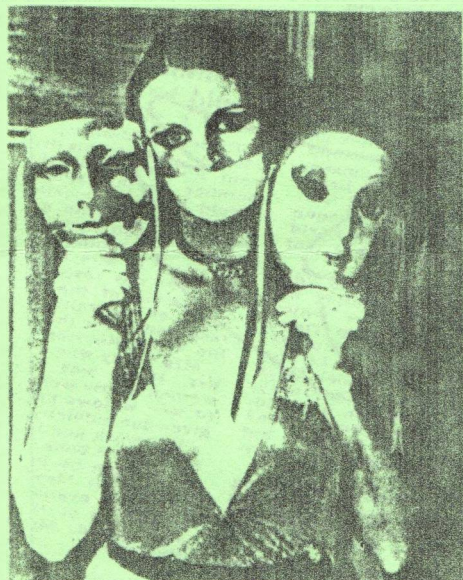
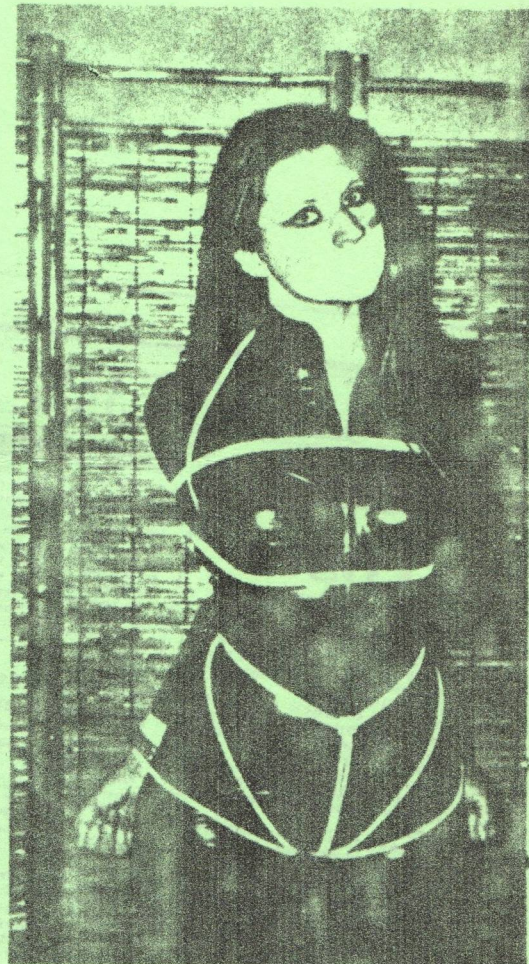
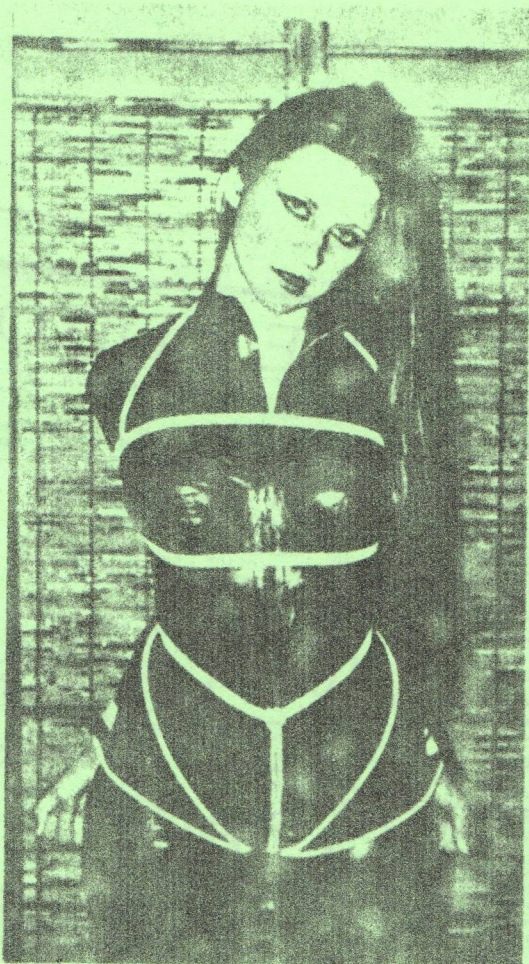
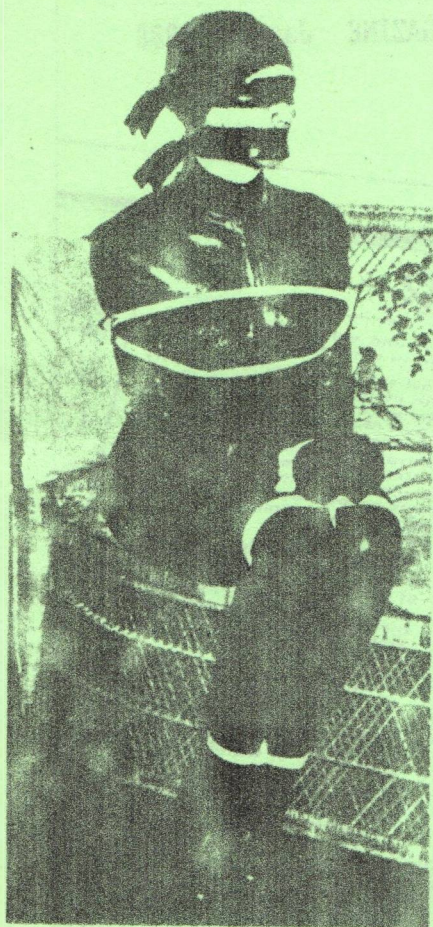
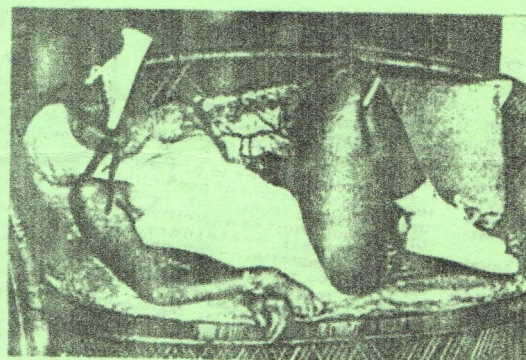


Bondage Fandom Makes Its Mark!



"Anyone who has ever seen bondage photographs of me can observe expressions and emotions from my true self. And the same is truer still of anyone who reads here what I write, as I do when I am alone and thoughtful. The fascinating truth is that you, whom I have never met, know me more intimately and more honestly than people I have known for years and see everyday."



Above:- extracts from "Sarah Foster Tate in Bondage", Harmony Publications.

Thyme believes that Mark Denbow is even planning to set up a 'Sarah Foster Tate' Fan Club in Australia; surely good news for her many fans. T-shirts should be available soon, watch this space for details.

[Unfortunately, the publication for which she is best known is probably ineligible for the 'Best Fanzine' category in this year's Ditmars. Thyme finds it unbelievable that the magazine in question could possibly be a 'non-professional' publication, as the category demands. -LynClively]

Thyme #66 is brought to you (~8 times a year) by LynC and Peter Burns, from the ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 4824, University of Melbourne, VIC, AUSTRALIA, 3052.

Telephone: (61 3) 344 7606 (Clive, Oz ESST Business Hours), or 325 0472 (Lyn, before midnight, Oz ESST).

