

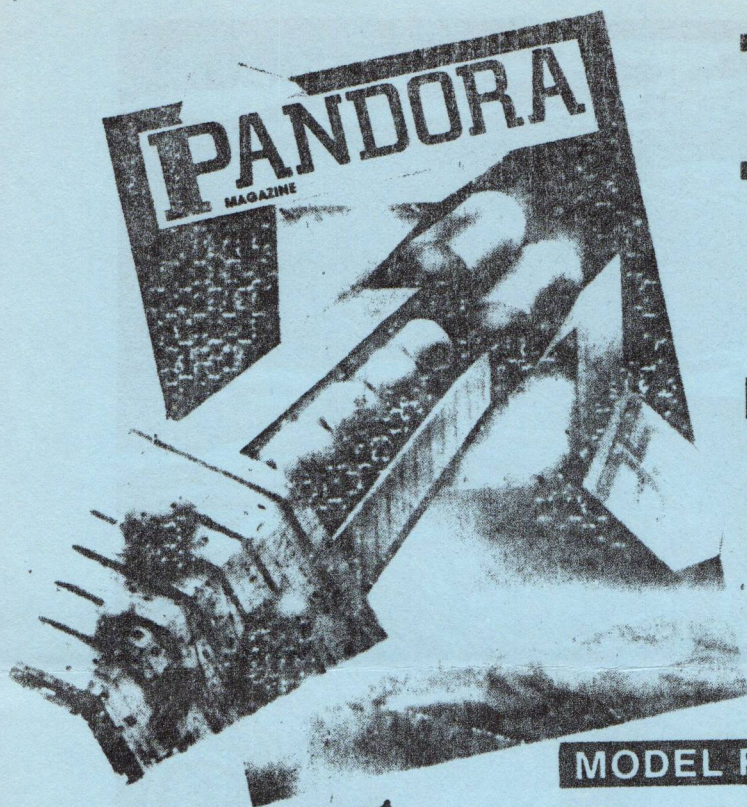


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thyme

the Australasian S F News Magazine

July 1985



**ISSUE 1
OUT NOW!**

PANDORA

S.F./FANTASY
GAMING & MODELLING
MAGAZINE

**AUSTRALIA/N.Z.'S OWN
S.F. & FANTASY
GAMING & MODELLING MAGAZINE**

SCRATCH BUILDING

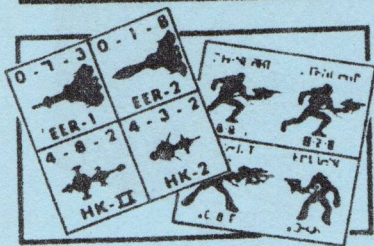
We look at scratch building techniques of Science Fiction models. Spaceships, Diaramas, Models etc. In issue one we demonstrate how to "scratch build" our cover ship the SX-35 Inter-System freighter.

MODEL REVIEWS

Pandora will take a critical review of model kits that are on the market and also discuss modelling techniques and adaptations. In issue one we will be reviewing the S.F.-3D Collection of Armour Suit Models.



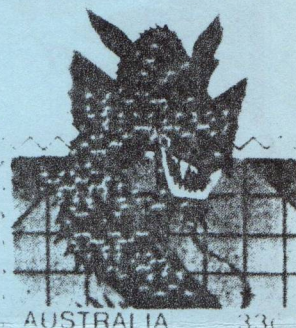
GAMES CAPSULES



Pandora will feature complete "Role Play and Board Games". We have commissioned Mr. W.G. Armintrout,* well known games author to write three capsule games for us and we will also be featuring items from local authors.

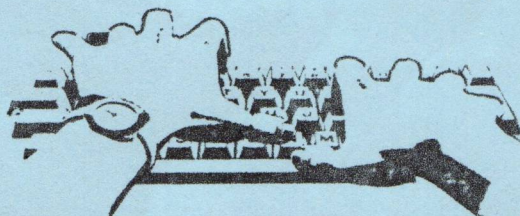
PLAY BY MAIL (PBM)

One of the fastest growing areas of S.F. & Fantasy Gaming is the PMB area. Pandora will be regularly featuring PMB reviews and information. Board and other games will also be discussed.



COMPUTER ADVENTURES

Pandora will regularly review computer Adventure & Strategic Games. It will seek out and publish Designer Notes and Programming Techniques for the computer enthusiast.



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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.

NEWS

We Were Wrong: to think that anyone would be fooled for a minute by our 'No Award' Nebula award hoax, just as we were wrong to assume it was okay to leave a big blank space on page three of the last issue for the awards to be announced in when they came in. We were wrong, you see, to assume that the Nebula awards banquet would not be put back a week, and the results thus be delayed. We were wrong, terribly, inexcusably wrong, and now we're wringing our wrong hands in despair - to think we even contemplated making fun of something as hallowed and venerable as the Nebulas.

Best Novel: *Neuromancer* .. William Gibson

Best Novella: *Press Enter* .. John Varley

Best Novelette: *Bloodchild* .. Octavia Butler

Best Short Story: *Morning Child* .. Gardner Dozois

Meanwhile, the British SF Association had its own set of awards to give to British talent.

