



ORNITHOPTER SEVEN

Edited and produced by Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 433, Civic Square, Canberra, ACT 2608, AUSTRALIA for the next mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, the Spectator Amateur Press Society and some others by way of saying hello! Pictures by Chris Johnston, stencilled by Noel Kerr.

WHAT'S GOING UP DOWN UP DOWN UP DOWN AT THE FACTORY:

Due to interesting recent developments the great OOPS organisation has recently had to find new accommodation. Neighbours being what they are, the Brunswick City Council decided that the future centre of the aerospace industry in Australia would have to relocate to less populous surroundings. And after the business with the model ornithopter triplanes in the St. Vasilos Cultural Centre during the big annual fund raising dance I suppose that, in a all charity, there may be something to be said for their point of view. The Brunswick Sentinel, - never a paper to beat about the bush - referred to the unfortunate event as "automated assault and battery".

So here we are in the beautiful Australian Capital Territory.

Canberra is really not a bad place to live in and the executive of Orrite Ornithopter Production Systems are, by and large, happy to be here. The weather is almost always pleasant, the city and its environs are well planned and set out, there are beautiful public and private buildings, monuments, parliament houses and so on. There is also a lovely industrial incentive scheme designed to attract industry to the Territory by the application of benefits, inducements, cost offset schemes and so on which can more or less be taken to mean a *PROFIT*. The OOPS executive just loves the idea of a *PROFIT* because that means money!

But there is, of course, more to it than just mere money. Think of the prestige of being the first major aerospace manufacturer to land an ornithopter on the lawns in front of Parliament House (perhaps on the Governor General) or to land in the courtyard of the War Memorial, possibly painted to resemble a Spitfire. The possibilities are almost boundless, you might say. Clearly a great and glorious future lies ahead of OOPS in its new national headquarters.

Unfortunately there are problems. They are usually called "Red Tape".

Did you know that the National Capital Development Commission has an obscure ordinance dating back to 1927 (nothing in Canberra dates much earlier than that) forbidding the erection of an aircraft construction works closer than ten miles to the Prime Minister. It apparently has something to do with all the airships which were falling down or blowing up in those days. And there is another which prevents the test flying of aircraft - that includes ornithopters - within five miles of the local airport and airforce base.

By putting these two ordinances together we have determined that there are only a handful of places in the Australian Capital Territory where it is at all possible to build an ornithopter factory. Unfortunately there are very well known land zoning regulations which prevent us from building our factory in residential areas and there is another slight problem which has prevented us from building the factory on the site where the Belconnen shopping mall is now situated. However, by the judicious but copious greasing of the right palms we have gained approval in principle to construct a floating factory in the middle of Lake Burley Griffin where the yachting course is. There is a slight inconvenience attached to this in that all the machinery on the floating factory will have to be wind powered and have the approved life saving equipment provided, but...

Work on the construction of the factory should commence within the next five to ten years on the present timescale. We have recently completed filling in the form "Request to lodge an application for approval to seek to be included on the draft list of possible works proposed to be constructed in the A.C.T. in the forthcoming ten years". Next week we will begin work on the next form which is: "Preliminary application for a proposed construction work for duly approved purposes in the A.C.T.".

In the meantime OOPS planners are working night and day to construct another three squadrons of killer triplane ornithopters to be let loose inside the offices of the N.C.D.C. as soon as they are completed.

LONG TIME - NO SEE

Well, I suppose that's what comes from moving to a new city, taking up a part time university course, not having enough spare room in the house for spare stencils, reams of paper and so on.

I suppose that I could give you all a bit of a run down on what Valma and I have been up to over the past twelve or so months except that I suppose most Australian fans will already know most of it.

The actual business of packing and unpacking from the move has probably taken over eighteen months so far and there are still a couple of boxes we haven't got around to opening even yet. The culmination of the whole packing process came when the moving van pulled up outside our house in Brunswick that Friday morning. It was a huge thing, a semi-trailer actually. The day itself was largely one of hassles and not terrible pleasant to recall - the most notable thing being that though there were three men ready to load things into the van there was nobody there to pack the various bits and pieces which make up a household into the boxes.

The packer arrived at about eleven or so, but as the movers had got to our place just after eight they had got a bit sick of waiting and started to do their own packing. What we saw did not instil us with much confidence so we wandered around the house as our existence there was fairly rapidly pulled to bits. They had just about finished by six in the evening and the last few pieces of ours had to be carefully managed so that everything fitted into the truck. All in all the movers told us that we had something like 49 square metres of stuff. Not at all unusual for fans, but I don't suppose that Grace Brothers get to move too many of us around the country.

During the afternoon the telephone rang and it was Peter Darling with the news that John Ryan had died. That put a damper on whatever enjoyment the day might have otherwise had for me because John was one of the first people I met in another town through fandom. He was one of the founding members of ANZAPA and the quality of his early contributions is probably one of the reasons why the apa is still around today.

Oh well... After the moving van had been filled and the empty house had been locked Valma and I went to a nearby motel to stay the night and spent the evening very pleasantly at a good Turkish restaurant.

The next day we went back to the house, cleaned up the mess, packed the few remaining items into the car and, early in the afternoon, left the house fairly much as we had found it three years earlier, and dropped the keys back to the owner.

As we drove off we asked ourselves why it was that we were leaving Melbourne. We stopped at an intersection and Valma looked up to see one of the less desirable Melbourne fringe fans standing at the tram stop. "That's why we're leaving Melbourne," we both said simultaneously... and having amused ourselves we drove off up Sydney Road and arrived, a couple of days later in Canberra.

The most exciting part of the whole trip was, for me atleast, when Valma (who was doing the driving) got something in her eye and pulled over to the side of the road in some desolate part of the countryside. Having fixed herself and had a short rest she tried to start the car but, Murphy's law being what it is, nothing happened. After a bit of desperate fiddling around with the controls, pushing on pedals and so on, nothing was still happening. We got out of the car and, since it was a very hot day, went and sat under some nearby trees for a while to ponder our fate - stuck out in the middle of nowhere (actually about midway between Wangaratta and Wodonga) with no home and a motel reservation which expired in about forty-five minutes. As it turned out, when we tried the car again a few minutes later it started with no great trouble and gave no later hint of any unwillingness to get us to Canberra.

The first great bit of excitement in Canberra was when we went to get the keys to our new house from the Housing Authority. A couple of weeks earlier Valma and I had been flown up to Canberra to have a look at possible homes. I shan't go into the whole business of how we came to be eligible for a three bedroom government house or any of the other technical details of this often intricate subject, suffice it to say we had ended up taking a nice enough (but slightly small for our tastes) house in an older suburb on the northside of Canberra.

Anyhow, as I was going to say, we arrived at the Housing Authority office to get our key and were shown into a tiny office where some official who obviously didn't know what was going on interviewed us. The first part of the interview concluded with his announcement that he was sorry but there wasn't anything to our requirements that he could show us.

We patiently explained the whole setup to him and a bit

later, with everything sorted out, we pulled up in front of our new house where the moving van was already waiting for us.

It took only three or four hours to unload the van but about three weeks for us to begin to make much sense of all our belongings.

