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Topic? WOMBAT

WOMBAT

Wombats, general

Wombats are native Australian or Tasmanian Mammals. Like many other antipodean animals they have strange* reproductive habits (less so than the platypus which lays green eggs and is a monotreme). They also have constantly growing incisors allowing (nay, encouraging) them to chew on bark, wood, softer rocks, etc. (Wombats are friendly, nocturnal, and not ever intelligent) (Sir Everard Home reports "In captivity it is as a rule amiable, the amiability being possibly associated with stupidity." He probably woke it from a nap.)

* strange to us - they wouldn't have it any other way.

Wombats, specific

The family Vombatidae is divided into two groups, the naked nosed and the hairy nosed wombats. The naked nosed group constitutes the genus Vombatus (or Phascogale) and includes the Tasmanian wombat (V. Ursinus), from Tasmania and Flinders Island and the common Wombat (V. Hirsutus) from south east Australia; they have coarse, harsh, blackish fur, a naked area on the muzzle and short ears. The hairy nosed group contains Lasiorhinus latifrons from south Australia and wombatula gillespiei from southern Queensland; these species have silky grizzled grey fur, a hairy muzzle and larger ears. The consequences of all this to wombat society is further complicated by the question of who has more ribs.

Additional information available:

ADVANCED - WOMBAT Subtopic?

WOMBAT ADVANCED

Wombats, particular

Dante Gabriel Rossetti had a wombat who slept (during the day) in an epergne on the dining room table. He (the wombat) reappeared as a dormouse in Rev. Dodgson's book.

Wombats, uses of

live - conversation piece, alarm clock (third shift)
dead - doormats; for food, see Wombats, food?

Wombats, food

grass, bark, leaves, fungi

Epergne

Who knows? ...clearly someplace wombats sleep.

Marsupials

Include bandicoots (which should be rabbits), koalas (which should be bears), tasmanian wolves (which should be coyotes), and wombats (which should be lethargic badgers). Pogo was a marsupial.

Sexual habits

are of interest only to other wombats, and then only between April and June.

Wombats Prehistoric

Pleistocene Giant Wombat was as large as a rhinoceros.

Wombats, food?

would you want to eat a doormat that ate bark and fungus?

WOMBAT Subtopic?

Thyme #40, the mostly monthly magazine which supports news, DUFF, GUFF, FFANZ and long overseas holidays for fan editors, is brought to you by who else but Roger Weddall of P.O. Box 273, Fitzroy 3065. Phone 0011 20 2 75 8173. It is available for news, letters, postcards, artwork, return air fares or, failing that, MONEY at the following rates: AUSTRALIA: Eight issues for five dollars; NORTH AMERICA, NEW ZEELAND: Ten issues for ten dollars; EUROPE: ten issues for 5 pounds/Dm20/ a letter of interest.

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Don't forget, a big silver X next to your name on the front probably means you won't be seeing any more of these for a while unless you ... DO SOMETHING.

PARANOIACON - They got me, OK

John Newman

Well, some people will probably say some harsh things about PARANOIACON. I know this because they already have, and I heard them. They complained about the lack of organization, before it even became apparent. They spread rumours that the con was cancelled. In fact there seems to have been some number of folk who would not have been sad to see it all fall disasterously.

Fortunately, this did not happen. Some things did not go really smoothly. There was even things that did not go at all. But we were there, we fen, and it wasn't too bad a collection of folk, let me tell you. Adelaide, Melbourne and Canberra were all well represented, and others made the long trip from Sydney.

Ooops, sorry, couldn't resist that! It did at first seem that Liverpool was a long way from town. But then we got used to it. The facilities in the Hotel as a hotel were fine. For a convention, however, they left a bit to be desired. The function room we were using was a long way from the majority of the rooms, in the open, which meant in the cold wind. Aside from changing it's mind occasionally about what it was going to do for us the management was OK. For a fairly small relaxacon like PARANOIACON it was just right.

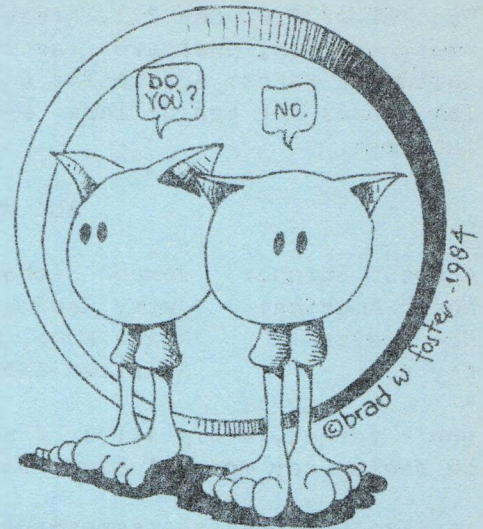
Travelling up to Sydney with Terry Stroud and John Packer in Terry's car on the thursday meant we arrived just about the time the committee were getting their major pre-con bursts of paranoia. While Terry and I slept in the lounge, John sung the committee songs to try and reassure them. Well, Dea and Kim were there I think. Anne Poore helped John, and the next day dawned a little brighter.

We were all cheered up by Terry Frost and Karen Vaughan pre-announcing their engagement by six months. By the end of the con they were pre-announcing kids!

During the day we met Selene Hize, perigrinating US fan and nice person, and swept her along pre-con. I could see that such a little convention was a bit out of her experience! Once we got to the Hotel and tried to register I felt the same way about the hotel, but soon we were all ensconced in our rooms and mingling and saying hello to everyone.

The con was to some degree under-organised. The committee hadn't entirely got it's act together. But the small size of the event meant that it was a good practice shot for those who hadn't run a con before. Things worked out, and there was a number of great things done. Little things were provided, like a phone for dialling out from registration, and coffee and wine, that make cons more pleasant.

The con had it's own band for the Masquerade, which was a good thing, and lot of dancing went on. Some excellent costumes were seen, with the outstanding ones being Nadia (alias Bruce) and Mark Denbow (as, ah, I forget but he was all shades of grey and white and very greasy looking up close)(it was the greasepaint). That reminds me of the AV program, which was a new Transfinite AV about 1984 and you'll have to ask Mark about it to find out what it means but I enjoyed it, and a couple of golden oldies, "Dreams" and "Don't Pay The Ferryman". TF were using a new, streamlined, set of equipment.



