

THE TIMES

Bicycle Pump Supplement

INFLATION ON DECLINE
Solid Rubber Bounces Back

AIRLINES UNDER PRESSURE
Carriers Get The Wind Up

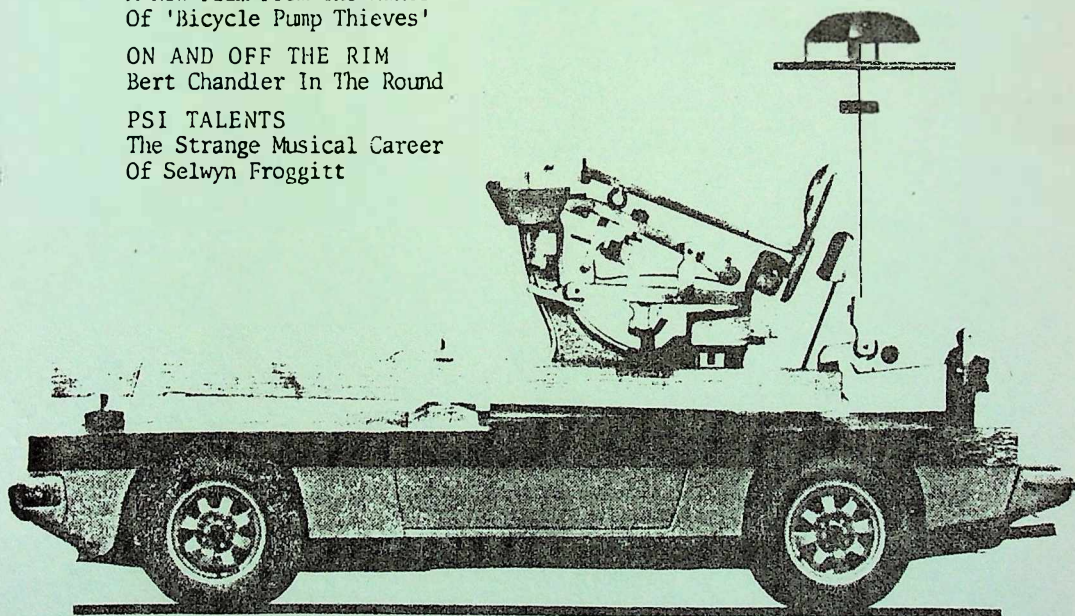
SEE SHARP OR BE FLAT!
Flatulence And Punctuality

RETIREMENT SURVEY
What The Big Wheels Do

BLOWUPS HAPPEN!
A New Film From The Maker
Of 'Bicycle Pump Thieves'

ON AND OFF THE RIM
Bert Chandler In The Round

PSI TALENTS
The Strange Musical Career
Of Selwyn Froggitt



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Friday, January 1, 1904

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AND HOLIDAYS
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are published for no immediately apparent reason by John Bangsund, PO Box 230, Kew, Victoria 3101, Australia. They may be had for \$5.00 per annum, letters of comment, books of verse, jugs of wine, fifths of november, gunpowder treason or plots of forthcoming Silverberg novels, or any combination thereof. Your own publication is welcome in exchange, as are old issues of Ross's Hobart Town Almanack you have no further use for (or Elliston's, Bent's or Melville's - I'm not fussy). This issue commenced on the 373rd anniversary of the day Guy Fawkes was fingered (which is why we still say - What do we say, Ortlieb? - Of course. Smart lad. - that biscuits were made before crackers).