Just when we were beginning to feel at home we got into the car again - this time with Valma's mother who had come down for a holiday, and drove to my home town of Dimboola in the Victorian Wimmera, where Valma made an honest man of me after all these years.

And quite an enjoyable wedding it was too. The feed afterwards went very well too, so it seems. It was organised by the local church womens organisation in fairly authentic rural style and the women there were beginning to wonder if the guests were ever going to go home. The mix was fairly evenly fans and family, I don't think that they mixed much but the two groups get on well enough within themselves so that it doesn't matter that much.

A few days later we found ourselves back in Canberra and a week or so after that it was back to work for me. After a bit of shuffling around I ended up with a nice office with a window looking out over the parklands from civic centre to the lake and to the buildings in the parliamentary triangle beyond. One of the best views from any office in Australia I would venture to say.

The work I do is fairly political in nature. In Melbourne we were fairly well insulated from the pressure of politics but in Canberra it became obvious fairly quickly that the pressure was on. So I've had a fairly hectic year. The pace has not been helped any because I've taken up part time studies at the Australian National University.

The aim was, when I started, a Bachelor of Arts to be achieved in five years, but it has now grown to a BA(Hon) in six or seven years. The specialities are to be Political Science and Australian History. (These are both topics which I will no doubt touch on in more detail over the next few years).

Well, what else has happened?

We went to Perth for a week in the middle of the year to attend the annual National SF Convention and have another look around. I think that we enjoyed ourselves even more the second time in Perth than we did the first time there, partly because we already knew some people there and partly because we knew our way around a little from the previous visit. We enjoyed ourselves so much that we will be going back again and again and again.

The main people to thank for the good time we had were Bob Ogden and Caroline Strong who put us up after the convention and looked after us as if we were royalty. I would like to write a detailed report of the time we spent in Perth but really only have time to recall briefly the delight of our last day when Bob & Caroline took us driving to see the non touristy sights of the city. We drove around Fremantle and stopped for lunch there. Then we went up the coast a bit and paddled in the Indian Ocean (adding it to my collection of the Pacific and the Atlantic) and then they took us back past some charming lakes to the park which overlooks the city proper.

Valma and I decided that Perth is a place we wouldn't mind living in for a while and hope to do so in a few years time.

Some other people who also helped to make our visit as enjoyable as it was were Roy & Julia, Tony & Gloria and, of course, Grant Stone. (One of my regrets is that we did not make it to South Warren and that I got no more than a brief opportunity to talk to Damien Brennan about the fanzine thing he was doing for university... oh well, such is life.)

SOME THOUGHTS ON FAN HISTORY

Mention of Grant Stone and Damien Brennan lead naturally enough (for reasons which will become clearer in the next few years) to mention of Ron Clarke, Vol Molesworth and Joe D Siclari and F. Towner Laney.

Firstly the Australian product.

At long last A History of Australian Fandom, 1935-1963 by Vol Molesworth is generally available. Ron Clarke has been publishing it in serial form in his fanzines over the past couple of years and has now collected together the various installments into one volume.

Before commenting on the history itself I should say that the production is more than a little disappointing. The whole thing comes in soft card covers with the title plainly printed on the front cover. The whole lot is stapled and a bit of black binding tape is run down the left hand side to make it look quite attractive. Unfortunately this standard is not maintained inside. The format changes from section to section (which reflects the various styles of the fanzines the stencils were originally used in) there are odd bits of artwork and bits of poetry which have nothing to do with Molesworth's text. However all this can be overlooked, I think, because of the value in having the whole text of the history in one place.

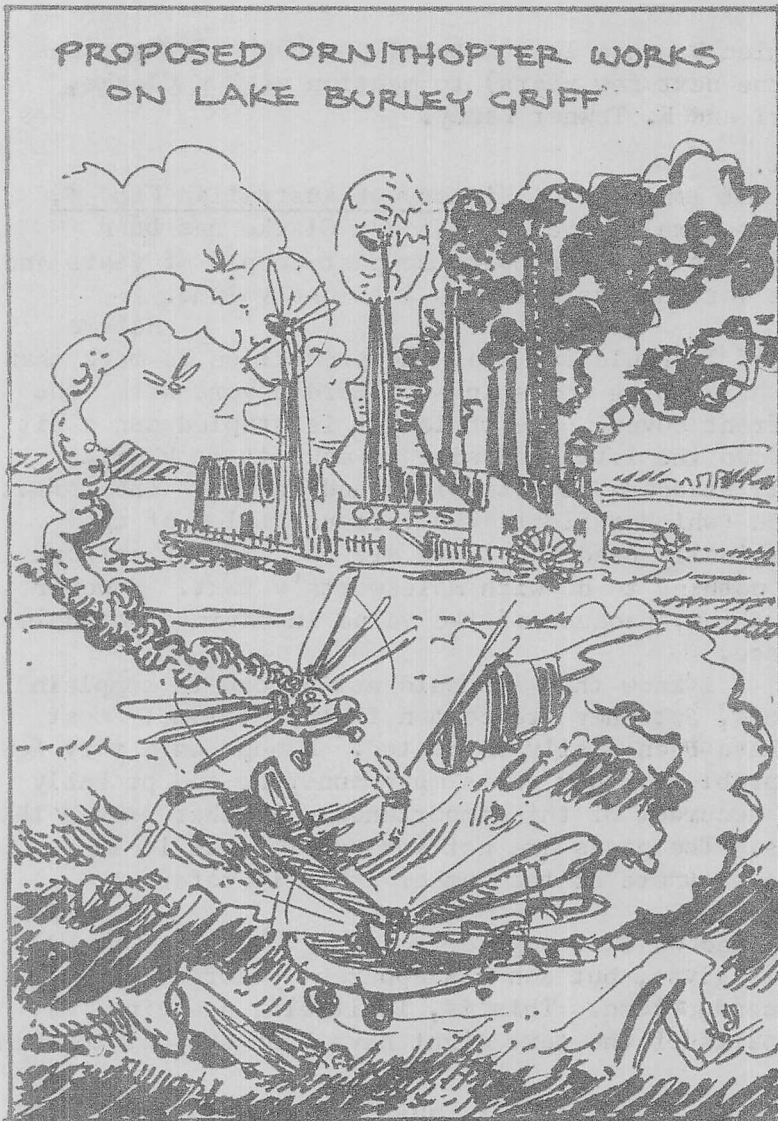
I know that I should not be one to complain about typing and spelling errors, but they are common in this volume. Most are simple typos which could have been easily corrected. Except in a very few places these errors cause no problems, they are simply annoying and probably should not have appeared in a document of this importance. Another simple thing is the visibility of footnotes. The pages are not set out so that it is always easy to find either the footnote or the number which it refers too.

Yet another problem occurred on the second last page of section "V". The breakdown of the Australian SF Society is given, but Ron has apparently forgotten to include the figures in the second column. This is, in itself, annoying. It also raises fears that other parts of the text might have been subject to such treatment.

Finally, a couple of minor complaints: while the quality of the electrostencilled photos in this are fair they could have been better. Page numbering would also have been useful and would have been very useful in conjunction with an index which is not provided but which would have been very useful itself.