THE BSFA AWARDS

Novel - Rob Holdstock's *Mythago Wood*

Short Fiction - Geoff Ryman's *The Unconquered Country*

Media Presentation - The Company of Wolves

Artist - Jim Burns

+++

Results were as follows:

	UK	Aus	Total
Eve Harvey	42	25	67
John Jarrold	22	1	23
Marta Beck	1		1
Roelof Goudriaan		3	3
Paul Skelton		1	1
Spoilt Ballots	4		
	69	30	99



Stu Shiffman

- Hugo nominee -
 Best FanArtist

DUFF

Though this year's DUFF race is over and Marty & Robbie Cantor are preparing their trip to Aussiecon and publishing "Here we go round the Duffberry bush", a DUFF zine. Nominations for DUFF 1986 are now open and will close sometime after Aussiecon. The winner will travel to the USA next year to attend the Worldcon. If you do not wish to be involved in the DUFF cause by actually traveling to the US, there are still various fundraising activities:

Marty & Robbie Cantor are selling back issues of "Holier than Thou" (a Hugo nominated fanzine) for \$2 each. Jack Herman is looking for material for the Aussiecon DUFF auction. Autographed SF books are particularly sought. Contributions can be sent to:

Jack Herman
Wentworth Building
University of Sydney
Sydney 2006

Marty & Robbie Cantor
11565 Archwood St
Nth Hollywood CA 91606-1703
USA

NEWS COMMENT

In the Hugo category of Best Non Fiction Book, your editors feel that people should consider voting for In The Heart Or In The Head by George Turner.

This is a rare work as entertaining and readable as it is informative about the development of the genre of science fiction over the past three decades. But more than that, it deserves your special attention because quite probably none of the voters in the U.S. (or any other places outside Australia) have ever heard of George Turner, and their local bookshops probably don't stock works by such unknown authors - let alone books that have not even been released anywhere outside Australia. So they're not going to vote for him.

As Harlan Ellison (one of the nominees in this category) said when he visited Australia in 1983, Australian readers have a particular responsibility to the local industry. And so here comes the barefaced nationalistic appeal:

Point 1: When you come to make up your list of books to read, instead of putting on works like *Foundation's Edge*, *Job* or *The Grandchildren of Dune* because they are popular, put on In The Heart or In The Head because it is well written and a good read.

Point 2: When it comes to deciding who to put on top of your Hugo ballot, put aside the "Australian writers aren't as good as American (or British) writers" syndrome and vote for In The Heart Or In The Head because it deserves to win.

NOT THE GOSSIP COLUMN

((Real fanac, perhaps overawed by the prospect of Aussiecon, hasn't been generating the news it often tends to, but fortunately fans are still writing to each other; so for a change of pace, we'll let the news commentary be helped along by a couple of letters. First from Diane Fox:))

Dear Peter and Roger,

Sorry I'm late with this loc on the two latest Thyme's. Actually, it isn't too bad for me - I am usually three months behind time.

* * * * * Thyme #45 * * * * *
First, Thyme #43. I loved the cover (by ???) with the long-necked furry alien and the cheeky ducks. ((Yes, sorry, it was by Matjaz Schmidt, a very talented fellow whose work will hopefully be appearing in future issues.))

The Ditmar winners list sounds good. I hadn't read Neuromancer' at the time I filled in my Ditmar form or would have nominated it. It looks to have a chance of getting a Hugo as well! ((See this year's list of Nebula Award winners, elsewhere in this issue, while you're at it.))

I'm not surprised at Nick Strathopoulos getting the Artist award -- I've seen his work and it's very good indeed.

The George Turner autobiography is another possible Hugo winner -- I got hold of a copy recently and should read it next week ((also see this issue for more discussion of the book)). Although I haven't read it yet, Yvonne Rousseau's review of the book makes it sound very interesting and moving in its own right and I would certainly have read it sooner or later even if it had not featured in both the Ditmar and Hugo lists. I have meanwhile started reading Transmitters' and am very much enjoying it.

I liked Damien Broderick's Ditmar rant. Incidentally, what's this about Randolph Stow's Suburbs of Hell'? I've not sighted it. Is it another hoax? I wouldn't be surprised at anything, these days.

Diane Fox

((No hoax, no hoax -- we here in the editorial offices of Thyme' like to restrain ourselves to only the occasional "scare", such as with the Nebulas. On the subject of the Ditmars, we have a letter from Van Ikin....))

Dear Peter/Roger,

Everybody seems to be asking the question: whatever did Bruce Gillespie edit in 1984 ((to win the Ditmar for Best SF Editor'))?

One answer is: SF' #15 -- the "Last SF Commentary'" special issue! That issue is dated 1983, but it was not published until 1984 (a fact which won't amaze anyone who reads SF' and knows its tradition of being way behind schedule).

What worries me about this mass-forgetting of SF' #15 is the fact that many people have said that the Gillespie-edited issue was the best issue of SF' that has yet appeared. If even the best is forgettable, no wonder the magazine is going through hard times!

Van Ikin

((Don't be glum, Van; the answer is not so simple as that. As Bruce cheerily points out, the fact that he was editor of one issue of Science Fiction', a magazine of sf criticism does not make him an sf editor'. The notion that it was as a third of the Norstrilia Press team that he was nominated remains front runner in the SF EDITOR section of the Annual Memorial Ditmar Eligibility competition -- otherwise known as "look what this year's awards committee has done".

Back now to Diane Fox's letter, and talk of the Hugo Awards....))

