



RATAPLAN 16

RATAPLAN
SIXTEEN



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A Big *A* appearing on the cover of this issue
indicates a parting of the ways unless you
respond in one of the fashions recommended above.

A letter from Eric Lindsay on RATAPLAN 14 begins:

"Although your editorial makes some good points about Melbourne fandom being involved in AUSSIECON, possibly to the exclusion of other activities, that is not the impression that fans outside Melbourne are getting. The general impression here seems to be that Melbourne, as a fan centre, has just about folded. Now I hope this is wrong but even if it is incorrect the existence of such an impression outside Melbourne inevitably means that Melbourne is losing support and help that it may need for AUSSIECON. I would guess that the August 1974 convention in Melbourne will not attract as much support as previous cons for this reason."

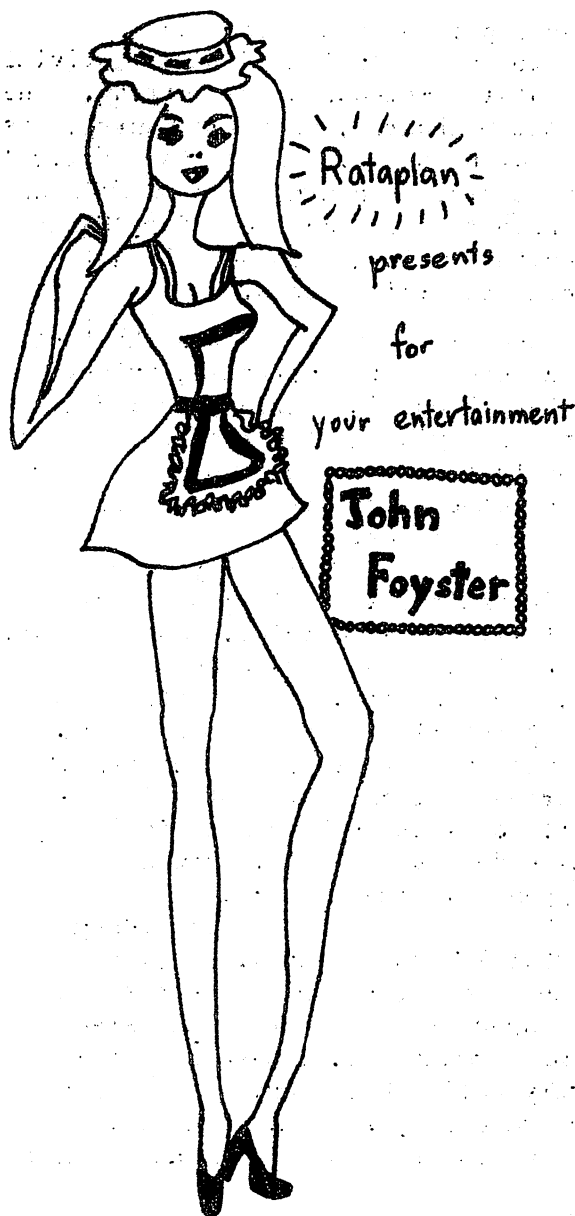
Fair enough, actually, though it does seem to be a bit odious the fact is that communications between the two fan centres in Australia, Sydney and Melbourne, have been lower than they have been since 1968 when Sydney fandom was just getting started again and moulding itself into the form it takes now. There are few visits of fans between the two cities and I venture to say that fewer letters pass between the cities than the letters that pass from one of them to some US fan centres.

It is easy enough to say that this is a deplorable state of affairs, which it just might be, but the problem is that just saying it will solve nothing. Such a thing as a constructive comment would also be just as useless since fans are usually not impressed by such things. So, the situation exists where Sydney and Melbourne fandoms are almost totally ignorant of what the other is doing and while Melbourne fandom appears to be far better at the spreading of information about various things little of this seems to be directed at Sydney. I hear a little of what is happening in Sydney, mainly because of FANEW SLETTER, if I didn't publish this newszine I would be totally ignorant of what happened in that centre.

In Sydney fandom there are only three or four people that I actually know. Of the currently active fans Ron Clarke is the oldest, his wife Sue has not been involved nearly so long and while she appears to be very interested in publishing, which is the main way fans communicate, I have been told that I've met her but don't remember it very well. Everybody has met and knows Eric Lindsay, and I suppose the same goes for Shyane McCormack. Apart from them there are a few other names that come to mind, but not very forcibly.

Working in the other direction I wonder how many Melbourne fans are well known by the fans in Sydney. Not many I suspect.

