

Boy's Own Fanzine 2





Number 2, December 1973

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IN LIGHTER MOOD
(LENGTHY TITLE)
1971 CONVENTION
LETTERS
JOE PHAUST

Leigh Edmonds
John Foyster
Assorted Writers
Gentle Readers
Minnie Hands

Cover photograph (by Eric Lindsay?) shows

at top: Leigh Edmonds

lower : John Foyster, Jack Wodhams, Lee Harding, and John Alderson's back.

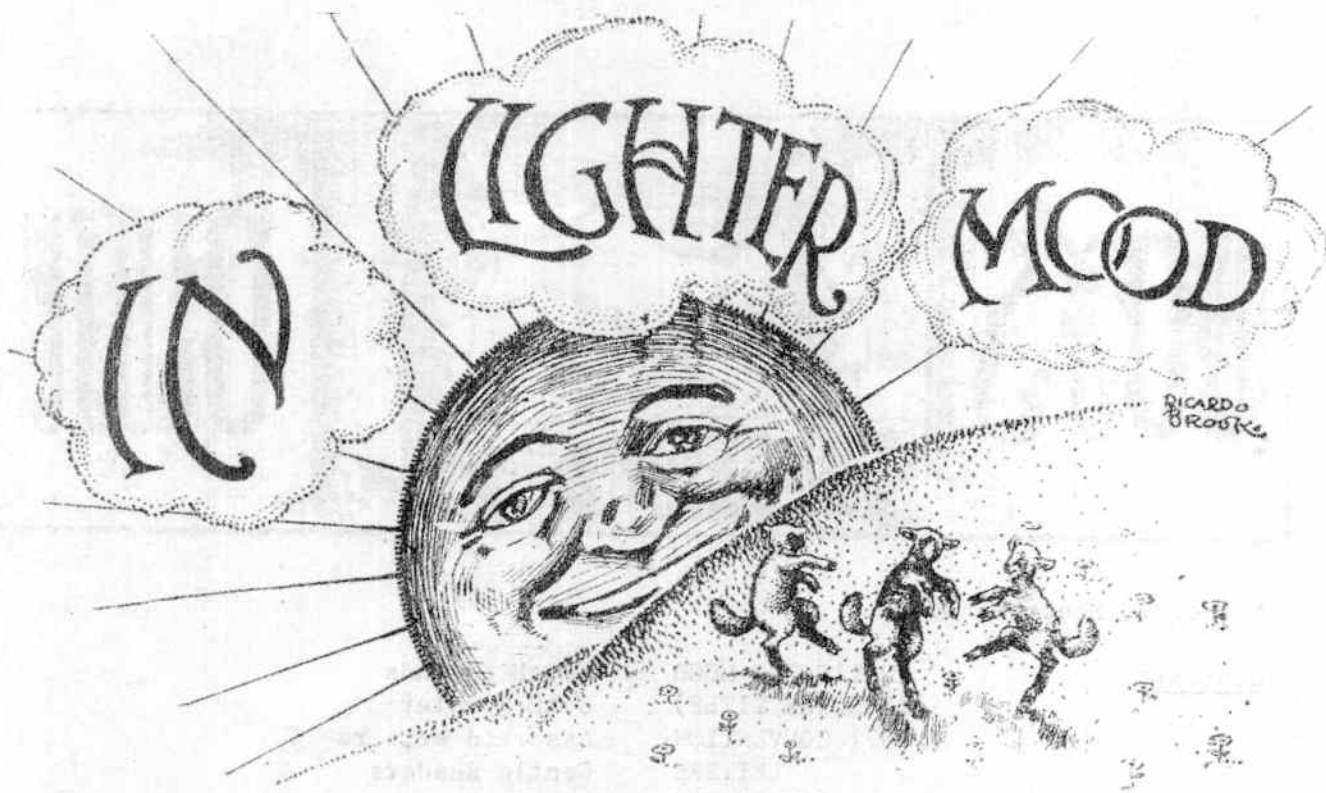
Illustrations by William Rotsler, John Bangsund, Valma Brown, S R Blyth, WRR and Ricardo Brooks.

Illustrations by William Rotsler copyright 1973 by William Rotsler.

Paper swindled by Leigh Edmonds, electrostencils cut by Noel Kerr (and he done the cover, too), and Lee Harding's bottle of corflu ran out, somewhere - bear with us.

BOY'S OWN FANZINE is published approximately every three months on an irregular quarterly schedule by Leigh Edmonds and John Foyster, P.O. Box 74, Balaclava, Victoria 3183, Australia, and is MADMAN 202.

Available for letter, contribution or trade - and in this case, to members of of the 1971 Australian Convention. There's no other way.



"Here John, hold this!"

"Uh, what is it?"

"Ah, it's a bio-degradable plastic and recyclable tin speaking trumpet. You hold this end up to the audience and place your mouth at the other end for speaking out of."

"I'm sorry I asked."

"No need to be sorry; we can't know everything, can we? No, if you hold up the big end to this piece of paper, I'll go down to the other end and speak. Okay, hold on."

"Are you ready yet?"

"No, I'm only about halfway."

"Well hurry up - this thing is heavy."

"Okay, I'm ready. Are you ready?"

"I'm ready."

"HELLO."

"Hello."

"Did that sound okay?"

"Yes Leigh, it sounded just perfect."

"All right. We're ready then."

"Just hurry up!"

"EDMONDS FOR DUFF!"

"Edmonds for DUFF? Is that all?"

"Yep, that's all. You can put the trumpet away now."

"Oh thanks, I've always needed one of these."

"You're welcome."

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As our faithful readers will no doubt remember, BOF is a bi-annual fanzine and, wonder of wonders, here we are right on schedule. No, I tell a lie, we're actually ahead by about three months. How's that for enthusiasm?

Let us assure you that we have poured many hours of concentrated effort into the planning and production of this fanzine. The print run was discussed in great depth while hanging on a gate at the Foyster Farm; the contents were discussed at some party or meeting, and the paper colour was decided one night down at the Degraes Tavern.

Not only have we worked together, we have worked separately. John showed great patience in typing most of the stencils and I showed great fortitude in fighting the duplicator in what almost became a struggle to the death. Valma and I went over to the Foyster Mansion in fashionable South Yarra one Thursday evening and while Valma and Elizabeth talked about the educating of the offspring of the country John and I discussed the final layout and other factors far too detailed to go into here. We hatched many sadistic schemes to upset our fellow fans and talked of the revenge we could wreak on the past follies of many Big Name Fans. Fortunately we discarded most of these ideas, deeming them to be unsuitable in a fanzine of such high moral standards. Instead, we ended up worrying about headings and page numbers, not exactly the most enjoyable aspects of fanzine publishing but facets of the business that have to be considered anyhow. Sometimes I wonder why we bother with fanzines (when I say we I am of course speaking Cosmically); indeed, I find this question so puzzling that I am about to announce the *First BOF Contest* (**Valuable Prizes can be won**)

"In one hundred words or less explain why people produce fanzines, paying particular attention to layout, headings, and artwork.

"Entries close one month before the next issue of BOF goes to the presses. Winners (if any) will be announced in that issue.

"Leigh Edmonds will be the sole judge of entries and his decision will be final. Correspondence need not necessarily be entered into."

But I digress. I was writing about how John and I were talking about this issue. I says to him "How many stencils have you typed?" and he replies "ah-ha" in the well-known Foyster dramatic fashion and disappeared out the back door. When he returned he was burdened by the weight of several kilos of stencils, enough to make me go weak at the knees with sickly anticipation (the sort you experience in the dentist's waiting room).

I did not enjoy this horrid sensation, but I must say that at least it was a

preparation for the time when the man from Roneo piled up 40 reams of paper in my room and even that horrid experience served to build up the resistance I needed when he handed me the bill for it all.

Friends, now I am really beginning to understand Bruce Gillespie.

A PICKLE FOR THE KNOWING ONES

If nothing else, the above at least proves that Leigh Edmonds cannot write an editorial a page and a half long.

A few words about this issue are necessary. Back in January 1971 (a couple of months before the first issue of BOF, as a matter of fact) the humble editors of this journal were two-thirds of a convention committee. As it turns out, this issue of BOF will have to stand as a convention report. We print transcripts of as much of the convention as could easily be retrieved.

The transcription of the tapes was done by that noble fellow, Tony Thomas, and I manfully restrain myself from quite imoperative remarks about gaps in tapes and hums and stuff like that. However, let me make one thing perfectly clear: Ron Graham's talk (page 71 et seq.) and the POLITICS IN FANDOM recordings were really imperfectly recorded, and what you hear is all there was, Meyer.

We follow up the '71 convention transcription with what must be the sole surviving record of the 1966 Australian convention (Bangsund, Edmonds and Stevens aside), a tape sent to Lee Harding by Michael Moorcock and cohort. I said to Leigh that I thought this tape had matured with age. I forget what he said, but I suppose it must have been funny, since an editor of BOF (not to mention AIR) said it.

Leigh has kept the LOCs away from me, so I can't say anything about that bit. And we wind up with the genuine version of JOE PHAUST. It is a pity my coeditor was so lacking in foresight that he neglected to keep enough copies of the program for distribution with BOF 2. I suppose this lack of concern and preparedness is a consequence of Leigh's employment in the public service.

BOFMEISTER

When Leigh and I finally finished BOF 1, we thought we had it made. The first one, we said with the experience of about 500 fanzines behind us, is the toughest. Then came the roar of acclamation from our readers. Since, as I remarked earlier, I have not yet actually seen the letters of comment, I can only infer the existence of such overtones in the awed stumblings of our overwhelmed correspondents, I have to rely upon my recollections of fanzine reviews: Charlie Brown said something like 'I expected better', and by golly, it is pretty plain that old Charlie was actually bursting with admiration and was only just able to keep calm.

Well, we figured that what we would do was just sit around and write a couple of brilliant stencils each, every week or so, and bingo! in three months there's another issue of BOF. Maybe I was waiting for Leigh, or maybe he was waiting for me, but a couple of months ago I was reading an issue of AMAZING - and there were my own golden words, reprinted from a fanzine. I must have written that piece for TOMORROW AND a long time ago, I thought. And slowly, as my mind drifted back through the ages to 1971 (or some year like that) I overshot slightly and my reverie was interrupted by the jarring thought that once I had been coeditor of a fanzine called BOF. It didn't take us long to get going after that, but our joy at our speedy production is somewhat dampened at the thought that up in Ananaland Dennis Stocks managed to produce a convention and a lengthy report in just ten months. There's something monstrous about such activity, and we intend to do something about Dennis before too long.

Eventually we will have to face the production of another BOF, and I have the feeling that we can't really wait until 1976, which is about when Leigh and I should run a convention together again. We could use our old editorials again, like a Prominent Australian Fan who is running for DUFF, but our minds are fixed on higher things - maybe old SAPS mailing comments?

Leigh Edmonds is standing for DUFF, of course, as those who slugged through his appalling editorial will know. I guess I can afford to come right out in the open here and say that I'm not supporting Leigh for DUFF. Or anyone else, since I didn't (and still don't) believe it is appropriate, this year.

The other nasty shock I had recently was the discovery of an Australian fanzine called GIRL'S OWN FANZINE. I think I will just not believe in it.

Since the last BOF there have been two more Australian SF conventions (and lots of local ones). The 1972 convention was held in Sydney, and the '73 in Adelaide. Melbourne will be it in '74, and praps Sydney in '75? Both the '72 and the '73 conventions were a departure from previous practice, and it really was a pleasure to get away to a convention that really was away. The conventions had their separate delights, and lots of things have been written about them.

But conventions are gandom/fanzines are not all that there is in the world, so I guess I can report that some things have changed for me since March '71. My address, for example. South Yarra is much nearer to the city, and just a short busride from the home of Leigh Edmonds, coeditor of BOF and a synthesiser, which hums and does lots of other interesting things. By the city, up there, I mean the centre of the city of Melbourne. It's a careless usage, and one that I should avoid a little more thoughtfully, especially since I now almost have the option of not living in the city at all. In March '72 Elizabeth and I bought a farm with her parents, and just a little of my time has gone into that in the 18 months since.

Elizabeth's father retired in January of this year (and this was the main reason for going into debt of a moderate kind to buy 35 acres 50 miles from Melbourne) and he now spends a couple of days a week up at the farm - I try to put in one day at the weekend. We have 17 steers at the moment, plenty of water, vegetables, and a comfortable house. We also play football and cricket with visiting fans, and this has been chronicled elsewhere.

That wouldn't have been possible had I stayed at Monash University as a research student in applied mathematics. I started that gig at Monash at about the time of the '71 convention, and I found it pretty pleasant. For most of the '71-early '72 period I was involved in student politics on a couple of levels, and the research puttered along happily (see assorted boring papers...). But by early '72 my stomach control was inclined to weaken in the presence of some of the professors, and I was pleased to be able to get a job outside the university, even though it meant tossing away a Ph. D. I settled in to the Australian Council for Educational Research as a research officer, and have been there ever since. My only temptation to move came when I saw an ad. which would have taken me out of Australia for a couple of years had I been (for a job) successful, just after Australia won the bid for the '75 Worldcon. The temptation was too great, and I applied for the job. But Robin and the rest of the committee were unlucky, and I missed out. Maybe I still have a chance, though. Any offers?

ACER has kept me busy, especially in the last couple of months when we've been short one member of staff, but it has enabled me to travel around Australia a bit, and provided money for buying steers and the like. I'm in the enviable position of being sufficiently junior that I can shout and scream at the directors with impunity. They regard me as beneath contempt, and take it out on my immediate boss. I take it out on him too. Sometimes I think he is in an unenviable position.

Inevitably, I have started playing politics again (it gets into the system). No matter what Bill Wright thinks, I didn't discover politics recently - it's just that occasionally I find myself in a position to do something about it nowadays. Fortunately I'm not meddling with anything important, but maybe some of the changes in mathematics education in Australia in the next few years will be an indirect result.

Good old Carey Handfield has just arrived here with an ANZAPA mailing. How would you like to be the next editor of ANZAPA, he asked. I think that is quite enough for tonight.

Friday 1st January

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OPENING

John Foyster: Well, I think it would be best if I opened this convention now. There are a number of people who were going to be here because they're part of the program now but they haven't bothered to come. It's not unusual. There are a number of things I'd like to draw your attention to. One of them is that my name is John Foyster. I've got a badge inside there but I'm keeping quiet about that. Lee Harding and Leigh Edmonds are also members of the committee. If you have any questions about what's happening in the convention or if you're having any difficulties of any kind, come to us. We make one request however; besides solving people's problems we have to run a convention, so don't come to us if you want to know where to buy cigarettes handy. I mean, this is something you can find out for yourself. But for serious problems, we'll certainly solve them one way or another.

The second thing is concerning the blue sheet there which I hope you all have. There are a number of items here which are quite important and I think I should draw your attention to them. Now they're put in chronological order so that if you don't get around to reading the last one till tomorrow that doesn't matter very much. The ones that I think are important just now are actually numbers five and six, even though chronologically these come right at the end. That is, I've put down the name of the person in charge of the smorgasboard and the films, Mervyn Binns. Now Mervyn's going to be very busy up the back selling books and he's going to have a few words with us later on but we have decided that instead of Mervyn Binns selling those tickets Bruce Gillespie will be doing it. Now I emphasize that for the smorgasboard we claimed that we would be having fifty people there. If we have more than fifty up to a

reasonable limit we can handle it. If it gets a lot more than fifty we could be in difficulties. If you want to go to the smorgasbord tomorrow night I think you'd be advised to pay the dollar to Bruce today to be sure of getting there. This is the hotel that the Melbourne Science Fiction Club has been meeting in recently and I gather that they're very friendly. And besides the dollar for the smorgasbord you'll unfortunately have to pay for your own drinks as well. Then on Sunday, the film program that's been arranged by Mervyn and Paul Stevens. I have written down there \$2.50 for the five sessions. This is true if you pay on Sunday. However, if you pay today or tomorrow, you will get the films for \$2.00. If you want to know what's on the program you look on a board in the other room at the back.

If you want to know what's on the program of the convention at any stage and you don't happen to have the sheet of paper on you, the blackboard right at the other end of the room has a complete list of the program. As far as I know it's accurate. So, that will be there all the time and so this little sheet of green paper you can screw up and throw away if you don't want to keep it.

In reference to the party tonight. This will be starting after the program finishes and when you get down there. There's a rough guide here, once you've got down to the corner of Carlisle Street and Nepean Highway. We'll have a larger scale map as well.

It doesn't say so here... Oh yes it does, there's a P.S. The Convention and the members of the Nova Mob will be providing a certain amount of liquid refreshment, but if you have exotic tastes, then it may well be that you'd be advised to bring your own. On the other hand, I think we can cater to average drinkers.

I think these are the main things about the program that we have to worry about. There is the auction. Now today we're mainly selling amateur magazines and people may want to have a look at these before bidding. For this reason Leigh Edmonds will be exhibiting some of the better items in this corner between 4:00 and 4:30. Now in the program the period 3:45 to 4:30 is set down for informal discussion of two interviews, and I'll speak about those in a moment. So those who are not informally discussing the two interviews because they are more interested in buying fanzines, come over here and Leigh will give a bit of a spiel and then later on the auction can proceed a little more smoothly because people know what's available.

Now I should introduce a few people who you're going to have to know. Bruce Gillespie - would you stand up Bruce? Quite apart from being the man to whom you give money for the smorgasbord and the films, he is the publisher of SF Commentary and I'm amazed that he's not trying to sell copies to anyone. Perhaps he's saving this for tomorrow. But have a chat with Bruce about SF Commentary and you'll be doubt learn quite a lot. Thanks Bruce. There are a few other people here. Bill Wright you all met as you came in. Jack Wodhams. Mr Wodhams, will you please stand up.

Lee Harding: Please stand Mr. Wodhams.

JF: Jack Wodhams makes more money from Science Fiction than we do. I've got an interesting little article for you to look at later. Terry

Carr having a shot at you, have you seen that one? Haven't tried to sell sell any Ace Specials lately?

And Robert Bowden, he has sold a couple of stories to Vision of Tomorrow. I don't know what he's doing otherwise. Thank you. Now have I forgotten any others... no. If I have forgotten anyone else in the professional line I apologize.

Now the next point concerns introducing other people. The purpose of the discussion groups this afternoon, while we've tried to get people interested in the same subjects together, is largely so that you can get to know each other and we have people from all the States and Territories of Australia excepting the Northern Territory and Western Australia so I hope that you'll try to get to meet some of these people who've come a long way just to talk with us for a couple of days and to perhaps see some movies on Sunday.

Now the program as it's listed on the green sheet has been changed slightly. If you don't have a green sheet don't worry, but I'm merely pointing out that if you have a green sheet there is an error or two on it. A matter of time. Tomorrow, because of the smorgasbord, we think we ought to extend the time between the start of the auction and the start of the evening program to a full three hours. So all the evening programs, at 7:30, 8:00 and 8:20, they'll be set back half an hour. Now I think that is indicated on the blackboard at the back. It is not indicated in the Convention Booklet, it's not indicated on the green sheet. So unless you hear me now or see it on the blackboard, you won't have known about it. So I think it's probably worth restricting your attention to the blackboard where any changes will be notified anyway. The second thing concerns a small error, very small, in the Convention Booklet. Tonight the fan guest of honour is speaking at twenty past eight and not half past eight. Robin was in Heidelberg over the period of the Heidelberg Convention, he's also been through Japan, spent a fair bit of time in Europe and England, a fair bit of time again in America and so has been in contact with fans all over the world, and besides speaking to us I think he's going to be very anxious to answer questions from you in this section tonight.

Now before proceeding to the round table discussions, I'd ask if anybody has a question right now. We might be able to solve a couple of problems of a general nature. For example, if there's anyone from interstate who does not have a place to stay we may be able to straighten this out now, rather than leaving it to some later time. Is there anyone from interstate without a place to stay. Ron Clarke and two other people. Now how many people could offer accomodation. We've got Joe and Rob Gerrand and James Campbell. Three people. So, Joe's at the front, Rob and James, you know where they are, if you three could get in contact and make some arrangements... Is there anyone else in this position? Ah, how fortunate, everything works out right. Oh, Tom Newlyn may be here a little bit later, no worry there.

Now, for the discussion panels our system is going to be this. We're going to have discussion groups. We're going to have two in this room and two in the other. We want you to arrange the seats as you think is best. It depends on the group. The people discussing the Worldcon bid

might feel that the best system is to have one person talking to them about the Worldcon to start with and so obviously you might have a different layout from the sort of thing you would have if you were all buddies together and you were talking about Reviewing Science Fiction, which is Bruce Gillespie's group. That's a rather large group by the way. Now we've tried to keep the groups fairly even. You may find that your group is large in which case you might find yourself sitting in two rows. Please don't feel that this means because you're in the second row you have to talk quietly or keep out of the conversation. We want everybody to be in it. We also want to remember that there will be two groups in each room so that if people are going to indulge in shouting matches it might be best to move outside, please. It is rather small anyway.

L.H.: The seating is arranged in the back room so we only have to arrange the seating in this room.

J.F.: Oh, that's good. Are there any more questions at the moment? Well, groups one and two are meeting in this room.

Someone from the audience: What about tomorrow?

J.F.: Well, tomorrow's groups are meeting tomorrow... Right now...
(applause)

Ladies and Gentlemen, that was Noel Kerr and Irene (who just entered). Noel Kerr is handling the comics and you can stay right there Noel because that's where it's going to be, okay. The Worldcon bid is going to be over on the other side, over there, and that's going to be Gary Mason's worry, yes. So people interested in that will be going thataway. Fanzine publishing is going to be - gasp - my concern and - which is the largest group?

Someone from the Audience: Closest to the door, where you can run?

J.F.: Closest to the door, yeah, okay, over there. And Reviewing Science Fiction, which is Bruce Gillespie's mob, perhaps if you could sit somewhere over that side. People who are not allotted - I think the best thing for you to do for today is to come up here to the front, have a look at the size of the groups, see if there are any chairs left over and then you can go and sit down. It's a pity you couldn't have been here a bit earlier and made this arrangement but certainly, if you haven't been allotted for tomorrow, you should try and get involved in today.

So, I imagine that it's going to take us a while to get arranged, so could you try and filter through to the areas indicated. Reviewing Science Fiction there... no, Reviewing Science Fiction there, Fanzine Publishing there, Comics there, Worldcon bid there, tomorrow the world...

Voice: Hey that's my line for tomorrow night.

J.F.: You can rely on John Bangsund, it's been a great day...

Leigh Edmonds: Yeah, yeah, has he been here at all today?

JACK WODHAMS interview

Lee Harding: Well, many of you may know Jack is probably our senior science fiction writer in this country. I say that in all modesty. Although he was only first published about four years ago, I think, give or take a year, he has had a tremendous number of appearances, mainly in ANALOG, which is a big breakthrough for an Australian writer. But he's also appeared in GALAXY, in AMAZING and in NEW WRITINGS. He's also sold a few stories to the American slicks such as CAVALIER and ROGUE or somesuch. He gets around. The most interesting aspect of Jack as a writer which I hope to investigate now in depth is that Jack, you did write for many, many years without success until you found success in the science fiction medium. Now, to what do you attribute this success? Charm?

Jack Wodhams: Well, I suppose it's waking up, really. You're not writing for yourself: it's to please the audience. I mean it's no good me writing to show how clever I am, I have to try and persuade the reader how clever the reader is. And this is the difference between professionalism and amateurism. The professional does not write for himself - not so much. I mean an amateur does write for himself, to please himself.

L.H.: Surely, Jack, there's an aspect of writing which we term commercial writing, and although the writer is a professional he does have to write more as you say with the audience in mind and so forth?

J.W.: Yes. Well, the audience. A big audience. You talk about pulps and popular writers - like James Bond and people like this - but the point is they are popular, they do appeal to most people. And they appeal to most people because they are entertaining. Now more obscure writers are lauded by the intellectuals as being something out of the box, superior, which they might be. But they're not

understood by many of the, you know, common or garden public. Now John Bangsund likes the more intellectual writer, I believe, but I try to appeal to a wider public. I'm not writing science fiction for the fans here - I think I've said this before - I'm writing to please a wider audience. The audience that is reached by John Wyndham, the audience that is being reached by Bradbury, the audience that is not being reached by Sturgeon and Pohl and is perhaps being reached by Clarke. So you get the two different types of writer. There's one that's writing science fiction for science fiction people and others who are writing for the general public.

L.H.: But let's just speak of writing specifically, Jack, as opposed to the two types of science fiction writer you analyse. Now, you believe that the main object of a writer is to entertain, to write an entertaining piece of fiction?

J.W.: To write an entertaining piece of fiction? Yes.

L.H.: But before you had success in this manner, did you write a lot of autobiographical fiction and maybe of an intellectual ... What did you write?

J.W.: Humour, mainly.

L.H.: And what sort of humour specifically, and why didn't it succeed, do you think?

J.W.: Ah, well, humour of course is a very tricky subject. You can tend to try and be clever and say this is very funny, ha ha. And it's not. Other people don't think it's funny, you see.

L.H.: But why do you think you've succeeded in science fiction where you haven't succeeded elsewhere, in other media?

J.W.: I don't think it would be a case of that. I mean, expressing myself in what you say is science fiction is just happenstance, really. It's coincidental that it happens to suit me. I don't force myself to write it. It's just the way it comes. I've looked back through some old pieces that I've written, way back (they're terrible), but they still have a science fiction flavour. I had one - there was a shadow, you know, a shadow form of life which hid in the rocks and a fellow ran past...

L.H.: You're putting me on.

J.W.: No, well this is...

L.H.: This is a serious interview, Jack.

J.W.: ... This shows it was there then. It's always there, and of course humour is always wild.

L.H.: As a successful science fiction writer, as you say, considering his audience and writing for them, do you ever consciously feel a little bit imprisoned by this and sit down and write something just to please yourself? And does it sell?

J.W.: I do try and please myself at the same time. But I don't want to please a science fiction audience, I want to please the public, in general, because if I please the public - the public is bigger than science fiction. Do you follow me? The public will buy more books.

L.H.: Do you think the public is stupid, Jack?

J.W.: I don't think the public is stupid, no. But I think they have to be reached and I don't think a lot of science fiction reaches the general public.

L.H.: Do you think a lot of science fiction is overserious and pretentious in its approach to the public?

J.W.: It could be, yes - because you've got the image of the monsters and so forth and so on. Now John Wyndham's is my idea of a sensible straightforward approach. Take the Day of the Triffids. This can be read and has been read by a great many people outside science fiction who wouldn't be seen dead here, probably, or be associated... I mean, this is putting it rather badly: but this is the writer I want to be. I want the public and...

L.H.: You want the money, Jack.

J.W.: ... entertaining writing generally.

L.H.: Have you ever written in the style of Wyndham, whom you admire? Apart from other humorous writing.....

J.W.: No, I don't try to consciously write in the style of anybody else; but of course they influence me. I've been influenced by more humorous writers than anything else, like W.W. Jacobs, Ernest Bramah, Damon Runyon, Thurber. I mean I've read more of these than I've read science fiction...

L.H.: Do you think you'll remain a science fiction writer? Do you want to expand and go out into the big world?

J.W.: I don't know what you mean about going out into the big world. I think I can say what I want to say, and what I want to say concerns the future much like 1984 concerns the future. This is the science fiction novel that's on everybody's lips. Everybody quotes it.

L.H.: Have you read it, Jack?

J.W.: Politicians use it: it's a reference point.

L.H.: Have you read it, Jack?

J.W.: I've read it, yes.

L.H.: Did you enjoy it as a book?

J.W.: I enjoyed it as a book. This is popular...

L.H.: And you know that it is popular and is also regarded as an intelligent novel. Now it is also popular. I don't know how you define 'popular': it's always available, it's always in print. I know John Foyster is an expert on this book. But do you think the science fiction writer, because of his medium, tends to write too shallowly, that he could perhaps reach the same...

J.W.: No. I think he writes too obscurely. I mean take (no offence to Bob Silverberg), you take Thorns. I've read Thorns and I couldn't make head nor tail of it. Quite frankly, I didn't know what it was about.

L.H.: It wasn't about anything. It was a dull, awful book.

J.W.: Piers Anthony with Chthon, or however you pronounce it - well, this didn't reach me either. It's just not my type - I don't say it's bad, it's not for me to say it's bad. Just because it doesn't reach me, I'd

be the last to say it's bad...

L.H.: On the other hand, I've had several people say to me that one of your stories was the most obscure thing they ever read and that was The Crooked Man.

J.W.: Yeah, well this is their opinion.

L.H.: Just as it's your opinion of Silverberg and Anthony?

J.W.: This can be conflicting. I spoke of Ernest Bramah. Now Ernest Bramah is my top, favourite humourist. To me, he's classic. He writes in an old-fashioned, Chinese style, way back old Chinese, in Kai Lung - the Kai Lung stories. Well, these can be said to be obscure. My father loved humour: he laughed at practically everything. He could not stand Kai Lung. I mean he couldn't get past the first chapter.

L.H.: Do you mind if I shift a little?

J.W.: No, but this is it. It's a classical humour.

L.H.: This obscurity you speak of, Jack. I think it's more an obscurity of style and just plain bad writing.

J.W.: I think it's obscurity of humour. I think it's ...

L.H.: Obscurity of humour?

J.W.: It's humour that doesn't appeal to everybody. You know you can tell a joke - you told that joke twice already and I haven't laughed once.

L.H.: No, no. I think you misunderstand me, Jack. The obscurity you dislike in Silverberg and Piers Anthony is mainly obscurity of style. They're trying to be clever.

J.W.: They're not trying to be clever. They're probably saying something that I can't understand.

L.H.: Modest.

J.W.: The fault is probably mine, yes.

L.H.: Oh, don't feel bad....

J.W.: No, this is true, this is true. I've never been great on symbolism as such and I think there's a lot of symbolism in a lot of these things.

L.H.: Now, just to get off on another tack: how many novels have you actually written?

J.W.: Oh, Lor' luv us - I don't know. It'd be six, eight, something like that. Possibly more.

L.H.: And how many did you write before you actually sold the first one?

J.W.: Oh, about half a dozen or so.

L.H.: Now, do you work on a schedule - a specific numbers of novels per year?

J.W.: No. Oh, I let myself be nagged I suppose because it's what the agent wants. Novels. That's where the security is - in the novel. The short story is a bit limited: they don't go into reprints with short stories.

L.H.: What would you do if John W. Campbell dropped dead?

J.W.: I don't really know. Probably apply for his job.

L.H.: What are your current plans? You have a novel coming out from Curtis. Do you know what the publication date will be?

J.W.: Haven't the foggiest idea.

L.H.: And the title - your title, they'll probably change it.

J.W.: The Authentic Touch

L.H.: How much did you get?

J.W.: Ha ha ha. (mumble, mumble). Yes, they threw out the novel before last.

L.H.: They?

J.W.: Scott Meredith. I'll have to try and hawk that around myself somewhere.

L.H.: Do Scott Meredith give you any editorial help or do they just say: 'We can't sell this?' Do they give structural criticism and assistance in that manner?

J.W.: Oh, to a degree, yes.

L.H.: To what degree?

J.W.: Advice that's... Suggestions that are not rude, shall we say? I mean that the last novel I sent they were quite pleased with. I got the best results out of that one so far, so I'm very hopeful about that one. And I'll just have to keep on going, I suppose.

L.H.: Well, I think it's quite safe to say that you are the only writer in Australia who lives exclusively off his science fiction sales.

J.W.: Lives, yes.

L.H.: This is living?

J.W.: It's not too bad, really.

L.H.: Well, just to wind up our discussion, is there any guiding light in your life that's made the path easier for you to perhaps pass on to the people out here and give them a better understanding of your craft and what they're reading?

