nixon was and is really working at it.

I'll have to remember to ask John Foyster sometime if he ever thought about resigning his Australian citizenship, maybe he was just hanging on until Labor got elected and Australia, atleast, could get out of the war and express official dislike of it. I hear tell that the Labor Government is thinking of setting up an embassy in Hanoi, far out! It figures I guess, we've recognised Communist China and East Germany in the last month and a bit so we may as well go all the way with it. One wonders if there is any need to go too all the trouble just to make up for having fought against them for years. Then again, if we are going to be fair about the whole thing we can't have an embassy in Sigon unless we have one in Hanoi just to even things up.

The two articles on E.E. Smith are very much appreciated. I'm supposed to be doing some kind of program item about him for the EasterCon at Easter (naturally) and now I know where to get all my learned insights from. The trouble with having to talk about E.E. Smith is that you have to read his books. Well, the "lensman" series is okay, infact I'm enjoying it much better on the third reading than I had anticipated but it's not that good (I'm reading Thomas Mann's "Doctor Faustus" at the same time so that, as you may well imagine, Mann looks to me to be the best writer of all time just now). Paul Stevens tells me that I've also got to read "Galaxy Primes" and "The Vortex Blaster" which I will do if I can stomach that much Smith but I am standing very strongly in my refusal to not even touch any of the "Skylark" series let alone read any of them.

I assume that the British system of filing fees to stand for election is the same kind as we have in Australia, it should be 'cause that where we got most of our Government ideas from. The percentage of votes you have to get to get your money back is quite high, high enough so that if you're not running on behalf of the two big parties you may as well kiss it goodbye as you hand it over. It's something like \$100 of \$150 so that while it's a fair sum it isn't enough to stop people putting it up as several hundred doevery election. Hmmm, I suppose that it does its little bit to cover the cost of putting an election on. How much does it cost to put on an election?

Jerry Lapidus: What will be the outcome of the theatre work you are doing at Syracuse? From the way you write about what you are doing and the way Valma drools when she reads it (Lapidus fanzines are about the only ones Valma reads) I guess that you are into something really good. But what happens when you have finnished the course? There must be millions of Actors in the US so how do you go about getting jobs?

Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell: The reason I got on the FAPA waiting list was because at the time it was the 'done thing' and because I was making provision for my fannish old age. At the time John Foyster took great delight in saying that it was a seven year wait and I only had to wait five which

isn't so bad but perhaps it's a little earlier than I would have liked. On the other hand, I'm not going to complain about something like the 141st mailing.

I've been trying to type these comments while I've been listening to the radio and I haven't been too good at either. It's a pity that I have to get these comments done just now because I've been having such a good time listening. What I've been listening to is the broadcast of the goings on in the House of Representatives, Doug Anthony (the leader of the Country Party talking against the proposals to change the electoral boundaries. Good stuff and it gives me some sort of idea about what goes on up there in Canberra.

They tell me that they don't broadcast the proceedings of Congress in the US which is a real pity, the US people could probably do with the education. Earlier on I heard a proposal that some of the proceedings in Canberra should be televised. If it comes through it should be really good fun and it would do wonders for the ABC's Australian quota (even though they would be the last telly channel that would need to worry about it).

THE WILLARD R. BISCUIT NEWSLETTER: It is true, I have to admit, that some Australian fans do actually drink Bheer. Fortunately they do it in the privacy of their own homes and don't present me with the disgusting spectacle of pouring the vile liquid down their throats. Paul Stevens is practically the only exception but since I had the ~~BLEASHEE~~.... uh, lived with him for a while, I guess that he thinks he can get away with it. Other, more cultured fans, drink wine or spirits which are more in keeping with a fannish existence. Off hand I'd say that the red and white wines provided by Henry down at Degraeves Tavern are the most often consumed fannish intoxicants followed on by several brands of booze which have been authorised by Lee Harding and John Bangsund.

What this has to do with one-shots may appear to be marginal but anybody who has participated in the production of a really decent one-shot will know exactly how important good booze is to the process.