Thyme is available for local news (in English from anywhere), artwork we can use (small, or suitable for a cover), interesting letters, informative phone calls, or even subscription, at the following rates:

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EUROPE: ten issues for five pounds Sterling, or 15 DM.; BRAZIL: (Oz) \$2.50 each.

Our overseas agents are:

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NORTH AMERICA: Mike Glyer, 5828 Woodman Ave #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401, U.S.A.

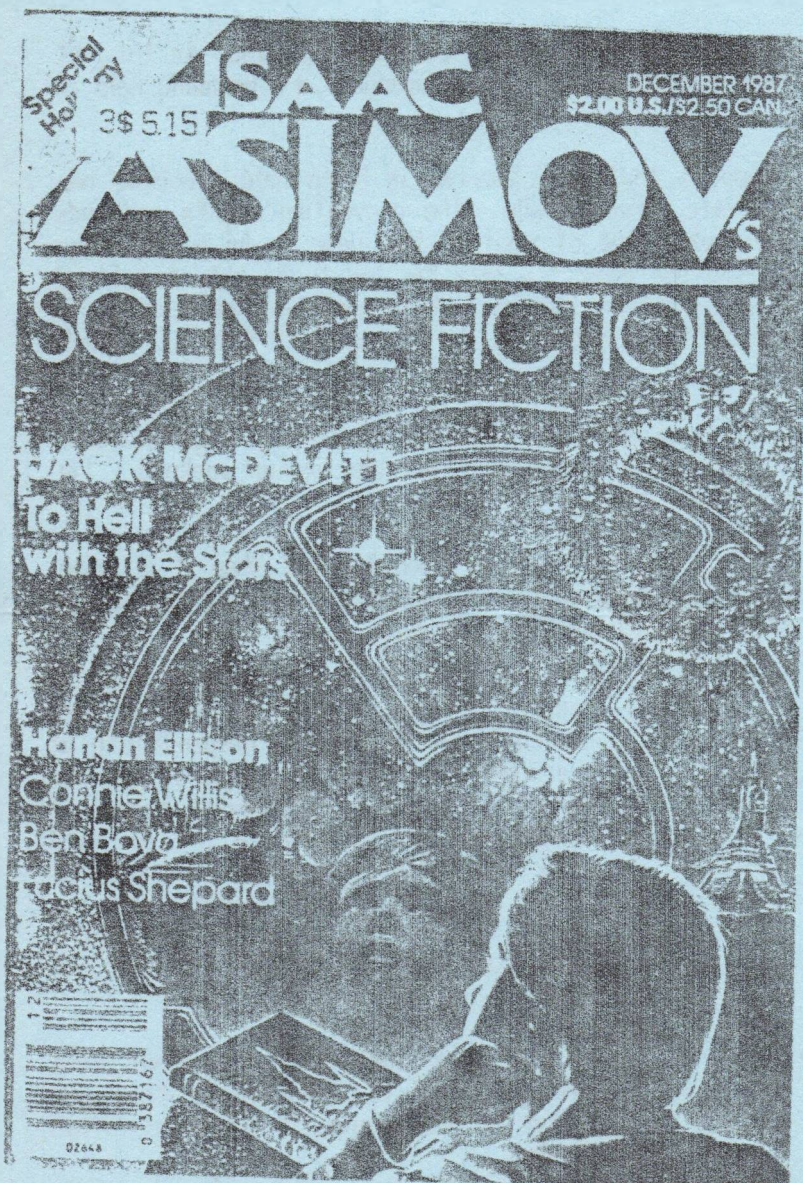
NEW ZEALAND: Lyn McConchie, 15 Rauparaha St, Waikanae Beach, Aotearoa.

Otherwise please write to us directly.

Please make all cheques payable to THYME, not to any individual. Thank you.

If your subscription number ends in an 'S', this means we are daily expecting your subscription, but are giving you three issues grace to get it to us.

Last but not least: If you have a big X (XX for non Australians) on your mailing label, this means that this is your LAST issue unless you DO SOMETHING.



IT'S BACK!

Gordon & Gotch have recently started distributing "Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine". This year you'll be able to read all those stories that will be nominated for Hugos NEXT year. First issue seen by Thyme was cover dated December 1987 and includes Harlan Ellison's "I, Robot" screenplay (part two of three). Cover price was \$5.15.

WHAT THE BICENTENNARY MEANS TO SWANCON:

The News: Swancon will not be held on the Australia Day Weekend this year, but on the weekend after. If this is news to you, it was no less news to Greg Turkich (hotel liaison for the con) when he went to confirm the Convention booking with the Westos. Due to various apparently curious factors associated with this year's bicentenary, he'd managed to book the hotel for the wrong weekend and it was too late to change it. It was an honest mistake - the sort of honest mistake they made when they tried to launch Challenger back then, or when they tried to build the Westgate Bridge originally (Cor the Darling Harbour Monorail??); the sort of honest mistake that has trouble going unnoticed. Here's Roger:

To whom it may concern,

(although perhaps I should specifically address this to Greg Turkich)

Accustomed as I am to Swancons being held over the Australia Day (Public Holiday) long weekend, I was quite pleased when recently I realised that I would be able to arrange it that I was on holiday at that time. I've very much enjoyed both Swancons I've attended, and would gladly get to more.

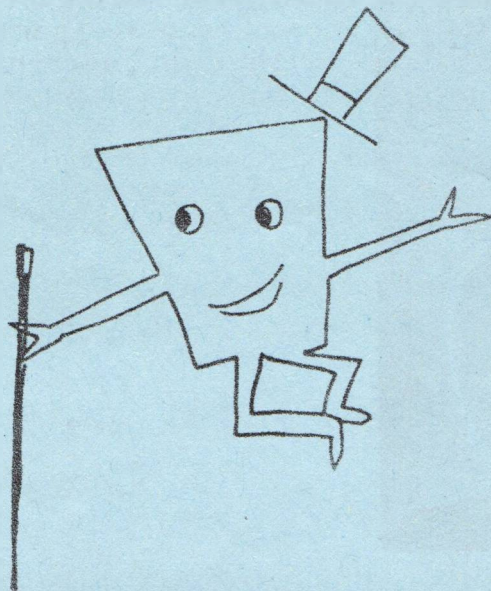
The only thing left for me to do then, was to arrange the holidays and the travel arrangements to fly over to Swancon 13...

It's at this point that I admit that I should have taken proper note, prior to this, of the dates of the convention, even though everybody knows that Swancons are normally held on that public holiday long weekend.

Not this Swancon however. It appears that this Swancon is being held precisely one week after that long weekend. A week late. Accidentally. The convention starts and ends on normal working days instead of taking advantage of what is this year to be a four-day-long weekend! Incidentally, it is being held one week too late for me to be able to attend it. The cheap fares were all set to go... better luck next time, perhaps; next time I'll know better than to blindly assume that 'those people in Perth can be trusted'... which brings me to the point of this letter.

I'm writing this letter, then, not principally to complain about the organisational stuff-up - the accidental booking of the hotel facilities for the wrong weekend. I'm writing, Greg (or whoever), to ask you a question:

How can I, in good conscience, support the 'Perth in 94' Worldcon bid when it is being run by people who are so incompetent in their organisation of administration that they allow this sort of error - and then make no attempt to explain themselves?



In fact I'd go so far as to ask the committee for 'Perth in 94' if they seriously feel up to the responsibility of running a Worldcon. Aussiecon II was run by a dedicated, experienced group of people and yet it took a lot of hard work and suffering by most involved for it to come off successfully. And I'm sure, incidentally, that all of their committee knew how to tell the time and read a calendar!

