

ANVIL 32

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HAMMER AND TONGS

After moaning lastish about not having any articles, I am suddenly inundated with them, including two burbling around in my own gray matter, which may or may not make it to these pages.

First off, we'd like to draw your attention to our brand new regular columnist... Buck Coulson. In this introductory column he proves once again that if you want something done, ask a busy person. We had discussed via the mails what to call this column in ANVIL. I rather leaned toward a name in keeping with the other regular features, tieing it all together with Birmingham's reputation as a steel town. Buck said he usually took column names from folk songs, and named a few. The only problem is that folk songs, concerning steel and iron anyway, are usually names of persons... "John Henry" and "Peter Grubb", for instance. I almost opted for 'Down in the Valley"... (Valley so low... hear that wind blow, dear, hear that wind blow. Write me a letter, send it by mail. Send it in care of... the Birmingham jail.") Buck, too, got carried away and quoted lyrics in his letter, and the "Peter Grubb" lyrics spoke to me... "Peter Grubb, the old ironmaster, had nine chimneys black with haze...) Well, if Buck doesn't mind being called "old" (I'm sure he won't argue with the "master" part), then "The Old Ironmaster" it is. So let it be written, so let it be done. Welcome to the pages of ANVIL, Buck.

An example of be careful what you ask for, you might get it" is Marc Ortlieb's article. You know, Marc is such a nice guy, not at all the noncomformist some fans are... he's a traditionalist, really founder of the League for Fannish Decemcy, and all that. He's getting married, for crying out loud. None of this living-in-sin business for good ole Marc. Then why, I ask you, does he write such crude articles? Marc, knowing the goodie-two-shoes stance ANVIL usually takes, said in his cover letter that "if this is too gross for ANVIL, then send it on to Holier Than Thou". (Fat Chance. I'd lower my standards first.) So I rationalized. Harumph. Well, let's see. Ah... this is an educational article. Ghod forbid US fans, when we go to AussieCon II, should not know how to make ourselves understood when we have to go to the bathroom. (Marc says never ask where the bathroom is... they might tell us and like as not it doesn't contain what we really wanted.) It is informative, instructing us in facets of Australian Culture. There's nothing wrong with being plain-spoken; Marc tells us what all the words mean, so we won't be embarrassed by asking 'What's a dunney?" in the middle of a group of people we had hoped to impress with our sophistication and urbanity.

Well, I finally talked myself into it. Marc's article goes in.

THE OLDEST PROFESSION

EROS ASCENDING by Mike Resnick (Phantasia Press, 1984), 217 pp. \$17.00

Welcome to the Velvet Comet, "the most luxurious brothel in the galaxy, complete with gournet restaurants, bars, nightclubs, elegant shopping mall, resplendent suites and fantasy rooms." The time is the unspecified far future. The place is a man-made satellite obriting the planet Charlemagne. With this, the first of four books in the "Tales of the Velvet Comet" series, Mike Resnick has written a free-standing novel (thank you, no tetralogies today!) that is engaging, entertaining and stimulating, (in the best sense of that word).

It is a sign of how far science fiction has come that we can have a novel that deals with commercialized six that: (1) can be published and (2) can deal with such a subject matter in a non-titillating fashion. It may be a letdown to some readers, but this is only an "R" rated novel. Unlike "adult" films, the human sexuality involved in the background of this novel is handled with maturity. The book is concerned with larger issues of power, ethics and human love and the brothel is the context for a good story about a man who found that he still had some principles left after leading an unprincipled existence.

The man, Harry Redwine, is an accountant sent by a mysterious and unidentified corporate executive in the Vainmill Syndicate, the owner of the Velvet Comet, to visit the brothel and tamper with its computerized accounting records so that a regular audit will show that it is losing money. The result will be a shift in the corporate power structure of Vainmill, as one executive is disgraced. Harry was experienced at such sabotage. His employer had moved him into other subsidiaries previously to do his (or her) dirty work. He was so good at it, that companies could fail and no one would make the connection between the collapse and Harry's visit months beforehand. Harry made a mistake this time. He fell in love.

It was a mistake because the woman he fell in love with was the madam of the Velvet Comet, the Leather Madonna. There is an amusing story about how she recevied her sobriquet, which was not descriptive. The romance is credible and refreshing. He is a middle-aged, lonely bachelor and she is a level-headed, hard-nosed businesswoman. I cannot explain why they fell in love, but I can say that I did not inwardly groan, "I don't believe this." at any point. If you wonder how beautiful the Leather Madonna is, just get a look at the wrap-around cover illustration by Kevin Eugene Johnson. It has to be the knock-out cover painting of the year. She is poised on the other side of a chess table from one of her "girls", Suma, a sexual super-star who wants the Madonna's job. Suma is the one who is practically nude. Don't forget to look at the chess table. It's beautiful, too.

The plot structure is relatively simple. It is a story of how Harry must avoid destroying the Velvet Comet and also avoid being replaced and/or killed by the bad guys, his former associates. There is an old vaudeville saying that you should always leave the audience wanting more. This is not a long novel. It is a fast paced story with little narrative "fat" and so I finished it wanting more. I was intrigued by the universe that Resnick had created and I am looking forward to the next book, EROS AT ZENITH.

I hesitate to go into very many plot details because I do not want to spoil the suspense for the reader. However, I am not giving much away by saying that Harry wins the battle and loses everything in the process, except his principles. I think that it was apparant at the beginning that : Harry would pull off his doublecross. (It also helps to know that the Velvet Comet has to be around for another three books.) The suspense is in what he must go through to pull it off. The ending was satisfying. It was consistent with the rest of the story and flowed from its internal logic.

I have been going back over the novel looking for any SIGNIFICANT passages. But it is not that kind of book. There are no great prose passages. The novel is a well written narrative. It is an intriguing story based upon the premise of "What is prostitution was legalized, run by a large conglomerate and located in outer space?" It serves the function of any good science fiction in giving us a little more insight into humanity.