I understand that in his time John Foyster has taken part in the production of more than one one-shot and perhaps Bruce Gillespie has too. How they can manage it is beyond me though from an experience many moons ago I suspect that John Foyster is a contact-drinker. There I was gazing drunkenly over a typer after a very enjoyable party and there was John Foyster gazing vaguely back and I could have sworn... but no.

Milt Stevens: There's not much that I can say about this beautifully detailed account of what you did for and at LACon. As far as I (and other members of the AUSTRALIA IN '75 Committee) am concerned, the main value of the whole report is that it points out thousands of little things that you have to do when you put on a big convention. And you have a dry but captivating writing style which makes me wish that your 20 pages went a lot further.

Don & Maggie Thompson: Seeing as how you amused me so much with some of the letters to Action Line and other bits and pieces that

I feel impelled to share with you a little joke that has been going around at work recently. I feel that maybe you won't understand it but that's the price you have to pay for living in the US.

It goes like this. You rush up to somebody and say; "Did you hear, Sonia tried to kill herself?" They look at you aghast, "What!" "Yes," you say, "She threw herself underneath Puffing Billy."

Australian readers will know what it is all about, John Bangsund is herewith appointed as Overseas Explainer.

Harry Warner: The idea of putting Paganini in the future is a good one but I'd wonder if he would be such an incredible violinist even these days when standards are so high. I've kinda wanted to write a story about bringing Beethoven into the present and restoring his hearing. Then taking him along to a performance of his late quartets where he gets all upset because they aren't being played right. Well, he must have had an incredible mind-ear for music but I'm sure that for all that he must have written the music a bit different from how he heard it.

I was walking down the street today to post a letter at the GPO when I happened to look up and glimps the new MLC building on the corner of Elizabeth and Collins streets. Suddenly it occurred to me that in the five short years since my Grandmother has died the city of Melbourne has gone through some pretty fantastic changes and if she were let loose in it today she might just get lost. They seem to be pulling down great chunks of Melbourne and putting up new office buildings at an amazing rate. Up towards the far end of Elizabeth street I noticed the other day that vast chunks of single story shops have been pulled down and though I must have looked at them hundreds of times I can't remember anything about them. For that matter I can't even remember what the old MLC building used to look like even though I used to walk past it twice every day. I don't mind people pulling down old buildings, I just wish that somebody could invent a way to project some kind of image there every so often just so that you could be reminded about what a place used to look like.

Richard Geis: I seem to agree with Harry Warner in expecting that at any moment something absolutely cataclysmic will happen to you and REG will reach it's climax, and that will be the end of the story. The whole thing is a series of ups but they don't go anywhere which is a pity but I guess we have to live with it. This issue didn't make me feel this unresolvedness as much as previous issues, for the reason I suppose, that nothing very exciting happened to you in the time it took to turn the pages. I missed the excitement but it made the whole issue a lot easier to read - no expectations. I liked the fiction, a very nice idea of a future world and the potential for development of the character is good.

Well, it looks like I'm not going to get to finish of the mailing comments, I'm about at the end of my allotment of pages. That's what comes from starting at both ends of a fanzine at the same time, you meet in the middle and you find that you've run out of room.

Not that it matters much anyhow, I seem to have reached the stage where I'm all dried up as far as mailing comments goes. There's nothing quite so frustrating as sitting looking at a copy of Horizons and knowing that there were a thousand and one things you wanted to comment on the first time you read it but not being able to find any now.

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THE WIT AND HUMOR OF ED CAGLE

The feeling of being entirely alone whilst amused to the point of hilarity in public is not something I am a stranger to, (although I do seem to be no more than a nodding acquaintance of grammar judging by this first sentence).