I think then that it's about time for you guys to demonstrate that you deserve the support of Australian fandom.

Yours in amazement (and waiting hopefully for a reply),

Roger Weddall

Metropole Hotel Manager Jokes:
"Come back Basil Fawlty -
All is forgiven!"

Yes, I wonder which Labour/Labor Day weekend they'll choose for the 1994 Worldcon if they win it ((The second weekend in March would suit me)).

I'm sure that Greg doesn't do these sorts of things intentionally, though I must admit my rule for going to Swancons has been to take a lilo and sleeping bag ever since Swancon 9. Great Convention, apart from the single room at the Westos Greg booked for the three of us to share. I remember being told beforehand that Swancons were always cosy little affairs, but I hadn't realised just how literally I was meant to take this.

Metropole Hotel Manager Jokes:
What's the definition of gross ignorance?
144 Hotel Managers

But don't people have short memories? I remember another convention from 1984 - called Seacon, held in Brighton, England, at the Metropole Hotel. I remember Roelof Goudriaan writing in 'Shards of Babel' afterwards - and he wasn't the only one expressing these sentiments - that on the basis of that convention's experience with the Metropole Hotel, he no longer felt he could support a bid which involved holding a Worldcon there.

Conspiracy happened anyway and people came away after that saying: "Never again will a convention be held at the Metropole." Amnesia! Mention 1984 and they say "but that was different". And no doubt they'll all be back for another dose in a couple of years.

Metropole Hotel Manager Jokes:
What's the difference between an onion and a hotel manager?
You don't cry when you cut a hotel manager.

The point is, there is really no point in using convention stuff-ups in 1984 or 1988 as any sort of basis for judging a convention due in 1994. Sure the same stuff-ups will likely happen all over again, but everyone will have forgotten to expect them by then. People will manage to enjoy themselves regardless - they always do - except the Committee who will come away never talking to each other again ever after. Just remember to take a sleeping bag - and probably a tent.

In all fairness to Greg though it should be pointed out that most State Governments did not legislate the Australia Day public holiday till quite recently. The usual calculation is the Monday following the 26th of January, and had that been the case Greg's calculations would have been correct. However this year is different. This year is Australia's Bicentenary, and the 26th happens to fall on a Tuesday. In order to give us this hallowed day off, all states have also given us the Monday (25th) as a public holiday. With the result that Swancon XIII, intended for the Australia Day holiday weekend falls one week too late.

Metropole Hotel Manager Jokes:
PLOT EXTRA:
There will a Hotel Manager Whanging competition tomorrow.
On The Beach.

The Hotel Manager is not a Klingon.
They're too nice!

LAUNDRY DOOR SLAMMED!

This year's DUFF race features no less than two write-in candidates. The best known is Roman Orszanski, long time fan from Adelaide. Roman was almost an 'official' candidate complete with his name on the ballot. He sent in his platform, even lined up nominators, only the nominations didn't get to the proper people on time. "Sigh!" thought Roman and put aside thoughts of visiting the US. In spite of this, he still harbours a secret desire to win DUFF, travel far places and meet exotic people. His other secret desire is to rid the world of vegemite...

The other and rather more controversial write-in candidate is the Roger St Laundry Door, whose platform we printed last issue. What follows is the DUFF administrators' official response to Thyme, reproduced exactly as it was presented to us (with a little reduction).

Dear Peter,

The following is written in response to a bogus DUFF ballot which appeared in the last issue of THYME (65).

Although DUFF has always encouraged the reproduction and dissemination of the official ballot, it at no time advocates the ballot's corruption for the self-serving motives of Mark Loney, Michelle Mujsert, and Roger Weddall. The Australian administrators fail to see humour in actions which are calculated to bring the fund and its candidates into disrepute. The fact that this has been partly, if not wholly, concocted by two fans who have run unsuccessfully for DUFF in the past, must surely reflect on their motives.

Putting forward a laundry door as a candidate evidences their contempt for all that DUFF represents, and their low opinion of the current candidates. We don't deny their right to voice that opinion, but they go beyond that. The parody of the current candidate's platforms is both insulting and defamatory.

The administrators consider the two candidates worthy of fannish consideration for the position of DUFF representative to America. They don't need their candidacy jeopardized at this stage of the race. Neither Cathy Kerrigan, nor Terry Dowling deserve this treatment.

The intention of the fund is to promote goodwill between Australian and American fans, by either bringing over, or, as in the case of the current race, sending a fan chosen by popular ballot. Not a piece of wood. The door cannot be deemed a candidate on technical grounds, as it cannot fulfil any of the conditions of candidature.

There may be confusion by fans over the door's validity as a candidate due to the way the DUFF ballot has been amended. Though the door may be a write-in candidate, the form given the impression that it is more than that, as it is accompanied by a platform. Formal procedures have been circumvented, since no bond has been posted, no nominations received, and no details submitted to the administrators before the requisite closing date.

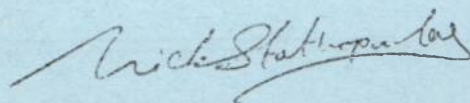
Further, as Mark, Michelle, and Roger have "offered" to administer the fund, should the door win, their actions can be interpreted as an attempt to take over the fund in an illegal manner. The Australian administrators have therefore decided to take the following action.

Any vote for the door will be declared invalid, although the entire ballot will not necessarily be cancelled out. For those fans who have already voted for the door, their other preferences will come into operation, thereby not totally invalidating their forms. If any fan who has voted for the door, fails to concur with our decision, their ballots and fees will be returned upon request.

As administrators of DUFF, we will not hesitate to take any action necessary to uphold the goodwill established by the fund over the years, and to protect its finances which we hold in trust.

The Australian administrators of DUFF condemn THYME for its part in publishing this corruption, sanctioning a possible take-over of a fan fund, and endorsing a bogus candidate.

Written and signed on behalf of the Australian administrators of DUFF, Lewis Morley, Marilyn Pride, and Nick Stathopoulos, by Nick Stathopoulos.



And this is the letter that Nick wrote to Mark and Michelle assumin (wrongly) that they were the main perpetrators of the 'Door for DUFF' campaign.

Dear Mark and Michelle,

It has been brought to our attention that you are circulating a bogus DUFF form in which you attempt to put forward your laundry door as a write-in candidate for DUFF. Very funny.

The joke is now over.

In concocting this latest bit of dirt, you've succeeded in doing nothing but bring both the fund and the candidates into disrepute. It is petty and trivializes the fund. Further, it is a callous attempt to sabotage the candidatures of Cathy Kerrigan and Terry Dowling, certainly unfair at this late stage of the race.

If you have any complaints as to the suitability of the candidates or the way the fund is presently administered, then direct them to the current administrators, and we will take any action deemed necessary to rectify them. As for assuming control over the fund should your write-in candidate win, this could be interpreted as an illegal take-over bid.

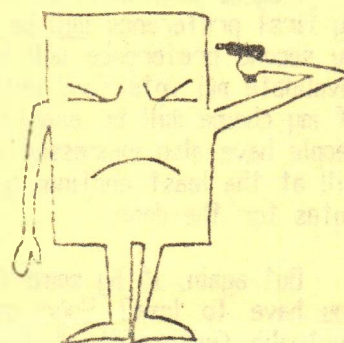
To prevent a take-over from occurring, the current Australian administrators have decided to make all votes for your laundry door invalid. For those fans who have already voted for the door, their other preferences will come into operation, thereby not totally invalidating their forms. If any fan disagrees with our decision, their ballots and fees will be returned to them upon request.