Neuromancer is still my first choice for Novel although JOB: A Comedy of Justice' looks to be one of Heinlein's better books -- influenced a great deal by James Branch Cabell and full of iconoclastic humour and a good deal of out-of-the-way information about religion.

by James Branch Cabell and full of iconoclastic humour and a good deal of out-of-the-way information about religion.

With the Hugo Awards in mind, the problem is that I am usually a year behind time in reading books and magazines, so my chances of having read an eligible book, in time to nominate it, are slim. I've been trying to get hold of the book and magazines on this year's Hugo list... but (many of the magazines and books) have sold out by the time I've had enough money to get at them!

I have seen all the nominated films except 'The Last Starfighter' and '2010' - I intend to see these before the 31st of July ((the deadline for voting)) - but I don't know why '1984' didn't reach the final ballot - it certainly got enough publicity (the usual reason a good film doesn't get the appreciation it deserves is lack of publicity etc.).

The budgie got stuck in the vacuum cleaner??? I hope there were no horrible happenings involving a microwave oven! ((The truth, as usual, is much worse than that but that, as they say, is another story.))

On Thyme #44: I hope that this 'No Award' for every category of the Nebulas is some form of practical joke or hoax. If they genuinely believe that nothing worthy of interest has been published in 1984, something is dreadfully wrong, somewhere. ((On this, we are in complete agreement, Diane.))

Joseph Grigg's story also sounded like a hoax, but unfortunately such stories are never hoaxes. I wondered where the Khmer Rouge would go after the Vietnamese drove them out of Kampuchea: it seems they have taken up residence in England's green and pleasant land; I wonder if friends and relatives of these council members would now be writing the "allowable" books with which the discarded classics will be replaced? It sounds like it would be a nice little racket, but I can imagine the sort of garbage that would be produced under the circumstances.

Middle-class rabbits? I imagine that the council members involved are all Upper Middle Class and probably employ maidservants and make sure that these employees earn every penny they get. I won't go on with this as it merely makes me helplessly angry. I hope the good people of London rise up and hang the silly bastards on the local lampposts. I mean, the poor bloody poms already have to put up with Maggie Thatcher and having these fascists in leftwing disguise burning their kids' books is too much for flesh and blood to tolerate.

Richard Bishop's review of Gerald Murnane's 'Landscape With Landscape' makes the book sound interesting; I enjoyed 'The Plains' despite being irritated at times. (I suspect Murnane, however, was deliberately being irritating as a kind of straight-faced joke - certainly there was a good deal of humour in the book!) The title of this latest book reminds me of the surrealist artist Rene Magritte who liked to paint puzzling and even punning scenes - the cover of 'Thyme' shows that this was quite intentional, for the reproduced cover of 'Landscape With Landscape' is very much a Magritte imitation in its imagery. I'll probably enjoy the book a lot.

Speaking of Australian book publishers, I look forward to Ebony Books' 'Urban Fantasies'; if it does come out at Aussiecon II I'll be delighted to buy a copy and will try to have it autographed. ((Jenny and Russell thus far assure us that their new anthology is still planned as an Aussiecon II release.))

John and I went to Womble and Gerald's wedding, rather more traditional than we had expected (held in a very old and historical Balmain church and with the bride in white with full veil etc.).

((John Newman comments:))

The wedding was really neat. Done and Run by the couple themselves, it was a great fannish collection, without the overheads and dangers of a convention (mainly because it didn't go for so long!). With most of the attendees coming from either Melbourne or Canberra, The whole thing was a real reunion, with travel arrangements being the biggest item of business. I was glad, on leaving, that I had given the traditional wine glasses to the couple, as Womble seemed to feel that the breakage rate in Balmain was going to stay high.

((And as life settles back to a kind of normal, the following is from Gerald Smith)):

Dear Roger,

How are you Cobber. All's well here. Sorry I haven't written sooner. I really should have but with the wedding and all, I just haven't had time.

I guess I should start with some news. The main news, of course, is the wedding of Womble and I (me and Womble) which all took place on Saturday 4th May here in Balmain. As far as I could tell, all who attended had a good time. I won't go into details here - if you want to know more, ask John Newman.

There is a Japanese fan visiting Australia at the moment. Her name is June and she is presently in Sydney. She hopes to be in Australia for some time, with luck so that she can make Aussiecon. I'm not certain of her plans - though I guess she'll get to other cities as well. She came out with us last Thursday night - the usual Galaxy gathering. Afterwards, she came back here to watch Twilight Zone and stayed overnight. A very nice lady who would like to meet as many Australian Fans as she can while here.

Good to see you had an er... interesting trip. Hope you did, at least, enjoy yourself. It's been interesting reading, in the apas, what others had to report about your travels - people like Roelof Goudriaan who told the tale of how the Australian came to stay a few days and ended up staying a little longer.

I'm not sure if it was you or Jean Weber making the comment about the TAFF fued, but I feel I should make some reply. I don't find it singularly silly. Avedon Carol's defence of her actions struck me as ethically, morally and, if you like, legally correct. For her to have acted otherwise would have been to disenfranchise the British because the British wanted things the way they were.