Whatever, while attending the High School Christmas Program on 22nd of December, in which my eldest son played his expensive horn in the band while all around 14-18 year old's played and sung to their tone-deaf ear's content, I became attentive to the gyrations of the "Music Director" as he "led the band". The piece they were playing was a 'mood' piece of martial christmas music....or something....it's hard to say, and often there would occur a period of near silence. At times it was obvious from the shuffling of sheet music that this was not a planned pause, but at other times all but a few unlucky members of the band sat around looking at each other and giggling until it was time to stuff the mouthpiece in and continue the blaring parts. During one of the 'planned' quiet passages, when only one rather wavery flute was holding sway, I happened to be at that point in my observations of the Director's wild baton-swinging that made it impossible not to speak up. (It was either that or laugh out loud.) There was this tiny little girl, obviously scared shitless, and not much of a flutist either, making pathetic noises, and this fat bastard standing over her swinging that little sliver like he was in a swarm of hornets with his drawers down. The man was an absolute flurry of motion! I had to say "You hit that little girl and I'll hit you with a chair!" As I said before, it was either say something or laugh, and I didn't want to embarrass the little girl. Be that as it may, he paused momentarily, while everyone else chuckled (even the little girl) and then suddenly began to pierce the air once more with his limber baton, only to cast it high into the air in an arc that put it within reach of the kid on drums, who bent at once to retrieve it and toss it back. The only damage was to my ribs, where my wife elbowed me (it's an old and frequently re-opened wound).

The moment of true hilarity (which affected only me) came when the Director sought to thresh the band into mournful wails anew, and for a few moments all that could be heard was the swish of his coat sleeves against his (assumedly) damp torso. It occurred to me at that silent moment that I was hearing a man direct himself in a Fuge for Coatsleeve and Pocket, and needless to say I cracked up, broke down, just roared with laughter. I suppose you would have done the same. We must be outcasts.

You have never heard me sing and play the guitar, hence you are not aware of certain musical moments in which there is great mirthful possibility. It is also a matter of record that my musical performances are most hilarious when I make an all-out attempt to sing and play with great and glorious perfection, which should indicate that there is mirth to be had from the efforts of even the most dedicated and skilled musicians. To me there's a risk of failure in the overt attempts of performers to actually elicit chuckles from their audiences, and thereby there is a certain diluting of the effect. When a veddy serious performer arises and belts out something ludicrous, there is no weakening of the effect due to the chuckle having been his quest, and therefore I go bugshit laughing at the pathetic nature of the situation. I'm crude and tastless that way. But there are times when I just must laugh, or risk blowing

out both my eardrums. Also....and you may be aware of this phenomenon....to make a desperate effort to contain an overwhelming urge to guffaw at the wrong moment will naturally result in an overwhelming increase in internal bodily pressure, and, as these moments usually arrive in periods of deep silence, I consider it a far better thing to chuckle at the wrong moment than to fart.

When a young and hard-petered child of 21 or so, I used to associate with a similarly lecherous and drunked feller my own age whose parents were, to be blunt about it, filthy rich. My abiding interest was his sister, but that's another matter.. Whatever, said male friend was against wealth by inheritance, and had chosen to make his own way in the world. At that time he was going to college and working in a laboratory where they made dentures and bridges, of all shapes and descriptions, for dentists. Odd enough thing for a rich kid. Not long after I became acquainted with this strange person he lost the remaining few teeth in the front of his mouth (in a bar in New Orleans during Madis Gras... we were... shall we say... engaged in a slight disagreement with the locals). Needless to say he acquired a perfectly handsome set of front teeth free where he worked, but he was never one to be satisfied with mere satisfaction of need. He proceeded to make himself a curious array of bridges - all custom fitted to his rather scarred mouth - which featured teeth unlike those one ordinarily sees in the mouth of a human being, and not often in animals. One set was, of course vampire fangs and were sutially frightening to small children and young nubile girls. However, he also had a set which looked like the teeth very small children draw in pictures with crayons - sawteeth, more or less. Another set consisted entirely of green (glowing green) teeth. No amount of words here can tell you the expression on some unsuspecting merchant's face when my friend would, in the act of making a purchase, suddenly turn on a wide open-mouthed grin to reveal green teeth. (Store clerks would also pause for a moment when he flashed his vampire fangs at them.) Then of course he had a set of utterly revolting, rotted looking snags, which I never did appreciate. There was a bridge with very large teeth, which were hinged at the gim line and which he could push out with his toung to a 90 degree angle. Very distracting. Be that as it may... I think that Paul (Bat) Stevens might have enjoyed meeting my friend.