Panels did not in general fare well at this con. I tried to attend about three, and due to a virtually complete lack of preparation found them unsatisfactory. I mean, hell, I enjoy sitting around killing time with my friends, but expect something more of a panel, even a humorous one. Besides, we did enough of that anyway. With no programming before 2:00 pm (deliberate) and no movies (accidental) the "long party" nature of conventions got a little strained.

In fact, this convention raises some interesting points about relaxacons in general. Trying to recall, for instance, the old MEDVENTION's as examples of relaxacons, it occurs to me that PARANOIACON was a relaxacon made out of more sercon bits. Instead of things that we would do for relaxation, we had things meant as part of the program of a more general con. This reflects perhaps that the con was in fact meant for bigger things when envisaged, and lack of organisation and commitment meant things had to change.

In summary, then, a good time, but more because of the friends there than the actual convention. The various members of the committee had done some good things and had good ideas, but the result as a whole was unimpressive. Unfortunately, the invisible details that must be done were done well in many cases, and the things that show were less well done. I'm glad I went.

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Meanwhile, on the other side of the world -

BENELUXCON'84 - a report by Roelof Goudriaan

"Fans are slans!"

With that thought, I jump onto the train to Ghent. I've packed a plastic travelling bag within five minutes to minimise delay to three hours. An emergency at work is all it takes to upset a schedule. No matter, fans can manage!

At the Dutch-Belgian border, I discover I've left my passport at home. A small nag only, as passport control is very irregular at this border: all it means is that I'll be travelling in Belgium without an I.D., and will have to supply the con with a fake passport number.

Just before arriving at Ghent, I find I've also left the Beneluxcon progress report behind; including the address of the con hall.

Beneluxcon is an annual convention alternating between Belgium and the Netherlands. They are a relaxed melting pot where Dutch, Flemish and English are intermingled with German and French thrown in at the Flemish Beneluxcons. The Dutch conventions traditionally lean towards the atmosphere of British Eastercons: held in a middle class hotel with a large lounge area, featuring a well-packed mix of serious and fannish programming, and with room parties going on until early morning. Xcon, the '83 Beneluxcon, attracted 350, while nearly 600 people attended Hillcon in 1981.

The Flemish cons are a bit more ramshackle but have a charm of their own. They're usually in a low budget students' lodging with the bar under own management. This year is different, as the con has been thrown out of the customary Fabialshome, a result of an overly successful convention in 1982. Cheap bedrooms of a nearby student enter are still being used instead of a hotel, but the con held is at a fifteen minute walking distance. It has been pouring in Ghent, so I arrive soaked after a long search due to the lack of an exact address. But the fans are there! The Dutch and Belgians, some Germans and more than 20 Britfans are gathered around the bar. I happily join them, drifting around talking until half past twelve, when my considerate room crasher reminds me that I actually haven't booked a room yet. The walk back is good for another shower of Flemish rain.

Saturday morning, Jim White holds a nice rambling talk about his sector general stones, re-telling the tales re-told at previous Albacon. It's one of the better attended programme items, together with the masquerade. The Beneluxcons in Flanders look much like relaxacons. The programme seldom has any highlights and is largely ignored by many of those present. The atmosphere is friendly and calm, and fannish activities like partying and talking at the bar predominate. This is also what's important this weekend. Ken Slater hands out "Hotel Spermalie Survivor" buttons to the fans who were around at that mid-seventies Beneluxcon, while Martin Hoare presents us with fine recollections. "Hot water? Ah no, we don't have it! And what do you mean, showers? We have no showers!"

Kate Davies and her soft toy effortlessly convince native fandom that something beautiful is happening in Britain, falling asleep during a room party clutched to her bear. Alex Stewart and I are snoffing while trying to find a decent eating place, and our group at last ends up in a restaurant some 50 metres from the con hall. Eddy C Bertin, dressed up as Frankenstein (with his daughter in the role of bride) loses his shoe while making his entrance. The British, all together on the seventh floor, hold a gigantic corridor party. John Paul Smith refuses to believe I'm not drunk, though I haven't seen alcohol in six hours. Gerard Suurmeijer auctions books in the bar, hammering away in three languages.

The Saturday and Sunday whirl together in a mesh of vivid impressions. It's the mark of a good convention. Neither smoothly organised or well programmed, but spontaneous and welcoming.

Next year, as always, will be even better.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

FABIAN UNHASCOUED

How to introduce Fabian Stretton? Fabian is a Melbourne fan about 25 years' old (give or take a year) who enjoys Role Playing games, wearing costumes where weaponry is an integral part, and writing (what I consider to be) abusive letters to convention committees and Fan Editors. He lives in a niche of fandom apparently rife with stories about Aussiecon of intrigue, tales of mismanagement and conspiracy by the Committee, rumours of deeds (and thoughts) of horror and malice displayed towards innocent fans by this monstrous bunch of convention organisers.

I personally don't care overly if people wish to live in these worlds of fantasy and delusion with their impoverished knowledge of reality. It is perhaps their right to believe what they wish, and who am I to get in their way with inconvenient things like truth and fact. What changes the equation is that Fabian has also started writing (what I consider to be) offensive letters to individual members of the Committee about personal matters which are (1) none of his business and (2) lies. I do not believe that any reasonable definition of tolerance would allow that this is acceptable behaviour in any context.

You may remember that Thyme#38 ran extracts of a photocopy of a a letter from Fabian. It is not - has never been, probably never will be - the policy of Thyme to print 3

page letters in full without editing. The reasons are obvious and financial - an extra double - sided page costs \$5 minimum extra in production, and is capable of adding \$15-25 to the postage bill.

In spite of this, I recently received an envelope in the mail containing photocopies of two further letters from Fabian. Included was a handscrawled note: "2 letters for inclusion in the next Thyme - without deletions this time please." What of it? Okay, I'm prepared to print the complete, unexpurgated texts of all three letters (with spelling mistakes - a failing would never hold against anyone) this once. But I am not prepared to let them pass without comment!

As Fabian himself says: "Admittedly, some of the points I raised were innaccurate, however this was due to either -

"(a) Misinformation given to me by the Aussiecon II Committee. ((Concerning this he states: 'I have a letter from the Aussiecon II secretary which specifically states there is insufficient room for an SCA display (which had previously suggested)' and goes on to ask for an explanation why both Thyme and Tigger had ignored his claim))

"(b) The fact that the letter was written prior to the release of Tigger 2, which answered some of the points raised in my letter."

