

# PHILOSOPHICAL GAS

## 84

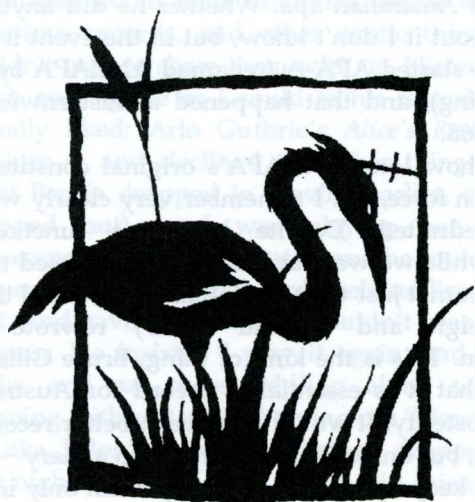
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by John Bangsund  
PO Box 1096, Thornbury  
Victoria 3071, Australia

'You are a philosopher,' said the lady, 'and a lover of liberty. You are the author of a treatise called "Philosophical Gas; or, a Project for a General Illumination of the Human Mind".'

'I am,' said Scythrop, delighted at this first blossom of his renown.

Peacock, *Nightmare Abbey*, ch. 10



## THE MARCH OF MIND

In *Slaydomania* II Ms Frahm of North Queensland claims to have known me while I was still active. I forget when I stopped being active, but it is true that I was still more or less functioning when Leanne and I first met at Anzapacon in 1978. In that year Leigh Edmonds and I were in our thirties, a fact that irritated him, because he always thought I was very old. It follows that in 1968 we were both in our twenties: he had just entered, and I was about to leave.

In those days, a quarter of a century ago, I was married to a lady named Diane and had a cat named Grushenka. Diane was new to fandom, but Grushenka had never known anything else, having been born at the Hardings' place at The Basin. In late 1967 the three of us were living at Ferntree Gully. Barely a week went by without some fannish gathering at 11 Wilson Street, and it was there that I began my long career of being mostly unemployed (in the technical sense, that is: I was quite busy then publishing a journal called *Australian Science Fiction Review*). Diane had become involved with the Melbourne SF Club, an outfit that I tended to avoid. Dick Jensen called it 'the travel agency'. It seemed to attract wild-eyed young men as fond of exotic substances, loud music and strange films as they were of sf. At Easter 1968 the club organized what we modestly called a science fiction 'conference'. Its main venues were an old community hall and a picture theatre in Boronia, a couple of miles from Ferntree Gully, so our place and the Hardings' were packed with fans from interstate (and some locals who couldn't bear to go home), and the convention, or party, went on for some days after the conference had officially ended. The interstate people there, as I recall, included Pat Terry (a long-time Sydney fan, then in his eighties), John Baxter, Kevin Dillon, Bob Smith, John Brosnan, Jack Wodhams... Jack, a postman from Caboolture, had published a couple of stories in *Analog*, and more had been accepted. Addressing the conference, Jack said we'd better enjoy his company while we could, because in a year or two he wouldn't want to know us. But he said it in that nice laconic way that Queenslanders have.

Diane and I were getting tired of travelling forty-odd miles a day, leaving for work in the dark, arriving home in the dark, but perhaps I agreed too readily when she suggested that we share a place with Leigh Edmonds and Paul Stevens, who were moving from South Melbourne. Some time after Easter 1968 we moved into a house-sized flat at 12 Redan Street, St Kilda. When the flat next door was vacated, Tony



Thomas, a frequent visitor, seriously considered moving in. We thought that eventually we could have the whole building occupied by fans, and with this awesome prospect of a super slanshack in mind we formed *Skarcfuta* — the St Kilda Australia Regional Committee For Un-Terran Activities. But before Tony could make up his mind (he was about to marry John Foyster's sister, Myfanwy, and he wasn't sure how keen she would be on the idea), our agent told us we'd be wise to look for another place: the Anglican school on the corner, St Michael's Grammar, had bought the property and soon the building would be demolished.

We could only have lived at Redan Street for four or five months at most, but the place became legendary. At least three fanzines were published there: I was still doing *ASFR*; Leigh had revived the MSFC's clubzine, *Etherline*, and started a genzine called *Rataplán* (the name inspired by the landlord's song in Burnand and Sullivan's *Cox and Box*); and there may have been others. There were frequent editorial meetings, with George Turner, Lee Harding, Damien Broderick, Dimitrii Razuvaev and others — rarely John Foyster: he was doing postgraduate work at Monash, and Elizabeth had asked us kindly not to distract him. I don't think Paul was publishing anything then. He and Noel Kerr conducted cinematic evenings in the loungeroom, screening horror films and (more often) soft porn. Sometimes I came home late and found the room full of people I had never seen before.

Odd memories come back: Damien striding down the street with a tree over his shoulder, or at least a very big branch, which he courteously presented to Diane as one would a bouquet; a rumor that the English sf writer David Rome was living in St Kilda, and one day there he was at our door, explaining that his surname was Boutland and 'Rome' just one of his pennames; Peter Darling and Gary Mason posing for photos in the back yard, one of them holding up for examination the centrefold from the latest *Playboy*, then Leigh's turn, grinning as he demonstrated the only way to read Andre Norton's *The Sioux Spaceman* — upside down; the night that someone broke into my car and stole three books: when the police came I told them to look for someone who liked Hazlitt, Simon Raven and Mao Tse-tung, and they looked at me as though I had described a very suspicious character indeed, someone like me. I can't recall Bruce Gillespie visiting Redan Street, but he can. He had a mystical experience there with George Turner, Damien Broderick and Beethoven. I think we can rely on Bruce to tell us about that.