* * *

DEPARTMENT 85

Gary Grady
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I have floated around on the borders of fandom for some time (since the mid-sixties, anyway), but I was never aware that Katz was so overbearing a bnf as you make him out to be. I have heard it argued back and forth that certain bnf's pass judgement on neos, but my impression is that (1) it is probably human nature on the part of the bnf's and (2) who gives a damn?

At any rate, I can't say that I like people who treat fandom as an elite and a rabble - I leave that

kind of thing up to the old world.

((L.E. Indeed, who does give a damn? A lot of fans I expect. Anyhow, I don't seem to remember coming down on Arnie Katz like a ton of bricks and I suspect that I didn't come down on him at all. Mike Glickshon had a little to say but he knows Arnie to say hello. to in the street and I don't so I guess he would know what he had written about and I'm just taking things on hearsay. Anyhow, I seem to remember reading somewhere in a comment on RATAPLAN 10 that Mike and Arnie had patched up whatever differences they had which is good news.

But, who really does care about what a bnf says. A lot of people obviously. If it came to your ears that some bnf or another thought that what you were doing was a load of bull dust would you just pass it off with a shrug or get annoyed with such a fan presuming to pass judgement on you or perhaps even decide to do a higher class of bull dust in the future. I'm sure that not many people really ignore comments that others pass on them and especially when these people are more highly thought of than you are. If we consider fandom to be some sort of peer group (with a hderachy of sorts to be sure) it would be the exception rather than the rule to have people just ignoring the comments of others.))

A remark lifted out of context from the PBS tv series AN AMERICAN FAMILY pretty much carries my impression of RICHARD E. GEIS: "I was amused some of the time and I was bored some of the time, but most of the time I was just embarrassed." I haven't seen an issue of REG in a while. Last time I corresponded with Geis he was quoting economic theory out of a John Birch Society pamphlet. When I and another chap wrote in to discuss the matter (in a perfectly civil, respectful manner), Geis called us both idiots and hasn't sent me anything since. Oh, well.

The list of records on page 14 interests me. Why not give your reasons? Not too many people are in APA 45.

((L.E. Gee, that would be a hard thing to do and I'm not good enough to write about music as well as I'd need to to be able to explain myself. Even so I can explain easily enough the inclusion of Mozart's 23rd Piano Concerto and the 40th symphony by just re-quoting the quote that John Bangsund put in an issue of SKYTHROB a couple of years ago, something about there being nothing perfect in this world except Mozart's music. Including the Beethoven 9th Symphony in the list was obvious, any list of the top ten works of serious music cannot be complete without it. Shostakovich is the composer closest to my heart, his music is the music which comes closest to expressing me and that will probably be the way things will continue until I get to write some decent music myself. The 1st Violin Concerto is a beautiful work, the third movement (the Passacaglia) is... well simple words just don't go that far which is why, I guess, people write and perform music in the first place. The 4th string quartet is like listening to myself in a mirror. Britten's Peter Grimes got on the list because it is my favourite opera, some Schubert Leider (actually almost any record of good leide would do) because Schubert's purity - the spiritual purity of just about any leide - is something you can't live without, Mahler's "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" (though it could just as easily be "Das Leid von der Erde" except that "Wunderhorn" is easier to listen to) for Mahler's wonderfully decadent romantacism and Stockhausen's piece made it onto the list simply because it

staggers me every time I listen to it. I don't know what's going on and I don't know how it's done but it drags me into it every time. The same could be said for Berio's "Laberintus 2" but I haven't had the chance to sit and listen to it very much yet.

The "Essential Beatles" was also on the list because the list was only ten records long and I couldn't fit all the Beatles records on it.))

I keep hearing about an AUSSIEFAN film. Enlighten me.

((L.E. Better than me enlightening you, go along to Disclave, Midwestcon or Westercon where it will be shown and you can see for yourself. In all modesty, and as I'm one of the persons in the film who suffers from a rather sad demise I can speak personally, it is quite an entertaining little bit of film and you should enjoy it.))

My god! Phone calls for 5c in Australia!! Which way to the boat?