The book will get a lot of attention because of the sexual content. Hopefully, readers will go beyond that and see what the novel is showing us about morality. Morality is not principally involved with sexual conduct, despite what we have been taught since the Victorian period. I would like to think that morality is more closely linked to individual ethics. A corporation, like the Vainmill Syndicate, is legally a person. But the only personal decision as to the propriety of any actions, corporate or individual, is made by a real live human being. When Harry, with the incentive of human love, gives up his "law of the (corporate) jungle" approach to life, he finds personal fulfillment for the first time in his forty-three years. The good guy may not always win in the end and fly off to the next planet with his true love. Sometimes he only has the satisfaction that he did what was right. In this life, that may be all that you will work, He was so good at it, the evallos ada pasagad polisacraco eta subar blue Patrick J. Gibbs

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THE OLD IRONMASTER

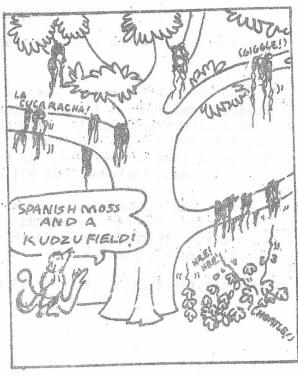
-- Buck Coulson

I'm not sure I'll be any good at this columnist stuff: I have the feeling that I'm better at reacting to other people's idiocies than I am at producing my own idocies for others to react to. But we shall see.

Charlotte said this could be "on anything you want to natter about". I have an interesting reaction to this sort of instruction; my mind goes blank. Instructed to natter about books, or conventions, or the influence of Hindu mythology in the works of Robert A. Heinlein, I turn out a page or two with very little effort. I think it's an automatic process; it goes directly from the editor's letter to my typing fingers. Being requested to write about anything leaves the automatic process unable to function; I have to think about what to write, which is much harder.

Of course, I could write about my wife Juanita, who is currently in the hospital. Dave Locke used to do very funny columns about his injuries, and if Dave could do it, I can. You say Juanita is the one with problems? No, no: all she has to do is lie in bed and be waited on; a hospital stay is the only place in the modern world where wives get treated the way husbands do all the time. I'm the one with problems. I have to feed myself, remember to change the cat sand occasionally, wash dishes, clean up my own messes; it's a hard life when you're not used to it. Juanita's only problem is whether or not she will get out of the hospital in time to fly to California to make recordings — and leave me to struggle along by myself for two weeks. Two days has been hard enough. (The doctor has pretty well promised her that she'll make it, even though he hasn't found out what's wrong with her; whatever it was seems to have cured itself.)





Have you noticed the depreciation of the term "friend" recently? It now seems to mean "somebody I have met personally, whether or not I like them". "Ann Landers" and "Dear Abby" columns are full of social outrages — in the point of view of the writer — committed by "friends". The ultimate, however, came in today's newspaper, in a police report. "He told police a friend stopped by his apartment and demanded money. The the man stabbed him, took \$356, and fled." This is a friend? Whatever happened to the good old term "acquaintence"? It's correct for someone you know but don't know well, and it's nicely neutral. I have dozens and perhpas hundreds of acquaintences in fandom, one or two of whom I wouldn't allow in my house. I also have friends; these are people I have chosen as intimates, I know them very well (and vice versa, of course), and I'm pretty sure none of them would drop by and stab me. (And if one did, I certainly would not refer to him as a friend; "former friend", maybe...)

This first column has been sort of in bits and pieces, partly because it's been written that way. In between sections I've visited Juanita in the hospital, bought auto license plates, discussed details with the contractor who is installing a furnace in our house, located a used fuel oil tank, and talked flight plans with the Off Centaur people who are bringing Juanita out to the west coast (I have visions of picking her up at the hospital and delivering her to the airport in one trip. Tune in next issue to see if she made it.) Anyway, it's difficult to keep a coherent train of thought under those circumstances. (Those who say it's difficult for me to keep a coherent train of thought under any circumstances are absolutely correct.) Next issue I may spend the entire time discussing one of the vital issues of fandom. It's not likely, but it's possible. Almost anything is possible in a fanzine; that's why I like them.

-- Anon.

It seems that the USS Enterprise had a new scientist aboard. Her name was Dr. Zarath Smedley, and she was in life sciences. Her specialty was farm animals, and she was a little eccentric, to say the least. She carried an animal around with her at all times. Ignoring the chicken tucked under her arm, Captain Kirk was giving her a tour of the ship. In Engineering, he ran into Spock and Scotty, so of course, he made introductions all around.

Spock looked at the chicken Dr. Smedley was holding, and raised his eyebrows. (On the Enterprise, you never can tell when you'll run into a sentient being.) The captain correctly interpreted Spock's unspoken question and answered..... "Also, Spock, Zaruth's rooster."

FORGED MINUTES

February, 1984. The Sisters Riley called the meeting to order at 7:30. We had to get started on time because at the ultimate last minute we ended up with two programs. Program Director Merlin Odom had called a couple of people that afternoon to say that not only could he not make the meeting, he didn't have a program lined up. To show you what BSFans are made of, both people he contacted (Prez " Linda Riley and L-5er Warren Overton) brought program material to the meeting. That meant we had to rush through the business. Linda expedited the matter by tossing flyers over her shoulder saying "You wouldn't be interested in this..." or "This one's too far away."

Discussion of the mythical BACHcon only emphasized our inability to get everything together, and we put the whole thing off until November.

Warren gave a fascinating update on the space program (wish I could remember it), and then it was S*H*O*W*T*I*M*E! We watched a tape of Dark Crystal and, just like in a real movie, had popcorn, other munchies, and cold drinks. In case you're wondering where all these edibles came from, well, you wee, Linda called a few people beforehand and "suggested" we bring refreshments.

The meeting ended when the movie was over.

March, 1984. Why, oh why, didn't I write the minutes while they were still fresh on my mind? Anything that happened before the tornado is just a big blur. Well, I'll give it a try. Harumph.

BSFC met, usual time and place... we had several visitors, including mike weber from Atlanta: We had the usual announcements, the dues were explained one more time, conventions announced, etc. James McClellen told about a hobby shop that sells basic D&D, Traveller, and other role-playing games at real good

The program was on the SCA. Valerie McKnight brought a video tape one of the local members had made for a class project (he got an A on it), and after we had seen it, there was a question and answer session. Everyone told their favorite SCA stories .

prices. weber said, "Yeah, the first fix is always cheap."

Most stories of that sort grow in the telling, and while they have some basis in fact, are to be taken with a grain of salt. One story, however, is documented on film, and originated in Atlanta. Valerie told us about it, and I'' tell you.

