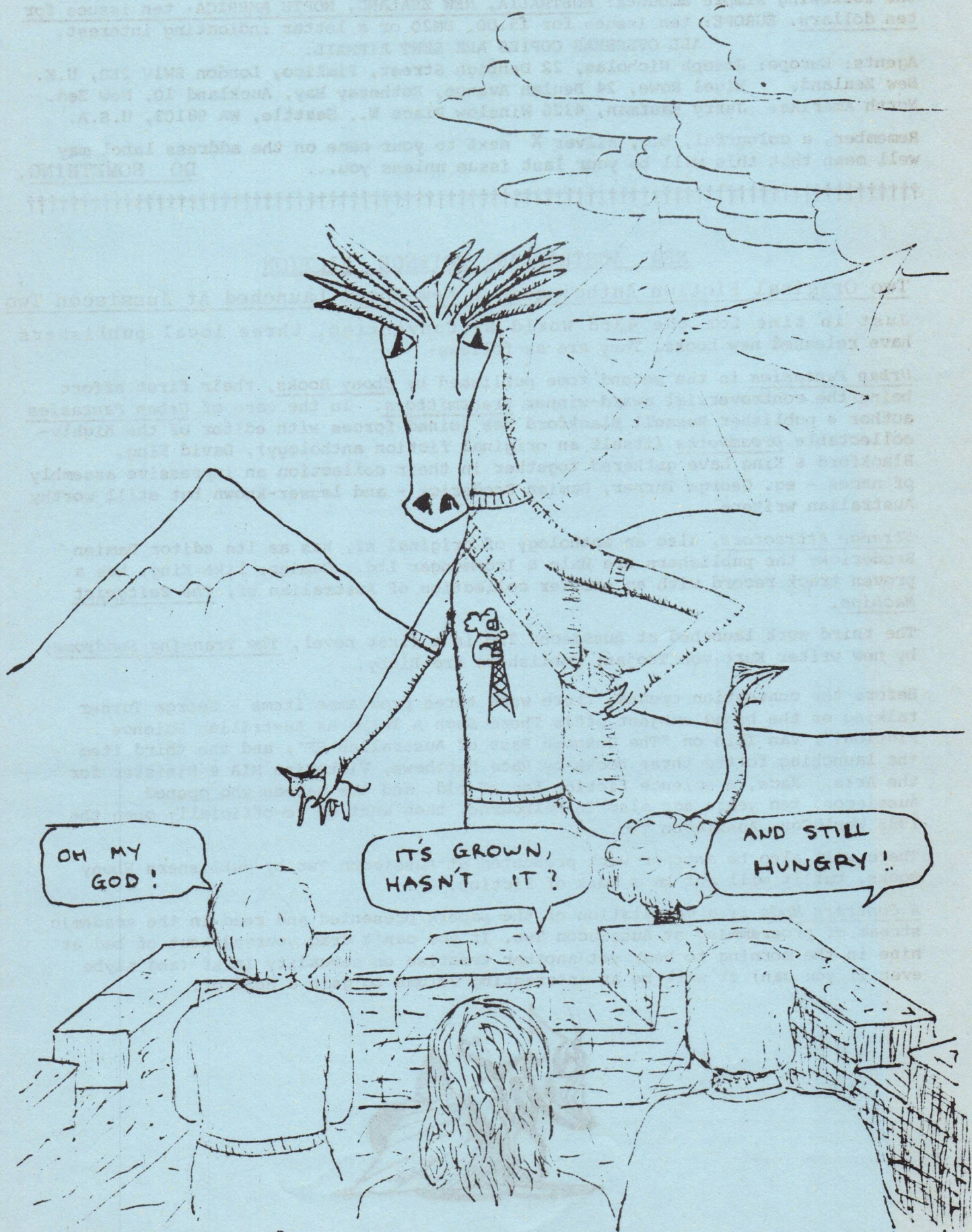


thyme 47

the Australasian S F News Magazine

August 1985



Thyme #47, the bio-degradable newszine, is edited by Peter Burns and Roger Weddall, and appears monthly (trust us, we're your friends) from the tax-deductible address of P.O.Box 273, Fitzroy 3065, AUSTRALIA [Telephone: (03) 486 1358], and is available in return for news, reviews, artwork, letters, friendly phone calls or... money, in the following simple amounts: AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, NORTH AMERICA: ten issues for ten dollars. EUROPE: ten issues for \$5.00, DM20 or a letter indicating interest.

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NEW AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION

Two Original Fiction Anthologies & New Novel Launched At Aussiecon Two

Just in time for the 43rd World SF Convention, three local publishers have released new books. They are as follows:

Urban Fantasies is the second tome published by Ebony Books, their first effort being the controversial award-winner Transmitters. In the case of Urban Fantasies author & publisher Russell Blackford has joined forces with editor of the highly-collectable Dreamworks (itself an original fiction anthology), David King. Blackford & King have gathered together in their collection an impressive assembly of names - eg. George Turner, Damien Broderick - and lesser-known but still worthy Australian writers.

Strange Attractors, also an anthology of original sf, has as its editor Damien Broderick; the publishers are Hale & Ironmonger Ltd.. Damien, like King, has a proven track record with an earlier collection of Australian sf, The Zeitgeist Machine.

The third work launched at Aussiecon Two is a first novel, The Transing Syndrome, by new writer Kurt von Trojan; publishers are Rigby.

Before the convention opened, there were three programme items - George Turner talking on the broad subject of "Is There Such A Thing As Australian Science Fiction?"; Van Ikin on "The Unknown Past of Australian SF"; and the third item the launching for the three books by Race Matthews, Victorian MLA & Minister for the Arts. Race, a science fiction fan of old, and the person who opened Aussiecon, ten years ago also in Melbourne, then went on to officially open the 1985 WorldCon, Aussiecon Two.