J.W.: If they're happy in the job they're doing, I suggest they stay with it.

L.H.: O.K., Jack.

J.W.: It's very much hard work.

ALF VAN DER POORTEN interview

J.F.: If you can bear it for a few moments, we're going to talk a little bit about the other side of the game. So perhaps Jack can rest that voice for a while. I hope that we likewise ... well, I hope we won't come to blows. Let's get the roles straight right from the start. Alf van der Poorten is a reader of science fiction and I am not. If you want to get some idea of Alf's approach it might help you to know that he lectures in pure mathematics at the University of New South Wales. Now perhaps that will serve as a starting point. Can you see any connection, Alf, between your lecturing in pure mathematics and reading science fiction?

A.vdP.: Uh, no.

J.F.: This being the case, would you say that there's anything involved in your work which might tend to make you read science fiction rather than, say, western novels, in similar quantities?

A.vdP.: I don't think that there's anything involved in my work. It's just that I read a lot and since I like to read for relaxation, as well as for educational purposes, I find science fiction is sort of the ideal relaxer. It also occasionally provides a little education: not in science, by the way, but I think in sociology, ways of looking at things.

J.F.: But how then does science fiction do this for you as a particular person that a western novel wouldn't do, or a detective novel?

A.vdP.: Because, I think, science fiction is simply different - at least what I call science fiction. The western novel tends to have fairly standard plots. The only education you're likely to get from it is from the interpersonal relationships which are usually badly dealt with anyway. From science fiction one very often gets some good ideas and insights, particularly, as I say, into sociological-type situations, sometimes

into scientific ones, but not often.

J.F.: Which particular writers... Do you have in mind particular writers when you talk about sociological insight? Or perhaps even occasional scientific insight?

A.vdP.: Oh, look, all over the place. Let's take a particularly primitive example, a writer that I couldn't classify in this way. I'm just reading at the moment Heinlein's Star Beast, which I also read 15 years ago: it was one of the books that almost started me off on the thing. Why is this a worthwhile book? Principally because on reading it any tendencies towards racialism that one might have are likely to become removed, for instance. This is a simple example that comes to mind. Almost any reasonably good science fiction story with a reasonably good idea is likely to make you take a wider look at situations. There are stories about overpopulation and the dangers that make one conscious of this. The pollution problem which is a new one for most people is one that must be very familiar to science fiction readers because that sort of danger has been dealt with in the past. The fact that society is relatively unstable is something which isn't apparent to most people although fairly obvious at a second look and is something obvious, so to speak, to the science fiction reader because he's seen it described in a multitude of stories.

J.F.: But look, Alf, if I want this sort of thing I don't read science fiction. I find more sociological information in reading non-science fiction.

A.vdP.: Exactly. I don't read the books just to get information; I read the books for entertainment and the information is a bonus.

J.F.: Yeah?

A.vdP.: Yeah.

J.F.: But I still can't get over this...

A.vdP.: I want to add to this. The information is presented in a particularly good style, which is really quite important. If you read a good high-class book on philosophy, dealing with philosophical problems, you will find that to illustrate the problems the author very often has to take what is virtually a science fiction-type example, an extreme case if you like, in order to make his points. Many of the examples that crop up in certain philosophical literature could have been taken from a science fiction book. Certainly, I managed to write a philosophy thesis once and took all my examples from science fiction stories, and I think it was quite good philosophy.

J.F.: Yes. But I'm concerned that to me science fiction doesn't seem to do these things very well. And I'm concerned that people reading science fiction might get half-baked notions. Take something like population, which you mentioned. Obviously, as we were saying last night, this is a very serious problem. Now is it likely, or rather have you seen science fiction writers who treat it sufficiently seriously. My attitude is this: if a problem is important, then it must be handled in the best possible way, and handling it in less than the best possible way is in some ways to make it seem less important and in fact may even be dangerous. For instance, on population. If someone comes up with some quite stupid argument in favour of control of population then it may influence people to take the view that

all arguments in favour of controlling population are wrong.

A.vdP.: Look, on the half-baked problem, I think this is a problem which infects many science fiction readers and many science fiction fans. One is quite likely to get half-baked notions from science fiction stories and you'll almost never get full-baked ones and I agree this is a real danger. And therefore, if you're going to get smart ideas from your science fiction books you must augment these or base these upon, hopefully, a foundation of proper knowledge. I agree: science fiction isn't a place to get these ideas from and I think that any science fiction reader who gets his sociological and scientific ideas essentially from science fiction is spouting nonsense probably all the time, certainly 99% of the time, and he should be aware of it. But beyond that, if one has the background, and has done the other reading and done the other thinking then the science fiction provides some very colourful and very apt examples.

J.F.: I can see your point of view in this, but how many science fiction readers, would you say, were in your position of having done their homework first?

A.vdP.: I think a goodly portion. Possibly quite a few people here, but but amongst the wide public that Jack Wodhams spoke of I think quite a few. It is interesting to note that of the special types of reading - westurns, detectives, and so on - science fiction would be the most popular type of reading, say, in a university audience.

J.F.: Yes, I think this is certainly true. Would you say that - I'm assuming here you're fairly familiar with ANALOG, a magazine slanted towards a particular audience - would you say that the relative power that the magazine has and the sociological views which it puts forward would make it dangerous? Some people have argued this in America.

A.vdP.: Oh, I think Campbell has got some dreadful ideas that are, yes, quite positively dangerous. I would think that Heinlein is a quite frightening type of fascist and ought to be read with many grains of salt. But given these, once you recognize this, I can let that part sort of drop down my back without doing me any harm. I'd say that it wouldn't do that much harm to most of the readers of ANALOG. It'll do some harm to, you know, susceptible adolescents from time to time. I hope that they subsequently receive an education which will show that a lot of the stuff there is nonsense. I don't think it's influential. You'd feel a little silly, I think, setting out to destroy the world, so to speak, based upon the thoughts you got in an editorial in a science fiction magazine.

J.F.: I think people have started from less. My feeling about ANALOG, though, is that it's a magazine in which the editor has taken the trouble to find out what his audience is like and he produces a magazine for that audience. So that in fact it's a matter of Campbell pushing the magazine in this direction because the readers are that way inclined, anyhow.

A.vdP.: Well, in so far as that is so, he's not doing any great harm. He's only leaving them where they are, sometimes slightly better informed, let's face it. You mightn't like Campbell's ideas, but some of his facts are quite good and don't do any harm. Campbell may even from time to time inspire people to read the facts. They will then find out perhaps that Campbell is wrong but Campbell will have achieved something.

J.F.: In other words, it could well be that he's some sort of fifth-columnist of left-wing socialism, and he publishes all this other stuff to get in the right-wing readers?

A.vdP.: Well, I'm pretty sure that he doesn't see himself in this light but this is not such a foolish joke. It's quite well-known that lots of people who started off with one political philosophy particularly when young reverted to quite the opposite wing later on. I would think quite a few people who were brought up on Heinleinian or Campbellian fascism as education hit them and a bit of thought sort of came to them turned sharply left, say - much more sharply than they would have otherwise. In so far as this goes, the effect you speak of may well have been achieved.

J.F.: One other thing, Alf. You concentrate your reading as far as I know almost exclusively on books. You read very few, if any, magazines.

A.vdP.: Yes. This is simply a matter of practicality. I couldn't conceivably keep up with all the magazines and all the books and besides I've got the collector's bug and I decided that I was too far behind as far as magazines were concerned, whilst books - I could sort of amass them - and there was no danger of having a completeness fetish, so to speak. With magazines I'd want them all, and I'd be agonized because I couldn't conceivably do that. With books it's silly to want them all so I don't feel so badly.

J.F.: I think you might find if you talk to some people here, that they are nevertheless trying to complete their magazine collections. If anyone is trying to complete their magazine collection, I have a few items to sell.

Lee Harding: I have several items to sell.

J.F.: What advice would you give then, Alf, to someone just starting to read science fiction? My feeling is that a lot of people who read science fiction don't read much more than that. What general advice would you give to people: that they should read magazines, or books? I presume books, but perhaps from the point of view of finding out what science fiction is like, rather than this collecting aspect... which?

A.vdP.: For a brand new person?

J.F.: Yes, a brand new person.

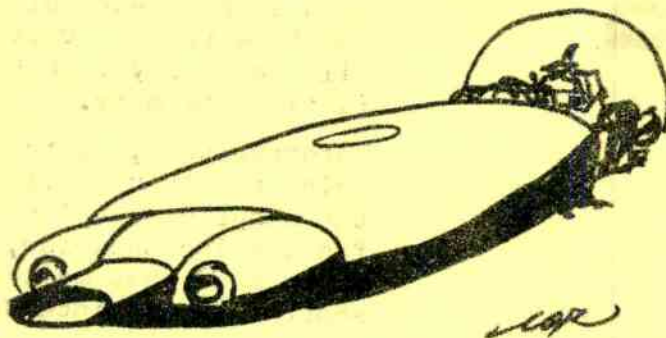
A.vdP.: Oh, I wouldn't put them onto the magazines because the average quality isn't likely to be as high as it is in a high class anthology. I'd be inclined to find a number of high class anthologies and a number of books that I feel would suit their taste.

J.F.: You'd go for an anthology rather than a novel?

A.vdP.: Probably, yes. Mainly because the average good anthology has three quarters of the stories very good and I think science fiction tends to be better in the short story medium by and large.

J.F.: I was going to ask you that because this is something that seems to me to be fairly true. Others have argued in precisely the opposite direction, but my personal feeling is that short stories in the science fiction medium are better executed than the novels.

A.vdP.: I'm pretty sure of this. This may be merely a function of the fact that the average quality author isn't all that good and therefore he doesn't show up so badly in a short story. But I think there's also something perhaps about what we call science fiction which makes it very suitable for the short story form, so much so that - I've heard it said, and I can well believe it - the best short stories of the moment tend to be science fiction, thinking generally of short stories. I've also noticed, looking at other books that are blatantly not science fiction, that very often they have a science fictiony taste. I'm not quite sure what that is... There are books with a science fictiony taste - one can best describe it by quoting them: The Magus was one, although rather blatantly one; another one was The Manchurian Candidate of Richard Condon, and I've read other Richard Condon since then and that flavour remains somehow. There are a number of other things - I read spy stories as well because there's often something of that flavour there, quite hard to pin down. But very often, in good short story collections, you find it, although they have no pretence to science fiction at all and satisfy none of the sort of normal requirements.



DICK JENSEN

First of all let me say that I'll give this talk seated because as soon as the talk's over I shall be standing for about an hour for the auction. Secondly, the clock says I have 20 minutes to give the talk in, which suits me because I don't want to be talking for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, particularly with the auction going on. Thirdly, I don't think I really have very much to say.

(Cheers)

John approached me about six months ago saying: would you give a talk at the convention? And I said, glibly, yes. About a month or so ago he said: don't forget you're giving a talk, and I said: what on? And he said: well, why not start off with one of the articles you wrote for THE GRYPHON in which you said you'd spent a weekend at an American fan's place, Stuart Hoffman's, and had been overwhelmed by the nostalgia of his magazine collection. So I thought about this and thought, yes, this would be a good stepping-off place and in my mind the talk slowly evolved into one which will be on why I do not read science fiction any more.

Unfortunately, quite a lot of what I was going to say has already been said by the panel discussion earlier on, the fan panel discussion, and this will again mean that my talk will be even shorter than I intended.

If I'm going to say something about why I don't read science fiction any more, in any large capacity, I'll have to say why I used to read it, why I did read it at one stage.

I began to read science fiction when I was about fifteen, and there's no doubt I read it partly for its escape value. When one is fifteen and at a large boarding school, and the boarding school is somewhat like the school in *If*, then one is reasonably depressed. And you need something to take you away from the harsh, cruel realities of the children around you.

So I began to read science fiction.

However, I think primarily I read science fiction because of the sense of wonder that it imparted about everyday things. One used to read science fiction and discover that Science itself could appear fairly wonderful and mysterious and well, if I can use the word, beautiful. This is rather like a story that Cocteau tells of Picasso saying that Picasso thought it was a miracle that every time we took a bath we did not dissolve. And this, when you think about it, this is what makes taking a bath rather wonderful - the fact that you don't dissolve. And I used to read science fiction for this effect - the fact that it was like taking a bath and still being there afterwards. It made the bare, dry bones of Science in fact live.

I think that we do need to be reminded of possibilities of the everyday world before we can appreciate the everyday world. In other words, improbabilities have to be with us before we can appreciate the realities that are with us. Again, like a Salvador Dali painting, you see a young boy lifting the skin of the sea and nothing underneath. Well, we all know that this is surreal, but the next time you go to the beach you think: yeah, you know, maybe there is nothing underneath after all, and it does impart a sense of wonder.

Thirdly, and this is a fairly large thirdly, I read it for its (cough) intellectual stimulation. There were many ideas in science fiction that to me then were new. Alf van der Poorten has spoken about these as philosophical ideas and these were floating around in 1950 - it was the end of the golden age of science fiction - but there were many, many ideas which I found stimulating, interesting and thought-provoking. This, of course, is related to the sense of wonder that science fiction used to impart to me. A typical story which I thought was tremendous at the time, which I probably think is still pretty good, but also rather bad, is Charles Harness's The New Reality, which is totally unfeasible scientifically, but the ideas which are propounded I found, and still do, quite stimulating. Books which I thought had this element of wonder - I'll only mention one, really - is Limbo 90. That was a big book of the time as far as I was concerned. It doesn't seem to be ever mentioned in science fiction circles, and this is presumably because it's well-written. I'll be coming back to that later. Of recent years, the only two books which have had some sense of wonder in them have been Bug Jack Barron and Camp Concentration. I found these two books very, very thought-provoking indeed, apart of course from Italo Calvino, who I may come back to later.

Nowadays these three points, escapism, qualities of wonder and intellectual stimulation all appear to me nonexistent in science fiction. I can find no escapism in science fiction because, being a scientist, I find that the scientific ideas involved in them are, if not unsound, not inventive enough, or if they're not inventive enough they're not sufficiently well extrapolated from present-day science. All the ideas propounded are just plain dull. Exceptions to this are the stories of Larry Niven, which I find quite interesting to read, but they are really at a fairly low level compared with the Gold Age. I think the reason that science fiction doesn't provide escapism now is that Science itself is so bizarre that it's produced its own escapism; that trips to the moon, lasers, you name it, new scientific developments, computers for example, are so, for me, filled with wonder and so much escapism that there's no point in reading science fiction. Who wants to read a story which is dull and sounds like a technical report. Why not read the technical report itself and get the wonder that way?

To come back to this qualities of wonder bit, which are nonexistent now, I must admit that this quality of wonder is a purely personal reaction to science fiction now. Quite a lot, I would imagine, of the younger people here today may read science fiction because it still holds elements of wonder for them. It does not for me. I think another reason as to why it is not wonder-full is the effect that scientific thinking has had on science fiction prose. I mentioned this - that quite a lot of science fiction stories now read as if they were technical reports. And I think a lot of jargon, science jargon, has come into stories and made them for me particularly dull and uninteresting. The element of wonder might be best typified by, for those who can remember them, the Bergey girls who used to appear on the covers of STARTLING STORIES and THRILLING WONDER, of which I may be selling some later on today, in which you had almost naked females in outer space, wandering around. It was totally unscientific, but at least it made you think. Science fiction unfortunately has grown up: instead of Bergey girls we're presented with stories like Riders of the Purple Wage by Farmer, which I thought was one of the better science fiction short stories to have appeared in recent years, in spite of what our censors might consider semi-pornographic material.

I also find that the quality of wonder is nonexistent in science fiction because it's becoming more pessimistic. This has already been spoken of earlier on this afternoon when people said that social ills are now figuring prominently in science fiction. Not only are social problems becoming more prominent, but they are presented in a pessimistic fashion and the solutions to them appear to be pessimistic. The world is either blown up or everyone is going to Hell on a roller-coaster very quickly. It seems that far from being a panacea, as Science was during 1940 to 1950, Science now in science fiction is becoming a great big ogre, something to be done away with, forgotten. This I don't like because I'm a scientist. I don't know whether this is good or bad. I think it's probably a good thing that social problems are being dealt with now in science fiction. As far as I personally am concerned it's a bad thing because I can find, as I say, no sense of wonder in reading it.

As for the intellectual stimulation involved in science fiction, the idea story seems to have disappeared - the philosophical idea story and the technical problem with its solution story seem to have disappeared. The social stories make one think but I feel that social events are presented in science fiction in far too simple a manner - they are too naive, the problems are too simplistic, the solutions are too unreal, if they are even solved. Of the better stories published recently I would say Stand on Zanzibar is particularly good for its extrapolation of present-day trends towards over-population and once again I'll mention Bug Jack Barron for its use of television as a power tool and drug-taking. I think that these two stories typify the kind of stimulation that one can find in science fiction, but unfortunately it's too simple a stimulation for me.

Now, I then ask myself the question: what has changed? Have I changed, or has, as I believe, science fiction changed? Why am I now disenchanted: is it me or it? Is it the fact that I am merely older? I don't think so. Referring back to Stuart Hoffman; when I spent the weekend in his attic, which is the size of these two rooms, every available wallspace was filled with books, magazines; I had a glorious time looking through the early, the

first issues of AMAZING, ASTOUNDING, THRILLING WONDER - you name it, they were all there. He had this tremendous collection. And the sense of wonder came back, the stimulation looking at some of the stories and pictures came back; the escapism certainly came back. So I don't think it's the fact that I've just become older, but it could be the fact that I am now nostalgic for the past. Again, I don't believe this is so because fairly recently I read for the first time, for the first time, the complete Lensman stories by E.E. Smith. Now you can't get terribly much worse writing than that, you can't get very much worse characterization than that, and yet I was enthralled by those books. They still held me. Bad as they were, and I really mean BAD as they were, I still read them with enjoyment. Why, I don't know.

However, there is no doubt that growing older does lead to even further dissatisfactions with science fiction. These are again in three categories - everything comes in threes - the writers, the readers and the critics. The writers, I think, of science fiction are at fault because they have not grown up with science fiction. The writing of science fiction today is just as bad, I believe, as it was twenty years ago. There are exceptions to this rule - I've mentioned some of them already - one of them is Camp Concentration which I believe is one of the better-written science fiction novels of the last few years. Giles Goat-Boy I believe is an extremely good science fiction novel. I'll be coming back to that later. However it's my contention that mainstream (whatever that means) critics of science fiction or ... mainstream critics, when they pick up a book that I would say is science fiction, and they find that it is well-written, tend, as we all know, to say it is not science fiction. Now what is not said is that science fiction readers also hold this opinion. Giles Goat-Boy has not been mentioned as far as I know. It did not win any award, any award in the year that it came out, in spite of the fact that it was undoubtedly the best science fiction novel of its year. This is because the readers of science fiction do not want good writing. If something is well-written in science fiction they believe automatically, having been told so often, that it cannot be science fiction. Italo Calvino, for example, is not science fiction because it is well-written.

I said that the science fiction fans expect bad writing and, believe me, they get it. I cannot understand, as I've just said, why else they would ignore Giles Goat-Boy, why else they would ignore Italo Calvino. Why, for example, is Hermann Hesse's Magister Ludi (The Glass Bead Game) very ... or never, probably, mentioned as a science fiction novel? Why is Limbo 90 very seldom mentioned? Because it's well-written. Or Ilooth (T-L-double O-T-H) by Harry Mathews - why is that never mentioned, or very seldom? Why is The Sinister Researches of C.P. Ransom, one of the better humorous collections of science fiction stories never mentioned? Why are all these ignored? It's because they are well-written. And this brings me to the second point. The readers of science fiction are at fault - they get what they deserve, they get what they ask for, which cannot be terribly much. However, I could be wrong here because I don't really know what the bulk of science fiction readers want. If there is time maybe you can tell me what you want in science fiction.

Certainly it seems as though they want bad novel and stories because ... and I base this on the Hugo Awards, for example. Generally what wins is some cr..... (laughter) terrible tripe by Heinlein. Now it was mentioned that Heinlein is a neo-fascist or fascist - I believe this too. I think he

is one of the more sinister influences in science fiction today. I think he is a bad influence and I think John W. Campbell is a bad influence on science fiction. But unfortunately Heinlein seems to win the Hugo almost every time he writes a novel. Whay, I do not know, unless the readers themselves have absolutely no taste whatsoever. That means you.

The third reason why I become disenchanted, as I get older, with science fiction is the critics. I stopped reading the critics some time ago, before I stopped reading science fiction. I got sick and tired of picking up a Judith Merrill critique and finding out that this month three masterpieces of science fiction had been written. It's difficult enough to find a well-written story - say three a year - in any field of literature, but to find a masterpiece every month is just more than I could take. Besides which, Judith Merrill's anthologies became so pretentious and her comments on them just so ...

Lee Harding: Inane?

... inane, yes, that once again I stopped reading her critiques - reviews. Algis Budrys, for example, in ... when he used to appear, I think it was in GALAXY, was again very, very pretentious indeed. I'll be coming back to these in a moment. The better critics like James Blish, Damon Knight and Panshin - I particularly liked Panshin's book on Heinlein: I thought it was very well done indeed - these critics, particularly Blish and Knight, seem to concentrate on more or less the little trivia of the science fiction stories. They pick out grammatic faults, they pick out errors in expression. I think Blish has got a very good one in one of Sheckley's stories: 'He blinked away the waves of darkness lapping at his ankles.' They pick up this sort of thing but they very seldom look at a work in its totality. A recent review in THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT of The Vivisector, Patrick White's new novel, does this same sort of thing. It picks out little elements of the novel and criticizes these, but it also, it also looks at the novel as a whole and makes its most devastating of that novel judged as a complete entity. This is what science fiction reviewers tend not to do. And, (I think George Turner has disappeared, so maybe it's unfair - has he disappeared? - it may be unfair for me to say this...)

Lee Harding: I'll go and get him if you want.

You can convey this to him later on. He wrote a review of The Left Hand of Darkness in THE AGE on Saturday in which he says that 'Ursula LeGuin's aliens are a single-sexed race and she investigates the psychological implications of this one fact to the point where one realizes that an utterly alien mode of thought, reaction and belief is bafflingly possible.' Marvellous. This is really good if this is done. However, two paragraphs later, Mr. Turner says: 'These are people', these aliens are people, and 'people' is in italics. So that creatures with an utterly alien mode of thought, reaction and belief are people. So, you are people, I am people and I fail to see how aliens can be people. Not only that but he goes on to say that 'Mrs LeGuin has performed a considerable feat persuading the reader to identify with them.' How anyone can identify with an utterly alien mode of thought is beyond my comprehension. That is utterly alien to me; it's - was was pointed out earlier - the immovable object meeting the irresistible force. You cannot identify with something which is totally alien to you. Not only that but it is not a considerable feat to persuade people to identify with people. I

think criticism of that sort reflects on what it is criticizing. So, when you read bad criticism I think that the product itself is bad.

As another example we can take Dune. I believe that Dune exemplifies the bad writing, the bad readership and the bad criticism of science fiction. It exemplifies bad writing because it cheats all the time. It presents a hero who is supposed to be a superman and in every page, almost, it tells you: he is a superman. Once and once only in the novel are you shown something which this protagonist does which is superhuman. Only once, when he, by some thought process, gets rid of some poison in his system. Every other event, like taking off his hat or removing his shoes, is presented in italics with 'this is a superhuman feat'. Cheap writing. The readers must also be at fault because it was voted a Hugo I believe.

Voice: And a Nebula.

And a Nebula, yes. And Algis Budrys is an example of the critics who must be at fault, because he believed that Herbert deserved a Ph. D. in Philology for his use of certain words which anyone armed with a dictionary of various languages could have picked out. I must admit that reading Dune was a most pleasurable experience. I was caught up by the novel, I read it with great pleasure, with great excitement. But it's rather like going to the lavatory. I enjoy having, if you'll pardon the expression, a shit. The end result is exactly the same - what is produced is one great, big turd.

Having said that, I must say - what do I read now if I don't read science fiction? Well, what do I read in science fiction? First of all, The World's Best SF, I read that. I buy each issue which comes out and I read it. To tell you the truth I cannot remember one single story from the last six issues or whatever it is that I've read. Not one, except something about glass that delayed light, I think. I forget that, but it's the only story that's remained in my mind. Very occasionally I read a story from a Judith Merril anthology, and only without reading her comments pre and post. NEW WORLDS. I used to read NEW WORLDS before I think it became banned or Mervyn Binns became too frightened to import copies. If it wasn't for NEW WORLDS I wouldn't have read things like Stand on Zanzibar or Camp Concentration and so forth. However I cannot stomach (this might hurt some people) J.G. Ballard or Brian Aldiss. I find that they write pretentious (applause). I find that they write pretentious crap, particularly Ballard who (stormy applause)

Well, we won't go on, then. What else so I read apart from that? I find the qualities of wonder, I find the escapism that I found initially in science fiction - I now find it in the fantasy field. Particularly in the Ballantine series of Adult Fantasys. I believe this is a very, very good series. Generally, or quite often, the writing is bad but the wonder and the escapism is still very strong in those books. Fantasy in general. I would imagine that probably many people feel the same way, otherwise how else can one account for the resurgence in this field? Why are early novels, the very early Morris novels, being republished and selling well if people are not becoming disenchanted with science fiction and more and more enchanted with fantasy?

Thank you.

A QUIET EVENING AT HOME

Carla Harding & Elizabeth Foyster

John Foyster: Ladies and Gentlemen,
can we start half an
hour late?

...

Elizabeth Foyster: Leigh, would you
get out of our
background?

...

J.F.: This table is the home of Lee
Harding. (Laughter) This
bell is Lee Harding's telephone.

Paul Stevens: Believe that and you'll
believe anything.

Carla Harding: That's the introduction.
Have some coffee. Where's John?

E.F.: Oh, he's gone to the Nova Club
meeting. He wants to see John
Bangsund. Where's Lee?

CH: Oh, he's somewhere around. He
usually is looking for a quiet
place to write his novel. He's
probably gone to the Nova meeting too.
Where are the kids?

E.F.: I left young Jillian Miranda at
Monash. She's building a rocket
ship to fly to the moon.

C.H.: Eric's helping the boy next
door to make some rocket fuel.
He'll be in later for some more
honey. How's work?

E.F.: School or housework? School's
the same, and the paper problem
at home is the same too. I've tried
every way I know of bribing the
garbage man to take away John's
science fiction collection. He won't
have it at any price. It doesn't
burn. The Study floor is two feet
high with papers and bits of scrunpled
stuff and old fanzines. And a new
parcel of review books arrives every
day. It's no wonder the postmen on
our route retire early. This
morning's mail, just take this
morning's mail. We got a S&PS mailing,
an ANZAPA, the Somerste Gazette, a
parcel from Kevin Dillon, a set of

Lancer books - six Gothic novels this time so I'll have something to read - four Village Voices, two Private Eyes, a gas bill and a brochure from a lawnmower man who'd doubtless seen the two foot high front lawn. If John would at least let me throw out the envelope that the gas bill came in...

(phone rings)

C.H.: Hello, hello. Oh, Leigh Edmonds. No, he's not here. No he's not here either. No. No. Anyway, we'll pick you up from Boronia station and get you back again in time to take your socks out of the bath and hang them up for Monday morning. Okay. I'm not going to iron your shirts. Goodbye, dear. Have you had your 'phone bill yet?

(phone rings)

C.H.: Hello. Gary Mason? Where are you. No he's not here. He's not. Is this a government paid call or a home one. Yes, I'll give him that message but I doubt whether it will be a forerunner for happy relations.

You answered the next time - he always rings twice.

(phone rings)

E.F.: Hello. Hello, Gary. Yes I'm here at Carla's. No, you didn't ring the wrong number by mistake. No, John isn't here. Hello, Robin. Oh, hello, Peter. For heaven's sake, don't all talk at once. Who's paying for this call? You, us or the government? Oh, mmm... Well, I'll tell John, but I don't think he's got time to do anything, he's doing exams. Mmm, I'll tell him. No, I don't think it's a good idea. Goodbye.

You know it's a pleasant change, Carla, to have Sydney calling when one isn't in bed. Well, you answered the next one. Gary will have changed his mind in a couple of minutes.

(phone rings)

C.H.: Hello, Gary? No, I won't tell him. You write instead. (Hangs up)

It's the three way conversations which confuse me. And those Sydney blokes always hang up so quickly.

(phone rings)

You answered that Elizabeth,

E.F.: Hello. Oh, hello John. Yeah, Carla's here. No, Lee's not. No, John's not. No, she's not. Where are you? Sorry, perhaps I shouldn't have asked that. Oh well, enjoy yourself. Perhaps I shouldn't have said that either. Are you working? Well I'm sorry. I always do say the wrong things don't I. No, but I'll tell him. I doubt whether he'll be interested either.

C.H.: That was Bangsund?

E.F.: He rang to say that the pamphlet will have to be reneoded, not offset. He was looking for collaters.

(phone rings)

Your turn, I think.

C.H.: Thanks. Hello. Hello Dick. Yes. Yes. Oh, of course she's here.
(hands phone to Elizabeth)

E.F.: Hello Dick. No, nothing desperate. I just wanted to know what the weather would be like on Thursday week. Are you sure? Yes. I know, never question your intellectual superiors. All right, your flat on Thursday. Bye.

C.H.: Goodness, what a noise. Those damn cats.

E.F.: No look Carla. It's a little green man with six hands and three eyes.

C.H.: Goodness. What shall we do?

E.F.: What shall we do?

C.H.: Just sit still I think. I wonder if he'd like to sit down and have a drink. Do you think he'd like coffee?

E.F.: Well, he says yes. Do sit down. With milk? And two sugars. Would you like a biscuit?

C.H.: Where did he say he came from? Mars.

E.F.: Odd isn't it, he can talk to us inside our heads.

C.H.: Yes, but it's rather a relief. Would your linguistic studies have equipped you for Martian?

E.F.: No more than your classical guitar lessons. Yes, I can see you quite clearly and Carla can too. Can't you?

C.H.: How odd. Fancy thinking we're intelligent just because we can see you. Are you sure that on one else can see you? You mean you've been to Parliament House? No, no we're not scientists. Elizabeth's husband is a mathematician. My husband is a... what is he?

E.F.: A writer I think.

C.H.: A writer of short stories, fairy stories I think is is. Have some more coffee. There you are.

E.F.: Tell us about yourself. Why? Oh, really. No. You don't mean that.

C.H.: Wish we could. No, that's quite different.

E.F.: Must you go?

C.H.: Why not come to dinner on Wednesday? Elizabeth will come too. And the boys will be home. We'll have some salad and coleslaw, rice and some of my muck.

E.F.: I'll come. Goodbye, for now.

C.H.: Goodbye. Well, shall we tell the boys or surprise them.

E.F.: Oh, let them see for themselves on Wednesday.

C.H.: Help! What if they don't?

E.F.: Don't waht?

C.H.: See. Oh well, we'll see.

E.F.: Here they come. Quick, where's your dishcloth?

J.F.: You go first.

L.H.: I hate to walk in...

J.F.: Go first.

L.H.: Hello girls. Had a nice time?

C.H.: Lee, you know I never have a nice time. The kids have been driving me mad all day and all I've been doing is work, work, work... I wish you were around sometimes.

E.F.: And I've been teaching all day. And I don't know why I don't stay at home and have more children, I really don't.

L.H.: You just sit down and we'll make the coffee.

...

That's it.

(applause)

ROBIN JOHNSON

Fan Guest of Honour

John Foyster: The next item is one that I regard as extremely important. We're going to have a brief talk from the Fan Guest of Honour of this convention, Robin Johnson. Robin has done so much in the last five or six months that I suppose it would be easier if he tells it, than if I start to tell you about it. But of course the thing that interests us most is that he attended the World Convention in Heidelberg in August. And so we're going to ask the Fan Guest of Honour, Robin Johnson, to speak to us tonight.