For this reason it seems to me it would be a great pity if Sydney fans did not make a good attempt to come to the Convention in August and if Melbourne fans did not make a similar attempt to get to the Sydney convention next Australia Day. At both of these conventions, in a mere six or seven days, more can be done to make the members of the two fandoms of these two cities (as well as fans from Brisbane, Canberra, Adelaide and Albury) familiar with each other than many tons of fanzines. One can make friends through the mail but then a personal meeting cements the friendship. Fans from all over Australia can do nothing better for the success of AUSSIECON than to attend the two conventions before it.



THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT (hereinafter TLS) is just about the most dangerous periodical in the world. I have learned not to buy it too often and, perhaps, by discussing the latest issue I bought, I can persuade others to resist its charms.

I have before me the issue of 9 November, 1973 (40c as McGills', 12p in the U.K. - 12p is about 18c by the way). In which the lead review is of Ptolemaic Alexandria by P.M. Fraser. The reviewer begins with some "reflections on the state of Alexandrian archeology", the gist of which is that, at Alexandria as at so many other places, the interest of archeologists in remnants of earliest times leads to their dismissal of and disinterest in materials of later times: in Alexandria this means discarding Greco-Roman material to get at the earlier, Dynastic levels.

The reader does not hesitate to draw the reader's attention to the difficulties of organization of Fraser's work, and also to occasional lacunae in the author's knowledge of Alexandrian and Egyptian history and culture. Overall, however, it is made quite plain that this is a remarkable and important work. The reviewer concludes:

"But this inconvenience is greatly outweighed by the rare intellectual pleasure of reading something so admirable in its scope, so rich in its learning, so informed in its understanding, and so lucidly written. ...

Ptolemaic Alexandria is truly a monument of erudition, wholly worthy of its noble subject."

The inconvenience referred to is the fact that the text and notes appear in separate volumes - but since these are 812 and 1116 pages respectively one has to balance that against the inconvenience of a 2000 odd page volume

(and throw in the third volume as well - a 155 page index).

Obviously a most desirable series of volumes - but at 25 Pounds, not the sort of thing one purchases on the spur of the moment. And yet one is hardly likely to wait around successfully for the paperback edition.

The page on which that review ends carries an advertisement for a new edition of M.G. Lewis's The Monk, which is described as "the first ever to follow the manuscript, which has only recently come to light, in all details", published by Oxford University Press at 4 Pounds. On the opposite page is an ad. for Authority, Participation and Cultural Change in China which looks pretty interesting and at £1.70 (paperback) from Cambridge University Press not a bad buy at all. Up above that ad. is a review of The Lords of the Golden Horn by Noel Barber, which seems to be a fairly worthwhile volume on the rulers of the Ottoman Empire (£3.50).

Over the page is a review of Darwin and His Critics by David L. Hull, which is probably a pretty good buy at £9.25, but a little too expensive for me, I fancy. The book is not about evolution, but the infrastructure of science, something which has been examined with increasing care over the past thirty years or so.

Down beside that review is an ad. from Jonathan Cape - Gravity's Rainbow by Thomas Pynchon (which you all should have read, but the U.S. paperback is cheaper), Vermilion Sands by J.G. Ballard (his best book), Wartime by Adrian Mitchell and Sadness by Donald Barthelme (a sort of rich man's Thomas M. Disch). Could have been an expensive month.

The next page carries reviews of fiction, and fortunately none of the books reviewed seemed likely to appeal to me.

Over the page again to a lengthy review of a number of recent books on recent U.S. art (concentrating on New York). The reviewer draws attention to the pretensions of many U.S. art critics and historians, but is able to draw some worthwhile conclusions from these eight books: it would be very jolly to write about this lot, but it would also take a lot of time and space. Part of the rest of the double page is devoted to a review of a new book on (Bosch (under the heading De-mystifying Bosch). The reviewer makes it plain that one would purchase this book (Hieronymus Bosch, by Walter S. Gibson, Thames & Hudson, £2.50) for the text and not for the less-than-wholly-successful illustrations.

Education and Emnity: The Control of Schooling in Northern Ireland, by Donald Harman Akenson (at £4.95) looks pretty good reading. The situation is summed up well by the reviewer in the following paragraph:

Part of the real difficulty up to Vatican II was that large numbers of people felt all along "that it was wrong to allow the clergy to claim authority over secular education" while they failed to understand that any form of compromise by the Catholic clergy on the principle of "simple Bible teaching" - the non-sectarian solution accepted by all creeds save the Catholics - was an acceptance that Protestantism

had some form of theological validity, and that ecumenicalism was possible. At the same time the politicians of Northern Ireland were always hemmed in by the fact that any attempt to pay substantial sums to the Catholic schools ran into opposition from the Protestants to what was in effect the endowment of the Catholic religion. Here truly was an impasse, that became more impassable as the bishops kept their faces set against any public intervention.