Just before we moved I did one of the worst things you can do to a friend: I sold my car to Tony. It was a Humber Super Snipe, a huge, impressive-looking car, six or seven years old when I bought it. It had belonged to one of the big oil companies, the salesman told me, and had always been chauffeur-driven. Maybe so, but it moved like a tank, and things kept going wrong with it. I decided to trade it on a VW. Tony asked if he could buy it for the trade-in price. I

should have said no, but I didn't. A few weeks later he and Myf set off on honeymoon, and the car self-destructed in some desolate place in the Western District.

The place in Redan Street was probably built in the early 1900s. There were four apartments, two up and two down, each with a big bedroom at the front, behind that the hallway and a huge lounge, a smaller bedroom and bathroom off the wide corridor, then a big kitchen and dining area, and at the back a pantry and a tiny bedroom, presumably for a servant. For our purposes it was ideal: three private spaces separated by large communal spaces. (Leigh cheerfully accepted the servant's room, and managed to fit his enormous collection of model aeroplanes and Andre Norton paperbacks in it.) The place we moved to, about September 1968, was quite different. It had modern plumbing, for a start, and a laundry. It was one of a block of two-storey flats in Glen Eira Road, Elsternwick, just east of Hotham Street. It was almost house-sized, but not as big as Redan Street. Upstairs were three bedrooms and a bathroom, downstairs the lounge, a dining room and the kitchen. We converted the dining room into a bedroom for Diane and me, and I took one of the bedrooms upstairs for a work room.

The part that visitors seemed to like most was the staircase: Paul, Leigh and Diane used a variety of impromptu sleds on it, and most of our visitors couldn't wait to try it. Having stairs naturally meant that we had a cupboard under them, which we instantly dedicated to George Turner, but we usually referred to it as 'Dillon's Room'. Kevin Dillon was reputed to be able to sleep anywhere. For a few years afterwards the broom closet or other suitably small enclosure in most fannish households in Melbourne was called Dillon's Room. The practice continued in Adelaide, in Gary Mason's house at least.

When Ron Clarke visited us at Elsternwick we had a special insult ready for him: the latest issue of *The Mentor* was hung in the toilet, and above it the notice 'Emergency Use Only'. I can't recall whether Ron was amused or upset, or even whether he let on that he had noticed, but then that's the way I recall Ron generally. Ron had been talking for some time about starting an Australian apa. Whether he did anything but talk about it I don't know, but in the event it was Leigh who started APA-A (renamed ANZAPA by the third mailing), and that happened at Elsternwick in October 1968.

I forget how long ANZAPA's original constitution remained in force, but I remember very clearly where it was redrafted. Despite having a functioning laundry, while we were at Elsternwick we used to go to a laundromat just west of Hotham Street, and that's where Leigh and I (and Paul?) rewrote the constitution. This is the kind of thing, Bruce Gillespie tells me, that it is essential to record for Australian Fannish Posterity. It would have been better recorded at the time, but unlike Bruce I don't keep a diary — and although I keep apa mailings, I keep them only in the



very general sense that I don't throw them out. So I don't know when we rewrote the constitution, only where. Leigh and Paul went on using that laundromat after we parted company, and I sometimes joined them after Diane and I parted company, so it could have been as late as 1971.

At Redan Street we tended to congregate in the kitchen, at Elsternwick in the lounge room. Part of the reason for this, I realize now, is that even then I preferred to relax with my elbows on a table rather than sit in a lounge chair. Another is that any fanzine-publishing household must have a collating table, and there was a lot of fanzine publishing going on at Redan Street, so one way or another we spent a lot of time at the kitchen table. At Elsternwick the only communal space was the lounge room, which also served as dining room and collating room. It was big enough for these things. At first the flat didn't seem big enough for Leigh's music and mine – a problem we hadn't struck at Redan Street, because there, if you happened not to like Shostakovich or Mahler, the Rolling Stones or Cream, you could go somewhere else in the house and not hear it. At Elsternwick there was nowhere to go, so we gradually got used to each other's music, learning what we could put up with and what we couldn't. When I was out, Leigh would play heavy metal; when Leigh was out, I would play Bruckner and Bach. One day I came in and found Leigh listening to a Mahler symphony – memory suggests (see how cautious I am becoming?) that it was the third. I have always thought of that moment as a turning point for Leigh: soon afterwards he was devouring classical music, learning piano, studying music with Felix Werder, composing music. But it might be closer to the mark to say that it was a turning point in my perception of Leigh: he was becoming his own person. I don't know when Leigh and I first talked about our view of life, or how often, but we agreed in general that it's a matter of deciding what things are important to you, then organizing your life to make the most of those things. Over the next few years I watched Leigh doing that, while I fumbled opportunities and lurched from one crisis to the next.

