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P.O. Box 4024, University of Melbourne, VIC, AUSTRALIA, 3052.

Telephone: [61 3] 615 0328 Oz EST Business Hours, [61 3] 386 0721 (Clive Newall or Lyn) before 10:00 pm GMT+10.

News, reviews, etc can also be sent via Email to Thyme@asis.unimelb.EDU.AU for those having access to ACSnet, AARNet, Internet, etc.

Thyme is available for news, reviews, artwork, informative phone calls or letters, trade, or even subscription, at the following rates: \$1.25 per issue Australia only. UK50p - to the agent. **ELSEWHERE**: A\$2.00 per issue (~US\$15 for 5 issues, including conversion costs). All overseas copies are sent SAL, or Airmail if SAL not available.

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Our agents are: **EUROPE**: Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Rd, Stamford Hill, London, N15 6NH, U. K.

ELSEWHERE: write to me (LynC) directly.

News, reviews, articles, and locs are to be sent to **Thyme's** address; fiction and fiction queries to **Thyme Fiction's** address (Aphelion Publications, P.O. Box 619, Nth Adelaide, SA, 5006); money to overseas agents if there is one, **Thyme** otherwise.

If you have a big hand-drawn X (XX for non Australians) on your mailing label, this means that this is your LAST issue unless you DO SOMETHING.

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FAN FUND UPDATE:

DUFF

DUFF voting has now closed and the winner to come from U.S.A. to Australia for Suncon has been announced. Voting was as follows:

Art Widner	48	Winner
Janice Murray	46	
Write-in (Rich Brown)	1	
No Preference	5	
	100	

No details about Australian votes or voters available yet. Our commiserations to Janice, and congratulations to Art. Last known address (about four years ago) for the new American DUFF administrator was 231 Courtney Rd, Orinda, U.S.A., CA 94563.

FFANZ

Only one nomination was received by either administrator before the closing date, so Alan Stewart (editor of *Ethel the Aardvark*) was declared elected unopposed.

There will be a fund raising "Sausage Sizzle" on Friday the 26th of April, at St David's Church Hall, 74 Melville Rd, West Brunswick. Starting around 7:30pm. Donations can also be sent to Terry Frost at 12/18 Robe St, St Kilda, Vic, 3182.

TAFF

Nominations have closed, and voting is now open to elect a European to go from Europe to the U.S.A. for the Worldcon in August. The nominees are: Abigail Frost, Pam Wells, and Bruno Ogorelec. Voting closes May 15.

Voting forms can be obtained from Robert Lichtman, P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442, U.S.A., or one of the two UK administrators: Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Ave, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0DH, U.K.; or Lilian Edwards, 2 Spring Valley Trce, Morningside, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH10 4QD, U.K.

DITMAR AWARDS:

Voting for the Australian SF achievement awards (Ditmars) is now open. There are six categories this year because the two fifth categories tied for nomination as a category. The six categories are the traditional ones (Best Long Fiction (or anthology), Best Short Story, Best Fanzine, Best Fan Writer, Best Fan Artist) and Best Fannish Cat. This last category started as a joke, but received enough nominations that it couldn't be ignored. There are some really lovely cats nominated too, as well as a couple of silly ones. It's good to see the fannish tradition of silliness being upheld.

Reviews for each of the Short and Long fiction/collections follow, but the nominations in the fannish categories are:

Best Fannish Cat:

Apple Blossom, Constantinople, Emuna Peel, Godzilla, Honey, Satan, Truffle, and Typo.

Best Fanzine: ASFR, Doxal, Doxy, Ethel the Aardvark, Pink, and StunGunn

Best Fanwriter: Terry Frost, Bruce Gillespie, Ian Gunn, Marc Ortlieb, and Alan Stewart.

Best Fan Artist: Ian Gunn, Craig Hilton, Marion Plumridge, and Phil Wlodarczyk.

The nominees for the William J Atherling award for criticism are:

Russell Blackford, Bruce Gillespie, Peter Nicholls, and Alan Stewart.

REVIEWS:

A Pursuit of Miracles by George Turner, (Aphelion Press)

I wrote about George Turner's work for ASFR 24, Winter 1990. That talk was based on my speech that launched this book at the convention held at Easter 1990 in Melbourne [Danse Macabre-Ed]. I realised later that in my speech I didn't talk much about A Pursuit of Miracles.

In the same issue of ASFR, John Foyster reviewed A Pursuit of Miracles. The final paragraph of that review reads: 'And so we have a terribly mixed bag. Some stories look like refugees from George Turner's earliest days of writing, archaic in conception and execution, while a couple show that he could really become a skilled short story writer. But he is an accomplished novelist. Stick to the last George Turner!'

And I would agree with Foyster if I didn't find these stories highly readable. Even Turner admits, in his introduction to "In a Petri Dish Upstairs", that it is a 'novel topped and tailed'. "On the Nursery Floor" is so compressed that it cries out for the novel version that Turner has now written. (Nursery Games should appear some time next year.) But these stories read just as well as "A Pursuit of Miracles" and "Feedback", whose structures are much more like those of the traditional short story.

If you like George Turner's forthright, gritty style, you will like A Pursuit of Miracles as much as most of his novels. But even while you enjoy "The Fittest", one of the best Australian short stories of the 1980s, you will remember how much better it became when transformed into The Sea and Summer (aka The Drowning Towers).

Bruce Gillespie

[reprinted with permission from SF Commentary #69/70]

The Fortress of Eternity by Andrew Whitmore (Avon Books, December 1990)

Lovers of fantasy who use the genre to escape reality will probably dislike this novel, it is too realistically gritty. The Hero, a "Jenemun" whose racial features are far too obvious for the common xenophobe to tolerate, is down on his luck in the seedy port town of "Julkrease". The lot of such people in a society with no social welfare is made all too obvious.

Fortunately for the hero (and the novel), he doesn't quite reach the stage of pawning his sword before he is hired by a foppish mercenary to "kill a god". Isaf, the hero, doesn't believe in gods, but he does believe in gold, and so accepts the offered task.

As in all good fantasies, magic swords, magic keys, tarot cards which give true readings, AND gods really do exist. This is the story of how our jenemun friend; a girl - who attaches herself to the party to escape the dreary pain of prostitution; an ineffectual key bearer; the foppish mercenary - who learns the hard way that riding 10+ (ten plus) hours on horseback a day is not good for the backside; and a somewhat taciturn, heartless (and *cojoneless*) demigod; find the god they seek, and irretrievably change their world.

It is also a very human tale of misfortune, poverty, frustration, revenge, loyalty, desperation, and the will to survive. Isaf does survive, but the reader is left asking the question "What is there to survive for?"