It seems that one of South Downs' fighters, who works at a liquor store, was wearing his chain mail shirt under his regular shirt to work — they do that to get used to the weight of it. A robber came in and said, "Give me all your money." Our Hero said "No", and went back to stocking the shelves. (All this time the little camera up in the corner was whirring away.) The (persistant) robber says, "Hey, you..." and our hero turns around. "You still here?" he asks: The robber says "Give me all your money or I'll stick you with this knife." Our Hero replies "No. Go away." The robber stabs, the knife fails to penetrate Our Hero, and the robber takes a morale check and runs away, screaming, into the night. It's a true story, folks.

The meeting ended when everyone went home.

-- Beauregard O. Possom

FORGED FIGURES

Beginning Balance	\$	166.72
Income:		
ANVIL sales	\$ 7.00	
Club dues	132.50	· .
Auction receipts	172.80	
	312.30	
Outgo:		
Overseas postage #31	22.00	
Postal Permit	40.00	
P.O. Box keys	2.00	
ANVIL supplies(paper & ink)	99.14	
	163.14	g s
Ending Balance	<u>.</u> \$	315.88
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-- Jane Gray

THE PAUSE THAT REFRESHES

-- Marc Ortlieb

What with AussieCon Two confirmed as a fact, American fans are bound to be bombarded with interminable articles on subjects such as "What to see in Melbourne"; "How to get your broadsword through Australian customs"; "How to speak Wombat" and "A dinkum guide to Aussie Tucker" - the latter having nothing to do with Wilson/Bob, though he did eat some of it while he was over for Aussiecon in 1975. Somehow though I doubt that there will be any guide to how to rid one's body of the waste products of eating our beaut Aussie tucker. This article is then, an attempt to redress this balance in advance. Hopefully it'll also help to scotch the rumours that "Ortlieb don't know shit!"

Unfortunately, I will admit to a sexist bias in this article. I tend to approach toilets from a male point of view. Indeed, the Australian cultural conditioning keeps males and females strictly separated when it comes to this particular biological function. However, one facet of Australian toilet training should help here. It seems that there is some psychic link between female excretory systems here in Australia, as it is an invariable rule that females go to the ladies' room in pairs. Thus the relevant details will be available to American females, provided that you make sure that there is not more than one American female in any given dining group, and that there is an odd number of Australian females.

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A Rose by Any Other Name.

Of course, the first thing to master is the terminology. As in any country, toilets in Australia have accumulated lots of euphemisms, along with the other material usually found in toilets. Thus, though the word toilet is quite acceptable, and understood by most Australians who have a smattering of English, in order to show that you have done your research before coming to Australia, you should be au fait with the colloquial expressions as well. In addition there are also the difficulties raised by those establishments that insist on including the names of the conveniences in a style suiting their decor. Thus, should you ever be looking for the rest rooms in The Robin Hood Hotel, in South Australia, you'll find them behand doors labled respectively LITTLE JOHN'S and MAID MARION'S. An understanding of English folklore can often be helpful when you're searching for the toilet.

The first thing that one should avoid is looking for the "bathroom", as few Australians speak fluent American. Such a request is likely to lead to your being directed to a room containing a bath, a shower, and a handbasin. It is not considered good ediquet to relieve yourself of solid wastes in any of these, though they have been known to be used for the disposal of liquid wastes in an emergency. Some Australian bathrooms do contain a toilet, but by no means all of them. If you are the polite sort of American who refers to "the bathroom" then, in Australia, the word to use is "loo". The word "loo" is acceptable in most polite company, though using it in the pub is bound to draw all sorts of rude comments, unless you are female. In ultra-polite company though, even the word "loo" is considered a little coarse and vulgar, and accepted practice is to ask where "It" is, placing



the appropriate emphasis on the word "It". (Another polite term, taken, I suspect, from the English, is "the little room". Considering that, in many houses, this little room is outside, making it a little house, you can imagine the reaction to the American television programme "Little House on the Prairie".)

Less couth euphemisms for the toilet, to be used at your discretion, include "dunney"; "dyke"; "crapper"; "shithouse"; "bog" and "big white telephone" although the latter term is usually used when the device is used as a receptical for regurgitation - i.e. "talking to the big white telephone" which is akin to "chundering", "crying Ruth", "taking a technicolour yawn" or, to be blunt, "throwing up". Unfortunately the American language has been creeping into Australia of late, and so the term "dyke" has come into disrepute. My brother Skye tells the story of the time when he was living in a Gay Collective in Adelaide, and two blokes, who obviously had no idea of where they were, asked, in true blue Australian fashion "Where are the dykes?" and then wondered why the two women who were in the room at the time left.

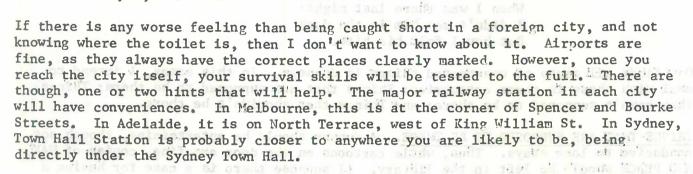
The act of excretion has its own list of euphemisms, most of which are too gross even for me. However, one or two have a sort of vulgar charm, my favourites being "Pointing Percy at the porcelain", and "Watering the python" (or "Shaking the snake".) You should, though, be able to get by on most of your Armerican expressions, since one place where American cultural imperialism has made itself felt is in our vulgar language. Avoid though, at all costs, the term "doo-doo", which I gather from my reading of MAD MAGAZINE is an American euphemism.

Then there is the wonderful proliferation of signs that are supposed to show visitors which loo is which. Most of these are find, provided that you come from a society where men wear trousers and women wear dresses. (I do sometimes wonder what the respective symbols look like in Scotland). However, several restaurants, as mentioned above, have been getting rather twee of late, and have taken to marking the doors with trendy symbols; such as silhouettes of riverboat gamblers and Southern belles respectively - after all, Australia is in the South; or portraits of Humphrey Bogart and Mae West' or silhouettes (very popular those silhouettes) of men in slicked back hair, smoking cigarettes and women with bouffant

hairstyles. This is all well and good, provided that you are in no particular hurry, and have the time to translate the artwork. I'd suggest that you reconnoiter before starting to eat and drink. There's nothing that dulls the cognitive process as well as a full baldder, and an inebriated mind.

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You know something is happening
But you don't know where it is
Do you, Mr. Jones?



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Trob Indy

Of course large department stores usually have facilities for use by patrons, and I don't think that you have to prove that you've bought anything in the store before being allowed to use their toilets, but, in order to discourage casual users, most shops seem to hide their toilets where only the most regular of customers can find them. The same applies to pubs, though there the barman might ask you to buy a drink on your way out. Cinemas all have dunneys, but you have to have a ticket, and \$7.00 is a lot of pay for the use of the dunney, unless you wanted to see that film anyway.