There will also be another work presented at Aussiecon Two by publishers Ebony Books, but it will not be a work of fiction.

A Contrary Mode is a compilation of the papers presented and read in the academic stream of programming at Aussiecon Two. If you can't drag yourself out of bed at nine in the morning to hear yet another treatise on sexuality in sf (and maybe even if you can) it will be an interesting volume to gain a hold of.



Theodore Sturgeon Dies

Theodore Sturgeon died on the 8th of May, in the evening, in Sacred Heart hospital, Eugene, Oregon, U.S.A. The cause of the death was fibrosis of the lungs, complicated by pneumonia. It is reported that he refused to have himself connected to life-support machines; it was not a sudden death and he had been undergoing treatment for his condition for some time.

Theodore Sturgeon's first science fiction sale was to *Astounding* magazine in 1939 with a short story *Ether Breather*, and from there he went on to produce such classics of the field as stories *Microcosmic God*, *It*, *Slow Sculpture* (winner of Nebula and Hugo awards), *Killdozer* and *The Man Who Lost The Sea*, author also of the novel *More Than Human*, amongst others, Sturgeon was active as a writer almost until his untimely death; his *Why Dolphins Don't Bite* is part of the *Medea: Harlan's World* collaboration/ original fiction anthology which is yet to see print in this country.

Theodore Sturgeon was honoured by the science fiction community, as Guest of Honour at the 1962 World SF Convention. His work was widely admired; the man was loved by many. At Aussiecon Two there will be at least one item where the body of works of Theodore Sturgeon will be discussed. It was planned for before knowledge of his illness became widely known. It is with a deep sense of regret that people will now be able to comment on the complete body of his writings.

FFANZes, GoHs and all that 'Wahf-ful'

If you are one of the people reading this publication for the first time, or if the business of attending conventions is new to you - if the words 'Aussiecon Two' mean little or nothing to you - then perhaps a few words of explanation are in order.

Everyone else? Go and fix yourselves a cup of tea while we explain things to the new kids on the block.

'Aussiecon Two' is of course a type of science fiction convention. Point A. Science fiction conventions are organised by, and held for the benefit of, people called 'fans', 'sf fans'. Point B. The rest is easy.

'Fandom' developed primarily during the thirties when the first 'popular' form of sf, short stories run in cheap-quality "pulp" magazines, attracted a large audience of young(ish) readers. As time went by, many of these readers firts wrote letters to the magazines, and then began corresponding with the other letter-writers - and thus was 'fandom' born.

Since those days, fandom has grown and spreads now across the globe. There are fans in Japan, Scotland, Hungary - and also Australia & New Zealand. And Fans do more than write to each other. Fan magazines, 'fanzines' abound; for the most part they are amateur publications that might discuss anything - often they contain no obvious reference to science fiction. Fandom has grown from a special interest group to being a worldwide social group, or series of groups. From 'fanzines' come most of the slang that has arisen, and what follows is an idea as to the sort of slang you'll encounter when reading fanzines, or talking to fans.

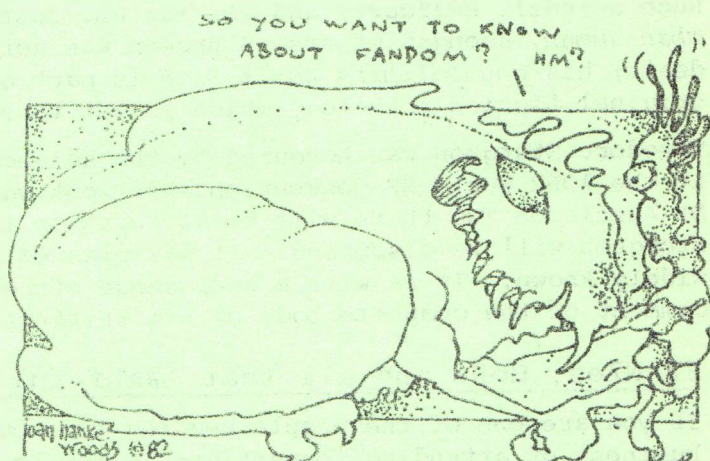
Fandom, as groups go, is a pretty loose one. You, reading this right now, could well be a fan already, without knowing what the term meant before now. There's no list of "members", just as there's no list of people around the world who, say, like toast, or partying wildly till dawn.

Conventions, as you may have already discovered if you're reading this at Aussiecon Two, are excuses to do just that - party, get together, have fun.

Panels? Talks? Films? Oh, sure, they're okay too.... If you are reading this at Aussiecon Two, the 43rd World Science Fiction Convention, try to get to some of the parties that will be on, and open to you just because you were interested enough to come along to the convention. Join in... have fun! The Hugo awards and the Guest of Honour speeches and the films all have their points of interest, but it's the parties and even more the people that are the main reasons things like these conventions exist. The whole point of fandom is to have fun.

con/WorldCon/'Con Amore'/'Aussiecon Two' - types of conventions
mediacon - use of the word 'media' generally indicates an interest, sometimes exclusive, in 'Star Trek', 'Dr Who', 'Star Wars' - media- derived sf, as opposed to written ('literary') sf. Hence: 'Mediacon(vention)'. ST=Star Trek.
zine = fanzine. Newszine (you're reading one now) = news(oriented) fanzine
Mediazine = fanzine which talks about media sf
Genzine = general fanzine (anything talked about, not necessarily sf)
loc = Letter Of Comment. To "loc" something. = Write a loc.
GoH = Guest of Honour. Fan GoH = Fan Guest of Honour. GoHs = plural of GoH.

Most slang is of that sort - simple acronyms or abbreviations - which can be no less confusing if you don't know what the term refers to! But the list above gives you an idea of the trend.