The novel is very picturesque, a little jumpy in places (the editors asked the author to add 20,000 words, and some of this padding shows), but it is very easy to read, once you recover from the shock of a little realism. As the author himself wrote "It is not your standard sword and sorcery, wish-fulfilment fantasy." [Slow Glass Books catalogue #27]

It is about time someone wrote a fantasy genre story like this.

LynC

My Lady Tongue and Other Tales by Lucy Sussex (William Heinemann)

During the recent mini-boom in Australian SF publishing (more than two books a year! wow!), Lucy Sussex has emerged as hottest newcomer. She has good SF ideas, a pernicky passion for fine detail and perfect pitch for people's voices. Her stories are often very funny. She is a merry ironist: amused by *all* human experience, and not just people and events that fit a private viewpoint. Her stories begin with the familiar and end up in the unfamiliar. My favourite story is "God and Her Black Sense of Humour". In this search for a couple of female vampires, the viewpoint character undertakes an unsettling pilgrimage among peculiar people spread across America. The story's 44 pages pack a wider range of experience than most people's blockbuster trilogies. In "Quartet in Death Minor", the main character sets off in pursuit of Death, who wanders past the house at night. Another fantasy story is "The Lipton Village Society", which plays with the idea of the fantasy world into which everyday people can enter, but excludes the narrator.

I like the SF stories less than the fantasy stories, mainly because Sussex tends to project future societies dominated by one or other strand of today's counter culture. The effect looks trendy, although Sussex is rigorous in working out the consequences of her premises. "Go-To" bogs down under the weight of its premise, that Animal Liberationists become far more aggressive than they are at the moment. The story is really about a cat. When the cat appears at the end, the story bursts into life. In "My Lady Tongue", the viewpoint character lives in a feminist/lesbian utopia. In a vividly uneasy flashback, she tells of her one encounter with a man, a Shakespeare-spouting SNAG (Sensitive New Age Guy). It's not clear at the end whether she has learned anything from any of the events in the story; reading this story is like encountering a lesbian Robert Heinlein.

Two other powerful stories, "The Man Hanged Upside Down", and "Read Ochre", are

technically fantasies, but have that rigorous sense of worked-out ideas that we usually associate with Science Fiction. They prove that Lucy Sussex is so accomplished that she can write anything she wants. Which direction will she take?

Bruce Gillespie

[reprinted with permission from SF Commentary #69/70]

Rynosseros by Terry Dowling (Aphelion Press)

In Rynosseros Terry Dowling has created an Australia ideal for the playing out of the most improbable of stories. It is an Australia of the Centre, not the Australia of the thin green coastal fringe familiar to most. Sand ships drawn by kites traverse a landscape ruled by The Dreamtime and the deadly justice of the Ab'O satellites and the laser batons of the avengi. It is a quantum Australia - we see chunks of it, and the holes in the pattern are big enough for tales of robots, shape-changers and strange hybrids of computers and dead minds.

Rynosseros is not easy to read. Terry has created a world of mythology that has parallels with Cordwainer Smith's Instrumentality - indeed, there is a temptation to read his Dreamtime as an analogue of Smith's Rediscovery of Man. In most cases, these are the stories of Blue Tyson - Tom Rynosseros - who survived the Madhouse to command the *Rynosseros*. He is a strange and haunted man, one who is difficult to comprehend and perhaps the more fascinating for that. Like Cordwainer Smith, Dowling has learnt to tantalise us with fragmentary tales doling out portions of myths.

Rynosseros is a fascinating attempt to create an alien Australia. In places it works well; in others it gets too lost in its individual myths. I think it takes several readings to fully appreciate some of the stories but the re-reading is worth the effort. I find myself more at home among the sandships each time I dip back into the collection and I find myself relating more easily to the strange and sometimes contradictory characters. Certainly not your run-of-the-mill science fiction.

Marc Ortlieb

The Specialist by Wynne Whiteford (Ace)

Wynne Whiteford's latest novel is set approximately one hundred years hence where TV ratings still control some people's lives. In this case 'specialist' reporter Lance Garrith pursues a story from the mountains of Hawaii to the canyons of Mars as he investigates a probe which has entered the solar system.

Wynne injects a surprising amount of detail into the novel, one suspects he has visited Hawaii recently, and the technological devices mentioned seem a reasonable extrapolation given the supposed time setting, although perhaps it should have been a couple of decades closer to the present. There seems to be a bit of confusion between the two main subplots on Mars - investigating a clone family and six-limbed aliens - and Lance's main love interest, Dorella, is disposed of off-handedly.

Overall an entertaining read for the near-future portrayed, but it becomes a bit rushed towards the end and the explanation as expository lump 'history', following suspended animation, is a bit clumsy. Hard Science Fiction featuring the detailed, sort of lived in, background Wynne is good at.

Alan Stewart

"Generation Gap" by George Turner (A Pursuit of Miracles, Aphelion)

"The THEME is the statement which the writer wishes to convey to the reader, the PLOT is the formal peg on which he hangs his exposition, and the STORY is the curiosity-hook with which he lures the reader in the required direction."

PLOT: An encounter between an art historian from the newly (re)emerging backwater planet Earth and his Guide in an extraterrestrial art gallery.

STORY: The exquisite detail of the encounter, laying open the perceptions and attitudes not only of the protagonists, but implicitly those of their respective cultures as well.

THEME: Ah. Here I have a problem. I'm not sure I can see exactly what George is getting at with this obviously pointed tale. Is it an admonition not to forget the past? An observation that parents and offspring have and will always misunderstand each others achievements? A comment on uninformed criticism (such as this?)? Perhaps they are all the same, that a closed mind prevents communication and understanding. Maybe I missed the point entirely.

"...it is still easy to be wrong in your summing-up of a book, simply because you have misunderstood..."

[Both quotes are from 'An Invitation to the Feasting of Vultures', subtitled 'The Martial Art of SF Criticism', by George Turner.]

Clive Newall

"God and her Black Sense of Humour" by Lucy Sussex (My Lady Tongue and other Tales, William Heinemann)

"God and her black sense of Humour" is a twisted mix of sixties sub-culture nostalgia and one of the strangest vampire stories I've ever read. It is humorous without descending to parody or slapstick. Sussex takes us through the autumn shades of the Summer of Love. Though not quite on a par with the snot vampires who formed a talking point at one of Peter Toluizzi's parties, Sussex has created a fascinating pair through whom to probe the notion of vampirism. The narrator is, like Marty, Fogarty, Magda, and Gifford, more observer than participant. The central characters show women in a strong role, but their power is dependant on the men upon whom they prey and the way in which they exercise this power, thus the title of this story. There is concern for the narrator's development following her excursion into the supernatural, but this is secondary to the ideas that Sussex has about the unnatural history of a pair of female vampires.