(Applause)

Robin Johnson: Well, thanks, John.

Actually I've been embarrassed twice today. Once was when Dr. Jenssen pinched all my best lines about the school I was at, and this is the second. I think really that as we're running a bit late I can use this as an excuse to cut it pretty short. The main thing is, I really want to find out what you want to know about Heicon and so on. I'll just very briefly start off by saying I have written a trip report. The section about Heicon I'm sure very nearly everyone must have seen in the last SOMERSET GAZETTE/ AUSTRALIA IN SEVENTY-FIVE that Noel Kerr did at short notice. Well, I was very pleased with the result... The bit I wrote about the trip home is in the new one and I don't know if many people have had time to look at this yet. And I don't really want to rehash that. So if anyone has any specific things they'd like to know about Heicon and how it was organized or whatever it is that interests them about it, just fire away. I think this is the simplest thing to do.

Voice: Robin, were there counter-attractions that dragged you away from the convention program? I think it's a good thing when we have nice Melbourne weather to keep us all in here: you don't want to go down to the beaches.....

R.J.: It was pretty wet in Heidelberg, too. More or less one whole day of the program was a trip up the river and this was a lot of fun. I don't think many people looked at the scenery, though. It was a great big boat with a bar on, and it was a very good program item. I might add that it was thrown in free, as part of the program. It was up the river to a small town, and people wandered off and had lunch there. Maybe they took picnics or ate in restaurants - I don't know.

Bruce Gillespie: What was the first reaction of German fans and American fans when you mentioned Australia in '75?

R.J.: Well, most of them had heard about it, which was nice. I'm talking about Americans. The Germans ... well I think, like most cons - nobody reads the program book 'til they get home, so the few comments I had from Germans would probably have been on the basis of ... I don't remember now whether we had something in the Progress Report; I think we did. The advertisement in the Program Book now doesn't look too marvellous. Most people probably haven't seen this. It was a sort of joke and I think the trouble was, particularly from the German end - well, the German sense of humour is just different. That may help. On the other hand you may take the whole idea as totally wrong-headed. It was a satirical look at what might happen if they didn't change the rules - in which there are conventions in Ruanda-Urundi and God-knows-what all the time, and so nobody goes to them any more. Certainly the Americans had heard about it - of course quite a lot of them we'd been in contact with individually and drummed up support and so forth.

The Germans - the few of them we had been in contact with, a particularly the con committee - knew about it. At one stage it was rather embarrassing. They asked me if I wanted to make a sort of announcement about the bid from the platform. And I couldn't very well, because the Swedes had just stood up on the platform and announced rather specifically what hotel they'd be at and all this. But there's a major difference. The Swedish Convention for '76 will be held whether or not it's the World Convention. It may well be a European Convention and presumably a Scandinavian or Swedish National one. The Australia in '75 Convention, whatever it's finally called, is a thing that will be held specifically for this one purpose. And if we lose the bid, we don't hold it. So it's rather different in that respect. It's also different in that Sweden has one very large city and there wasn't much choice about where to hold it.

As I only just recently, in the last 48 hours, transferred states I'm not about to step in on the Melbourne versus Sydney thing. But we have to resolve it. Not necessarily in a way which says yes, it will be Sydney on August 17th, 1975, or whenever it is, but to say exactly how it will be decided. We have to make it look a firm solid bid. And here I can carry on perhaps a little bit from what you said. I understand that Bruce Pelz, who we've cooperated with quite a lot (and I hope we'll go on getting good publicity and so on through him) in Los Angeles, he being, from memory, the chairman of the Los Angeles in '72 bid - they expect to hold a convention, which I believe is to be called Con-Fusion in 1975 in Los Angeles. Now if we didn't go in any further with our bid, this would be a Worldcon bid. Otherwise it will be a large regional convention - USA National if you like, held in Los Angeles over their Labor Day weekend,

which is early in September. And Bruce has been saying in public in the last two or three weeks that the Australians are firm on this and that they're going ahead. And whether he means by that that we haven't announced whether it's going to be Sydney or Melbourne or what, I don't know. I find the whole thing a bit terrifying. Damn it all, it's nearly five years ahead. Looking at the number of people around here, and the relative proportions of Sydney and Melbourne, then at the moment there must be something like three times as many people actively interested here as there are in Sydney. But it was different in the past and it might be different in the future. And I would think that regardless of the tourist side of the city, and I think there's not much doubt that Sydney has it over Melbourne on that, it has to be where there are most active people at the time of the convention, because of problems people have with getting away from work and this sort of thing. I'm sorry, I've gone on too long.

Bill Wright: Did you find in Heidelberg that it was a totally live-in convention with all the conventioners living in the one place?

R.J.: No. Heidelberg is a student town. It's quite a small town and the convention hall was the town hall, which is a big place. There would have been room for twice as many people. But there's no large hotel - there were several middle-sized ones, several small ones, and people had booked in at those that fitted their financial plans, I suppose.

B.W.: But the thing about Sydney is that accommodation would be spread out so far that people would have a lot of Well, if you didn't have a convention hotel, you'd have people travelling miles and miles by public transport from wherever they were staying in the suburbs...

R.J.: I could say exactly the same about Melbourne....

B.W.: ... and this wouldn't be the same as Heidelberg, so it would really, if we held it in Australia, would really have to be live-in.

R.J.: That assertion I'd like to criticize. I went to a Worldcon in New York in 1967 and this was in a hotel; by far the biggest hotel I've ever stayed in, over a thousand bedrooms - it was one of the Hiltons in New York. And it was so large they had two conventions simultaneously, which was a disaster, actually. But the thing is, very few of the New York fans were not booked into the hotel. Now this simplifies the whole transport thing - it hits the old drunk-driving thing on the head straight away, which is a fairly major thing, because quite a large amount of memories you carry away from a convention are non-program ones, which means parties and private meetings and talks...

B.W.: You really only get that atmosphere if you're all living in the same house.

R.J.: Well, I would say that Heicon is the exception that proves that rule. Heidelberg was a small enough town, a friendly town, with lots of small bars nearby and other places where people could meet. And Candidly, this set-up is a bit different. We're in a very small place here but, let's face it, the facilities of various kinds are not exactly on the doorstep.

Peter House: Robin, I'm just wondering what percentage of people, do you think, went to this con and go to other cons - and here I'm talking about the overseas fans - (a) so that they can sightsee at the same time and kill two birds with one stone, or (b) to meet the personalities?

R.J.: I think it's a bit of both. Quite a lot of the Americans at Heicon, which is what, I think, you're largely talking about, for quite a lot of them it was their first trip to Europe. They used the fact that by being in fandom they were entitled to use the charter - the charter group was over there for three weeks you know, just under three weeks - and went back via London, which is 500 miles from Heidelberg. And most people sort of spent perhaps a week in London, a few days travelling back from Heidelberg through a few places that they might want to see for tourist reasons, like Paris, where probably very few people would know fans. And then afterwards there were three or four people I met in London - one had been to Prague, a couple had been to Amsterdam and one had been to East Berlin - you know, people had been all over. But the reason they went that time was the convention. I think that nobody who's paid a \$200 return fare from New York to London is going to begrudge a little more in travelling around and seeing the country they might not otherwise see.

P.H.: But how many were attracted by the fact that they could go.....

R.J.: I don't know. It might be interesting to find out.

P.H.: I think it would have some...

Voice: It would give added incentive, wouldn't it?

R.J.: Yes. And incidentally (this is only slightly off the point) one of the recent changes in air fares around this part of the world might make a difference. What they've done is they've allowed an American coming to Australia to go back via, I think it's Hong Kong and Japan, for very little more. That might make it a somewhat more attractive thing to cough up the old \$800.

P.H.: There ain't much you can see here, folks, but you can go to Hong Kong on the way back.

Bill Wright: Well, this is not true. What about putting on a Harbour cruise as part of.....

R.J.: There are all sorts of things. I think these tourist things are not part of the convention. I would have thought that we would be dealing with probably one travel agent - that's Alan Nourse, who runs a travel agency (I wouldn't say in his spare time because he's a doctor as well as a writer) but is sort of accredited to fandom. He's done a lot of work to get the authorities in America to accept this idea that fandom isn't an organization set up so we can have free trips to Europe. Having got this idea accepted, and having got, for the first time, 80 members of fandom to take planes all at the same time together, and to get this idea accepted, I think will make it go over better another time. But don't forget, unless something very surprising happens we will be the next overseas, non-North American convention. People have got plenty of time to save up.

Paul Anderson: Well, what about South Africa?

R.J.: What about South Africa? I'm sorry, it's really hardly worth discussing, is it? In two years you could frighten me with those South African stories but at the moment I don't think we have any cause to worry.

John Foyster: About Heidelberg, Robin, how many locals would you have had, where you extend local to mean a little more than coming from Heidelberg?

R.J.: Very few, I think. The thing that we haven't really considered is that before they picked the name Heicon, it was Germancon - it's a project of German Fandom in general. People have been saying, well, Heidelberg was just one little place, and Australia's a great big continent. People collaborated: there were various things wrong with the sort of planning at Heidelberg and it triumphed over them.

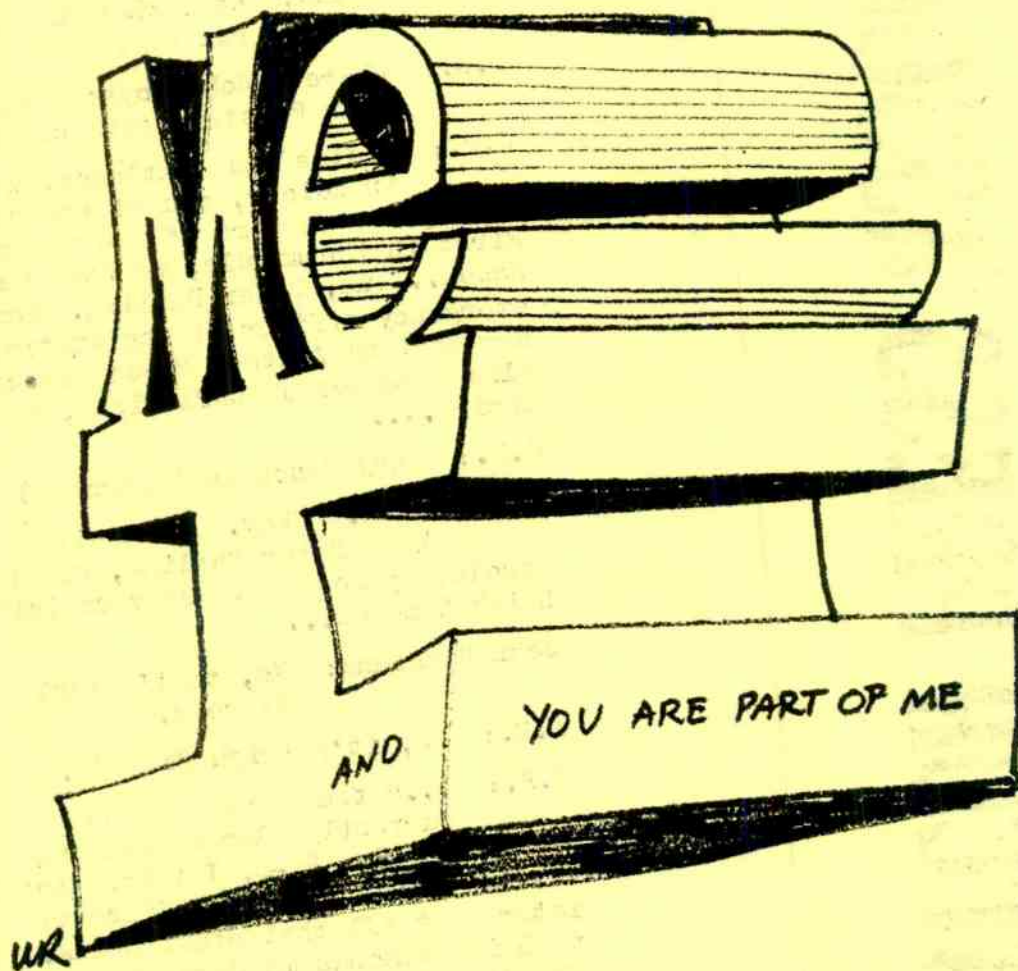
Peter Darling: It's been suggested by various people as a way of getting overseas attention in Australian fandom it might be an idea if, at some future Australian convention, we had some form of TAFF...

R.J.: Well now, this is an interesting idea. It's been suggested - well, the specific suggestion, if I'm not blowing the gaff, is that Sydney hold a convention next year in the winter, which is the equivalent to the American long vacation time, and that in the period between now and then we have a TPFF or whatever you call it, a Trans-Pacific Fan Fund, to bring some American down here. It would need something approaching \$750 I'd guess, as a minimum. But it might be a good project. And looking at the way the Bob Shaw Fund in competition with TAFF has run up, I think it's about \$650 already. And it's only been going two or three months. This doesn't seem to me an at all difficult project and it might do us a lot of good. It gives us practice in two things - an out-of-season convention, and some overseas participation. Even if it's only one attendee, the fact is we've got people interested. I think it's a marvellous idea.

Paul Stevens: How much time have we got before the Americans or the Swedes step in and say: Right, we want it in '75.

R.J.: I think that's one thing we don't have to worry about - the Swedes in '75. From various evidence I have, I think it's quite likely the Swedes will change and go to '77. They as much as said so from the stage at Heidelberg after the business session. The only reason they haven't announced it is that they don't want to get the impression over that they change their minds after every business session, because the previous year they changed from 1980 to 1976. How much time have we got? Well, the bidding is in 1973. As far as I can see, it will be unopposed, unless we antagonize the Los Angelenos more than is necessary. We'll be having people, with any luck, Australians, probably members of the Australia in '75 Committee, at each of the next three worldcons and I think this in itself will be, you know, keeping up the contacts. And candidly I think - well, we've had a couple of R&R people down here, and there's more discussion of the whole thing in American fanzines, people are aware of what we're aiming to do, in fact, in some ways, maybe we've been a bit too public. They're able to see some of the minor bits of dissension we have like the Sydney/Melbourne axis. Of course, various people have suggested all sorts of radical solutions. The Queensland power group is suggesting a Barrier Reef Con, to be held presumably at the Barrier

Hotel, with James Blish as guest of honour.



AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION

panel

Leigh Edmonds: John Foyster, tell
this man not to smoke.

John Foyster: Ah, control yourself,
John.

Gary Mason: Unfortunately, Gary Mason
was indisposed tonight,
and as emergency officer of ANZAPA, I,
Peter Darling, am chairing this
meeting.

Paul Stevens: Hey, when did the tank
run over you?

L.E.: Where's John Foyster gone?
John Foyster, give us an intro.

J.F.: Ladies and gentlemen, we present
in colour, and stereo unfortun-
ately, the members of the apa panel.
First in the middle, we have Gary
Mason... uh, Peter Darling, currently
emergency officer of the Australia and
New Zealand Amateur Press Association,
also a member of CAPA-Alpha, a
comics....

G.M.: Gary Mason is (laughter)

J.F.: Yeah. Okay. As chairman we
have Peter Darling, who is
absolutely nothing. On your left,
Leigh Edmonds...

John Bangsund: No, that's Paul
Stevens.

L.E.: No, it's Leigh Edmonds.

J.F.: ...a founder of ANZAPA,
currently also a member of
SAPS, APA-45, APA-L, I think that I've
covered them. You will discover
later what all that stuff means. Next
to Leigh Edmonds is John Bangsund,
ANZAPA and also OMPA, oh, and APA-NOVA,
of course everyone's in APA-NOVA.
Michael Cameron, who has newly joined
ANZAPA and is representing that school
of thought. Bob Smith, currently in
ANZAPA and he used to be in the
Spectator Amateur Press Society, that
great group Leigh...

L.E.: Very Good.

J.F.: ... a few years ago...

L.E.: When it was even better.

J.F.: Yes. And all these people know quite a lot about Amateur Press Associations. I give you Peter Darling.

(applause)

L.E.: Come on, Peter Darling, start.

G.M.: Well, now, as the most recent initiate into the world of apas...
((G.M. pronounces these as arpers through, except once or twice where he remembers))

L.E.: arpers?

G.M.: I pronounce it "arpers"

Tony Thomas: 'arpers Bizarre

G.M.: ... it would be nice to know what Michael Cameron expected to find in apas and what, in fact, he found.

M.C.: Well, to start with, I heard about them from Noel Kerr who originally told me there was a group of people who contributed every two months and sent the contributions to an official editor. And he originally sent me a copy of Sweet Nothings - Number Three, that is. I expected more or less what was in that and that's what I found.

G.M.: And you're happy?

M.C.: Yes, extremely.

G.M.: John Bangsund, why are you a member of all these apas, when you have all these other fanzines to publish as well?

J.B.: Well, I go like this you see (holding up a partly paralysed hand). It's something that happens when you've been running a roneo a long time. The only thing that will relieve it is to go and do some more.

(applause)

G.M.: Why don't you change over to a Gestetner?

J.B.: I did for a while.

L.E.: But you came back to Roneo.

J.B.: Yeah. I frankly don't know why I'm in these apas, particularly OMPA, which I must admit I don't even read. I have a quick look through it to make sure they've got my contribution in and then I leave it lying around for people to look at. And nobody ever seems to look at it.

G.M.: Do you read mailing comments on yourself, for example? I know when Gary Mason gets CAPA-Alpha he always looks through for that bit of egoboo even though he never reads anything else in it.

J.B.: Well, yes, I do do this, but it's sort of a terribly depressing kind of thing. Because you set up all these things for people to comment on...

G.M.: And they never do.

J.B.: ... and they never do. They just say, Jeez Bangsund, you're far too good, I can't comment on you. Or else, you know, what they mean is Bangsund's obviously a nut and not worth replying to. They're nice about it that way. I think basically I just find it easier to communicate through writing than speaking and being in apas is just one symptom of that.

G.M.: Well, Bob Smith, why do you think we're in apas? Why not just publish fanzines and circulate them generally?

B.S.: Well, I think I'd agree with John Bangsund that now, it's a good easy way of communicating with other fans. I'm in ANZAPA because I find it keeps me in touch with what's going on. And compared with say ten years ago, there's an awful lot going on in Australian fandom. It's not the reason that I sniffed around one of the big three almost ten years ago, which was SAPS. In the course of discovering fanzines in America, and at that time there wasn't very much being published in Australia, so we naturally turned to overseas. And there was an enormous amount of paperwork coming from America. You'd get a dozen fanzines a day in the mail, no trouble at all. And I remember writing away for a thing called Ur, published by somebody named Ellis Mills. In the letter to him that I wrote asking for a copy I also said that I wanted a copy of something called The Vinegar Worm, published by a bloke called Bob Leman. I got a rather terse note back from this Mills saying that I couldn't possibly have a copy of The Vinegar Worm because it was an apazine. I was rather upset at that particular time.

Harry Warner calls apas in his book, the "fortresses of fandom" but at that time they just looked like fortresses to me. I was getting a rather naive idea that fandom was a nice little web, you know, and everybody belonged to it, and we all sort of jiggled our little parts of it now and then. And there were these three bigs, FAPA, SAPS and OMPA over in England, which seemed to be sort of out there silently all by themselves, you know. To get into them, you had to be somebody quite incredible. I ended up getting on the SAPS waiting list and I ended up in SAPS for a very brief period. I found myself dissatisfied with it because I wanted to really communicate. I wanted to write things down, say things which I thought people might listen to, you know. And comment on. But I think that the rest of the panel that have been in apas will agree with me that this doesn't happen. You might spend quite a few pages giving your views on something, even science fiction, and all you might get back out of an apa which has got ten or twelve fanzines in it, or apazines in it, is maybe two will give you a comment, a line, you know, "Gee, yeah, well I thought that was very good", you see. And after a while this gets... it doesn't tell you anything at all.

But on the other hand, you do find an awful lot out about individuals. I remember a lot about individual American fans simply because I was in SAPS for a short time. You also find out that there are quite a few science fiction fans that never venture outside their apa. I think Wari Ballard has never published anything in fandom generally, but he's been in SAPS for a hell of a long time. But basically I'm in ANZAPA because it tells me almost all of what is going on in Australia now, and there's an awful lot going on.

G.M.: Well, Leigh?

L.E.: Oh, yes.

G.M.: Say something intelligent. Why did you start ANZAPA?

L.E.: I started ANZAPA because there wasn't any other apa that I knew of that I could join...

G.M.: What about CAPA-Alpha?

L.E.: There's a page requirement thing about if you don't write about comics then they throw you out. I don't read comics, much less write about them. But I formed ANZAPA and about two weeks after I got the idea for forming ANZAPA I heard about APA-45. So I was a member of APA-45 actually before ANZAPA happened, but after it was formed if you see what I mean. And APA-45, you know, that was marvelous in those days and ANZAPA was just sort of...

G.M.: Small potatoes.

L.E.: Yeah, small potatoes. And then, then, what happened? Then I used to mess up the mailings and Gary Mason got to be editor.

G.M.: He's done a fine job. I can say... I'm not him, so I'm not being immodest.

L.E.: I was just listening to what Bob Smith was saying before about how you dedicate pages and pages to talking about all kinds of things and you hope to get back pages and pages of mailing comments. One of the best things about APA-45 was, it isn't now, was that I would, say, write fifteen pages of mailing comments on four hundred pages - nothing but mailing comments - just sort of read somebody's fanzine and then think up a page to write about them. And for fifteen pages, sixteen pages, I'd get back twenty or so pages of mailing comments on me which I thought was pretty good.

Unfortunately ANZAPA has never been like that, because most of the people in ANZAPA don't have any idea of how to write mailing comments.

G.M.: True.

L.E.: And for the first year...no, the first year I didn't win the mailing comments. The second year I won the mailing comments and I've always won the Good Guy but you know ANZAPA is... blush... ANZAPA is good because I know all the people in it personally. But I can't get as involved in them as the people in APA-45 because the people in APA-45 write and write and write and write and write, or they used to anyway. But they've got a lot of pretentious young people in there these days, trying to communicate...

Paul Stevens: Like Leigh Edmonds.

L.E.: No, no I write mailing comments. You know, they draw meaningful drawings and write meaningful poems, meaningful reviews and things like that. So the best apa to be in these days is SAPS where people just write mailing comments. Mailing comments are what apas are about.

G.M.: Is there a possibility then perhaps that personal contact kills the magic of... well, perhaps not only in apas, but fanzines in general,

for example...

L.E.: Oh, I keep turning out fanzines. And most of the people here get them so...

G.M.: But they're pretty crummy.

L.E.: What do you mean, crummy fanzines? That's a good fanzine, folks.

G.M.: Yes, but I haven't got my copy yet.

L.E.: No, I don't think so. I think that in a way it would strengthen it because a couple of the people in APA-45... Well you write good stuff but the trouble is I've never met you so I'm not going to write any mailing comments on you.

G.M.: Ah, well, I would take the opposite view. For example, I've met you and I see you every few months. Anything I really want to tell you, I can tell you, I don't need to put it in a fanzine.

L.E.: Oh, so that's why you haven't written any mailing comments for the last year and a half or something.

G.M.: So I'm lazy. I'm sorry I'm...

Voice: Peter Darling's lazy?

G.M.: Yes, Peter Darling's incredibly lazy.

L.E.: Oh sorry. Peter Darling. Well actually Peter Darling, you have written me some mailing comments. Not very inspired ones though.

Peter House: Well you haven't written any mailing comments, Paul Stevens, have you?

G.M.: Who's that?

Paul Stevens: That's the bloke on the end there?

L.E.: Yeah, Paul Stevens, you see... (showing his membership badge)

G.M.: Oh, I'm sorry, I hadn't noticed.

L.E.: Paul Stevens is only a member of ANZAPA and he drops out every three months.

G.M.: And the title of his contribution is LSD.

L.E.: What? No that's John Bangsund who publishes... No. Nobody's in SAPS except for me and John Foyster so they wouldn't know about that. ((A Foyster plot which reveals Leigh Edmonds as a John Bangsund alter ego.))

Bruce Gillespie: Tell us about APA-L

L.E.: APA-L is a... it's a lot of hard work, it is, and it costs you a lot. APA-L is a weekly apa put out by the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, right. Put out weekly, usually about one hundred pages, and if you live away from Los Angeles and you want to get distributions of APA-L, all you have to do is to send Fred Patten a lot of money and send him stencils which he runs off on his duplicator. But typing up two or three or four stencils a week, every week isn't easy, as John Foyster can well attest too because...

Elizabeth Foyster: It interferes with his lawnmowing.

L.E.: It figures. I did six pages for APA-L about two weeks ago and I have no intention of doing any for at least another week or two.

J.F.: Would you point out what that means...

L.E.: I don't get the distributions I don't contribute to.

J.F.: The system is slightly different with APA-L as compared with other apas.

L.E.: With other apas. Oh yes, the... as you'll learn tonight with APA-NOVA, which is modelled in a poor way after APA-L, anybody who comes to the meeting, in this case a Nova Mob meeting, gets a copy, up to how many copies of the thing there are. So if you go to the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society you'll get a copy of this APA-L. And in theory it's supposed to attract you back again next week so that you can get the next instalment of the personal hassles and things between the people. APA-L is very funny in parts because it's all these people trying to understand what you're thinking, so please think better so I can understand you.

J.B.: You can just sort of imagine it. You have somebody coming into the club meeting and stalking past this person he doesn't like and going up to the roneo or whatever and running this thing off, and he gets a copy and he walks up and goes uh. (makes gesture of handing fanzine to other person) And this other bloke sort of reads it, runs over to the roneo...

(laughter)

L.E.: And it would be very exciting.

G.M.: The terminology varies between apas too. For example, in ANZAPA it's Official Editor, in APA-L it's Official Collater, in CAPA-Alpha it's Central Mailer. Some apas call the thing that is sent out by the presiding officer every so often, a mailing. APA-L calls it a distribution.

L.E.: That's because it isn't sent out. It's distributed to the people at the meeting

G.M.: Well, it's mailed out to some people.

L.E.: I had an argument with somebody in APA-L because they pointed out it's a mailing to me because it comes through the mail.

G.M.: But this is where you get differences in things called distribution comments and mailing comments.

Robin Johnson has a question.

R.J.: Yes, I just wanted to ask one thing about the frequency. Now, what made Leigh pick two months as the frequency for ANZAPA because there are quarterly ones. I believe one of them is even talking about going half yearly and there are things like APA-L which are weekly? Why did you pick two months?

L.E.: The reason I picked two months was because I didn't know any better really. But actually, it is a good choice. Saps is having a lot

of trouble, it's quarterly, and several prominent members, like John Foyster, are trying to get the regularity of it changed to once every month or once every two months or once every six months because with things like weekly apas existing now, the good old quarterly apas are just having a lot of trouble. FAPA is even in hot water, and when FAPA is in hot water that means things are in a bad way.

R.J.: It's a response kind of thing. If you have to wait six months to get your mailing comments back, you've forgotten what the hell you wrote in the first place.

L.E.: You get a copy of what you wrote. No. I've got a good enough memory to remember what I wrote six months ago.

J.B.: Good God!

J.F.: One comment on the use of mailing and distribution for APA-L. One good reason for having distribution as the title is that the distribution is then referred to by APA-L members as a disky-whisky-poo. I don't think you can do the same with mailing very easily.

G.M.: I don't know. Our mailing stinks sometimes. Anyway we're having an election in ANZAPA very soon and this one is going to be very interesting because it is the first fan election that I have ever come across or, certainly participated in, where there are actual vying candidates. There are actually candidates who are diametrically opposed and there are more candidates than there are positions vacant. This is an amazing thing. There are four candidates and there's only one position, Official Editor.

Voice: Who are the four candidates?

Someone: Not me, I'm not involved.

G.M.: You've got to give me your withdrawal in writing. Well, there is Gary Mason of course, who is the best man for the job - I would willingly serve as his emergency officer any time. There is John Foyster of course, who is the official law and order candidate. He's going to enforce the rules rigidly which means that everyone gets tossed out within the first week of him becoming OE. This means that he has no work for the rest of the year, which is probably the idea. Then there is Denis Stocks from Brisbane who nobody knows anything about and who was supposed to be here but he never turned up, did he. See, chicken. There is David Grigg who, now he's met me in person again...

Voice: He's met Gary in person.

G.M.: Oh, I'm terribly sorry. Now he's met me in person I've talked him out of standing against my good friend Gary. So it really comes down to John Foyster and Gary Mason and... Why do you think Denis Stocks would be standing for this position?

M.C.: Because he's from Queensland.

P.S.: Yeah. But we're not going to hold that against him.

Mervyn Binns: Is it too late for another nomination?

G.M.: No.

M.B.: I nominate Peter Darling.

Voice: Which one?

G.M.: I think I'd be rather good.

J.B.: You get it both ways, if you'll pardon the expression.

Voice: Let's hear from David Grigg why he decided not to stand.

(cries of 'speech')

D.G.: I decided not to stand.

G.M.: Why?

D.G.: Because it's too much work.

G.M.: I do agree with you but why did you decide to stand and then back out?

D.G.: I was going to put in a really funny contribution that was going to be a really big take-off on all these very serious candidates, Gary Mason and John Foyster. It was going to be a great big take-off on both of them. Then I decided I couldn't do it humourously enough so I took it out.

G.M.: He couldn't be funnier than we are John... I mean that you are, John and Gary.

D.G.: Well you've got both these candidates who were talking tremendously seriously about something which should be... well, maybe, it's a serious position.

Elizabeth Foyster: I'll have you know that my husband's always serious.

L.E.: I've known him in light-hearted moments, about once every three years.

D.G.: Here was Gary Mason talking very seriously about law and order and John Foyster talking very seriously about enforcing every rule down to the bottom of the list...

L.E.: That's what the rules are for. I created the rules.

D.G.: But nobody was even smiling about it. It was incredible.

G.M.: I smile about the rules every time I put the thing together...

J.B.: Your friend Mr. Mason.

G.M.: I'm sorry, he does. Hello, Gary, yes.

Peter Darling: You're going on about a quite comprehensive storm in a teacup here but the main thing is there are quite a few people here who aren't members of ANZAPA and to them it seems pretty much like a closed club.

L.E.: It is.

P.D.: Maybe it is. But how hard is it for somebody to get into ANZAPA?

G.M.: It's not hard at all. All they have to do is give me two dollars. I'm pleased to take two dollars from anyone at any time for any

purpose, and six pages every six months. If you have access to a typewriter and a little bit of money to buy stencils or something, you can sort of put the stencils on the typewriter at the rate of no less than six every six months and, you know, you're away. You also have to find someone who is willing to run the things off for you if you haven't got your own duplicator, but there are people like that... well, in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Mike doesn't seem to have any trouble and I don't know about you people in Adelaide, but you seem to want to join anyway. But we have vacancies at the moment.

J.B.: Is it true that there's a rule in ANZAPA that nobody from New Zealand can join?

G.M.: There is a rule in ANZAPA that no one from New Zealand can become Official Editor.

J.B.: I think that there should be a rule that nobody from Nicaragua can be Official Editor because I think it's unfair to the people of New Zealand that they should be singled out for this treatment.

B.S.: Yes, I quite concede the point. There are people here at this convention who wonder what all this has got to do with science fiction. I might be wrong.

G.M.: The answer is, not a thing. Apas, according to Harry Warner's excellent book which is on sale from Mervyn Binns sometimes I think, are a mundane invention. They were run by, you know, just ordinary people who weren't science fiction fans at all, as long ago as last century. And a few science fiction fans started up the first fannish apa, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, in 1938, or something like that. I think that at first they talked about science fiction. I don't know whether they do any more in FAPA, of course I'm not in it.