Fan Fund Frolics

This year, Australian fandom welcomes to its shores the four winners of three fan funds - one visitor apiece from New Zealand and the U.K., and a team of co-winners from the USA.

Fan funds are concerns invented to help promote the exchange of fans between different communities around the world. Money is raised by donation, and each fund is a reciprocal affair - which means that next time around it is the turn of some lucky Australians to be sent overseas, if any can be found who are willing to be sent.

Anyone is eligible who has been involved in the fannish community to a certain extent, the original idea of the funds being to send overseas worthy representatives of each country's fandom/sf community.

At Aussiecon Two you will have a chance to meet with the Cantors from America, Eve Harvey (and husband John) from the U.K. and Nigel Rowe from New Zealand, and there are panels where such matters as DUFF (USA), GUFF (U.K.) and FFANZ (New Zealand) will be discussed, amongst other things.

At Aussiecon Two you will also have a chance to contact the administrators of those three funds, should you intend to stand as a candidate for the race which will be run in each case to determine who will be sent where.

The 'Down Under Fan Fund', sending an Australian to next year's World SF Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., is currently calling for nominees for the DUFF race. Candidates must obtain the nominations of three Australian and two American fans, post a bond of \$10, and be willing to attend the next World Con, August '86. Nominations close on the Sunday of Aussiecon Two. If you are interested, contact Jack Herman at the convention.

Australian administrators of GUFF and FFANZ are respectively Justin Ackroyd and John Newman. Justin, John and Jack will all be at the convention; if you are interested in standing, or just interested in talking with someone about the funds, seek them out.

Meanwhile, the winner of SEFF - the Scandinavia-(rest of) Europe Fan Fund has just been announced. A write-in candidate, Brit Jim Barker won over the official candidates Hans Jürgen Mader, from West Germany, and Steve Green, from Britain. Jim will have his passage paid from Britain to attend Swecon '85, this year's Scandinavian convention.

Reviews - Books & Film

Footfall by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle
(soon to be available; approx.\$24.95) reviewed by Chris Chittleborough

Niven and Pournelle have now been writing for several years. Separately and together they have written some memorable books, even some first-rate books (eg., Niven's A World Out Of Time, Pournelle's Mercenary). Their third joint effort, Lucifer's Hammer, is one of my all-time favourite books. They are Big Name authors, both individually and as a team, and (in my opinion) they deserve their popularity. So I would expect them to put together a good, enjoyable, thought-provoking story without much difficulty. Unfortunately, it seems, so did they. This is a 500-page book from which a good editor could probably wring an outstanding 300-page story.

Footfall is about an alien invasion of earth. It is set in the near future. As you would expect from the creators of the Moties, the aliens are well thought out, and not just ordinary human beings costumed in different bodies. Niven and Pournelle have postulated an elephant-like intelligent race which developed from herd-dwelling herbivores, and extrapolated a detailed society from there, one which is quite different from what we omnivorous simians have developed. (Footfall reminds me of Hunter of Worlds, in which C.J. Cherryh did much the same thing with a race evolved from wolf-like predators.) The authors carefully pace their revelations about the Fithp, saving some of the important details until the end; only then does the reader recognise just how different their culture is from our own. In fact, the clash-of-cultures theme is a major element of the book, and a good one. (For example, in trying to learn about human beings, the Fithp come across some pornographic films, and have a LOT of trouble understanding them.)

Footfall has some things in common with Lucifer's Hammer, because the aliens bombard the earth with rocks from space. Some readers may think that Niven and Pournelle are recycling their previous book. Instead, the earlier book is a spin-off from the later book. (When Niven and Pournelle developed an outline of Footfall, their publisher suggested they cut out the aliens and concentrate on the story of the world under bombardment from space. The result was Lucifer's Hammer, in which a comet collides with the earth. Now they have gone back to the original story.)

In the books they have written, Niven and Pournelle have used increasingly large casts of characters. They have also moved away from the traditional single-protagonist story towards having several focal characters. In this, their fifth collaboration, they have taken both these trends even further.

Footfall has no shortage of characters. The *dramatis personae* in the uncorrected proof edition lists 99 human characters and 22 Fithp. Actually, some of these 'characters' only appear very briefly, less than other minor characters who didn't make it into the list. Perhaps they were in sections which didn't make it into the final book. If so, some more sections should have been omitted. For example, one of the protagonists, an investigative reporter from the *Washington Post*, could easily have been cut out; some of his scenes were fun (especially the last), but it would have been a better book without him.

Lucifer's Hammer had many protagonists, but the story followed one (Harv Randall) more than the rest, whereas in Footfall there are a few major protagonists (some of whom are female) and no-one dominates the story. Niven and Pournelle are good at this technique, but in this book they seem not to have put enough thought into it. The result is that the book moves very slowly as the action switches from protagonist to protagonist, many of whom are not very interesting, especially for the first 100-odd pages.

As in Lucifer's Hammer, Niven and Pournelle put a lot of material into this book. Now I happen to like books with a lot of information, ideas and opinions in them (The Plague Dogs by Richard Adams is a classic example) but not many people go as far as I do, and even I found a lot of the extraneous material tedious and unconvincing.

The book contains some nice in-jokes. For example, the U.S. government recruits a group of writers of hard sf to act as advisers, including Robert and Virginia Heinlein with only their surnames (and state of health?) changed; Niven and Pournelle themselves are there under pseudonyms; and there are others whom you might recognise but which I didn't. Another example is that one of the Fithp is called Harpanet. The first large-scale computer network was something called Arpanet, which is still going strong. Pournelle has a column in the computer magazine *BYTE*, and knows a good deal about computers - both he and Niven use word processors - so this cannot be a coincidence. I wonder how many other in-jokes there were which I didn't spot.