First of all, "misinformation": Christine Ashby also has a copy of the letter Fabian claims to have (written by her - Peter Darling has had no direct communications with Fabian), as well as the original letter from Fabian to which this responded. The news is that the SCA is not mentioned in either letter. Nor had Fabian conducted any discussions with the SCA about the possibility of such a display. (The display will happen though)



In his letter Fabian asked about the possibility of a "model competition and static weapons display". Christine replied by saying the suggestion was of interest and would be considered by the committee. She then pointed out that the convention was suffering from space shortages (separate, logically entirely separate sentences). How this reply was twisted to be interpreted as a statement that there would be no SCA display because of lack of space, one can only imagine.

Okay, once around might have been a simple mistake, forgivable. But now, twice more around and demanding a response? I find it difficult to know how to treat fairly somebody who insists on such distortions as the one above. Fabian accuses: "many of the points I raised were used to try to discredit me, or just sidestepped and ignored where they weren't just deleted." I might point out that even as Thyme #38 came out, much of the material and innuendo contained in Fabian's letter was obviously and demonstrably false. I am not prepared to run material

I know to be false and let it stand uncommented on, and I am not prepared to waste my time knocking down all the straw men people such as Fabian seem to want to set up.

As it was, Fabian did raise some quite specific and fairly serious allegations about the way Aussiecon Committee members treated some individuals. These were printed along with the Committee's comments about them. I fail to see how this constitutes "sidestepping". I might add that Fabian has failed to produce any evidence (even names of people involved) to support his allegations to the present time.

Which brings me to Fabian's point (b): Marc Ortlieb, editor of Tigger, dealt with a very similar section of the same letter as Thyme did. Strange as it may seem to Fabian, Tigger and Thyme don't go to the same people. If one is to engage in sending the same letter to two different editors, one is to expect two answers to the same question. I don't want to put a damper on the fanwriting activities of Fabian, but

Dear people,

letter 1

I am writing this letter as I am concerned about some of the disturbing aspects that are appearing within the organisation of Aussiecon II. It would seem that the Convention Committee are set on repeating the worst mistakes they made at Eurekacon (the 1984 National Science Fiction Convention).

I have had some 16 reports about Eurekacon, some printed in Thyme, but most directly from people who attended including one from a Eurekacon committee member. The resulting opinion - with the notable exception of the convention committee member - was that the convention was DEAD BORING, A COMPLETE AND UTTER FLOP, UNLESS you were a member of the convention committee or directly associated with them in the ANSFA "clique" - this group numbering 12 - 15 people. I.E. The general opinion of most of the convention attendees was that if you weren't a member of said "hard core elitist clique" it wasn't worth coming. The one exception to this opinion was (not surprisingly) the convention committee member's who said (and I quote) "Yeah we made a few mistakes but it went pretty well for all that". I would still like to know how a National Convention which was a severe disappointment to some 90% of its members could be described as a success, and how a convention committee member would could be so tuned out as to not realise the magnitude of the disaster. Unfortunately Aussiecon II looks to be going the same way, that is - it's going to be a convention for a small group of very hard core narrow-minded elitist SF fans and the other 1,900 convention members will have wasted their money.

Particular examples of this elitism which I have mentioned above will be detailed below:

- Many members of ANSFA (The Australian National Science Fiction Association) hold opinions such as "If it's on TV or a movie at a cinema it's not REAL SF" (whatever real is supposed to be I don't know). Similarly I've never heard of most of the authors that they quote as being REAL SF while denouncing such writers as Isaac Asimov, Harry Harrison, and Ray Bradbury as Pseudo-SF printed merely to keep the plebeians happy, and thus not fit for real SF fans. These, along with many other equally immortal and ridiculous opinions are the epitome of what went wrong with Eurekacon and what (I hope) will not be done to Aussiecon II.
- At the last Phantasticon, a wargamer from Wollongong approached a concomm member at the Aussiecon II table (on which were at least 200 flyers) and asked "could he please have 50 Aussiecon II flyers as he was sure he could find at least 20 people in Wollongong who would want to go. The answer "NO, we don't want those kind of people at Aussiecon". Now JUST WHO THE HELL THIS PERSON THOUGHT HE WAS I don't know - the worldcon is just that - it's for the WHOLE WORLD OF SF, including SF wargamers, SF RPG'ers, SF computer gamers, SF media fans (blakes 7 to Battlestar Galactica), SF pulp & comics, SF books, Trekies through to the very hard core SF literature fans represented by ANSFA. Similarly, the worldcon is also for ALL fantasy fandom, be they Fantasy wargamers, RPG'ers, Pulp & comics, media, movies, etc.
- Much as ANSFA would like to, it is impossible to accurately delineate Fantasy from Science Fiction. In fact many of the best so called "REAL SF" as claimed by members of ANSFA are sociopolitically and/or technically either highly improbable, inaccurate or absolutely impossible, and hence are in fact fantasy and not science fiction at all.)
- When suggested that there be an SCA display and/or a weapons display I was told that there was insufficient space - nonsense. Both the university of Melbourne and the city square have been used very successfully in the past (both I might add for free). The university sports grounds have plenty of space, the city square is less than 1/2 a minutes walk from the victoria and 2 minutes walk from the southern cross hotel, and also has a reasonable amount of space. In every case where a medieval display has been given these displays have been very successful and very

letter 2

Dear People,

In answer to the butchery and mudslinging that was implemented upon my last letter; deleting the section which discussed Eurekacon, which was the most important section of all: the advertising for Eurekacon specifically stated:

"This con is being brought to you by the same people who will be bringing you the worldcon - so come along and see how we handle it."

As no objections were raised by the Aussiecon II Committee to this advertising I very much doubt that it was false. Mind you, considering the magnitude of the disaster that Eurekacon was, I can well understand why no-one in their right mind would admit responsibility for it.

To repeat a section of the previous letter which was deleted:

"I have had some 20 reports about Eurekacon; those printed in Thyme, but mostly direct from people who attended, including one from a Eurekacon Committee member. The resulting opinion - with the notable exception of the convention committee member - was that the convention was DEAD BORING, A COMPLETE AND UTTER FLOP; UNLESS you were a member of the convention committee, or directly associated with them in the small elitist clique - a group numbering about 12 to 15 people; ie: the general opinion of most of the convention attendees was that if you weren't a member of said "hard core elitist clique", it wasn't worth coming.

The one exception to this opinion (not surprisingly) the convention committee member (he was also an Aussiecon II committee member) who said - while attending the Aussiecon II table at Eurekacon -

"Yeah; we made a few mistakes but it went pretty well for all that."