J.B.: You're pronouncing it all wrong of course, Peter, it's actually upper, as in "upper-Nova" (APA-NOVA)

G.M.: Where were we. Anyway, very rarely is science fiction discussed in science fiction apas.

B.S.: I didn't mean that quite the way it sounded. If people know that there is something like this... after a while, when you're talking about it, it all sounds very in-groupish. You know, the jokes and everything about it is "in". And there might be a lot of people here... it puzzles them and it turns them off you see. For example, if you know it is restricted to so many people and the mailing list is restricted to so many people, they might say "well, what's the point in getting on the mailing list and waiting and waiting for things like that. Is it worth it? Have I got something to say and am I going to be able to say it in an apa or is it best to publish a general fanzine which goes out to quite a few hundred people.

J.B.: I think the answer to that, Bob, is that anyone can join APA-Nova simply by publishing something and handing it in on the night of a Nova Mob meeting, and I don't know what the record number is so far, four or five people who have contributed to it. So there are no restrictions on APA-NOVA - if you're there and you publish something, you can put it in. So you get four or five. Now there are restrictions on

ANZAPA and you get more.

G.M.: Well, there are restrictions on ANZAPA but then last time we got anywhere near meeting the upper membership limit we raised it. And we haven't met the new one yet. Maybe when we meet that we'll raise it again. But not while I'm Official Editor because it's a hell of a lot more work for those extra copies.

Voice: Well, why bother? They can sit on the mailing list and wait until they get thrown out again.

P.S.: Gary Mason's sure to throw me off again.

D.G.: What would you say would be the function of an apa to the rest of fandom? Is it a thing for individuals or do you think it is beneficial for fandom itself?

G.M.: It's beneficial for fandom in that it keeps at least that number of fans together in reasonably close contact. It's no fun for the people who aren't members of the apa for them to have an apa there that they're not members of. But this is what fandom is for, surely - to have fun.

B.G.: Can we ask Michael Cameron - do you find that you had enough contact with other fans through ANZAPA? Or would you agree that there wasn't enough personal contact?

M.C.: Well, in the three mailings I've got there seems to be a lot. I've only had mailing comments on one of mine, and they were fairly good. They were fairly long, and as far as I was concerned I was quite pleased with the responses to mine.

G.M.: It was easy to get into the in-group, even if it was an in-group.

M.C.: Yeah, well I'd already read a mailing when I joined.

J.F.: Perhaps you might make that point, Gary, that there are mailings available.

G.M.: Oh, there are mailings available. As a matter of fact, I understand that there are bits of mailings around - that people can have. Wait a minute - we were going to save that until we auctioned off all the expensive ones, weren't we? Sorry. I blew that, didn't I? Anyway, the policy is that any serious applicant who is interested in joining can certainly have a free copy of a mailing as far as I'm concerned while the supply lasts. We have an upper membership limit of 30 which means that in the limiting case we send out 30 copies of each mailing when it's time - at the moment I think we send out something like 27 - and then as 40 copies are prepared there are those 10 extra copies. Now I sort of stockpile them, as Official Editor. I sell the back mailings off to later joiners and I also give them away to other people that I think I might be able to induce to join. And if you haven't been given one by me to induce you to join and you might be interested in joining, or you might be interested in saying that you might be interested in joining, say so and I'll give you one - but I haven't got any here.

I said it's half past nine and we've got to be at Bangsund's at ten, I think.

Did you call me Gary? I'm Peter. No. You'll get your face slapped.

Voice: Why is ANZAPA called that?

G.M.: Well, this was something that Gary Mason for one opposed.

L.E.: It was originally called APA-A and I thought it was a lousy title so our friend Gary Woodman, who isn't here, suggested in a funny little way that maybe it should be called the Australian and New Zealand Amateur Press Association and at the time I was listening to the music of a guy called Frank Zappa, so I thought, why not put an A N in front of it, so we did. And it was called ANZAPA.

Voice: And why is the constitution prejudiced against members in New Zealand?

L.E.: It's prejudiced against everybody who doesn't live in Australia.

G.M.: It's a stupid constitution, but then Leigh wrote it.

L.E.: It's an in-group and we've got to be bigoted to some extent. Besides, I think that there's not enough bigotry in the world.

G.M.: I'm not going to slap your face at the moment.

Voice: How many New Zealand members do you have?

G.M.: None. As a matter of fact, if anyone knows of any New Zealand fans...

Voice: Is that why they can't be Editor?

G.M.: That's why they can't, yes. I won't let them.

J.B.: How many mailings have been sent to New Zealand?

G.M.: Counting ones sent by me, none.

L.E.: Have you sent any? I didn't send any.

G.M.: Did you send any of the one you did, John? John sent copies of the one he did to so many weird and wonderful people.....

J.B.: Yeah, but I mean, they're already all members.

G.M.: So if anyone knows of a New Zealand fan...

J.B.: Well, I've got addresses of about half a dozen.

L.E.: But are they reputable people?

J.B.: One of them is associate professor of English at Auckland University, so I guess that rules him out.

G.M.: Obviously you don't want a person like that in.

Bill Wright: I move that New Zealand be cancelled.

G.M.: Well, in the limited competence of this convention, I declare the motion carried on the laughter.

There is one American and an Englishman who are members. Preference is not given to them under the constitution...

L.E.: But a lack of preference is.

G.M.: I prefer Mike Horvat to some of the Australians.

Voice: Which Australians?

J.B.: Because he's further away?

Tony Thomas: I see that Redd Boggs is mentioned in the Program Booklet as being a member.

G.M.: Redd Boggs is a former member and he's on the waiting list, which means we're waiting for him to rejoin.

J.B.: And incidentally, Noel Kerr should have been in that ad. too, but somehow, because he's temporarily out...

G.M.: He is out. Is it temporary?

J.B.: And after I remembered it would have mucked up the design, so, ...

G.M.: Yes, it's a club, and if you don't pay the dues you're out. If you don't contribute the pages you're out. The thing exists purely...

J.B.: You're the law and order candidate, are you?

Elizabeth Foyster: And it doesn't matter when you've typed your 6 pages whether you read what anybody else has written.

G.M.: I don't. I only put the thing together.

L.E.: No, but you make a habit of making the Official Organ the most interesting thing in the whole mailing.

G.M.: Thank you, Leigh. I've been waiting for you to say that all night. Gary does that, not me.

L.E.: Sorry, yes. In most apas they just have a front page where there's... on the front they say this mailing contains such and such, they list them and then they say this makes up 104 pages for the mailing, and then on the inside cover you'll find names and addresses and telephone numbers of all the members. And on the opposite side, on the third page you'll find a financial statement, and the fourth side is usually blank. But Gary Mason turns out 10 or 12 pages things...

Peter House: That's it. You get your ANZAPA mailing and your first thought is: let's see what Gary Mason's done now? Then you go on to the rest of it.

G.M.: Are you screwy, John?

J.F.: That's a winding-up sign.

G.M.: Winding-up sign. Let's wind it up. Last question from ... the last question from Peter House was much appreciated.

Oh, hello, Elizabeth.

E.F.: How do you bribe the garbagemen to take them away?

G.M.: I take them to the General Post Office and put them down the chute.

J.B.: No, there's a much easier way, Elizabeth. That is, when you've got too much stuff you just pretend and let your pretence be widely known that you are gafiating and you'll find a horde of eager young fans will come and relieve you of all...

L.E.: And sell it at convention for vast, vast profits.

J.B.: And when all this stuff is safely out of the way, you sort of reveal the pretence and start filling the place up again.

G.M.: By the way, just before I do finish it, I wonder if I could have a show of hands on the question of whether I am a nut to want to be Official Editor again?

P.S.: Can we have that in two parts?

G.M.: Well, I am ~~un~~animously elected! Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.



Saturday 2nd January

10.00 am	INFORMAL MEETINGS OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS	
1.00 pm	ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS The Preparation of Manuscripts SF and Horror Films Edgar Rice Burroughs The Psychology of the SF Fan	
2.00 pm	BUSINESS SESSION	54
2.15 pm	AUSTRALIA IN '75 REPORT	57
2.30 pm	INTERVIEWS & DISCUSSION	61
3.45 pm	To Be Announced	71
4.30 pm	PANEL: SF FILMS Chairman, Paul Stevens	77
5.00 pm	AUCTION continued	
7.30 pm	THE PAUL STEVENS SHOW	78
8.00 pm	DITMAR AWARDS	90
8.20 pm	PANEL: THE POLARIZATION OF SCIENCE FICTION Chairman, Leigh Edmonds	94
9.00 pm	FAN MOVIES & SLIDE SHOW Messrs Clarke, Johnson & Binns	

BUSINESS SESSION

John Foyster: Ladies and gentlemen,
I'd like to start the
business session of the Tenth Australian
Science Fiction Convention. With any
luck there won't be any business.

I think the best thing we could start
with in the business session is a brief
report on the last Australian Science
Fiction Convention, from the financial
point of view. If Mervyn Binns ...
Could you tell people roughly what
happened to the money? How we wound up
at the last convention?

Mervyn Binns: Well, we had a fantastic
budget. Altogether we
spent over \$1,000. We got returns of
nine hundred and something, approximately
and I think the convention itself actually
finished about \$40 to \$50 in the red.
However the convention report was com-
bined with THE SOMERSET GAZETTE and this
was sent out as the report. But in
actual fact we did lose about \$30 to \$40.
But in over \$1,000 I don't think that
was very much.

J.F.: Thanks, Mervyn. I think actually
this is quite true. No
Australian convention has spent anything
like that much at previous conventions.
For instance, this convention isn't
spending anything like \$1,000. It's
not taking anything like \$1,000, either.

I think perhaps this business session
doesn't have a great deal to worry about
and the most important thing it should
do is ask for bids for the Eleventh
Australian Science Fiction Convention.
Is there any...? Yes, Peter?

Peter Darling: On behalf of an as-yet-
to-be-formed Sydney
organization, I'd like to bid for the
right to hold the 1971 Australian Science
Fiction Convention.

J.F.: I rule that out of order. Yes?

P.D.: Sorry, sorry, sorry. Eleventh
Australian Science Fiction
Convention.

J.F.: Is there a seconder for this?
Bob Smith seconds it. Are there

any further bids for the 1972 Australian Science Fiction Convention? In the absence of any other bids, perhaps we could more or less declare Peter dubbed. But, can you give us any further information or would you rather just leave it as it is?

P.D.: Leave it as it is.

J.F.: Bob Smith, is that O.K. by you as seconder?

Bob Smith: Yes.

Question: Where and when?

J.F.: 1972 is the date, I understand.

Question: What about the site?

J.F.: Sydney.

Voice: Or environs.

P.D.: We are bidding for the right to hold a convention.

J.F.: Ah, hah. Well, the wording is not particularly important in the sense that if you don't hold it, someone else will.

Robin Johnson: I think the point is that Peter is bidding for the right that some convention at some date to be announced can be called the eleventh...

J.F.: He's spitting in the beer.

R.J.: ...whereas the Syncon wasn't one of the numbered sequence of conventions.

J.F.: That I think sums up that problem. There is one other aspect of science fiction conventions that I think could be briefly mentioned here. Mervyn, could you tell us briefly your plans for Easter?

M.B.: We've more or less decided that the Melbourne Science Fiction Club will sponsor a convention every Easter from now on. Now this may or may not be the national convention of the year. Obviously, the Eastercon this year will not be the national convention, but further plans than that I can't tell you. But I can assure you that it will be quite different from the last Eastercon. As soon as we've got something worked out, well, you'll hear something.

Lee Harding: Mervyn, why is Easter the best sort of time. It does come very soon after the New Year Convention. There are other long weekends during the year.

M.B.: Well, we might find another time to put it on. But, I think it's the only long, long weekend that's available.

L.H.: I don't think you'll get very many interstate visitors so close... I mean, this is what happened last Easter, wasn't it? We didn't really get the turnout we expected.

Bill Wright: It's not intended to be a national convention this time anyway.

L.H.: No, but a convention...

M.B.: Well, I thought about this a fair bit and I think the things against

holding it at Easter are as many as things in favour. I appreciate that being so close to the New Year we won't get the turnout. But I think for the local people it's much better. If this meeting had been held at Easter they would have been here. It's six of one and half a dozen of the other. If you have something really special at some stage like a World Convention, well, you'll get everybody there.

J.F.: I think I can solve the problem for everybody by ruling that a statement of intent to hold a convention is not debatable. If anyone wants to hold a convention they can do so, but we are concerned with the Eleventh Australian Science Fiction Convention in our business session. But we can also ask if anyone else is intending to hold a convention. Mervyn Binns is. Now furthermore, Paul Anderson, you were talking to me about Adelaide possibly holding a convention. Have these plans come into any greater focus or would you rather not make any further comments at the moment?

Paul Anderson: No comments at the moment. At the moment we've just discussed it roughly and we're waiting to see what this one was like.

David Grigg: I'd like to move that the rotation plan which was drawn up at the Eastercon - Melbourne, Sydney, Melbourne, Sydney - which was drawn up at the Eastercon, I believe - be removed, because Adelaide is thinking of holding a convention and it's pointless to have something in the rule book which says the alternating system should go between Melbourne and Sydney, Melbourne and Sydney.

Voice (Peter Darling?): That was only a suggestion, I think.....

J.F.: May I have a seconder for the motion?
Seconded by Carey Handfield.

D.G.: I believe it was passed, though.

J.F.: Do you want to speak to the motion? You've already half-spoken to the motion. Is there a speaker against the motion? Peter?

P.D.: Not necessarily a speaker against. I'd like a clarification. Was the motion that was passed recommending a rotation scheme, or setting down a rotation scheme? My memory is that it was just a suggestion and could be varied at future conventions at the business session.

J.F.: David, David, if I may....? As I recall the situation is that both John Bangsund and I agreed at that meeting that no convention actually had power to give any instructions to future conventions. We don't have an organization which runs conventions. All we can do is therefore make recommendations. If I may enter the debate on this, our argument with regard to the Worldcon has been identical with the argument we might present against your view. Namely, that you say Adelaide and Brisbane want to enter; as yet, they have not made a bid which upsets the pattern. If they want to make a bid against the plan, I think that's the time to investigate it.

D.G.: O.K. I'll withdraw the motion.

J.F.: Is that acceptable to you? The motion's withdrawn. Are there any further motions? Beauty - that's seven minutes for that session.

AUSTRALIA IN '75

John Foyster: Now the next item on the agenda is the Australia in '75 Report which I have the honour of presenting. At the Easter ... I'm trying not to go back too far in history ... at the Easter convention a committee of four people was elected to follow some peculiar wording, the gist of which was that they would try to see if they could find out whether Australia could bid for a Worldcon. This committee of four then co-opted four further members and later on two more were added. The committee now stands at ten. In the time since Easter, a number of issues of the fanzine AUSTRALIA IN SEVENTY-FIVE have been produced, mainly in Sydney. In that time Robin Johnson, one of the members of the committee, has attended the Heidelberg World Science Fiction Convention and in that time the committee has managed to acquire some money and spend some money. Fortunately, having an excellent treasurer in Gary Mason, we have acquired a good deal more than we have spent.

One of the tasks with which we were charged was to report back to this convention indicating our feeling about the wisdom of bidding for the 1975 World Science Fiction Convention. To my knowledge the unanimous recommendation of the committee is that we do bid for the 1975 World Convention. Are there any dissidents? I don't think so. So, we're making this recommendation that we do bid.

Now when we went in at Easter we had in mind the following situation. At the 1969 World Convention the rules regarding sites, and a number of other rules, were changed from a system which was quite satisfactory to us to one which we regarded as less satisfactory. Therefore, as the first step in our campaign, we attempted to redress this evil, and we spent some money in different fan publications and convention booklets trying to convince people that the best thing to do would

be to return to the system which had been in action prior to 1969. In fact, we got this and rather more, because the system that was approved was one that went back even further than that. The result is now that normally the World Convention rotates in North America and that outside countries can bid whenever they like. It is pleasing to note that no city in North America is yet bidding for the 1975 convention, mainly because there's the threat that Australia will want to bid for that convention. I'm not quite sure that 'threat' is the word, but let's put it this way: we have been treated very gently. Now, to indicate how close we are to a little bit of danger there, there's been a lot of jockeying for 1973 and 1974 amongst the various North American cities, with cities standing and then withdrawing and giving their votes to such and such, and asking you to give your support that way. The consequence has been that the picture after 1972 is rather unclear at the moment. If we are to bid for the 1975 convention, we have to bid in 1973. As I've said, our intention as a committee is that we recommend that Australia bid for the 1975 convention. I hope that at the end of this report I will be able to accept a motion from this convention advising the committee to proceed with their intent.

...

The committee members, by the way, I had better name, since I want to accept this nice motion afterwards. On my left here: Gary Mason, Peter Darling, Robin Johnson, Bob Smith, Leigh Edmonds further down, Mervyn Binns further down, coming back up this side Lee Harding. Who have I missed? Bruce Gillespie, Alf van der Poorten and myself, and at the moment the committee is considering adding a couple more members to itself. The situation is that we do have.... who have I omitted?

Voice: John Ryan.

J.F.: Yes, but he isn't on the committee: that's why I didn't mention him. As I said we're planning to add a couple more members because the amount of work involved in some of these escapades is quite considerable. In addition, of course, to the regular advertising we have to write to individual American fans to try and influence them. That's great fun. Sometimes they don't understand us at all: I think they speak a different language.

In the convention booklet there's a short article, about a page and a half, indicating some ways in which you can help the bid. It's mainly, really, a matter of enjoying yourself in a peculiar way: getting involved in science fiction fandom. Because if we have a large number of people involved in fandom then we have a large pool of people to draw upon for financial resources - for physical resources. This is what interests us. We would also like those of you who are already involved in fandom locally to try and extend that to an overseas interest. Leigh Edmonds is more or less giving these fanzines away - partly for this purpose - so that you can have a bulky cross-section of what's going on, perhaps, in overseas fans' minds. Perhaps that is one way of starting. I think the convention booklet lists quite a few others. Perhaps if I am silent for a moment Gary Mason might think of a few things I have forgotten and then other members of the committee might wish to add other matters, and then if there are any questions from the audience, or perhaps a motion to

some effect might be appropriate. Gary, is there anything...?

Gary Mason: Not really. Cheques can be made payable to 'The Bidding Committee', which is the title of the bank account, and I'll 're happy to accept them from anyone, any time. At the moment we don't give receipts, but if you insist on one for tax purposes or something, though it won't do you any good I'll give you one. And what you're going to get for it is really the satisfaction of knowing you've helped the bid and we may give you something else as well but I can't be sure of this.

J.F.: Bruce?

Bruce Gillespie: I just wanted to mention one thing. In those sheets of paper you received yesterday there's a nomination form for the Hugos and it would certainly be good that as many people as possible put in their \$4 for non-attending membership for the Noreascon and Los Angeles convention and nominate and give some votes for them because there are a couple of categories where we might conceivably get Australians onto the Hugo ballot - or else people closely connected with Australian fandom.

G.M.: I have got something more to say. I decided last night in a moment of weakness to appoint myself Australian agent for the Noreascon so if you want to join just pay me and I'll make the arrangements.

J.F.: And while we're on the commercials, I am the Australian agent for the Los Angeles convention. To join this is \$4.50. It might cost you 50¢ extra, but immediately you get something from me. I think we ought to support the Los Angeles convention strongly because we would have to rely to a considerable extent on visitors from the west coast coming to our convention. At the Heidelberg convention, Robin, would it be true that the bulk of the fans came from the east coast? East and midwest. Very few from the west coast. We would have to rely on the reverse situation.

...

Mervyn Binns: I was going to mention also that the raffle is being run and part of the proceeds of the raffle are going to the Australia in '75 committee.

J.F.: Well, in that case this might be an appropriate time to mention that a good deal of the money from the auctioning of fanzines is going to the 1975 Bidding Committee and this is why I said we'd had a recent influx of money. Those of you who recall the prices yesterday may well understand that. We hope you will be similarly generous today. Now if there are any questions about this, we might be able to help you. I want to close this at quarter to three if I can. (Aside: Would you like to move a motion? That this convention asks the existing Bidding Committee to bid for the 1975 World Convention. Did you get that? You just have to move that motion.)

I have organized a motion. Miss Runic?

Donna Runic: That this convention asks the existing Bidding Committee to bid for the 1975 World Convention.

J.F.: Is there a seconder? Seconded Carey Handfield. Do you wish to

speaking to that motion Donna? Carey? Anyone to speak against that motion?

G.M.: I move that the motion be put.

J.F.: Gary moves that the motion be put. Seconder to that? Peter Darling. All those in favour? Right, the motion will now be put. All those in favour of the motion as read by Donna Runic? Against? Carried unanimously.

I think that puts Bruce Pelz's mind at rest, Gary. The wording of this motion has been designed to make it plain to overseas fans that we are bidding for the convention. There's been some talk about the Australian bid being a little bit nebulous because we haven't said which city and which hotel, you know. The Swedes have decided which hotel they're going to hold the 1976 convention in. What happens if a fantastic new hotel is completed in 1975, I don't know. What happens, Robin? They're stuck. We are not doing this sort of thing. We have moved slowly and in the opinion of many committee members we've moved much too slowly, but on the other hand we have also moved surely. This motion is designed to make plain to everyone that we are bidding for the 1975 convention.

Robin Johnson: A new hotel in Sydney that I'd been thinking of crashed last week. It was to be a new 100-storey building on the site of the Hotel Australia. The fact that I never got an answer from the Hilton International in Hong Kong makes me think they knew what was coming. By 'crashed' I mean that the firm that had got permission to build this 100-storey building and said it was going to be a hotel suddenly said well, actually it's going to be offices.

J.F.: Well, if there's no discussion on the Australia in '75 program, possibly I could suggest that if any of you want to discuss this with any of the committee members you might be able to do so after the interviews which will start in a couple of minutes, instead of talking with the rather uninteresting people who will be involved in the interviews.

...

Donna, did you give me back that piece of paper?

D.R.: No, do you want it back?

J.F.: I would like it, please.

D.R.: I kept it. I keep paper.

J.F.: Oh look, I'll make a copy of it. You keep that one.

D.R.: Noooooo

J.F.: No, please, you keep that one. Let me have a look at it, though, while I copy what was on it, and you can keep that one. Thank you, Donna.

LEIGH EDMONDS interview

John Foyster: Ladies and gentlemen, for the next 25 minutes to half an hour...

Leigh Edmonds: You mean it's going to go that long?

J.F.: No, there are two interviews.

Lee Harding: Who's the other one?

J.F.: Gillespie and me.

...

J.F.: Ladies and gentlemen ... (to the inspectors of the fanzines) I wonder if you vultures would sit down...

L.H.: Oh, they don't need to see me, Leigh.

L.E.: (sympathetically) Ohhhhhh!

...

L.H.: How did the party finish, anyway? Chunder to a close, did it?

...

J.F.: Right. Ladies and gentlemen, we do need to get on with the remainder of the program. You may have noticed that it's fairly heavy this afternoon.

L.E.: Oh, yeah.

J.F.: I've got to have this with-it talk or they won't understand me. The generation gap, Leigh?

L.E.: No, no...

L.H.: Credibility gap.

J.F.: You think perhaps I shouldn't have used 'heavy'?

L.H.: No, it's just that your fly's undone.

J.F.: Gee.

L.E.: You did get up early this morning.

J.F.: I wouldn't know: I feel cold.

L.H.: Can I tell a joke?

J.F.: I've often wondered. We have in our two interviews this afternoon a slightly different set-up because this time Lee Harding, who was a very active science fiction fan twenty years ago...

L.H.: Try again.

J.F.: No, I'm just trying to make you feel old.

L.H.: You don't have to try...

J.F.: There's no one old for you to feel. He's going to quiz Leigh Edmonds, who hasn't been a science fiction fan for very long, on just why he still is what he is.

L.E.: Oh.

J.F.: And I'm hoping that blood will flow, but I know it won't.

L.E.: No, I didn't have enough sleep last night.

L.H.: Can I start now?

L.E.: Yeah.

L.H.: Well, I think I'll introduce Leigh first in the best way I know and that's by introducing myself. I'm a professional writer. I write and I get paid for what I write. Although this isn't the main motivation it's a good fringe benefit. Now Leigh is an amateur writer who writes and produces fanzines for pretty much the same reason as I write stories. But he doesn't get - he doesn't seek - payment, but he does charge a few cents a copy for his fanzines and he's quite happy with all this. So that is the basic difference we have to discuss. Leigh has no inclination that I know of to write and be published professionally. Now, why do you write and publish fanzines, Leigh?

L.E.: Well, these days I ask myself that question, too.

L.H.: Why did you, originally?

L.E.: Why? Why? It was something.... Y'know, it was creative. You typed up stencils and you actually wrote something - it was a big deal - and then you ran off a hundred copies, and you distributed your thoughts to every ... well, a hundred people. And it makes you feel good, sort of.

L.H.: Does it still make you feel good after all this time? Do you...

L.E.: No, no!

L.H.: Well, what has occurred in the interim, apart from hair growing on your face and....., that has caused this change in your attitude to publishing and writing?

L.E.: I think partly because ... well, maybe you get used to it after a while. It's like drugs of addiction - you need more and more, and unless you're willing to put in an incredible amount of time, you just can't get enough egoboo from it.

L.H.: Well, comparing this to the professional writer who, if he is lucky, continues writing and being published and getting money all his life, you find he doesn't sort of have this period you're talking about. You committed yourself to writing and producing fanzines and now it's getting a little bit jaded.

L.E.: Exactly.

L.H.: So is it a directed creative purpose?

L.E.: Ah, well, I believe it is. I'm not a writer in any shape or form but since I read science fiction in the first place, writing is the thing what I was acquainted with, and so any creative urge that I had was ... I thought mainly about writing because that's the only thing I knew, and you get to find that there are other things apart from writing that you can do.

L.H.: Well, as you say, you type stencils and you print something and you send it out to a hundred people and six of them write you a letter of comment, then you're engaged in a process of communicating your ideas. Now, have you found different methods of communication?

L.E.: Yeah - communicating with people rather than addresses on a mailing list.

L.H.: You mean direct...

L.E.: Yeah - direct communication, whereas fanzines are very tenuous. You know, you get a letter back, but it's only a bit of paper. But it's not like sitting and talking to somebody for even five minutes. It just isn't enough these days. That's about it.

L.H.: So you want to be loved by your....

L.E.: Ah, yes!

L.H.: Now, you see, a professional author, although he writes and gets published and is paid, when he does meet his public, he sort of really wants to hide a little, you know, because he doesn't really want to meet them. Whereas to you, sending a fanzine out and getting a letter of comment back, this is the big thing - being noticed and knowing you've got through to somebody.

L.E.: That's right. This is why I joined amateur press associations, because in a closed group where there are 25 or 30 people, there is a far greater communication, and some of the people I've been in contact with in America, apart from the fact that I don't know their faces, I would say I know them reasonably well through having talked, if you can use that word, with them for the last - two years? - two years about all kinds of things. Whereas when you're turning out 100 fanzines and sending them to random people it isn't as compressed - I guess that's the word.

L.H.: Do you still intend to stay in the fanzine business?

L.E.: I do, through obligations, no because I want to.

L.H.: Why through obligations? What obligations in particular?

L.E.: Australia in '75. I don't want to sound nasty or anything but there are things that have to be done to get the bid going, to get a world convention in Australia in '75, and one of the ways to do it - the best way - is to sort of sell Australian fandom to American fandom. And the best way is through fanzines, therefore, people have to turn out fanzines.

L.H.: In other words, from being a rather all-embracing hobby and grand passion and what have you, the fanzine work you do now is a sideline,

a hobby, very much a sideline.

L.E.: Yeah - except for one fanzine of which one more issue will be coming out, which is THRUSTING MEMBER. I don't know why I did it. I'd hate to know why I did it. But, you know, I thought it was a good thing at the time and I'd always wanted to produce a fanzine with a title like that so...

L.H.: I do believe you're being slightly evasive here when you say that the only fanzine publishing you'll be doing from now on will be an obligation.

L.E.: No.

L.H.: Will there be any more THRUSTING MEMBERS? I mean, will you get consumed by the creative urge and put out something purely for joy, again?

L.E.: Yes, well, maybe, but I doubt it very much.

L.H.: And you don't have any ambitions of professional writing...

L.E.: No, none at all.

L.H.: But at the time you started in fanzines this may have been a possibility?

L.E.: Oh, yes it was. I actually tried to write science fiction stories once. They were terrible stories. But, you know, I thought that if I practised I would get better and better. But I'm not a writer's bootlace, unfortunately. I wouldn't mind being a writer except that I guess I just don't have the temperament or, no, the knack with words.

L.H.: I didn't happen to hear the panel discussion on amateur magazines but would you say you were in the fanzine publishing world for the business of communication?

L.E.: Yeah.

L.H.: And the more your life has expanded, the less you need to communicate through fanzines?

L.E.: Yes, that's right.

L.H.: And your only plans are for Australia in '75?

L.E.: Yeah, that's about it.

L.H.: What advice would you offer to anybody out there, for example, who might be thinking at this precise moment of typing a few stencils and starting a fanzine?

L.E.: It's good fun. It really is.

L.H.: Now that's very interesting. It's good...

L.E.: It's good fun. I can tell you from experience it's good fun - but it isn't good fun to me.

L.H.: Any more.

L.E.: That's right. I really enjoyed it. You know. Some people used to think I was sick but I used to enjoy turning the duplicator handle. And collating - I used to enjoy collating. I used to enjoy the whole thing. But somehow - it's like science fiction itself: when you read too much, the sense of wonder is gone, it just isn't the same any more.

L.H.: You seem to have somehow avoided or short-circuited the stages of fandom which, as you know, Robert Bloch set out many, many years ago. You sort of got out before you actually started going up the ladder.

L.E.: Well, I feel lucky.

L.H.: You wouldn't like to end up like me?

L.E.: Oh, I'd rather end up like you than who-was-it? at the Eighth Stage, the agent-publisher. Have we got our Eighth Stage member here? No, he isn't.

L.H.: I think we have, up at the back - Mr. Graham, our publisher. I think that was the Eighth Stage wasn't it, Ron?

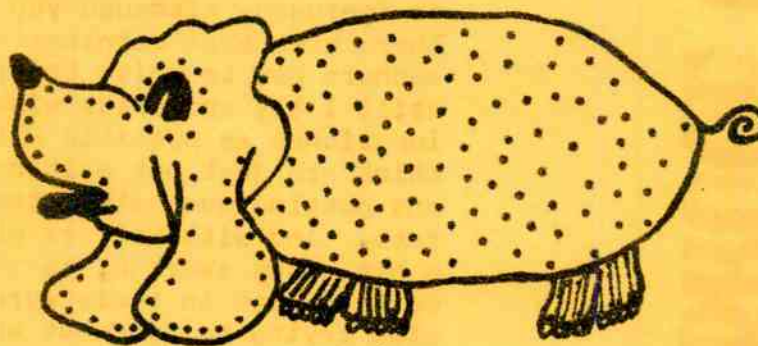
Ron Graham: Yes, that was it.

L.H.: It think it was it.

L.E.: (in a low voice) Actually, I was thinking of the other one.

L.H.: No, John Bangsund isn't here. Well, you would say that basically science fiction fan publishing is a fun medium and if anybody takes it more seriously than that they really should be professionals.

L.E.: Yeah. This is one of the troubles with some people around Australia at the moment. Fandom is fun. If it's anything else then you may as well not bother with it, because taking a thing which is basically as unimportant as fandom seriously - well, I don't see any point to it.