Marc Ortlieb

[adapted, with permission, from Q36]

"Red Ochre" by Lucy Sussex (My Lady Tongue and other Tales, William Heinemann)

In "Red Ochre" Sussex takes the theme of manipulating reality through Art. The story is set in Northern Queensland in an undefined future. Australia has been at war with Indonesia whose parting shot has been to spread mutagenic viruses. There are very few wild animals remaining and so Francis F. Fogarty makes a living with a peripatetic menagerie including a genetically engineered python, which causes trouble in one of the more paranoid North Queensland towns. One of Fogarty's crew, Ian Limrock, is bitten by the show's mongoose and the fearful police sergeant sends him to the local Mutie reservation. As a result, Fogarty comes into contact with Jon Blackmore, the reservation doctor. Fogarty is enticed out to the reservation with his animal show and he finds a changed Ian, one who has come to terms with his aboriginal ancestry - the origins of his surname, Limrock, are

explained; one of his ancestors was a rock painter. The Muties, to the townsfolk pariahs, are tied into the art/magic. They are changing into the aboriginal totemic animals depicted on the rocks renewing the land. As Ian explains to Fogarty, in the dreamtime legends, all the animals were people in the first place. What happens to the Muties is simply repeating that history.

Marc Ortlieb

[adapted, with permission, from Q36J]

"The Caress" by Greg Egan (Asimov's, January 1990)

"The Caress" by Greg Egan, is something of a surprise to those accustomed to his Interzone stories, which were sleek, bleak, and often very gruesome exercises in the horror mode, not to all tastes, but undoubtedly most stylish. "The Caress" is Fantasy/SF, with its title and subject deriving from a famous symbolist painting. A future cop, 'primed-up' on official drugs and growth factor hormones, finds in the course of a murder investigation, a being who has been even more radical altered than he - a sphinx, a chimæra, with the head of a woman and the body of a leopard. The chimæra, he finds, is an exact, living copy of a fantastic animal in the title painting, created in accordance to an insane theory of artistic replication. And someone is trying to kill her ...

This is a story that starts out as a thriller, covers some hard science along the way, and ends up as a mood piece. It resembles perhaps a symbolist painting in its evocation of ideas and emotions - delicate is one word that comes to mind, also extremely subtle. Just when you expect the narrative to explode in a turmoil of blood and claws and fur ... it doesn't. And that perhaps is the beauty of it.

Salmon R.

"Turtle Soup" by Rosaleen Love (Eidolon 3, December 1990)

Among the dubious, if any, benefits of the Gulf Crisis is the wide circulation of a new or newish word: 'Ecoterrorism'. It is not the prettiest of terms, yet it is a perfect descriptor of the subject Rosaleen Love has chosen in her short story, "Turtle Soup". The boot, though, is on the other foot in this narrative - nature is red-fanged and clawed in the pursuit of vengeance.

Love is a contributor to the ABC SCIENCE SHOW and her use of biological colour in the story is concise and entertaining, as if written to be heard rather than read. Consider this description, of bird banding:

"Just do it. Catch one. Make up your mind. Be more decisive than a gannet. It's not hard, you'll see." She saw. The birds dithered, and as they tried to work out whether to fly or stay, she caught one and tucked its wings under her arm, ready for Alan to clip the band around the right leg. Half-digested fish splattered over her jacket. She counted the ticks on the beak, certain at any moment they would take to the air, leaping like acrobatic snails to land on her face.

Of the recent Australian SF, "Turtle Soup" is perhaps closest in spirit to Leanne Frahm's excellent "On the Turn", which is also concerned with the sea. Love's story is more languorous, though, more sunny, and arguably more sinister. This is a tale to be savoured, although the exact flavour - rich, acerbic, but also dry - remains undefinable.

Salmon R.

"While the Gate is Open" by Sean McMullen (F&SF, February 1990)

I suppose I never really realised just how much Australian SF there was being published, until I saw this year's Ditmar nominees, in real life, or in real photocopy.

This story is one of those nominated and I cheer, "go and good luck" to all those people writing today and actually getting something into print.

I dislike discouraging anyone who tries, but I suppose I must be honest if I'm to be a reviewer.

"While the Gate is Open" is just an average sort of story; no real twists or turns, no sudden jumps or surprises. Although I cannot quote titles or Authors the theme seems all too familiar. A doctor finds a way, via an electronic device, to look beyond death. This is a dark story, but not quite dark enough to be a real thriller. There is mystery, a bit of romance, and an ending that I thought was predictable. It seemed the obvious thing that the main character would do.

This story is a good read, it doesn't require you to be a genius to just understand the language (as does happen in many current psychological stories at present). The main problem is that it leaves a vague feeling of having read this before in a different guise. Maybe it was just a little too stereotyped. I suppose some ideas just keep popping up again and again till all angles have been investigated.

So, a nice read, but a little predictable.

Karen Pender-Gunn

[Please note: This last story occurs in the February issue of F&SF, not the March issue, as stated on the Ditmar form.-Ed]

1989 AUSTRALASIAN MEDIA SF AWARDS:

Awarded at the 1990 Media Natcon, HUTTCON, in November.

Best Fan Media Publication was Enarrare

Best Fan Media Writer was Edwina Harvey

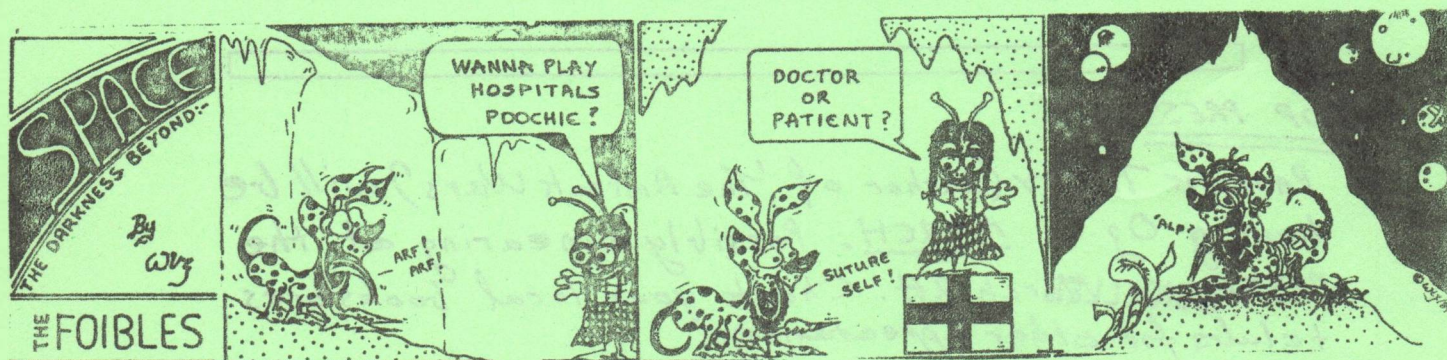
Best Fan Media Artist was Marianne Plumridge

Best Australasian Amateur Audio-Visual Production was cancelled due to a lack of nominations.