((L.E. Not so fast. True, it only costs you 5c to make a local phone call but before you get a 'phone to make these cheap calls from you have to spend money and you have to keep spending money to keep your phone even if you don't use it. I forget the actual price for getting the 'phone connected up, it is probably somewhere around \$50-\$60. Then you have to pay a rental charge of something like \$26 for every six months. Then you can start making calls for 5c.))

WAHF: What, after only one letter. Yeah, I know, you wouldn't read about it; but you are.

John Snowden says; "In my tentacle (would you believe hand?) I hold that mighty fannish masterpiece known as Rataplan 10. Was that fanzine meant to self-destruct? When I tried to pull out the staples it fell apart on me."

Helen

Hyde said much the same thing.

So did Ken Ford.

So I went out and bought a bigger and better stapler. No complaints this time, ta.

In the 27th ANZAPA mailing I wrote a little comment to David Grigg about John Bangsund which went something like this:

The exciting thing about John Bangsund, if you can call it exciting, is that he can get worked up about virtually nothing and then remain absolutely unmoved by an absolute cyclone. And that, as we all know, is unnatural. A comparison between this issue of SKYTHROB and any issue of REG could be said to be interesting. Dick Geis is supposed, so the fanzine reviewers tell me, to be writing about himself and we are supposed to be able to see his poor little soul pattering away there where the scalple has laid the flesh bare. That might just be the case but alongside SKYTHROB, REG is just somebody writing about what happens to himself, it's all put down but it doesn't matter much.

Now, when John sets himself down on paper he makes the paper come alive with himself. Some of the stuff in the latest issue was about nothing in particular but when John was through with it you really couldn't believe that such things could happen. Dick Geis wrote about his adventures with C___ and it was pretty torrid stuff but it really didn't matter much to me. Maybe I'm just

biased, I know Bangsund but I don't know Geis.

Just a sort of half thought (do I ever have any other kind) to fill up the bottom of the page. So then I was, as you may understand, more than a little surprised to get a very nice little letter from John just a couple of days ago.

Dear Leigh,

This morning I read all that great stuff about you in SFC 33, and I have just listened to Shostakovich's 14th (purchased yesterday on the strength of one hearing at your place) - which is superb. These things remind me to write to you and thank you for your kind words in Sugar Tooth 14.

Do you know, I think the Americans must imagine Dick Geis to be just about the greatest thing to ever hit fandom: REG seems to have left them utterly gasping. He has his moments, sure, but I now find him so formula-dull that I didn't finish reading no. 3 - and I'm afraid that I've said as much in FAPA (there went another friend...).

I've been thinking a lot lately about differences in taste - and especially the oddness and unpredictability (to me) of American tastes. Bruce could write "Bangsund is the best fan writer in the world" on the cover of his next issue, and fill the thing with my best stuff, and I believe that the Americans would still prefer Geis. Also, I don't agree with Bruce. My taste, you see. I think Jim Turner and Gary Deindorfer, just to name two, write rings around me; so do Barrett and Brosnan, when they feel like it. George Turner is probably the best fan writer, but no-one would think of saying so, and he wouldn't like it if they did. Bruce has his own taste; I agree entirely with Aldiss about Probability A and Soldier Erect, for example.

I haven't seen anything written by Gary Deindorfer so I can't comment but I agree with John that Jim Turner is an excellent writer, not better than John, different. Jim's piece is Cowboy Angle 2 is actually quite crudely written but the ideas in it are something else again. You could probably say that Jim writes following a science fiction style (ideas are what count) while John has a very literary style, the writing style is superbly carried through so that the intensity with which he feels, or does not feel, a situation is expressed very powerfully. At one time I said that John used to cloud over an issue with the words he used but now he has gotten over this and his ability to use words has become his ally rather than his foe.

This is not to say that John is my favourite fan writer, my favourites are David Grigg and Leigh Edmonds. David Grigg because he writes superbly within his limited framework of ability and experience and Leigh Edmonds because I agree with him, all the time.