It pains us to see the two of you taking these destructive measures. We hate to see the goodwill established by the fund sullied by actions which can only be motivated by sour grapes. As administrators of the fund we will take any action necessary to prevent its takeover by illegal means, and to protect its finances which we hold in trust.

Finally, we are certain that this latest excursion into the fannish mire will evoke nothing but the scorn you both deserve.

On behalf of DUFF Australia,
Nick Stathopoulos

One point of Nick's is patently NOT true. There is no unity in the 'Door for DUFF' campaign. Since no agreement could be reached regarding a reply to Nick's letters, Thyme herewith presents four (4) slightly different responses, each describing different reasons for being involved in this fannish tomfoolery.



Peter Burns:

Why is it that people continually choose to put the most sinister motives they can think of onto simple but unusual events. It took quite some time and effort to track down the probable reasoning behind the thoughts expressed in your letter about various people's motives. I think I understand, but you are wrong, all the way down the line. I voted for the Door, I participated in the creation of The Door as a candidate. This is a personal response:

Nobody expects The Door to gain enough votes to win DUFF. That is the first thing. There is no conspiracy to hijack the money, there are no sour grapes. What there is is a group of people - including me - who support DUFF and who want to vote, but who do not feel that they want to give their vote to either of the candidates actually standing. What do you do in a situation like that? I have never been a big believer in putting 'Hold Over Funds' at the top of my ballot because I think that is a sour grapes response. It says that just because you personally don't know/like either candidate enough to vote for them, nobody should go. 'No preference' says full support to both when what you're trying to say is no

support for either. That leaves only the write-in candidate. I quite often vote for write-ins, as do a good selection of other people in the world. It isn't sabotage, it's participation and comment. Cathy and Terry are no doubt nice enough people and they have their own circles of friends in fandom who will no doubt support each of them fully. That is all they need; they don't need me and they don't need the handful of fans who share my reluctance to vote for either of them. The Door is our comment (we would have put up a Drover's Dog except there wasn't one available at the time). It was a kind of lament - it's a conspiracy to lament if you like.

It benefits you or the candidates nothing to try to silence our lament. As Irwin Hirsh went to great pains to point out to us, the Laundry Door for DUFF campaign makes 'Hold Over Funds' a less likely winner than it would otherwise be. I'm not going to go through the reasoning here but he is entirely correct. Your reaction in not allowing The Door's votes to be counted conversely increases the chance that 'Hold Over Funds' will win. So why are you doing it? Write-in votes which have been allowed in the past for Fan Funds have included Footrot Flats (a bit of ground in a cartoon landscape), Woolly, Mickey Mouse and the Yorkshire Ripper. Of these, only the Yorkshire Ripper was an animate object, but nobody wanted to meet him.

Speaking to one American BNF recently - and he ought to know - it emerged that if The Door won, it wouldn't even be the first time an inanimate object had won a fan fund.

The Door-For-DUFF campaign has no potential to damage the fund or its 'serious' candidates if you simply let it run its course. Your over-reaction on the other hand is potentially much more damaging. If your fears are justified and The Door does have a hope of winning on the votes, then how do you enhance DUFF's credibility by covering up the fact?

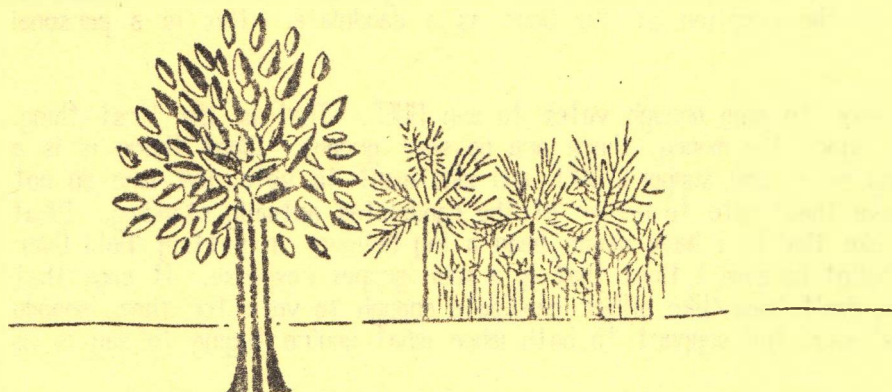
In the unlikely event that the majority of Australians want to send an inanimate object and most Americans want to meet the same inanimate object, then what is to be gained by standing in the way of the will of the people?

LynC:

I agree with most of what Peter has said, except that I haven't as yet actually voted. My first preference will be for the Door. I do not expect it to win. However (unlike Peter) my second preference will be for one of the animate candidates standing. If you decide to invalidate my vote (and return my money) then neither myself nor (I'm sure) the candidate of my choice will be exactly happy if they lose by a single vote! I sincerely hope, as other people have also expressed a desire to vote for the Door (at some future date), that you will at the least continue your "enlightened" approach to past votes for the door, on future votes for the door.

But again, if by some fluke, the Door does in fact win, why stand in its way? What do you have to lose? Your good name (and remember you three were the popular choice in Australia (with 75% of the first preferences)) will continue unsullied if you stop over-reacting and just let this thing take its course. And just for the statistics, how about at least letting us know just how many first preferences the door does actually get?

By the way, just where is it stated that inanimate objects are ineligible as write-in candidates?



As well as Nick's letter above, Mark Loney has supplied a reply for us to publish (Mark has not yet seen the official open letter).

cc: Lucy Huntzinger
Lewis Morley & Marilyn Pride
THYME

Mark Loney
PO Box 428
Richmond VIC 3121

7th January 1988

Dear Nick,

I have been trying to write a 'more in sorrow than in anger' reply to your letter about the candidacy of THE DOOR for DUFF; the main difficulty is that rereading your letter makes me laugh so much...

Seriously though, wouldn't it have been sensible to read one of the copies of THE DOOR platform and DUFF ballot that we forwarded to the nominated address for DUFF Australasia before breaking out the writing implements? (Yes Nick, it was probably the fact that we let the administrators in both Australia and the USA know what we were doing that led to this matter being 'brought to (your) attention'). If you had read what we forwarded to the Australian administrators (to you, in other words), you would have known to address your letter to Mark, Michelle & Roger (in whatever order you please). THE DOOR for DUFF is a joint effort by all three of us, just as the Australian administration is a joint effort by Lewis, Marilyn and yourself. You may consider this a minor quibble, I consider it a representative example of the sloppy and confused thinking displayed throughout the body of your letter.

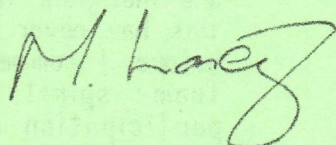
THE DOOR for DUFF campaign was not launched because of any doubts about the current administration (and, until your letter, I had no complaints whatsoever about the administration of the Fund) or because of questions about the eligibility of the other candidates. Of course, like all other nominators, we believe that our candidate is the best suited of those standing for the 1988 race to represent Australasia at the 1988 Worldcon and other events in North America.