Underneath that is a review of a book about universities today, a subject singularly irrelevant to Leigh Edmonds. But next to it are advertised two books which may be of interest: The Berlioz Style by Brian Primmer (£3.75) and The Templars in the Corona de Aragon by A.J. Forey (£7.50). Well, the second one looks interesting to me at least (the Templars were in Aragon as an order for about 150 years).

Over the page are reviews of a few war books (well, two) and of A History of the British Cavalry 1816-1919 Volume 1: 1816-1850 by the Marquess of Anglesey, which might cost £7.50 but which is a sort of war book (?) which does vaguely interest me: the sort of thing I've read a bit of lately is more concerned with tactics and strategy and stuff, and I gather that the three remaining volumes of this history will be devoted to a part of the British military which played an even less significant role over this century.

An architecture book is reviewed on the next page: special interest, and then a review of Volume 1 of a biography of Aldous Huxley (which takes us through to 1939). The books published by Calder & Boyars tend to be very good (on average) so their ad. is probably worth a glance: doesn't look as though there's anything I'd go out of my way for - the Ivan Illich probably won't have much that's new in it, I have the Beckett, and I suspect I could live without John Cage.

The next page is dull - really dull: a report on an unwilling stay as guest of some urban guerillas in Uruguay is the most promising-looking book, although a Dilys Powell volume might pay off (one would have to examine the goods first, whereas the titles I've been referring to above could probably be bought sight unseen).

Proust and Rilke by E.F.N. Jephcott (C & W, £3.50) is the best prospect on the page after that (page 1369, by the way). The history of modern Greek literature could be okay, but looks risky. No interest in the Lawrence books.

Page 1370 carries the 'editorial' - a derogation of South Africa, which is rather neatly done. Two interesting books are reviewed - well, I would like to look at Anthony Bonner's Songs of the Troubadours (Allen & Unwin, £5) before purchasing. The Routledge & Kegan Paul title, Making People Pay (by Paul Rock, £5.75) may be of interest to those acquainted with debt-collectors. There is a delightful contrast, is there not, in the prices of these two books?

Aaaaagh! The next page and a half are devoted to a review of 4 volumes of Longfellow's letters (£20 for 2200 pages from Harvard University Press),

which I really couldn't bring myself to read and, hello, here's an ad. for The Stainless Steel Rat Saves The World by one H. Harrison.

The letter column is next, and I want to print one letter and one reply, in full:

Sir, - I think it improper of the TLS (Commentary, November 2) to publish an account (whether commissioned or unsolicited), as what was said at an informal meeting of an Oxford student society (not a formal "lecture", every word considerate), and to quote, not altogether accurately, things said in reply to questions. (The questions themselves - such as "Hasn't Harold Bloom shown that Eliot is an Emperor with no clothes?" - being withheld in the interests of febrility.) There is a difference between a room full of people one evening - with a context, an atmosphere, faces and tones of voice - and the public prints, especially as the publicness of the TLS is a vulpine anonymity. The TLS should not pretend that there is no such thing as a semi-public occasion, or that if there is it demands a semi-sense of editorial responsibility; and the TLS should not take the politician (who, it is claimed, asks for it) as the type of public appearance. That even the TLS's deft skulker may have felt some twinge is suggested by his not having had the courtesy to mention either to the speaker or to the senior member of the society that he intended to publish his impressions.

I should want to rescind very little of what I said, even extempore, but it is a matter of real regret to me that, thanks to the TLS tattler, I may have caused Dr. F.R. Leavis embarrassment and vexation.

CHRISTOPHER RICKS
Bristol.

To which the editorial reply was:

We are not sure what special dispensation Professor Ricks is asking for with his new, foxy classification as "semi-public". We should not, perhaps, have described his Oxford address as a "lecture"; but the fact that it was given at a crowded meeting in a college lecture-room, no society passes being required for entry, does not seem to suppress comment on it. Professor Ricks cannot believe that but for the TLS news of his incisive repartee would never have been passed on to a larger audience. If he now wishes to modify some of the things he was then led to say, it is our own feeling that semi-public occasions also demand a semi-sense of professional responsibility.

What a pleasant way of saying: Get knotted!

At any rate, there are a couple more letters on the same subject (from

Leavis and F.W. Bateson), and then some less interesting ones, followed by a 'Commentary' dealing with a course on the nineteenth-century novel at the Open University.