Footfall is not without redeeming features. As mentioned above, the Fithp are a significant addition to sf's small stock of believable aliens. Toward the end, the action hots up and the book develops into a real page-turner, one of the most exciting and engrossing books I have read this year.

To summarise, this book is patchy; it is boring in some places and excellent in others. The bad patches are mostly near the start, so you may have trouble getting into this book. If so, I suggest you skip the first 7 chapters; the *dramatis personae* list will probably give you enough information to follow the action from then on. (The Fithp don't appear until chapter 9.) If you like an exciting, idea-laden, hard sf story, perseverance will be well worthwhile.

Chris Chittleborough

Back To The Future (Greater Union)
reviewed by Alan Wilson

Back To The Future is not a film that lends itself to an in depth critique since it is a light and humorous time travel adventure and has no pretensions to being anything else. It is aimed at a broad audience since nearly everyone (I think) at some stage would have liked to have seen what things were really like when their parents were young. This the main character does (accidentally of course) with the help of the everyday 'town's eccentric scientist'. He then becomes entangled in his parents' lives before they had met each other, and also with a younger eccentric scientist (every town has one) in an attempt to get back to his own time. The plot is largely a vehicle for the humour implicit in situations that only he (and we, the audience) realises are rather awkward. It is a very tight film in the sense that nothing happens that is not essential to the plot. On reflection, this makes the action all seem somewhat contrived (so what is new for an adventure film?) and there is a lack of background 'colour' which would have made that film just that little bit better. The characters also lack depth but these two points do not detract from the enjoyment of the film while you are watching it.

There are a few, small, nagging technical points like a rather silly (and inconsistent) presentation of how activities in the past are affecting the future (via a bizarrely altering photograph) as well as problems with the main character's memories when he eventually arrives back in his own time.

If you want a technically light film which grapples with the paradoxes of time travel then this is not the film for you. However, if you want some lighter, harmless entertainment then I would recommend Back To The Future as a worthwhile film to see.

Alan Wilson

Letters of Comment

[In which we let people write in to have their say....]

Dear Peter and Roger,

Thyme #45 just came in. I guess its cover celebrates Bob Geldorf's great Live Aid achievement, so that was smart of you to get in ahead of time. Now I have your address I can write to you and thank you for phoning me to invite me over for the convention. [long story - eds.]

Sorry I can't get over [for Aussiecon Two]. Last Monday I was having a drink at a party in central London for Harlan Ellison - who was busy thrashing the Britfans at darts when I arrived - and Malcolm Edwards & Chris Atkinson, Joe Nicholas and Judith Hanna were getting psyched up to make the trip. Y'all have a good time.

Brian Aldiss

[Brian and Harlan Ellison are both late cancellations for Aussiecon Two - perhaps they've been impounded by the 'Britain in 87' bid for the 1987 World Con.... Brian also added that he thought that the '#46 Literary Supplement was a good idea.' Someone else wrote in to agree.]

Dear Peter Burns & Roger Weddall,

I especially enjoyed the Literary Supplement, as an aid to my Hugo voting.

Have you skipped an issue? I've received Thyme numbers 44 & 46, but Thyme #45 hasn't arrived...

K. Moylan

[Ah dear, the inevitable seems to have happened. As the material was gathering for the issue to be devoted to the Hugo material which people would be voting on, we were torn between including it in normal issues, and sending it out as a separate issue. In the end, we decided to do something rather unusual, which was to send out the two issues - numbers 45 and 46 - at once. The fact that Thyme #45 did not have a big number 45 on its front cover while #46 did was bound to confuse some people in the end. And *then*, of course, we probably confused the issue all the more by sending out an extra, bonus issue: Thyme #46½. Who ever heard of a half issue number, you say? All the readers of Thyme #25½, presumably - an issue that was similarly free to readers.]

[Here now is a letter from Mike McGann on the subject of Art, Truth, and Beauty.]

'Well as I see, out of sight is out of mind so now you are into a new form of censorship reduce it out of sight so may be no one will see it. I see you do not wish to upset the establishment which makes up the World Con people with fair comment as I do best with my Artwork. We must not upset the boat must we now!...'

[Ye Gods, Mike - look back at *Thyme* #34 and you'll see you're talking nonsense.]

'As to my Artwork being any good! after selling over 1000 T-Shirts with my Artwork on them over the last 7 years you have no right to judge me after you use Artwork by some one? on your last cover which you then give no credit to the cover work?

'Up to this year you have had no Artwork in your zine I gess you have to be a U.S.FanArtist to get into your zine is that right?... I do not do Fill in Art for zines I do Full page Art now which getes into S.T.zines here in Sydney I gess with me saying this I will now find my Artwork coming back to me?...

'So this is the best way for me to say letters of comment with my Art. I do have trouble doing letters so my Art does. The best cartoons are, and allways have be into sniping at others but I guess you do not wish to upset the boat with my Artwork. So show me you are not into censorship by runing the letter I did on Syncon84 as I saw it last year, on racism at that con.

Live long and thank you for runing my work,

Mike. (McGann)

[We told you that you wouldn't like it if we reduced your artwork down in size. Mike, we are all individually different; one way that your editors are different from, say, the editors of a Star Trek zine is that (and read this following bit carefully, it's important) we do not use full page art, except on the frontcover.

[Got that? We've printed lots of words in the past explaining why this is so; there's no need to repeat it all here. We have suggested constructive ways in which the problem with our running your art can be solved; we have even gone to some expense to do what we can to get around it, but you did not like what we did: impasse. It seems to me that the next move is yours on that score. You've done at least one excellent piece of 'Fill in Art' for the American fanzine *Hotter Than Thou* - how about trying a couple on us?