The 1991 Media Natcon will be VAMPIRICON in October in Melbourne.

The 1992 Media Natcon will be HONGCON in June in Adelaide.

(See the convention listings for details)



YARN BASKET:

CofA:

Ian Gunn (StunGunn) and Karen Pender-Gunn (Pink) have taken out a Post Office Box, P.O. Box 567, Blackburn, Vic, 3130. Please send all correspondence to this address in future.

Nigel Rowe, ex FFANZ winner, has moved into P.O. Box 27432, Wellington, New Zealand.

Lucy Zinkiewicz has decided to continue her degree up in Queensland. She can now be contacted at International House, 5 Rock St, St Lucia, QLD, 4067.

Beky Tully and Danny Heap have also been on the move. They are now at 33 Cameron St, Coburg, Vic, 3058. New Phone no: (03) 386 2518. Much mention of a housewarming has been made but no date fixed yet.

OZ Publishing:

Rumour of yet another Terry Dowling masterpiece (or maybe just a collection of small pieces), Wormwood, to be released at Suncon by Aphelion Press. (Aphelion's activity in this matter is stated as the reason there is no fiction available for this issue of Thyme. However we are assured that Thyme Fiction will return for the next issue.)

Fan Publishing:

Chris Nelson has now published 3 issues of Mumblings from Munchkinland, a perzine of book reviews, 'zine reviews (Thyme is listed as being somewhat anaemic of late; a statement we regretfully agree with.), odd newspaper clippings and travel stories. It is published from the isolated wilds of Pakistan, and he'd love to hear from anyone wishing to receive a copy. Write to him at P.O. Box 860, University Town, Peshawar, Pakistan.

The Esoteric Order of Dagon are resurrecting their magazine and Short Story Competition. The 'zine will be published bi-monthly, and specialises in Lovecraftian fiction and general horror. Costs \$10 for 6 issues (a year). If interested either in contributing or receiving write to: EOD, c/- Chris Masters, 13 Leopold St, Glen Iris, Vic, 3146.

Events:

Celebrate Chinese New Year at Karen and Ace Auhl's place, 6 Ian Parade, Concord, NSW, 9th February. Ring Susan Clarke on 047 516740 (before 10:00 pm) for more details.

St Valentine's Feast, presented by Suncon and Starwalking, Saturday 16th February from 7pm to midnight at the Melbourne TownHouse. \$36 a head, formal dress. Write to StarWalking Inc, P.O. Box 118, Springvale, 3171, with SSAE, by 13th February.

Blakes7 Video weekends - 23rd&24th of February (seasons 1&2), and 2nd&3rd of March (Seasons 3&4). Venue: 428 Albion St, West Brunswick, Vic. Inquiries: Phone 386 2518. These are being run as Fund raisers for Conjunction 3 and cost \$10, most of which covers munchies, and tea and coffee.

Proposed Minicon if enough interest; Newtcon, 9th-10th March, in the Hunter valley Region. A Bus-load will go down from Sydney for Wine-tasting and fun. Send a SSAE to Medtrek c/- 6 Bellevue Rd, Faulconbridge, NSW, 2776.

STOP PRESS:

PATRICK TILLEY (Author of 'The Amtrak Wars') will be touring Oz in MARCH. Possibly appearing at the M.S.F. ~~CANCELLED~~ March 24th. Check your local bookstores + clubs for other appearances.

The THYME Convention Update

SUNCON '91: (The 30th Australian Natcon)

Dates: 29th March - 1st April, 1991
Venue: Brisbane Gateway Hotel, North Quay, Brisbane
Rates: \$75 Attending, Supporting \$15, Voting \$5
Theme: Dangerous Visions
GOH: Harlan Ellison & Patrick Tilley
Fan GOH: Leigh Edmonds & Valma Brown, TM:
 Nick Stathopoulos
Banquet: Smorgasboard @\$35 (Saturday night)
Room Rates: Single/Twin/Double \$90, Triple \$100
Mail: Suncon '91, P.O. Box 437 Camberwell, Vic, 3124

ABBYCON:

Dates: 29 March - 1 April 1991
Venue: Abby's Hotel, Welleslet St, Auckland
Rates: NZ\$40 til Feb 1, NZ\$45 after
GOH: Phillip Mann (Author - who'll be taking a couple of writers' workshops as well), and Steve Campbell (TVNZ Director)
Mail: ABBYCON, P.O. Box 74013, Market Rd, Auckland 5, New Zealand

FORRYCON: (The 1991 NZ Natcon)

Dates: May 31- June 3, 1991
Venue: Airport Hotel, Kilbernie, Wellington
Rates: \$NZ35 til Feb 28 1991, NZ\$40 after, NZ\$45 at door. Supporting NZ\$20
Banquet: \$29 (Vampire Theme)
GOH: Forrest J. Ackerman
FAN GOH: Tim Jones
Room Rates: Single \$69/\$89, Double/Twin/Triple \$99, Quad \$109
Mail: Forrycon, P.O. Box 27432, Upper Willis St, Wellington, New Zealand

VICTORICON:

Dates: 7th-10th June 1991
Venue: Melbourne Townhouse, Swanston St, Carlton
Rates: ??
GOH: Mark Lenard & Bjo Trimble
FGOH: Gary Armstrong & Diane Marchant
Mail: P.O. Box 8035, Northlands, 3072

CONCAVE 2:

Dates: 2nd-4th August 1991
Rates: \$30 to Jan 1, 1991
Venue: Royal Pde Motor Inn, Royal Pde, Parkville, Vic
Mail: Concave, P.O. Box 409, Canterbury, 3126
 [An SF/F Multi-media con, a party con, a con for those who like fun...]

CHICON V: (The 1991 Worldcon)

Dates: August 29 - September 2, 1991
Venue: The Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois, USA
Rates: US\$95 to 31/Dec/90. Supporting US\$30
GOH: Hal Clement, Richard Powers (Art), Martin Greenberg, Jon & Joni Stopa, Marta Randall (TM).
Room Rates: US\$70 single/double, + US\$20 per person triple/quadruple. DO NOT attempt to book these yet.
Mail: Registration; Chicon V, P.O. Box 218121, Upper Arlington, Ohio 43221-8121
 Information; Chicon V, P.O. Box A3120, Chicago, IL 60690-3120, U.S.A.