The capital cities seem to provide conveniences as well, but there are remarkably few per head. (If you were in the navy, you'd probably say that there were very few heads per head. Don't let me stop you.) These are also reasonably well hidden, the two I know of in Melbourne being underground — on the corners of Bourke and Elizabeth, and Bourke and Russell respectively. In Adelaide they've done even better. The most convenient of the public loos in Adelaide is hidden down a little alley called James Place, just off of the main shopping mall. Despite being a frequent visitor to Sydney, I've never found the public loo there.

Incidently, unless very desperate, heterosexual males are advised to avoid dimly lit public loos at night. They are popular pick-up points for the male homosexual population, who refer to them as "tearooms", and, as such, anyone visiting a dimly lit toilet at night is bound to be harrassed by policemen, who tend to be found there more often than male homosexuals.

Finding the bog while visiting people is far easier, provided that you keep in mind the difference between a toilet and a bathroom, and provided that you use the appropriate euphemisms. Australian houses of an older vintage - the sort that fans tend to rent - often have that wonder of Australian plumbing, the outdoor dunney. The place where I am currently living in Flemington has one such, though

it is just outside the back door, as opposed to the dunney at the place I lived in Ovingham, where, to get to the dunney, you had to walk down an unlit, web-festooned garden path. (Outdoor dunneys do tend to become infested with spiders, but I'll deal with that later.)

Usually your host will give you details of any operating problem with the loo before you visit. At one point, Camberra fan Jean Weber had a list of instructions on how to flush her loo, written next to it. However, she insists that I point out that the problems that she was having have since been fixed.

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There was a redback on the toilet seat
When I was there last night;
I didn't see him in the dark
But boy I felt his bite.

One finds all sorts of unexpected things in dunneys. In this essay, I intend to deal with these in three categories: Things that are supposed to be there; Things that aren't supposed to be there; and Things that shouldn't be there.

THINGS THAT ARE SUPPOSED TO BE THERE. A dunney should be entertaining, though not conducive to long stays. Thus, while cartoons on the door are fine, copies of WAR AND PEACE should be left in the library. (I suppose there is a case for having a copy of NUMBER OF THE BEAST in the dunney. After all, sometimes things don't come easily, and need a little encouragement.)

Of course, graffiti does add to a dunney, though, unless specifically permitted by your host, it is not advised that you add your own. Public dunneys are, of course, fair game. My two favourites of late are "Any more than two shakes is considered masturbation" (above the urinal at Adelaide airport), and "Beware the Phantom Limbo Dancer" (on the bottom of one of those three quarter cubical doors in the Adelaide Uni Gents). If you find yourself short of interlineations for your trip report, you might try remembering dunney graffiti, though I don't recommend that you walk into the dunney with writing implement in hand, lest you be mistaken for the constipated mathematician, who worked it out with a pencil.

Dunney decor varies, according to the owner. Thus the lady who had painted on the underside of the toilet seat "How nice it is to have a man around the house." Personally, I preferred the dunney at Joanne and Barbara's place, which was decorated with two "liberated" street signs - NO STANDING ANY TIME and SLIPPERY WHEN WET.

THINGS THAT ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THERE. As mentioned earlier, the great Australian Outdoor Dunney is noted for the amount of wildlife that it accumulates. Some of this is quite harmless. Geckos are bizarre looking, but quite pleasant little lizards that can be seen running up the walls, chasing cockroaches and other insect life. They should be left alone, as they are probably making the dunney safer for human habitation. Similarly the large fawn-coloured spiders - huntsmen - which, though capable of biting, prefer to leave people alone and concentrate on insects.

Unfortunately, not all of Nature's plans help people. The redback spider, a close cousin of the North American black widow spider, lives under sheets of dead wood or logs.

Now, before the advent of plastic toilet seats, most were made of wood, and bore an uncanny resemblance to the redback's natural habitat - toilets being rather similar to small caves, often sharing a similar dank miasma. Thus unwary late night visitors to the dunney have, at times, found themselves rushed to hospital with bites on most awkward parts of their anatomies. (Fortunately the practice of sucking venom out of spider bites has been discontinued. The redback may have contributed to the demise of the practice.) The bite of the redback, though not invariably fatal, has caused death - especially to those with weak hearts, and who wouldn't have a weak heart if bitten on the butt in an outback dunney?

THINGS THAT SHOULDN'T BE THERE. Well, everyone has an opinion on Dunney Decor. My pet peeve is people who keep novels in the loo, encouraging those visitors to spend more time there than is actually necessary. I also feel that there are some posters not suitable for use in the shithouse. Rob and Stef have a wall length poster of a black kitten on the dunney wall, directly behind you if you are standing, or directly in front of you if you are seated. I find that, having a six foot kitten looking over my shoulder tends to inhibit me.

Stereos and electric seat warmers are right out. I'm not all that happy about pink fluffy toilet seat covers either.

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I Can't Believe That I've Been Reduced to Telling Fart Jokes!

Well, that just about covers it. True, I haven't included a section on the bush, but there it's just a matter of remembering to take a shovel, some toilet paper, and of finding a tree large enough. Oh yes, and remember to avoid the ants. Some are an inch long and though they, unlike redbacks, don't kill, you might wish that they would. (The toilet paper is essential. There are few Australian trees with leaves large enough to be used for that purpose.)

Oh yes, and remember to take the prevailing wind into account. We can't have people accusing fandom of pissing into the wind.



IN XANADU DID KUBLA KHAN A STATELY PLEASURE DOME DECREE?

CAMERA

2 BEDS, AND 12 PILLOWS... WHAT WILL THE

HERE

BEAUREGARD O POSSUM'S ADVENTURES AT KUBLA KHAN





AT AN UNIDENTIFIED ROOM PARTY...

SENOW I'VE GOT

ALL OF THE PILLOWS!



AT THE PROGRAMMING ...



AT ITHE ALTERNATE BANQUET.

And the state of t It's the policy of this letter column to always lead off with a short, and it is hoped, witty paragraph that will seque into the letters. Unfortunately, the letter editor is a dry well. (Echoes of previous issues!) But all is not lost. Guest opening paragraph specialist Jim Cobb has volunteered: Heeeere's Jimster. (Pour on the wit, Jim.) a leader of the continue of the contin

What ho!