The history itself is an impressive work of some seventy-one pages. It covers the period from the very first fan club in Sydney (and in Australia we presume) up until 1963 when Graham Stone, who had kept the Sydney Futurians going for many years, was offered a job in Canberra. This period effectively covers the whole first phase of fandom in Sydney.

The history concentrates on the activities of the Futurians through that period and it seems that, to a large extent it has been written from the minutes of club meetings and of comments on the club published in contemporary fanzines. The research for the history must have been a time consuming business, but on the other hand one sometimes gets the impression that the work is a synthesis between the evidence which Molesworth was able to gather and his personal recollections of the events which took place. There appear to be forty-two footnotes in the history, not a great number really. It is obvious that much more information has been taken from contemporary sources - lists of who were at meetings for example. Most readers of this or other histories are not interested in footnotes (and who could blame them) but the things do tend to keep writers honest.



My comment regarding honesty should not be taken to mean that I believe Molesworth guilty of writing history to his benefit. Although he was intimately involved in most of the activities described, there is no reason to think that he may have wanted to do a whitewash job on himself for those in the future to read. Infact, the whole of the history seems to treat everybody quite fairly, and that is one of its good points.

Even so, I doubt that Molesworth could have been completely free from personal bias in some matters. The trouble is that as things stand the only source we have is this history and unless somebody else decides to conduct separate investigations into the fannish past this is liable to remain as close to complete truth of what happened as we will ever see.

Perhaps some of the survivors of that period, Stone, Nicholson and Dillon are the three most obvious who come to mind, might care to commit their memories of that period to paper so that we may have some material to compare against Molesworth's work. Because, as it stands, this Molesworth work is the bones and the background material for a much greater work which may never be written.

(With reference to Graham Stone, I note that he recently published a small booklet to mark the fortieth anniversary meeting of the Sydney Futurians. In it he quotes from minutes of some of the earliest meetings so that this leads me to hope that many of the sources mentioned in Molesworth's footnotes still exist.

One point which needs emphasising is that to a very large extent this is a history of Sydney fandom. The development of fandom in Melbourne in the early fifties is reported more as it affected Sydney at the time than as a separate entity with its personalities and problems. Of course I don't think that it would be realistic to expect Molesworth to have been able to write expertly about that development as well as what was going on in Sydney - which was more than enough to keep one historian busy.

To digress for a moment, a fairly good idea of the early history of fandom in Melbourne can be gained by reading the article "I remember AFPA!" written by Lee Harding, with notes by Dick Jenssen and John Foyster. (It was first published by John Foyster in the combined The Wild Colonial Boy/The Gryphon 35 in 1966, and then again by John and I in Boy's Own Fanzine 3 in 1976. So far as I know there are no spare copies available of BOF 3, I certainly have none.

So far as I am aware, the Harding article and the Molesworth history are the only two solid pieces of fan writing in Australia about the history of fandom in this country. Both deal largely with events before about 1958 so that there has been nothing of any substance written about the twenty odd years which have passed since then.

End of digression.

The main point of the Molesworth history seems to be how people didn't get on with each other. In such a closed environment as Sydney fandom must have been in those early days this is not terribly surprising. These days fandom is big enough that if you don't get along with somebody or don't share their views you can go off somewhere else and do your fanac with some other bunch of fans.

I recommend that anybody who is interested in the history of fandom in Australia should send Ron Clarke three dollars to purchase a copy of the Molesworth History, at \$3 it is a bargain. For those who don't have it, the address is: 6 Bellevue Road, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. I should also mention the preface has been written by Laura Molesworth and briefly sketches in some background information about the man who wrote the history.

A final publisher's note at the back of the volume is written by Ron Clarke and explains how he came to discover the Futurian Society in 1963. From it comes one point which puzzles me. Ron mentions that he learned from Graham Stone of the death of Vol Molesworth at the library which was all that was left of the Futurians at that time. However, the last part of the history, XI, which is only nine lines long, mentions that the library was handed to Kevin Dillon when Graham Stone moved to Canberra. Did Molesworth write this last bit and I've got my timing wrong, or was it added by somebody else later?

Moving right along we leave the small world of Australian fandom and find ourselves plunged in at the deep end with Jeod Siclari publishing the second part of "Ah! Sweet Idiocy!" by F. Towner Laney, in his fanzine FANHISTORICA.

The first obvious thing is that fandom in Australia has a minute history alongside that of North America. The number of people who have passed through fandom since the mid thirties must be quite large, especially in North America where there have been far more centres in which clubs have formed and in which people have decided to publish fanzines.

This latest issue of FANHISTORICA is almost a completely Laney issue, with articles about him by Harry Warner Jr., Charles Burbee and Sam Moskowitz. There is a lot written here about Laney but none of it really gets to the basis of what the man was like, what motivated him and so on. Harry Warner provides a very interesting commentary on a quite talented man, Charles Burbee gives some fairly clear ideas as to what the man was like in person and Moskowitz briefly calls Laney an out and out liar (or words to that effect). Finally, there is Laney himself writing about what LASFS was like when he arrived in Los Angeles.

Moskowitz would apparently have us believe that Laney is not telling the truth, or all of the truth anyhow. However, lacking any proof to the contrary, LASFS sounds pretty much like the Melbourne SF Club as I came across it in 1966 so I am

willing to believe what he has written. I am also very pleased that there was nobody around the MSFC like Laney, otherwise we would have been subject to the same unflattering commentary that the then current LASFS members got.

I applaud JoeD Siclari for going to the trouble to reprint this Laney work. I hope that, as Ron Clarke did, Joe will collect the whole lot together in the end so that those of us who miss one or two installments will be able to read the whole work.

Apart from this I am interested in the way which Joe has taken to go about presenting contemporary fandom with its past.

It has sometimes seemed odd to me that even though most long lived actifens have been prolific publishers and that fandom is primarily a written thing, it is odd that the history and traditions of fandom are basically oral. It has now become clear to me that the reason for this is that at any given time the written traditions of fandom are not accessible to neofans. By this I mean that there is nowhere a neofan can go to get copies of basic fannish works such as "The Immortal Storm", "Ah! Sweet Idiocy!", "The Enchanted Duplicator", "Fencyclopedia II" and so on off the shelf.

The manner in which Joe and others have chosen to present fannish history is to reprint it from the original sources, in other words, increasing the number of original copies which are available.

I am not now sure if this is the way to go about presenting history. Admitted that these sources are invaluable to those who are really keen on the history, but it seems to me that we should be looking at the past through modern eyes and trying to make sense of what earlier fans did in modern day ways. This means that we should be writing our own history, not reprinting other peoples. Laney's work is a great basis upon which a modern history of LASFS might be written, but it is a biased view and needs to be counterposed with other views, either written at the time or recounted at a later time.

Perhaps some of our troubles are that we have so little history that we like to revere it. Perhaps also we have been too lazy in the past. It is, after all, much easier to retype stencils than it is to attempt to determine what actually happened. That way Laney is to blame for any inaccuracies, not a contemporary writer.