[Speaking of Americans, then, what's this about having to be an American to have us print artwork of yours? The Joan Hanke-Woods illustration which served as the cover for *Thyme* #45 was lifted (with credit given) from the pages of a European fanzine, *Shards of Babel*. The cover of *Thyme* #43 was rendered by a Slovenian - a Yugoslav, to you. Incidentally, the cover to #46 $\frac{1}{2}$ was by a Tasmanian who must remain anonymous (that right, TVS?). We give credit where credit is due, and use the very best artwork available to us. The cover to this issue is by an Australian.

[You also mention the matter of the quality of your own artwork. We're not questioning the tastes of the thousand people who've bought t-shirts sporting your artwork. I (make that 'we') don't actually own one of them, but that's a little irrelevant. We're not generally interested in artwork recycled from t-shirts, however good it is. We prefer original work. Of the rest of what you sent, some of it was, in our opinion, quite good; some of it was not. Some (more) of it would have been used if it had been of the right format. This is assuming that you are not complaining, in the first place, because we did not print all ten-odd pages of artwork which you sent us in the last issue. Surely not.

[As regards your purported letter to *Thyme* about racism at Syncon 84, we must claim ignorance on this point. If you have a copy of the letter on you still, Mike, please send it along for us to see - the original certainly never reached us.]

Convention Reports

"And You Don't Really Need A Passport..." - reports on Con Amore

In the shadow of huge preparations in Melbourne for the World SF Convention, people in Brisbane recently found no trouble in taking some time off to relax (or, if they were committee members, to work hard) at a convention of their own. Laurie Boen and Tim Reddan report.

Laurie: Con Amore did not start in the usual manner. The first line, spoken by Ian McLean, was, "Hello, breakfast!" Ian, Karen and their cohorts from Sydney took on the guise of Visitors and told us that we were to be part of next week's menu. This set the tone for the rest of the three days.

The majority of the 171 attendees were from out of town, particularly interstate. There was little support from the Brisbane fans. The crowd was enthusiastic, and joined in on the proceedings. If the letters we have received since are any indication, everyone had a good time.

The fan guests, Dennis Stocks and Sue Clarke, were gracious and undemanding. Sue spoke about publishing zines and Dennis talked about the history of organised fandom in Australia. Both sessions were interesting and informative, even though they were not well attended. Gary Armstrong and Ace Martin gave talks on their favourite subjects, model- and prop-making. They were surprised at the number of people who really wanted to know about it. Mark Rigby, Assistant at the Brisbane Planetarium, spoke on the return of Halley's Comet. This was one of the few things I got to see live (we taped a few others), and I'm glad I did. The talk on UFOs by Colin Phillips was much more than the skeptics thought it would be, also.

David Gerrold proved to be a great guest. His writer's workshop was a success for those who were lucky enough to get into it. David's other talks were also amusing and eye-opening. We found that he was able to take as well as he gave. He was approachable and easygoing, considering that he was new at being upside down.

Our other guest of Honour, Judson Scott, was very different. Some actors do not have the self-confidence or ability to prepare for the decidedly strange environment of an sf con. I have heard that this problem is not confined to actors, either. [Anyone remember Jack Vance at [Ischaicon?]] The committee must thoroughly research their prospective guests before issuing invitations - do not believe people's agents, mind you; they are only out to promote their agents and make money. The, perhaps ill-advised, incidents at the con concerning Scott were a result of the anger, frustration and feeling of being cheated.

Con Amore was the host of the year's National Media Awards. These were won by Sue Bursztynski for the Best Media Fanwriter; *Chronicles* (ed. Sue Clarke) for Best Media Fanzine; and Lyn Henricks for Best Media Fan Artist. They were presented, along with the con's own awards, at a ceremony on the Sunday evening. The trophies were made by Peter Lupinski.

The costume parade on Saturday evening had to be restarted - the first three contestants zipping through before anyone realised it - but the work that went in to some of the costumes was phenomenal. Some were very simple, the wearer acting the part, while others were elaborate. Many had to change for the disco afterwards.

The reason behind having media and literary guests at Con Amore was to get the benefits of both sides of sf. We wanted to see and show how each side could complement the other, which they do when given the chance. On the whole, Con Amore did blend the factions well. The people there were interested in the whole convention - films, literary side, mastermind competitions, media mindbender (in the form of 'Sale of the 23rd Century, hosted by Tony Therrin and Thera Delaney), dealer's room, guest speakers, writer's workshop, etc.. I think it was a good con; I wish I could have seen more of it.

Laurie Boen

[Laurie does not mention the fact that she was one of the chief organisers of the convention. Here now is Tim Reddan with his side of the story.]

Tim: This was a high energy convention. It had the laudable ambition of trying to bridge the media-literary gap. This involved having a GoH, Fan GoH and trivia quiz for both groups, amongst other things. There were films, a reading by the Lit. GoH, a writer's workshop for budding authors - run by David Gerrold - and more besides. The opening and closing ceremonies were taken over by a group of 'V'-type, lizard nazis from Sydney. [In human make-up?]

The literary trivia quiz had to compete with the media quiz, on the programme, unfair, I feel, as the media "Sale of the 23rd Century" was far too exciting and vivacious for anyone (except the literary trivia finalists themselves) to miss it.

The presentation of national media awards at the con, plus the media con constitutional convention made Con Amore pretty much a media con. The films were good old favourites (original version of 'Metropolis', 'Day The Earth Stood Still'...). Fan Guests of Honour are not my cup of tea, but Sue Clarke (media) and Dennis Stocks (literary) put in sterling performances. The two GoHs were quite different from each other, however.