Thereis nothing like being put on the spot in public like that to get the old blood ##1114g stirring. I suppose this is one of the hazards of living in a Slan Shack. The Buck-Passing Specialist, which is to say Wade, must have sat and thought for a full 45 seconds before deciding he couldn't think of anything. With a flash of insight, he said "I know! I'll get Jim to do it!" Well, folks, this is my intro:

Carrier Walter State

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AND THE RESERVE OF A STATE OF A STATE OF THE SECOND SECTION OF A STATE OF A S "Hey! Here come the letters!" (Please pass the buck the other direction next time, Wade.) in the common production of the grant

First off, a late loc on ANVIL 29/30 from Diane Fox...

The second of the principle of the second of Diane Fox (COA) This loc is late because we've moved -- to a newly built house, 9 Anderson Avenue what's more. What all this means is that this has been an in-Bullaburra NSW credible amount of work to do - the packing of books alone was 2784, AUSTRALIA an exhausting task. I still haven't unpacked them either.

No, it is not wise to lock a grieving or very upset person up "until they get over it." The person is quite likely to feel that he/she is an object of contempt: this will arouse intense feelings of resentment which will possible affect their actions towards the people who didn't want to help them when they needed it. They may almost certainly find or make an opportunity -- consciously or not -- to cause problems for the people who have "let them down". There's also the possibility that an extremely distraught person, rejected as a kind of social leper, will suicide.

Patrick Gibbs' comments on "Foundation's Edge" getting the Hugo seemed most apt. It is a good novel but by no means great literature. Actually it takes at least 20 years to judge whether or not a piece of writing possesses literary merit. It may simply have a story appeal to the current obsessions of the year or the decade -- or to the preoccupations of a small but influential group. Certain attitudes may be fashionable. (Nearly every SF or horror film made in the early 70s seemed to have a "downer" ending, and I believe this was due to the political climate -there are less obvious but equally persistent "trends" in books.)

In reply to Brad Foster's query, as well as the novel "Mr. Pye" (available in Penguin, if he is interested - I could try to post him a copy?), there are other writings by Mervyn Peake available. There is a thick paperback (called "Peake's Progress") from Penguin containing these shorter writings and lavishly illustrated. There are also volumns of poetry available.

((A grieving person has to deal with their loss in their own way. Efforts by others to alleviate grief seem pointless. Their only real purpose is to show the grieving person that they care about them. Which is not a bad thing. But again, you can't stop a person's grief until they resolve the loss in their own mind.))

Patrick J. Gibbs The cover on ANVIL 31 is in keeping with the high standards 1935 Woodslea #11 you have recently set. You can't do much better than Doug Flint, MI 48507 Chaffee for a cover artist.

I would like to note, for the benefit of Harry Warner, that cockroaches would have been around in the Pliocene period. They have been on Earth for 350 million years.

Looking back on the letter column, I picked up an attack on my as being a sexist, by Joy Hibbert from England. Her comment indicates to me that she is an ultrasensitive feminist and not a very careful reader. She accused me of only identifying the female characters by sex. In response I could note that only a male can be "widowed", that a Viking by definition is male, that I identified the anthropologist as male and that a Catholic priest who is a woman is a development in a novel's universe which is noteworthy. If she had read the books she would have known that Felice's (the female athlete) sexuality is a very important part of her archetypical character. The author has conceded that she is patterned (at least in part) after the Goddess Diana, the virginal huntress. To cover the last character, Aiken Drum, (the engaging young crook), I would simply assert that in my twenty years of reading fiction I have never seen the word "crook" used to refer to a woman. There is a decidedly male ring to the word, at least to this ear. To my mind, being accused of being sexist is almost as bad as being called a racist.





Brad W. Foster I think your thoughts this issues could be boiled down to what 4109 Pleasant Run just about every area has — wanting the respect of your peers. Irving, TX 75038 For you, you can get a lot of locs from fans saying how nice a zine is, but the one that comes from another fan editor means more to you. For me, same thing when it comes from another artist. Same in just about every area I would imagine. Did like that idea in the Kimbrough quote about how this only incidentally makes it nice for everyone else. How true.

Of course, I don't see any conflict in someone saying they publish just for themselves, and at the same time scanning reviews and reacting to criticism. I draw these weird little pictures only for myself, and am lucky in that there is a fandom that they can get printed in to be seen by others. If someone says something nice or derogatory about them, I like the compliment and see if there is any valid information in the criticism, but I'm still just doing it for myself,

Looks like Cindy has moved away from a totally fannish approach with Beauregard this time. I've figured out her plan! She's going to do a whole pile of these things and get them published as fillos and such, then take it all and submit it to some comic syndicate and get herself rich drawing for the newspapers! (Not a bad plan, either!)

Well, fart! Here I was just getting interested in Gibb's review of "Gods of Riverworld" when I got to the warning and had to stop. At the moment the book is sitting on the stand next to my bed, waiting its turn under the midnight lamp. Ah, well. I'll just have to remember to come back to this after I read the book.

Getting horses to do what I want them to do? Hell, tell Buck I'm still working on getting my car to go in the direction I want. And thanks, too, for the additional bit of info on Peake. So far it sounds like my chances of getting anything else by him are slim and none, but I'll keep my eyes open, you never know what'll pop up in those book stores.

Okay, now wait, I'm totally confused here. The responses to all these locs so far have been bracketed with double-parentheses, and I took that to mean it was Wade responding. But now I get to the first answer in my loc and it gets a second bracketing within the first, but then outside of that one and within the double-parentheses are "cp". Was that actually Charlotte who made the comment inside your comment, Wade, or am I trying to confuse this much more than it deserves?

Yes indeed, it would have made more sense had Ceciela been male, which is why I thought it was "biologically bizarre"! As far as my reading something vulgar into it, sure, but at least I had the good taste not to mention that "buns" line! Nyah!!

((Charlotte always seemed concerned whenever she puts her comments in the letter column, that I'll object or become miffed. I never object. It's almost become a ritual politeness:

"Wade, I made comments to Brad Foster and Marc Ortlieb. Hope you don't mind."

"No, no, not at all,"

My feeling is that a greater variety of input can only enhance any letter column. Every time you see "cp", it's the real editor speaking.)) ((And every time you don't see "cp", it's the unreal editor speaking? - cp.))