Spot

BRUCE GILLESPIE interview

John Foyster: Bruce and I both review science fiction books and stories. Believe it or not, our approaches are not exactly identical. I think this probably results from the different kinds of training we've had. Bruce's training was essentially that of an English student and mine, such as... (oh, if only John Bangsund was here I could say) whereas I have been a student of the world. Well, be that as it may, I did not do an English major at University, which is what Bruce has done. And this has meant that our attitudea ... quite apart from how we might have started off, we've certainly finished very, very differently. Perhaps you could indicate what you think your approach is, if you can boil it down to a few words, Bruce.

Bruce Gillespie: The only trouble is that it has been changing. I'd say that my approach is to try and look at a book and see what's in it. Now when I look at a book from that point of view, it might only be to say whether it's worth buying or not, but when I look back at my reviews I find that they're far more than that - or perhaps far less. I don't know. But I try to look at a book and find out what is enjoyable in it, if I enjoy it; what is not so good perhaps, what could be improved, although you can't.... There have been warnings against telling authors how to write their books. But still I try and write with as much impatience as possible with writers I think are just not writing very well and putting over stuff that's second-rate. And with writers who are perhaps a bit above average, to at least see what is good in their work even though also trying to find out what is not so good.

J.F.: Which writers would you say were the ones who were very good, and in your mind bore considerable investigation?

B.G.: Well, the writers I have done considerable investigation of so far are Philip Dick and Brian Aldiss.

Well, for instance, having a look at the works of Philip Dick started off in a fairly complex sort of manner because he was for me what Robert Heinlein was to an earlier generation. He was someone who seemed to have all the things that I enjoyed most about science fiction. I then went on to trying to find out what I liked about the works of Philip Dick. First of all, there was trying to put Philip Dick over to the audience, trying to say - well, here's an author that everybody's ignored, nobody's looked at him properly (that's a bit of propaganda). Then finding out for myself what was good about his works, because I couldn't pin it down at all. It took me in fact three articles to find something that you could really pin down as being what I liked about his work. And also there's this point about what's different about science fiction. Obviously, by many standards, Philip Dick is not a good writer, and yet as a science fiction writer he seemed to hold special appeal for me.

J.F.: Now this is an interesting point. You have said that you feel that a writer like Dick was not being investigated very deeply, and therefore you went into it. In other words you are saying that, taking writers like Dick and Aldiss, there is a good deal in them. Now how have you been helped to find what's in them by your correspondence with the two writers? Has this helped you or has it been a hindrance?

B.G.: Not a great deal, because it came so late. I'd already done a lot of the work on Philip Dick's writing before I had any correspondence with him at all and the first letter, which went in SF COMMENTARY 9, I rather thought at first was him sending me up a bit. If you remember he goes on a lot about his mystical experiences. I think he mentions LSD experiences. Well, this was not something I had got out of his writings much at all, and I found I couldn't relate it very much to what I'd done, except for PALMER ELDRITCH. And again, the second letter that I received from him seemed to be, you know, as if he'd misread his own books. Well, you can't sort of tell that to a writer but it just seemed that he'd emphasised something that I hadn't noticed and perhaps I'll have to re-think it in the light of that. It was too late. And the same with Brian Aldiss. He deliberately said - well, I don't want to comment on the articles yet until they're all written, because I'd like to see what you write first.

J.F.: I think this is possibly something which is similar in our approaches: we have both taken a very restricted number of writers and tried to look at them fairly carefully. Do you think?.... Well, first of all, do you know any other science fiction reviewers who have taken this attitude and, well, obviously both of us think it's the right attitude, but why do you think it's a good attitude? So firstly, are there any other people who take this attitude of studying one writer very closely?

B.G.: There are people who have said they're going to do it. There are at least two or three writers in America doing work on Cordwainer Smith. There were a few abortive articles about Brian Aldiss, weren't there, in SPECULATION a couple of years ago? I didn't get to see them, but from what I did see they were mainly quotes from Brian Aldiss about his own books, put together in a line, not much to do with the books. There have been propaganda books about people like Tolkien, Merritt and people like this, but I can't recall anything I've read that's been a full-scale study except your work in ASFR and....

J.F.: Alexei Panshin.

B.G.: Oh yes, sorry. Alexei Panshin did some work on Robert Heinlein, a full book. Thank goodness you mentioned that because this is one of the reasons I set out on the Philip Dick articles. I thought well, Panshin has done this and he's been able to sell it. Given enough work, perhaps ten years to put this into shape, perhaps it will be a book worth publishing. Anyway, Franz Rottensteiner has since demolished Alexei Panshin and anyway, it was certainly worth doing. But the main thing Franz Rottensteiner said about Panshin's book was that you have to choose a writer who is worth investigating in the first place. In science fiction this is always risky. Sometimes I think that no writer in science fiction is worth investigating. And at other times I find something new in a writer I've never read before and then you say to yourself well, here's somebody I should do some work on. And my mind goes between these two attitudes.

J.F.: I think this figure you mention of ten years is quite a significant one. It doesn't take a lot of work to get to know a writer fairly closely and this may be why the number of people who take this approach is relatively small. Now I know that in my preparation for some articles about J.G. Ballard I've read his entire works twice and I haven't yet got a first draft out of that. So I've got quite a long way to go, and Bangsund thinks he's going to publish the completed book in May! Hopeless! The amount of work in this sort of thing is immense, but both you and I think this pays off.

B.G.: Yes. Take the problem of Aldiss, a much greater problem than Philip Dick. As Aldiss himself has pointed out, in Philip Dick the ideas are mainly ideas that have been used in science fiction before, and the main thing that's added to them is Dick's rather odd experience of the world and the way he treats these ideas. But with Aldiss - he has the background of English literature, in a way that Dick hasn't: you feel you'd have to read everything Aldiss has read for a start. You then feel as if you need to know the person a bit more, although I think now I know a bit too much about Brian Aldiss. And then you need to know what's been going on in English science fiction recently, because he's obviously been influenced in his later books, and there are so many facets that I haven't even started to look at as far as that goes...

J.F.: In other words, this can become a study of the mind of the author. It can become...

B.G.: Only as revealed in the books.

J.F.: Now I found this also, for another writer who interests me in Cordwainer Smith, and I find that in looking into his books I can discover all sorts of things about him which I don't think I could have known if I'd just spoken to him. It's as though his mind was so well-trained that, in the words which he has written down, he has almost given a blueprint of his own mind. Indeed, he actually had this idea in one of his own stories, THE BURNING OF THE BRAIN, in which the captain of the spaceship, when the plans of the local area of the galaxy in which they are are destroyed, uses his brain as a map of the galaxy, and his brain is completely burnt out in getting the spaceship home. This is in fact in a sense what Smith was doing because when he was writing most of his science fiction he was dying, and he was in a sense turning up his own energies and burning himself up in producing his fiction. And if you don't know this there's a terribly odd

feeling about some of Cordwainer Smith's later stories. Once you know this, it all becomes quite plain. This is why I think it sometimes pays to know the writer a bit.

B.G.: The main disadvantage of knowing Aldiss is that you know that he is a raconteur, a wit, an extremely smooth sort of guy, and when you look at the books, and there's so much that interests you, you tend to wonder how much smoothness is wiped over this, obscuring your view of the books. Is Aldiss ever going to rip away this smoothness and really have the honesty to go much further than he has so far. And the more I know of Aldiss, the more I wonder about this.

J.F.: I've had some dealing with Aldiss and I agree that it's a serious problem.

B.G.: Whereas Dick is, well, - we seem to work out that he destroys his worlds in his books. Well, for the past twenty years he seems to have been gradually destroying himself, in a rather wild sort of way. He's been through three divorces, about four what he calls nervous breakdowns... And you know, you just wonder how much longer can a person keep on this way without either dying himself or the fiction going or something like this. It makes him far more interesting as a person but as a writer he's still not so interesting as, say, Cordwainer Smith.

J.F.: Would you recommend this almost intense study of a writer as a way of actually learning, not only something about science fiction and the way it's put together, but something about (excuse me, Tom) human psychology? Would you recommend this to people as an attitude?

B.G.: That's the second step. The first step? I think people are not willing to look at the books themselves. They're not willing to take apart the prose in the books and see what's in it. Most reviewing in the American fanzines, which is perhaps even better than say professional reviews, is still generalizations about books, and such generalizations don't have much meaning because these writers haven't looked at the books that they're reviewing. And because they're not willing to do this - test themselves against the book - then they've got no hope of doing a general survey of an author, because when they come to it, all they can do is read the books over again and they can't get to grips with the books at all. This seems the main problem. I mean, if you're willing to do a bit of hard work and take apart a few books and see what's in them and then, say, an author who really does interest you, and see if this works on the author - well, you're certainly getting somewhere.

J.F.: To close this off - if any given book is given to Bruce and me, there is an exceptionally good chance that we will disagree on its merits. This is partly our background, but you will have seen that our approaches to the subject are almost identical. We insist, Pete Weston says too much, that every last bit of value must be squeezed out of what the writer puts into his works, whether he knows they're there or not. Now I have been able to tell some writers what they have put into their work and they've agreed afterwards - yes, I did, I didn't notice it at the time. You can do this if you work very hard at it. It's no joke, but I think it's worthwhile. Would you like to close with a plug for Stanislaw Lem?

B.G.: Well, no, I was just going to use him as an example. I could put a

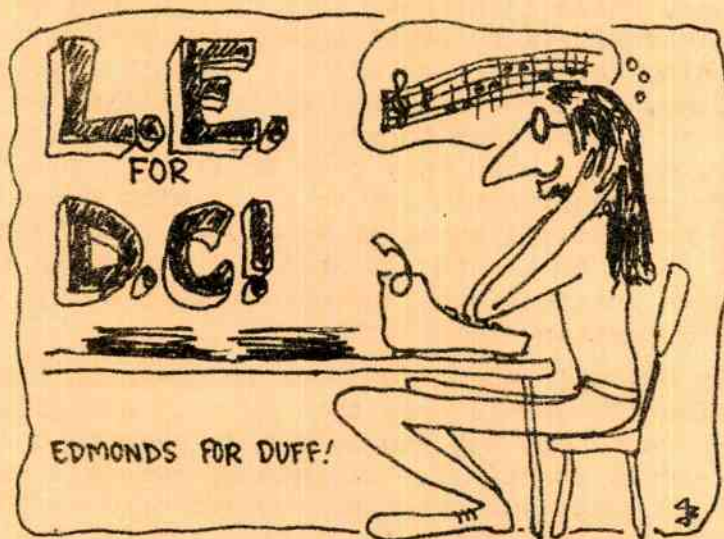
plug in for Franz Rottensteiner, but even then he doesn't use the same approach entirely. I was going to say something about this work that's involved. I don't know what your notes come to. In the Philip Dick articles - the notes are about three or four times as long as the articles. Well, if you want to do this good luck to you, but it's not particularly easy.

J.F.: Well, could you say a few words about Stanislaw Lem?

B.G.: Stanislaw Lem's three articles were features in JOURNAL OF UMPHALISTIC EPISTEMOLOGY, which is being reprinted. He is Poland's only and leading science fiction writer. He is leading because he has sold a lot of copies of his books. He has written twenty-something books including a 500-page study of science fiction...

J.F.: In Polish.

B.G.: ...in Polish. His first novel to be translated into English has just come out through Walker, and later through Faber and - I can't tell how well it's translated, but certain passages are brilliant anyway, whether the translation's been good or not. It's just that some dialogue seems to have said-bookisms and this sort of thing added to it. Anyway this is interesting. Also Italo Calvino is a writer that either John or I or somebody will definitely put a bit of work into later on.



RON GRAHAM interview

Lee Harding: It seems that the large-size science fiction magazine just can't make it.

Ron Graham: I didn't intend to have a large-sized magazine. I started off with the idea that it would be a paperback format. And in fact the first issue was already set up in paperback format when we had a long discussion with our distributor, who flatly refused to distribute it in that form. They said that it would compete with their range of paperbacks too much and if we were going to publish it in paperback format they wouldn't have anything to do with it. They told us then that they would accept it in the large format and that it would achieve better display on the bookstalls because of its size. In actual fact, of course, that didn't work out. But I would have infinitely preferred a paperback format myself. I don't think that a magazine in the large size, particularly a science fiction magazine, will succeed.

L.H.: I suppose the question on everybody's lips at the moment is, although Vision has folded, do you have any future plans in this line? Do you intend to continue publishing in some way, or...?

R.G.: I don't think so, Lee. I've no fixed plans for it. I've got a couple of nebulous ones but whether they'll come to anything I don't know. The only thing that perturbs me is that I own the rights to somewhere about a hundred stories I think, and also two complete issues of Science and Sorcery. I purchased and paid for the stories and the artwork and the editorial work for two complete issues of Science and Sorcery. The first one went to the printer and, until I gave the word to stop, would have been on the bookstalls, with the same distributor incidentally who distributed Vision. The second one was all gathered together in that the stories, the artwork and the editorial work was put into it, but it never got to the printer. I would like to do something with those two, I'll admit, in not the ambitious format we had

for them originally, but the stories are so good - I've read a number of them and I think they were excellent myself, in that particular field. Ken Bulmer did an exceptionally good job in putting the two books together: it seems a pity that all his work went for nil. Some of you have possibly seen a letter from Ken Bulmer in Science Fiction Review. I was rather perturbed when I read it I might say because I entered into an undertaking with Ken Bulmer. I asked him to give me a price to prepare ... to get the stories, to get the artwork and to do all the editorial matter for an issue - in other words to quote me a flat price for the whole job from start to finish, which he did. I didn't haggle with him at all and I paid him for two issues in advance. I don't think I could have done fairer than that. But from reading Ken's letter you wouldn't conceive that that was so. So I've written a letter myself to Science Fiction Review just setting the matter from my point of view and you'll eventually see that.

L.H.: Would there be a possibility of, as you say, making this material available in a rather limited edition like a small offset-type magazine?

R.G.: That's the idea I have, the nebulous idea that I have, Lee. I'd certainly hope to see the work that went into garnering and preparing and editing, the stories and the artwork, than see it simply left for nothing. I'd much prefer just to publish a collector's edition, you might say.

L.H.: The alternative, of course, being to release the right to other publishers and see the stories split up over a wide area?

R.G.: Yes, that's right - if other publishers want them. I mean, most of them were written to order, a particular kind of story. We had a lot of discussion, Ken Bulmer and I, in the first place. Also John W. Campbell was kind enough to give me a lot of his advice on the gathering of stories for a sword and sorcery magazine.

I asked him: how did you go about getting the stories for Unknown? You had an idea, you knew the type of stories that you wanted; how did you persuade authors to write these particular stories and let you have them? And he told me that the same problem gave him an immense amount of thought. The way he solved it eventually was to select a panel of about 25 authors whom he thought might be interested and whom he thought might be capable of doing these stories. He invited them all to a dinner in New York, the publishers paid all the expenses to bring the authors together to hold the dinner, and they had a round-table discussion. He, of course, spoke first and told them what he thought he'd like and the kind of idea he had behind Unknown. It was started as you all probably know by Eric Frank Russell's SINISTER BARRIER. He thought it was too good not to publish and yet he didn't think it was the sort of story that should go into Astounding.

And they had this dinner - it was eminently successful and he said once he gave them the idea he didn't have to do any more - they talked it out among themselves. As a result he got enough stories to do two or three issues, and from there on of course all he had to say was, we want stories of the type that are already in Unknown. I passed this information on to Ken and he thought - he is, as you know, a fairly good fantasy writer himself; at least I think he's written some nice fantasy, and sword and sorcery - he said that he probably could tell the writers what he wanted. Incidentally, for the first issue he got a story by Aldiss which I thought was very good in view of

the remarks Aldiss had made earlier on the fact that he wasn't prepared to submit stories any more. It was a very good line-up. I'm awfully sorry to see it not printed so as I say I might do a limited collector's edition of both issues.

L.H.: I think that would sell very well. What, over the last twelve months - well, I know it was more than twelve months because there was a lot of preparatory work - but what to you were the most rewarding aspects of the Vision enterprise?

R.G.: Meeting the various authors and artists. Yes, I got an immense amount of delight out of that. Not only the ones that wrote for Vision, I might say, but I met quite a number in the U.S. and in Britain who never sold stories to Vision, but I found them intensely interesting people and extremely rewarding to talk to. I started as a science fiction fan from the age of about eight myself, came to Sydney from the country and the Sydney newspapers in those days used to publish serials in, at least stories in serial form every day of the week, and they'd have a full page spread when the story first started off. And just as we hit Sydney, the story was WAR OF THE WORLDS, and it was printed in serial form in one of the Sydney newspapers. I'd never read any science fiction up until that time but it absolutely fascinated me. The artist was exceptionally good. He drew the Martians and machines much as they've carried on ever since, as described by Wells, and I was hooked from that time on.

L.H.: What do you think then, from your experience, the future of science fiction publishing lies in? I mean, say there's somebody out there today thinking of going into science fiction publishing, what would be your advice to them?

R.G.: I wouldn't go beyond the paperback format myself. I think that's the solution. I think the paperbacks have tolled the knell of the science fiction magazines in the old form. The digest-size sells, of course, as we see, but I think a paperback format would sell if any one could. And if I were to venture into it again - I don't think I will - it would definitely be in a paperback format.

L.H.: Of course this is what happened to New Worlds finally, that it's been sold to an American publisher who is going to publish it as a paperback every three months, with an English edition. They tried the same format, and even they...

R.G.: I think John Carnell had the idea with New Writings in SF, but to my way of thinking, New Writings in SF never made any impact as a volume. I do think that a science fiction magazine tends to generate more interest than a straight collection of short stories. Most paperback publishers, in fact most publishers, don't like collections of short stories; they don't sell, they'd infinitely prefer to sell novels.

L.H.: Yes, we have the current innovation, rather like New Writings, where the publisher puts out a collection of original short stories. I think we have about four, maybe five, of those in America at the moment all doing the job that John Carnell pioneered.

R.G.: Yes. To my taste of course - every science fiction fan, by the way, in an individual, and with all respect to our speaker of yesterday I believe

he turned into a critic, and I don't think critics enjoy science fiction - they're more interested in the grammatical content and the way the story is put together than the story itself. I never read stories with any critical intent at all: I read them for enjoyment. And I think the vast majority of fans that buy science fiction and the vast majority of readers who buy science fiction do exactly that. And I think we find all the critics mostly among the science fiction fans. This is where you hear all the comment and so on but the average reader doesn't care what the fan thinks. He goes ahead and buys the stories he likes and he reads them for enjoyment. People say the sense of wonder has died out of science fiction. I think that purely depends on the age of the individual. As I think somebody here said even today, after a while you grow up and the things don't appeal to you so much any more. And I feel that's right. But I can still read science fiction, and I read an immense amount of it, science fiction and fantasy. I'm a voracious reader and I read an immense amount as I say and I still get enjoyment from a lot; a lot I don't, of course - I think you have all heard of Sturgeon's Law - he said 90% of everything is bad and I think that's pretty right - that goes for mainstream writing just as much as it does for science fiction. You can't expect science fiction to differ from the norm and be all good - you're going to strike a proportion of bad stories, or at least stories that appear to you as bad. I think we all know, and I heard John Foyster say here today, that he and Bruce would never agree on the merits of a certain story and I think that goes for everyone. What will appeal to one will not appeal to another and vice versa. The same thing applies in life everywhere, and if everyone wanted to be boilermakers, or schoolteachers, it would be a bad thing.

L.H.: I think someone also pointed out recently that 90% of Sturgeon's Law is crud. Anyway, Ron, it's been very nice having you here and I think filling in the people with a lot of the things they didn't know about Vision. On the other hand Vision has collected a fair share of awards, several of the stories have been reprinted - I know one went into the World's Best SF, the Ace anthology. Have there been any others reprinted?

R.G.: There are a number pending, Phil tells me. I can't remember the details of them at the moment, but there have been a number of approaches. Personally speaking, I got a tremendous kick out of Bert Chandler's BITTER PILL - a lot of people don't like it apparently, but it appealed to me tremendously.

L.H.: I think it's possibly the best story Vision published.

R.G.: I think what people don't generally know, and I think should be know, too - Bert's wife was responsible for the idea behind the story, nutted the rough out, and he polished it up and put it into its final form. I think it's good social comment at the moment.

POLITICS IN FANDOM panel

John Foyster: The next exciting item is called, I think, Nova Mob reprints...

Mervyn Binns: Can I just make an announcement about the movies?

J.F.: I guess you can make an announcement about the movies, Merv.

Leo Harding: Come up here and make an announcement.

M.B.: Well, it appear that we won't be having Flash Gordon. (Boos)

You probably realize that this copy is not a legal copy and it's got to the people concerned and they've said that if it's put on there'll be trouble over it, so that's that. But by way of compensation we've got Paul's 35mm version of METROPOLIS, which I believe has tinting in it as well.

J.F.: Well, if you haven't seen a tinted METROPOLIS...

M.B.: We saw FAUST the other week, which was from the same batch of films, and this was tinted and the colouring was absolutely fantastic.

J.F.: Yeah. Would the members of the panel for the Nova Mob Reprints panel come forward please? Paul, Paul, come on. Is John Bangsund there or is he gone again?

M.B.: I think he's gone. He said he'd try and get back before it started, though.

J.F.: Paul Stevens asked me to make a remark at the beginning of this convention which I neglected to make, then. I therefore say now: don't believe everything you see. Is that what you wanted me to say?

Paul Stevens: Yes.

J.F.: Right, I've said it. For this panel, which is a discussion on politics and fandom... (groans) and Noel Kerr will appreciate why it is called Nova Mob Reprints, we have a small panel of experts on the subject of politics in fandom. On my right we have Paul Stevens, well-known Executive Officer of the Melbourne

Science Fiction Club. And on my left we have Leigh Edmonds, nothing.

This all came about when we were talking down in the Degrares Tavern over a couple of drinks ...

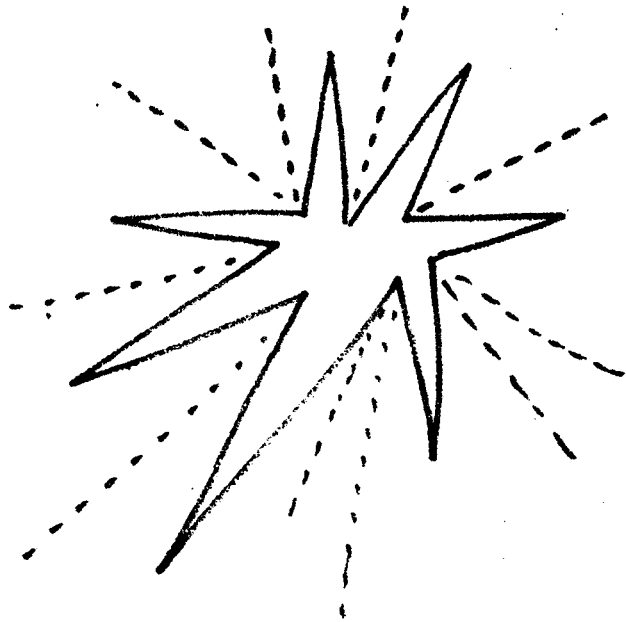
P.S.: Couple!

J.F.: ... about the Heidelberg Convention Program. And somehow, by talking about my corns, we got around to the subject of politics entering fandom. And some of you know that at the Heidelberg Convention there was a little noise from people who wanted to introduce politics into fandom. Would you agree with that, Mr. Stevens?

P.S.: Yes, definitely, there was noise from people who...

(At this point Mr. Stevens thumped the table heavily, causing the tape recorder not to record again until the SF Movies Panel, some time later.)

TONIGHT
TOMORROW
THIS MORNING
NOON
SUNSET
DAWN
THIS AFTERNOON
SUN
SAND
AIR
LAUGHTER
LOVE
BEAUTY
YOU AND ME



WR

SF FILMS panel

Paul Stevens: Well, this is supposed to be a panel on science fiction movies.

Mervyn Binns: What are they?

P.S.: Thank you. So I suppose I'd better kick off by saying that "2001" is the one true faith and nobody's sort of come up to it since then. Just recently there have been a few announcements about various films being thrown up for production. Among these is Kubrick's latest production which is based on Anthony Burgess' The Clockwork Orange. "The Incredible Mind of Mr. Soames", based on a Charles Eric Maine novel is yet to come - it's due for release any moment. Jules Verne's Light at the End of the World, with a cast including Yul Brynner and Samantha Eggar and... well you name it. There's quite a few novels being bought up recently, or the options taken out on them for production. In actual fact I think that the movie producers at the moment can produce films that are acceptable to us as science fiction readers and fans. However this may not be the case with the majority of the public and I'd like to ask Mervyn Binns to kick off by commenting on this.

Do you think that science fiction readers and fans actually demand far more from their science fiction movies than the general public?

M.B.: Yes, definitely. I would say that probably...

Lee Harding: There's a gelatin man with a bicycle...

(most of the audience rushes through the door)

M.B.: Get one for me.

P.S.: I've been sabotaged. All I want to know is who paid him. Is somebody going to go and get me one.

(The panel does not resume.)

THE PAUL STEVENS SHOW

John Foyster: And now, ladies and gentlemen, the Paul Stevens Show!

Paul Stevens: I have a small speech here which I ... A few notes....

(drops yards-long scroll)

Oh, it doesn't matter. What I intended to do first was announce the winners of the caption contest. Mr. Foyster judged it so you can blame him if you didn't win. Tom Newlyn, I think, is by far the best. Would you like me to read out the captions?

Audience: Yes.

P.S.: Well, the first one, with Mervyn Binns in it - "You mean to say that without the moustache I'd look just like Mervyn Binns?" Picture Number 2, with the vampire - "But Doctor, is it really necessary to have another blood test?" Picture Number 3, with Mick Jagger as Ned Kelly - "Call the scouts; I can't remember the knot." Picture Number 4 - "My dear, these are the ties that bind." Picture Number 5 - "And then he said: 'Just a quick run around the stately homes of England.'"

(Applause)

If Tom would like to see Mervyn later, Mervyn will give him a selection of any paperback book he'd like.

J.F.: That Mervyn has.

P.S.: Yeah - that he's prepared to give out, you know. I think honorary mentions go to Stephen Campbell for Picture 1 - "Corporal, this man did not clean his teeth this morning: shoot him!" John Bowden for Picture 3...

J.F.: Robert Bowden.

P.S.: Oh, he's got Bowden here. "No, it doesn't fit. Can I try size eight?" Harry Rippon for Picture 2 - "Taken him half an hour to get this far. My feet are killing me." Picture 1 for Shayne McStartrek - "Which one of you fellows wants a ghetto?"

Shayne McCormack: Eh? No, no!

J.F.: (reads over shoulder of Paul J. Stevens) Gelato.

(Laughter. Stormy applause.)

Lee Harding: Bless you, Shayne.

P.S.: And Peter House (who's indisposed for the moment) for Picture 1 -

"You can't be Mervyn Binns. I'm Mervyn Binns." If these people would like to see me later on I'll hand them out some movie posters.

Now you see I have here two fanzines. I mean that they look like any old ordinary fanzines, but one of them has not got Hidden Freshness. Now there's one easy way of checking this. First of all, roll it up so....

(lights fanzine, blows smoke)

Nope - hasn't got Hidden Freshness. But take a copy of AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY, roll it up, apply a light.....

Oh BOY, that has got Hidden Freshness. So remember, my friends - see John Bangsund and he'll sell you the fanzine with Hidden Freshness.

Now I would like to interview a person who I suppose is one of the best-known people in the world - Superman. Superman, step forward!

Have a seat, Superman. Well folks, this is your enquiring reporter with another interview-in-depth. This evening we have Superman. Yes. (I think you should have put your glasses on.)

Superman (Peter House): Good evening, Paul.

P.S.: You! You're Superman?

P.H.: Yep.

P.S.: Bit thin, aren't you?

P.H.: I've been sick lately.

P.S.: Oh really? Was it green Kryptonite poisoning?

P.H.: No. Actually I've been swimming on St. Kilda Beach.

P.S.: Tell me - your planet of origin was Krypton, right?

P.H.: Yep.

P.S.: What caused it to blow up like that?

P.H.: Who knows? Maybe someone went looking for a gas leak with a candle.

P.S.: I believe that you were instrumental in helping to win the Second World War. Did you keep any sort of score on what number of ships and tanks you destroyed?

P.H.: Yeah. About 17 aircraft carriers, about 10 tanks, 15 destroyers, 102 aircraft.

P.S.: Gee. That's impressive.

P.H.: Ah, you should have seen the score once they sent me overseas!

P.S.: Now, tell me about your love life. When are you going to marry Lois

Lane?

P.H.: Get away - we've been married for years.

P.S.: Really?

(Peter House tries to find place in script)

P.S.: (pointing) There.

P.H.: I mean, where do you think Supergirl and Superboy came from?

P.S.: Well, actually I thought they came from Krypton.

P.H.: That's what DC wants you to think. After all, there is the Comics Code.

P.S.: You know, I thought you might have picked some girl who was a little bit more Super for a wife.

P.H.: Like who, for instance?

P.S.: Well, er, Wonder Woman?

P.H.: Biggest dyke in the business.

P.S.: Er, yes...

P.H.: Besides, it's not all that bad being married to Lois. I mean, she throws dishes and they just bounce off me. Now if I got some Super-woman - I mean, Wow!

P.S.: I can't help but note that you're now sporting a beard. Is this some attempt to change your image?

P.H.: Not really. Have you ever tried to find a shop that sells kryptonian razor blades?

P.S.: Not lately. I'd like to ask you a few questions about your good friend and ally, Batman. Is it true that he chose the image of a bat to strike terror into the hearts of criminals everywhere?

P.H.: Is that what he told you? Actually, he's a Bela Lugosi fan.

P.S.: Oh, surely that's not the only reason!

P.H.: You're right. It's just that that was the only costume left that matched his eyes.

P.S.: Which brings me to the question of the relationship between Batman and Robin. What can you tell us about it, eh?

P.H.: Well, ah, due to the fact that this is a mixed audience, very little.

P.S.: Yes. One more question before you go. Having been around for many years, you must be fast approaching middle-age. Do you have any plans for your declining years?

P.H.: I certainly have. I'm going to retire and use my X-ray vision to become the oldest peeping tom in the business.

P.S.: One thing still puzzles me.

P.H.: What?

P.S.: You explained where Superboy and Supergirl came from, but what about

Krypto, the wonder dog?

P.H.: How would you like a punch right up the cakehole?

(Exit Superman)

P.S.: I really wonder if it's worth it.

Folks, are you planning to organize?

You are?

Then don't fail to contact your local branch of COMORG. COMORG, otherwise known as the Australian Science Fiction Communications Organization, is the organization for you. For at least three months now, COMORG has been organizing organizations. Even if they don't want organizing. And who else can boast of a record like this? Who else can claim to be a national organization with only a committee as members? Who else can publish an expensive magazine without funds? Who else can claim not only a Victorian executive but a National Council, without one interstate representative on it? Nobody but COMORG. Yay!

So, my friends, if it's organization you want, then it's COMORG for you. COMORG, the mafia of the science fiction world. Join now, or else!

I've got another interview in a moment, but before that ... I've been very upset about the awarding of the Ditmars over the last couple of years: I mean, I don't agree with it, you know. Italo Cantino, who's ever heard of him? But I sort of decided I'm going to make my own awards. So I've come up with an award called the Gold-Plated Caterpillar. There you are.

I have four of these things and I now propose to go on and award them.

First of all, it will be the femmefan of the year, and that is Shayne McCormack. Shayne, come on - here's your gold-plated caterpillar. Watch out: the paint comes off.

Shayne McCormack: Thanks very much.

P.S.: The most productive fan of the year award. Well, it's been a close race between Bruce Gillespie and David Grigg. But having a look at the material that's over there, David wins by a large margin. David Grigg. Watch it, it comes off.

Voice: Does it bite as well?

P.S.: Well, I have two other awards left. First of all, I have the most optimistic fan of the year award. Now this - this can only go to one person, and I'll give it to him later.

