

C H U N D E R !

June 27, 1978

volume 2, number 3

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A DISH OF REALLY CRISP BAYCON

(George Turner reports)

It seems that the most hilarious turn at Adelaide's BAYCON was performed at approximately midnight of the day before the official opening. The local fantechs, fanops and fankibitzers were practising their film projection routines in the convention room at the St. Vincent Hotel when the projector developed a short circuit which blew the hotel's fuses. With all staff in bed at the witching hour, the innocents decided to do their own clandestine repairs and entered the hotel's office in search of the fuse box -

- an act which triggered the hotel's burglar alarms.

I draw a merciful veil over the state of relations between night-shirted hotel management and sf conventions.

After that, the noisiest fanfare could produce only a relatively quiet official opening. It was, in fact, that ear-blistering 'Star Wars' theme - again. Plus a collection of very nice colours slides raped from Patrick Moore, magazine covers, movie stills and other helpless but respectable sources. A good atmospheric start.

The first panel of Day 1 dealt with UFOs, Bermuda  $\Delta$ s, unlikely cosmologies and Erik von D. It was no contest because all the charlatans were damned out of hand by everybody - save one brave wight (Robin Johnson, I think, but don't quote me) whose defence indicated that Velikovsky, however guilty of nonsense, was a pillar of intellectual honesty beside Erik von and his bandwaggoners.

Jeff Harris, always listenable, followed with a talk demolishing most of sf's favourite ideas about aliens as unlikely, unnecessary, unimaginative, uncouth, unscientific and uncommonly silly. I enjoy a neat demolition job. He made me feel, too, that humans also are pretty unlikely and have probably survived by way of a statistically unique combination of circumstances. (Well, that's what evolution is for, isn't it?)

The inevitable session on comics ended the afternoon, with Gary Mason and a stack of otherwise normal humans competing in the exhibition of abominations. I fled. All right, all right, I know other people see depths and aesthetic subtleties in these ebullitions, but I am grown old and fragile and can no longer cope with Spiderman and The Hulk breathing down my neck.

After tea (there are a couple of quite good Chinese restaurants near the con-venue - is that a new word? - as well as steak n' chips and a pizza joint) Baycon provided something new in my convention experience. Len Woodley, Vice-President of the Australian Booksellers Association, and its secretary, Max Rowe, gave the horrendous lowdown on 'closed markets' and the reasons why books are so damned expensive in Australia. Mervyn Binns and Paul Day (who has recently opened an sf bookshop in Adelaide) provided a plaintive obbligo as goodhearted booksellers who love their clients but must, alas, screw them to live. The Trade Practices Commission is looking into the matter, so by 1988 ... These facts of literary life left the fans mildly stunned - except the trufans, who don't read anyway. The session was an excellent idea and was handled with more humour and goodwill than blatant robbery deserves.



Next, Jeff Harris presented his Death Star Awards to people who had brought along fearsome sf devices for judging. I'm sorry, but I don't know who won with what; I was having a beer with Sally Bangsund. Then there were movies, headed by 'Doc Savage' and followed by those fannish films so familiar at cons that the eyes glaze before the lights go down. No, no, not fair - there were some excellent short features in the collection.

Sunday began with something called an 'Invisible Man Hunt. For late night party goers'. I was firmly in bed chez Bangsund and didn't arrive until 1.30 pm to do my stint on a panel about apocalyptic sf. Spent a pleasant hour destroying a few cultures, worlds and literary reputations.

At 2.30 pm Paul Stevens gave his GOH speech and really spoke his mind about conventions and the running thereof, with special reference to that recent one which should by now have been swept under the carpet of ill-memory. I agree that these things needed saying but felt that a Foundation meeting might have been a more tactful choice of forum. Still, it isn't often that you get a no-holds-barred, fangs-in-the-jugular session which the whole family can enjoy. Despite reservations, I was enthralled.

Then the auction, and time for a nap for yours truly ... John Bangsund had the barefaced Scandinavian chutspah to offer copies of 'Playboy'. Sold them, too.

After tea (merry group of revellers at the nearer Chinese restaurant, which is licensed) came another bright programming idea. At some time Brian Aldiss selected 'The Lava Seas Tunnel', by F. G. Rayer and E. R. James, as the worst sf story ever written. Having read it, I'll not quarrel with his judgment; the least of our workshopers would do better extempore with a broken biro. The con-fathers circulated copies of this literary dreg to all present, then brought in Michael Tolley and Kirpal Singh of the English Department of the University of Adelaide, with Maureen Nimon and Bill Menary of the Adelaide College of Advanced Education, to give the poor thing the complete Doc Litt treatment with full battery of unctuous critical apparatus. The result was devastating, with the academics enjoying themselves even more than the audience. Bill Menary capped it by claiming to have written an even worse story over his morning coffee. So he had, and read it out to prove it; the house dissolved in tears of laughter. At least Bill knew he was funny, which Rayer and James did not. Full marks for the conception and performance of this item.