SELWYN FROGGITT, concert secretary of the Scarsdale Working Men's Club and Institute and all-round genial idiot, came bumbling onto our TV screens about this time last year, and I loved him. It's a cruel thing to say about Bill Maynard, the very accomplished actor who plays Selwyn, but he looks for all the world like Doug Anthony's smarter older brother. Sometimes when the Deputy Prime Minister appears on telly, much to Sally's annoyance, but I can't help it, I give him the old double thumbs-up and cry *Magic!* with a Yorkshire accent. Selwyn is a tallish, fattish, baldish, smiling chap with a heart of gold and a head of, I dunno, maybe putty. But he has ideas, oh yes: he's full of 'em. Since he's cultured, or says he is, loves Beethoven and the Times Lit. Supp., his ideas tend to be a bit on the ambitious side, like getting Andre Previn or Elvis Presley to perform at the club's bingo night. Selwyn is such a large comic figure that he needs no less than seven almost-straight characters to support him: his mother, his brother Maurice, Maurice's girlfriend Vera, the barman at the club and the club's three committee members, who are mean-minded, pompous, self-inflated (but likable) bastards. One night the three con Selwyn into believing that he is going to be the guest on *This Is Your Life*. He falls for it completely, not so much because he is vain (he is a bit) but because he thinks it just and probable. When he wavers a bit they remind him that the show often has quite ordinary people as guests - sometimes the only thing they're notable for is that they play a musical instrument. Selwyn admits that he doesn't even play a musical instrument, but he can get a bit of a tune out of a bicycle pump. That's it then, says one of them, They probably saw a note about you in the Times Bicycle Pump Supplement! (So now you know about the cover. That, I thought, is a publication that should not go unpublished.) The evening wears on. Selwyn's mum sends a message that he can't be on *This Is Your Life* because she's watching it, and it's the Archbishop of Canterbury. Wonder what instrument he plays, says Selwyn. It's not the kind of show that would go well in America.

CRAFTY COLONIALS I said something to Terry Hughes last issue ('If this is Arlington it must be T.Hughesday' is much better than the awkward pun there, by the way, but it's too late now to do anything about it) about the Colonial Crafts Of Victoria Exhibition at the National Gallery, and my involvement in it. I did not say too much about it, because there's always the chance that the Ministry for the Arts might want to give me more work, and Hughes Nose who reads this stuff? (That's awful. Why do your artists always portray you with a big nose, Terry? Really? Go on! Yes, I read somewhere that the Welsh were one of the Lost Ten Tribes. No, I didn't believe it either.)

Sir Roderick Carnegie Requested the Pleasure of my Company at the Official Opening of the Exhibition, and Sally's of course, and later at a reception in the Great Hall (Music by the Wedderburn Old Timers, Colonial refreshments, You are invited to wear Colonial Dress), but we had to disappoint poor old Rod on account of a prior engagement and not being sure we had the keys to our colonial dress. As it turned out there was nothing in the paper the morning after about it, not even a photo, so it's probably just as well we couldn't go. Nothing worse than standing there in the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Victoria, sweltering in your sackcloth and leg-irons, and not a reporter or photographer in sight. And we managed rather better than colonial refreshments at the Lotus Inn, where we dined with Robin Johnson, Robin Johnson's parents and some of Robin Johnson's friends. The Chinese do rather well for themselves, don't they? If that's the sort of food they eat (didn't go much for the crab claws, but the other dozen or so courses were fine), you can't believe everything you read about China, can you? (Can you, Ortlieb? Of course not. Pay attention, lad - there'll be a test on this later. And put that woman down while I'm talking to you.) As I was saying, flash sports cars.

Ever since I was five I have wanted a Lamborghini Espada. That is not a Chinese dish, but a flash sports car (as I was saying), and I was somewhat ahead of my time, wanting a Lamborghini Espada when I was five. In 1944 even Issigooni hadn't thought of wanting that car. As I grew up my ideals changed, and in 1951, at the Melbourne Motor Show, I saw the car I really wanted - the Alvis TA21. I had one of those for a while, in 1964-65, and I wish I had it now (you wouldn't believe the prices they're fetching), but it wasn't what you would call a practical sort of car for a young man with little money and less mechanical knowledge. These days I think just about any car would be fine if it was paid off (two years to go yet on the Renault, lord love us), but I still have a bit of a hankering after an Espada. Or a De Tomaso Pantera. Any of those.

Reading the catalogue for the Colonial Crafts Exhibition, as I did at least three times in the line of duty, I was struck with the way these old crafty colonials *made do*. If they wanted a flash Italian sports car on the farm, say, to milk the chooks or shear the kangaroos, would they sit around moaning about not being able to afford one? Never! They'd get a gum tree, a discarded anvil and a length of post-and-rail hoop iron, and in two shakes of a dingo's tail they'd have knocked up something near enough. I can't

tell you how inspired I was, how proud of my colonial heritage and so on, when I read that sort of rubbish. Yes I can. That was only a figure of speech, a periphrastic circumlocution of a divagatory or roundabout nature, preparing you for what I did next. Using only an abandoned piano, the chassis of a discarded Porsche 924, a disused coin and a few pieces of bent string, I constructed my own flash Italian sports car. That's it on the cover. One touch on the keyboard (one tickle on the ivory, I would have said, but I could not find an abandoned elephant to complete the job) and away it goes, roaring off in all directions at speeds of up to 24 decibels in E-sharp minor and other clefs you've probably never heard of. It's not much to look at, sure, but Sally finds it very handy when she's doing her Chopin.