On the next page, reviews of three books on South America, of which the most promising seems to be The Aztec Image in Western Thought by Benjamin Keen (Rutgers University Press, \$20). It's a book for non-specialists (why, it admits as much in the review...) which is just about right for me.

Pages 1375-6 are largely devoted to a review of Billion Year Spree by Brian W. Aldiss. Reviewers in TLS are not named, and this looks like the work of Robert Conquest, though the bad taste evidenced by the reproduction of the July '57 cover of F&SF suggests the hand of Kingsley Amis.

The first paragraph of the review reads:

A new history of science fiction might ordinarily be the occasion for a calm and considered setpiece on the subject. On the other hand Brian Aldiss's new book is so continuously stimulating or irritating that it calls for a more point-by-point approach; and this is probably for the best, since the issues raised, partly aesthetic, partly socio-psychological, are not really susceptible of a tidy - perhaps of any - formal solution.

The result of this attitude, adopted so deliberately by the reviewer (who is, so Bruce Gillespie informs me, the afore-mentioned Robert Conquest), is not in any way stimulating, though it is rather irritating, for the reviewer persistently trots out his prejudices as though these are final judgments of Aldiss's prejudices: assertion is not argument.

Furthermore, there have now been quite a few books like Billion Year Spree and I am afraid that a calm and considered setpiece is exactly what we needed, no matter how inviting any alternative might have been, for the important issues raised by Billion Year Spree are not associated with any peculiarities in Aldiss's view of politics, sex, or sociology, but with Aldiss's attitude towards science fiction, and the reflection of that attitude in the book.

And no matter how inviting the opportunity to spar, the reviewer might have attempted a more detailed overview than an (admittedly not wholly unfriendly) dismissal of the book as 'a highly idiosyncratic gallop of hobby-horses in all directions'. The evidence is that this is a good description of the review, while the reviewer's approach ('point-by-point') is intended to make Billion Year Spree fit his description, whether or not that description is accurate.

Robert Conquest refers to the danger of readers taking Billion Year Spree as gospel: there is also a considerable danger that readers of this review will take it too literally. For example, when we read:

On the other hand, many hard SF writers have a surprisingly clear grasp of the nature of politics and of power - A.E. van Vogt, for instance, in his accounts of struggles for power in strange futures; Heinlein, too, in spite of Mr Aldiss's claim that his grasp of politics

is "frail"; and Asimov.

we must understand 'power' and 'politics' to have meanings somewhat different from those to be found in dictionaries, and certainly different from those intended by Brain Aldiss.

It would be possible to continue to pick nits in the review, but overall it is a most readable piece of writing: but I cannot help but be dissatisfied that the reviewer took the line he did. But then, I think I would have preferred to read Billion Year Spree as written by James Blish.

There follow 2½ pages of reviews of SF or sf-related books, together with a few specialist ads. Ten lines are devoted to The Embedding by Ian Watson which, Bruce Gillespie tells me, is slightly the rage amongst British fans nowadays. There's also an ad. on this fourth page based upon a part of Conquest's review of Billion Year Spree.

There isn't a whole lot more in this issue of TLS, but since starting to write this description/review of a review I have taken out a sub. I seem to have convinced myself.

-- John Foyster

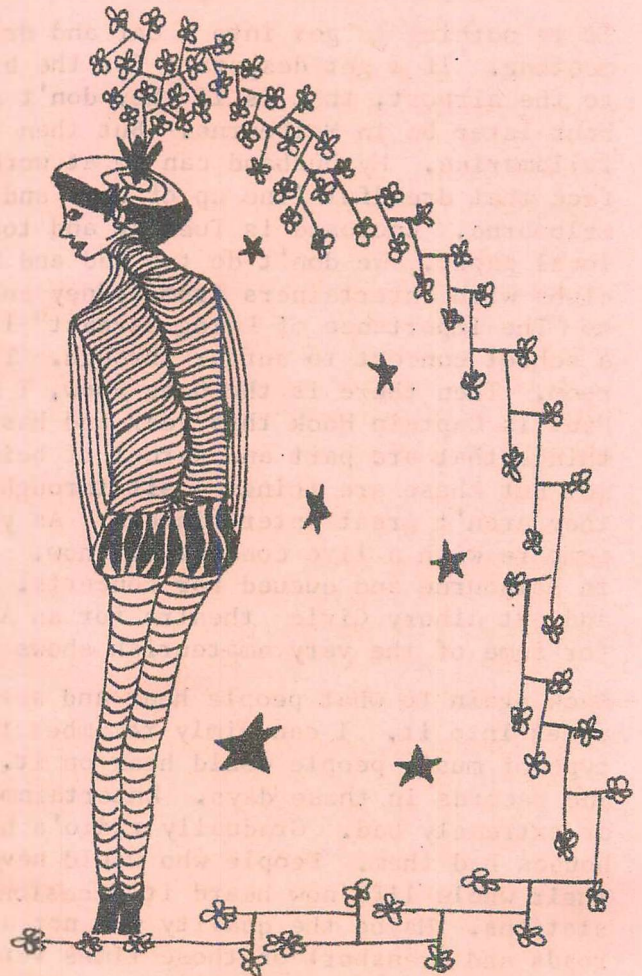
* * *

And now it's letter time:

Joan Dick
379 Wantigong Street
Albury 2640

One of my friends at the Astronomical Society was up early one morning with her child and as she glanced out the window she saw a flashing light passing overhead. She says it was a flying saucer. I say it was an early morning sighting of a satellite passing northwards or eastwards into the light of advancing day. It is possibly left over space debris from a take-off and it tumbles as it goes merrily around thus giving it a flashing appearance. She has given me "UFOs over the Southern Hemisphere" to read. I have "God Drives a Flying Saucer" from Space Age and in a more serious vein am reading "We Are Not Alone".

We are still getting a lot of rain up here. Not flooding



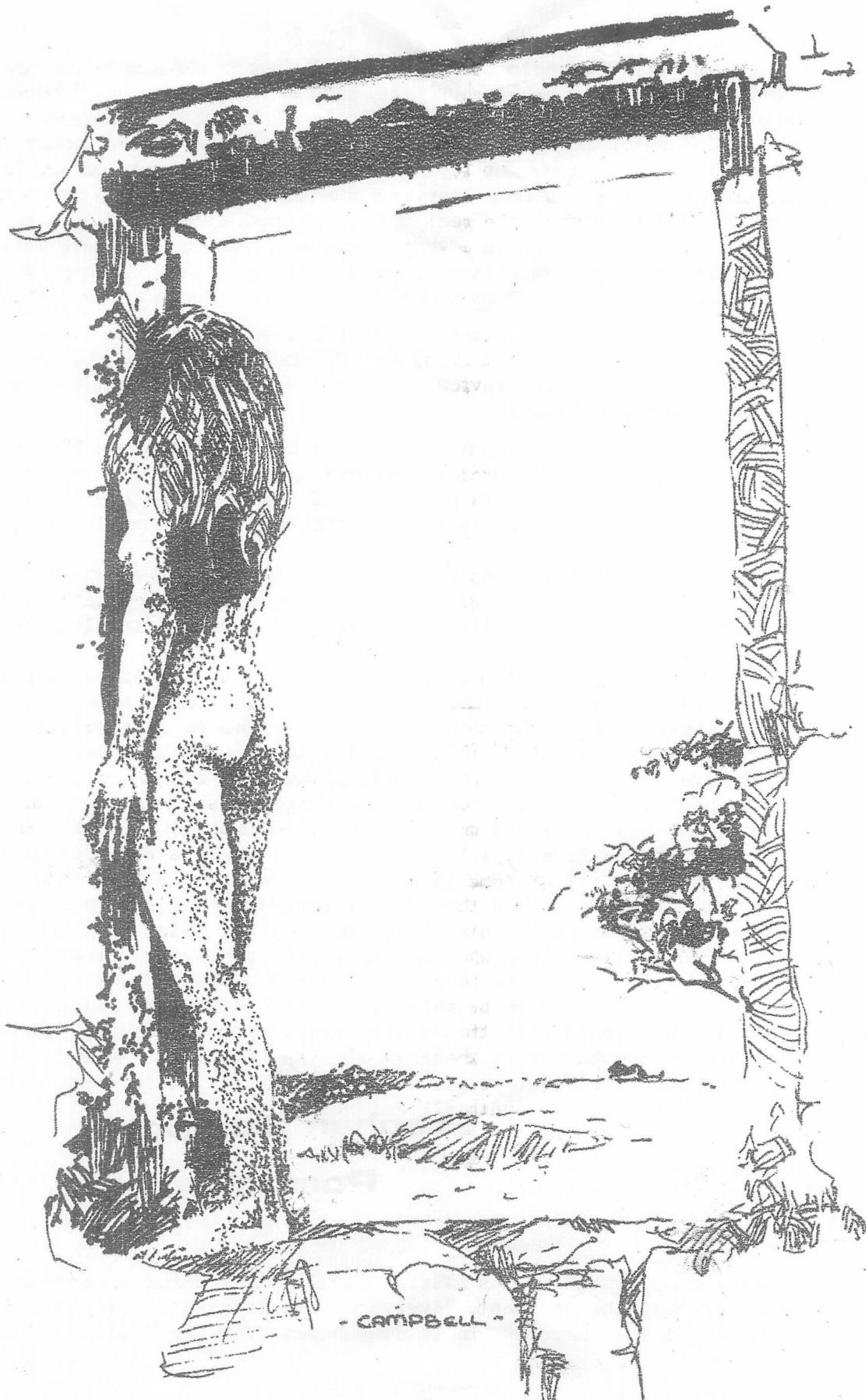
rain but steady rain. The washing gets done on fine days and then dried off inside. But today I received a letter from Humula, you pass it or turn off to it as you go up to Canberra or Sydney. It is a very small collection of houses on a creek. On Good Friday there was a fall of 250 points ten miles up the creek. This along with seven inches in the few days beforehand proved to be too much and now my cousin who lives on the bank of the creek is shovelling mud out of her house. Not as bad as Sydney or Brisbane I know but bad enough.