One of the great advantages which fans these days have if they are interested in fan history is that cheap photocopying is readily available. Thus a photocopy of the first edition of "Ah! Sweet Idiocy!" should not cost more than about \$5. The main advantage would be that Joe would have more time to research instead of cutting stencils; and even if what he wrote was not as exciting as the Laney original, atleast we would have a little more certainty of its historical accuracy.

Despite my comments above, don't let me put anybody off writing to Joe for a copy of his fanzine which can be had for the usual or \$1.50 per issue. His address is: 4599 NW 5 Ave., Boca Raton, FL., 33431, USA.

A final comment relates to my own interest in fannish history. As you will perhaps recall reading a couple of pages back, I've taken to studying Australian History at ANU. I have been interested in history for a long time but with the commencement of this course I have found this long smouldering spark fed well and now burning brightly. Furthermore, I have already picked up some of the rudiments of the historical method and find them more than useful in looking at the fan history which is available. If I were you I would not be at all surprised to find that in future issues of this fanzine the whole business of Australian fannish history gets a good going over. It seems to me to be a long neglected activity in Australia and I hope that as I develop some ideas on the subject my Australian readers will be able to help

with their own ideas and comments too.

THE "WE'LL PRINT ALMOST ANYTHING" SECTION

(The little item to follow was written for Paul Stevens to use in his Paul Stevens Show at SynCon '79 at the national convention that year. I understand that this script wasn't used in the show and I don't know what happened to it. So I'll use it myself.)

FANNISH RELIGIONS

Announcer: Announcing the "What's New in Gods Show". The programme with all the latest in theological trends.

And here is tonight's speaker - Brother Paulus of the Blessed Order of the Little Sisters and Groupies of Saint Tucker.

Paulus: Good evening my brothers, sisters and children, especially John and Betty who have stayed up this evening to listen to daddy speaking on steam radio.

Tonight we are going to change the format of the show so that instead of being the "What's New in Gods Show" this will be a "What's Old in Gods" programme.

Let us begin by looking at what Gods are for. Some of you may say that this is a theological question of the most profound nature and depth, and begin quoting me long and abstruse tracts of dogma from the most obscure books. Let me say to these people, from the outset, that while I appreciate their efforts to perceive the hidden light of truth behind the veils of mystery, I failed Theology 1 in my first year at the seminary and just can't follow any of it.

We will therefore look at theology and the need for Gods from the level of the ordinary nong in the street or in the pub or perhaps even in the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation.

Historically speaking, gods have been invented when there was something like an eclipse or a flood, or when something that mere mortals couldn't handle needed doing. There were gods for all sorts of things, like lust, lunacy, love, longevity, locale, liquor, light, larger, language, lampoonery, lambs, lactose and fertility. There were even gods invented to keep a tight reign on other gods.

More recently we have moved into an age of monothiesm and even nonthiesm. Monothiesm appears to be for people who can't remember all the names of the earlier gods and nonthiesm is for those who can't remember anything.

(Just as an aside, I would like also to mention the modern trend towards athiesm - a trend I find very puzzling just when the need for gods is on the increase. Where, for example, I ask you, are the much needed gods for tax-avoiders and drink-drivers



or the deities for those afraid of flying in DC-10s, using bridges built over the Yarra or trying to find their way around Sydney - even with a street directory. Where, I ask, are those to whom one can pray for the return of the Labor Government, the mini-skirt or the Ashes.)

I see that my aside has led me to the subject on which I am to speak tonight. This subject is that of fannish deities. Although science fiction and fantasy writers have created more gods than even Arthur Clarke's Tibetan computer could name, the number of gods in fandom is small. More interestingly, the fannish deities were all invented to meet a specific need within fandom.

To illustrate what I am talking about let us look at the first of the three great fannish divinities.

In the early days of fandom one of the most popular means of reproduction, of fanzines, was the hectograph. This method involved a tray of hideous purple slime over which was placed a wax stencil. This done, a sheet of paper was pressed over the stencil and the vile purple jelly like substance would seep through the holes in the stencil to give a copy. Now, if you can't follow my description of this method, it is because it is too vile to contemplate. The normal healthy human mind will begin to think about more happy things like plague, famine and so on when confronted by such evil.

"How," I hear you ask, "did this vile practice lead to the discovery of a god?"

"Simple," I reply! Some poor fanzine editor was struggling with his hectograph when, by some stroke of fate, the tray of vile and evil smelling gooy jelly overturned and splattered itself all over him. He looked at his purple stained body and hands, rolled his eyes to the heavens and exclaimed, "Vile Purple GOO!"

Allowing for the fact that some historians debate whether he said "vile" or some more descriptive word, that is how the god was named - Ghu.

The purple religion was founded in August 1935, and for three years it held single sway over the fannish world. Later researchers have told us that Ghu is a beetle-bodied monster living on the sunward side of Vulcan who telepathically controls a zombi named Donald Wollheim (I told you this happened a long time ago). Wollheim was usually regarded as Ghu by its followers - at least before the Great Ghuist Revival of the 1950's.

What did Ghuists do? Quite honestly, you wouldn't want to know and anyhow I'm not allowed to tell you on the radio.

The second fannish god was created to fill a desperate need in the fandom of the late 30's. He was invented to oppose Ghu and his name was FooFoo.

FooFooism began early in 1938 with a call to form a Sacred Order to oppose Ghughuism in all its forms, however monstrous. Till the early 1940's the ranks of the Foo-men grew by leaps and bounds (and shuffles). Victory, they cried, was assured, for FooFoo had promised it. Ghughuism, like tyranny, was not easily overcome. But the struggle was a glorious one!

One of the chief sources of Fooist theology were the Foo-proverbs and Foo-phrases. For example: "It's only a Foo days to SeaCon", "A Foo and his collection are soon parted" and "Yours Fooily" Foo example.

After the close of the second world war FooFooish and its old antagonist, Ghuism, fell on evil days and the ranks of the faithful rapidly shrank. There was a revival of interest in these gods in the fifties which was spurred by the revelation of the third major fannish deity.

For a description of this god let me read you an extract from the book of all knowledge, the Fancylopedia II of 1959.

"ROSCOE The One Tru Ghod, incarnate in the form of a beaver. (This mystically expresses the fact that all true fen are busy little b's.) Revealed by the Prophet Art Rapp in '47, His religion - Roscoism or the Rosconian Faith -- rapidly swept thru fandom, converting the elite group to its Insurgent credo and arousing the False Faiths of Ghu and FooFoo to a brief revival. Baring interference by Oscar (the Evil Principle, represented as a malignant muskrat) Rosconians enjoy the Reality of Fanac, the Hope of Egoboo, and the Promise of Bheer. Chronicles of the future Rosconian Empire have been produced by various fans, even depraved Ghuists. Roscoe's Mighty Two Front Teeth and Slapping Tail are terrible weapons against the evil-doer. Holy days are the Fourth day of July ("that's the day when Roscoe flies a fiery spaceship in the sky") and Labor Day, the day of Roscoe's Birth. Conventions are frequently held to celebrate these Sacred Occasions, and fen meeting there quaff libations of bheer and other beverages in Roscoe's honour.