I lie. I didn't build that whatever-it-is at all. It's just something I took a sneaky photo of over Leigh Edmonds's back fence. And I wasted my time: ASIO said they knew all about it already, and wouldn't give me anything for my trouble. They said it was an abandoned prototype Orrright Ornithopter, designed for use in long-range-capability pianoforte quintets, with or without double-loop grapevine-stepover-synthesizers, but it didn't work so Edmonds had chucked it out. I'm not at all sure what that gobbledygook means, but there you have it.

And what has all this to do with bicycle pumps? Blessed if I know.

FRANCIS PAYNE is by way of being a doctor in Hobart, poor feller (Don't be frightened, dear — here's Doctor Payne to see you), and in the smashing Tenth Anniversary Mailing of ANZAPA he told us some perfectly horrible stories about how crook Tasmanians are, and how crook it is to be a doctor in Tasmania. Make yer heart bleed, it would — possibly his intention — you know what these doctors are like. Frank's fanzine is called *Ovid in Tomi*. Manfully resisting the temptation to make a funny about a Payne in the Tomi, I... How do you stand it, Frank? Couldn't you have chosen a different profession? No, I suppose you couldn't. There's a strange compulsion about names matching occupations — like the publishing manager and his assistant at Rigby's, Mike Page and Bill Reed, and a theologian I read once named Thurman. I have a few notes somewhere on the phenomenon. But what a great helping of tristia this is, young Payne! *Then forth I go, like one to's grave outborne, / My hair down-hanging, nasty and forlorn.* Dear me, I never thought Tasmania would affect anyone like that. Now, I mean. I know it's had a pretty bad press in the past. I have a note somewhere on what Hal Porter thought of the place. Don't read him, whatever you do: you'll finish up your own worst patient. And you know what happens to people who don't make out in Tasmania, don't you? *They send 'em to Norfolk Island! Or Canberra.* A lot end up in Canberra.

I was going to quote for Frank's enjoyment various opinions on social life, morals, customs of the natives &c of Van Diemen's Land from 1803 to the present, but I haven't left myself any room and they're probably copyright anyway. Look 'em up in Crowley's *Documentary History of Australia* — or ask Mike O'Brien.

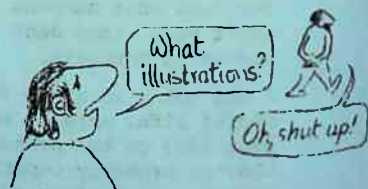
10 November I picked up the phone a few minutes ago and a girl said 'Have you got the tail-pipe into the Mercedes yet?' (At least, that's what I thought she said. On reflection, she must have said 'for' the Mercedes.) I had to admit that I hadn't, but before she got mad with me I gave her another number to ring. I get some delightful wrong numbers, mainly because the number we have was previously owned by a firm called Parts Of Europe, and before them, by the Country Roads Board. When people ring and ask for Parts Of Europe I am always tempted to say something like 'Yes, which part would you like? We have a special on Bosnia this week.' Likewise, when people start by saying 'I want a permit' I'm tempted to say 'What for?', and when they tell me they want to dig up Cotham Road or whatever, to say 'Nah, you don't need a permit for that! I'll just make a note of it, and you go for your life.' So far I haven't done it, but golly, it's tempting. Last week an elderly-sounding woman said 'Is that Mrs Cooper?' and some inner demon urged me, but did not quite persuade me, to say 'Of course it is. I always sound like a baritone when I've been drinking.' Does Mrs Cooper, I wonder, deal in permits or tail-pipes? I'll probably never know.