The last award (... think about it) This is the beard of the year award. Now, you know, I look around and I'm not game to make the award. So I'm going to ask the audience to sort of give this award. I want you to sort of clap and cheer for the best beard that's here. So first of all, I'd like to introduce John Foyster. (loud applause.)

Voice: (as Paul hands over the award) Watch it; it comes off.

John Foyster: They don't call me Goldfinger for nothing. Well, I shall endeavour to live up to this award....

Peter House: No, you should live it down.

J.F.: I just hope the competition doesn't get too strong. I think I have a break over some of the other starters by having it on the other end as well. (Taps back of head) Thanks very much, Paul.

Voice: Now you've got somewhere for it to live.

P.S.: Now I have another interview, and this time I'm going to interview Humphrey Tape. Mr. Tape. Where is Mr. Tape?

(John Bangsund enters in academic gown, with tape recorder, and then leaves again.)

Lee Harding: I think you'll have to do better next time.

P.S.: One of the shortest interviews on record, I think. Next, I

(John Bangsund re-enters to applause)

P.S.: Good evening , Mr. Tape.

John Bangsund: Professor.

P.S.: Professor Tape. I'm very sorry.

J.B.: Hum-hum-humphrey Tape.

P.S.: At what university did you obtain your professorship?

J.B.: The University of Ard-Knox.

P.S.: Well, I think I'll turn our audience over to you.

J.B.: Well, you can hand the audience over to me, but may I hand the tape recorder over to you? It's not connected.

P.S.: Yes, certainly.

J.B.: Ladies and gentlemen, I have been invited by the Vice-Chancellor of this university, the Dean of the Faculty of Biblical Engineering, the gate-keeper at the main entrance, the promoter of this diversion, Mr. Stevens, the organising committee of this convention, and indeed by 74% of a random sampling of convention members, not to read this small paper to you this evening.

However, as you well know, I have devoted the last 43 years to the study of ektrachiasology. I can say truthfully and without false modesty that as a result of my labours in this lonely field of learning, the science of ektrachiasology is today in its infancy.

You may well say to me: Sir, if this science is still in its infancy today after you've worked at it for 43 years, that doesn't say a hell of a lot for your work, does it?

I reply with candour and becoming humility: Hah, how little you know, eh? My researches were years - nay, decades - ahead of their time. The pure science of

God, I can't read this: I've drunk so much tonight.

ektrachiasology existed long before we had a technology capable of providing an object to study. But I can hear some of you saying, if I listen very closely: What is Ektrachiasology? And it is to you eager,

questioning, wide-awake young people that I wish to address my remarks tonight.

Ekttrachiasology is the study of ektrachiasomes! Or, in everyday slang, the run-offs on long-playing gramophone records. People have often asked me how I came to decide back in 1928 to devote my life to the study of run-offs on long-playing gramophone records. I have tried to explain patiently to them the sense of dedication a scholarly man feels when he has completed his formal university training, and it is a matter of finding a congenial and preferably obscure branch of learning to specialize in, or getting a job.

But they rarely listen. They just want to know where I found long-playing records in 1928.

It is because of this wilful ignorance that ektrachiasology is in its infancy and not the glorious

(Thumps the table)

international field of progress

(Thump)

and co-

operation it rightfully

(Thump)

should be.

Friends, do you know there is no professorial chair in ektrachiasology at any institution of learning anywhere in the world

Voice: Shame!

J.B.:

except right here in

Victoria at the University of Ard-Knox? Look at the mess the world is in. War, hunger, pollution, traffic problems, race hatred, ignorance and violence everywhere - postage increases - what a life! You invent new weapons of destruction and you make millions. You put up ugly buildings everywhere and you make millions. You spoil the land and the water and the atmosphere with smoke and muck from your factories and you make millions. You write science fiction - but that's irrelevant.

There are 943,278 institutions on this planet where you can learn to invent weapons and build buildings and pollute the atmosphere, but only one, one, where the beneficial, harmless science of ektrachiasology may be studied. Think about that.

From the looks on your intelligent young faces I can see that you're not thinking about that at all. You're still wondering where I found long-playing records in 1928.

I have to be frank with you. Of course, in 1928 there was no such thing as a long-playing record. You have difficulty in conceiving of a time when there was no television, no stereo, no LP records. You are so young. There was a time when there were no Beatles, when LSD meant money, and when Beethoven's Song of Joy was in German and lasted twenty minutes. But in 1928, after seventeen years of studying the history and the theory of

musical orthography, I decided that long-playing records needed to exist. Without them the science of ektrachiasology was doomed. I could not allow this to happen. I devoted my life to studying and promoting ektrachiasomes.

Now I must tell you how all this started - how I first stumbled on the existence of these things twenty years before technology allowed them to exist. One day in August - it might have been September, I'm not quite sure - 1928, I was sitting alone in my cell at the University of Ard-Knox, smoking my pipe, reflecting in a bitter-sweet, melancholy sort of way on man's folly and what I would do for a living the next year. On my lap I had a volume of Vivaldi's Masses in D, the well-known Kaltgrund Masses of 1740 dedicated, as you well know, to Count Kaltgrund von Oberheisen etc. etc. mitknobson. Interestingly enough these masses are rarely performed today, although one tune from them has survived and was quite popular in America some time ago, particularly among the negro folk. I refer, of course, to Masses in de kalt, kalt grund.

Anyway, there I was, idly woolgathering, when I noticed that I had dropped some pipe tobacco on the open pages before me. I tried to brush them away but found I couldn't. What an extraordinary thing! I held the book up to my eyes to find why the tobacco was stuck there and to my amazement found that it was not tobacco at all. The marks were on the page.

Now this was strange indeed. The marks occurred after the end of one of the masses. By rights, the music was finished. Yet here, quite clearly, after the final triumphant Missa Est, the last magnificent not of trumpet, organ, strings and choir, here was something more! I immediately turned to the end of the next mass in the book and there they were again. Incredible! The marks looked like specks of ink accidentally scattered on the score by a careless printer. Yet, believe me, printers were not careless in those days. There must be some reason for those marks.

And from that romantic beginning the science of ektrachiasology grew, ladies and gentlemen. My researches took me to the original manuscripts. I discovered that indeed Vivaldi had indeed written those marks. I checked with other works by Vivaldi, and all of them had the marks. I turned to other composers and, by God, every manuscript I examined had the marks on the page after the final note of the work concerned. When I first published my discoveries in 1930 in the University of Ard-Knox Journal of Musical Orthography they were unanimously acclaimed by music scholars the world over - as arrant poppycock. I was not distressed. I knew deep down that these marks I'd discovered were placed there by the composers, and furthermore they meant something. What they meant I did not know, but I determined to find out.

Friends, it took me fourteen years to realize what I'd stumbled on. I was relaxing under the baobab trees down behind the lockers at the university one day in June, 1944, idly talking with young Dudley Fortescue, who had just come onto the staff as Senior Reader in Comparative Plumbing. We were discussing the test matches and rubbishing the younger generation with its long hair and idiotic pop music: Sinatra, Crosby, Glenn Miller - you know, crazy, way-out stuff, and we got talking about ektrachiasomes.

You know, in all those terrible, wartorn years with all their insecurity and uncertainty and danger, conversation seemed inevitably to turn to ektrachiasomes. And suddenly, suddenly I realised that to play these strange notes you would really need - how could I not have thought of it before? - you would need a

vinyl plastic disc, preferably about twelve inches in diameter, turning at about 33 revolutions per minute, some carefully placed grooves towards the disc's centre and a needle of some description. I rushed back to my cell, dragged out some old bits of vinyl and a few needles and rigged up the necessary instrument within a few hours - the breakthrough! Now the great classics could be heard in their full glory for the very first time. Well,

But you wouldn't believe the opposition I came up against in trying to present my discovery to the music-loving public. It took almost another seven years before the idea got across. And - I'm really furious whenever I think about this but - it was a science fiction writer named Arthur C. Clarke who patented the discovery. Later on I found out he was just trying to get his own back on me because back in 1941 I'd patented the communications satellite, which he claimed also to have thought of, but that's another story.

Today, as I remarked earlier, the science of ektrachiasology is still in its infancy. All the theory is known, the equipment is available for reproducing ektrachiasomes, but there is just so much work to be done and so few to do it.

I would like to conclude this address by playing for you just a few really superb ektrachiasomes from my collection. They will perhaps give you some insight into a fascinating world which you might never have suspected even existed, particularly if you have an automatic record player. They might even inspire you to join me and my colleagues in the great work of classifying and cataloguing the entire recorded output of classics.

Now, I don't know how well this is rigged up - this is like something out of science fiction, isn't it?

The first example is from a very early work by King Alfonso the Mad of Spain. You will notice at once the very primitive nature of the music. It comes from the Fourteen Little Gavottes and Hოდowns of 1378 and was intended to be played during sessions of the Inquisition. The particular one I will play was intended to be performed by two lutes, a brass serpent, four bagpipes and a well-tempered rack.

(Run-off is played)

(Applause, shouts of 'Encore!')

I'm really encouraged tonight.

Jumping several centuries we come to the great Viennese composer Carl Emmanuel Frescobaldi, who in many ways foreshadowed the even greater Bach. This little run-off is from the Prelude and Several Fugues in various keys for solo tenor whoopsichord.

(Run-off is played)

Now the great Bach himself. Norman Vincent Bach wrote perhaps some of the most magnificent ektrachiasomes in all music. The delicate tracery of counterpoint is something that - it's almost too good to be true. This particular example is from the Great Organ Mass of 1693 and I think you'll find it, as I do, a most deeply moving experience.

(Run-off is played)

The next three examples speak for themselves. Everyone is familiar with the tremendous development of the symphony in the hands of those three angry young

men Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. It is fascinating to see the complexity of the form increasing as we move from the first to the last of these composers. The intense emotion of Beethoven is rarely more evident than in the example we shall hear. This is Haydn.

(Next line during run-off)

The symphony had a long way to go.

And now this is Mozart. You can see that far more emotion sort of

(Run-off is played)

And of course with Beethoven ... This is the ektrachiasome from the Grosse Fugue.

(Next line during run-off)

It sounds simple, but that was Beethoven for you.

Well now, at this stage I'm jumping a little bit. There are those who say that modern composers have lost track with the classical tradition. Now I find this impossible to believe and I'll demonstrate it to you. This run-off is by the modern composer John Cage. I'm sure you'll agree with me that nothing has been lost when you compare the Beethoven extract we've just heard with these few bars from Cage.

(Run-off is played)

1956 - it's rather incredible, isn't it?

Now a sweet melancholy piece...

I can't speak straight!

Now a sweet melancholy piece from the late symphonies of Sibelius. You can almost feel the bleak, icy winds of the tundra rushing down on you in this excerpt, particularly if you're sitting near the door, and if you really try.

(Next line during run-off)

Isn't there something incredibly arctic about that?

And now a quite cheerful, marching, banner-waving, crowdpleasing ektrachiasome by Shostakovitch. Incredible as it might seem to us, this particular passage infuriated Stalin. It was first performed in 1938 and Shostakovitch was forced to apologise and re-write the run-off. Luckily a more liberal subsequent regime has allowed the original to be recorded and here it is, performed by the Leningrad Philharmonic, under Inya Boot.

(Next line during run-off)

There are some who say that Shostakovitch is not much, but I mean, there's the evidence.

Now, finally, no survey of the ektrachiasome could be complete or even representative without an example of that incredible man, Wagner. Richard Wagner never did things by halves. During the course of his Ring of the Nibelungs he has no less than 38 run-offs. And in this, the very last run-off from Gotterdammerung the discerning listener will discover not only the themes from the previous 37 run-offs, but also every last one of the 2,198 leitmotifs which appear during the course of the opera.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attention. (Applause)

Paul Stevens: Thank you, Professor. Professor, before you go, would you think you could accept an award of a gold-plated caterpillar?

J.B.: Not in this garb, no.

P.S.: Oh, well, do you think you could...?

(Bangsund places his gown over his head to make a cowl)

P.S.: This is the Most Optimistic Fan of the Year Award, and I can't think of anyone who deserves it more than you do.

J.B.: You know, the pattern on this thing reminds me of a little fugue by Gutenberg...

P.S.: I suppose before we have the last interview we should run the last unsolicited advertisement, and this is, of course, for good government.

Well, my name is Paul Stevens and I'd like to talk to you about good government. Do you know that in 1658 Oliver Cromwell said "I would have been glad to have kept a flock of sheep than to have undertaken such a government as this."?

Strange man. But I would like to ask you to think about the government of an organization that is dear to all our hearts, ANZAPA.

Yes folks, ANZAPA. With all those foreigners from Queensland coming into our ranks we do need good government from the Official Editor. As OE we need someone we can trust. So when you come to vote for OE, next whenever, remember to vote for the man who has proven himself in the field of fanmish service. Vote for John Foyster. Remember - a vote for Foyster is a vote for clean living!

Peter Darling: Equal time!

P.S.: This advertisement is from the Foyster for OE Committee authorised by L. Edmonds, spoken by P. Stevens.

John Foyster: Ladies and gentlemen, this evening we are proud to have with us a visiting publisher, MR. Olaf Bangsund of Parallel Books. Mr. Bangsund?

(Lee Harding enters)

(Throughout the interview Bangsund has some trouble with his self-willed hands, a la Dr. Strangelove.)

O.B.: Quiet, please. Very serious.

J.F.: Ah, Mr. Bangsund, could you outline briefly some of your aims in starting Parallel Books?

O.B.: I want to publish lots and lots of books.

J.F.: Would there be any subsidiary aims to these, Mr. Bangsund?

O.B.: It's catching me up.

J.F.: (sotto voce) How about making money?

O.B.: How about making money?

J.F.: That's a good aim. (Would you like to ask the questions?) You've only just begun this work then, Mr. Bangsound?

O.B.: Yes, yes.

J.F.: Is it a full-time occupation?

O.B.: There's a policeman up the back of the hall. Would you get him out please?

J.F.: No, it's not a policeman, it's Mervyn....

O.B.: I just thought ... They're all around you, you know.

J.F.: You've been doing this for a while - does it take up much of your time - all your time?

O.B.: Oh, considerable. Well, you know, I work most afternoons, every evening. But I rest on the seventh day.

J.F.: Do you find the amount of work you're doing at the moment satisfying?

O.B.: Oh, extr - extremely rewarding. (Hand gets loose)

J.F.: When you say rewarding, do you mean in the financial or the spiritual sense?

O.B.: Always spiritually. Spiritually.

J.F.: You wouldn't object to the financial?

O.B.: Oh no, I wouldn't object to it. But spr - spiritually it's m-most satisfying, yes.

J.F.: Would you object to getting a little bit more...

O.B.: No.

J.F.: ...financial reward? You wouldn't object to this?

O.B.: I wouldn't object, no. I never ob-ob-object. (Hand gets loose again) Excessive ectoplasm, you know.

J.F.: Well, in order to perhaps get a little more money, would you foresee your business expanding in future?

O.B.: Oh, I have great hopes. Expanding the business. Today, Australia. Tomorrow, the world.

J.F.: Do you sell these door-to-door?

O.B.: No, no, no, no. We have a ... very specialised publications. I've bought a ship and we sail it outside the three-mile limit and we indoctrin ... we train young women to flog ... ah, to... The course costs them three thousand a year and that clears them out of just about everything. (Has more trouble with hand)

J.F.: Do you want some water?

O.B.: No, not really.

J.F.: Are you sure you wouldn't?

O.B.: I'm quite all right: it's ectoplasm, you know.

J.F.: In other words, you've got a market plan set out for your...

O.B.: Oh yes. A sssssaturation campaign. It's quite complicated. It's still in the process of being worked out.

J.F.: (Foyster's hands have now also gone stiff) Mr. Bangsound, could you do something about... You're very experienced....

O.B.: Well, it's very difficult. (Chokes Foyster) Are you sure that not a policeman up the back of the hall? Enemies everywhere! Enemies!

J.F.: Most effective treatment.

O.B.: It's my St. Christopher, you know. Share my load? Could we get back to the script, please?

J.F.: The script? Oh, yes. Now this setup sounds a rather expensive sort of one, Mr. Bangsound. Do you have any plans for financing all of this?

O.B.: Well, it's a bit dicey at the moment, you see. I've (loses control of hand again) I know a good doctor. At the moment I...

J.F.: I had one.

O.B.: Maybe we could swap. At the moment I'm sort of terminating my present employment. You may know that I'm kernel-inspector at a peanut-butter factory. But I have sent this application - it's a copywriting job for Monbulk jam tin labels. Their punctuation is very bad. I intend to smarten that up.

J.F.: I would think that punctuation would be very important on jam tin labels.

O.B.: Well, the tins, you know, punctuation, very bad. I'll change them over to glass bottles, I think, screw-top bottles.

J.F.: That sounds very attractive.

O.B.: Good idea, yes.

J.F.: Mr. Bangsound, you have reached a certain stage in your plans. What, roughly, is your present arrangement? I realise you've only begun....

O.B.: Well, I have many, many projects, but the major one....

J.F.: No...

O.B.: It's the big one. Modesty - I just can't keep it to myself, you see.

I'm going to republish all my school exercise books. A 30-volume edition. You may have the choice of the calf-skin with gilt lettering, or the plain paperback - which will outlast the telephone directory. I expect this to be very popular, and be able to pay the girls on the boat a bit more, you know. And although it's going to be very expensive, I'm putting out a fanzine made entirely of coupons. When they cut out the coupons, and they paste them in, it comes out twice a week... Cut out the coupons.....

(At this stage Mr. Bangsound was removed from the stage by two men in white coats.)

THE DITMAR AWARDS: 1971

John Foyster: We are about to present some awards. The Ditmar Awards are included amongst these. However, there are at least two other awards to be given tonight and it seems to me perhaps the most appropriate thing if the Ditmar Awards be saved for (yawn) I suppose the climax of the session. And we shall tickle our fancies with the earlier awards first.

Dr. Jenssen, the persons involved in these various awards have asked if you would deign to present those awards also. It would be great if we knew what these awards were, but nevertheless, would you like to come forward?

Leigh, you're supposed to be getting some.

Leigh Edmonds: I know where they are.
I'll get them.

Dick Jenssen: I have one, I believe.

J.F.: Mervyn, do you want Dick to present that, or would you like to present it?

Mervyn Binns: Oh, I'll present it.

J.F.: You'll present it. Well, while Dick is looking for his script...

M.B.: No, Dick can present it.

J.F.: OK, Dick's going to do it.

D.J.: Yes, one more question before you go. Having been around for many years you must have... Oh, I think that's a previous script, isn't it? This one first?

J.F.: Yes, please.

D.J.: I have an award here for some unidentified person. The Melbourne Science Fiction Club, I have been told, is going to make an award at every convention and presumably it will be the same award for the same category which is - The Melbourne Science Fiction Club Achievement Award. And this year, through rigged voting, this is presented to Bruce Gillespie.

Lee Harding: Have you got it?

Bruce Gillespie: Thank you very much. I'm not exactly sure what this is for. Presuming it is for services to fanzines - well, if it's for that, if it's for paying the bills then I'll thank the Education Department. If it's for fanzine publishing I'd like to thank all those people who helped in that, many of them are here tonight, and all those people in the past who have helped me from time to time. And thank you very much to the Club for giving it to me.

D.J.: The next award is somewhat complex. It is the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation Award, also known as the Pat Terry Award, given for humour in science fiction. I present it to John Sladek for THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM, and to accept, to accept ... that's pretty funny when you come to think of it, to accept this award is John Foyster.

J.F.: I'm sure that John Sladek will appreciate the practicality of the award, provided by the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation to commemorate the name of Pat Terry, and I'm damn sure Pat would like it too. So thank you for John Sladek, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Foundation for thinking of this way of remembering Pat. Thanks very much.

D.J.: We now come to the Ditmar Awards and this year... Do I have any voting figures to read out?

J.F.: No.

D.J.: No? Presumably I just give you the final result, then. I suspect that this means that the awards have definitely been rigged this year.

The first one is for the best Australian Science Fiction and I think I'd better just read it out without further ado. It's the second time this has been won by Bert Chandler (applause), this time for THE BITTER PILL. He's not here to accept it. Maybe Peter Darling will accept this and make a speech.

Peter Darling: Well, all I've got to say is that Bert is no stranger to Sydney and to Melbourne and to Australian science fiction fandom. I'm sure that I'm expressing his wish when I say thank you very much for this award and I hope very much that he'll go on writing and that you'll be able to give the award to him in future years.

D.J.: The next award is slightly wobbly, but a little spanner will fix this. This Ditmar is for the best Australian Fan Publication and it goes - again, it must have been rigged: I can't understand the result really. I campaigned for so many other magazines, but in spite of my campaigning it has gone to Noel Kerr for The Somerset Gazette.

Noel Kerr: I'd like to thank you all very much for this and I'd like to make a special mention of Norstrilian News, which was ineligible for this voting, and I'd like you to put your hands together please for this excellent publication from Leigh Edmonds and John Foyster.

D.J.: And the Ditmar Award this year for International Fiction...

J.F.: Ah...

D.J.: ...is...

J.F.: No Award.

D.J.:going to go to Italo Calvino. The next Ditmar Award is an extra-curricular one. It is a special award which is being given by the convention committee, presumably. It is being given to John Baxter for his contributions to science fiction and/or cinema criticism for his book SCIENCE FICTION IN THE CINEMA and it will be accepted by Mr. Lee Harding.

L.H.: I...this is...

J.F.: Excuse, excuse ... Aren't you going to...?

L.H.: Yes, make a speech, yes. Now, well, as you know, some of you know, John Baxter's association with Melbourne science fiction fandom goes back many years and I'm sure he'll be tickled pink to receive this in Finland or Wales or wherever he's hanging out now. I hope he sits it up on a shelf and thinks of you all occasionally. Thank you very much.

D.J.: The awards have got a little bit out of order. The International Fiction Award now and the Ditmar for...

J.F.: No, no!

D.J.: 1971 International Fiction goes to....

J.F.: No. No Award, Dick.

D.J.: There is no award for International Science Fiction this year. I wish to thank Mervyn Bimms in particular for making this non-award possible, and for his most successful campaigning and threat to resign from the Club if Italo Calvino won. It frightened a lot of people off voting entirely for international fiction.

We do have another special award. I don't know how many of these are going to be given each year. Presumably it depends upon the previous year's convention takings. But there is a special award this year for services rendered to science fiction for Ron Graham for Vision of Tomorrow.

J.F.: Merv, we'd like you to present this tomorrow at the Capri. I think Ron's coming there, is he not?

...

D.J.: If the truth be known it's an award being given to the most expensive fanzine ever published.

J.F.: Thank you Dr. Jenssen. Are there any more awards to be given?

D.J.: Does anyone have an award?

J.F.: Yeah, everyone got an award? Would you like to relax...?

D.J.: Yes, I'll....

Peter Darling: I think the only award that can be given at this stage even though the convention isn't quite over yet is a round of acclamation for the people who have provided us with a magnificent convention.

NARCISSISTIC FINALE

John Foyster: I think that you know
that our idea of a
convention is a place where people have
a lot of fun and if you...

Lee Harding: Next year it's your turn to
give the speech.

Leigh Edmonds: It had better be.

J.F.: Our idea of a convention is a
place where a lot of people have
fun and if you've managed to have a
lot of fun (there's still one day to go
with the films at the Capri), then we
are certainly glad. I can assure you
that from the point of view of the
auction we are extremely grateful for
your support. Perhaps if one of my
colleagues would care to add some remarks?

L.H.: Yes. I'd like to correct one very
small error in the Convention
Booklet which has to do with the ex-
cellent displays you see around you. It
is suggested that they were done by John
Breden with assistance from Lee Harding.
I'd like to correct that because I gave
no assistance whatsoever. They are all
John's work and I didn't see them until
the first day of the convention. It's a
marvellous job.

L.E.: Well, while we're up here I'd like
to thank - thank? - thank all the
other people who helped, John Bangsund
in particular for slaving over our
beautiful little handbook, and Mervyn
Binns, and Paul Stevens for his Waiting
For Godot Half-hour and absolutely every-
body else, especially you too for making
it a reasonably good convention.

(Narcissistic applause)

THE POLARIZATION OF SCIENCE FICTION

panel

John Foyster: And now the moment you've all been waiting for - the cancellation of the penultimate item. At this stage we were to conduct a panel entitled...

Voice: You still are - we haven't changed the name.

J.F.: The Polarization of Science Fiction. Yes, indeed Friends, this is what we're going to do. (Thumps table.) Robin, will that upset you too much? It's when the whole thing bounces that I worry. (Thumps table.) It does, too.

Robin Johnson: Would you mind unbanging the table once or twice?

J.F.: (Bangs table underneath) I think I should have gone to bed last night. At once stage we were going to have a panel. We were going to talk about the polarization of science fiction. And then the panelists chickened out, so we organized another panel called The Polarization of Science Fiction. And this time, instead of a literary and intellectual polarization, it was to be a, pardon the phrase, sexual polarization. Fortunately my wife would be involved, and also Lee Harding's wife...

Voice: Two marriages.

J.F.: No, no, no, no. Just one. Owing to the lateness of the hour...

You must realise, of course, that we started a little late tonight. I presume all of you people did leave the Golden Age on time. No one drank too much? We have decided to have instead of that panel a different panel. This panel will be entitled The Polarization of Science Fiction. What I propose is this. We have, one way or another, some slides and movies to show you - that is, if the projector is indeed a Super 8 projector, which we've not exactly tried yet. But the slide projector's a super projector. And the way the panel works is this: those of you who wish to see slides and movies polarize into that room, those of you who wish to recover from movies polarize out the door, and those of you who are too buggered just stay where you are. You gonna toss a coin, Merv?

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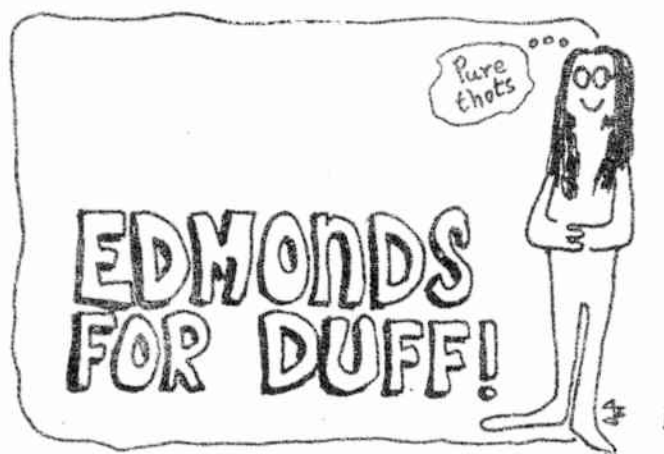
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4	Gary Mason	N. S. W.	34	Michael Cameron	Queensland
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6	John Bangsund	Victoria	36	Andrew Edquist	Victoria
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76	Terry Payne	Victoria	93	Lesley Howard	Victoria
77	Noel Kerr	Victoria	94	Elizabeth Foyster	Victoria



ID CAME FROM INNER SPACE

(The tape begins with the thunderous sound of bombs and bullets: Great Britain is at War. The following cries may be faintly heard: 'Those bloody Starship Troopers, I'll...', 'Now get this men - find Ballard, crucify him. That's all.' 'Captain, captain! They're burning NEW WORLDS in Birmingham!' 'FLASH! The neo-surrealists have established themselves in London...' 'MORE NEWS! Harrison's Irregulars have taken Liverpool!')

Narrator: Greetings Australia. The battle is just reaching its peak. The Old Guard is down. Fireballs are breaking through..... aaaarrgh!

Yes, Australia, Britain is at war. It is a war to the death: a war without rules, a bloody war in which many will perish and in which others will be maimed. But it is a very necessary war.

Timid Voice: Poul Anderson was good enough for me when I was sixteen and he's good enough for me now and always will be, aye.

Narrator: So says Scotland's Donald Malcolm, but what of those who oppose him?

Second Voice: I...I don't know, I don't know...quite how I got into it. I s'pose I thought it was the only thing to do. It 'ad to be done, so... I joined up with the... the NEW WORLDS contingent.

Narrator: That was George Collyn, who fights under the blood and fire banner of the NEW WORLDS contingent, as he calls it. And what is this NEW WORLDS contingent? Let us ask the leader, Mister Michael Moorcock.

Moorcock: Um? ...er...Kafka, Borges, Wyndham Lewis, Kafka, Kafka ... KafkaKafka.....Kafka..Kafkaaaaaaaaaaaaa

Narrator: Thank you, Mr. Moorcock. We'll come back to Mr. Moorcock later. Meanwhile, let's try and analyse how this war started...

Moorcock: Well, we hope that little drama didn't sound too obscure to you over there, but you've probably heard, through

magazines and fanzines, that things are in a state of conflict in the British SF scene. Lots of discussion is going on about the place, future and function of SF - its literary possibilities - whether it should entertain on an escapist, crossword-puzzle level, or whether it should try to do more. This discussion is heated and not always friendly by any means, and it's about the healthiest thing that's ever happened to SF. Those with extremist, intellectual or philistine, views are not likely to be the people who will be satisfied when the field sorts itself out. This isn't a destructive civil war, nor the last death throes of a decadent medium. These are the birth-pangs of a new and better kind of SF in which the author's individual talents are valued and allowed to develop more than ever before. Tomorrow's author must have individual talent, not be a second-rate Heinlein. He won't be able to get away with tired twists on an old gimmick or cloak-and-dagger historical settings in umpteen galactic empires. He'll have to exploit his imagination, skill and intellect to write what he wants to, and he'll have to be bloody good because in time the market for decent SF is bound to decrease and stay steady. There won't be so many magazines and paperbacks about, but what there will be will be better.

One of the reasons that SF is improving is because an ever-increasing literate public is interested in it. Popular standards are rising all the time and there are some people to read good fiction of all kinds. The corny SF story sells or sold primarily to children and the semi-literate section of the public. Whether you like to think so or not, those are the people who have kept the field alive since the thirties, and without the kids and the others we wouldn't have a field today. If you discount the 'Golden Agers' who felt that American SF of the fifties produced the peak and that only explicitly technical SF is pure, then you're left with two predominant schools of thought in Britain. There are those like J. G. Ballard who feel that worthwhile SF should be experimental, metaphysical, neo-surrealist - and those (like Brian Aldiss, for instance) who, rather in the manner of the good Victorian novelist, feel that naturalistic plots and credible characters coupled with fresh imagery and a literate style can produce a kind of SF that uses a sound conventional narrative to carry a solid moral argument or observation of some kind, not necessarily explicit. There's a merit in both opinions and we on NEW WORLDS are seeking to encourage both kinds of writing. If SF is to appeal to a literate audience, then it must use the terms and tools of good literature, whether experimental or conventional, to improve itself. It's the only way to ensure long-term survival. Any questions?

Narrator: And what does sex-fiend Langdon Jones have to say about Moorcock's views?

Jones: Well, I can only agree with what my insane friend says. Make no mistake about it, there is a war going on, a war in which feelings are running high and patience low. The literal-minded grumblers who mutter in their beards about Heinlein, pausing only to utter such gems of literary criticism as 'I think Ballard writes a load of old rubbish because he doesn't have any blasters' seem to forget a natural law as unbreakable as the law of gravity. SF writing is, although the mind sometimes boggles, an art, and all art must develop. The law is: change or die. If a composer today wrote music in the style of Bach, however good a musician he was the music would still be a mannered imitation. Similarly, one cannot expect to write SF like early Bester that has any value at all. The Stars My Destination (Tiger! Tiger!) and The Demolished Man were very good novel written under very strict limitations. The limitations have altered, the picture has changed, and a good novel of this nature will never again be written. This is an exciting time as far as SF is concerned. A renaissance is taking place that will have far-reaching consequences. Today, the aspiring writer must look to the great imaginative and

visionary writers - Borges, William Burroughs and, if Mike will permit me ... Kafka.