VOLGACON: (An International SF Con on the Volga)

Dates: 8th-14th September, 1991
Venue: Somewhere in Volgograd, Russia
Mail: Boris A. Zavgorodny, Volgograd-66, Poste Restante, USSR, Volga-Con

QUARTERCON: (Presented by Conquest)

Dates: 27-29th September (1991?)
Venue: The Gateway Hotel, Brisbane
Rates: \$115 to March 31, \$135 to July 31, \$155 after
GOH: Richard Arnold, James Doohan and Leonard Nimoy (commitments permitting)
Room Rates: Single/Double/Twin \$90, Triple \$100
Meals: \$15 Breky/Lunch, \$25 Dinner
Mail: G.P.O. Box 1376, Brisbane, QLD, 4001

MEDTREK IV: An SF Media Con

Dates: 4 - 7th October, 1991
Venue: University of Western Sydney - Hawkesbury
Rates: \$75 til 1st August 1991, \$85 at door, \$20 Sup.
GOH: Dave Prowse (Darth Vader)
FGOH: Marianne Plumridge (fan artist & writer)
Theme: The Galactic Senate Elections
Room Rates: These include Full board and vary from \$85 (Sat&Sun) to \$170(Fri-Mon). Individual meals can be purchased for \$7.
Mail: Susan Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd, Faulconbridge, NSW, Aus, 2776

VAMPIRICON: The 1991 Media Natcon

Dates: 11th-13th October 1991
Venue: Melbourne Townhouse, 701 Swanston St, Carlton
Rates: \$80 attending, \$25 Supporting
Banquet: \$40 at Dracula's Theatre Restaurant (pay by Sept 1, 1991)
Mail: Vampiricon, 134 Glenlyon, Brunswick, Vic, 3056

CONFLECTIONARY: (SF/F & everything else Con)

Dates: 12-14th October 1991

Rates: \$15 to Nov 30 1990, \$??? after, Supp \$5 to Nov 30 1990, \$??? after

Venue: Somewhere in Adelaide

GOH: Yvonne Rousseau

Mail: "Conflectionary", P.O. Box 878, Adelaide, 5001

SYNCON '92: (The 1992 NatCon)

Dates: 17-20th April 1992 (Easter)

Rates: \$50 till after Suncon, \$25 sup

Venue: ??????

GOH: Michael Whelan

FGOH: Nick Stathopoulos, Sean McMullen (Keynote Speaker)

Theme: The Art of Science Fiction

Mail: Syncon 92, G.P.O. Box 429, Sydney, NSW, 2001

HONGCON '92: (The 1992 Media NatCon)

Dates: June 6th-8th, 1992

Venue: Adelaide Convention Centre

Rates: \$65 til July 1991, \$75 after. \$30 Supp.

Room Rates: Cheques to "Motel Adjacent Casino",
Single \$59, Double \$69, Family \$119

Mail: Hongcon '92, P.O. Box 160, Rundle Mall,
Adelaide, SA, Aus, 5000

[The first 192 memberships are eligible for various prizes.]

MAGICON: (The 1992 Worldcon)

Dates: September 3rd - 7th, 1992

Venue: Orange County Civic & Convention Center,
Orlando, Florida

Rates: was US\$50 attending till 31/Jun/1990, US\$20
Supporting, US\$30 Children

GOH: Jack Vance, Vincent DiFate, Walt Willis, Spider
Robinson (TM)

Mail: Magicon, Box 621992, Orlando, FL 32862, U.S.A.
[If you wish to vote for 1995, you must be a supporting
member of this convention]

CONIUNCTION 3: (Not your Normal Sequel)

Dates: 18th-20th September 1992

Venue: tba

Rates: \$30 Attending till after Suncon, \$10 Supporting

Theme: Animals in SF

Mail: P.O. Box 273, Fitzroy, Vic, 3065

SWANCON 18: (Bidding for the 1993 Natcon)

Dates: Easter 1993 (April 8-12?)

Pre-supporting Memberships: \$5

Mail: P.O. Box 318, Nedlands, W.A., 6009

STAR WALKING II: (bidding for the 1993 Media
Natcon)

Dates: Queens Birthday Weekend, June, 1993

Rates: \$20 Pre-supporting

Theme: All things strange and Alien

Mail: StarWalking, P.O. Box 118 Springvale, Vic, 3171

SAN FRANCISCO '93: The 1993 Worldcon

Dates: 3rd-6th September 1993

Rates: US\$50 till 31st Dec (US\$22 if voted), US\$25
Supporting, Child (under 13 at Sep 1, 1993)
US\$30, 0-3 yrs no charge.

Venue: San Francisco Marriott, Moscone Convention
Center

GOH: Larry Niven, Tom Digby, Alicia Austin, Wombat
(Jan Howard Finder), Guy Gavriel Kay (TM), and
Mark Twain (Dead GOH)

Mail: San Francisco in '93, P.O. Box 22097, San
Francisco, CA 94122, USA

(all details are correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of going to print.)

Thanks for this issue goto the army of people who were willing at almost no notice to produce reviews for the ditmar nominated fiction, even though not all of them wished to have their names published. Thanks also go to Terry, John, Alan, Greg, Mark, Roger, Lucy, Beky, Ian, Ian, Nigel, Chris, and Chris. Unfortunately Aphelion Press were too busy to supply a Thyme Fiction this issue, but promise it will be back next issue.

Thank you also to all those who wrote regarding my imminent departure from editorship; there wasn't room to run the letters in this issue, but maybe in the next issue (also my last).

Artwork this issue:

Front Cover: © 1991 Ian Gunn

Back Cover: © 1990 Craig Hilton

Space, the darkness beyond: © 1990 The Wiz (p7)

LynC 233430011991

DITMAR AWARDS 1991

This is the ballot paper for the Ditmar Awards to be presented at SunCon, the 1991 Australian Science Fiction Convention. It has been produced by the SunCon Ditmar SubCommittee (the *SunConDitSubCom*) and consists of four pages on two sheets of paper. Permission is given for it to be reproduced without alteration for distribution within fandom.

Only members of the Australian Science Fiction Convention are eligible to vote for the Ditmar Awards. If you are not already a member of SunCon and you do not wish to become an Attending or Supporting Member, you may become a Voting Member of SunCon through the payment of a fee of A\$5. A Voting Membership does not allow you to attend the Convention or receive any of the Progress Reports and Program material provided to Supporting and Attending Members.