And also for the next, which was arranged to enlighten Michael Tolley, who had claimed not to know what fandom was all about. The panel, which included Marc Ortlieb, Allan Bray, Paul Anderson, Jeff Harris and myself, never got off the ground. The audience moved in with mayhem in mind, as though fandom really had its back to the wall and was prepared to unleash dragons at the first hint of criticism. At the end of a bitterly contested ten-way defence of something never clearly defined, the fans retired sated with victory over a panel that had never got around to attacking them. (The discussion was supposed to be: 'There must be some connection between sf and fandom', but the fans weren't going to be gagged by transparent ruses like that.) Michael Tolley did not find out what fandom is. Nor did I. Nor, I suppose, did the fans.

Then more movies. 'Moon Zero Two', would you believe?

At this point I confess - without any particular shame - that I did not attend on the Monday. What was supposed to happen there was: 1.30 pm - a panel on people's favourite sf devices; 2.30 pm - a panel on how to run a convention; 3.30 pm - a panel discussion on Australian sf awards, how they are and how they should be. The last two sound like the kind of infighting I am happy to leave to the pugilists and the results, if any, will probably appear as motions at Foundation meetings, thereby



giving rise to bigger and better infighting.

For the rest, I quote from the programme: 'Followed by any leftover movies'.

And so to bed.

It was a small convention as such things go, with about 50 members, but John Bangsund (who knows much more about these things than I but did not offer to write this report for me) claimed it to be the friendliest he had been to. Yes, it was friendly, very much so, but the remark left me wondering if I had missed actual bloodshed at others....

To my myopic and unfannish eye, applause is due for the originality shown in thinking up panel items with a combination of bite and breeziness usually absent from these affairs. Congratulations to whatever brains trust was responsible.

Two items remain. One, I spent an hour in Paul Day's Black Hole SF Bookshop in its anything-but-black basement in Chesser Street, and feel that the Adelaide readers are fortunate to have a specialist shop as pleasant and spacious as this. It should become the sort of cross-current centre that has made Melbourne's Space Age something more than a market place.

The other is that Jeff Harris is planning a writers' workshop, probably in the hills behind Adelaide, in a long weekend in October, with yours truly as bastard-in-chief. No other details as yet.

Adelaide, with a couple of good conventions to its credit, a bright new bookshop to play with and a workshop in planning, bids fair to become a valuable centre for sf in Australia. So perhaps it's time we turned our attention to Perth, whence rumours and rumblings promise an upsurge of activity. All we need now is an outburst of sf writers...

GEORGE TURNER

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EDITORIAL INTERMISSION

Several things to be covered. (1) Convention reports: next issue there'll be another conreport, then a break, then a report on SYNCON '78 in Chunder! 6. I don't mind so many reports (the ones I don't write myself I quite like) but the reader should not imagine that this state of affairs will go on indefinitely. (2) Subscriptions: as I cut down on the freebies present readers might find themselves without their present three-weekly sustenance - subscribe! (3) Flyers - a policy of sorts: For the moment I am quite happy to distribute flyers - one last issue, two with this issue. If you want a flyer distributed with Chunder! please send (preferably) the appropriate number of copies (60 at present) on either quarto or A<sup>4</sup> (NOT on yellow paper!) or a stencil neatly cut between lines 5 and 65 with a Roneo head (three-slot variety) for preference. (4) Contributions: Most contributions received so far fit best into the SNIPPETS column. I would like to remind old-timers, and inform newcomers, that in its first incarnation Chunder! usually carried one or two contributions of a page or so (the longest was about 16 pages, I think, but that was an excess). I should like to pick up that practice again. In addition to any general stuff I am particularly interested in publishing details of meetings and other stuff anywhere in Australia. Consider yourself invited. News: At the moment I avoid the pro stuff, on the assumption that readers of Chunder! also see AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS. Am I wrong? (Which reminds me that I also get letters of comment, but at the moment don't feel up to publishing same: is this policy wrong, perhaps?)  
AUSTRALIA IN '83!