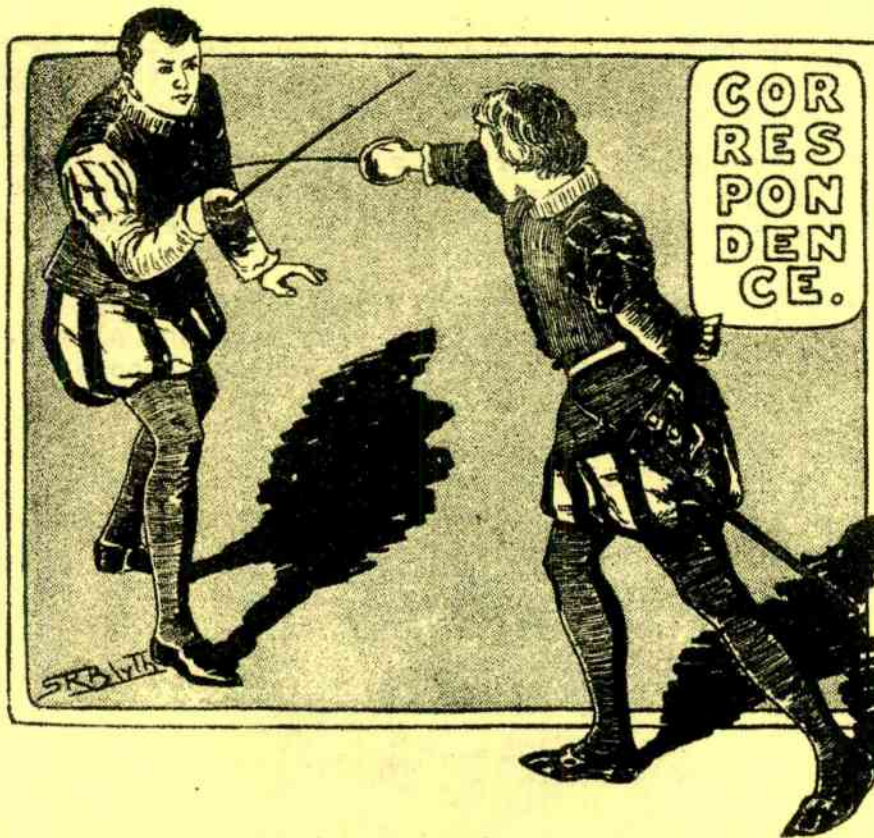
You know the kind of writing we're looking for: unfortunately there's not much of it about. So if any of you can produce it I must stress that if you catch us in a good mood we'll even consider Australian submissions.

Anyway, the sooner I finish the sooner you can get back to your drinking. I'll just close here by wishing all those of you who buy NEW WORLDS a very happy and successful convention - and I hope the rest of you have a perfectly miserable time.....

Unnamed Group: (sings)

Read your NEW WORLDS every day,
NEW WORLDS at your work and play...
NEW WORLDS gives you mooooooooore.





John Bangsund
Box 357
Kingston
A.C.T. 2604

10th March 1971

Sirs,

may I take this opportunity of congratulating you Gentlemen on "Boy's Own Fanzine" no 1. I wish to say that I find your fresh and invigorating approach to fanzine publishing wholly commendable. It goes without saying, of course, that I wholeheartedly approve your moral stand, as outlined by Mr Foyster on page 5. Ah, how often have I not seen young fans twisted, misled, perverted and wholly corrupted by lascivious fanzines emanating from a North American nation which must remain nameless? It is bad enough that these fanzines in the past have been in the habit of publishing numerous drawings (in various media) of young ladies, well-endowed physically, wearing little else but space helmet and ray-gun, posed so suggestively as to leave little to the imagination; but in recent months I have heard reports of photographs appearing in these fanzines, photographs of nubile young ladies, well-endowed physically, wearing nothing, and leaving nothing to the imagination! What, I say, what has this to do with science fiction? What has this to do with the impressionable young men who read

these publications? - not to mention the impressionable young lady fans, well endowed physically, nubile, their coral-pink (ahem) up-thrusting (choke) ... what?

I find it difficult to believe these reports about fanzines publishing such photographs. But in this permissive age, anything can happen. And if someone has indeed published a fanzine with photographs of this vile nature, the fuckwits haven't sent me a copy! I DEMAND TO SEE THESE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS! How can I be expected to protest knowledgably against the fallen standards of fanzine publishing if the bastards don't send me a copy of their filthy rags!

The admirable Freudian symbolism of the "o" in "BoY'S OWN", with its deep-frozen cold shower so graphically portrayed, on the title page has not escaped me. Indeed the whole frigid symbolism of the title, with the wholesome, short-haired, pantalooned youth gaily skating over the ice, blithely unconcerned with whatever raging tides of passion lie beneath him, is redolent of a way of life which has, alas, passed away in the big, wicked world about us and may only be observed in such tiny outposts as virile and undefiled purity as Melbourne fandom. The youth depicted, in fact, bears an uncanny resemblance to Mervyn Binns as he was before he started reading science fiction and watching horror fillums. Sic transit...

Jerking myself away from the title-page, I must say that the rest of the issue (I use the word, of course, in its non-procreative sense) is quite delightful in all but one respect, Lee Harding's apparent failure to admit to Apollo (whose surname I understand to be Papaioannou, rather than the non word ypu have printed) that he has been camping before - with Carla and myself in December 1963.

I met Lee and Carla in mid-1963, at a surprise party organised for Carla's brother, Koos Bleeker. (I was there as a friend of Mary, Koos's fiance, with whom I had the pleasure of working at the Victorian Railways Institute, and my companion was a lovely Hungarian girl named Ildiko. Ildiko - the name is a Magyarized version of the German "Hildegard" - had this superstition, based on Hungarian history, that she was fated to marry someone named Attila. Since she already knew someone named Attila, my efforts to convince her that "Bangsund" was Old Norwegian for "Attila" were fruitless, and she married a quite pleasant young man named Joe. But I digress, do I not?) Some months later I encountered the Hardings again at Koos and Mary's wedding, where Lee and I talked about classical music, and against a party given by Muriel Lawrence, my assistant librarian, for her fiance David Catchpool's birthday - on which latter occasion I recall being forced to play the piano and only Lee realised that I was attempting to play Mahler's Second. That night, Lee and Carla invited me to visit them - "You go through Bayswater and out along the Mountain Highway, past the service station, and it's the first house you can't see from the road". Miraculously, I found the place, and we tasted Lee's Madras Curry - and during the course of the evening I discovered that Lee was in the habit of writing science fiction. I did not think any the less of him for this. We all have our failings.

After several visits, Lee talked one night about a story by Arthur C. Clarke, called "The Star", and he suggested I read it so we could talk about

its theological implications. That, my friends, is how I started reading science fiction.

I went away for three weeks, driving up through New South Wales and Queensland, and all the way I was calling into little shops buying science fiction. In Sydney I tracked down just about all the issues of "New Worlds" in which Lee had stories. Between 26th September and 16th October 1963 (according to a notebook which Lee's subsequent derisive comments caused me to discontinue), between Turgenev's NEST OF GENTLEFOLK and Durrell's ALEXANDRIA QUARTET, I read no less than ten science fiction novles and story collections. I hate to admit it, but I was hooked.

Just before Christmas, Lee and Carla moved from the house they were renting on Mountain Highway to another place, even more difficult to find, in Olinda Road. I arrived there on Boxing Day in time to see one of the back rooms (half of the back room now occupied by the children) entirely filled with Lee's books, records, desks, shelves, manuscripts and god knows what else, and I looked at this incredible conglomeration and at Lee's utterly down-cast features, and I made a firm resolve never to move again. (I have subsequently moved eight times.)

Some time, I forget when, before or after that Boxing Day, we arranged to go camping together, and about 27th December we left The Basin in my father's Austin Cambridge and headed for Walhalla.

Apart from the car and the tent and the stretchers, I took with me a Scrabble set and two books - Raymond Paull's OLD WALHALLA and Dostoevsky's THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV. The car, tent and stretchers proved useful, but I needn't have bothered with the books. Lee had with him Spike Milligan's PUCKOON, and Carla will testify that our Scrabble games were absolutely ruined by Lee's insisting on reading the funniest bits of PUCKOON to us as he came to them.

In late 1963 I was still awefully modest. We pitched the tent on the banks of the Thompson River, just outside Walhalla, and there wasn't a lavatory for miles. I nearly died between visits to the township, where there was one. Someone was panning for gold in the river, someone with modern equipment, including a two-stroke engine which putt-putted away non-stop for most of the time we were there. On the Saturday night we debated for some time whether I should approach the owner of this motor on the following morning and demand that he should desist on the Sabbath.

As I write the whole escapade comes back to me in detail, but I must not take up your space with more. Suffice it to say that Lee exhibited even in those far off days the prowess mentioned by Apollo in skipping pebbles across the surface of the river (a trick he learnt by watching JASON AND THE ARGONAUT on Christmas Eve); but I do not recall that he showed any inclination towards cooking. Also, none of us got to go about naked, though I have photos to prove that I went swimming in shorts and a straw sombrero.

Of course, if Apollo had known that Lee had been camping before, and had talked to either Carla or myself about that trip, perhaps he wouldn't have allowed himself to be talked into it - and we would not have had the privilege of reading his excellent article. Since Apollo has captured in

this article the essence of Lee's very individual conversational technique, this would have been an immense loss.

Thank you, Apollo, Don, Bill Rotsler (what can I say about your magnificent, inimitable artwork that has not been said before?), Elizabeth, Leigh and John, for a most entertaining fanzine.

Even if you did spell "ektrachiasology" incorrectly.

Jack Wodhams
8 Stone Street
Berala
Sydney
N.S.W. 2141

12th March 1971

Dear John & Leigh,

it's amazing how many 'No. *1*' fanzines we get, isn't it? So we got this BOY'S OWN FANZINE thing dropping out of the sky - which is, we might say charitably, better than the falling sky itself. Leigh Edmonds opening ramble was not quite as good as a muskrat, but passable. And it is nice to have a record of Prof. Hump. Tape's inaug. address for the files. Thanks. And now, hell, we don't like to knock a fellow writer, but COUP D'OR needed to be cut by 90% at least, and... it made me itchy with a surging suffusion of inexpressible advice - too many characters, movement like a clobbered clock, irrelevant and lifeless sex-interest, dialogue far too minimal, and action dialoguenon-existent. A lot of good material thrown into the pot to make it a sluggish grey stew. A lesson could be learnt here from the vastly redeeming tail-piece - Apollo Papayannou's crisp and accurate recounting of his safari with the famous Lee Harding. If you can get Apollo to report for you more often you'll be fortunate.

Bill Wright
53 Celia Street
Burwood
Victoria 3125

13th March 1971

Dear Leigh & John,

At last! A fanzine about real people in real situations doing real things.

Boy's Own Fanzine is a far, far better thing than you have ever done before. You are therefore honoured with a special Bill Wright poem:

In Fealty to BOF

George is drawing lots of pay
From the Dept. of Civil A.
George has nought to do all day;
No wonder George is blyth and gay!

Spare a thought for poor old Bill
Who slaves from morn to dusk, until
He staggers out to drink his fill
Of ale or grog, or what-you-will.

The truth is plain for all to see -
The slaves of private industry
Are very similar to me,
And not at all like lucky Leigh.

Foyster fans (and I am one)
Regret his reference to his bum.
The rest of TRACK is wholesome fun,
Exactly what he oughta done.

We know Professor Humphrey Tape
Is fond of talking through his pate.
His little lecture sounded great;
Where is this gentleman of late?

It seems exotic pleasures rare
Go with smuggling gold by air.
Those entrusted with the care
Of clean and wholesome boys, beware!

The William Rotsler illustrations
Fitted all the situations.

What more can I say?

David Grigg
PO Box 100
Carlton South
Victoria 3053

16th March 1971

Dear Leigh & John:

Thanks very much for BOF.

Frankly, I was disappointed in this issue, even though it was the first.
From the way you were talking and the glimpses of it in production, I had
expected something tremendous. But it was merely good.

The best things, the most readable things in the first issue were to my mind
at least, Leigh's editorial and Apollo's article. Both were light and
amusing, and both told me things I didn't previously know. What it is like
to be a public servant, what Lee Harding is like at close quarters for an
extended period of time. Polite applause: more of this sort of thing.

John Foyster's editorial read like a John Foyster ANZAPA-zine for some reason.

Bangsund's speech was funny, but funnier somehow when spoken, with a
costumed Prof. Humphrey Tape looking wistful and nostalgic as he pronounced
those golden syllables: "... back in the days when LSD meant money..." But
for those who were not there at the Con, it was, I would imagine, the
selling point of the fanzine.

Don Symons, and the maet of the fanzine... He can write, and write well, I
will say that. This felt like an excerpt from a novel. If not, it should
be. Reading the one and only copy of ODD in my possession, I would say that
this is the type of material Ray Fisher would have liked: "life-oriented"
is his term I think. A very good article, a little strange even in an

amateur magazine: it's professional material.

On the whole, a very good fanzine in the humble opinion of this letter writer. Presentation could undoubtedly be improved, but that can be said of every Australian fanzine but one, and no doubt Noel could improve that, too.

Eric Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Avenue
Faulconbridge
N.S.W. 2776

17th March 1971

Dear Leigh & John,

Thanks for the first issue of "B.O.F.". Really that title is going to make you lose subscribers. In the past two weeks I have had more derisive comments about fanzines and the people that read them than I have had before in my own whole life. More people think I am mad, gone round the bend, than when I read prozines at work.

Now I butter up the editor by saying how much I liked "George", and how much I wish I had a job like that.

John Bangsund's excellent article on ektrochiasomes deserves a far wider audience as the first public proclamation of this fascinating science, however Professor Tape neglects to mention the invaluable preliminary studies on run-ins on LP records. Dr Deucalion's classical work on chiasmusekes in Edison records is clearly an earlier example of work in this field.

Noel Kerr
86 Leila Road
Carnegie
Victoria 3165

23rd March 1971

Dear Leigh & John,

Thoroughly enjoyed your "Boy's Own Fanzine". It's great to see another non-serious fanzine hit the market (?).

Without doubt, GEORGE was definitely Leigh Edmonds. I liked your article Leigh, but I did feel that you could have condensed it a bit, as I found myself wanting to skip through some of it to find your next comment. But in all, I had a bloody good laugh, and a cry on finding out how our money is being spent.

The "speech", or should I say "address", would be interesting to those who never attended the Con., but as I did and heard it, I passed it by. Nearly everyone I spoke to about it thought it was one of the great moments of the Con., except myself. I know I may be sticking my neck out but I felt I had heard it all before. I enjoy Bangsund immensely when he writes about his experiences in life and his off-the-cuff remarks when one is speaking to him, but... I thought the funniest parts of his address were when he lost his place and had a couple of technical hitches, so I must be sick.

Now what can I say about COUP D'OR? I know that it wandered and got bogged down a few times, but it made me feel as though I was back at Oakleigh Technical School, reading Biggles, under the desk. I ENJOYED IT! Two questions that I bet you have been asked... who is D. Symons and did it really happen? I'm frightened to say more incase you've "set" this story up.

The presentation was good, although I'm not over keen on blue stock. I would be interested to know if you ran the Electronic Stencils seperate. If so, I felt that the inking should have been increased... or was John scared of show-through?

Mike Glickshon
32 Maynard Avenue
Apt 25
Toronto 156
Ontario
CANADA

27th April 1971

Dear Leigh & John,

many thanks for including me on the mailing list of BOF number 1. It is a delight to get a fanzine from Australia that not only arrives intact, but also gets here early enough that the deadline for the next issue has not been and gone by the time I read the zine. (No slur on Bruce Gillespie intended, but I have yet to see the back page of an issue of SF Commentary. Somehow or other, every issue arrives quite literally shredded by the Post Office).

BOF 1 is a nice attractive fanzine, although I think a few smaller drawings might have improved the story by Don. Rotsler's cover has to be the saddest thing I've ever seen him draw! In fact, most of the illos for you reveal a cynicism that not quite usual for Bill; but I suppose that it would scarcely do to use his dirty old men, or busty young things in a fanzine devoted to "all that is clean and worthy in science fiction fandom", now would it?

When my wife worked in the civil service for a summer, Leigh, she often sorted paper clips into different sizes and fininishes. Apparently considerable time can be spent this way, as long as one remembers to put all the sorted clips back into one large box when one has finnished. I was a bit luckier: working as a computer programmer meant that sitting waiting for the machine to execute the program was perfectly acceptable and book reading while doing so was a part of the procedure. I got many fanzines and paperbacks read that way. And during actual working hours it was no problem to devote many hours to writing up birthday cards for friends, lists of all the s-f books in my library, mailing labels etc. since one card looks exactly like the next and as long as you always carry boxes of them around with you, no-one's going to bother checking that they actaully have something to do with the tidal constituents of the Bay of Fundy,

As the completely innocent creator of the remark that spurred Ethel's comment which prompted your discussion which called forth her delight at your agreement which brought about your deciphering her cryptic comments, may I say that I most certainly did not intend any slur when I asked about the poorness of repro in English fanzines. Having been born in England and

raised there for 11 years myself, I'm well aware of the differences in economic levels which exist between our two countries. And yet, I feel sure that the equipment must exist in England for good mimeo reproduction (hell, the Gestetner material I buy at colossal expense is imported from England!) and merely wondered why one sees so many English fanzines that are mechanically inferior in reproduction. Ethel may be happy to know that I castigate both American and Canadian fanzines as well for failing to strive for a better appearance. I certainly realize that electro-stencilling art can be expensive and will be out of the reach of amny faneds. But this does not excuse sloppy layout, blotched or wrinkled stencils etc. Merely technical difficulties can be overcome with care and effort, and one does not need money to produce an attractive looking fanzine. And Ethel might be surprised to learn that not all North American (please do not refer to Canada as part of the US - we too have our pride, you know) drive Cadillacs and live in penthouses. I venture to say that my wife and I, as two unemployed graduate students, live on a level not far removed from that of a typical British fan. So; apologies if any insult was taken from my question. None was intended and I trust this explanation will restore the good state of Australian-Canadian fannish relations.

Thoroughly enjoyed John's "speech"; a marvellously comic piece of writing of a quality rare in fanzines today. More, more! COUP D'OR though struck me as being far too long. I enjoyed the parody elements, but had to force myself to read the last few pages to see how things came out.

William M. Danner
R.D. 1
Kennerdale,
PA 16374
US of A

29th April 1971

Dear Chaps:

Thanks a million for sending me number 1 of The Boy's Own Fanzine. I hope that you will do it again and that you won't be deterred by the three issues of Stefantasy I'm sending you seperately.

It is indeed praiseworthy of you to present, in these sad times of rioting and nudity, dope-taking and long hair, good, clean-cut adventure stories advocating nothign worse than grand larceny. I hope that future issues will follow this sound policy laid down in this one.

Kidding aside, I am very favourably impressed by this first issue which is so much better than many theth issues. I suppose I should not be be surprised, in view of the eccomium Buck Coulson has heaped upon Australian fanzines, but it is pleasant to be able to say that Buck is right, as usual.

Prof. Tape might like to know that there were long-playing records of a sort in 1928. The first sound-movie system, Vitaphone*, was introduced in 1926 and used a 16" disc running at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, with a playing time or around 12 minutes. Since they were played from the centre out some of them no doubt had some real dillies of ektrochiasomes.

I don't know who R.D. Symons may be but his "Coup d'Or" is one of the best things I've ever read in a fanzine and better than many that have appeared

in professional magazines. If it is a factual account Symons has had an interesting life, to put it mildly. If, as seems more likely, it is fiction based on fact, what the hell is he doing writing for a fanzine for free? In these days when both fanzines and professional magazines of all kinds are full of "They come to call on I and she, but her and me had went out" English, it is a pleasure to read the work of one who proves so conclusively that correct English need not be either pedantic or dull. All of you guys seem to exhibit this facility, as a matter of fact, so I wonder if Australian schools have not yet succumbed to the dry rot that has made a mockery of education in this country.

* Vitaphone was the first system installed permanently in any considerable number in theatres. Several years earlier Lee DeForest's "Phonofilm" was demonstrated with short subjects in theatres in some of the larger cities, but it was ahead of its time. While synchronization was perfect (it was a sound on film system) there were no suitable sound amplification systems then and the volume was very low.

Lynn Hickman
413 Ottokee Street
Wauseon
Ohio 43567
US of A

30th April 1971

Dear Leigh & John:

Frankly, I can't imagine boredom on the job. I'm on the go continually and never seem to have even an extra minute at any time. Some day I'll have to do an article on handling production control for a plant that builds over two hundred different parts for the automobile industry. It's nerve-wracking but a fun thing.

My good friend, Plato Jones, would be glad to come out of retirement (he did a lot of artwork for fanzines in the fifties) and design a cover for you ala "American Boy" of the 30's (another cleancut, worthy publication) if you would like it. Although he is rotten to the core - and proud of it, he does appreciate your efforts in combatting all he holds dear.

Thanks for sending me your zine. It was enjoyed so much that I re-read two "Clive of India" books.

Andy Porter
55 Pineapple Street
Brooklyn
NY 11201
US of A

5th May 1971

Dear John & Leigh:

Thanks for BOYS OWN FANZINE. For what it's worth, yours is the second fanzine that's arrived in the last two days that's taken exactly seven weeks from mailing to receipt by myself (the other was "Fanarchist").

It certainly looks interesting. The article about being a steward on an interstellar cargo vessel was certainly interesting but we all know that the many things that were recorded as happening were just not realistic. Anyone knows that real life isn't that exciting.

The title and contents page illo reminds me of a vast volume I have here, CHUMS ANNUAL for 1936. It's complete with exciting chapters of "Old Chums at School" and stfnal chapters of "Ace of The Atlantic Areodrome". I've been menaing to reprint parts of it in ALGOL one of these days.

Your editorial (Leigh's) was pretty interesting. After reading Manning Clark's SHORT HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA and Craig McGregor's PROFILE OF AUSTRALIA (not for sale in the US, due to copy-right restrictions) it All Ties In.

What you need is some political experiences - take up your time with turning out political manifestos and using your departmental postage meter to mail them out through Australia. What you really should do is undertake an exhaustive study of time-wasting in your department, publish a book on it and become Australia's Own Ralph Nader. You'd be the first fan to be arrested for Treason in Australia, if not fired from your job...

Speaking of Treason in Australia, I find it incredible to read about things like the Orr case, and police confiscation of CREEPY and EERIE in - was it Brisbane? And the wide police powers of arrest and literary confiscation in places like NSW. Is Australia ready for a WorldCon? Would they let Elliot Shorter into Australia? I can just see it - the government refuses visas to half the people coming to an Australian con as "communist subversives," and arrests the book sellers and confiscates the SF on sale in the WorldCon Huckster Room as subversives and pornography dealers. And the ALP comes out against SF, while the Country Party moves to confiscate John Bangsund's records and have every self-acknowledged fan moved to detention camps at Alice Springs.

Allan St. Baker
97 Kahibah Road
Kahibah
N.S.W. 2290

1st June 1971

I've had B.O.F. for a while but this is the first chance I've had to say anything about it as I've been busy with industrial strife, which is much better than the last type of strife I was busy with.

It was mentioned that my article in Fanarchist I was in questionable taste, something about drunks who kill people. I thought rather the same about R.D. Symons' effort about stealing five thousand pounds worth of gold, but of course he only stole it from a Jew so I suppose anti-semitism does have its uses. Loved his fine sense of fair play when entrusted with a letter. Well, as good a way as any to earn a living.

Liked the illustrations and captions, Bangsund's speech I enjoyed, and much as I hate to say it both editorials were readable. A hint for the next Boy's Own: tell them never, under any circumstances, drink from a flagon of dry sherry which has sat, open, in a cupboard for a fortnight.

Apparently fandom has grown a little since 1965 and the Gryphon. Found No. 38 of your anniversary issue in my luggage. So that's why Bill Rotsler's illustrations looked so familiar.

Office of the
Department of Local Industry.

To the editors, BOF.

Dear Sirs,

In accordance with the directive of my Minister and with reference to Section T, Paragraph 37.13, sub-Paragraph (h) of the Fisheries Act 1893-1948 together with addenda thereto ***I HEREBY GIVE NOTICE*** under the powers vested in me by the Parliament and the People of the State of Victoria that a certain emanation from your address has been denounced to me by a public spirited person of the municipality in which you have been permitted to reside thus far who makes deposition to wit and viz. that the publication 'BOF' has been purveyed notwithstanding and despite representations made and attested to by the said citizen acting entirely from unselfish motives and with a desire that Her Majesty's Victorian Government be not treated with contempt to CERTAIN UNDESIRABLE ELEMENTS of the population of this State with the avowed aim of providing 'wholesome' reading material to those same elements despite and notwithstanding the Law of this State as heretofore designated ***NOW THEREFORE*** be hereby notified that pursuant to the undeniable charge that material NOT IN ACCORDANCE with the Order in Council given this 17th day of June in the one hundred and twenty fourth year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria has been published by you in that it did not contain the requisite exhortation on each page to readers to support the local industry of the Municipality and eat MOONEE PRE-FROZEN PONDFOOD as supplied to all members of Her Majesty's Government in the State of Victoria and manufactured entirely from local materials in accordance with all subsequent retrospective legislation a writ of attainder has been promulgated upon you under penalty of contempt of court to ensure that henceforth all such Orders are obeyed.

STABAT LEX

Given under my seal,
I Quibble,

(second secretary to the Permanent Under-Secretary to the Minister
representing the Minister.)

Jerry Lapidus
54 Clearview Drive
Pittsford
New York 14534
US of A

30th September 1971

Dear John & Leigh,

BOF is an extremely hard fanzine to write about. It's enjoyable to read, but I'm having a very difficult time coming up with anything to say about it.

A number of things do come up, and a few I want to get back to, but the most pressing, and that which hits me most personally, is that dealing with the

reproduction of British (and Australian?) fanzines. I confess it is likely that many of us tend to assume the rest of the world is as affluent as we, and of course we're wrong here. But I know personally, my main complaint about British fanzines is not that they're plainly (unostentatiously) produced, but that they are generally poorly produced. One need not have an expensive mimeo, electro-stenciling, or offset reproduction to produce a good-looking fanzine. With an in-expensive, hand cranked mimeo and hand-traced art - or no art at all - one can produce a good-looking fanzine. What it takes is time and consideration in how the fanzine will look, besides what it says.

Bruce Gillespie uses no art at all in most issues of SFC, and yet produces a very readable and visually interesting fanzine. This very issue of BOF is not particularly fancy; yet with the exception of (for me) a few too many long articles unbroken by artwork or other visual breaks, this is also quite enjoyable. I just think it's seemed to many fans here that British fanzines look rushed and hurried for the most part - not that they are inexpensively produced, but that they're not particularly well produced.

Don't feel it necessary to apologize for the artwork, John - it isn't at all bad, and clearly you've tried to make the magazine visually interesting and/or stimulating. Everything is readable, and all the artwork is quite clear... so you'll do better next issue, no?

I confess that I don't really know what to make of the rest of the material. Curious, no doubt, and very strange, all of it. I did enjoy your BOF awards exceedingly.

Hmmm. Just got a suspicious thought. Is BOF in any way related to Boff, as in Sturgeon's "The (Widgett) the (Wadgett) and Boff"? This seems to be the devious thing you would do, John Foyster, pretending toward such a loose, original title, but actually having this Sinister Title, actually connected with Science Fiction, hidden back there all the time.

Masses in D Cold Cold Ground indeed.

Alex Gas,

Dear BOF editors,

I've been told that to get a copy of Boy's Own Fanzine I have to write a letter of comment. Now how the hell I'm to write one without reading BOF I don't really know, but here goes.

"The cover was a tasteful shade of blue that is marred only by its shoddy quality. The size is convenient, so that upon folding it can be carried around without discomfort in a pocket.

"The humor is brilliantly written, witty (you can edit me any time you've had enough of it). The first article was...

At this stage I noticed a rare butterfly flutter outside the window of the kitchen of the MSFC's clubrooms. Being a butterfly collector I folded the copy of BOF I had been reading and put it in my pocket. I then proceeded to climb out the window to get a closer look at what I thought was a tiger-moth (moths, butterflies, they're all the same to me).

At this point I was physically assaulted by the Possessive Owner of the magazine I had thoughtlessly put in my pocket. This of course was totally uncalled for and I can categorically and undeniably state that within the limits of reason and my sagging conscience, that my dignity demands I had had no intention of willfully taking the fanzine home. Of course I have a poor memory, for which I cannot be held responsible, and one never knows what one will forget until one is reminded, isn't one?

Well anyway Leigh, here's your letter of comment and may you choke on it (but not before I get a BOF).

EDITOR LEIGH WRITES: Saving the comments on the letter column until the very end of the letters is done only for the sake of spreading confusion throught the world. It also has a minor purpose in the conservation of natural resources by cutting down on the number of trees that have been cut down for the publication of this fanzine. And while I think of it there is yet another reason. When John Foyster comes to look through the letter column he will ask me why I didn't say anything about the letters and then I'll just tell him to read the last page. Cunning what?

The most interesting question raised in the letters was whether or not the Don Symons story was true life or not. To answer let me say that I have been given to believe that it is a factual recounting of an actual occurance but that is not of course to say that what I have been told is correct. Something that persuaded me to think that the story is probably true was Jack Wodhams letter where he criticised Don for not writing a good enough story. Well, if the story isn't written well enough to be a good bit of fiction then I can only think that it must be fact because afterall fact is always a lot stranger than fiction (so they say - though I suspect the person who originated that hadn't read too much science fiction).

David Grigg

said that he had the impression that the story was only an extract from a novel. From what I remember of what was being said a couple of years ago when we put together the first BOF, David's supposition is more or less correct except that the rest of the book hasn't been written just yet.

It seems that a lot of people enjoyed the Bangsund speech a lot which is only as it should be, springing from the Bangsund genius as it did. It is only half accident that we are re-printing it again in this issue so that those who missed it two years ago can catch up on it now. The suggestions that some of our correspondants for the direction of further research might lead to further lectures, atleast we might hope so. However I know for a fact that such research might have to wait for a few years as Bangsund is at the moment rather indisposed towards playing more run-offs as they do terrible things to magnetic pickups and the 1971 lecture cost him \$18 or whatever it was that you payed for the things in those days.

There is no WAHF. We might have heard from other people but that was a long time ago and the records are in a bit of a mess. Better luck next time.

JOE PHAUST

A Fan-Opera in One Act

by

Minnie Hands

from the stage play by

Paul Stevens & Leigh Edmonds

Introduction

"Joe Phaust" was given its successful premier performance at the 1973 Melbourne EasterCon before a capacity audience. It was the culmination of months of hard work by the cast and one end result of thoughts thrown around among Melbourne as long as eighteen months previously.

Most groups of fand probablthink about producing plays or films and Melbourne fandom is no exception. First thoughts on producing any stage presentations probably resulted in 1970 in the first presentation of the "Paul Stevens Show" which has since become almost a fixture at Australian SF Conventions. Before this Paul had worked on a film but progressed no further than some shots of fans in Somerset Place and somebody using a typer on a tombstone in a cemetery.

In about August 1970 John Bangsund and his associates began to think seriously about the production of plays or films. Initial ideas began to form of a Goons type film with local fans doing typical things. As time progressed however no concrete results resulted and the idea was put aside as consideration was given to a stage production, a fannish opera to be known as "Gestetnerdammerung". A few lines were written and the idea lapsed. Both ideas became part of the Bangsund Legend.