THE DOOR for DUFF was suggested (to us, not by us, as a matter of interest) a few months ago at a Roger Street party and developed considerable popular support in Melbourne long before we got around to putting pen to paper and formalising the candidacy in early December. Write-in candidates are a long-standing and honourable tradition in the history of fan funds. Fandom similarly has a long-standing and honourable history of healthy innovation. Most importantly, though, is the fact that most fans have a sense of humour.

If it is 'unfair at this late stage of the race' for a write-in candidate to be announced, would the 'sabotage (of) the candidatures of Cathy Kerrigan and Terry Dowling' been less 'callous' if it had been done earlier? Roman Orzenski's write-in candidacy for DUFF only became generally known of in Melbourne at the same time as that of THE DOOR. Is his candidacy also 'a callous attempt to sabotage...' You really should rein in your language, it's enough to make me think that my comments about Jack Herman's use of pejorative adjectives (see elsewhere, this issue) were ill-considered and hasty...

Your intimations of an 'illegal take-over bid' (say what!), 'sour grapes' (are you really that far off the planet?) and 'destructive measures' (damn, forgot the phaser), qualify as both ludicrous and ridiculous. I can only hope that the remaining time of the current Australasian DUFF administrators is characterised by more common sense and less reflex paranoia than is indicated by your letter. Oh, and developing a sense of humour might be a good idea too...

On behalf of THE DOOR for DUFF.



ps: I have no wish, in line, I presume, with your own desires, for this to become 'Topic B'.

Accordingly, I do not plan to run any correspondence about DUFF in THE SPACE WASTREL and will restrict my correspondence to DUFF administrators and the pages of THYME (LynC, Clive and Peter willing). This, of course, depends on what you do too...

Roger Weddall, ex-editor of Thyme and co-conspirator in the 'Door for DUFF' campaign, also felt the urge to reply to Nick, extracts from which appear next:

...I thought I might be able to help clear the muddy waters surrounding this year's DUFF race. It seems to me that the problem you guys are having is one of attitude...

About a week before your letter to Mark & Michelle arrived, I had a chat on the phone with Marilyn, during which she said that none of you thought the 'Door for DUFF' campaign funny. My reply was that people down here all thought that it was a rather light-hearted bit of fun; we more or less stated our points of view and left it at that.

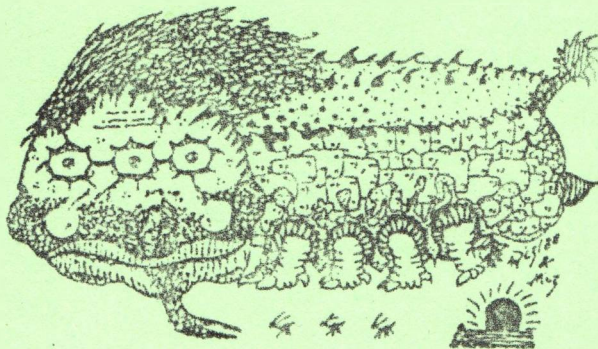
Now comes your letter, blustering and furious, almost daring the reader to respond in a similar fashion: it's abundantly clear that you don't consider what we've done to be a joke; but I must persist politely in assuring you that the vast majority of Australian fandom does still think it rather funny.

I've spoken to Cathy (Kerrigan), one of the candidates in this year's race, and while she was not completely happy with the way everything was put, she had both the common-sense and the good grace to see the fun in, as she put it, "that piece of fannish silliness", and she was able to see the spirit in which it was intended to be taken. You should try to do likewise.

...(the) far more serious false accusation is that anyone is attempting to hijack the DUFF fan fund. Really, Nick, what an absurd suggestion...as one fan fund administrator to another, you tell me what fun there is in being 'in charge' of one end of a fan fund...tell me and we'll both know.

We also heard from Gerald Smith who hopes it is a joke, and who interprets "verbatim" [= (adv.) "word for word, or in exactly the same words"-The Concise Macquarie Dictionary] to mean not only verbatim but with no inclusions, and therefore objects to the addition to the DUFF form of the Door's platform. He also felt that modifying the form was a violation of a long standing fannish tradition, which is to just simply reprint the form. The DUFF form Thyme circulated is verbatim; every single word which appears on the original form appears on our form in the same order (unless a typo has accidentally crept in). As for being a violation of fannish tradition - see Lucy below.

On the other hand (or side of the Ocean) Lucy Huntzinger, the American Administrator, has a somewhat different reaction, which she lays out in a personal letter to Mark Loney. We reproduce it here to introduce some more common-sense and balance in this affair.



Lucy writes:

"Thank you for notifying me of the Door candidacy. I regret to inform you that inanimate objects are ineligible to run; however this has never stopped anyone before. I commend your hearty team spirit and fannish participation in one of the traditional fan activities: That of the Hoax. Good luck to the Door."

THE OTHER FAN FUNDS:

We've all heard sob tales of people missing the deadline for voting in fan funds, and (horror of horrors) the story of fan fund administrator's accepting bogus votes after the deadline; well now here's a fan fund which blatantly and officially allows both:-

FFANZ has been extended till 1st February 1988

GUFF NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN:

(From Irwin (the Australian Administrator) we hear that:)

The next GUFF race is open for nominations. It will bring a European Down Under to attend Swancon 14. Nominations will close 20 March 1988, with voting to start by Easter. The voting deadline will be 27 November 1988. To appear on the ballot, a candidate must have signed nominations from two Australians and three Europeans, provide a platform of 100 words or less, post a non-refundable bond of 5 pounds, \$12 (Oz) and promise, in writing, that he/she will attend Swancon 14 [Barring accidents, acts of God, all that], if elected. So, if there are any Europeans whom you would like to see at Swancon 14, why not write to them and suggest they stand for GUFF?

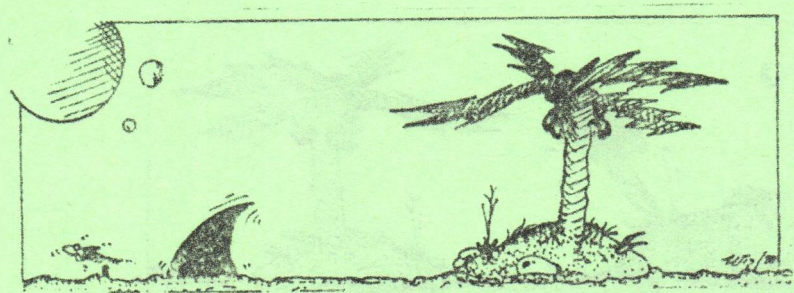
There should be a GUFF administrator's report sometime in the next few weeks. For further information please contact one of the administrators:
Irwin Hirsh at 2/416 Dandenong Rd, Caulfield North, Vic 3161
Eve Harvey at 43 Harrow Rd, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3QH, UK.

CONFEDERATION NOW A CHARITY:

As reported by Thyme last issue, Confederation (1986 Worldcon) made an embarrassingly large profit of \$90,000. Our first response to this comes from Frank Macskasy Jnr, who feels that while there is nothing wrong with making a profit, Confederation did carry it to extremes! He also asks, 'if Cons are going to be run as formal businesses making such sizeable profits, can they reasonably expect fans to be willing to volunteer their services' *[or even be willing to settle for just a refund on their attendance fees-Ed]*. Gerald Smith also commented on how massive the surplus was.