I would still like to know how a National Convention which was a severe disappointment to some 90% of its members could be described as a success, or how a convention committee member could be so tuned out as not to realise the extent of the disaster."

The major problem with Eurekacon was that the committee did what THEY wanted and not what the convention wanted. My letter was based on evidence that this was also happening to Aussiecon II, and I have no desire to Aussiecon ruined the same way that Eurekacon was. As further evidence of this attitude I will quote from a letter I recieved from Marc Ortlieb:

"Please do not feel that our discussion will have any effect on the convention policy. Were not a democracy were an oligarchy."

This is quite correct, the convention committee can do what they like, regardless of popular opinion. The question is - should they?

In general, many of the points I raised were used to try to discredit me, or just sidestepped and ignored where they weren't just deleted. Admittedly some of the points I raised were inaccurate, however, this was due to either -

- Misinformation given to me by the Aussiecon II Committee - more on an example of this below.
 - The fact that the letter was written prior to the release of Tigger 2, which answered some of the points raised in my letter.
- Despite this however, most of the important comments were just not printed, and while this (I am told) was due to lack of space (agreed it was a long letter) I would like to know what criteria was applied in the editing, with the more important comments deleted while others (particularly those which were irrelevant due to the release of Tigger) were not.

Regarding misinformation from the Aussiecon II committee, and the SCA display. I have a letter from the Aussiecon II secretary which specifically states that there was insufficient room for an SCA display (which I had previously suggested). Considering their comments in answer to my statement on this issue I would like this letter explained, particularly as there was not sufficient time between my receipt of that letter and the response to my letter in both Thyme and Tigger to explain it.

Best regards

Fabian Stretton

popular both with the conventions AND the passing public (in the case of the city square display), often proving to be THE high point of the convention. The real reason that this idea has been shelved is that the SCA isn't hard core SF and that (SNOOK HORRERS TREMBLES) - it has martial arts and (GASP) weapons and (faint.....) combat.

- An Indonesian acquaintance of mine, who asked a member of the concomm for some flyers to send over to some friends of his in Indonesia was told (again I quote word for word) - "Oh I don't think they'd be interested, YOUR not coming are you". Since when has a worldcon been limited to white caucasians, its a WORLDCON isn't it NOT a white australiacon.

Another problem is that I think that ANSFA and the Aussiecon II committee have lost touch with the reality of SF & F fandom in Australia. The average age of an ANSFA member is about 30, and its numbers (I think) less than 300 members. It is highly elitist and very narrow minded. You have to be good enough (translates to "just as narrow minded and in roughly the same way") to join. Now this is supposed to represent fandom worldwide, or even australiawide (where the average age of SF & F interested people is 16-20, and numbering between 750,000 and 1,500,000 or more) I don't know, more importantly, neither do they and worse, they don't even realise that they have a shortcoming in this area.

More gripes - Compared to previous worldcons Aussiecon II is going to be tiny, even compared to Aussiecon I (when you consider the huge growth in popularity of SF & F between 1975 and 1985) it's going to be tiny. Even some state gaming cons here in Victoria (with 600-800 members) are almost as large as the 1,200 some sources quote, although I believe 2,000 is the official figure. It should be in the region of 3,000 and 4,000 giving a budget more in the area of \$250,000 to \$300,000 rather than the \$120,000 quoted. This brings me to another point - money - \$120,000 for a worldcon is a bloody SMALL budget, and while no-one wants to see another Constellation fiasco, previous worldcons have been running on a budget of \$300,000 or more. State conventions in the US are running on similar budgets (\$90,000 - \$130,000) - specifically things like gencon. Meanwhile our worldcon is turning down 20 members at a time (worth \$1,000 to \$2,000 to the con fund) just because "we dont want those sorts of people".

Other questions I would like to see answered are:

- Why aren't the worldcon committee yet block booking both the Victoria and the Southern cross hotels and (if they are going to be as overpopulated as they think they are) other local city hotels - particularly as some are cheaper than either of the above.
- Why has the advertising of Aussiecon II been so poor, 90% of the SF & F oriented people I have spoken to of Aussiecon II have never heard of it. What will be done to rectify this situation in the future.
- Where are the flyers that should be being distributed to (and prominently displayed in) SF & F book and gaming shops around Australia. Remember it takes most of us poor mortals at least 9 months to plan for a worldcon in advance.
- Where are the flyers that should be being posted to gaming clubs (almost all of which are SF oriented) - I can provide a list of some 50 clubs and addresses if need be.
- Why is it that I (who aren't associated with the concomm in any way except by being a member) seem to have distributed some 40-60% or more of all the flyers going out. This may just be paranoia but I will have sent out some 300 by the time this letter reaches you, and I've not seen more than 100 total anywhere else.

In Summation:

The Nation (Eurekacon) was effectively thrown for some 12-15 people (WOW). The above evidence would indicate that the Aussiecon II committee is THROWING a worldcon for some 40 - 100 people while the other 1,900 attendees will be bored stiff, thus guaranteeing that no-one in their right mind will ever let a worldcon be held here again. Result - Australia will NEVER see another Worldcon.

A Worldcon cannot afford to be limited to a few narrow-minded hardcore purists and their ideals, nor should it be either sexist or racist - both aspects which have been demonstrated by at least one member of the concomm towards people I know and (presumably) to others.

Finally, although I have several personal gripes about the organisation of Aussiecon II and one or two members of the concomm in particular, I have not detailed them here as they do not concern the general populace. The above letter details general concerns that apply to any convention mismanaged as badly as Eurekacon WAS and Aussiecon looks like being.

Fabian Stretton.

letter 3

Dear people,

Having seen considerable evidence to support the notion that (within Australia at least) a NO WEAPONS policy fairly directly becomes a NO COSTUMES policy - evidence based on some 8 cons I've attended and reports of some 10 others - and also noting that several recent conventions have had (with very considerable success and no problems at all) a limited weapons policy, limiting what could be worn, and requiring that they are merely worn, not drawn or demonstrated, and are safely and securely holstered.

I have found that conventions where the vast majority of members come in costume have a much greater atmosphere and are much more fun for all members of the cons concerned. Also bearing in mind that with the limited facilities for large cons in Melbourne, atmosphere and fun are much more important than they might otherwise be - consider Aussiecon I for example, which was remembered primarily for the costumes, the atmosphere and the fun rather than any of the programmed items.

For the above reasons, amongst others, I have started a campaign to get the costume rules for Aussiecon II altered from NO WEAPONS to one were weapons can be worn, with some limitations as to what can be worn (definitely no guns or explosives, etc.) and how it may be worn - all weapons must be secured in a safe holster of some sort and may not be drawn or demonstrated.