Gerald Smith (27 May 1985)

((The British seem to agree - Ansible#43 reports that "TAFF constitutional revisions were hammered out in a practically smoke-filled room at Yorcon, containing enough present and past administrators to have changed the course of the simultaneous '86 Eastercon voting. Upshot: future winners probably need to pick up a minimal 20% of final (adjusted) votes in both Europe and N America. If no one evinces such multicontinental appeal, the winner is presumably deemed to be 'hold over funds'. (Pete Presford comments that no one objected when Justin 'You don't know me - I don't know you' Ackroyd came over and, in the event, won all hearts as GUFF delegate. But the massed TAFF sages felt that being known in the host country was very much part of TAFF's ancient, unwritten tradition.)" What the Mid-Western Americans (who no doubt see things a little differently) think about all this remains to be seen, but there seems to be a little less gloom and doom talk about TAFF since the winners were announced))

((Onto something completely different - the Australian SF tradition of starting the campaigns for (and against) Natcon bids in earnest after the voting is finished. Paul Stevens starts the ball rolling:))

I was a bit worried regarding the report of the 1987 Australian National SF Convention. As I understood it, this bid - Capcon - was won on the basis of the convention being held over the Easter 1987 weekend. It was also understood that the guest of honour would attend the convention at this date. It was also understood that that the Convention would be held at the Lakeside Motel. We are now told, two to three weeks after the convention ((Advention - the 1985 National Convention)) that this was not really the way things were intended, that what the bidding session was told was a mistake, a misunderstanding. I am wondering if giving these turkeys the 1987 National Convention was a good idea, Paul Stevens (9 May 1985)

((Comments? Finally, we received one response to last issue's article about the burning of the Children's books in London which surprisingly, I thought, seems to think the ILEA is onto a good thing. Anyway, Marcus O'Reilly:))

I read the article on the withdrawal of books from school libraries in London ((Thyme #44)) with some interest. John Colinene may well be of the stuff the British Empire was made from, but I find his misguided sentimentalism no reason why the rest of us shouldn't feel acutely embarrassed by our imperialist ancestors who wiped out whole cultures - whole races even - while keeping women in the kitchen, barefoot and pregnant for so long. How is it that a work of fiction gets to be so sacred that Daniel Defoe's presentation of Man Friday as something a short step away from a tamed monkey, for instance, should be tolerated on the shelves of the Children's Section. And how many Jewish children have been tormented at school by the culture which encouraged Charles Dickens to characterise Fagan as a Jew? Maybe it is John Colinene too who should have a bit of a long think about the elements that make up a "Children's Classic".

The following is an extract from a history of the settlement of Melbourne, written for older children. It illustrates quite well the distorted view of the world which the writers of the Classics found so comfortable:

"... Batman sailed leisurely up to the head of the Bay, and then, taking with him a couple of Sydney Blacks in his employ, he struck inland a distance of 24 miles and ... succeeded in coming upon the head quarters of the Dutigalla tribe of Aborigines. His 'taking manner', which he had already exercised upon struggling groups of natives en route now stood him in substantial stead, for he speedily managed to so ingratiate himself with the savages that by the following morning they were eager to do anything and everything for their affable guest.

"Accordingly, Batman, fully prepared for this pleasant turn of events, produced the necessary documents assigning him and his co-partners the tracts of land, towards which their longings must have amounted to a breach of the tenth commandment. The contract involved the modest area of 600,000 acres, for which consideration was 20 pairs of blankets, 30 tomahawks, 100 knives, 50 pairs of scissors, 30 looking glasses, 200 handkerchiefs, 100 lbs of flour, and 6 shirts ...

"A rather romantic incident in connection with Batman's arrival occurred while his party ... were encamped at Indented Head, during his return to Launceston with the glorious news of his land bargain. They were surprised one morning to see an extremely tall figure advancing towards them. His hair was thickly matted; his skin was brown, but not black like that of the natives; he was almost naked, and he carried the ordinary arms of the aborigines. This was Buckley, the only survivor of three convicts who had escaped from an exploring expedition in 1803. He had dwelt for thirty-two years among the natives... He had many strange adventures during this long time, but had not the smallest influence for good upon the natives. He was content to sink at once to their level and lead the purely animal life they led. But when he heard from them that there was a party of whites on Indented Head, whom the Geelong tribes proposed to murder, he crossed to warn them of their danger. ...

"And now the little colony began to germinate. Settler after settler arrived from Tasmania, and squatted, some close to the Dutigalla settlement and others further away over the Iramoo Downs. They did not enjoy peaceable possession. The blacks, who had worn out the blankets, blunted the knives and broken the looking glasses for which they had parted with their birthright, began to repent their bargain, and forcibly proved their dissatisfaction by frequent attacks upon the settlers, whose homesteads were many miles apart."

("Victoria in 1880" - George Robertson, 1880)

The 150th anniversary of this event - 6 June 1985 - was not celebrated by most Victorians who would now prefer to forget that people ever thought that way. Yet it seems okay for children, okay for schools to teach through their fiction? I find

this difficult to comprehend. And what about this for teaching about life in Uganda:

"Many great discoveries have been made, as we have said. In Africa the good missionary Livingstone, Stanley, Sir Samuel Baker, Captains Speke and Grant, found out where the Nile begins, which no one before could discover; also three or four great lakes; the course of two rivers; forest land in which live very tiny men, dwarfs, who eat spiders and fight with poisoned arrows.