Bernie Bernhouse, a regular visitor at Glen Eira Road, seemed to have unlimited access to the latest American records, and other exotic things, and he couldn't wait to share them with us. I listened with as much good grace as I could to his records – some I actually liked: Arlo Guthrie's *Alice's Restaurant*, for instance – and declined the other things. Late one night Bernie dropped in (having earlier, so to speak, dropped out) as I was playing one of Bach's unaccompanied violin sonatas, and he couldn't believe his ears: he had never heard such sublime music, he said. And having heard it, he couldn't bear not to hear it again. He insisted I play it again, and again, and again, and sat there fiddling along with it and moaning with ecstasy and crying out 'Wow, man!' and the like. I don't know what he had dropped out with that night, but from then on he said mine was much

better gear. Music also had the distinct advantage of being legal. Bernie was usually good company, mainly because he always seemed enthusiastic about something. When Leigh started recruiting members for ANZAPA – yeah, man! – Bernie was in like a shot. He was listed as a member in the first mailing, but was too excited by ANZAPA to publish anything. As far as I know, Bernie is the only person who has been in ANZAPA without contributing to a mailing.

Damien Broderick was another regular visitor. It's odd to realize that he was only 24 at the time: he had already made his mark as a writer. None of us knew where Damien lived, but I had driven him home once and he asked to be let off at a telephone box in Prahran, so we decided that he lived in telephone boxes. Damien has never been a fannish fan. You can tell that from his novel *Transmitters* (1984), a delightful book, which is largely about fandom, very well researched, very funny, and contains almost recognizable portraits of many local fans, but when he attempts fannish humor it doesn't ring true: it always sounds like Damien, who is a great humorist in his own right, but fannish humor is a complex mixture of individual voices and shared allusions and in-jokes. Having said that, and recognizing that Damien would probably prefer not to be thought of as a fan at all, I have to say that he provided the funniest occasion I can remember at Glen Eira Road. In ASFR 16 I had reviewed Philip Harbottle's *The Multi-Man*, an extensive annotated bibliography of John Russell Fearn. This project was greeted with disbelief in Melbourne, where the consensus was that Fearn, under his own name and as Volsted Gridban, Vargo Statten, Astron del Martia and others, was the worst sf writer the world has ever known. We must have been talking about him when Damien picked up a copy of Fearn's *The Intelligence Gigantic* and began reading it to us.

Three men stood quietly thoughtful in a wonderfully equipped laboratory, each holding in his hand a sheaf of papers upon which were executed abstruse mathematical formulae, and sections of the human anatomy, correct to an amazing degree.

The tallest of the three, Doctor Albert Soone, Professor of Chemical Research – a tall, broad-shouldered man of perhaps forty-three years – studied his own papers silently, his lofty forehead wrinkled into furrows of thought, his steel-grey eyes abstracted. The black hair seemed a trifle disordered.

Next to him, equally absorbed, was a much older man, possessing a far kindlier face, less severely chiselled – Professor Peter Ross, Master of Anatomical Research.

The third member of the group, David Elton, an exceptionally well-built young man with riotous fair hair, china-blue eyes, and a square, purposeful face, stood watching his seniors attentively, his hands sunk in the pockets of his laboratory smock.

Presently Dr Soone laid down his papers on the bench and regarded his two companions meditatively.

'Well, Dave,' he remarked at last, after a profound cogitation, 'You certainly have found something! Congratulations!'

The words were curtly spoken, in a cold voice.



That's about as far as Damien got, carefully enunciating every dreadful adverb and adjective, before he joined us in uncontrollable mirth. For weeks afterwards we had only to describe anyone or anything as 'less severely chiselled' and we would pack up all over again.

One night Dick Jenssen came to see us, a fairly rare occurrence. As I recall, the committee organizing the 1969 Melbourne Easter convention met at our place, and Dick may have been a member of that committee. Dick (more formally Ditmar) was something of a legend among the older Melbourne fans. Along with Mervyn Binns, Race Mathews and others, he was a founder of the MSFC. I first met him at the Degraives Tavern (when it was still Jenny's Cellar) in late 1965 or early '66, and what I'd heard of him was true: he looked too young for his age, far too young to have a doctorate, and he could wiggle his ears at will. He had a wicked sense of humor, bordering on the perverse, and a repertoire of disgusting, brilliantly funny jokes. He was urbane — a perfect gentleman, Diane said. He was a meteorologist by profession, but at the least prompting he would talk about the geometry of art, or classical music, or the secret life of Ludwig of Bavaria: he seemed to know everything. But his most passionate interests were sf and film. At our first meeting he talked about *Lawrence of Arabia*, which he had seen overseas. They cut the part where the Arab shoves a stick up his camel's arse, he said sadly. We didn't believe him: typical Jenssen humor. In 1992 I saw the uncut version of the film, and he was right. We always took Dick seriously, but we weren't always sure whether to take him literally. What he had to say that night, this cheerful, unfathomable man, was that we really should have our own equivalent of the Hugo Awards, to recognize Australian achievement in sf and to provide a distinctive Australian recognition of world achievement in sf. If we could work out a system of awards, he said, and he would help us with that, he would put up the cash for the trophies. You could call them Ditmar Awards, he said, with just the hint of a twinkle in his eyes. Twenty-four years on, we still have the Ditmar Awards. Well, not all of us: I have one, and Italo Calvino had one, and Gillespie seems to have the rest.

My Ditmar Award was for ASFR, which by then had become more of a burden to me than a pleasure. It had twice been nominated for a Hugo, and I was proud of that. Many of my enduring friendships in the sf world were founded on it. But I simply couldn't afford it, and to tell the truth, I had become a little tired of sf and very tired of retyping other people's writing. I wasn't sure at first how much I wanted to be involved in ANZAPA as well, but the experience was liberating.