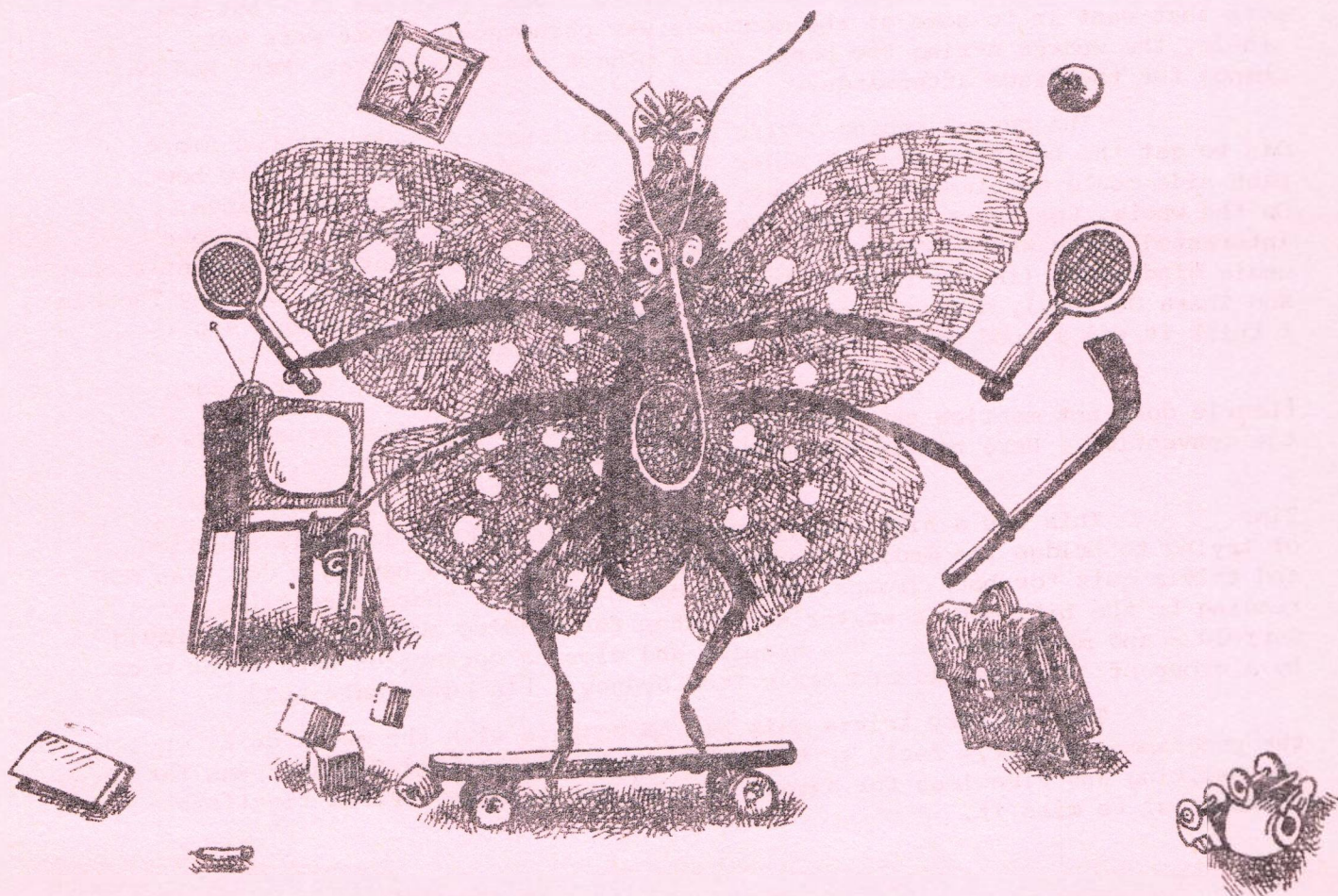
David Gerrold was magnificent as a GoH. He was polite (well, as polite as anyone from Los Angeles gets [chuckle]), and he had plenty of time for fan questions, autographs and like duties. He donated several items for auction and provided some nice behind-the-scenes glimpses of his work.

Judson Scott, on the other hand, had a wonderful time visiting Brisbane - except there were too many sf fans hanging around his hotel. Mr Scott did not attend the opening ceremony. He seemed to expect many more fans to be at the con itself (so he wouldn't have to know any of them personally, I imagine). When he spoke spontaneously about his work as an actor he was interesting. Unfortunately most of his talk sessions were somewhat tiresome in that they were filled with sight-gags and many jokes made at the expense of sf fans. I hope that no sf convention anywhere in the world ever wastes their money on this actor as a GoH again....

Finally, my over all impression of the convention was favourable. It lived up to its theme ("with enthusiasm"). I even got to see the infamous Fabian Stretton. Of course, I may be biased in my assessment of Con Amore. I wrote the literary trivia questions and ran the quiz. The one regret I had about the con was that Transfinite Audiovisuals could not make it up for a performance or two. But Con Amore was fun.

Tim Reddan

[Well, the gauntlet has been thrown down. While the Big Name Fans in Melbourne come back to life once every ten years to take over the World Convention, people in Brisbane, Perth, even Tasmania (see convention updates), get on with the business of holding lively, enjoyable conventions. See you in Perth for Easter '86?]



P.S. "And Then There's The Selection of the National Australian Media SF Convention"

Normally, at the Media SF Convention, the selection of the next year's National Media Con would take place. However, we are told that at the convention this year no bids were presented, so a ring around is being done of all media clubs of Australia, and when all bids (if any?) are assembled, a postal ballot will be made of all members of Con Amore. The ballot winner, expected to be known by November, will be the National Medis SF Convention for 1986.

Convention Updates

ANZAAS Festival of Science

Dates: 26th-30th August, '85

Venue: Monash University, Clayton 3168 VIC.

Rates: \$8per half-day session. Book through BASS, or pay at the door.