Pascal J. Thomas P.O. Box 351293 LA, CA 90035 Thanks for ANVIL. I guess I'm getting to the point where I'm well-known enough in fandom to have fanzines fall into my mailbox more or less by chance occurrence, some from this country, some from Britain or France.

I glanced through this one, you're right, despite its apparent size it is rather small. I was interested in Valerie's reviews of Roelof's zines. Right on! (by the way, the quotation at the head of the column, if it's intended as a quotation, should read "toujours de l'audace". From "De l'audace, toujours de l'audace!" Can't remember who is supposed to have said that, though; Napoleon Bonaparte, maybe?)

I do have to answer to one point she makes, though. You see, this fellow Pierre Barbet is certainly a swell guy, he travels around and has lots of connections, and certainly has worked to help put together the European SF Committee (though what the European SF Committee does besides giving out awards at the Eurocons is nebulous to me). But he is a mediocre writer. Not one of the truly bad; merely an undistinguished hack (although he does need to write for a living). Unfortunately, what he writes is bland and derivative enough to have been published by DAW (okay, so it's better in a way than publishing no translations at all... Humm...). Seeing him as a GoH in a foreign convention only adds insult to injury: the fact is that there are truckloads of French SF writers who are more gifted than Barbet, and this honor will only comfort people who do not know French SF in the fallacy that there must not be much more to it than Barbet, or say, Gerard Klein or the Hennebergs. Now what would you think if Judith Krantz was awarded a Nobel Prize in literature, as an homage to American literature?



Well, just a last look at the loccol and I'll go. Did you know — talking about Wodehouse — that Charles Sheffield once wrote a Wodehouse parody? It has appeared in some issue of S&SF 2 or 3 years ago I'd say. So here is one connection between SF & Wodehouse. Who'd have thought so?

((I can understand the reaction to the choice of Barbet as GoH now that you've filled in the background. Still, I can think of a number of extremely talented writers who have proved to be terrible in the role of GoH. Perhaps Barbet was chosen for the combination of his personality and activity in putting together the European SF committee, and less for his writing.))

((I would equate the Nobel Prize with a Hugo, and nobody is planning to give Barbet A Hugo, or its European counterpart, are they? And let's not confuse Science Fiction with Literature. Literature is something you take in school. Science Fiction is the expression of Ideas that spark the imagination. Literacy is expected: I give you literacy. But whether Science Fiction writings are poetic or prosaic, "literature" or unpretentious story-telling, it is the idea, the stick-in-the-mind, thought-provoking idea, that is important. --cp.))

Harry Warner, Jr. It looks as if I may be up all night with a sick refrigera423 Summit Avenue tor. So this is a fine opportunity to provide comments on
Hagerstown, MD 21740 the 31st ANVIL. The 31st issue of any fanzine causes twinges
in the deeper recesses of my memory because my own genzine,
Spaceways, suspended publication after its 30th issue and each 31st issue bears
evidence that there's yet another fanzine editor who is sturdier and more persistent that I was.

I haven't read all the previous books in the Riverworld series. But I went ahead and read Patrick Gibbs' entire review, on the theory I won't get around to reading all the Farmer books for at least another year or two, and my memory isn't good enough to retain that long the secrets he reveals. My dissatisfaction with the one novel I read completely and another in fragments rested with Farner's failure to make the individuals bearing famous names completely consistent in behavior and ideals and inclinations to their real life counterparts. A while back, I read somewhere that Farmer had promised to explain these inconsistencies in future sections of his series. But I gather from Patrick's summary that the Riverworld individuals were literal reincarnations of their namesakes. So maybe my reaction was a valid one.

But I have a related problem. I've been wondering if maybe I died several weeks ago and just haven't noticed it yet. Two separate and distinct fans said nice things about me in their publications in the most recent FAPA mailing. Now Valerie McKnight begins muttering about a Hugo for my locs. All these years in fandom have taught me that fans don't normally say nice things in print about other fans until the other fans are dead, the only time that fans don't like egoboo. There's one overpowering objection to honoring me for writing all these locs. Endless battalions of fans, past and present and undoubtedly future, could rush to the Hogu ballot boxes with one common intention, to vote me a Hogu for all the locs I failed to write on fanzines that came free and should have been acknowledged. Valerie sounds more sensible in her reviews. I was particularly happy to see a lot of space devoted to Roelof Goudriaan's publishing. He hasn't received on this side of the Atlantic nearly as much recognition as he deserves for aiding communications among various nations' fandoms. There was a postal strike in The Netherlands a while back but it has been settled for several months and you shouldn't have any trouble getting mail through from now on.

It's encouraging to find someone else, Kim Huett, sharing my doubt that computers will assume complete command in fanzines. Just the other day, I was passing a local computer store, looked at something just inside its door I'd seen a dozen times before, but this time I finally realized the paradox. It was a large rack containing dozens of computer-oriented magazines. For the first time, I realized that conventional periodicals must retain some merits if the computer industry itself continues to depend on them, instead of arranging for electronic equivalents which would appear on computer screens at the impetus of the proper combination of keys.

I'm pretty sure Mack Reynolds or someone wrote a thriller set at a science fiction convention, but for the life of me, I can't remember its title or feel certainty about the identity of the author. Of course, the pioneering murder mystery which involved fandom was Anthony Boucher's Rocket to the Morgue. But I don't remember that any of its scenes were set at a convention, and the same creaky memory seems to indicate that it was written and published during the WWII years when transportation difficulties had forced fandom to get along with conventions.

It would take a better researcher into Ted White than I am to say if he had ever engaged in food fights. But there was one celebrated occasion when he unexpectedly found himself the victim of a custard pie in the face. A pro who didn't like Ted put out a contract on him with a hit man of the pastry-wielding variety.

((If there are any Mack Reynolds fans in the ANVIL readership, help me out with this lead. I would like to track this book down. I need to check out Rocket to the Morgue. Sounds good.))

Robert A. Newsom All in nature is not ugly. Why, there is even a time of year General Delivery when mosquitoes fear to tread. I think it's around about from Tunica, LA 70782 1:10 to 1:12 s.m. February 14, or at least it was last year.

I distinctly remember not being bit around that time. Sunrises and sunsets are beautiful even when viewed through a windshield, and you can always burn a mosquitoe coil that were so popular when Drive-in Movies were. I could go on and on, but why bore you.

((Perhaps your opinion of nature will change when the African bees arrives in Louisiana about 1990.))

((Robert, your letter was dated October 10, 1983, and the envelope postmarked February 11, 1984. Does it just take you a while to get around to mailing your letters, or has the Post Awful been at it again? -- cp.))