I enjoyed writing *The New Millennial Harbinger* for ANZAPA, and the reaction to it was very pleasing. Lee Harding wrote: 'Offhand I suppose I could think of a round dozen reasons for ASFR to fold; I had thought that ASFR 17 was the best reason yet. But now you've gone one better. The no. 2 *Harbinger* is so good

it makes one wonder why you persist in this pose of Guardian of SF. I enjoyed every word of this delightful effort — and the material was so much more interesting than this weary old sf kick.' If you had had as much strife as I had with Lee over editorial policy, you would have found that pleasing. John Foyster produced ASFR 19 in March 1969, and I did the final issue in June. That final issue had a picture of Thomas Love Peacock on the cover; looking at it today I remembered that it was originally meant to be the first issue of *Scythrop*. And *Scythrop* begat *Philosophical Gas*, and here we are.

According to Leigh Edmonds' list in mailing 64, I contributed 740 pages to ANZAPA in its first ten years. I suppose you could fairly call that active.

## Two Anecdotes of Keats and Chapman

Keats and Chapman were discussing poetry.

'I have often wondered', said Keats, 'what exactly is meant by the expression *poetic justice*.'

'I always imagined it to be a singularly appropriate punishment meted out to some wrongdoer,' said Chapman. 'And such a thing, with respect, seems to happen more frequently in poetic creations than in real life. On the other hand, it may have its origin in some historical occurrence.'

'Such as?' said Keats.

'I am thinking,' said Chapman, 'if you will forgive me, of some possible connexion between the bard and the barred, the court and the caught, the, ah ...'

'I am finding it difficult to forgive you,' said Keats.

'So sorry,' said Chapman. 'But you can perhaps imagine some learned judge, in some far-off time, handing down his decisions in verse ...'

'I cannot,' said Keats.

'... and becoming known far and wide as the Poetic Justice,' Chapman continued. 'I can just see him, addressing some quivering miscreant thus:

*I find the accused a veritable worm!*

*Sweet Thames, run softly, till you end your term.'*

'Lord preserve us,' moaned Keats.

'Or. *Bid daffadillies fill their cups with tears,*

*For thou art in the jug for fifteen years.'*

'Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour!' sobbed Keats.

'Or. *The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,*

*But winding slowly o'er the rack's for thee!*

'Enough! Enough!' cried Keats.

'Really?' said Chapman. 'Do you accept my hypothesis?'

'Oh, certainly,' said Keats, in a rare outburst of sarcasm. 'I don't know how to thank you for this brilliant conjecture!'

'All tributions gracefully conceived,' Chapman murmured modestly.

Not a lot is known about the stage careers of Keats and Chapman, but certainly Chapman's came to a sad end, and it was all Keats's fault. Chapman was playing Polonius in an otherwise unmemorable performance of *Hamlet*, and just as he was about to make his first entrance Keats wished him luck. Chapman turned pale and fell from the wings onto the stage, the first of a series of mishaps that ended in Act 3 when he fell over again and brought the arras down. 'You fool,' said Chapman, red with humiliation and limping badly, when he found Keats, 'You should know that you *never* wish an actor luck!' 'Oh, silly me!' said Keats, 'Of course! — you can't make a *Hamlet* without breaking a leg!' 'Ohh,' Chapman fumed, and turning on his heel, exeunte ominously.



## MUPHRY'S LAW

*Printers have persecuted me without a cause*  
Psalm 119:161

Some readers have wondered why I claim only to edit the *Society of Editors Newsletter* 'in places'. Some suggest that I am too modest, or that I deliberately include a mistake or two in each issue, on the Islamic principle, or simply to make you feel superior. It is for none of these reasons. It is because of my deep respect for Muphry's Law.

Muphry's Law is the editorial application of the better-known Murphy's Law. Muphry's Law dictates that (a) if you write anything criticizing editing or proofreading, there will be a fault of some kind in what you have written; (b) if an author thanks you in a book for your editing or proofreading, there will be mistakes in the book; (c) the stronger the sentiment expressed in (a) and (b), the greater the fault; (d) any book devoted to editing or style will be internally inconsistent.

A recent example of (a) is a review in the *Age* on 29 February of Julie Lewis's *Olga Masters: A Lot of Living*, in which Laurie Clancy criticizes the proofreading; the review consistently misspells Dorothy Hewett's surname. You can probably recall with no trouble, but some anguish, examples of (b); I will mention only the absence of a list of illustrations from Lloyd Robson's award-winning *History of Tasmania*, volume 1 and hurry right along in case the FAW gets wind of this and demands that I return its plaque.

Shirley Purchase's *Australian Writers' and Editors' Guide* is the dictionary I consult first on any matter of Australian style, and it rarely fails me. In her acknowledgements our distinguished colleague uses the word 'meticulous' to describe another distinguished colleague's proofreading. There is a touch of black magic about that word, perhaps reflected in its etymology (Latin *meticulosus*, fearful, from *metus*, fear). Some scholars contend that it should be specifically mentioned in Muphry's Law: 'using the word *meticulous* to describe editing or proofreading guarantees faults in the work'; others maintain that it is amply covered by (b) and (c). Certainly I can think of no other reason for the novel *Coonardoo* being attributed to 'K. S. Pritchard' when AWEG's entry for Katharine Susannah Prichard says emphatically '(not Pritch-)'.