"Unlike various false ghods Roscoe has no official colour and leaves ritualistic forms of reverence to the discretion and imagination of his worshippers; for, being the True Ghod, he of course does not need to be confirmed in his position by bombastic pronouncements such as Ghuist and Fooist use to trumpet their ghods' pretensions. Certain references in the Birch Bark Bible /the Rosconian scriptures/ suggest that allegiance to false gods delivers misbelievers to Oscar, who created false ghods as well as mimeos that overink, cheap stencils, hangovers and other banes of fannish life. Liberal Rosconian theologians, however, point out that this is merely a consequence of submitting to Oscar, since after 200th Fandom Roscoe will save all fans simply because they are fans."

Since sixth fandom there has been a marked decline in interest into matters of the spirit. This souless state has continued, by and large, to this modern day. There has been an increased awareness in politics and the continuing reanimation of the Fanarchist Party of Australia is a sign of this, although it is beyond the scope of this programme.

Some listeners are bound to want to know about the newer fannish religions. One supposes that in the interests of impartiality I should mention that from Los Angeles has sprung the herasy of Herbangalism and from Minneapolis (the Perth of the extreme north-east) has sprung the abomination of the Spiderist Faith.

Let me warn you! Do not become involved in these latest creations of Oscar! Take a clue from the foul travisty of Herbangalism. Although its devotees worship a blimp sized and shaped god called Herbie, look again at the name... Herbangalism... Herb... By what name do those drug crazed Jamacian musicians refer to their mind and soul destroying drugs?

So now you see, both the Herbangalist and Spiderist faiths are not truly fannish but the creations of the drug crazed minds fallen into the power of gafia and Oscar!

I don't know how to mention this without upsetting some of the more junior members of the listening audience, but I must say it. Two people you have heard earlier on the steam radio were married at a pagan Spiderist ceremony! Yes; Ken and Linda from Minneapolis are Spiderists! Gordon R Dickson is also from Minneapolis, could it be that he also is a Spiderist?

Gives you Foo for thought, doesn't it?

((Just incase you missed something, Gordon R Dickson was the GoH at Syncon and Ken Fletcher and Linda Lounsbory, having won DUFF, were the fan GoHs.))

LAYING IN WAIT FOR THE PERFECT FANZINE

As more and more of the evidence comes in it becomes clear that Marc Ortlieb has an enchanted duplicator. Certain fannish pedants will note that only a Roneo 750 has the potential to be enchanted but even if Marc doesn't use one of them he is certainly giving a good imitation.

But I am getting ahead of myself.

By definition, a perfect fanzine has to be Australian. Everybody knows that North American fans are too wrapped up in their self exploration (read Joseph Nicholas for full details) and that the Brits are too wrapped up in themselves to produce the perfect fanzine. New Zealand fans haven't been doing it long enough yet and Europeans have the language barrier to break - so obviously the task of publishing the perfect fanzine has fallen to the lot of the Australians.

Being an Australian I'm not inclined, by natural temperament, to go to the trouble of defining what a perfect fanzine might be, but as they say... "I know what I like"... and that is obviously going to be my idea of the perfect fanzine.

Which gets us back to Marc Ortlieb. It also brings in John Foyster and Irwin Hirsh. The fanzines which each of these three produce are more or less perfect, some more perfecter than others, as one might say.

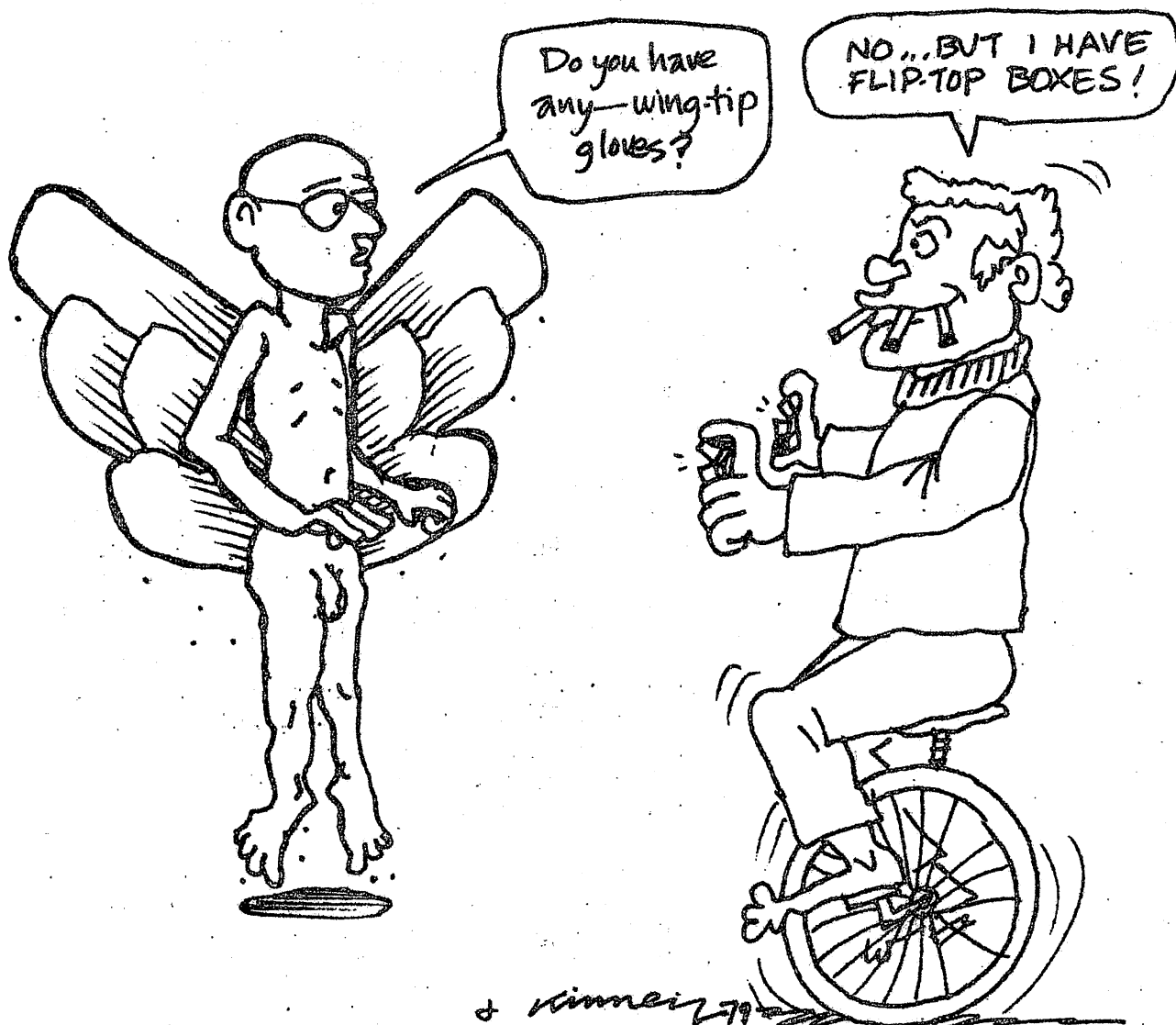
The least perfect at the moment is Sikander, edited by Irwin Hirsh (279 Domain Road, South Yarra, Victoria 3141). The reason for its less perfect state is, I think, due to the fact that Irwin is the youngest of the three publishers I have in mind to write about. He does not show a lack of ability, a lack of enthusiasm or a lack of contacts, he merely still has a couple of things to learn. This is no bad thing and future issues of his fanzine should be quite outstanding if they live up to their early promise.