I want as many opinions from people on my proposed alternative policy as possible, both for and against my policy. I do not want the "Oh you're just a dangerous lunatic" type letter unless you tell me why you believe this to be so, giving evidence if possible. Also I will gladly answer any questions anyone may have.

All letters should be sent to:

Fabian Stretton
P.O.B. 445
Glenferrie
3122
VICTORIA
AUSTRALIA

I greatly prefer written correspondence, as it leaves a lasting record and gives me more of a chance to consider your ideas/comments. If however you feel that you must speak with me directly I can be phoned on AUST 03) 8181784, with the greatest chance of catching me being on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings, although I can often be contacted on weekends as well.

I am, yours in expectation

Fabian Stretton

P.S. If you agree with my ideas it is very important that you write and tell me so, as without VISIBLE rather than moral support there is little chance for change.

most of the letter simply wasn't worth reproducing.

In particular, I see no point at all in printing unsubstantiated vitriol like that heaped by Fabian upon Eurekacon in the section which he considers so important. Why did Fabian not like Eurekacon? I find it most curious. Fabian Stretton was not a member of Eurekacon. It appears that he turned up briefly (without paying), but got no further than the luckster's room. Why is he so intent on branding Eurekacon a failure and hurling such abuse at the concon? Certainly, it wasn't Fabian's nose that was out left out of joint by any shortcomings of Eurekacon - he wasn't even there.

Still, he soldiers on, relying on con reports printed in Thyme and second hand stories. If he'd asked the original sources of those reports printed in Thyme, he would have discovered that nearly all of them managed to enjoy themselves, even if it wasn't the greatest convention ever. Maybe if Fabian had bothered to go to the convention, he might have managed to enjoy himself too. But no, he prefers to just abuse people, inventing mythical ANSFA's and 'hard core cliques'.

Notice that Fabian can't ever quote himself faithfully. In letter 2 when he wants to repeat a section of letter 1: references to ANSFA disappear, little explanatory notes (complete new introductory paragraph) magically appear... Yet he claims to be able to quote other people verbatim. Which parts of Fabian's claims am I meant to trust?

Somehow, according to Fabian, Eurekacon being a failure is going to make Aussiecon a failure also. Why? Because it's being run by the same people. I note two things: 1. The organisations are not the same, any more than the organisation of, say, Kinkon and Funcon were the same. Some of the people are the same. 2. These same people also helped to organise Aussiecon I, that other con Fabian did not attend, but which he nevertheless dubs a success.

I remember the organisers of Kinkon getting annoyed when people suggested it would be just a rerun of Funcon (a year earlier). Call me stupid, but I don't see any way in the world Aussiecon II could turn out to be remotely like Eurekacon, whatever the Committee did - except insofar as they are both sf conventions. Not even the room parties will be the same. If Fabian had been around for Aussiecon I, he probably would have noticed that it was a different experience from any other Australian con before or since. In my opinion, people who stay away from Aussiecon simply because they thought that Eurekacon was a bit of a flop ought to have their heads read.

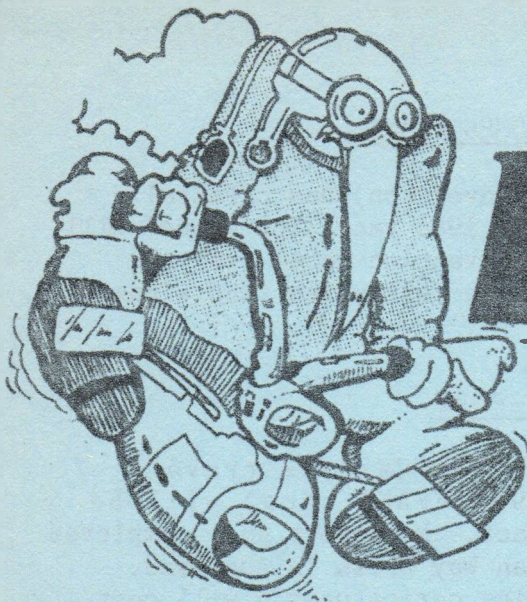
Letter the third. A brand new letter about Aussiecon's weapon's policy. Look, I know this is a matter which concerns Fabian deeply, but it would be nice if he would produce some of this "evidence" he claims to have. The following was related to me by one concerned individual:

A while back, someone Fabian knows quite well (though, obviously not nearly well enough) went to a party in Mt Neveley in full costume. Part of this medieval garb was a "sheathed" battleaxe. You know those costume battleaxes with the deliberately flattened edges? - this was not one of those, this one had been properly honed. Also at the party was much alcoholic beverage.

I'm not going to go into the sordid details of this otherwise quite forgettable evening, except to mention that one of the house's residents was a rather large friendly puppy. Said puppy was so menaced and threatened by person with battleaxe, it spent most of the evening hiding in corners or behind chairs - until, just for a moment, this person got sick of 'playing' and put the battleaxe aside. Placid puppy went for visitor, savagely...

I, for one have always been a big supporter of the drover's dog.

The Aussiecon committee, in P4/2 comments: "Although we have no doubt that most people would behave sensibly if weapons were permitted, there is always a risk of somebody doing something stupid, and the safety of convention members has to be our overriding consideration." Since Fabian's last communication with the committee, the weapons policy has been reconsidered in the light of what Fabian has had to say and the



FFANZ

THE FAN FUND OF AUSTRALIA
AND NEW ZEALAND
PO BOX 1010 AUCKLAND

AUSTRALIA: JOHN NEWMAN PO BOX 4 THORNBURY
VICTORIA 3071 and KIM HUETT PO BOX 429 SYDNEY
NSW 2001

FFANZ NEWS SEPTEMBER 1984

THE RACE IS (FINALLY) ON!

Despite rumours to contrary FFANZ already has two nominees for the 1985 race. Nigel Rowe and Duncan Lucas (both of Auckland) have been involved in fandom for six years. Nominations are open until the end of the year, and it is likely that others will follow, intent on a free trip to Aussiecon the 43rd World science fiction convention. Those interested can get nomination forms and rules from either the Australian or New Zealander administrators. N.B Voting does not open until nominations close.

FUND RAISING: THE SAGA CONTINUES...