In *The Complete Guide to Editorial Freelancing* (Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1974) Carol O'Neill and Avima Ruder acknowledge the assistance of 160 editors and friends, which is very generous of them. Or could it have been a marketing ploy? (We should sell at least 160 copies of this one, Mr Dodd. I am sure you are right, Mr Mead.) It's a fairly useful sort of book, worth the fifty cents I paid for it some years ago in a remainder joint, but I have never been able to get past page 38. On this page the authors remind us that 'Country names change, and a book that uses an old-hat appellation will seem dated' (a sentence typical of their light-hearted style, which I would have edited in

places). They then tell you where to look for up-to-date place names and give a few examples of countries recently renamed, among them Cambodia, now 'Sri Landa'.

Muphry's Law is no respecter of persons. The editor of the English translation of the *Jerusalem Bible* (Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1966) does not thank his proofreader, but he does list the 'principal collaborators in translation and literary review', among them such eminent people as J.R.R. Tolkien and James McAuley. My copy is not just a first edition — it is a copy that got through before the press was stopped to correct a little mistake in Genesis, chapter 1: 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's siprit hovered over the water.'

Over the centuries Muphry's Law has been particularly evident at work in the Bible. The misquotation that heads this piece is from the *Printers' Bible* (c. 1702), so called because in that verse 'printers' replaced the princes that David was complaining about. There have been other misprints: the original King James version of 1611 was riddled with them. In an edition of 1823 Rebekah's damsels (Genesis 24:61) inexplicably became 'camels'. An Oxford edition of 1820, known as the *Large Family Bible*, renders Isaiah 66:9 as 'Shall I bring to the birth and not cease to bring forth' instead of 'cause to bring forth'. Another, in 1804, had a son coming forth 'out of thy lions'; nothing to do with Daniel — it should have been 'out of thy loins' (1 Kings 8:19). The *Wicked Bible* of 1632 left the word *not* out of the seventh commandment: 'Thou shalt commit adultery.' An edition printed in the reign of Charles I replaced the word *no* in Psalm 14:1 with *a*: 'The fool hath said in his heart there is a God.' The first Bible printed in Ireland, in 1716, transposed two letters in John 5:14: 'Behold, thou art made whole: sin on more.'

These curious facts I have on the authority of the Reverend Doctor E. Cobham Brewer, tireless compiler of curious reference books, including two of my favorites, the *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* and the *Reader's Handbook of Famous Names in Fiction, Allusions, References, Proverbs, Plots, Stories, and Poems*. Brewer died in 1897, before he had finished correcting the proofs of a revised edition of the *Reader's Handbook*. My copy includes his daughter Nellie's preface to that edition, and I will end this ramble by quoting from it.

I thank, too, most warmly, the proof-reader, who has shown so much patience, and has helped me in every possible way in what might have been a very hard task; he made it not only an easy but an exceedingly pleasant one.

And, bless her kind heart, she seems to have got away with that — almost as if Muphry had smiled upon her.

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\* Sri Landa was the name given by an infamous religious sect to its commune in the mountains near Trilby, Virginia — which, oddly enough, is where the original old-hat Appalachians came from.



My apologies to any reader who now has three copies of 'Muphry's Law': ANZAPA has not seen it before. The piece has been reprinted in several editors' newsletters, in Australia, Canada and Britain, invariably with misprints, which tends to prove the point. In the (UK) Society of Freelance Editors and Proofreaders' newsletter my name appeared in 18-point bold as John Bangsurd.

#### Computer alert

Also operator, fortunately. Two lines into the previous paragraph a message came on the screen to the effect that WordPerfect's automatic backup didn't know where to put the latest version of this document. With a degree of quick thinking that surprised me, I instantly saved the document on a floppy, then went looking for the directory where the backup should be. I have two hard disks on this computer, the original 44Mb disk that I thought was so big I would never fill it, and the 85Mb disk installed in 1991. The latter became drive C, the former D. Drive D was reserved for documents (the really important stuff: newsletters, fanzines, letters, reports, the last two books I edited on disk), C for operating programs, until I installed Word for Windows 2 in December: that left so little room on C that I moved some programs I rarely use to D. The backup directory was on drive D, which now, for all practical purposes, no longer exists: 'Unknown media', XTree told me politely. ViruScan was more informative: 'File allocation table bad.' I have always been fairly careful about backing-up documents on floppies, so all I have lost is WordStar and NameGram — and a hard disk. I mean, it's still in there, but it won't talk to me. Given the dust it has had to put up with for thirty months in this grotty little room (*annexe horribilis*), and the chemical pollutants from my cigarettes, I don't blame it. RIP, drive D: expired 2 January 1993 from passive smoking.

#### The SocEds Newsletter

(he continued calmly, as only a man with two hard disks on his computer can) (and a spare computer, just in case) (and everything really was backed up, wasn't it?) (of course it was) (but what if the other disk crashes?) (*what if the roof falls in?*) is what I was about to mention when we were interrupted.