You must provide your name and address, written or typed legibly, in the space provided below. Please indicate whether you are already a Supporting or Attending Member of SunCon or whether you wish to take out a Voting Membership. If you are taking out a voting membership, payment in full of the \$5 voting membership fee must be enclosed with your ballot. Additionally, if you do not personally know any members of the *SunConDitSubCom*, you must provide the name of a fanish referee in order that there can be no question about the validity of your vote.

Voting is optional preferential in each award category - place a 1 next to your first choice, a 2 next to your second choice and so on until you have exhausted the ballot or have no preference between the remaining nominees. You are encouraged to vote only in those award categories where you feel you can make an informed decision.

Ballots must be received by the *SunConDitSubCom* on or before Monday the 18th of March. Completed ballots should be mailed to the following address:

SunConDitSubCom, PO Box 437, Camberwell VIC 3124, AUSTRALIA

VOTER DETAILS

My full name is:

My address is:

My referee:

My membership status: Attending/Supporting Membership Number _____

I have enclosed A\$5 Voting Membership fee _____

DITMAR AWARDS 1991

1. Best Fannish Cat (27 nominees, 94 nominations)

___ NO AWARD

___ Apple Blossom (humans : Elaine Cochrane & Bruce Gillespie)

___ Constantinople (human : Phil Wlodarczyk)

___ Emma Peel (human : Terry Frost)

___ Godzilla (humans : Ian Gunn & Karen Pender-Gunn)

___ Honey (humans : Gerald & Womble)

___ Satan (human : Phil Wlodarczyk)

___ Truffle (humans : Mark Loney & Michelle Muljsert)

___ Typo (human : Roger Weddall)

2. Best Fanzine (19 nominees, 69 nominations)

___ NO AWARD

___ Australian Science Fiction Review (Second Series)
(Edited by the Science Fiction Collective)

___ Doxa! (Edited by Roman Orszanski)

___ Doxy (Edited by John Foyster)

___ Ethel the Aardvark
(Edited by Alan Stewart for the Melbourne Science Fiction Club)

___ Pink (Edited by Karen Pender-Gunn)

___ StunGunn (Edited by Ian Gunn)

3. Best Australian Novel or Anthology (11 nominees, 30 nominations)

___ NO AWARD

___ A Pursuit of Miracles, George Turner (Aphellon)

___ Fortress of Eternity, Andrew Whitmore (Avon)

___ My Lady Tongue & Other Tales, Lucy Sussex (William Heinemann)

___ Rynosseros, Terry Dowling (Aphellon)

___ The Specialist, Wynne Whitford (Ace)

DITMAR AWARDS 1991

4. Best Australian Short Fiction (18 nominees, 38 nominations)

___ NO AWARD

___ Generation Gap, George Turner (*A Pursuit of Miracles*, Aphellon)

___ God and Her Black Sense of Humour, Lucy Sussex (as below)

___ Red Ochre, Lucy Sussex (*My Lady Tongue & Other Tales*, Heinemann)

___ The Caress, Greg Egan (*Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine*, January 1990)

___ Turtle Soup, Rosaleen Love (*Eidolon*, December 1990)

___ While The Gate Is Open, Sean McMullen (*F&SF*, March 1990)

5. Best Australian Fan Artist
(8 nominees, 36 nominations)

___ NO AWARD

___ Ian Gunn

___ Craig Hilton

___ Marlon Plumridge

___ Phil Wlodarczyk

6. Best Australian Fan Writer
(15 nominees, 35 nominations)

___ NO AWARD

___ Terry Frost

___ Bruce Gillespie

___ Ian Gunn

___ Marc Ortleib

___ Alan Stewart

William Atheling Jr Award

(17 nominees; 13 specific, 5 body nominations)

The William Atheling Jr Award for Criticism and Review is also presented by the Australian Science Fiction Convention. It has been presented for specific pieces of Criticism or Review as well as for bodies of work.

___ NO AWARD

___ Russell Blackford, for:

- A. "Analogues of Anomie: Lee Harding's Novels" in *Science Fiction 30*
B. *Australian Science Fiction Review* (Second Series)

___ Bruce Gillespie, for:

"The Non-SF Novels of Philip K. Dick" presented at Nova Mob and published in ANZAPA

___ Peter Nicholls, for:

"Fantastic World" reviews in the *Melbourne Sunday Herald*

___ Alan Stewart, for:

Reviews in *Ethel the Aardvark* and *SF Commentary*

DITMAR AWARDS 1991

Determination of Award Categories

It has been traditional in Australian Fandom for the Ditmar Award Categories to be determined by fiat of the Ditmar SubCommittee. In the spirit of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, the *SunConDitSubCom* instead sought the views of Australian Fandom through a formal balloting process. The Ditmar Award nomination form, which allowed nomination of award categories as well as nominees for those categories, was widely publicised through SunCon Progress Reports, newszines such as *Thyme* and professional publications such as *Eidolon*. By the close of nominations, sixty three nominating ballots had been received by the *SunConDitSubCom*. Six of these ballots, unfortunately, had to be declared invalid because they lacked any identification of the nominator. The remaining fifty seven valid ballots, however, comprise the largest number of nominating ballots for the Ditmar Awards that the *SunConDitSubCom* is aware of and compares more than favourably to the number of votes cast in most recent Ditmar Award final ballots.

Despite a heartfelt plea from one voter for the Ditmar Awards to be entirely professional awards with no awards to be presented for any fannish endeavours, the 1991 nomination ballots clearly indicated that Australian fandom wants the six Award Categories that are on this final ballot. Each of the chosen Award Categories received between twenty and thirty votes each (exact figures are provided in the accompanying information sheet) while the next most popular category received less than ten votes. The *SunConDitSubCom* is aware of the provision in the Constitution of the Australian Science Fiction Convention that limits the number of Ditmar Awards, but decided that it could not ignore the clearly expressed wishes of its constituency.

Another issue that the *SunConDitSubCom* considered was the category of *Best Australian Long Fiction*. There were a small number of votes for *Best Australian Anthology*, but most nominators clearly expressed a preference for an award for *Best Australian Long Fiction*. Strictly speaking, however, anthologies such as *A Pursuit of Miracles*, *My Lady Tongue & Other Tales* and *Rynosseros*, do not constitute long works of fiction and the *SunConDitSubCom* seriously considered restricting nominees in this category to novels. After carefully examining the nominating ballots and discovering that a significant proportion of the nominators who voted for the category of *Best Australian Long Fiction* nominated one or more of the anthologies above, it was decided that the nominations would be allowed to stand. There was an obvious intent on the part of the nominators for those anthologies to be considered for that category. Accordingly, it was decided that the award category be *Best Australian Novel or Anthology*.