So far this year FFANZ has been particularly successful in raising money. Profits from SYNCON (Australia's national convention in 1983) donated \$150 (in Australian dollars too!) While in New Zealand, the fund now totals \$264.73. The majority of this was raised through two FFANZ auctions. One held in Dunedin on January 9 raised \$8.60 (thanks to Rex Thompson, Evan McCarthy, Peter Boston and Gregor Campbell); while another held at NORCON (NZ's national convention) raised an amazing \$202! (Many thanks to Marc, Bruce, Lindsay, Scott, Evan, Duncan, Gordon, Lisa, Joseph, Justine, Kay, Cathi, Michael, Greg, Corena and Glenn).

Naturally the fund still needs to be built. FFANZ appreciates donations or money raised through auctions and other fund raising activities, however small.

AND THE WINNER IS?

All fans who support FFANZ will also be interested in noting the deadline for votes: Midnight, April 7 1985. This is the final evening of ORCON (NZ's 7th national convention.) Tom Cardy will be collecting votes and the voting fee over the convention. Then the votes will be counted and the FFANZ winner for 1985 announced! It is highly likely that all FFANZ candidates will be present at ORCON. So expect an exciting grand finale as try to 'persuade' naive convention members to vote for the best er... possible person. Another FFANZ auction will also be held, hopefully repeating the financial success of NORCON.

NEW CO-ADMINISTRATOR

FFANZ would like to welcome Kim Huett who will be helping John Newman coordinate FFANZ within Australia. (John has been rather overworked in other non-fannish areas!) Kim will be handling PR for FFANZ, and gives the added advantage of having Australia's two largest cities covered.

AUSSIECON II OFFICIALLY WELCOMES FFANZ

Aussiecon II (the 43rd World science fiction convention) has officially recognised and welcomes the eventual winner of the 1985 race. The winner will receive free membership and accomodation at the convention hotel over the worldcon. He or she will also be sharing a room with fellow fan fund winners from the U.K (GUFF) and the U.S (DUFF).

THE INFAMOUS FFANZ REPORT

Well, believe it or not, the report on Tom Cardy's travels throughout Australia (as winner of the 1983 FFANZ race) will be available in October 1984. As a matter of fact, the report was completed two months ago and is line for printing at Martian Way Press in Auckland. This report (lavishly illustrated with embarrassing caricatures!) will cost \$1.50, all profits to the FFANZ fund in both Australia and New Zealand. So. feel free to send your order and money now!

FFANZ PLATFORMS

DUNCAN LUCAS nominated by Seth Lockwood, seconded by Graham Ferner

I, Duncan Lucas, being of sound mind and body, have been persuaded to run for FFANZ in 1985. Now all I have to do is persuade some of you lot to vote for me. Herewith a list of my achievements and attributes. Such as they are: Edited and published two copies of the highly praised but little seen KIPPLE. Edited WARP for NASF for one year. Inaugural member of AOTEARAPA. Lapsed APPLESAUCER. (Is that a plus or a minus?) Artist (starving), cartoonist and contributor to all NZ fanzines of quality. Attendee of all NZ natcons. An organiser of NORCON '81 plus divers one day cons and the upcoming OROON '85. One of the famous and fabulously wacky crazy guys who opened and MC'ed NORCON '84. Fringe member of most of the good feuds and controversies of recent years. Poor correspondent, rotten mooch, trashy philosopher, good wit and okay speaker. Magnificent drunk with a tremendous capacity for FOSTER'S LARGER. Understands what cobber, jumbuck and chunder mean. All-round nice guy who's desperate to go to AUSSIECON II.

NIGEL ROWE nominated by Peter Burns, seconded by Cathryn Symons

Skybus, well everyone is allowed one mistake, okay, okay there was also Heads n Tales. Two mistakes surely you can let me off, I mean that was three years ago, I'm trying to make my way in the world now. What have I done since? Well I became involved with this gang, er... I mean committee of people trying to organise the sixth national SF con in New Zealand, alright, alright so I organised the committee, what of it I mean there's no law that says you can't have a good time is there? That was kinda a success, and there are the few fanzines that I've edited, but nothing illegal mind you. I'm a new person I tell you, I mean it. All this talk about me trying to con my way into a free trip to Australia...Geez, it's enough to give a guy a heartburn. Pass my pills would you...Hi Mum!

THE NEXT FFANZ NEWS: will be available in January 1985, with a complete list of candidates and voting forms. N.B REPRODUCTION OF THIS NEWSLETTER IS ENCOURAGED AS LONG AS IT IS REPRODUCED IN FULL.

CANDIDATES' PLATFORMS

rich brown rich founded SBOF (Society of Boring Old Farts, a.k.a. Secret Bastards of Fandom), which tells SMOFs what to do and strikes terror in the hearts of fakefans everywhere. He's been publishing/writing for fanzines and attending cons for a quarter of a century, can pick out fans at a distance by their auras and determine by touch if a fanzine mentions him. rich tied with Terry Carr in last year's PONG Poll for best letterhack and will be fan GoH at Norwescon, Seattle's regional, even though he ran off with one of Seattle's brightest new fans, Linda Blanchard, by promising they would publish a frequent fanzine. Mindful that she was voted "best new fan" last year -- due in part to the excellence of her fanzine -- he promises to bring Linda with him if he wins, provided he can teach her that the Old Ways Are The Best.

Nominators: Gary Farber, Bruce Gillespie, David Grigg, Teresa Nielsen Hayden and Ted White.

Marty & Robbie Cantor This American/Canadian team, a truly North American bid, will be able to meet and talk to twice as many fans as any other single entry. We intend to spend all of our waking hours with fans; however, we promise that we will not bring the Australian NATCON back with us when we return home. Between the two of us we can promise to keep both the mimeo ink-stained fanzine fans and the be-costumed media fans happy. (Marty will talk fanzines for hours, Robbie will discuss plots and characters of "Doctor Who" just as long.) If that doesn't keep your con attendees in the blissful peace of sound-asleep boredom, nothing will! Of course, if you want to be awake, we can always change topics. (For instance, Marty can start talking about "Doctor Who"....)

Nominators: Mike Glyer, Larry Niven, Marc Ortlieb, Bruce Pelz, & Roger Weddall.

Mike Glicksohn Mike Glicksohn has been a fan for 19 years during which time he's been active in sf clubs, conventions, fanzines, and all social aspects of fandom. In 1973 he helped run the worldcon and won half a Hugo for his fanzine Energumen. When discussing DUFF, he harps on the way it fosters international fannish relationships. He has a passionate, but platonic, fondness for wombats, has been known to publicly disagree with Ted White and for 15 years has worn his own Aussie bush hat. He regularly uses "antipodean" in letters without consulting a dictionary and longs to be the first Canadian to win a major fan fund. Having already eaten pie'n'sauce and met John Alderson he is confident nothing can prevent him from being an amiable ambassador of North American fandom at Aussiecon II.