* * *

And now, something which we haven't done in RATAPLAN since issue 3, fanzine reviews. I went and checked up to see when I last did reviews and it was really a shock, reviews of CRY 177, QUIP 9 and LOCUS 10 ("this is a news-zine, and a pretty good one at that. Perhaps it is not as good as the late SF Weekly, and it comes out only half as often, but still, it is a lot of fun and very informative. The lead article tells us that Dick Geis is going to change the name of his fanzine from PSYCHOTIC to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW and takes great

pains to tell us that this is not a hoax.) Anyhow*... Have some fanzine reviews.

C H E A P C H I P P Y C H O P P E R

LOCUS 134 - Charlie and Dena Brown but the Australian agent is Bruce Gillespie who charges some exorbitant sum for a subscription.

Interesting after a fashion. Informative if you want to know what publishers are putting out which books and what are the contents of the magazines to come out in three months time.

GRANFALLOON 16 - Linda and Ron Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, PA 19076, US of A. \$1 an issue or \$2 for 3 issues.

A person who shall remain nameless was heard to remark when first he looked upon this issue one night at Degraives, "Guess who's going after a Hugo this year?" Now you see why that person must remain nameless, uttering such shamelessly slanderous remarks against two perfectly nice faneds who would never think of stooping so low as to actually try and win a Hugo by such an elaborate method as producing a pretty fanzine with nicely written material. I prefer to think that Ron and Linda are just trying to produce the best fanzine they possibly can. If this is only the case then I think it is a pity that they and I don't agree on what a good fanzine is.

At first I tend to think of GRANNY 16 as the biggest non-fanzine I've seen so far this year but then I remember the Glickshon article and Glencannon and then Brink and then even Linda's editorial and I realise that there is really a lot of good writing in the issue. I'm not much for pictures but I admit freely that I liked what was in this issue, I wouldn't spend all that much money on getting portfolios done but this one is quite nice as are just about all the other pictures. They are even inserted well into the text if that sort of thing interests you.

Then, if everything in the issue is so nice, howcome I still think of this issue as being a massive non-event. Perhaps a thing that would do some good would be if Linda and Ron threw away their GRANNY recipe and tried a bit of, uh, free form publishing. GRANNY looks and reads as if it were edited to a formula and while I'm not going to knock formulas that work I don't like formulas that have a fanzine coming out looking like a body after the undertaker has finished with it, beautiful but deceased.

COWBOY ANGEL 2 - Doug Carroll, Hotel Tipton, Tipton, Mo 65081, US of A.

Good Stuff, Jim Turner turns it on good and proper with his unbegun and unfinished serial about inhuman torture and people hiding behind masks of deceit and sorrow. The letters are good and interesting and the other article and the editorial pass the time in a satisfactory manner. This is not what you could ever call a top class fanzine but it does what most faneds set out to do, provide entertainment and material for discussion.

S O N O F A N Z A P A C O L L A T I N G P A R T Y

There was a knock at the door and when I went to answer it there was Bill Wright with a flagon of white wine, a very nice white wine from the Celar de Henrie. Ken Ford knocked next and before I could help myself I said those immortal words, "Let's do a One-Shot!" So we did, and that's what comes next.

t h e t h r e e w i t h o n e b l o w o n e s h o t p a r t o n e

To celebrate the occasion upon which Bill Wright, Leigh Edmonds and Ken Ford were all in the same place at the one time a stencil was placed in a typewriter and people beat upon the keys of the typer to produce the following fine results.

Once every two months the Edmonds home rings to the happy sound of an ANZAPA collating party. This time around, however, I (being Leigh Edmonds) did the collating all by my little self and so when the willing helpers arrived there was nothing for them to do but to sit down and read the mailing. This is a decidedly unproductive and anti-social activity and so with a flash of inspiration I said "Let's do a one-shot" and that is what we are doing. There is a little trouble in rousing the others to activity unfortunately, Bill is sitting in the Living room reading the ANZAPA mailing and Ken is sitting next to me reading the FAPA mailing 141. Bill, being a thoughtful person brought along a flagon of white wine and with it's potonet aid we will soon be in action.

And then he hands the one shot over to me. 'Whose it for?' I asked. 'Just about everybody,' says the Edmonds. Welllllll, my little mind immediately thinks that now I have the opportunity to tell the world how to go about its business.

STEP ONE: Disregard pain. Disregard meaning. Disregard me and what I am saying.