Having refunded the attendance fees of all participants, and being still left with \$90,000, Confederation had to determine a method of dissipating this back to fandom as fairly as possible. The December 1987 "Locus" included the following, which explains how fan groups and organizations can get a slice of the cake:

'The Board of directors of Worldcon Atlanta, Inc.(WAI) announces the availability of grants for projects to promote the appreciation of science fiction and fantasy art and literature. WAI is a Georgia non-profit, Sec. 501(c)(3), corporation which conducted ConFederation, the 44th World Science Fiction Convention, in Atlanta, Georgia in September, 1986.



Applications for grants should include within their typewritten proposal the following:

- (1) Purpose of project;
- (2) Complete breakdown of project expenses and income;
- (3) Time-line of project, including review dates;
- (4) Names and relevant experience of persons involved;
- (5) Profit/nonprofit status of project sponsor;
- (6) Executive summary of project (2 pages or less);
- (7) How project will promote science fiction & fantasy art and literature.

Examples of grant proposals already received include promotion of fan publications, audio publication of works of science fiction and fantasy, standardization of handicap access to science fiction conventions, and a child education program.

For more information: Write to Worldcon Atlanta, Inc., Attn: Jim Gilpatrick, Suite 1986, 3277 Roswell Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30305. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for replies and 5 copies of project proposals.

Where is the Australian Science Fiction Foundation Co-operative Ltd. when we really need it??

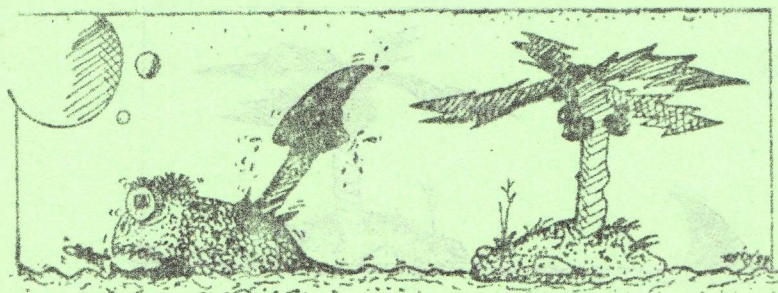
TEA WITH THE BLACK DRAGON - A Review

Tea With The Black Dragon could best be characterized as a kind of Buddhist romance set in San Francisco amongst the computer software industry.

It was very light and racy after the weeks spent on Percival and similar epics. In Percival, your attention is constantly drawn towards the character development going on all around you - it's an epic, he's a hero. In Tea With The Black Dragon, Mayland Long is a hero too, but of a slightly different ilk. My first impression was of a character with a secret. He was a man moving about in the world acting not the least abnormally, but underneath the cool controlled exterior, we the readers knew there lay a being of immense if slightly non-specific power. Here was the sort of person who could look through people (metaphorically) with a single glance, and solve problems of immense complexity with the blink of an eye.

He seemed at first look to be pretty much your standard, if slightly offbeat, super-hero type. In stories with heroes like this, the reader reads and enjoys because he can identify with this sort of character - the character who's ill at ease in day to day life, but who has hidden talents the world rarely sees or appreciates. Enter the bookworm who can't play cricket.

But this impression of Mayland Long, Super-hero didn't last long. I had but contemplated it when the story's 'main character' turned up and the world changed. Outside the world of Science Fiction there is another genre filled largely with hack writers cashing in on a lucrative market - the world of the rubbishy romance. Rubbishy romances have standard character types too. The hero is not someone the reader is meant to identify with personally, but rather he (always



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he) is someone the reader would like to meet at a party. He is a man slightly mysterious, cool, calm, well controlled on the surface, but with an immense unplumbed depth of experience. The sort of person who can see through people (metaphorically) with a single glance, and solve problems of immense complexity with the blink of an eye. Yet (if it's an upmarket rubbishy romance we're looking at) underneath it all, there's an almost childlike nature - he's in search of something he doesn't completely understand and he needs help. Enter the 'Main Character', and the reader. She (always she) is someone who's made her way quite well in the world up to now. Strong, independent woman with no trouble manipulating situations to her own advantage normally. Only this time she's got herself into something awful and ugly, she's confused and finally forced to admit that she's out of her depth. She needs help.

There are other plot lines available, but this is the one Tea With The Black Dragon moves inexorably towards as the story progresses. TWTBD, funnily enough, calls itself neither Science Fiction nor Romance, but Fantasy.

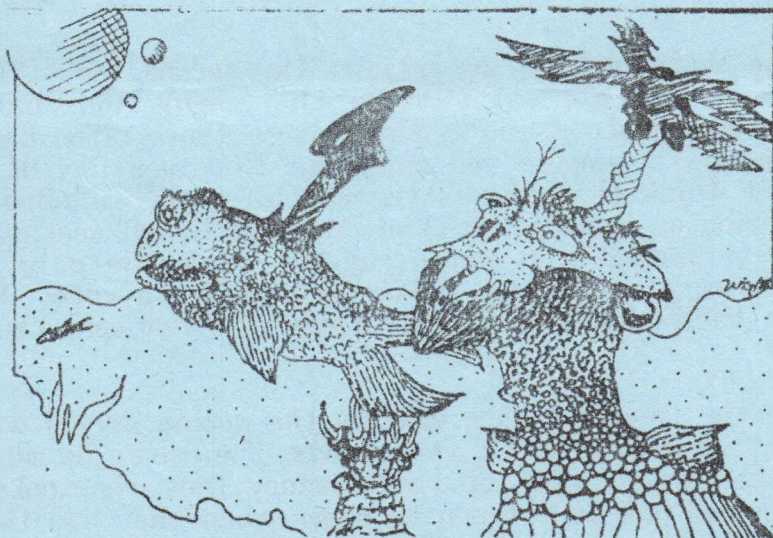
And so here we see boyhood fantasy and girlhood fantasy collide in a character - Mayland Long - who sadly doesn't really exist. Sigh!

The events which form the backdrop to the story - the world of the software industry and the potential to make money out of the weak links in computerized bank security systems - are quite real though and make for lots of good suspense. The villains are a bit cardboard: there are two, one with a brain, one without. You start to wonder after a while how the brainless thug one ('can I kill him now, boss, huh?') ever got out of primary school, let alone became a Systems Analyst good enough to... but no, that would be giving away too much. It's a good entertaining read as M.L. goes in search of the meaning of Life, the Universe and Everything, and it has that great line out of Batman: "No, Thicker, we'll kill him later".

- Peter Burns

Tea with the Black Dragon was first published in paperback by Bantam Books in 1983 for an Australian RRP of \$3.50. It was recently (1987) republished in paperback with a new cover, again by Bantam, but with the new RRP of \$7.95.

Author: R.A. MacAvoy



DITMAR REPORTING NOT ENOUGH?

As part of Irwin's Letter as GUFF administrator he wrote about the article Thyme ran on the Ditmar Nominations Category Ballot.

he wrote:

I was interested in seeing the results of the Ditmar category ballot, but I do wish you'd list how other categories polled. You are publishing a newszine, not filling in a hole in a genzine, and to dismiss the views of the people who prefer those other categories as not being "worth mentioning" is not playing fair with those people.

I also don't, really, understand the point of the last two sentences. I'm one of the people who is being referred to. My excuse for not voting is that I was overseas for the last four months. But that is only an excuse and irrelevant to my point, which is that had last year's complainants voted the result would have been no different. Last year the categories I favoured were the same five which topped this poll. I wasn't the only one favouring those five categories, yet at the time it was suggested that our opinions shouldn't have as great a weight as our numbers would suggest. The way it was put was that we were a small group who were only looking to serve our own self-interest. Yet there were many people (in Ditmar terms) expressing a very similar opinion. I can only assume that the last two lines were referring to us, and I for one, am impressed that the results of this poll seem to indicate that I wasn't part of a small, self-seeking group, but part of a wide group holding a very similar opinion.