-from "Victoria, our Queen and Empress - Simply told for children". Published 1897.

No wonder our society has so much trouble with barriers between peoples when they let that sort of thing survive.

- Marcus O'Reilly (6/85)

~~~~~  
Publishing News and Fanac

No boring Con updates this issue, just so we don't have to mention Aussiecon. Instead, from the fringes of fandom, the following press release arrived in our letter box:

PANDORA MAGAZINE OUT OF THE BOX

Kim Books has unveiled Pandora - a new bi-monthly magazine for people who enjoy Science Fiction and Fantasy. Editor, Mervyn Beamish, says "Pandora caters for the growing number of model makers, artists and gamers who enjoy relaxing with science fiction and fantasy books and magazines." Pandora contains a selection of 'how to' articles on model building plus play-by-mail (PBM) strategy games. "This is a tremendous growth area throughout Australia which has extended internationally with many Australian games already successful on the world market," he said. Game scenarios range include: medieval fantasy, war and science fiction strategy ((a game on how to write SF???)) "A series on science fiction art techniques (with and without airbrush) is planned along with reviews, news, and other items on models, art, artists, films and photography", he added. Reviews of the latest computer games and support materials are included in each issue. In addition, war games conventions occur in most capital cities and universities throughout the country and Pandora will report on the conventions. Another facet of Pandora will be to encourage Australian and New Zealand gamers to develop their own brand of adventure and strategic games. Also covered will be how programming techniques and micro-computers are influencing the game market. Throughout Australia and New Zealand there are groups, clubs and individuals meeting weekly for role playing games, and Pandora will offer articles for them. "Complete capsuled games in both board and role-play categories will also ((to boldly split...)) be published, and I see Pandora as an avenue to encourage local authors to publish their own games capsules", Merv said. Pandora will be a bi-monthly magazine, available through newsagents, games and modelling outlets, as well as by subscription.

Mervyn Beamish - (02) 439 1827

((Is Pandora a magazine to introduce Wargamers to Science Fiction, or is it the other way round (are we perhaps a Wargames fringe group?). Reading all the promo material we got about this magazine, I've been feeling a little ambivalent about this claim to fandom by model-makers and wargamers. Glossy brochures attest to the fact that there is money in games and writing about games that isn't in written Science Fiction, but I wonder how much the two groups really have in common. (Pandora will tell, I suppose) Maybe it's just that all those fannish twelve year-olds who would once have got stuck into Heinlein Space Cadets are just playing Wargames instead; mightn't be all that bad.))

((Onto Media Fandom. I suppose it was inevitable that something as popular as The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy would eventually spawn its own Fandom. In Victoria, the following, according to W. M'Dale (don't ask me), is it:



The Hitch-hiker's club to the Galaxy has the following to say about the Hitcher's Club:

One of the major attractions of the insignificant little blue-green planet Earth is its relative innocence and unspoilt nature - relative, in respect to pollution and Culture Club fans, but as the latter are becoming steadily rarer, in accordance with the inverse relationship between the time since their last concert tour and the number of people still deluded by them, we won't worry (much) about them.

An essential organisation for every hiker planning an Earth to contact is the Hitcher's Club, of 20 Castlewood Drive, Boronia 3155, Victoria, Australia. Unlike most things on the planet Earth, the club is non prophet/ profit-making, leading a well-known augumentotemporal economist - that is, the local Bank Manager - to ask how it survives upon poultry/ paltry \$5 subscriptions. "Money is an illusion, money owed doubly so", is the response. Not illusory however, is their 25-page quarterly magazine, Playbeing, which adds Hitcher's tips and news, artwork, articles, reviews to its Ursa Minor namesake's mixture of gynaecology, politics and music.

The Hitchers' Club also holds almost monthly meetings, at which members wave towels, explore public transport systems and byways with meaningful names, raid Federation pavilions, drink tea with decoram, watch videos & films and generally make abject fools of themselves.

Reported by Lucy Zinkiewicz

Hitchers' tip: join the Club, go to Earth, but beware of Republicans and other primitive but deadly creatures. Otherwise Mostly Harmless.

- W. M'Dale

FANDOM BEHIND THE BANANA CURTAIN -

from Kevin Sheehan

Is there really something different about Queenslanders? Yes! We are all smarter, braver and stronger than all Southerners. Now seriously folks, this is not true. There is no difference between Queenslanders and any other Australian. There are even some SF Fans living here.

There are three SF Clubs in Brisbane (that I know about). These are the Queensland Star Trekkers, New Horizons and the Claytons Club.

Queensland Star Trekkers has a monthly newsletter and meets about once every fortnight. They meet on the second floor of a temperance "hotel" called the Canberra. The Club is a family-oriented one with a number of functions each year. Although the club is nominally Star Trek, there are a lot of other interests represented in the Newsletter as well as at meetings. Some previous members of the club were responsible for getting the CONQUEST Convention started in Queensland. Interested persons can contact the Secretary for further details:

Kevin Sheehan  
c/- GPO Box 2084  
Brisbane 4001  
Ph: (BH) 222 6202