Towards the end of 1971 interest was revived in the making of a fan film and since this time the project was conceived with an object in mind, publicity for AUSTRALIA in '75, it progressed and eventually reached the stage where fans were in front of John Litchens camera being filmed. Although John Bangsund had by this time moved to Canberra work progressed ~~extremely~~ and culminated in the successful premier of "Aussiefan" at SynCon II in August 1972 and later successful screenings in America.

Inspired by this success Melbourne fandom took a new interest in the concept of a fan opera. A meeting of interested people was held during September which coincided with a birthday party for Paul Stevens at my place. In the lounge room and the kitchen fans made merry and in the study plot ideas were thrashed out. Elizabeth Foyster, Paul Stevens, Rob Gerrand and myself took a major part in this with other people helping out when they happened to be in the room. The end result was an adaptation of the Faust legend and most of the basic plot was decided upon.

However we became ambitious and decided to attempt a full opera which would be through composed. Several people were supposed to write lines and the task of composition was given to Rob Gerrand. Unfortunately work progressed slowly and no more than two pages of words and music had been written at the end of December by which time Rob had left to go overseas.

It became obvious that the opera would not be completed in time for performance at the Easter convention and anyhow it seemed rather doubtful whether Melbourne fandom would be equal to the task of putting it on. We decided to change tack and during the early part of February rewrote the work as a comic-ballad-opera. Work was completed on a first draft in one day by many members of Melbourne fandom including Paul Stevens, David Grigg, Carey Handfield, Robin Johnson, Shayne McCormack (who was in Melbourne on an

extended visit) and myself. The first scene was written virtually as it appears in the final version however the second scene was written when the inspiration had exhausted itself and ended up as a very basic summary. The lyrics were left to a later date.

Rehearsals began at this stage as it was the intention of Minnie Hands, the group pen-name, to improve the opera through rehearsals by seeing what would work and extending where it was needed. Virtually the whole of the second act was rewritten about four weeks later and apart from minor revisions the complete script printed at that time was the one performed. Everybody in the cast contributed in one way or another to the final version with their suggestions and some of them adapted their own lyrics.

Only in the last two weeks of rehearsals did the opera look as if it would be worth putting on. The cast began to settle into their roles and with two, sometimes three, rehearsals a week they had begun to look halfway like actors and actresses. The last three rehearsals were held at the convention site in the mornings when the cast would not be disturbed but you can well imagine the state of some of the members after late night parties and films. Nevertheless the dress rehearsal went very well and we hoped the audience might actually enjoy the performance. As it turned out on the night the audience reaction exceeded our wildest expectations and we could feel justifiably proud of our achievement.

If this publication was to concern itself with much more than printing a finalised script I would probably feel impelled to thank everybody who contributed both to the play and its performance, but this might take a couple of pages. However as the main intention here is to publish the script that is my excuse for not naming names.

The script published in this publication is about as "authorised" as you will get. It was reached by adding to the final script used by the cast, the extra dialogue and directions agreed on by them and some of the more inspired ad-libs used on the night which were immortalised on tape and later transcribed.

When reading or performing "Joe Phaust" it should be remembered that what follows is not quite the final product and any improvements, within reason, are encouraged. "Joe Phaust", even though published, is not perfect and if anybody has suggestions I would be pleased to receive them. If the opera is ever performed by another group of fans I would like to receive a copy of the script they've used, or a tape recording of the performance, if they've made many changes. Perhaps, one of these days, we might be able to publish a better version.

Leigh Edmonds

Cast

(in order of appearance)

PAUL J STEVENS (a seller of books at Space Age
Bookshop)

THREE COMIX FANS

JOE PHAUST (an eager young fan)

COUNT WILLHELM FREDERICK vonMEPHISTOPHELES (an
evil devil from the nether
regions)

MAE EAST (the last word in lust)

ROBIN JOHNSON (world traveller and racounter
par exellance)

BRUCE GILLESPIE (the ultimate fanzine editor)

ODE of ANZAPA (a poor tortured soul)

THREE HARBINGERS OF DOOM

EDNA E PHAUST (Joe's aunty, the good influence
in his life)

JOE PHAUST (The Elder) (an old fan and tired)

MERVYN BINNS (Toastmaster General)

ISAAC A CLARKE (the richest pro in the world)

FIRST WOMAN (a part of Joe's past)

IRENE (who brings Joe his nourishment)

THREE NEOFANS

WOMAN TWO (drag queen)

MARGUERITE (the corflu fairy, the sweet woman who saves
Joe from eternal damnation)

Note: the THREE COMIX FANS, THREE HARBINGERS OF DOOM and
the THREE NEOFANS acn all be played by the same
people. One of those people can also play WOMAN TWO.

Scene One

(SPACE AGE BOOKSHOP. At rear centre stage there is a counter, at rear stage left are bookshelves and there is a table with comix on it at front stage left. PAUL J STEVENS is standing beside counter with comix in hand and JOE PHAUST is looking at the books on the shelves when the lights come up.)

MUSIC

OVERTURE

(Lights come up during the last few bars.)

PJS

Thursday, comix day, I've got to put the comix out. No, on second thoughts first I'll bar the door, then put the comix out. It's safer.

(PJS moves towards the door which is imagined to be at stage right. As he reaches the "door" COMIX FANS burst in and push PJS aside in their haste and excitement.)

COMIX FANS (seperately)

Comix! Give us comix! We Need comix!

JOHN:

You know fellers, I still remember my first comic.

MUSIC

Number 1 EVERYTHINGS UP TO DATE IN MARVEL CITY

JOHN

I read a Marvel comic on a Friday,
By Saturday I'd learned a thing or two,
'Cause up till then I didn't have an ide'
Of what a super hero aught to do.
I counted twenty villains try and bash
the Hulk
Almost every time he took a walk
And then I saw a fish man walking through
the air,
His heel wings made me stop and gawk.
Everything's up to date in Marvel City,
They've gone about as far as they can go,
They went and built a super hero
seven stories high,
About as high as a hero ought to grow.
One of the girls was granite armed
and gritty
As round above as she was round below.
You could swear that she was padded
from her shoulder to her heel
But later in the comic when she bent
a slab of steel
She proved that every muscle there
was absolutely real,
She went about as far as she could go,
They went about as far as they could go.

ALL COMIX FANS ..

MICHAEL

Hey it's Thursday, the new comix should be in.

(They go over to the comix table very enthusiastically and begin to look through them.)

DAVID

Say, Spiderman looks a bit dejected these days,

JOHN

You'd look dejected too if they kept changing your artist all the time.

(PJS wanders over and glares at them.)

PJS

Don't get your dirty thumb prints on them comix if y'aint gonna buy them.

(To JOHN) And you, hairy face, stop drooling on the centre page of Captain America.

(He heads back towards the counter)

What do you want anyhow.

(JOHN and MICHAEL go over to the counter carrying armfuls of comix which they dump on it.)

MICHAEL

How much?

JOHN

Anything new in?

MICHAEL

Can we have a discount?

PJS

NO!

(As JOHN and MICHAEL cringe back DAVID approaches the counter and offers PJS his three comix.)

DAVID

How much?

PJS

Seventy-five cents, sonny.

DAVID

Oh good.

(He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a long list which he unwinds and hands to PJS.)

Could you please order these 7,395 back issue comix from America and put them on my account... Do I get a discount?

(PJS takes the list and ties it into a pretty bow around DAVID's neck, picks him up by his shirt and pants seat and throws him off stage and throws his comix after him. PJS turns to other COMIX FANS and snarls at them.)

PJS

What do you think this is... a shop?

(COMIX FANS cringe off as PJS glares after them. He then sees JOE standing over by the books and glares at him threateningly. JOE moves to the counter.)

PJS

I hate comix fans! You're not a comix fan are you?

JOE

No. I'm trying to find a copy of JOHN W. CAMPBELL: AN AUSTRALIAN TRIBUTE.

PJS What kind of a fan did you say you were?

JOE Some people might call me an optimist but...
(He rind his finger along a book shelf)
A bit dusty aren't they?

PJS Hardly worth dusting. No one buys them any more. All they want is comix. Comix! I hate them!

JOE But what about the great ones... Clarke... Heinlein... Asimov... Otis Adelbert Kline?

PJS (sadly) The people just aren't buying. Fandom has gone to the dogs.
(He weeps visibly and rings out a sodden hanky)

MUSIC Number 2 SPLIT PILLOW

JOE The last fan I stand here and sing this lament,
singing pillow, split pillow, split pillow.
I would read all these books but my
 energy's spent
singing pillow, split pillow, split pillow.
Think of all the great authors
 and all that they've said,
For the people that know of them
 they could be dead,
When I think of their sad fate
 I go off my head,
singing pillow, split pillow, split pillow.
So please tell me oh gods of the infinite
 night,
singing pillow, split pillow, split pillow,
There must be some way I can lessen the
 blight
besides singing pillow, split pillow, split
 pillow,
I have tried, I have cried,
 I have sung this damned song,
But what good does it do
 if the fans are all gone?
I would sell my own soul
 for a good fannish throng
singing pillow, split pillow, split pillow.

(JOE moves over to the counter and leans on it dejectedly.)

(MEPHISTOPHELES appears asif by magic and goes over to stand next to JOE.)

MEPH By Avram Davidson's beard, though dost appear to be right downcast. What ails thee?

JOE Oh woe... Oh woe. Hold it, where did you spring from?

MEPH I hark from the nether regions.

JOE Down South?

MEPH Yes. Fan Demons Land.

JOE You mean...?

MEPH I do!

JOE Not really

MEPH Yes.

JOE But.

MEPH Of course!

(They look pleased and shake hands. MEPH produces his card)

MEPH My card. (Hands it to JOE.)

JOE It's blank!

MEPH The other side, you fool!

JOE (reading) "Count Willhelm Frederick von Mephistopheles, Diabolical Services of the Highest Order. Souls Bought Cheap. Hmmm, I'm Joe Phaust, how can you be of service to me?

MEPH Tell me Joe, how would you like to transform the world?

PJS Ah, you're selling 'Watchtower'.

MEPH No, I deal in power!

PJS The meters are under the sink.

MEPH Who is this churlish idiot? Tell me Joe, there must be something you need.

(Background music, "The Impossible Dream".)

JOE (wistfully) I have a vision, a dream, in which all Mankind reads science fiction. I see a world in which Heinlein and Clarke are on every bookshelf, where Asimov is taught in schools instead of science, where little children recite Bradbury in the streets, where old people study Gernsback in their homes and where Bruce Gillespie has three Hugos!

MEPH For one small payment... one ridiculously low price, all this can be yours!

JOE And what's that?

MEPH Your soul!

JOE Oh is that all. I thought perhaps you wanted something valuable like my science fiction collection or my imitation plastic beanie.

MEPH I wouldn't mind but we've had a run on those, got the entire Melbourne Science Fiction Clubs collection last week.

JOE

Such a choice, but is it worth it?

MEPH

Do you hesitate for a moment Joe, hesitate?
Look, being a fan's more important than being
a reader. Anybody can read a book, it takes
courage to be a fan, it's much more dignified,
it's nobler and it carries a sacred trust.

MUSIC

Number 3 FANDOM IS A WAY OF LIFE

MEPH

Fandom is a way of life, it holds you in
its thrawl,
An exhalted state, you'll look just great.
You'll become the finest fan of all,
Time, there's no greater fate,
I'll help you on that road,
That golden road,
A way of life, my lad.

Don't be a mug Joe, don't procrastinate.
You have your dreams, I have the means.
Sign now, there is no time to waste,
I'll make real your schemes,
You'll have what no fan's had,
A way of life,
A golden way of life.

JOE

Really! You mean I could do all that?

MEPH

Ofcourse you can, with a little diabolical
assistance.

JOE

Goshwowboyohboy, that's really cool. You
know, I just happen to have a little list
here.

MUSIC

Number 4 I'VE GOT A LITTLE LIST

JOE

If someday it should happen that the power
could be found,
I've got a little list, I've got a little
list,
Of fannish irritators who might well be
underground,
And who never would be missed, who never
would be missed,
There's the pestilential nusiances who
write for autographs
And the people who praise Heinlein in
extensive monographs,
All Star Treck fans who carry on with love
for Mr Spock
And stupid neo's who on spoiling tete-a-tetes
insist,
They'd none of them be missed, they'd none
of them be missed.

CHORUS

They'd none of them be misses, They'd none
of them be missed,
You can doubly be sure, they'd none of them
be missed.

JOE

There's the crudzine producer and the others
of his race,
And the mimeo magician, I've got him on the
list,
And the people who smoke mary-jane and puff
it in your face,
They never would be missed, they never would
be missed.
And the idiot who praises with a mind befogged
by booze
The latest movie epic starring green primeval
ooze
And the neo from the country with ambition
in his eye
Who doesn't write for fanzines but would
rather like to try
And that singular anomaly, the lady novolist,
I don't think she'd be missed, I'm sure she'd
not be missed.

CHORUS

You may put her on the list, you may put
her on the list,
We don't think she'd be missed, we're sure
she'd not be missed.

JOE

And that dreaded fannish nuisance who just
now is rather rife,
The punning humorist, I've got him on the
list,
All faneds who will fill their 'zines with
tales of private life,
They'd none of them be missed, they'd none of
them be missed,
And famous BNF's of an infuriating kind,
Such as what do you call and thingmabob
and likewise... never mind,
And tututut and what's his name and also you
know who,
The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather
leave to you,
But it really doesn't matter who you put upon
the list
For they'll none of them be missed, they'll
none of them be missed.

CHORUS

It really doesn't matter who you put upon
the list
For they'll none of them be missed, they'll
none of them be missed.

MEPH Now you're getting the idea my boy.
(To PJS.) Mind if I use your 'phone?

PJS Go ahead.

MEPH Thanks.

PJS Just put five cents in the box.

MEPH (Dials.) Hello Kev. Look, I've got a guy here who wants absolute power over fandom and a trade in on a used 1948 soul. What do we do?

VOICE OFF Give him the works, and how about a few extras.

MEPH Right. Bye Kev.
(Hangs up and turns to JOE.)
Now Joe, because I like you, tell you what we're going to do. In addition to the standard contract, we're gonna give you three extras. First, magnetic power over women.

JOE Gulp!

(Enter MAE EAST. As she enters a twelve bar blues begins to play and remains until she exits. She sings the first verse.)

MUSIC Number 5 EMPTY BED BLUES

MAE Boiled my cabbage, made it awful hot,
Boiled my cabbage, made it awful hot,
Put in the bacon and overflowed the lot.

Hello big boy. Say, is that a gun in your pocket or are you just pleased to see me.
(JOE can't believe his luck.)
Say, how tall are you big boy?

JOE Six feet seven, mamm.

MAE Let's forget about the six feet and concentrate on the seven inches. We can work on it, if you get my point.

JOE Oh yeah.

MAE Why don't you come up and see me some time?

JOE Yeah, I'll do that, right away...

(MAE exits, JOE attempts to follow her off but MEPH restrains him.)

MEPH What did you think of that, kid?

JOE Carumba. Tell me what's next.

MEPH This is what's next.

(Enter ROBIN who goes over to PJS.)

PJS Hello Robin, we've just got the latest Harlan Ellison book in.

ROBIN Oh don't give me Harlan Ellison, last time I saw him I said, "Harlan, you may think you're a big guy but to me you're... (indicates about Harlan's height.)

JOE What's that?

MEPH This could be you. A World Traveler and Racer par Excellence.

(Robin walks away from PJS and sees the audience.)

ROBIN Good god, science fiction fans!

(He takes out his camera and takes a photo of the audience and exits.)

JOE Gee, can I be like him?

MEPH You can, but that's not all. There remains the greatest glory to be achieved. The Ultimate Fanzine Editor!

(Enter BRUCE carrying portable typer, bulging letter file and stencils. He goes over to counter and dumps the lot there.)

BRUCE Three Science Fiction Commentaries produced this week, it's ridiculous. I wanted to produce six.

PJS Only six?

BRUCE Yes, but I slept last night. Anything happening this week?

PJS Not much. Joe's selling his soul.

BRUCE Well get him to write me an article about it.

PJS I'll do that.

(BRUCE exits.)

JOE Incredible! The mind boggles! I can do anything, put out great fanzines, even become the Official Bloody Editor of ANZAPA.

MEPH Never! That's the one thing you must never do. You must never join an apa, it's the elephants graveyard of fandom!

JOE But...

(The OBE of ANZAPA staggers across the stage burdened down with ANZAPA mailings and muttering to himself about deadlines, staples, dues and constitutions.)

MEPH Do you want to become like that, the present OBE of ANZAPA? Joe, the one thing you must never join an amateur press association. If you do this contract will be null and void.

(Three fans in sackcloth enter and march across the stage to a few bars from the Chopin "Death March" sonata. When they reach JOE they point and chant.)

FANS DOOM! DOOM! DOOM!

(They march off. EDNA enters from the opposite side.)

EDNA Hello Joe, I'M not sure I like you associating with the kind of people who frequent this shop. (Points at MEPH.) And who is that man?

MEPH (To PJS.) Who is that... ah... woman?

PJS That's Joe's aunty, Edna E. Phaust.

EDNA Norm and I didn't bring you up to waste yourself like this. Why don't you get a job as an encyclopedia salesman, find a nice girl and get married and settle down?

JOE Settle down?

EDNA Yes.

MUSIC Number 6 SOME ENCHANTED EVENING

EDNA Some enchanted evening you will see a stranger
You will see a stranger across a crowded room
Then run to her arms and make her your own
Or all through your life you may dream all
alone.

(MEPH is sickened.)

(To MEPH.) What are you doing, trying to corrupt my nephew. I heard all those terrible things you were saying. There shall be no influence in his life but good, and that shall be my guiding light.

MEPH Not anymore you won't.

EDNA Yes I will.

MEPH No you won't.

EDNA Yes I will.

MUSIC Number 7 ANYTHING YOU CAN DO

MEPH Anything you can do, I can do better -

EDNA I can do anything better than you.

MEPH No you can't.

EDNA Yes I can.

MEPH No you can't.

EDNA Yes I can.

MEPH No you can't, can't, can't.

EDNA Yes I can, can can.

MEPH (together)
EDNA

No - you - can't.
Yes - I - can.

MEPH

Hey, that's not bad baby. How would you like
to tread the light fantastic a little, eh?

(EDNA lays into him with her handbag, throws JOE a sorrowful
look, walks to the edge of the stage and turns to face MEPH.)

EDNA

Child corrupter, you haven't heard the last
of this.

She exits.)

MEPH

Thank Hell she's gone.

JOE

I have only one question to ask?

MEPH

And that is?

JOE

Where do I sign?

MEPH

(Producing the contract with a flourish.)
Ah... right here Joe.

(Background music begins to be heard, the segment from
Wagner's "Das Rhinegold" from the end of Donner's aria
up until the thunder, after that it dies away quickly.
JOE signs as the thunder is heard.)

JOE

Do we do it in blood...?

MEPH

Don't be disgusting. Here, use this quill
pen.

(Servant runs on with a quill pen on a cushion.)

JOE

Where's the ink?

MEPH

It's a ball point.

(JOE signs, music fades.)

JOE

Where do we go now?

MEPH

The next scene of course.

(They begin to exit.)

To the WorldCon in 15 years time,
(To the audience.) and you're all invited.

(blackout)

Scene Two

(The 69th World Science Fiction Convention. There is a lectern and some seats at back stage. There is also a thin paper barrier set up and the audience can see a shadow of a man on the paper. On stage as the lights come up are MEPH and some convention members.)

MEPH

Ladies, gentlemen and fans, members of the 69th World SF Convention, I give you the greatest fan of all time, the man who alone and unassisted turned the whole world onto science fiction. I give you - JOE PHAUST!

(Convention crowd cheer and clap as JOE the Elder breaks through the barrier and runs around the stage as if he is doing a lap of honour.)

MEPH

Tell us Joe, how did you get where you are today?

MUSIC

Number 8 THE GREATEST FAN IN HISTORY

JOE

When I was a lad I served a term
As a neo to a fanzine firm.
I washed down the windows and swept up the
floor
And polished up the ego of the chief editor.

CHORUS

He polished up the ego of the chief editor.

JOE

I polished up his ego so carefully
That now I am the greatest fan in history.

CHORUS

He polished up his ego so carefully
That now he is the biggest fan in history.

JOE

When I was a neo I made all the scenes
They gave me the job of caooating their
'zines.
I picked up the pages with a smile so grand
And stapled them together with an expert
hand.

CHORUS

He stapled them together with an expert
hand.

JOE

I stapled them together so easily
That now I am the greatest fan in history.

CHORUS

He stapled them together so easily
That now he is the greatest fan in history.

JOE

My publishing skills became so fine
That they made me the editor of ETHERLINE.
The stuff that I wrote was all so good
And I edited ETHERLINE as best I could.

CHORUS He edited ETHERLINE as best he could.

JOE I edited ETHERLINE so brilliantly
That now I am the greatest fan in history.

CHORUS He edited ETHERLINE so brilliantly
That now he is the greatest fan in history.

JOE I grew so famous that they then made me
The secretary of the MSFC.
I always took their money at the old club
door
And wrote to all the faneds asking them for
more.

CHORUS He wrote to all the faneds asking them for
more.

JOE I wrote so often with the aim to be
The greatest science fiction fan in history

CHORUS He wrote so often with the aim to be
The greatest science fiction fan in history.

JOE Now faneds all, wherever you may be,
If you want to rise to the top of the tree,
Take care of your LOCs and never be seen
Too far away from your printing machine.

CHORUS Too far away from your printing machine.

JOE Stick close to your typer and you will be
Without a doubt the greatest fan in history.

CHORUS Stick close to your typer and you will be
Without a doubt the greatest fan in history.

(PJS enters carrying a book.)

PJS Look Joe, look what's finally arrived, after
all this time!

JOE What has?

PJS You won't believe it, Joe... JOHN W. CAMPBELL:
AN AUSTRALIAN TRIBUTE! Hold it Joe, feel it,
it's real Joe, REAL!

JOE JOE flicks through the book disinterestdly
and hands it back to PJS)
(Yawns) Take it away.

(PJS walks off dejectedly.)

MEPH What was all that about?

JOE Just a relic of fandom from a living relic of
fandom.

MEPH How quaint. (To audience) And now ladies
and gentlemen I give you the person without
whom no SF convention would be complete,
the legendary Toastmaster General.

(MERV enters carrying glass and bottle. Between each of his toasts he takes some time in refilling his glass and others begin to chatter among themselves but are cut off with his next toast.)

MERV

Ladies and gentlemen, the first toast of the evening, the Queen! The Convention! Australia in '95! The Space Age Bookchain! And now, a very special toast, to the richest science fiction writer in the world... Isaac A. Clarke!

(Applause as MERV moves backstage and ISAAC makes his triumphant entrance.)

ISAAC

Thank you, thank you ladies and gentlemen. It is a great, indeed it is a very great pleasure to be here tonight, especially since you are paying me.

I wish to thank the honourable toastmaster general for such a marvelous introduction, the committee which organised this wonderful convention and my good friend Count Willhelm.

You know, I wasn't always the richest pro in the world. Before I became so rich I would often sing this little song.

MUSIC

Number 9 IF I WERE A RICH PRO

ISAAC

If I were a rich pro,
Dai-dle, dee-dle, dai-dle, dig-guh,
dig-guh, dee-dle, dai-dle, dum.
All day long I'd bid-dy, bid-dy bum.
If I were a wealthy pro.

Wouldn't have to write much,
Dai-dle, dee-dle, dai-dle, dig-guh,
dig-guh, dee-dle, dai-dle, dum.
If I were a bid-dy, bid-dy rich,
Dig-guh, dig-guh, dee-dle, dai-dle pro.

I'd write a big tall novel with pages by
the dozen,
Written to impress the fans;
A fine big novel with real wooden heroes.
There could be one big sub-plot just going
up and one even longer coming down;
And one more going nowhere just for show.
I'd fill a room with typewriters, paper and
desks
And gin for the fans to see and hear;
Working just as noisily as I can.
And each loud click and clack and gluggle
and plunk
Would land like a trumpet on the ear;
As if to say here lives a wealthy pro.

If I were a rich pro,
Dai-dle, dee-dle, dai-dle, dig-guh,
dig-guh, dee-dle, dai-dle dum.
All day long I'd bid-dy, bid-dy bum.
If I were a wealthy pro.
Wouldn't have to write much,
Dai-dle, dee-dle, dai-dle, dig-guh,
dig-guh, dee-dle, dai-dle, dum.
Lord, who made the neo and tha fan,
You decreed I should be what I am;
Would it spoil Doc Smiths' eternal plan,
If I were a wealthy pro.

(Loud applause. ISAAC bows and one of the members of the audience rushes forward and presents him with a vegetable bouquet. He is overcome with emotion and goes around shaking everybody by the hand.)

ISAAC (To JOE.) Joseph Phaust, Joesph Phuast, you superfan, good luck with the ladies.

(To MEPH) Count Willhelm, ah, das ist wunderbah...

MERV Congratulations Isaac.

ISAAC Come and we'll have a Vodka and we'll discuss your latest takeover bid.

(ISAAC and MERV exit.)

MEPH Modest and unassuming as ever, success hasn't changed him one little bit.

(To JOE.) Enjoying life as a BNF, Joe?

JOE Well, after the first three years it gets kinda boring, even letters from Ted White don't turn me on any more.

MEPH What ails you?

JOE I wish I knew. I've consulted with my chiroprapist, my therapist, my astrologer, my optomitrist, my dietician and my scientologist but they can't sort it out. You know, I'm beginning to feel that they don't make fandom the way they used to.

MEPH Oh Joe, but aren't you happy with your Hugos?

JOE Hugos! Bah! I've got 25 of the damned things! They hold open the bedroom door, the kitchen door, act as paper weights in the study, the cats use them in the laundry as scratching posts and (Confidentially) I crack nuts with them.

MEPH But Joe, isn't fandom a way of life?

JOE I'm beginning to doubt it.

(Enter FIRST WOMAN.)

FIRST WOMAN Joe, Joe, don't you remember me?
JOE No, frankly.
FIRST WOMAN At the last WorldCon, I helped you keep your eyes open through Norman Spinrads speech.
JOE That would have been...?
FIRST WOMAN And Joe, you fathered my child!
JOE Don't bother me with trivia. See my lawyer and he'll set up a trust fund. It's only a formality, I've been through it hundreds of times.

(FIRST WOMAN exits weeping visibly.)

MEPH How much do these little trust funds cost you?
JOE Two dollars a time.

(PJS enters and heads straight to JOE.)

PJS Hey, have you heard the news, Joe?
JOE News, what news?
PJS Harlan Ellison is the new editor of ANALOG.
JOE Harlan Ellison?... But who's Harlan Ellison?

(PJS retires to the back of the stage beaten as IRENE enters.)

IRENE Joe Darling, it's 8.15, time for your virility sandwich. It's your favourite, cheese and pickle dipped in Milo.

(JOE picks up sandwich, takes a bite and chokes.)

JOE Ovaltine!

(JOE directs a withering look at IRENE who cringes off.
MEPH has been getting concerned but he spies three NEOFANS about to do their little song and dance.)

MEPH Look Joe, pull yourself together, you've got to straighten yourself out. You've forgotten the real things. Look, this is what fandom's all about.

MUSIC Number 10 HEIGH-HO HEIGH-HO

NEOFANS We fan, fan, fan, fan, fan, fan, fan in our rooms the whole night through,
To fan, fan, fan, fan, fan, fan, fan, is what we like to do,
And when we fan we always sing,
For when we sing our parents double up and groan,
Hide and groan,
And leave us on our own.

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, collating we will go,
Just keep on going all day long heigh-ho,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho,
Heigh-ho, with a stapler in our hand,
We positively can't go wrong with a heigh,
heigh-ho.

(NEOFANS dance off and EDNA enters, looking around.
JOE sees her.)

JOE Auntie Edna! I haven't seen you in fifteen years but you haven't changed a bit.

MEPH ... Agreed. She's still the same old bag.

EDNA I see you're still going around with that
foriegner. You still haven't learned
wisdom yet.

JOE But aunty, he 's made me that fan I am today!

EDNA That's exactly what I mean.

(EDNA goes off to join other members of the convention.)

JOE There is something in what she says, I haven't seen a decent Sheila the whole Convention. The last fourteen WorldCons I've been to there's been a bit of action every night, but there is nothing that's worth the trouble here.

MEPH Oh, I'll have to correct that immediately,
Joe.

(MEPH snaps fingers meaningfully. Enter WOMAN TWO who is a man dressed in drag.)

MUSIC Number 11 WHAT JOE PHAUST WANTS JOE PHAUST GETS

WOMAN TWO Whatever Joe Phaust wants,
 Joes Phaust gets,
 So give in.....
 Give in.....
 Give in.....

(JOE is positively uninterested. SECOND WOMAN exits.)

JOE (To MEPH.) You're losing your touch aren't you old son?

MEPH I've never had this happen to me before, somebody must have slipped up in the front office.

(PJS rushes in, looking about for something.)

PJS Hey Joe, Raquel Welch is skinny dipping in the pool!

JOE Big deal.

MEPH (To PJS.) Well, what do you think you're doing?

PJS Looking for the pool lights switch!

(PJS exits, still looking.)

MEPH Joe, son, what's wrong with you these days. You sold your soul for this life.

(MARGUERITE enters.)

JOE I don't know whyiyiyiyiy... (He has seen her.)

MUSIC Number 12 DANCE OF THE CORFUL FAIRY

(MARG does a dance in which she mimes reading stencils for mistakes and corrects them with corflu. Towards the end of the dance she notices JOE and ends the dance slinking up and down against him seductively.)

JOE I'm Joe Phaust, perhaps you've heard of me?

MARG No.

JOE I've got 25 Hugos.

MARG Oh, that Joe Phaust. Hello Joe, my name's Marguerite. I'm OE of FAPA.

JOE Not the Fantasy Amateur Press Association? Things must be looking up.

MARG No, Female Amateur Press Association.

JOE I've never been a member of an amateur press association.

MARG Oh, you poor deprived lad.

JOE What are the membership rules for joining?

MARG But you can't join.

JOE Why not?

(JOE and MARG go over and consult a large telephone size book labled "FAPA Constitution" which just happens to be on stage. While they are doing this MEPH rages to himself.)

MEPH Curses! Fifteen of the best years of his life I've wasted. Leave her alone Joe, leave her alone. This woman will be the ruin of you!

(JOE and MARG find the relevant sub-section.)

MARG You have to be a relative of one of the members.

JOE Marry me!

MARG I will. Oh Joe, I thought you'd never ask, you're so... so... beautiful.

(They embrace. EDNA comes over to congratulate them.)

MUSIC Number 13 SOME ENCHANTED EVENING

MARG, EDNA & JOE Some enchanted evening, you will see a stranger,
You will see a stranger, across a crowded room,
Then run to her arms and make her your own,
Or all through your life you will dream all alone.

EDNA Oh Joe, it's so nice to see that you've met a nice girl and will get married and settle down.

MARG Oh Joe!

JOE Oh Marguerite!

MEPH Oh Hell!

(MAE EAST enters and goes over to MEPH.)

MAE Hello big boy. I believe you deal in souls,
I deal in flesh. Want a merger.

(They grab each other lustily. MEPH produces the contract.)

MEPH This has got to be better than temptine fools. (He tears up the contract.)

(ROBIN wanders over to EDNA.)

ROBIN Did I tell you about the time I was in Alaska selling camels to the Eskimoes?

EDNA Yes, but come home and I'll make you a nice cup of tea and you can tell me about it again.

(The three couples join hands.)

MUSIC Number 14 JOSEPH PHAUST - SUPERFAN

ENTIRE CAST Joseph Phaust, Superfan,
How can you do what they say you can?
Joseph Phaust, Superfan,
That's how you do what they say you can.

- FINIS -