SNIPPETS

ABC-TV's Weekend Magazine on Sunday 18 June featured Ronald E. Graham,



engineer, of Sydney, talking about comics. Mr Graham's library of comics and science fiction was shown (for the first time, we understand, on television), and viewers were told that this library is rivalled by only one other of its kind in the world, is worth about one million dollars, and will be inherited one day by the University of Sydney. Asked whether he had ever felt the inclination to write comics or science fiction, Mr Graham said he had not; he was just an engineer, he said, and had no literary ambitions. (scribe JB) // "A senior lecturer in Physics and an English Tutor will present a 9-week series starting in August on ATN 7, asking the question 'What is Science Fiction?' Dr Ian Johnston (Physics) and Mr Van Ikin (English) will combine science and literature in their discussions, which will occupy the second half of the University's 1-hour TV program telecast every Wednesday morning (9 am-10am with repeats on Sunday mornings 8 am-9 am). The "What is Science Fiction?" series will commence on Wednesday August 2 (with repeat on Sunday August 6) and run through until September 27 (with repeat on Sunday October 1)." (THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY NEWS, June 12, 1978, per KJD. Reports from those used to damaging what remain of their brain cells are invited to submit reviews.) A gruesome photograph of George Turner headed a brief story on the forthcoming writers' workshop in Sydney which appeared in the SYDNEY SUN on 15 June. No details on the workshop appeared with that story. There'll be a flyer on the workshop with the next Chunder! // Gerald Carr has published an Australian edition of STAR REACH 1 at 75¢. Some good stuff, some just careless.

#### CONNOTATIONS

SWANCON 3 will be held July 21-23, commencing on the evening of Friday July 21. Membership \$7.50, to Roy Ferguson, 247 Gloucester Street, East Victoria Park, WA 6101. Easterners wanting accommodation should mention it to Roy. Program includes films, talks, discussions, auction, banquet, fancy dress party. WASFA is running ten (count 'em, 10) competitions in association with SWANCON 3. For example, in supernym one must decipher the following acronym either correctly or amusingly: WATSWASFAFOCWADWASIFAUNISFAWAVICAGACONBYO. Entire close first night of the convention. Last minutes enquires by phone to Roy (3613769) or Bob Ogden (4576048). Report of the convention, anyone? // SYNCON '78, \$8 to SYNCON 78, Box J175, Brickfield Hill, NSW, August 25 to 27 at the Twin Towers Motel. Guest of Honour is Robin Johnson. // Yeah, but what about the fanzine reviews, other news items, letter? Next time they get preference.

#### PRINTED MATTER ONLY

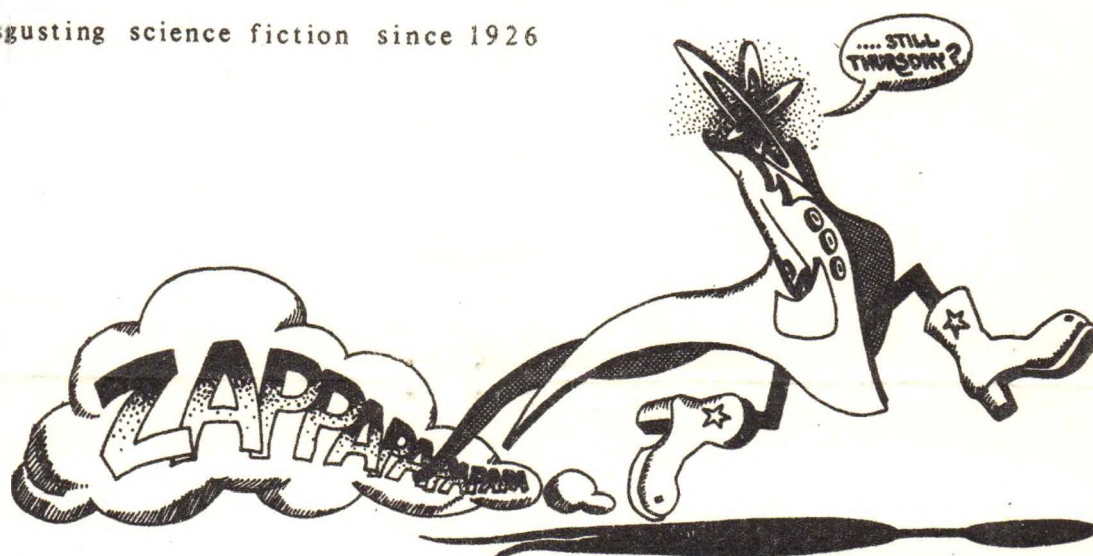
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# THE NOVA MOB

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No. Tuesday

## MEETING SCHEDULE: July-December, 1978

- July 4, 1978 'James Blish' (Robin Johnson/ George Turner) at 2/36 Princes St, St Kilda.
- August 1, 1978 'Science Fiction in comics' (Paul Stevens) at 1 Glen Eira Rd, Elwood.
- September 5, 1978 'Physics and science fiction' (Stephen Solomon) at 10 Johnson St, Collingwood.
- October 3, 1978 'Beloved Son by George Turner' (a symposium) at 3a/19 Marine Parade, St Kilda.
- November 7, 1978 'John Carnell' (Lee Harding) at 294 Amess St, Carlton.
- December 5, 1978 'Brian Aldiss' (Rob Gerrand/Bruce Gillespie) at 863 Hampton Rd, Brighton.