New Horizons used to be a branch of the Australian Club of the same name. The members had so much fun that when the main club wound down, they continued on. The Club is going into a short recess but should be back on deck in July 1985. I am not involved with the club as yet so please don't hang me for anything I might say about the club. It gets together about once a month to watch videos and I think that it has a bit of a "Blakes Seven" bent. Keen people can contact:

Ellen Parry  
c/- 32 Curragundi Rd,  
Jindalee 4074



The Claytons Club is a club which has no bias against the written word. The members get together and talk about life, the universe and everything at regular restaurant type meetings. This club is quite small compared to the other two but that is no ban to new members ((unless they want to go walking in the street together)). If anyone would like to join they can contact:

David Evans  
63 Annie St,  
Torwood 4066  
Ph: 369 9179

I don't know if this was the sort of thing you had in mind when I spoke to you on the phone but I hope you can read it.

Brisbane will have two SF conventions this year. The first will be CON AMORE which is also the National Media Convention in a few weeks (8-10th June). The second will be CONQUEST '85 (5-6th October). Con Amore is shaping up a lot better so far, but the other con may get its act together as well.

I refuse to tell you all the juicy gossip about the various back-stage interactions up here mainly due to my poor knowledge of them. I hope that Melbourne is not too cold,

++++++

((Sigh. So all of fandom has gone to pot and turned into Media fen. But still we have bits for the serious literary fan, like this piece of news about Piers Anthony books from Alan Stewart of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club:))

Piers Anthony intends to close down Xanth after the ninth book "Golem in the Gears" to make room for a second Adept trilogy beginning with "Out of Phaze".

In his Social commentary series - "Bio of a Space Tyrant", correspondences are:

Jupiter = America; Saturn = Asia; Uranus = Europe; Neptune = Australia.

(This news also appeared in "Ethyl the Aardvark goes to Gor", MSFC Newsletter, March/April 1985 - but maybe it is new news to you.))

++++++

And for the Fanzine fan, Jean Weber sends some news:

((HUGO NOMINATED ART AVAILABLE))

Bill Rotsler sent a packet containing a packet containing hundreds of illustrations (suitable for fanzines) to Eric and asked him to distribute them to Aussie faneds. Most of the illos are 1/4 page size, and most are originals, though some are photocopies. Most are of 'Aliens' though some are cartoons. Anyone wanting a fistfull of these illos should send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Jean Weber, PO Box 42, Lyneham ACT 2602. It might be smart to enclose a little note saying why you're sending this envelope, since Jean gets requests for lots of things and you might find something very unexpected in your envelope when you get it back, if she isn't sure which item you're asking for. A 100 x 227 mm (approx 4x9 inch) envelope would be better than a smaller one, if you don't want the illos folded.

((Fanzine Display at Aussiecon))

As a follow-on from the note about fanzine display and sale: anyone wishing to sell their own zines (or get a friend to sell them) in the fan room - for the profit of any cause including the lining of the faned's own pocket - is welcome to do so. (We probably won't have room for individuals to have tables, but you might be lucky) It's only the ones that the fan room 'staff' are supposed to keep an eye on, and collect money for, that have to be in aid of fan funds' 'kitty'.



In the last issue of *Thyme*, we published a review of George Turner's Hugo-nominated autobiography *In The Heart Or In The Head*. Here is John Baxter with another view of this work.

*In The Heart Or In The Head* by George Turner

(Norstrilia Press; \$16.95; 239pp., index)

reviewed by John Baxter

As unobtrusively and circumspectly as he lived, the science fiction writer A. Bertram Chandler died on the 6th of June. Australia was initially just a terminus to the voyage Bert Chandler plied from his native Britain in his profession as a captain of the merchant marine, but it became in time his home - and his subject. His popular stories of the Rim Worlds plainly derive from an affection for the rigour and virtues of a hard-luck, down-at-heel colony. And in *Kelly Country*, his magnum opus, published last year, he endorsed those virtues in a story of an alternative Australia in which Ned evades hanging and leads the country, with American help, to independence from the Imperial yoke.

Chandler was not always easy to get on with. A lifetime at sea, a formidable speech impediment and two decades of exposure to insistent fans rendered him constitutionally monosyllabic. Knowledgeable of his formidable sensuality and flair in the kitchen were reserved for his intimates. Some will recall him with warmth, all with respect.

George Turner shares some of Chandler's inaccessability. His small circle of friends is ringed by a larger circle of adversaries (earned mostly by his testy reviews of science fiction for the Melbourne Age). And with this autobiography he caps his career with a work almost certain to increase his reputation as one of the literary scene's most notable curmudgeons.

Turner published six realist novels between 1959 and 1968, most of them while employed in a succession of clerical jobs, the last in a Melbourne brewery. His third book, *The Cupboard Under The Stairs*, shared the 1962 Miles Franklin Award. Since 1978, he's written three science fiction novels and become a familiar comentator on sf. This memoir is issued by Norstrilia Press, the Melbourne sf publishing house, and was written at the suggestion of co-founder Bruce Gillespie. In what Turner means as an illustration of how he and the field of science fiction grew up together, chapters of recollection alternate with a brief history of sf and Turner's acerbic comments on favoured and disliled writers.

So *In The Heart Or In The Head* is afr from a typical literary life. It recalls Orwell's *Keep The Aspidistra Flying* in its sarcastic view of the world of the struggling writer, embattled, indigent, misunderstood, to whom the windfall of financial security is a mockery of one's stoic existence and a provocation to excess.