The *SunConDitSubCom* is extremely pleased at the high level of interest in the 1991 Ditmar Awards and would like to thank all those people who took the trouble to nominate categories and works for the final ballot. Yvonne Rousseau, in particular, is to be credited with the concept of a Ditmar Award for *Best Fannish Cat*, an award whose time had obviously come.

We hope that you all vote and trust that the best cat will win...

SunConDitSubCom
23 January 1991

DITMAR AWARDS 1991

ATTACHMENT

This attachment gives details of the voting for categories for the 1991 Ditmar Awards. It does not comprise part of the official Ditmar Ballot and may be circulated separately.

The following categories were nominated for the 1991 Ditmar Awards. Counting of the vote was done in two rounds. The first round allocated one vote to each award category that was in the first five categories nominated by each nominator. The second round allocated one vote to every other award category (if any) nominated by each nominator but only if that category had received any votes (been established) in the first round of voting. As can be seen, there was little effective difference between the ranking of award categories after the second ballot.

In total, forty five categories were nominated in the first round of voting.

<u>Category</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>Second</u>
Best Australian Anthology/Short Story Collection	2	3
Best Australian Novel/Long Fiction	22	26
Best Australian Short Fiction	22	26
Best Short Fiction in a Fanzine	1	1
Best Australian Fiction	1	2
Best Australian Fan Artist	17	20
Best Australian Fan Art	1	1
Best Australian Fan Cartoonist	1	2
Best Australian Artist	4	5
Best Australian Fan Writer	17	21
Best Fanzine	27	31
Best Fanzine Named After A Colour	1	1
Best Typo in a Fanzine	1	1
Best Australian SF Magazine/Periodical/Journal/Publication	5	7
Best International Fiction	4	7
Best New Club	4	5
Best Fan(zine) Editor	7	9
Best Editor	1	1
Best Professional Editor	1	2
Best Publisher	1	1
Best Fannish Cat	28	30
Best 3-Legged Cat	8	9
Best Non-Human Living Creature	1	1
Best Fannish Pet	1	1
Best Hoax	2	5
Best Debut Writer	1	1
Best Fan by Weight/Fattest Fan	5	5
Most Notorious Fan	2	3
Most Deathly Fan	2	2
Most Opinionated Fan	1	2
Nastiest Fan	1	1
Most Exuberant Fan	2	2

DITMAR AWARDS 1991

ATTACHMENT

Most Lethargic/Least Active Fan	2	2
Most Disgusting Fan	1	1
Best Non-Professional Activity	1	1
Most Ditmar Categories	1	1
Best Australian Compilation Album or CD	1	1
Services to Fandom	1	1
Stillest Ditmar Categories Nomination Form Ever	1	1
Most Ridiculous Ditmar Ballot Ever	1	1
Best Fannish Skinny Dip	1	1
Best Original Title	1	1
Most Fannish Departure	1	1
Most Fannish City	1	1
Best Rubber Shark to Attend a Convention	1	1

NOMINATIONS OF INTEREST

Best International Fiction:	Hyperlon, Dan Simmons
Best Hoax:	Sydney in '95 Melbourne in '96 The "Down Deep" Anthology
Best Club Lego Collection:	Melbourne Science Fiction Club
Nicest Guy or Girl in Fandom:	James Allen Alan Stewart Roger Weddall
Best Fannish Skinnydip:	Smithfield New Year
Best Professional Editor:	Sarah Brennan (<i>My Lady Tongue & Other Tales</i>)
Most Fannish City:	Perth Melbourne Sydney Darwin
Most Amazing & Why	ANZAPA - For still existing

FELINE HONOURABLE MENTIONS

TC	Boots
Sylvester	Oscar
Wij	Kerr'le
Tasha	Tiger
Turlow/Turlough	Fat Cat
Garfield	Dark Star
Aurora	Umbril/Umbral
Fishbreath	Monty
Bruce	Dylan
Mr Cat	



THE INSTRUMENTALITY

The Instrumentality of the Australian S.F. Foundation

Vol 3 No. 1

January 1991

1991 Committee:

President:
Cath Ortlieb

Vice President:
Alan Stewart

Secretary:
Mark Loney

Treasurer:
Carey Handfield

Committee:



No-one elected as no-one filed. Members will be co-opted. Expressions of interest are invited!

Publicity Officer:
Greg Hills

ADDRESS MAIL TO:

ASFF
PO Box 428
Richmond 3121
AUSTRALIA

President's Report 1990

1990 has seen the Foundation continue to foster Science Fiction in Australia in a variety of ways. It supported aspiring Australian writers by sponsoring the short story competitions run by *Danse Macabre*, the 1990 Australian Science Fiction Convention, and *HuttCon*, the 1991 Australian National Media Science Fiction Convention. This support will continue with the sponsoring of short story competitions run by *SunCon* and *Vampiricon*, the 1991 NatCons. The Foundation also provided a seed loan to *HuttCon*, a loan which, I am pleased to report to this meeting, was recently repaid in full and with a generous donation to the Foundation.

The Foundation is also sponsoring a *Ditmar Design Competition*, entries for which close at the end of January 1991. The Foundation hopes to be able to provide future Australian Science Fiction Conventions with the choice of their own *Ditmar Award* design or an attractive standard design from the Foundation. Additionally, the Foundation has agreed to provide a seed loan to Jack Herman for the preparation of a history of Australian Science Fiction Conventions. To further promote Australian fandom overseas, the Foundation presented a display of Australian Worldcon material at the 1990 World Science Fiction Convention in Den Haag, The Netherlands. Material from *Aussiecon*, *Aussiecon II* and the Sydney in '95 bid was included. The Foundation has begun to collect data for a *Directory of Australian Fandom* to be made available to conventions and fannish groups.

Although our membership numbers have grown, it is disappointing that more people are not supporting the Foundation by joining and/or offering suggestions regarding how the Foundation can better foster Science Fiction in Australia. It is true that most of the Management Committee reside in Melbourne, although it is also true that they are not all originally from Melbourne, but we value the input of our interstate agents and all of our members. The Foundation has never attempted to favour Melbourne in its activities and, although the Management Committee must be based somewhere, it is up to fans in other states

to express their ideas and keep us in touch with ways in which the Foundation can best use its funds or structure to promote Science Fiction in Australia. We are always open to suggestions.

-- Cath Ortlieb
President

Secretary's Report 1991

[There is no Secretary's Report this year due to the work pressure the Gulf War has placed on the Secretary.]

Treasurer's Report 1991

[Members will receive a copy of the full report with this issue. What follows is a synopsis. Ed.]