Harry Andruschak Received ANVIL 31, and am replying on 26 Feb. I am in SHARE Post Office Box 606 at this time -- St. Luke's Hospital for Alchoholism Recovery and Education. I will be staying at least three weeks. Detoxification is almost complete. Fourteen years a hopeless alcoholic.

Valerie McKnight certainly has some interesting comments. Now that Locus, SF Review, Starship, etc., etc., are out of the picture, it will be interesting to see how the fanzine vote comes out.

From Frad W. Foster's loc... I have over ninety (90) books by P.G. Wodehouse. My favoriet series is Blandings Castle.

Life here in SHARE is just amazingly friendly. Twenty-two males and females trying to help each other defeat a disease. My first trip to the lounge/dining room.. I tried to pour some coffee. My hand shook too much. Another guy filled the cup, took it to the table. Another gave me a straw. Nobody laughed. A couple commented that this had happened to them too, and to hang in there.

I think I will.

((You have ninety by Wodehouse! Envy, envy, ENVY!! I really like Blandings Castle. But Wooster and Jeeves remain my favorite. "Code of the Woosters" is one of the best in the series. // Sounds like you're in good hands. Good Luck.))

Colin & Joan Langeveld 9, Lisleholme Road Liverpool L12 8RU U.K.

Wow! Zowie! Cor Blimey!! Plus a multitude of expletives.... That front cover! (don't forget the back one.) Gee, Doug, can you show me how it's done?

Seriously, though, full marks for a <u>superb</u> cover, also full marks for the excellent reproduction in spite of the limited (with all due respect) facilities at hand.

I, too, hope that the "Doc" Who does not reach "Trek" proportions. The fact that the characters change so often might help to prevent this. We have just welcomed our sixth "Doc" and it's always interesting to see just how long it takes for him to be accepted by the afficiandios, but I do wish they would cease dressing him up in ever increasing silly costumes.

As I write this Joan is busy packing our cases for our trip to Brighton where Seacon II is to take place. This will be the nearest that we will come to a world con since '79, as it is double billed as a Eurocon. Roger Zelazny will be one of the GoHs. Asimov could not make it!!! My next letter will contain some of the more sordid details.

Dalvan Coger 1433 W. Crestwood Dr. Memphis, Tenn. 38119 Buck Coulson in ANVIL 31 refers to a Ballentine book that he cannot recall the name of. It is Sometime, Never (Ballentine, LC 57-11580), with each story copyrighted by the author as 1956. The stories are William Golding, John Wyndham (John Beynon Harris). "Consider Her Ways".

"Envoy Extraordinary", John Wyndham (John Beynon Harris), "Consider Her Ways", and Mervyn Peake, "Boy in Darkness".

As far as I know, Peake's story is the only Titus Groan story outside the Gormenghast trilogy. This novella is 58 pages long. According to Maeve Gilmore, his wife, he wrote "Boy" just after returning from Spain about 1956. He had gone there, with her, for his health which was already bad. Peake was above all else an artist, though he wrote both poetry and prose. He was born of missionary parents in China and lived there until he was 10. For a biography and samples of his art, see Maeve Gilmore and Shelagh Johnson, Mervyn Peake: Writings and Drawings (St. Martin's Press, 1974). It includes a bibliography of his work. For one who can not stand most modern poetry, I found several of his verses from The Rhyme of the Flying Bomb (1947) attractive: (He was in London during the days of the flying buzz bombs.)

And the church leapt out of a lake of light And the pews were rows of fire And the golden cock crowed thrice and flew From the peak of the falling spire.

And the candlewax swam over the stones, And the tail of the flying Bomb Stuck out of the floor to point the place That it had journeyed from. Toni Jerrman

Very many thanks of ANVIL 31! Here is to you our fanzine,

Makitorpantie 17 A 12

Universal Mind. Hope you will enjoy it. It would be nice

15 you could review it in ANVIL and tell people how they

16 can get it (\$2.00 in cash). The success of Universal Mind

17 have been terrific, we have got two (2) orders from abroad! Fun, ain't it. In

18 Finland we have sold over 100 copies, gee...

Time and Space is now on the clubzine of Helsinki Science Fiction Society, which director I am. We are now trying to invent new (in Finland) activities for our society, so that people would be more eager to join us. Maybe you could tell us what your club does, apart ANVIL?

And now some comments of ANVIL 31. I haven't read many foreign fanzines, but of those I've seen ANVIL belongs in the best group. It's nice and well done. Of course, there's many things that could have been done better; the art was quite lousy, the only good picture was in cover; printing could have been better, although it doesn't matter much since it's readable; articles were all missing. All writings were well written and interesting and for once the letterpages were all good and interesting, they were worthy of those 15 pages they got!

Nice that you get so many and so good locs. Here in Finland it's almost impossible to get even one. In my knowledge I am the only to frequently loc other zines and nowadays I'm beginning to be too busy to do it, and believe me, locking isn't rewarding here: always when I said I didn't like something I got a letter where they abused me as an idiot and said that they were the best! The only fanzine which wants and publishes locs is a little zine called Uusia Maailmoja (New Worlds). Finnish fanzine makers seem to love their own work and hate others. Some kind of co-operation doesn't even come into consideration.

HEOOO!!! We've done a story of TWO mad killers in a SF event. Tuomas Kilpi and I (representatives of the Good) kill every one else in "an amateur science fiction writers event" which was arranged by Ursa Science Fiction Club and held in last November. The "article" is called Sick Games at Saatytalo and is published in a special fanzine called Science Fictionia (we even have photographs) where is also many other mad things (e.g. a satire of Stanislaw Lem's great Kyberias stories).

((Our club does not have a lot of activities. Its purpose is to provide a time and place for fans of science fiction and fantasy to get together and share their interest in the literature and fandom itself. We have parties two or three times a year. Usually everyone gets together after meetings to eat pizza. Occasionally, when the madness seizes us, we put on a convention for other fans in the area. And we publish ANVIL. That's about it. I don't know if this would be enough to interest fans in Finland, but it's worked in Birmingham since 1978. // You have every right to your opinion that the art in ANVIL is quite lousy. I don't think you are an idiot. I do feel, however, that we publish good fan art in ANVIL. Prejudiced opinion, of course, since I contribute spot art. If you are expecting high quality professional quality art in fanzines, with few exceptions, you'll be disappointed. Fan art is amatuer art by fans, with exceptions such as Doug Chaffee, Brad Foster, and Stephen Fox.))