Most of the first twenty-one issues I did, in 1978–80, were produced on a Roneo, in the laundry at Kew, then the garage at Alphington. I usually got stuck with collating, stapling, folding and addressing the thing, as well as stencilling and duplicating it, so by the end of my second term as editor I was sick of it. But the pleasure of producing a fanzine that someone else paid for haunted me, so I volunteered again in 1982 and produced another thirty-odd issues, but this time round I typed it on my lovely IBM 60 (was that the model number? — the one with golfballs and proportional spacing anyway) and then it was printed offset, and often the committee helped me put it together for mailing. In February 1990 Karen

McVicker asked me to do an issue for her and said the committee could only afford \$300, was that OK? You bet. I did another issue for her in June, then took over as Newsletter editor again in July. The Newsletter is just as much work as it ever was, but the work is more productive: the longer pieces that aren't submitted on disk are typed for me by a secretarial service (which also does the folding and addressing), giving me time to think about the fun part — writing-up the news in a sort of fannish way (when it suits me: the dull bits I tend to leave dull), and writing my 'Threepenny Planet' column.

In PG 82 I reprinted a few things from the Newsletter from July 1990 to October 1991. It is included in this mailing of ANZAPA.

About April last year Bruce Gillespie decided to reprint my article 'Sir William and I in Adelaide' from *Canto 1* (1964) in *The Metaphysical Review*, and I wrote a piece called 'Glimpses of a Golden Age' to introduce it. In September I wrote a longer piece, incorporating that one, called 'How I Became an Editor'. While writing it I had both editors and fans in mind, and I published it in two versions, the first in PG 83, the second in the October Newsletter. The first four pages of *this* issue of PG could be regarded as an extended footnote to 'How I Became an Editor'. Bruce has a hundred copies of PG 83 to distribute with TMR to Australian readers. If you aren't on Bruce's mailing list, or if you are but would like to see the October Newsletter anyway, please ask: I have about twenty spare copies.

#### Tod und Verklärung

On the third day... Kevin from Northern Link Computers called in (it really does pay to shop locally) and resuscitated drive D, simply by reformatting it. It's working quite happily. But can I trust it?

#### Back to the futzine

30 January This issue began with the thought that, since I was rejoining ANZAPA in its twenty-fifth anniversary year, I would write something about ANZAPA's beginnings and what was going on in 1968. As I began to write I had in mind a photo, which I planned to use on the third page — a photo of Diane, Paul, Leigh and Grushenka on the back lawn at Elsternwick. That photo has been turning up unexpectedly for years, and I always put it in a special place where I can find it easily on a special occasion like this. It's in this room, this *annexe horribilissimus*, I'm sure, but where? Looking for it in the last few weeks I have sifted through and thrown out more than my own bulk in paper, and still it eludes me. This left me with a big gap on page 820, so I put in those Keats and Chapman stories, which spilled over onto page 821, so I fixed that, then noticed that all the margins were wrong. Fixed the margins, then all the word-breaks were wrong. There is a technical term for this activity: *futzine*. It's not in *Oxford* yet: I checked. That's fussing. For futzing you need a computer.