I gather that when you reach Wodonga you turn left at the lights, cross that dreadful railway crossing, thread your way across the Lincoln Causeway (it has wonderful scenery, especially the tip. All is being done away with, the buildings and all, and it is to be allowed to revert to its natural state as a unique area of river flooding flora and fauna). Then you go up Wodonga Place, into Hume Street along Young Street, into Mate Street and hence out the highway again. Yep, that is real soul destroying country. When I talk of Albury I find, after some deep thought, that I have a tendency to lump Wodonga, Albury, Bandiana, Bongilla, Jindera, Howlong, The Weir, Tallangata, Corowa and various other places together. It is like Melbourne and the suburbs such as Camberwell, Box Hill, Preston and so on.

It is nothing to get into a car and drive to Wagga for an afternoons meeting. If I get desperate for the big city, I can drive in ten minutes to the airport, that is if they don't shift it to Corowa, and half an hour later be in Melbourne. But then there is the dreadful drive from Tullamarine. My husband can be at work in five minutes and we do not face that dreadful line up of cars and trams I usually get into in Melbourne. Enclosed is Tuesday and today's entertainment section of our local paper. We don't do too bad and besides these things there are the clubs with entertainers from Sydney and Melbourne. I am looking forward to "The Importance of Being Earnest" later in the year. Next week I have a school concert to suffer through. They have been practising in my front room. Then there is the Gang Show, I manage to get there every year. Paul is Captain Hook this year and has another part also. These two are things that are part and parcel of being a mother. They come with the act but these are things I sit through because I love my family though they aren't great entertainment. As you say, there is nothing to compare with a live concert or show. I have stood through the ballet in Melbourne and queued for concerts. I will brave the cold of winter and out Albury Civic theatre for an ABC concert. But I will not suffer for some of the very amateurish shows we do get.

Back again to what people hear and see via the TV and radio. Here age comes into it. I can dimly remember those early days of radio and the type of music people could hear on it. There were very few gramophones and records in those days. Entertainment was what you made it; very good or extremely bad. Gradually radio's became cheaper and more and more houses had them. People who would never have heard classical music in their whole life now heard it occasionally, more if they picked their stations. Maybe the quality was not as good as a live show but with the roads and transport of those times very few could travel to a live concert. The vast majority of people these days still get all their

A
Stephen Campbell
Portfolio



entertainment from the radio or TV. Some of them would not cross the road to listen to a concert even if the tickets were given away free. But, and this is my point, these same people will sit in their own front room and watch a good presentation via TV. Isn't this better than nothing. If a family grows up seeing and hearing this sort of music and presentation in their own home they may one day be tempted to cross the road and see and hear what the real thing is like. And don't knock THE BOX or 96 or CLASS OF '74. In a very funny way they have caused us to start watching some of the better shows the ABC produces because my husband hates those three shows and will watch anything else but them.

I am thinking of writing a letter of complaint to GMV 6. They have stopped showing the late night SF movies as it is now football season and we MUST have a football review. The whole world would stop if we didn't have our football....

((My parents have a few shares in GMV 6 so the next time I'm writing to them I'll tell them what's happened on their station and see if they can get a few strings pulled. Unfortunately they only have a couple of hundred shares so they'll only be able to pull little strings.

Thanks for sending those two pages out of your paper, it's a pity you couldn't have got me a couple of hundred of them so that I could staple them in with this issue, it would certainly have saved a lot of typing.