The third issue of Sikander follows the trend which has been established by many other fanzine editors. The first issue was, I thought, outstanding, the second issue dipped quite a bit and the third issue picked up a bit so that the standard of the first issue will soon be reached and from then on there is only up.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about the third issue is that there are really no highlights, there is a nice consistency of good material, in Irwin's introduction, in the four short articles and in the letters. John Berry and Keith Curtis were perhaps a little better than the other two contributors but only just, and it seems to me that in generally raising the standard of the contributions he prints, he will be making his fanzine just that bit better.

I applaud the restrained use of art in this fanzine. There are a couple of pieces which are quite good but no junk. My own biased view on art is that unless it is good it doesn't deserve to be printed. There is nothing wrong with a fanzine made up of nothing but lines of type just so long as they are smartly presented - better than printing blotchy things just because everybody else does it. (I suppose that I should mention that the level of reproduction of this issue is high but not perfect, and the art that he did use isn't perfectly reproduced either.) This could, of course, lead to an argument about what is good fan art - you will excuse me if I bow out now before the going gets too heavy.

More perfect than Sikander, if you get what I mean, is Chunder from John Foyster. John has been publishing fanzines for a long time, probably only Mervyn Binns and Graham Stone have been at it longer in Australia. This wealth of experience doesn't show when you look at a Foyster fanzine, but when you begin to read, ah... this is the sort of things which a perfect fanzine prints.



There are thirty-four pages in this issue of Chunder! and not one of them is dull and uninteresting. The opposite is generally true and most of the issue is compulsive reading. Central is the first chapter of John's GUFF report which promises to be exceptional. In the first chapter we get a brief run-down on the history of fan funds as seen from Australia, and a brief bit of fannish history from around the time when the first GUFF race started. All is written in an informative yet light style which has been the hallmark of good fannish writing for many years. It is rarely that we get to see John Foyster writing at such length and giving us a chance to savour his ability. There should be much more of it and with much more of the trip report to come there will be.

John Foyster has also written a rather long book review and a whole bunch of fanzine reviews, I would have preferred it the other way about but then it is sometimes difficult to think of anything decent to say about some fanzines after the first word or two. I also thought that the letter column was good, John seems to have encouraged some interesting people to respond to earlier comments.

What has John Foyster got that others haven't? The answer, in two words is - style and intelligence. Which is not to say

that others don't have one or the other or a bit of both, just that they don't have so much to spare. John also has years and years of experience which adds up to a certain amount of fannish wisdom, and there isn't too much of that around.

Chunder, which once had a headlong publishing schedule has decided to take life easy and will now appear only four or five times a year, which is probably quite often enough, given the work which goes into publishing thirty page fanzines. This means that Australia is now effectively without a source of generally available fannish news and comment. Of well, it's a small price to pay for the survival of this fanzine.

I notice that on the back page of this issue the results of the 1979 CHUNDERPOLL are given. The best fanzine is given as Q36, which is funny because that was what I was about to say! (But before I do, a reminder that John Foyster lives at 21 Shakespear Grove, StKilda, Victoria 3182 and that you get four issues for \$2.)

I am actually a bit at a loss for words to describe Q36. For a couple of years Marc seemed to be going in the right direction but not quite getting there. He tried various ideas and while all of them worked to some extent they have suddenly come together in Q36 to make one of the most delightful fanzines that has ever been published, in Australia or anywhere else. Make sure that you get a complete set because, in a few years, they are going to be worth their weight in oil.

As I mentioned, I'm not exactly sure what it is that makes Q36 such an outstanding fanzine. True, the writing is of a very high standard and the artwork, which is not usually very good art, is very clever, but there is an almost intangible something which lifts the excellent into the realms of outstanding and incomparable (even if this isn't terrific english).

The magic ingredient is, I think, a large helping of Marc Ortlieb and a large sprinkling of John Packer. Q36E, which is the most recent issue, contains generous lashings of Packer cartoons and two large strips, both of which are immensely amusing. The majority of the rest of the art, while not being similarly clever is very good. By encouraging John Packer, Marc has also encouraged a whole collection of other cartoonists whose work is fairly well up to Packer's level. By contrast, there is Mike McGann, who actually has some pretensions to being an artist, whose work is generally too bold and arty to match the style of the rest of this issue and is yet not good enough to be printed because of its aesthetic value. There are eleven artists listed as having contributed to this issue - it must be some sort of Australian record.

I was delighted to read the lead article by Joseph Nicholas in this issue, partly because he is an interesting and excellent fan writer but also because I was delighted to learn that he can write well about other things aside from fanzines. And it was delightful to read about his surroundings which, quite honestly, I would not enjoy living in.

The rest of the issue belongs to Marc and we see four different facets of his ability.

The "Oneshots of Conotel" is an extremely good piece of sf/fan fiction. Marc has revitalised the often neglected field of fan fiction in Australia and has, almost single handed, made it into a very useful tool for giving expression to all sorts of ideas and emotions. I imagine that this is about his best effort to date.

In "Back to the Drawing Board" Marc discusses, with quite a deal of insight, the problems of fan art in Australia. In the letter column he displays a deft editorial touch and seems to know just where to enter a letter with a light comment which will maintain a feeling of

continuity through the whole column.

Perhaps the best piece was "Notes from the Spectacle Case" in which Marc briefly sketched his experience of 1980 in the style of a corporation report. A highly delightful exercise it turned out to be and, for Marc, a way of making the painful less difficult to write about. He begins by stating; "It's often been said that the happier a person is, the less fanatic that person indulges in. This has been a tremendous year for my fanatic."

Okay Marc, we've had a tremendous year from your fanatic too. But I think that we might be able to survive, just, if you go back to being happy. Perhaps the secret ingredient I mentioned at the beginning, which has brought potential into fruition, has been unhappiness. I guess that this is the case with a great deal of worthwhile human achievement.

(But if you want to write to Marc and encourage him in his unhappy ways through fanatic, his address is: 70 Hamblyn Road, Elizabeth Downs, S.A. 5113, Australia. Q36 appears to be available for the usual.)

AND MEANWHILE, OVERSEAS...

If it were just possible for a North American fan to publish a perfect fanzine, it could quite easily be Telos which is published by Gary Farber, Patrick & Tereas Nielsen Hayden and Fred Haskell (address: 4712 Fremont Avenue., N., Seattle, WA 98103, USA).

The third issue is a little ripper only it's not so little, being about 72 pages big.

Hmmm... if you think that I'm going to devote as many words to this fanzine as it appears to deserve then I will have to disappoint you. There are superb contributions from Richard Bergeron, Terry Carr, John D Berry, and that's only the start of it.