## RECENT READING

- Alexander, *Australia Since Federation*, 4th edn (Nelson)  
 Arnold, *Writing with Style* (Heinemann)  
 Australia Post ECS Manual (Computer Documentation)  
 Backhouse, *The Japanese Language: an introduction* (Oxford)  
 Ballenden, Davidson & Newell, *Better Chances for Girls* (VISE)  
 Bassett, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Australian History*  
 Beed, *Melbourne's Development and Planning* (Clewara)  
 Blainey & Hutton, *Gold and Paper* (Macmillan)  
 Brett, *Things Could Be Worse* (Meanjin/MUP)  
 Brewer, *On the Bread Line* (Hyland House)  
 Bromby, *An Eyewitness History of New Zealand* (Currey O'Neil)  
 Bromham, *Introducing WordPerfect* (Nelson)  
 Byron & Grace, *Thomas More — Essays on the Icon* (Dove)  
 Charlton, *The Unnecessary War* (Macmillan)  
 Collinson & Hall, *Understanding Hypnosis* (Heinemann)  
 Cox, *The Galloping Guns of Rupertswood and Werribee Park* (Cox)  
 Crowley, *Colonial Australia in Documents*, volumes 1–3 (Nelson)  
 Crump, *School-Centred Leadership* (Nelson)  
 Cumming et al., *Knowledge Tools* (ACER)  
 de Serville, *Tubbo* (Oxford)  
 Donovan & Schmalzer, *Explore Australia* (O'Neil)  
 Dunstan & Hook, *Footy — a Dictionary of Australian Rules Football* (Macmillan)  
 Eagleson, *Inside Language* (Pitman)  
 Erlich & Pryor, *Two in the Kitchen* (Penguin)  
 Establishing Common Scales in Group 1 Subjects (VISE)  
 Fahey & Duggan, *Pacific People and Place* (Cambridge)  
 Fleay, *Accounting — an introduction* (Nelson)  
 Fowler & Bowen, *Questions of Law* (Nelson)  
 Francis et al., *Agriculture and You*, book 2 (Nelson)  
 Gallagher et al., *Through a Geographer's Eyes*, book 3 (Nelson)  
 Gibbs, *Stress and Counter-Stress* (Macmillan)  
 Hamilton, *Religious Education in Australia* (Dove)  
 Hancock & Hill, *Literature-based Reading Programs* (ARA)  
 Harris, *The Unknown Great Australian* (Macmillan)  
 Heath & MacNaughton, *Matter and Energy* (Oxford)  
 Henderson, *HSC Politics Study Aid* (Nelson)  
*The Heritage of South Australia* (Macmillan)  
*The Heritage of Tasmania* (Macmillan)  
*The Heritage of Victoria* (Macmillan)  
*The Heritage of Western Australia* (Macmillan)  
*Historic Places of Australia*, volume 2 (Cassell)  
 Hudson & Griffin, *Behavioural Analysis and Problems of Childhood* (Outback Press)  
 James & Keaney, *Language Works — Teachers' Guide* (Nelson)  
 Jensen & Stabback, *Resources for HSC English* (Nelson)  
 Johnston, *Jobs for the Girls* (Heinemann)  
 Joppien & Smith, *The Art of Captain Cook's Voyages*, volumes 1 and 2 (Oxford)  
 Keats, *Skilled Interviewing* (ACER)  
 Keyte & Baines, *Winter Crossing* (Nelson)  
 Keyte & Baines, *Exits and Entrances* (Nelson)  
 Klinge, *Cycling the Bush: Tasmania* (Hill of Content)  
 Kriegler, *Working for the Company* (Oxford)  
 Latham, *The Working Mother's Handbook* (Dove)  
 Lawson, *The Archibald Paradox* (Penguin)  
 Lee, Mead & Murnane, *The Temperament of Generations: Fifty years of writing in Meanjin* (Meanjin/MUP)  
 Love, *Labour and the Money Power* (MUP)  
 Lowenstein, *Weevils in the Flour* (Hyland House)  
 McCaughy, *Australian Painters of the Heidelberg School* (Oxford)  
 McGregor, *Imagining Realities* (Nelson)  
 Marsh, *Beckom* (Pop. 64) (Hudson)  
 Marshall, *Accounting for a Century* (Touche Ross Australia)  
 Meares, *The Metaphor of Play* (Hill of Content)  
 Mishra, *Tandava* (Meanjin)  
 Moloney, *Woman — First Among the Faithful* (Dove)  
 Morgan, *Border Territory* (Nelson)  
 Mountford, *Aboriginal Conception Myths* (Hyland House)  
 Moyal, *Clear Across Australia* (Nelson)  
 Murnane, *Inland* (Heinemann)  
 Murray, *Anthology of Australian Religious Poetry* (Dove)  
 Murray, *The New Oxford Book of Australian Verse* (Oxford)  
 Pascoe, *Peppermint Grove* (Oxford)  
 Pask, *Ballet in Australia — The Second Act, 1940–1980* (Oxford)  
 Patience & Head, *From Whitlam to Fraser* (Oxford)  
 Pike & Cooper, *Australian Film 1900–1977* (Oxford)  
 Pratt, *Sidney Myer* (Hyland House)  
 Read, *Charles Perkins: a biography* (Viking)  
*Recognition of Prior Learning: Implications for Women* (Broadmeadows College of TAFE)  
*Report on Part-time Work and Victorian Teenagers* (VISE)  
*Report on Curriculum Development Conference 1981* (VISE)  
*Report on HSC Assessment Program 1984* (VISE)  
*Report of Task Force on Certification below Year 12* (VISE)  
*Research Report on Truancy* (VISE)  
 Richmond & Webster, *Become a Non-Smoker* (Heinemann)  
 Robin Smith's *Australia in Colour* (O'Neil)  
 Robson, *A History of Tasmania*, volume 1 (Oxford)  
 Roland, *Caviar for Breakfast* (Hyland House)  
 Rowe, *Learning with Personal Computers* (ACER)  
 Sansome & Ridsdale, *The Oxford Australian Junior Dictionary*  
 Solomon, *Australia's Government and Parliament*, 7th edn (Nelson)  
 Theophanous, *Australian Democracy in Crisis* (Oxford)  
 Tranter & Mead, *The Penguin Book of Modern Australian Poetry*  
 Turnbull, *The Spycatcher Trial*, rev. edn (Heinemann)  
 Turner, *In the Heart or In the Head* (Norstrilia Press)  
 VISE, *Approved Year 12 Study Structures: Fine Arts Course*  
 VISE, *STC Course Business Studies Course*  
 VISE, *Year 12 Course Descriptions: Accounting Advanced*  
 Typing Ancient Greek Arabic Art Asian History  
 Australian History Australian Race Relations  
 Biblical Studies Business Mathematics Chemistry Chinese  
 Christian Social Perspectives Classical Ballet Classical  
 Civilization Commercial Mathematics Community Language  
 Studies Comprehensive Music Computer Science Croatian  
 Czech Dance Design and Technology Drama Dutch Earth  
 Science Economics Eighteenth Century History Electronics E  
 Elementary Data Processing English English A English B  
 Environmental Science French Geography German  
 Government and Law Graphic Communication Graphic  
 Techniques Greek History The Hindu Way of Life  
 Home Economics — Human Development and Society Hungarian  
 Indonesian Interpretations in Australian History  
 Introductory Accounting Introductory Business Law  
 Introductory Data Processing Italian Japanese Latvian  
 Legal Studies Lithuanian Mathematics at Work  
 Modern Greek Music Music A Music B Office Dictation  
 and Transcription Oral English Outdoor Recreation  
 Personhood: a Christian Perspective Physical Recreation and  
 Health Physical Science Physics Polish Professional  
 Dressmaking Psychology Religious Studies Roman History  
 Russian Secretarial Practice Secretarial Studies  
 Serbo-Croatian Slovene Small Business Management  
 Society and Scientific Technology Spanish Studies in Theatre  
 Arts Symbols and Searchers Talmudic Studies Turkish  
 Values and Human Ecology  
 VISE, *Handbook for Year 12 Curriculum and Assessment — 1981, 1983, 1985, 1986*  
 Wahlqvist, *Use and Abuse of Vitamins* (Macmillan)  
 Walker, *Colonial Crafts of Victoria* (Ministry for the Arts)  
 Warlow & Senserrick, *Goods and Services Tax Guide* (GST Publications)  
 Wilson, *WordPerfect, Step by Step* (Nelson)  
 Yates & Mroczkowski, *TAFE Accounting* (Nelson)  
 Zucchi, *Indonesian Cuisine* (Heinemann)