I have to agree with you that almost any way of getting culture (if I may use such a vulgar word) to people is good. Even though a Beethoven symphony on the TV is a pretty ghastly affair usually - though I once saw Bernstein conduct the last movement of the 9th which had me sweating and shaking - it seems preferable to some second rate singer bashing out one of the more inane popular songs or, of course, THE BOX, 96 or CLASS OF '74. The catch is that, especially with records, people begin to think that what they get at home is better than what they hear in the concert hall or see in a theatre. I remember reading somewhere a hi-fi enthusiast complaining that the music he heard at a concert was so much duller than what he could get at home on his expensive stereo system. Mybe the poor fellow was too used to his artificially reproduced sound to be able to realise that music produced live just doesn't sound like that and no matter how vibrant the strings and how brassy the brass there is always a missing element. So we are breeding a race of people used to artificial music and, in fact, used to all sorts of synthetic entertainment.))

Ray Nelson
333 Ramona Ave
El Cerrito
CA 94530
US of A

Your grandmother's article was fascinating, and the thing in it that most caught my eye was the statment, "Everybody was interested in playing some kind of musical instrument." In reading books from the Victorian Era and

even mail-order catalogs, I have repeatedly been impressed by the sheer volume of amateur musicianship that appears to have been thriving back then. And, as your grandmother also mentions, there was music in the church, music to be performed by the congregation, not just listened to.

Perhaps this has some bearing on the theory that a whole lot of bad music has to be performed before something good appears. In a culture where "everybody is interested in playing some kind of musical instrument", there is the right kind of environment for the development of high-quality music, not because the audience is uncritical, ready to applaud any old thing and leave judgement to posterity, but on the contrary because the audience, being composed of musicians of various levels of ability, is more demanding of any performer who sets himself up as a "professional".

In my lifetime I have seen the level of amateur musical participation fall rapidly, and I have the impression from what I hear from old folks that the process had already proceeded pretty far before I appeared on the scene. Today very few people play any musical instrument, or even sing (in a choir or some such thing). As a result those few who can play at all seem so much better than they really are, and can present themselves to the public as professional "rock stars" before they are able to handle their instruments, trusting to loud volume and weird showbiz presentations to cover up their defects.

Here in the Bay area I get to observe, because I have many friends in the music business, either as players or promoters or something like that, just exactly what modern music is like. First of all, there is the atmosphere of contempt for the audience. The rock musicians I talk to all agree, without exception, that their audiences are mindless idiots who will applaud anything that is loud and rhythmical. Right now it is a fad among rock musicians here to go on at great length about how they themselves never listen to anything but classical music, though close questioning generally reveals that their knowledge of classical music is, to put it mildly, limited.

I can not help but contrast this to the atmosphere of rural Norway, where I once played in a waltz and polka band. There the feeling for the audience was entirely different. The people out there on the dance floor might very well be musicians too, and might now and then sit in with the band while the "professionals" took a bounce around the floor. I like that. I like not having the line between amateur and professional too sharply drawn. I like the idea of people playing just for fun... around here all the "superstars" and would be "superstars" think of nothing but all the millions they are going to milk out of the "dumb groupies".

And I remember when I was a teenager in the late '40's. That was before the musician's union was as powerful as it is today. I played in a dance band (drums) and never belonged to the union, though some of the players in our band were union. We didn't make much money, but we loved what we were doing. It made a difference that amateurs and professionals could play together without the pros paying a fine.

There was a while, in the '50's, when folk music seemed to be making a comeback. What happened? Maybe pot came along and everybody got too stoned to play.



Well, forget about pot and rock. Let's get back to so-called "serious" music. Tell me, do composers of classical modern music get together somewhere at regular intervals and jam? Do they get together and play their things for each other and talk music? Do they form little groups to perform for nothing or very little in some cafe or private home? If you can answer yes to this question, I'll stop worrying about the state of Australian music, at least somewhat.

Here in the Bay Area the serious composers hate each other. They fight like lunatics for the few crumbs that the foundations throw their way in the form of commissions. Or maybe I should compare them to tomcats. They can't stand to be in the same room with each other without starting to bite and scream and bite and claw. The only exception is the electronic music composers. They don't like to listen to each others' compositions, but they

love to compare equipment. (My synthesizer can lick your synthesizer.)

By contrast, there is an amateur musical group at my church (The First Unitarian Church or Berkeley) that puts on a yearly Gilbert and Sullivan season. They always draw a sell out crowd and run for about a month. I do the publicity for the group, but that can't be the only reason for the success.