People living in Melbourne, or those just in town for the World Convention, may be interested in wending their way down to Monash University to check out a half day or so of what may prove to be a most interesting event. Normally billed as a conference, this year publicity has it as a 'festival of science', with the idea of attracting members of the general public through the doors for a recce.

At \$8 per half day session the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) is expecting that many people will drop in to see such things as talks on deer farming, complete with venison barbecue, special audiovisual sessions, and all manner of lively demonstrations... science sells itself.

ARCANA CON

Dates: 30th August - 1st September, '85

Venue: Melbourne College of Advanced Education

This is the annual games/gaming convention run by the Melbourne Uni. role-playing club, MAGInc - at this stage just either turn up at the door, or look for information on it at Aussiecon Two.

CORFLU 2½

This convention won't be going ahead after all. Lack of interest in the eastern states is cited as one reason for this sorry state of affairs; another reason is..

RATCON 6

Dates: 31st August - 1st September, '85

Venue: Rottnest Island, W.A.

Rates: \$15 Attending (including accomodation)

(it will cost you about \$30 to get to & from Rottneest, from Perth)

Rooms: Accommodation is limited to 16-24 people, and is cottage-type. Sally Beasley, the person to talk to about this at Aussiecon Two, if you're interested, reports that the convention has already aroused much interest locally, but sh'e been trying to save a little space for any eastern-staters or overseas people who might happen to be interested. But hurry. Ratcons are almost as famous as the Perth-based Swancons, for being enjoyable events. Highly recommended, and just what the doctor ordered after the hectic bustle of a WorldCon.

Contact: Too late to get in touch by mail; speak to Sally at the WorldCon or ring her in Perth shortly after on (09) 349 0804.

LON CON '85

Dates: 7-8 December, '85

Venue: Launceston Community College, Launceston, Tasmania.

Rates: \$4 Adult, \$2 Children (under 6), \$8 Family - till 6th of December.

Quiz Night: \$3 Adult, \$2 Children, \$7 Family.

\$5 Supporting, \$2 Convention Fanzine.

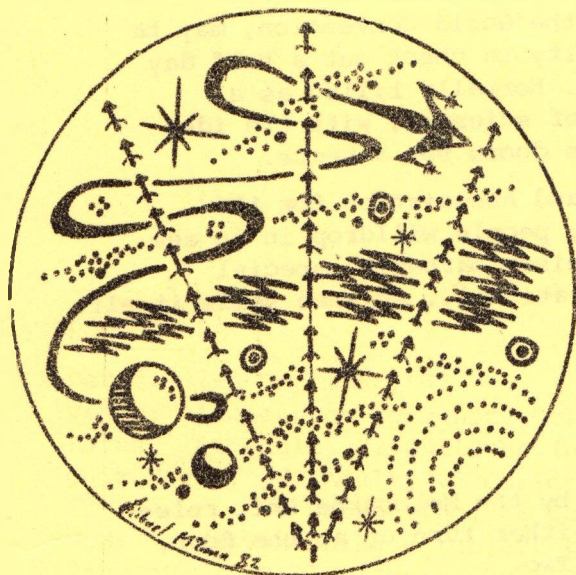
GoH: Katy Manning - subject to business commitments

Fan GoH: Dallas Jones, President of the Australasian Dr Who Fan Club

Accommodation: billets are being arranged by the convention, privately.

Mail: P.O.Box 1120, Launceston 7250, TAS.

The 2nd National Dr Who Convention for the Supreme Council of Time Lords; but there will also be Star Trek, Blakes 7, Anderson and Literature SF Fans there. [Anderson fans?...Anderson fans?]



GALACTIC TOURS CONVENTION

Dates: 8-9 March, 1986

Venue: The Melbourne Townhouse, Swanston St, Carlton, VIC

Rates: \$40 Attending, \$15 Supporting. Proceeds go to the Red Cross.

Rooms: \$56 per room per night regardless of the number of people. Bookings should be made directly through the Townhouse.

Travel!: Ansett is a major sponsor of the convention, so discount airfares and bus fares are available by booking directly through Ansett.

GoH: To be announced.

Fan GoHs: Sue Clarke, Denise Cunningham.

Mail: P.O.Box 264, Ascot Vale 3032.

I must admit, when we saw the first flyer for this one, we were a little skeptical; what with talk of there being a Tardis (non-operational) and a Full scale model of the bridge of the starship Enterprise in the huckster's room.... Truth, as they say, is stranger than fiction, and all of this falls very definitely in the realm of truth. At the most mundane level are the technical displays and talks being presented by Telecom, the Dept. of Aviation and the RAAF. The displays, along with the Enterprise, fill the ground floor of the Townhouse; upstairs there will be parallel-streams technical and fan programming. The fan programme will have a media bent, in more ways than one.

Other things about this convention, we are asked not to print because they are still in the process of being negotiated, and therefore fairly sensitive. With a planned attendance of 350-400 (with the sort of things that are being arranged, however, we feel that 500+ would be closer to the mark) that would mean a cheque for around \$12,000 being handed to the Red Cross at the end of the event.

There is no doubt in our minds that if half of what is being negotiated comes off (and with the large range of commercial sponsors involved to the extent they are, and with the event working as a fund-raiser for the Red Cross it seems they couldn't possibly fail), the biggest problem this event is likely to have is control of the crowds.

It is in fact possible that this convention will be known about, perhaps even attended by, more Australians than Aussiecon Two, especially considering the decision of Aussiecon Two to stop publicising itself (for fear of undesirable overcrowding) a good month before the convention itself.

Media fans take note: this is one convention you will not want to miss. And it's all for a good cause, too. Good luck to them, I say - they deserve to succeed.

SWANCON XI - the 1986 National Australian SF Convention

Dates: 28-31 March, '86 (Easter)

Venue: Miss Maud's Hotel and function centre, 97 Murray Street, Perth, W.A.