Looking at all the lists of recent reading in ANZAPA I felt I should do a list too. Mine is different in that it's a list of what I've been paid to read since mid-1978. It's not complete. I have read the last eighteen issues of *Meanjin* pretty thoroughly, and a few other things. My first job when I returned to Melbourne was proofreader on the night shift at Southdown Press: *Woman's Day*, *TV Week*, *Best Bets*, great stuff; since then I have done three stints as part-time or casual reader for typesetters. For about eighteen months in 1987-9 I was slushpile-reader for a Melbourne publisher: Lyn McConchie may be depressed to learn that I looked at over 700 unsolicited manuscripts in that time and recommended twenty-odd for publication. Of these I can recall only two that were eventually published. *Meanjin* used to publish about one story out of every fifty submitted; now, with more being written and fewer magazines, it's about one in two hundred.

In mailing 149 David Grigg mentions Winston Churchill's *bon mot* about America and Britain being 'two countries divided by a common language'. I wish I'd been as confident about the wording two years ago, David: I couldn't find the quote anywhere. In the Newsletter for November 1990 I published letters from John Berry, Robert Lichtman and a British freelance editor, Naomi Laredo, and followed them with this note:

Naomi, meet Robert and John. Robert and John are already acquainted. You and Robert say 'The Chicago Manual', John says 'the Chicago Manual'. I said 'The Chicago Manual', but I tend to agree with John. You say tomato, they say tomato, I say tomato. Three countries divided by a common vegetable.

What these letters were about was a piece I had written called 'A Riot of Parentheses' (reprinted in PG 82). I returned to this subject in November '92 in some notes on the new edition of Judith Butcher's *Copy-editing: the Cambridge Handbook*:

The mystery of parentheses within parentheses remains: "In British style use double parentheses; but in American style use square brackets within parentheses." (The author ((I am fairly confident)) does not mean "double parentheses" in this sense.)

Judith Butcher wrote to me: 'No one has commented before on the ambiguity of "double parentheses"; I wish they had, because I would have changed it. I'm making a note for the next reprint.' So, you see, editing has its fandom too. Unlike real fans, editors who would never write comments on anything important will fall over themselves to comment on trivialities.

Which brings me to Leanne Frahm again. Shall I be the only member *not* to mention to you, Leanne, that the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 4 is a printer, not a copier? I shall not. Forgive me. I agree with you that reading an ANZAPA mailing 'comes a touch below watching *Sale of the Century*', but only because you can learn so much from that program, especially about music. Last year, for example, I learnt that Kiri Te Kanawa first came to wide public attention when

she sang Desdemona in Verdi's *Aida*. Just about anyone would attract some attention by doing that, but I heard it first on *Sale of the Century*. I first heard of Verdi's *Rigolotto* on the same show, and learnt that Prokofiev is pronounced *procka-feev*. Was it from ANZAPA or *Sale of the Century* that you learnt how to spell *de rigueur*?

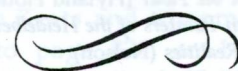
From Terry Frost we learn that 'nobody drinks riesling any more'. Or do we? No, it's just that 'riesling is very proletarian these days'. Thank God for that: I was about to throw out my 1988 Kidmans and 1989 Seppelts, but if they're good enough for the proletariat I'll go on enjoying them.

Marc Ortlieb, one of many people talking here about vasectomy, suggests joining a monastery as an alternative, and asks 'Do they allow you access to fanzines if you live in a monastery?' I think they do. Among ASFR's subscribers were Ken Sinclair, of St Francis Monastery, Lonsdale Street, and Guy Nelligen, a Carmelite father at Whitefriars, Donvale. I visited both of them. Ken had a huge print of Dali's *Crucifixion* on his wall, and I seem to recall a discreet collection of sf. Guy didn't show me his room, but he did show me the library at Whitefriars, and it was magnificent. You would probably find plenty to read in a place like that, Marc.

(On Sunday nights Sally and I often listen to the church music program on 3MBS; one night last year I was delighted to realize that we were listening to a mass at St Francis celebrated by Ken Sinclair.)

I enjoyed ANZAPA 149: the standard seems to have improved since 1989. Singular Productions — a strange-sounding crew, especially if they really think that getting stuffed is 'the latest thing in Australian fandom' — provide the highlight of the mailing, or to be exact, Ian Gunn does in his trip report. Putting up a 'Garage Sale' sign halfway across the Nullarbor was an inspired piece of fanarchy.

As I heard that David and Leanne and Marc had rejoined ANZAPA I toyed with the idea of doing likewise. At Roger's funeral I decided I must. Roger was a genial, witty man, always interesting and interested, always good company, and I hardly knew him at all. Of his 120-odd friends at the funeral I knew only a handful; some I simply didn't recognize. I am not a very sociable person these days, but there are friendships that can be renewed, others perhaps to be made, and ANZAPA seems a good place to start doing that.



Word count: 7673 Press any key to continue