Nominators: Harlan Ellison, John Foyster, Gay Haldeman, Irwin Hirsh, & Joni Stopa.

Joni Stopa I became active in fandom in 1954. I was too young to know any better. Since that time I've been a fan artist, worked on 9 worldcons, won costume balls, done some fan writing, given parties, joined 2 apas, and produced a genzine with Dave Locke. I'm old enough to know better, but I'm still hooked on fandom. I've met enough DUFF delegates to know that I'd like to meet a lot more Aussies. I'd also like to find out for myself if Terry Frost really talks in rhyming slang.

Nominators: Mike Glicksohn, Rusty Hevelin, Eric Lindsay, Joyce Scrivner, & Jean Weber.

DUFF: The Down Under Fan Fund was created in 1972 to encourage closer ties between fans in Australia and North America. With host countries alternating each year, there have been twelve exchanges of fan representatives since, supported entirely by voluntary contributions from fans all over the world. DUFF representatives visit a major sf convention in the host country and visit with fans they might otherwise never meet in person. DUFFers are treated as special guests, and are always well looked after.

DONATIONS: DUFF exists solely on the contributions of fans and always welcomes material for auction, and donations of money. There will be auctions of DUFF material at future conventions. Contributions may be brought to a convention, or sent to the local administrator. Anyone may contribute, even if ineligible to vote, and donations in excess of the voting donation are gratefully accepted. Checks should be made out to Jerry Kaufman (in North America) or Jack Herman (in Australia).

VOTING: Any fan active in fandom before January, 1984, may vote. Ballots must be signed and be accompanied by a donation of at least \$2.00. Each person is allowed only one vote. If you think your name may not be known to the administrator, please include the name of a fan or a fan group who can vouch for you. We won't count unverifiable votes.

ALL VOTES MUST REACH AN ADMINISTRATOR BY NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 28, 1985.

DUFF uses the Australian Preferential system of balloting to guarantee an automatic run-off and a majority win. You rank the candidates in order of preference (1,2,3...). If there is no absolute majority for one candidate after the first count of votes, first place votes for the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped and the second place votes on those ballots are assigned to the candidates named. This goes on until one candidate has a majority. It is therefore important to vote for second, third, etc., places, especially if you choose to write in a candidate. (You are not required to fill in more than your name and your first choice.)

CANDIDATES: Each candidate has posted a \$10 bond, provided signed nominations, and has promised (barring acts of God) to travel to the 1985 World Science Fiction Convention, Aussiecon II, in Melbourne, Australia, August 22-26. Platforms are reproduced on the reverse side of this form, and the ballot is below.

ADMINISTRATORS: Jerry Kaufman, 4326 Winslow Place No., Seattle, WA 98103 USA.
Jack Herman, Box 272, Wentworth Bldg, Univ of Sydney, NSW 2006 Aust.

I vote for (list 1,2,3, etc.)	
rich brown ...	SIGNATURE.....
Marty & Robbie Cantor ...	NAME & ADDRESS (Please print)
Mike Glicksohn
Joni Stopa
Hold Over Funds
No Preference
Write in	If you think you may not be known by the administrators, please give the name of a fan or fan group to whom you are known

Reproduction of this form is encouraged; please copy text verbatim.

current policy stands. Feel free to comment if you wish.

CONVENTION UPDATES

WHO DO

Dates: 24-25 November 1984
 Venue: Carrington Hotel, Katoomba NSW (1930-2400hrs 24th), St Mary's memorial hall, Murre Rd, St Marys, NSW (25th)
 Cost: Varies
 CoH: Robert Jewell
 Mail: 5 Tingalen Ave, South Penrith, NSW 2750
 Robert Jewell was a Dalek operator in Hartnell and Troughton stories. Other special guests are Gary Armstrong (maker and operator of the well known fake K9) and Dallas Jones (new president of the Dr Who Fan Club)

CIRCULATION 3

Dates: 30 November- 2nd December
 Mascot: Kim Muett
 Venue: Southside Motor Park, Canberra Ave, ACT
 Rates: \$20 attending, \$6 supporting
 Rooms: \$22 single per night, \$5 extra per person (motel section). Cabins, tent sites, caravan sites available also.
 Mail: PO Box 42, Lynham ACT, 2602
 The relaxacon everybody seems to be going to.

SWANCON X

Dates: 26-28 January 1985
 Venue: Airways Hotel Apartments, Adelaide Tce, Perth.
 Rates: \$20 attending, \$5 supporting, \$15 disadvantaged. These rates will hold until at least 1st January, but will definitely have risen in time for people trying to join at the door.
 Rooms: \$40 single + about \$5 per extra person. The committee makes vile threats against anyone not booking through the con or not paying a deposit of one night's charge by December 10th (\$5 penalty surcharge, they say).
 Mail: PO Box 310, Nedlands 6009.
 Space Merchants (John Hall-Freeman) is sponsoring a short story competition for SWANCON X. The competition will be judged by Grant Stone, of Faster Than Light fame, and the prizes are yet to be decided. John informs me that there have already been several submissions, even before the competition is officially announced! All submissions are to be handed in or sent to Space Merchant; not to the SWANCON PO Box!! - from PR#4.

AUSSIECON II

Dates: 22 - 26 August 1985
 Rates: \$50 attending, \$30 supporting until 1 February 1985 when the rates will become \$60 attending, \$30 supporting. Special children's rate - \$5.

Overseas Agents for Aussiecon II:

North America: Fred Patten, 11863 West Jefferson Blvd, Apt 1, Culver City, CA-90230, U.S.A. (North Americans send all membership applications and cheques here)
 Joyce Scrivner, 2732 14th Ave South Lower, Minneapolis, MN-55404, U.S.A.
 Jan Howard Finder, P.O. Box 428, Latham, NY 12110, U.S.A.

Belgium: Andre De Rycke, Lendenplasstraat 70, Evergem, B-9050, Belgium.

The Netherlands: Annemarie van Ewyck, Obrechstraat 4, NL-2517 VT, Den Haag, The Netherlands.

New Zealand: Tom Carty, PO Box 1010, Auckland, NZ.