Why write autobiography? In most cases, it's for the personal satisfaction in placing in perspective the events of a life. Or, if you're courageous or egotistical enough to believe that theyears have conferred wisdom, the book can be an annotated compendium of treasurable experience. Then there is the more common motive, favoured by show business, of recrimination.

Turner's book belongs to none of these categories. There is personal reminiscence, but it is not recorded with any sense of satisfaction. Life has been hard, unsatisfying; with hindsight, it seems to him devoid of meaning as well. Turner has lived through a great deal, from childhood privation to family trauma, loneliness and alcoholism. But at the conclusion of every passage, he specifically any general significance. What meaning these events may have is exclusively personal - if indeed there is any meaning to events.



As for recrimination, if there is surprisingly little of that, it can be traced to Turner's even-handed dislike of almost everyone and everything, not least himself. Only T.E. Lawrence has ever written so bleak and despairing a life. In The Heart Or In The Head treads an almost pathologically wayward path of self-revelation. Explaining the book's genesis in its first chapter, Turner writes "I fell prey to memory, an unfair trap for one who had paid little attention to his past, preferring to let it lie where it fell on the rubbish tip of the years." Turner, as Lord Berners said of Lawrence, backs into the limelight, tricked by the accidents of existence into painful revelation.

What he chooses to remember is not what most of us would include in our own autobiographies. He discards thirty years of working life with a casual remark that "my years with the Commonwealth Employment Service, with the textile trade and in the brewery would make long chapters of human goodness, wickedness and fallibility, but they are off the point."

What then is the point? What is his subject? Turner's earliest influence was *Alice In Wonderland*. "It tapped an ecstasy of visions as real as the 'real' world", he writes. "No fantasy here, but only accepted reality transmuted into the nonsense he perceived inherent in it." An element of Carroll's sarcasm and sexual repression has ruled Turner's life. Merely to meet another being is to be tricked, confused, made sport of. Better to remain silent, stand with your feet together, speak in French when you can't think of the English for the thing, and always remember who you are.

What Turner recalls is a life of tight-lipped encounters - with literature, with love, with death. His childhood was disordered. Business reverses broke up his parents. He half-liked the school from which he was twice expelled, but drifted from there into casual boozing. He didn't have a "good" War; friends died, his testy nature hampered advancement. There is some fragile friendship but little love in this book and no sex at all. Bluntly, Turner says "whole areas of aesthetic experience, working life and personal contacts are merely summarized in the interests of the community, or simply excluded. I belong to a generation that considered sexual experience a matter private to those concerned."

No wonder Turner writes as he does, with the harsh dedication of someone determined to get the car moving no matter what. Clunking and grating, his style rolls over its subjects, grinding them into the cement. His books read like sermons and allegories from a man brought up to speak some obscure tongue and worship a flinty, unforgiving god: translations from the Uranian.

They lack any sense of place. A city or a room is just a setting in which the characters may hector one another. In The Heart Or In The Head is no different. It is the kind of book Alice specifically hated - one without pictures and without conversations. Except in some brief recollections of Kalgoorlie, which he repudiates after returning to his early home, his life progresses through a landscape of the intellect where fiction is the only reality.

For that reason, this is a classic literary life of the 1950s. It reflects as accurately as Gissing's *New Grub Street* the reality of writing for a society that saw in the author no social utility or moral function: perceived him, in fact, as immoral, a trickster who made money from a facility commonly possessed. A world where the only question worth asking a writer was "Where d'yer get yer ideas?"

It's the story of a man writing novels alone at night in rented rooms, supporting himself by day in a series of menial jobs. The world within the head becomes all the space there is: and, in interleaving the passages of reminiscence with a potted history of science fiction, Turner has made that fantasy world his subject. Like Reardon's book in Gissing's novel, science fiction itself becomes a vision of "absolute realism in the sphere of the ignobly decent."



Whether his history of science fiction is accurate or his critical judgments valid is beside the point. To question them is to question the content of dreams retailed to an analyst. He would dislike the flashy, technocratic fiction of the pre-war years and admire the solemn idea-spinning of Olaf Stapledon. Of course Alfred Bester and J.G. Ballard offend his sensibilities; to a man of Turner's stoicism, imagination on the loose must be like a wasp in the shower.

He offers a stoic recipe for the science fiction writer of the future. "He will not be writing works of art - at any rate not at first - but solid, tradesmanlike fiction with a purpose, overt or covert. In this area a great technician may at first do more useful work than a great artist." It's plainly in this character that Turner sees himself, a Stapledonian Jeremiah crying The Apocalypse.

In *The Heart Or In The Head* does nothing to convince me that George Turner is a good writer, though it does explain why he is so often a poor one. But he has given us a glimpse into a life of more than usual desperation, one that, to the last, is true to his earliest mentor. "I only took the regular course," said Alice. "The different branches of Arithmetic - Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision."