Period 1st November 1989 to 31st October 1990.

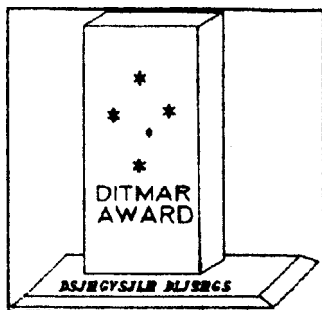
REVENUE:	\$1,011.23	\$1011.23
EXPENSES:	\$610.51	\$610.51
SURPLUS FOR PERIOD:		\$400.72
ASSETS:		\$9,482.37
LIABILITIES:		nil

FUNDS:

► Balance 1st November 1989	\$9081.65
► Add: Surplus for year	\$400.72
► Balance 31st October 1990	9,482.37

-- Carey Handfield
Treasurer

Ditmar Design Competition



Due to underwhelming demand, the Foundation has elected to extend the deadline on this project (originally due to close on the 31st of January). As of the 24th of January, and despite our massive publicity campaign, no entries have been received (even Your August Editor has not completed his world-beating design). Considering the readiness of so many creative people to hold forth in person and in print on the necessity of finding an acceptable long-term design for the awards, the Foundation has been astonished by this enthusiastic display of apathy.

The Foundation emphasises that there will be no pressure on any Australian Science Fiction Convention to use the Foundation's design; the design. It will be there for any natcon that wishes to use it, but that decision will obviously be for the individual convention to make.

Foundation's Logo

The 1991 ASFF AGM adopted an official ASFF logo. Stationery using it is being prepared, and you will find it incorporated into the left side of the masthead of this issue of *THE INSTRUMENTALITY*.

What's On At The Melbourne Science Fiction Club



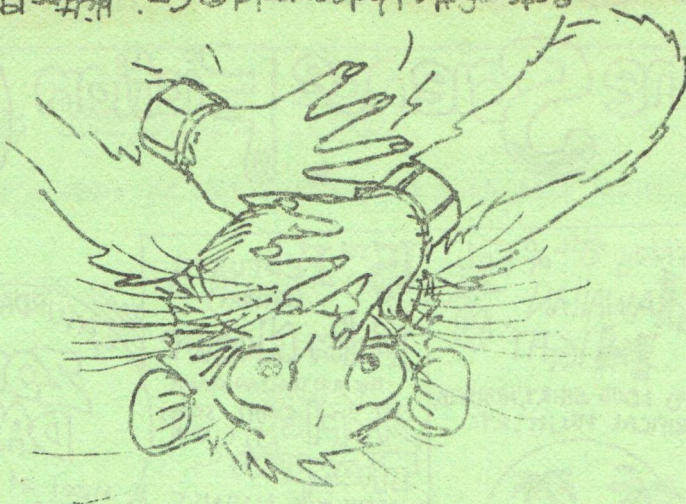
Friday Feb 1st PAPER PLANES COMPETITION	Friday 8th of Feb HAWAIIAN NIGHT BYO LOUD SHIRT, Hibiscus, TROPICAL FRUIT, ETC. 	15th February (FRIDAY) Film Night THE AUSTRALIAN CLASSIC Shirley Thompson VERSUS THE ALIENS A DONATION, PLEASE, TO COVER FILM FRIEGHT	SATURDAY 16th ZOO DAY Meet at main Entrance 10:00am Bring a cut Lunch	22nd FEB (FRIDAY) Word Games
Story Time READINGS OF REAL STRANGE TALES FRIDAY 1st MARCH WITH FREE FAIRY BREAD!	FRIDAY 8th MARCH Get your teams together and your thinking caps on for... DRAMA GAMES	SATURDAY 9th MSFC BARBECUE 11:00AM. ALBERT PARK LAKE. NEAR ALBERT RD. DRIVE + LAKESIDE DRIVE BYO EVERYTHING	FRIDAY 15th MARCH The 2nd MSFC HORSE RACE BUY SOME PLAY MONEY TO BET ON OUR CARD-BOARD STALLIONS. LOTS A FUN. SUPPER, TOO! AN MSFC FUNDRAISER	Friday 22nd March Jacko's Slot Car Races BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!
FRIDAY 5th APRIL SWAP NIGHT BOOKS, TOYS, CLOTHES, ETC. BRING ALONG YOUR UNWANTED STUFF AND SWAP IT.	FRIDAY 12th APRIL Test your skills! * FAN OLYMPICS * Some rather silly competitions.	FRIDAY 19th APRIL CARD NIGHT! 	FRIDAY 26th APRIL F.F.A.N.Z. SAUSAGE SIZZLE A FAN FUND FUND RAISER! 	FRIDAY 29th MARCH GOOD FRIDAY NO MEETING THIS WEEK Membership of the MSFC entitles you to free copies of our award-winning newsletter, use of the club library and lots of discounts around town
FRIDAY 3rd MAY VINTAGE VIDEO CREAKY OLD CREATIONS FROM THE VIDEO VAULT... ANCIENT STUFF...	FRIDAY 10th MAY Coffee, Cake and Conversation 	 CHOCOLATE CRACKLE MAKING! FRIDAY 17th MAY	FRIDAY 24th MAY ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL ALL SORTS OF CARTOONS! FILMS START AT 8.15 A DONATION, PLEASE, TO COVER EXPENSES	 ROUND ROBIN STORY WRITING FRIDAY 31st MAY

The Melbourne Science Fiction Club meets every Friday at 7.30 p.m. at St. Davids Church Hall, 74 Melville Rd. West Brunswick (Melways Map 29 C6 Catch a No. 55 Tram)

COME ALONG - WE'D LOVE TO MEET YOU

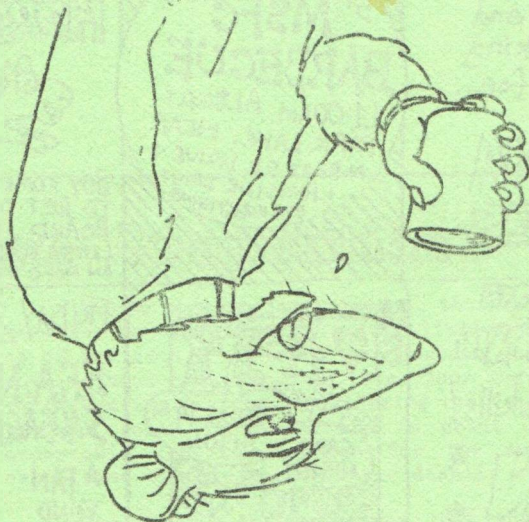
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phone 3700503

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EAST PRAHRAN
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TTT?

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