Gilbert and Sullivan are Victorian composers. Also I number among the Victorians Strauss, Debussy, Ravel, Verdi, Brahms, Satie, (there is a regular cult around Satie here) etc. etc. To say these composers are no longer popular is absurd. A rock group called "Blood, Sweat & Tears" went so far as to do a rock version of Satie's "Trois Gymnopdies."

I still firmly believe that modern music isn't just unfamiliar: it's really fundamentally rotten. It's rotten because it meets no felt need in even a small public. It's rotten because it has no folk roots, it draws on no tradition of a society where "everybody plays some instrument." It has no social function. You can't sing it, you can't dance to it, and it doesn't work well as theatre. There is no elite of aristocrats to listen to it at supper. There is no church of genuine believers to be

uplifted by it. One branch of modern music continues a ghostly if profitable existence - Schlock Rock. But even that has reached a point where the guy who plays it feels he must appear in a dress to put it over.

((Apart from the fact that I am one of the members of the church of true believers who is uplifted by this "rotten" music I tend to agree with most of this letter. The reason I put it immediately after the letter from Joan is because it carries on the thoughts that Joan expressed. The lack of personal experience that most of the people in the world have these days in music is distressing and has to lead to the worship of the professional, partly because they are usually very good - they have to be to keep on top of the competition - but mainly because only one or two people in any audience has any experience of the instrument that is being used and the result is a sort of mystique which falls upon anybody who plays the piano or violin or whatever. On the other hand I should imagine that the

role of a serious composer has always been a little different because involved in composing is the organising of sounds which takes a different mentality from that which is able to play from a sheet or by ear or even to adlib from something else. A person who plays an instrument must of necessity have some idea of what is going on in any piece, by musical instinct mainly (because when I was learning the piano my teacher actively steered away from telling me why a piece of music was constructed in such and such a manner and just wanted me to learn to play it note perfect - even he wanted to keep it a mystery). But musical instinct is not something we are born with but is something we are taught. This does not mean that it is natural and a lot of the worlds population would tell you that it's not.

As for what happens inside the structure of the circle of composers in Melbourne and Australia, I really have little idea. Perhaps I should attempt to get some composer to write an answer for you, the problem being that I don't know any Australian composers well enough to go up to them and ask them if they would consent to write an article for this humble little fanzine.

In the meantime, since most of the electronics in Melbourne are SYNTHI A's and AKS's they can't compare them so maybe they have to compare music.))



Rated -R- Wet Dream
of the Month in
next issue.
This Wet Dream
rated -G- and
suitable for Dreams
in Prime Dream Time
7.30 - 8.30

(our noble leader has been off in the wilds keeping in touch with his roots this issue and, being pretty apathetic, I haven't written anything to fill the space. LE)

A book review from Joan Dick:

VAMPIRES. FACTS AND FICTION by Basil Cooper

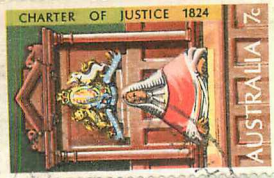
After reading vampire stories and watching vampire films for years it was interesting to know the gruesomely true story that is the basis for all the subsequent sagas.

Premature and inadequate burial most likely caused the walking dead legend. Superstition and ignorance fed the idea. Greed and love of the weird injected life and immortality. But no matter how we thrilled and shuddered through the Saturday afternoon matinee, it is rather galling to realise that this present generation treats those same show as a bit of a giggle.

The vampire of fact is rather a let down. No huge bats sweeping down on sleeping victims to leave bloodless corpses to greet the dawn; just a small inoffensive creature that laps enough blood for immediate needs. The greatest danger is rabies. No small danger I grant you. Even the Massai tribe who live on blood and milk from their cows make sure their victims live to provide another meal.

A run through of stage and screen stars who rose to stardom on vampire wings provide some rather surprising reading. But legend, fact, film and stage fade before the reality of the real vampires. HOMO SAPIENS. There really are people who crave for human blood and will kill to satisfy this longing. It could be argued that these are unfortunate people suffering from some obscure medical syndrome. Fortunately the police do not take this view and deal in the usual manner with the culprits. VAMPIRE: An evil creature that lives by praying on others. Think. Who do you know that fits this description. A dope peddler, a money lender, a demanding teenager, a whinging child, a selfish wife, a thoughtless husband... I could go on and on. So could you. We are surrounded by vampires in one form or another. Just make sure you are not one.

There are a couple of WAHFs that should finish up this issue but as it turns out I wanted to use most of the letters in this issue but simply ran out of room, which is nothing unusual I'll grant you. So hang on there and see what happens. Also, you people who got the Big Red *A* might pause to remember what it means and you might care to act on it.



*Luxury is Barbarian
etc the Only Way to Fly*

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