STEP TWO: Disregard Bill Wright.

STEP THREE: When your through with all that disregarding, go out to a movie and disregard what the director is saying, and what the hero is doing, and what your friendly sex symbol is doing.

STEP FOUR: When you are finished with the movies, do the same with a book, the telly, a song, and your pet cat.

STEP FIVE: If you run out of things to disregard, disregard this one shot.

FINAL STEP: Publish a fanzine and disregard any letters of comment on it.

You have now achieved the Ken Ford 6 point plan of Awareness.

And now to Bill.....

In Ken Ford's ANZAPA mailing comments he wonders what the Americans thought of me picking up all those betting tickets off the ground at the Albuquerque races. Little does he know that all forty of the \$2.00 tickets circulated through the 26th mailing were legitimate personal purchases from the parimutuel ticket window. I would like to say that I have never been guilty of picking up betting tickets off the ground in the hope of collecting a dividend .. but unfortunately I cannot. Nevertheless, all the tickets I circulated through ANZAPA were for real. So there!

Hey! I've just thought of someting. It's best not to drop out unless you can afford to drop back in again.

Bill is now playing Leigh's piano and I am trying to keep in time with the music. The piece he is playing is perhaps the only piece he knows of by heart. In fact, everytime I hear Bill on the piano he plays that one piece. It is Beethoven's Bouree in F.

With a good piono it would sound very good.

Bill is so versatile.

Leigh Here: Bill may be versatile but the white is taking it's toll and his fingers seem to be deserting him. Perhaps it is that he is not so familiar with Chopin. Whenever Bill comes around he ends up at the piano and sits there playing bits and pieces enoughto make me go green with envy.

Bill, Ken and I seemed for a time there to get distracted from what we were doing and discussed the publication of a fanzine to be totled "A Patten the Back" which may or may not come to fruition.

This is Bill Wright again, and I want to tell you about the wedding I attended in America between Superman and Lois Lane. Among the guests were Batman and Robin, Green Arrow and Speedy, Aquaman and Aquaboy ... "What a queer wedding !" somebody remarked. At the consummation of the ceromony, the happy couple revealed to the assembled company their Secret Identities. Superman disclosed his identity as Clark Kent, and Lois Lane revealed herself as ... Jimmy Olsen.

Have you got a soft stomach ? Then that is a great pity, because there are are a great many people in the community just waiting to bash you. Here is a good early morning exercise for strengthening the tummy muscles, provided that you don't drink too much.

Lie face up on the bed and put your hands behind your head. Then raise the front part of your body up as far as you can go whilst keeping your legs straight (keeping your hands behind your head, of course). Then gradually return to a prone position on the mattress. Repeat twenty times.

If this exercise is faithfully performed every morning and every evening for six months, then I will guarantee that you need not fear being bashed .. at least in the stomach.

Back to Leigh again and I can only wonder what sort of exercise Bill would propose to protect one from being bashed in the head. Off hand I can think of something having to do with wriggling your ears in a contr-clockwise manner for fifteen minutes whilst frowning intently. Would pretending to be crosseyed be of any use?

Whilst Ken and Bill are out in the Living room trying to sort out Jack Speer's 'Civil War' game I sit in here and type this trying to ignore the converstaion between them as they try to work out how the game is played. Ken Knows a very little about the game and Bill knows even less so the results should be interesting. I fear that Bill will not appreciate my devious strategy for the defence of the South and all will be lost in double quick time.

At the end of the above statment I was called upon to act as an International Peace Commission at the end of 1862 to tell the combatants who ended up with how many new divisions. Ken is playing the North at this moment and I now call upon him to take his place at the typer while I go and take his place in the field.

Thank you Leigh, and I think that I was winning. But I was having a bit of trouble getting divisions down to the front. I was also trying to contain myself into not telling Bill the wrong rules. If you can't win a war by fair means, win it by foul.

And speaking of chooks, how fares the chicken-sexer in today's almost chicken-less society? One has heard that you can tell by the feathers.

And how about sexing fans. The law of averages tells that at least one in five is a male. Does that mean that fans are four times more butch than chicken-sexers?

One can only wonder.

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