((Boy, are you lucky, Toni, that I don't have room at the bottom of this page to rush to the defense of "my" artists as I would like to: --cp.))

Garth Spencer 1296 Richardson St. Victoria, B.C. Canada V8V 3E1

First part of this letter is specifically for Valerie McKnight. I've been through three drafts of this already, Valerie, so if I seem unclear, please bear with me.

As you say, in ANVIL 31, TWATG #7 was rather negative. I'm not sure I agree with some of your analyses, though. About the time I got on my high horse, SFAV seemed to be in a tough of lactivity, as you might say. Now I had the idea that being a fan necessarily meant a certain level of enthusiasm, and participating in activities generally, and initiative enough to join or even start some activities. I may have overreacted when my brilliant intellect finally penetrated to the startling observation that reality wasn't acting the way I expected. Sure, maybe I expected too much.

Still -- I think Charlotte Proctor said it right, when she said a clubzine editor has to avoid putting out a perzine with club money, and also avoid exercising too little control to the detriment of the clubzine. Now, I have this need to be told, right at the outset, where I stand with people. And on one would do that. Sure, it's only a club project, but I was specifically trying to avoid just doing my thing with SFAV's money, so I asked for guidelines. I got frustrated because the questions I managed to frame, I didn't get answered, not to my satisfaction.

Now. You seem not to know what I meant by editorial policy; I did not mean the club should make all my decisions, but that they should lay down a few guidelines, what I could then build on. Do you know what I mean? SFAV didn't know what I mean! I've already written twice as many words as I wanted to express half of what I wanted to. Oh well. Situations I can't deal with, I just back out of. So that's what I did. End of subject.

About fanzine reviews. A while back I started a newsletter, Maple Leaf Rage, for much the same purposes as New Canadian Fandom; now I find myself playing fanzine reviewer and feeling not up to it. How does one review fanzines?? Does anyone give a course? Hey, maybe someone could do a workshop at a con, about this.

LoCs. I had totally forgotten Charlotte's frog-prince editorial until I saw Diane Fox's loc. I might as well come out of the closet and admit I am a frog prince... sort of; an evil fate has trapped me in the form of a human male. I want to go home!

((How do you review fanzines? A good question. It's a matter of taste, I suppose. I like Valerie McKnight's reviews. While she usually touches on each zine's personality -- to me the most important observation in fanzine reviews -- she also reacts to controversies in the zines making her reviews lively reading.))

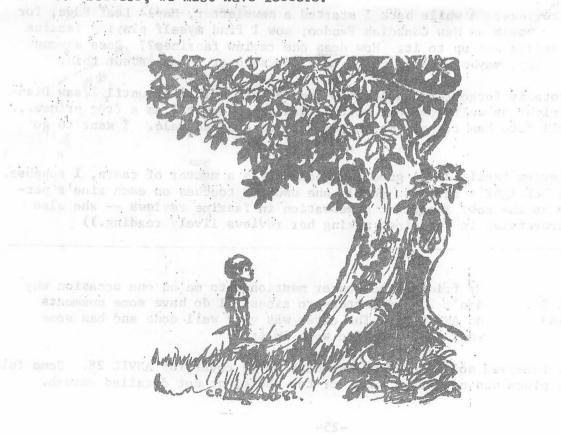
Steven Fox 5646 Pemberton St. Phila., PA 19143 My friend Brad Foster mentioned to me on one occasion why don't I send letters to zines? I do have some comments on ANVIL 31. The cover was very well done and has some very good pen line work in it.

I seem to have received some amount of feedback on my cover for ANVIL 28. Some folks think that the piece was not drawn well, or too loose, or not detailed enough.

Kim Huett mentioned that the drawing suffers in comparison with another picture I sent to her (sic). Well, Kim, that picture was maybe the finished version or a more detailed picture. I also get the feeling that some folks out there don't understand what I've drawn. What I had tried to get across was a situation of helplessness and despair caused by disaster. The strange cloudlike mass in the background is a burning city. The rest explains itself. In a way I'm saying something about the human condition. If we get to the stars we will still fight among ourselves and cause each other grief. I thought the sketchy rough style would convey the depressing scene better. I still think I did, and in the future I'll do more cover art which is not the supertight renderings everyone is used to seeing.

((Kim is a fella... I, too, made the same mistake and didn't know the difference until he sent some pictures. // So far as your cover on ANVIL 28 is concerned, those who think it "was not drawn well, or too loose" just didn't know what they were talking about. Wade and I homed right in on that piece out of the last batch you sent, and Bill Brown and I went through his huge file of press-on letters until we found the definitive open-style letters to use as the title that would not take away from the style of the piece. All this hoorah reminds me of the time an artist did an impressionistic portrait of my husband, for his office at Brown Engineering in Huntsville. I gazed upon it for a while and then turned to the artist and asked "What does it all mean?" "What does it mean to you?" was the only reply I got. // Keep up the good work. -- cp.))

WAHF: Buck Coulson, Brad Foster (again), and an apazine from Kim Huett with the why-you-got-this box "because I owe you a loc" checked. No, no, Kim, this just will not do! Letters, we must have letters!



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Beagle's World Revisited 17 & 18 Catherine Circosta 453 Kooyong Road Elsternwick, Vict. 3185 Australia

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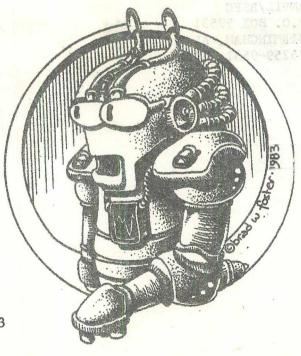
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World According to Garth 8
Garth Spencer
1296 Richardson Street
Victoria, B.C.
V8V 3E1 Canada



Next Meetings: June 9, 1984, nomewood _____ July 14, 1984, same time, same place. June 9, 1984, Homewood Library, 7:30 p.m.

> I think there is a summer party scheduled at the Riley Residence sometime soon... come to the meeting to find out just when and where.

Art Credits:

Steven Fox - Cover C.P. Langeveld - p.12, 26 Brad Foster, p.15, 27 Wade Gilbreath - p. 4,13,20 Gary Fowler - p.9 Cindy Riley - p.6,7,16,18

Announcements:

Please note Change of Address.

Please send art. (small)

ANVIL

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