Scandinavia: Anders Bellis, Vanadisvagen 13, S-112 46, Stockholm, Sweden

United Kingdom: Joseph Nicholas, 22 Denbigh St, Pinlicko, London SW1V 2ER, U.K.

Federal Republic of Germany: Waldemar Kruming, Herzogspitalstr. 5, Munchen-2, D-8000, Federal Republic of Germany.

Australia: GPO Box 2253U, Melbourne 3001, Australia (all overseas mail should be air mail)

Meanwhile...

The programming subcommittee has been very busy recently working on the programme, but are still looking for input and ideas from the fan community, in particular the media fans. The Committee has booked convention space at the Sheraton (which is an ASIS free zone) for the media track of the convention. However, one thing the committee sees itself lacking is any Media Fans to suggest ideas as to how to use the space. To this end, there is to be a meeting/get together/forum of anyone interested in the media programme on Sunday 9th December 1984, 2pm BYO at Nandy's place 77 Railway Pde West, Flemington (ph 375 8391). But this meeting isn't just for media fans - in fact, anyone with any ideas to do with anything (but especially programming) to do with Aussiecon should come along.

~~~~~

# FANZINES IN MY LIFE

## The Metaphysical Review - life after SF Commentary

Published by Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne 3001. Available for love, not money. (letters of comment, articles, reviews, phone calls, change-of-address cards, other indications of continuing interest...)

"SF" does not appear in the title", writes Bruce in the editorial: "What will I publish...? That's a question which has puzzled me too. The easy answer is: the same sort of mix as in Fataplan, but with a Gillespie twist. Lots of good writing about lots of good things: general fiction, children's fiction, people, places, non-fiction, music, films, restaurants, to name a few possibilities. Even SF and Fantasy, if that's what you want to write about."

Holter Than Thou has recently joined this trend towards no subscriptions for fanzines also. It's a kind of recognition that a LoC or an article is worth more to a fan editor than mere money (not that I've got anything at all against 'mere money')- and that there's no profit in fanzines anyway even when there is a subscription. Bruce says he plans a major culling of the mailing list after about issue 2, but is still very enthusiastic about finding new writers and contributors for Metaphysical Review.

So, write to him.

## Cathseye

Produced by Cathy Kerrigan, PO Box 437, Camberwell 3124

Cathy Kerrigan moves from fanwriting to fanediting with issue 1 of this zine (which contains con reports and reviews of some things not covered in Thyme). It's a rather tentative step, with print schedules planned to be fairly irregular. Again, no subscription, only friends and contributors (print run planned to be about 30).

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

## FURTHER STUDIES IN FANNISH MIGRATION PATTERNS

Victoria:

Kevin and Denise Noonan have moved house (again), this time to a more permanent



place, purchased secretly by K & B (to avoid sabotage by malevolent wombats) at a location between Outer Mongolia and the Black Stump: 5 Ernest Rd, Croydon 3136, Ph 725 7421. Bruce Fraser is all set to head off to Canberra to study at ANU in early December. Andrew Brown has moved to 2/96 Orrong Rd, Elsternwick 3185. Blackwood (a kind of a MUSFA reunion activity) will be held this year in the first week of December (Dec 3 - 7). This year, just for a change, it will be held at Blackwood. The bad news, though, is that someone else has booked the place for the weekend, so Blackwood this year will only go till Friday. Dennis Callegari sees this as yet another sign of the impending demise of MUSFA (he's predicted the demise of MUSFA at the end of each of the past five years - I suppose he has to be right one day). The End of year Bistro Nite will be held on Friday 1st December 7.30pm at the Asian Food Plaza, 196 Russell St, Melbourne. Come along and see who gets the WAGG Shaky Leaf Award. Peter Burns often appears at 206 Haughton Rd, South Oakleigh 3167, Ph 544 6071.

#### N.S.W.

Terry Frost is getting engaged to Karen Vaughan in April 1985. (Could this be an attempt to evade the ultimate responsibility of marriage?) Also, Terry has recently suffered a change address after forgetting to pay the rent for a couple of weeks and being given a weeks' notice. Mail to PO Box A401, Sydney South 2000. Margaret Willard has moved to Clifford Ave, Burwood. Marilyn Pride is now resident in Annadale. The National capital threatens to suck up yet another fan as Kim Huett begins to make plans to move to Canberra sometime in the future with his department.

#### QLD

Cathy Kerrigan reports that Queensland television is showing reruns of the second series of The Avengers (starring Diana Rigg with companion Patrick Macnee) and expresses the hope that these eventually find their way out of the time warp and down south.

#### N.A.

Seth Lockwood has moved again, probably to Crawley. While he gets himself oriented, he asks that people write to him c/- 19 Coleby St, Balcatca 6021. He also writes: "I have, shock, horror, been to Pottnest. This is momentous news of awesome magnitude (which I think should make the front page of Thyme) ((only if you read it upside down and back to front)), given the avid fervour for which I have, in times of Ratcons past, declared my horror of this hell-hole. I had a wonderful time. Such pretty boys there." Meanwhile, Carolyn Strong has disappeared for four weeks working in the North West, reportedly digging holes in the ground.

#### Taswegia

Torbjorn and Robyn finally have the phone on (002 25 4148). They may be moving from their present abode shortly, so they're not telling anyone where they are.

#### Overseas Travellers

Alan Avent has moved to the US for a short time in search of money. His address is "Head of the Australian Defence Staff, 5th Floor, Embassy of Australia, 1601 Mass Ave N.W., Washington DC 20036, USA." Justin returns to Melbourne Friday 16 November on Pan Am flight 815. He will be stopping over in Sydney for a couple of days before this. Meanwhile, our travelling correspondent reports that Zorro departs Egypt for the U.K. around November 15 (C/- Joseph Nicholas), returns to Egypt about four weeks later and may appear in Australia late December/early January. Christina Lake has moved to 235 Iffley Rd, Oxford OX4 1SQ, U.K. Brian Aldiss now lives at Woodlands, Foxcombe Rd, Bears Hill, Oxford OX1 5DL, U.K. Steven Fox appears to have changed address, but I don't have his new one. Carey Handfield reports that the Britain in '87 and the Phoenix in '87 Worldcon bids remain mortal enemies in spite of the report last issue.

Thanks for this issue go to John, Roelof, and INCROFT!!!! For the production of last issue thanks to CMUC and Bruce's Boneo. While we're on the subject, Phil, Mandy, Chris, Victor, Lyn, Clive helped collate, Alice took it down to the post office. Thyme is 2125 2.11.84.



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