Irwin Hirsh.

As you say, we are a Newszine, we just report the news, and that's exactly what we were doing in the article you mention. Gerald Smith won't be publishing the results of the Ditmar Categories' Poll till Conviction's PR#3, so what we wrote up in lieu of an official report was a collation of notes from a telephone conversation. Any views or judgements contained in it are as near as we can judge, Gerald's own opinions, as expressed to us, on the various subjects.

Gerald didn't think it worthwhile to divulge the other categories that got votes without winning, so he didn't. He did however mention that their point scores were in the order of units, not the hundreds of units that the mentioned categories scored. As it turns out, the figures we gave aren't quite correct, but that wasn't our fault. We assume Gerald will give the full results for all categories in Conviction PR#3.

Of The last two sentences in our article, the second last ("The number of complainants last year who did not vote in the nominations ballot was also interesting.") is close enough to a quote. The last sentence ("You had your chance boys and girls.") was ours. I suppose you can make what you like of them. We at Thyme certainly don't think that the letter writing campaign about the Ditmars last year was the action of a small (certainly not small) self-seeking minority. It would be a troglodyte indeed who would suggest that the only valid way to participate in the democratic decision making process is to vote. Many a rabble has been put back on the right track by the words of a few sane (but non-voting) individuals.

Nor, indeed, were the fanzine letter writers the people Gerald was specifically referring to with our paraphrase of his statements. The people he mostly seemed to have in mind were the large number of vocal Sydney fans who spoke to Jack (or himself), and then decided not to put pen to paper when they had the chance. Had they done so, we gather, the results would have been different. As we (Gerald and Thyme) decided that they knew who they were, nothing could be gained by listing even the worst of them, except perhaps the condemnation of their fellow non-voters (and despite appearances it is not actually Thyme's desire to sow dissent in the fannish community).

1988 AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION ("DITMAR") AWARDS

The 1988 Ditmars for work in Science Fiction and Fantasy during 1987 will be awarded at CONVICTION, the 27th Australian National SF Convention, to be held in Sydney from June 10 to 13, 1988.

The Constitution of the Australian National SF Con states, re awards:

"The Convention Committee ... will, by a vote of the Convention's members, after a nominating process involving Australian Fandom generally, award up to five Australian Science Fiction Awards (of which, at least one must be for fanish endeavours) and the William Atheling (Jr) Award for Criticism and Review."

For this purpose the Conviction Committee has appointed a sub-committee. On the reverse side of this form there is a nominating form which may be filled out by any member of Australian Fandom. The sub-committee will accept up to five nominations in each category from each nominator.

Voting forms compiled from these nominations will then be sent to all members of Conviction.

Send completed forms to: Ditmar Sub-Committee
G.P.O. Box 429
SYDNEY NSW 2001

NOMINATIONS CLOSE on 4th MARCH 1988.

DEFINITIONS OF CATEGORIES

1. BEST AUSTRALIAN LONG FICTION: A science fiction or fantasy story of 17,500 words or more, written by an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia and which was published in Australia for the first time during the 1987 calendar year.
2. BEST AUSTRALIAN SHORT FICTION: A science fiction or fantasy story of less than 17,500 words, written by an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia and which was first published in Australia during the 1987 calendar year.
3. BEST FANZINE: A non-professional publication devoted to science fiction, fantasy or related subjects, produced by an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia, generally available in Australia and which had at least two issues during the 1987 calendar year.
4. BEST FAN WRITER: An Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia who wrote material which appeared in a fanzine during the 1987 calendar year (whether or not that fanzine qualifies for the Best Fanzine category).
5. BEST FAN ARTIST: An Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia whose artwork (of whatever description) appeared in a fanzine (whether or not that fanzine qualifies for the Best Fanzine category) or through other public display during the 1987 calendar year. An artist does not qualify for this award for any artwork which they were paid to produce. Artwork for public display must have as its theme, science fiction, fantasy or related subjects.

THE WILLIAM ATHELING JR. AWARD FOR CRITICISM OR REVIEW: For a particular piece of criticism or review of science fiction or fantasy, where that piece of criticism or review was first published in Australia during the 1987 calendar year.

1988 AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION ("CONVICTION") AWARDS

NOMINATION FORM

1. BEST AUSTRALIAN LONG FICTION

2. BEST AUSTRALIAN SHORT FICTION

3. BEST FANZINE

4. BEST FAN WRITER

5. BEST FAN ARTIST

* WILLIAM ATHELING JR. AWARD FOR CRITICISM OR REVIEW
(Please supply the source of nominees in this category.)

+++++

NAME:..... SIGNATURE:.....

ADDRESS:

..... I wish to join Conviction

Conviction Membership No.:..... Enclosed is my cheque for

Attending: \$ 40

Supporting: \$ 20

If you are not a Conviction member and may be unknown to the Sub-Committee please supply the name of a fan or fan organisation to whom/which you are known.

(All cheques payable to Conviction)

.....

NOTE: The Sub-Committee is the final arbiter on the eligibility of a nominee.

For further information on Conviction, please write to:

Conviction, Box 272, Wentworth Bldg., University of Sydney NSW 2006

NOMINATIONS CLOSE: 4 MARCH 1988

REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS ENCOURAGED PROVIDED IT IS VERBATIM

THYME CONVENTION UPDATE: (Australasian only)

SWANCON 13: the BLACK Swancon

Dates: 29th January - 1st February, 1988
(Not the Australia Day Weekend)
Venue: Westos Hotel
GOH: Dave Luckett, Tim Richards.
Rates: \$30 attending till the con, \$40 at the door
\$10 supporting
Room rates: a very reasonable flat rate of \$50.
Mail: Swancon 13, PO Box 318, Nedlands, WA 6009.
[Perth's own annual convention - this year it's a relaxacon but probably still lots of fun.]

KINKON 3: Melbourne's annual Eastercon

Dates: April 1-4 1988 (Easter)
Venue: The Victoria Hotel.
Room Rates: with facilities \$58 twin/double, \$46 Single.
without facilities \$44 twin/double, \$35 Single.
Deposit of 1 night's accomodation to Kinkon 3.
GOH: Lee Harding, John Baxter *[April 1-4]*,
Greg Turkich *[April 23-25]*.
Rates: \$35 till con, \$45 at door.
Theme: for Masquerade is "I was a teenage ..."
Mail: Kinkon 3, 11 Hopkins St, Dandenong, VIC 3175



CONFUSION: The New Zealand Natcon(?)

Dates: 3rd - 6th June 1988 (NZ's Queens Birthday weekend)
Venue: State Trinity Theatre
GOH: Bjo Trimble, Gerry Anderson (commitments permitting), Margaret Mahy, and Lana Brown
Rates: Gold card ("I want to sponsor X") \$250NZ, Attending \$35NZ,
Supporting \$15NZ
Hotel: United Services Hotel, Cathedral Square, Christchurch. \$30NZ per person per night. A deposit of one night is required. Couples: Please specify if you need a double rather than a twin.
Mail: Confusion, Box 1169, Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand.
[This is the convention we are sending the FFANZ winner to.]