The Colonial Crafts exhibition got a good write-up in the Age a few days ago. I don't know Ted Greenwood, but his complimentary remarks about 'the excellent catalogue' indicate that he is a reviewer of perception and good taste, qualities rare in reviewers these days outside fanzines. Murray Walker, the author, rang me the same day to say how much Sir Roderick had missed us at the opening, but somehow he forgot to mention this in his excitement about a misprint he'd found in the catalogue. On the reverse-title 'copyright' is spelt like that, with a w. 'That's just an old colonial word for editor,' I said to Murray, and wished again that I'd had a chance to look at the page-proofs. The only thing that disturbs me about Greenwood's review (which doesn't mention typos in the catalogue, and lucky for him) is his comment that 'it will bring viewers back a sec-and the written matter as^ociated not an exhibition for swimmers'.

The Age seems to have water on the brain. In one issue this week it reported: 'But he persevered with the gelding, giving him plenty of swimming exercises, until the tide turned.' 'Details of Board of Works curbs on after-hours water repairs are leaked to The Age.' And in an advertisement: 'A 4 inch sprinkler main burst spraying the place! ...We must liquidate stock (regardless of cost)'.

Still, that's a change from the Adelaide papers. I wouldn't dare guess what's on the Advertiser's brain, but this item could provide some clues: 'Tomorrow (Thursday), will be a special day for Mr. and Mrs. Garnet Smith. Their 60th wedding anniversary. And they're looking forward to a get-together on Sunday.'

This seems as good a place as any to mention that the illustrations in this issue were meant to appear in the Anzapacon one-shot, and probably would have if I'd got round to telling anyone. No excuse. Naughty JB!



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25 November Parergon Papers — the journal of lost causes and false starts. I'm not happy with a thing in this issue. I managed to get fifty passable copies of the cover, so that's how many copies there'll be of this issue, and most of them will go to ANZAPA and waitlisters. You hold a collector's item in your hands. (Truly. You'd be amazed what people collect.) I think I might stop putting that stuff about being registered for posting on the cover, because I haven't posted an issue of PP yet, except to ANZAPA and occasionally FAPA.

Did you decide to write twenty pages of mailing comments this time, too? I made lots of notes on the Grand Decennial Mailing. They're around here somewhere. The only note I expanded into a comment was on Frank Payne's stuff, and the comment turned out oddly. I wrote to Helen Swift and told her I thought 'A Day In The Life Of Me' was probably the best single piece in the mailing, which I still think, and that letter turned out oddly, too. I'm not at all sure that dieting agrees with me. I'm quite sure that not-drinking doesn't agree with me. I've written some very strange things since the 10th of November. Not daring further comments on the mailing, I'll just say that Leigh Edmonds' hundred pages of history, bibliography and nostalgia is a landmark in Australian fan publishing, a marvellous, enduring celebration of our fine madness; that I particularly enjoyed the contributions of Helen and Frank, as I've mentioned, and of Gary Mason, Paul Stokes, Robin Johnson, Keith Taylor, Irwin Hirsh, Margaret Arnott and (*sigh*) David Grigg; that there was something enjoyable in every contribution; and that if this mailing is anything to go on, ANZAPA has a fine future ahead of it (as well as behind it).

Sally and I were surprised and delighted to be elected president. We voted for Leigh, and thought everyone else would, too. Peter Toluzzi may have shed some light on this in a letter he wrote to us recently about Applesauce: 'quite aside from not wanting to drop one of the best fan writers in Australia, or her husband...'

It's been an odd sort of year altogether. I don't think it occurred to Sally in January that she might finish the year as an insurance claims assessor in the Victorian Public Service and President of ANZAPA. Certainly I didn't suspect, as I went grudgingly about my duties as a debased-grade clerk in the dole office, that I would end the year hobnobbing with the big names in Melbourne literary fandom and doing work for Oxford University Press; in fact there were a few times when I thought I wouldn't end the year at all (but let's not talk about that — besides, there are still 36 days to go). The move from Adelaide was ruinously expensive, but it was the right move at the right time; we have a settled kind of feeling here that we never had in Canberra or Adelaide; and for this we have Gary Mason to thank, because we couldn't have budged without his help. We've brought with us from Adelaide mostly good memories, a few hurtful (our first tax accountant, the National Trust), a few sad (Flo Oppatt, Adele Koh), and a lot of useful experience; but the best thing we brought with us is Gary's friendship.

Happy Xmas, everyone. Sweet tempus, run softly, and God bless tiny Tomis. Roll on, '79, we're just about ready for you.