Rates: \$35 Attending till 30 November; \$40 till 27th March; \$45 at the door.
\$25 Supporting. Day rates: \$15/day.

Accommodation: Varies, from \$37.50 Single through \$49.50 Double and \$56.50 Triple, to \$59.50 Suite. A late fee and possible 20% rate increase applies to bookings made after 25 Feb, '86. All bookings should be made through the convention. PR #1 contains a form offering the promise of a kind of bureaucratic efficiency, so probably it's best to use these rather than rely on the 'phone or a hand-written note.

GoH: C.J.Cherryh

Fan GOH: jack Herman

Mail: P.O.Box 318, Nedlands 6009

Food: The banquet will be a smörgåsbord dinner provided by Miss Maud's Swedish Restaurant [Sounds suspicious to me, Pete.]. Cost will be \$15-20.

Being the 1986 National Convention, Swancon XI is designed to appeal to everybody. Many of the traditional Perth programme items will be retained for the enjoyment of all. The Fan Olympics, always a fun item, will be on the Sunday morning, as usual; the winning team will have their name engraved on the perpetual 'Swancon Cup'. The masquerade has a theme based on the idea that many people require themes to develop their costumes. The theme is 'Meetpoint Station'. Basically, come as you like (as long as it's a costume).

The Friday morning "Room Lotto" and "Pin the Tail on the Room Manager" will not, we are told, feature... but you never know. But what more is there to say? Perth people put on good conventions; it's as simple as that. Be there, join in the fun.

HALLEYCON

Dates: Queen's Birthday Weekend, June 1986.
 Venue: Southern Cross Hotel, High Street, Dunedin, New Zealand.
 Rates: \$30 Attending, till 1st April '86; \$35 thereafter. \$10 Supporting.
 GoH: No word on this one, yet.
 Fan GoH: Frank Macskasy Jnr.
 Mail: P.O.Box 5516, Dunedin, New Zealand

The 7th New Zealand National SF Convention.
 Well, actually, the *second* 7th National SF Convention. It seems that Dunedin fans boycotted Orcon this year (held in the North Island), questioning its right to be called the (you guessed it) '7th National...' (This had something to do with the decision making process or the dates or some such question which even NZers are still arguing over). Anyway, they've organised their own con. Sounds a bit like the War of the roses.... Anyway, attendance is limited to 130 people (a magic number).

CONFEDERATION - the 44th World SF Convention

Dates: 28th August - 1st September, '86
 Venue: Hyatt Regency, Atlanta Hilton Hotels, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.
 Rates: \$25 Supporting; Attending membership has just gone up again - look out for the Confederation table at Aussiecon Two. Remember, you have to be a member of Confederation to vote for the Bermuda Triangle in '88 WorldCon bid.
 GoH: Ray Bradbury
 Fan GoH: Terry Carr
 Toastmaster: Bob Shaw
 Mail: 2500N. Atlanta St. #1986, Smyrna, GA 30080, U.S.A.

CAPCON - the 1987 National Australian SF Convention

Dates: 25th-27th April, '87 (Anzac Day Weekend)
 Venue: New Airport International Hotel, Queanbeyan. A.C.T.
 Rates: \$10 Attending till Aussiecon (at?), \$15 till Swancon XI, \$20 till Christmas '86, \$25 till the event and \$30 at the door. (The committee promises to hold to these rates, too, they say.) Supporting \$5.
 Rooms: No(booking)details yet.
 Fan GoH: Likewise.
 GoH: Robert Asprin.
 Mail: P.O.Box 312, Fyshwick, 2609, A.C.T.

Robert Asprin (and wife Lynn Abbey) is an SCA (Society for Creative Anachronism) buff, and will be spending Easter at the standard, big Easter do that the NSW/ACT crowd hold each year at this time.

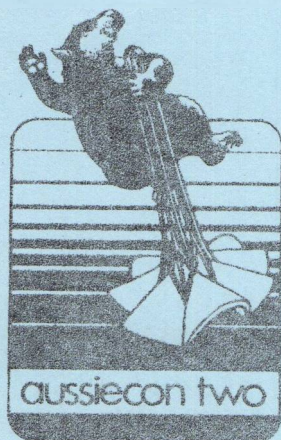
BERMUDA TRIANGLE IN '88 (World SF Convention Bid)

Neil Rest writes: Well, something may be happening;

A few friends and I had a Bermuda Triangle in '88 bid party at Confusion, and it was a success. It seems we could get the Norway, potentially (built as the France, but redone for cruising when the transAtlantic market ended); a thousand feet long, up to 1864 people, less than a thousand dollars. The diagrams of the ship and the rum punch were both popular.

So a variety of gestures is underway to make like a real bid. Like a post office box, advertising, a committee and like that. I want to get it to where pre-supporting memberships are paying for the parties. I sure don't want to, personally.

Dates: (traditionally for American World SF Cons) the Labor Day Weekend; '88.
 Venue: the Norway?, the Bermuda Triangle (of course).
 Mail, etc.: watch this space for further details....



And so we come to the close of another issue of *Thyme*. Before doing so, we'd like to thank a few people for their help with the issue - Tim, Laurie, Chris, Alan, Sally, 'Ebony', Kevin, artists John, Joan, Miroslav, Mike and Ian, and in a completely important category:

☆☆ VICTOR ☆☆

0718 140885

As a parting thought, Yvonne Rousseau recently acquainted us with the following valuable information:

The Wombat

by Ogden Nash

The wombat lives across the seas,
Among the far Antipodes.
He may exist on nuts and berries,
Or then again, on missionaries;
His distant habitat precludes
Conclusive knowledge of his moods.
But I would not engage the wombat
In any form of mortal combat.

Pitzroy, 3065, Australia.

P.O.Box 273,

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