CONVICTION: (aka Syncon 88,) the 27th Australian National SF Convention (Reminder: T-Shirt competition, and Convention Anthem competition close March 1, 1988. Cash prizes for both. The Art Competition closes at the Convention)

Dates: 10th-13th June, 1988
Venue: The Shore Motor Inn, Pacific Hwy., Artarmon.
GOH: Spider & Jeanne Robinson, Carey (TRO) Handfield.
Theme: Song and Dance in Science Fiction.
Rates: \$40 till 1 June 1988
\$20 supporting, \$5 voting (only)
Room rates: a flat rate of \$85 a night.
Mail: Conviction, Box 272 Wentworth Bldg, University of Sydney, NSW 2006

ZENCON 2: The 1988 Media Natcon.

[Profits (if any!!) go to Riversleigh Research Fund]

Dates: 9th - 11th September, 1988**Venue:** Clunes Ross House, 191 Royal Pde, Parkville, Vic.**GOH:** Paul Darrow (Avon *[I thought he was dead - Ed]*),Michael Keating (Vila *[didn't he get it too?]*),Janet Lees Price *[I don't remember her from... oh, By The Sword Divided?]*,

Dr Michael Archer (A Zoologist!!!?)

Rates: \$45 till the Con, \$60 at the door

\$15 supporting, \$35 Day

Rooms: A pleasant stroll up Royal Pde to no. 441, The Royal Pde Travellodge.Single/Double \$72, Apartments *[Don't ask me]* \$83.

All Meals for whole Con: \$120 subject to negotiation

Mail: Zencon 2, c/- Cathy Kerrigan, P.O. Box 437, Camberwell, 3124.*[The place to be in '88 if you want to O.D. on Blake's 7]***SWANCON 14: the 28th Aust. National SF convention.****Dates:** 24-27th March, 1989 (Easter *[Are you sure it's Easter - isn't that in April Sometime? (Shhhht...)]*)**Venue:** Kings Ambassador**GOH:** John Varley, Bob Shaw, Paul J. (Antifan) Stevens.**Theme:** Urban spaceman.**Rates:** \$40 till 2nd February 1988, \$20 supporting**Mail:** Swancon 14, PO Box 318, Nedlands WA 6009.

The YARN BASKET:

John Newman and Jan Warrack are about to move house again to 42 Elma Rd, St Kilda in about 3 weeks. They claim the phone number will stay the same.

Rocky Lawson (alias Clark Kent, alias Mark) while still working for the financial Review has been moved from Perth to Sydney. Address as yet unknown.

There are rumours floating around fandom that Associated Pulp and Paper Mills have decided to stop producing duplicating paper. As they are the major (if not only) producers of duplicating paper in Australia, this would mean that finding paper in order to produce fanzines (by the time honoured tradition of duplicators (such as the Roneo used for Thyme)) would be even harder in future than it already is.

Thyme is pleased to announce to all fanzine editors that a spokesman for APPM has "emphatically" denied this rumour. You may rest easy.

The Block Bar and Bistro proved not to be without drawbacks as a venue for eating on a Friday night. The food was OK, but as they started closing before 6.00 pm, somewhat limited. You have a choice of pasta or pasta. At 7.00 pm, they close the till and are unable to take any more orders. The first week they then gave away unused desserts for free, in order to get rid of them. The second week they were better prepared for us and seemed to have a stock of change so we had to pay. Apart from the early closing time (the bar continued open), the actual venue is well situated in the centre of the city, we have the place almost to ourselves, so are free to be as noisy as we need to be, and the seating arrangement allows us plenty of scope and room for our needs. However because of the early closing time, it really is unsuitable for a group of people who start gathering between 6.00pm and 7.00pm. Nor can everyone face pasta every Friday night. Next week will be the Myers Caf. if no-one can suggest a better place.

The owners of the Tavern have announced that they are thinking of selling the place, the implication being that without us it doesn't make sufficient profit.

Critical Wave, the new UK Newszine has seen its second issue. The third issue should already be in production (deadline was 6 January '88). This small newszine (issue 2 was 12 pages long) has a definite sense of humour, and covers a wide range of topics. Issue two covers Convention reports and updates, the latest english publishing and conversion-to-films news, Doctor Who and other celluloid media news, book reviews, plus items of fannish interest, and lots more, including stage productions of SF plays. This was all done in a racy style with as I've already mentioned a definite but not too irreverent sense of humour. Not only a good source of news but an enjoyable read too. Editorial Address is CRITICAL WAVE, 33 Scott Rd, Olton, Solihull, England, B92 7LQ (U.K.). Available for the usual or subscription of 2 pounds for 6 issues. Overseas rates on request to the above address.

Thanks for this issue go mostly to Mark, Michelle & Roger, who between them have managed to supply 7 pages of this issue. Thanks also go to Clive, Irwin, John & Jan, Gerald, Frank, Cath, Lynn & Linette, and Jack; again in no particular order. It's good to see so many people responding to the articles we run.

Artwork this issue comes from Dennis Callegari (22 Waltham St, Richmond, VIC, 3121), and the Wiz (still of no fixed abode). The Cover 'duck' was found lying around the floor of my work when the company changed address 3 years ago. I believe it was drawn by "Rusty" and rejected as being not good enough for the particular game he was doing graphics for at the time.

That's all folks. Next issue due approx 5 weeks time.

THYME

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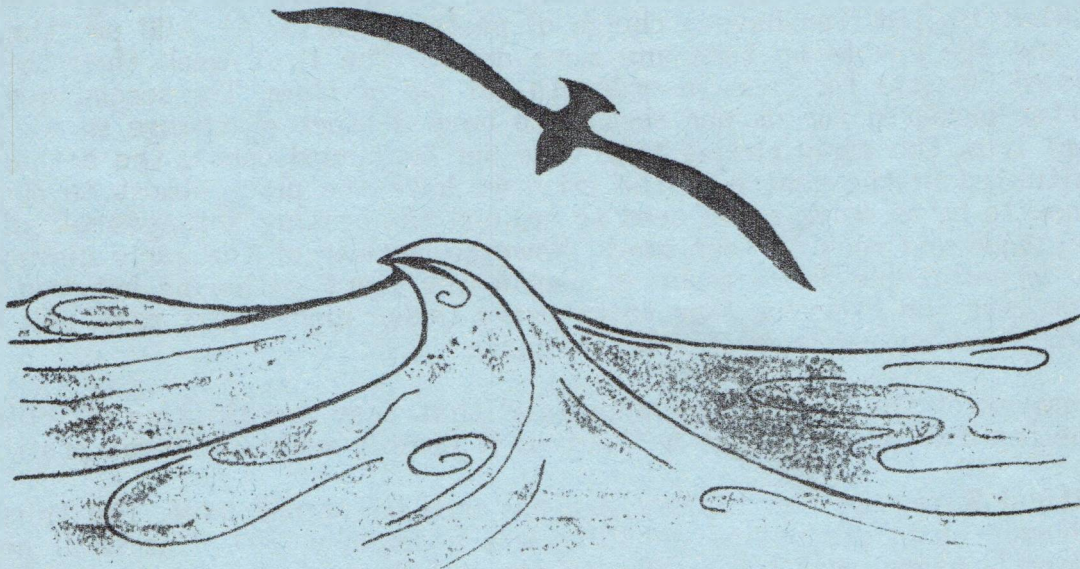
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Wiz

Wiz & Miz

p2, 5, 6 & Back Cover

p9, 10, 11, 13 & 14

p8