John Baxter.

*'If SF is fiction informed by the centrality of the scientific view of reality (conjecture, hypothesis, test), then Karl Popper might well find Transmitters an SF novel -- even though (indeed, because) the tachyon-hypothesis seems to be falsified.'*

Damien Broderick, *Thyme #44*

TRANSMITTERS by Damien Broderick  
(Ebony, 1984, A\$7.95, 320pp) reviewed by Bruce Gillespie

Most people will not call this book science fiction, but it is certainly a novel which sf readers will want to own and peruse. Are you pilloried or plagiarised in its pages? And should you sue if Broderick ignored you? (Michael Murphy, editor of *SF Scrutiny*, gets only one line in the book.)

On a superficial level *Transmitters* seems to be a satire about the science-fiction-fan and alternative-lifestyle communities during the late 1960s and early 1970s. At that level I don't think Broderick quite succeeds: many of his "fanzine pages" do not read like any fanzine ever published, and he fails to capture an essential quality of fandom: a certain spirit of silliness and tomfoolery mixed with a love of achievement for its own sake. Instead Broderick concentrates on the extraordinary way in which fans and free-thinkers communicate with each other by letters, magazines, messages slipped under the door, and even, in the book's funniest episode, via a radio talkback programme.

Broderick's characters transmit and receive, but rarely communicate. Only toward the end of the book does one of the characters invent a dance which enables people to touch, to transmit, to join together.

Is *Transmitters* merely a funny and elaborate satire? I could argue that it is an extended metaphor, or even that Broderick intends it as a science fiction novel. His main character, Joseph Williams, delivers a lecture about tachyons to the 1975 World SF Convention, held in Melbourne: "Everything, from the point of view of the Minkowski diagram, has already happened.... Even if a message could be transmitted to us now, at this very moment, from the future, using tachyons, we would not be able to use that information to extend our volitional choices.... We are trapped in a block of rigid space-time and nothing can get us out." This is close to the central proposition of Broderick's recent sf novel, *The Dreaming Dragons*. His woebegone, funny, angry characters suggest a wider, more universal state of non-communication. But then what does one make of the notes of hope which ring out towards the end of *Transmitters*, even in the alternative lives of luckless Joseph and Caroline? As we capsule-book-reviewers say, a mention here does not preclude a longer review later.

(reprinted from Science Fiction #16)



CHANGES OF ADDRESS

## Vic

Nova Mob still meets at the Bistro in the Rose and Crown in Bay St, Port Melbourne at 6pm, with the meeting held at Jenny and Russell Blackford's home at 198 Nott St, Port Melbourne, 8pm, first Wednesday of each month. Program for the rest of the year is: July 3 - Lucy Sussex on "Australian SF from the mainstream."; Aug 7 - Yvonne Rousseau on "George Turner's Children of Time Trilogy"; Sept 4 - Worldcon Mo-pup; Oct 2 - Jenny Blackford on "Judging Short Story Competition"; Nov 4 - Cathy Kerrigan on "Preoccupations in the Dangerous Visions anthology". Got all that? Good.

Other SF fans also meet/eat Friday evenings, 6pm, at the Tavern Coffee Lounge, corner (roughly) Elizabeth St & Little Bourke St. So, when in Melbourne... Clive & LynC, evicted again, have taken up residence at 6 Elizabeth St, Brunswick 3056; ph: 380 2283. Mario Mirable moves house soon to 3/24 Stewart St, Brunswick, but not before having a house cooling party at 61/480 Lygon St, Carlton on July 6; Alan and Clare are having a house warming party at 2 Grieve St, Carlton (where they now live) on July 13; Alan and Judy Wilson have bought a new house at 26 Nerissa St, Burwood 3125, and will be having a moving in party on 20 July (starting at 20 Wharton St in the morning, then progressing...). James Styles is back in Melbourne and living at 9 Tyson St, Richmond 3121 after an overseas jaunt to the USA, Mexico, Guatemala and France.

Karen Small has been hospitalised after living in pain for some time, suffering from cysts on both kidneys. A fleet of ambulances (how's that for a collective noun?) converged on the small residence in Glenroy on Wednesday the week before last. The way the doctors make it sound, she has more cyst than kidney, and Karen will be in the Royal Melbourne Hospital for a few weeks; And meanwhile, Adric and Nicole are at their grandparents' place so that Asms doesn't have to be hospitalised later. Get well, Karen.

## SA

Since we're not mentioning much about Conventions this issue, I'll mention here the Con in Adelaide in October. "Where no Man has Gone Before", a "mixed" ((?)) convention ((oh! it's a Star Trek Thing)) October 19-20 1985. \$10 attending for adults with special childrens rates. Mail to Gill Curtin, 72 Seaview Rd, Tennyson 5022.

## WA

Please note that for quite a while now, Geoff C Jagoe and Barbara G Z de la Hunty have been living at 22 Fraser Rd, Applecross 6153; ph: 364 8915. Swancon XI rates have just risen to \$35 (till Nov 30), but we're not talking about conventions this issue.

## Tas

Bob Toth can now be found at Video Village, Bay Village, Sandy Bay 7005, yet another addition to the masses of fans who find south a good direction to move.

## Overseas

Kevin Smith has moved to 33 Derbyshire road, Sale, Cheshire, WA4 2PB. Roelof Goudriaan has changed his home, but not his postal address to: Noordwal 2, 2573 EA Den Haag, Netherlands. Avedon Carol to 9a Greenleaf Rd, East Ham, London E6 1DX.

Thanks for this issue to Diane, Van, John, Gerald, Paul, Marcus, Mervyn, Lucy, Kevin, Alan, Jean, Joan Hanks-Woods (Hugo nominee artist) for cover art (from a foreign fanzine - thanks Roelof, Marc) and of course, Mycroft, Nancy, VICTOR zorro!!!