Should I come right out and admit that a high percentage of fanzines that lob into our letterbox are downright boring? Probably not. Anyhow, there is always the occasional fanzine which makes me sit up again and take notice. Telos has been one of those and I devoured it avidly... not such a bad effort to stir me to such excitement on the same day that ANZAPA and APPLESAUCE mailings (both the Australian apas) arrived. In fact it is fanzines like Telos, Sikander, Chunder! and Q36 which keep me interested.

Another fanzine which would be perfect if it were Australian is Twll-Ddu from Dave Langford (22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7FW, United Kingdom). The product of the Langford duplicator looks much like the product of any other British typer. The difference is that reading Twll-Ddu can be a health hazard and it can cause people to look at you in public places. Issue 18 is a nice thick one with plenty of high grade material. I chose to read it in the library at university and, naturally enough, burst out with loud laughter on but one occasion. After everybody had turned to look at me - well you know the low quality of humorous writing that is to be found in a university library - I shuffled off to another part of the campus to snigger and laugh to myself for the rest of the issue. It is just a pity that there aren't more writers gifted with the Langford sense of humor. Even if it were not unique it would still surely be just as entertaining.

WE DO TOO GET LETTERS

I kinda hate to have to do this but, since it's been well over a year since the previous issue and most of the issues then under discussion have lapsed, I think we'll go straight into the We Also Heard From section.

Terry Hughes: 606 N. Jefferson St., Arlington, Virginia 22205, USA, sends along a note on propulsion alternative No. 37-B for Ornithopters. This method, combined with the Bob Ogden venetian blind wing should revolutionise the whole of the aerospace industry. If I have time I will detail these developments in the next issue, except that I know you're all dying to know about the time that OOPS attempted to apply the non-destructive testing techniques to its aircraft and accidentally blacked out the whole of Victoria when the ornithopter and the testing rig hopped all the way across metropolitan Melbourne and only stopped after it had pounded the power station at Yallourn into steaming rubble. On the other hand, perhaps you don't want to know about that. The army is quite keen on developing the idea though, and the contract for R&D should keep us going for a few years even if the "tank stamper" does come to nothing in the end.

Mike Gunderloy, 930 North Bushnell Aveune, Alhambra, CA 91801, USA, sends along a very interesting letter about the difference between media fans and fanzine fans. He Concludes: "My point, if there is one other than on top of my head, is that fandom may be heading for a drastic split of sorts, where the fanzine fans, far from being the elite, are looked on as the outcasts of society, the ritually unclean. After all, anyone who would rather go to a typer than a movie must just not be with it at all, and hardly worth dealing with.

"This may turn out to be a good thing for fanzine fandom. If the media fans split off and form their own groups, then those who are dissatisfied with this will be drawn more closely together, and we may yet see another flowering of the fanzines and apas as a sort of rebellion against a world composed of vidiots."

Actually I'm not so sure that any split would be drastic. There seems to me to be two things to consider. Firstly, nobody is forced to read fanzines so that, by a process of natural selection, fanzine fans will remain separate from other fans and so, having built up their own communications networks, retain their own view of fandom no matter what non fanzine-fans think. The second option is that the thing which we have known as fandom will become something else and either from within it or separate from it will grow up a fandom as it once may have been, basically a place for social misfits. Just as in the thirties and forties when fans felt themselves separate from society because they read sf and sf was considered weird, fans in the future will be considered weird because they read.

Either way I guess that fanzine fans will continue to call themselves an elite of sorts, no matter what anybody else says. Has it ever been any other way?

Seth Goldberg of 5950 Imperial Hwy. No. 43, South Gate, CA 90280, USA agrees that you have to be active in the mail in order to become known with other fen; and this is especially so on an international scale. Having written this letter from Hawaii, I suppose he would have some expert knowledge of this.

Jean Weber of 13 Myall Street, O'Connor, ACT 2601 wrote twice. Once more the topic was the relationship between fanzine fans and club fans and also on any supposed hierachy systems which fandom may have. Jean commented that she didn't come across any.

Ahrvid Engholm, Flotviksvagen 39, S-162 40 Vallingby, Sweden wrote making some generalised comments on various things. I was very grateful for the letter; if for no other reason than it is good to have contact with European fans. I envy them all their dedication in going to the trouble of learning English as well as most of them, including Ahrvid, have.

Richard Faulder, Yanco Agricultural Research Centre, Yanco, NSW 2703 writes comments on quite a few subjects, as is his habit, and passes on the results of recent

research into vegies. "Rob Gerrand shows a total ignorance of our relationship with the vegetable world. Recent research, conducted using kirlian photography, has convincingly proven that plants, like schmoos, ENJOY being eaten. If they can't be eaten they'll settle for being made into furniture or clothes. It is one of their great regrets that they must be assisted by people to give of their best. It is only "animalish" plants like triffids that reject their ghod-ordained role to be bare-rooted and fruiting in the kitchen garden."

From this it seems to me that we should be considering the possible socialisation of seedlings at an early age into accepting this submissive role in life. The question, it seems to me, is whether plants actually like to be exploited, as Richard claims, or whether their early upbringing - the myths which are passed from generation to generation of plant in the garden and reinforced by the predatory animals lurking there as well - is to blame. I expect that we will hear more on this topic from Mr Gerrand in a future issue. His topic will be: "Nature or Nurture - the Role of the Watering can as an Instrument for Cultural Suppression".

Leanne Frahm, 272 Slade Point Road, Slade Point, Queensland 4741; writes informing me that... "There's no future in wings: The airship is the aircraft of the future. If you really put your mind to it, I'll bet you could do some truly interesting things with a blimp." Leanne has obviously been talking to Bert Chandler again. I will not take it upon myself to say that airships are a lot of hot air, a lot of people have already said it and nobody is paying much attention. I read in the paper the other day that a British air-cargo mob called "Redcat" will be selling off their freighter aeroplanes and going to airships in the next couple of years so it looks like there is a future in airships afterall.

All the same, I can't see OOPS getting into airships, far too little room for technical innovation even if there is the slight chance of a profit. Who needs profits when they can get Government subsidies?

Perry Middlemiss, PO Box 98, Rundle Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000, writes: "I'm not sure what you mean by saying that a record is 'over produced'. If I was to say that I would probably be referring to the amount of over-dubbing and such that is evident. However, in some cases this is not altogether such a bad thing. The obvious example that springs to mind is "Born to Run" (the track off the album of the same name) by Bruce Springsteen. It's fairly obvious that there have been quite a number of guitar over-dubs on this track, but it still retains that Springsteen-like raw quality.