Meetings commence at 7.30 pm at the private addresses shown. To check on the venue of meetings, or changes in schedule, ring John Foyster on 534 1625.



## 1978 Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards: Final Ballot

The FAAns are fanzine peer awards created to reflect the opinions of the creative fanzine fans of book and magazine SF. Nomination and voting are limited to those active in the fanzine field during the previous year, with nomination restricted in each category to those eligible themselves for nomination in the category, and voting open to anyone eligible to be nominated in any category.

IF YOU NOMINATED: Read "General Instructions", then go on to the ballot. Your voting fee has been paid and your credentials established.

IF YOU DID NOT NOMINATE: (1) Submit credentials showing you were eligible to nominate, having done one of the following during 1977: edited a fanzine; had published in a fanzine an article, story, essay, review, or artwork; or had at least two letters published in different editors' fanzines. ("Fanzine" is here defined as a publication dealing with book and magazine SF, its authors and/or its fans, which does not pay its contributors, and which is published for enjoyment to which any financial profit is incidental.)

Credentials:

(2) Include a minimum voting fee of \$1 U.S. (or equivalent) to help defray the cost of trophies and balloting expenses. Ballots received without this fee will not be counted.

(3) Read "General Instructions", then vote.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: You may vote in all categories, but are not obligated to do so. Skip categories in which you do not feel qualified to make an informed decision. Mark your choices in each category in order of preference, "1" for your first choice, "2" for your next, etc. Votes will be counted by the Automatic Runoff system. In addition to voting for the awards, you are invited to choose among the nominees to fill the three seats on the Award Committee which will become vacant this year - vote for the three of your choice.

Mail your completed ballot (and your voting fee, if you did not nominate) to the appropriate agent, to arrive no later than 1 August 1978.

U.S. Agent: Bruce Pelz, 15931 Kalisher St., Granada Hills, CA 91344

Canada Agent: Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6P 2S3

Australia Agent: Leigh Edmonds, Box 103, Brunswick, Victoria 3056

U.K. Agent: Ian Maule, 18 Hillside, 163 Carshalton Rd., Sutton, Surrey  
SM1 4NG

Verbatim reproduction of this ballot is encouraged.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS... \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1978 FANZINE ACTIVITY  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:  
FINAL BALLOT

BEST FAN EDITOR:

_____ Donn Brazier (TITLE)	_____ Terry Hughes (MOTA)
_____ Don D'Ammassa (MYTHOLOGIES)	_____ Rob Jackson (MAYA)
_____ Mike Glycer (SCIENTIFRICTION)	_____ Victoria Vayne (SIMULACRUM)
	_____ No Award

.....  
BEST FAN WRITER:

_____ Don D'Ammassa	_____ Don C. Thompson
_____ Mike Glicksohn	_____ Susan Wood
_____ Bob Shaw	_____ No Award

.....  
BEST FAN ARTIST (HUMOROUS):

_____ Harry Bell	_____ Alexis Gilliland
_____ Grant Canfield	_____ Bill Rotsler
_____ Derek Carter	_____ Dan Steffan
	_____ No Award

.....  
BEST FAN ARTIST (NON-HUMOROUS):

_____ Jim McLeod	_____ Al Sirois
_____ Jim Odbert	_____ Michael Streff
_____ James Shull	_____ Taral
	_____ No Award

.....  
BEST LETTER-OF-COMMENT WRITER:

_____ Avedon Carol	_____ Jessica Amanda Salmonson
_____ Don D'Ammassa	_____ Harry Warner, Jr.
_____ Mike Glicksohn	_____ No Award

.....  
BEST SINGLE ISSUE OF A FANZINE:

_____ Delta Psi 1 (Taral)	_____ Simulacrum 7 (V. Vayne)
_____ Fanthology '76 (V. Vayne)	_____ Spanish Inquisition 10.
_____ Maya 14 (R. Jackson)	_____ (J. Kaufman & S. Tompkins)
	_____ No Award

.....  
FANZINE ACTIVITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD COMMITTEE (Vote for 3):

_____ Brian Earl Brown	_____ Terry Hughes
_____ Don D'Ammassa	_____ Peter Roberts
_____ Gary Farber	_____ Stu Shiffman
_____ Gil Gaier	_____ Taral

.....  
If you wish a direct report of the voting results, check here ☐ and include a SASE with your ballot.

Voting Deadline: August 1, 1978