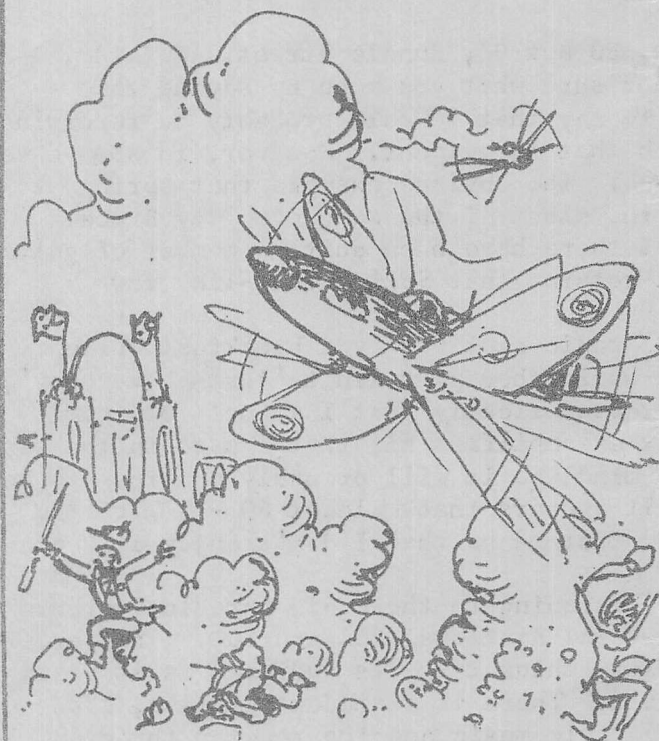
"I tend to listen to the local radio stations over breakfast while waiting for the news, and most of the music they play isn't 'just above okay', it's bloody awful. I can state quite categorically that I am not now, nor ever will be, a fan of disco-shit. It exemplies all that I hate in the way of mindless pap, and because it is so mindless it will probably continue to be popular for at least another decade. It appears that at least 60 - 70% of the music played on the radio is disco and that means that I don't enjoy listening to the radio very much."

I don't enjoy listening to the radio here in Canberra very much either. There are two commercial stations, 2CA and 2CC. They are almost identical except that 2CC seems to think that its audience is 12 years old whereas 2CA thinks it's 11 years old. There is a student station, 2XX, which is fairly uninteresting and plays folk music and the regular three ABC stations. Of the three non ABC stations 2CC is the least objectionable and so I am currently listening to it. They have just played an AC/DC track followed by a good Wings track... and just when I was beginning to think good things about them they played so indescribably bad a track that it doesn't even rate

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as well as "disco-shit", you couldn't even get up and dance your brains out to it.

There were also letters from Irwin Hirsh, Chas Jensen, Marc Ortlieb, Greg Hills and Tom Campbell. I'm not quoting from their letters because they are uninteresting, but because I have to make some room for mailing comments in this apazine, and this last page and a bit is all that I've got left. So I had best make the most of it.

MAILING COMMENT:

Tara Wayne/ Serendipity led me to read your contribution first and because of what you have written about I have no doubt that this is the only contribution I'm going to manage to comment on.

It just so happens that your comments on making models gives me a good excuse to write about that subject - as it happens to be my major hobby.

Given the choice between making a model and cutting some stencils I would generally make a model. Of course this is not always the case or you would not be reading this fanzine.

I make models for three different reasons. The first is because I am fascinated by the shapes of aeroplanes and tanks (which is what I make), the second is because it gives me something to do with my hands, and the third is because it is something that I have been doing since I was nine or ten.

The first model I ever had was an Airfix model of the Hawker Hurricane IVRP and somebody was silly enough to give me 10s for Christmas which bought me a Messerschmitt bf-109 and a Spitfire IX and I was hooked.

For a while, when I was reading Taral's article on models, I had the feeling that we were kindred spirits... but I'm afraid that's not so. When it comes to making models I'm strictly sercon.

Taral talks about making a model of a P-47 in an evening and then painting it drab olive and sky blue and dabbing on some silver paint. Nononono... that will never do. Painting the underside of a P-47 blue is like admitting that you read sci-fi. All the references I have, and because I'm a sercon I have lots of references, say that the correct colour would be "medium grey". As to what exactly this colour looks like is another question again, which I won't go into here.

If this all sounds a bit pedantic then that is a fair way of describing what my model making is like. I don't like to put glue between two pieces of plastic unless I'm sure that the end result will be almost exactly like the full scale thing and I don't like applying paint unless I'm just about sure that I've got the tone right. As for the location of the decals... well that's an art in itself, and I won't bore you with the tedious details.

Since we arrived in Canberra I've completed four models, three of which were begun well before we left Melbourne and the other which I've been working on solidly (more or less) for nine months.

My favourite subjects are post WW2 aeroplanes and armour so that it is no surprise that the models completed were an Entex 1:144 Rockwell B-1, a Panavia 200 Tornado, an Esca 1:48 Fairchild A-10A Thunderbolt II and a Tamiya 1:35 T-62A.

They are all the result of long hours of research and sometimes it seems to me that I spend more time studying pictures and drawings and reading articles than I actually spend in putting glue to plastic. I wish that it were otherwise but there is nothing I can do about it. I would love to be able to take all the pieces out of the box and stick them together so that I had a reasonable representation of this or that aircraft, with the accuracy totally dependent on the whim of the kit manufacturer. But I can't do it. No matter what happens and what I tell myself, as soon as I open the box and have a look inside the only thing that I can really see is the potential to make a little replica, identical in almost every way to the real thing.

When Valma and I go shopping we don't spend as much time in the bookshops as most fans do, in fact if there is a model shop I'm not in the slightest interested in looking at books. I will wander around looking for something out of the ordinary, perhaps an old kit now deleted from the catalogues, that sort of thing. The new issues barely interest me unless they are by little known companies because you see, I am a collector. We have a shed in the back yard which is half filled with unmade kits, some are duplicated or triplicated because they were already scarce when I came across them and they were cheap. When Frog went out of business I made a couple of trips down to the local newsagents who had a good stock of them and returned with a couple of shopping trolleys full of their product. Having done this you will realise how distressed I was to learn that the Frog moulds had been sold to the Russians who were apparently going to flood the market with tons of reissues. After that upset I was overwhelmed with joy to find out that the Russians were apparently only paying for the moulds with kits, and when they were paid off there would be no more kits. Selfish you might say, but how would you feel if you had been lucky enough to get a mint copy of the first issue of AMAZING at a reasonable price, only to learn that somebody was reissuing it and there was no way to distinguish them.

As I said, I take my hobby seriously, which may be why I am so much more frivolous about my fanac. The only real trouble is that, no matter how much trouble I take, the end result still comes out looking



so badly made that it is just as well that this is the final page of this issue. It prevents me from becoming all maudlin about the subject and makes me contemplate putting some kind of index thing here.

Okay... so this is the seventh issue of ORNITHOPTER and, as it says on the front, it is for members of FAPA and SAPS and a few others. You can even subscribe at \$1.00 per issue or four issues for \$3, if you must. As it also says on the cover, all the art in this issue is by Chris Johnston - except the piece on page 13 which was given to me by Ken Fletcher and is a collaboration between him and Jay Kinney. I think that it fits in nicely.

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The only bit left to go into this issue is the traditional bit, which almost every damn fanned these days has, wherein he/she/it expresses support for this or that fan activity. Since I'm not one to knock the good old traditions I'll list some good old fashioned fannish things which I support. How about:

"South Gate in '58"
"The Big Pond Fund."
"Ethel Lindsay for TAFF"
"Lesleigh Luttrell for DUFF"
"Australia in '75"
"A Brick for the Tucker Hotel"
"It's Eney's Fault"

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