

Thrane

#85 — December 1991

Eleventh Year of Publication

The Australasian SF News Magazine

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TERMINATOR

It's PERSONAL!



Three Out of Three Ain't Bad

Quartercon, Medtrek, and Vampiricon

Report by James Allen

Three media-oriented conventions were held over three consecutive weekends this year. The cons were **Quartercon** in Brisbane, Sept 27–30; **Medtrek IV** at Richmond in the Blue Mountains near Sydney, Oct 4–7; and **Vampiricon** in Melbourne, Oct 11–13. The Mad Hatter's Hat Trick, each con a week apart, spread out down the eastern coast of Australia, ending with the National Media SF Convention in Melbourne.

Someone told me at **Medtrek** that the way the Queensland, NSW, and Victorian school holidays worked led to this incredible grouping of media-oriented conventions. I doubt anyone will want this to happen again. The recession we had to have certainly didn't help. It meant a lot of people having to make choices about what they wanted to go to and what they could afford. At least cheap airfares were available. Jeanette & I flew Compass to Brisbane and hired a car and drove down the East Coast, taking in **Medtrek** on our way back home. I think six fans including Jeanette and I went to all three cons. I feel sure that if people could have saved up between cons more would have attended them all.

Quartercon

First there was **Quartercon**, at the Gateway Hotel in Brisbane. Run by **Conquest**, it celebrated 25 years of *Star Trek* and 10 years of **Conquest** conventions. It had about 240 attendees but somehow it lost money. After we got home both Jeanette & I got a **CONSCRIPT** newsletter which asked for donations. Pity, it was a really good con, with lots of guests.

Guests, it had guests coming out of its ears. Firstly there was James Doohan, who played Engineer Scott in the original *Star Trek* and in the series of movies. Then there was *Next Generation* actor John De Lancie who plays 'Q', a super-intelligent alien. I saw a piece of fannish history when a woman in one question and answer session asked John 'Are you American?'. He was a little puzzled by the question and asked why she enquired. He was downright flummoxed when she replied 'Because you seem too intelligent'. The two Canadians, James Doohan and Richard Arnold, just laughed.

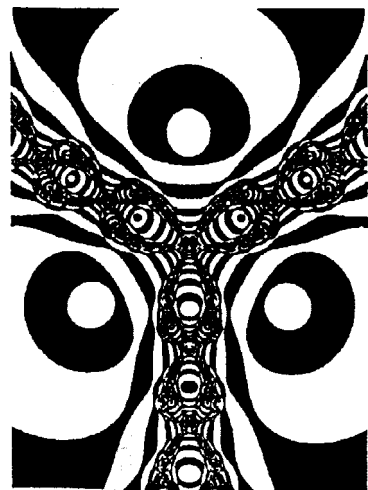
In a roundabout way that brings us to another guest, Richard Arnold, Research Consultant for Paramount, who works on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Author John M Ford, who has written about a dozen books including my favourite *Trek* novel, *HOW MUCH FOR JUST THE PLANET?* (which even has a pie fight in it) was a guest, as was Heather Wood, an editor for Tor Books. There were lots of guests and as a special treat Katy Manning, who played a companion in *Doctor Who*, also dropped by on the Sunday, did some hilarious impersonations, ran part of the auction, and signed autographs.

Quartercon was a convention which revolved around its guests. It was guest-drive. One nice thing was seeing them going to each other's talks. John De Lancie was on after James Doohan and sat in on most of his talk. He said it was nice just to be able to sit in the audience, without security problems.

I went to more talks and autograph sessions than I have ever been to before. The line for 'Scotty's' autograph session never seemed to diminish. It went around several corners. I took the opportunity to get several other autographs and came back next day for his. Having Katy Manning autograph the new issue of *PSYCHODALEKS* was fun — she really can't see much and writes so big — but she is a genuinely funny lady. I was tempted to bid at the auction, just because she was running it, and I am sure I wasn't the only one. It quietened down considerably when she left the auctioneering to a committee member. The talks were interesting. John De Lancie was great and talked about many things including his time on *Days Of Our Lives* and the fans (known as *Doolies*). There was a special lunch for the *Doolies* and it was interesting to see another type of fandom. Apart from being almost totally female they were quite similar to a lot of the *Trekkies*.



Marvin the Paranoid Android (and friend)



Thyme 85 — 26 November 1991

THYME, The Australasian SF News Magazine, is published every six to eight weeks.

ISSN 1037-4213

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THYME is available for news, reviews, artwork, letters, trade, and by subscription as follows:

Australia: \$2.00 per issue; \$12.00 per annum

Overseas (economy air): \$A2.50 per issue; Annual rates negotiable.

European Agent: Roelof Goudriaan, Caan Van Necklaan 63, 2218 BB Rijswijk (ZH), Netherlands.

Please make cheques payable to 'Thyme' or to the appropriate Agent.

Advertising Rates: Professional: \$20 approx. per half page (12 tall x 18 wide or 24.5 tall x 8.75 wide) for camera ready copy, more if you want us to make up your ad. SSAE for sheet with standard sizes, shapes, rates. Fan rates: Negotiable (cost+) — no freebies. We decide whether you're a fan.

Phones: (03)-429-8354 or (03)-427-0691.

Mail: THYME, PO Box 428, Richmond 3121, Australia

James Doolan talked a lot about *Star Trek* and the way it has gone on through the years. Some of the US cons he described with their thousands of attendees sounded like quite an experience. He seemed to be having quite a good time and I am sure he enjoyed the masquerade; I was told he was taking pictures of some contestants. He seemed very nice, and happy to be there at *Quartercon*.

Richard Arnold gave a different perspective, talking about *Star Trek* from the production side. His comment was that what they did was real, the books were fiction based on that reality, and fan stuff was fantasy based upon the reality, was revealing, as was his comment that Gene Roddenberry called the fans 'Trekkies' and that was what they were, not 'Trekkers'. The serious side of media fandom came to the fore a bit at this con. The 'Fanning the Embers panel', where fans and people who make their living in the media came together to discuss things was great.

The discussion showed that the relationship between fans of something and the people who make their living creating it, is more complex than I thought. The suggestion that fans need to be doing things without stepping on the professionals toes, and helping them rather than expecting support just because they are fans, was illuminating.

Quartercon had a good masquerade won, naturally, by Garry (not Geoff as the picture magazine report said) Armstrong's and Edwina Harvey's Marvin suit. It was great to see Marvin again; don't know how Garry stands the heat inside it. Jeanette and Lesley Walker went in their Romulan gowns (the Roms had a lot of fun all weekend teasing the Peds and Klingons. Trek fandom is another world with its factions and such!). I just took photos from the audience. All in all *Quartercon* was a good con and enjoyed by all its attendees.

Medtrek IV

Medtrek IV was a contrast to *Quartercon*. This was the fourth one run by Sue Clarke and her committee. It was on at the University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury. This was the old agricultural college before the current round of 'bigger is better' amalgamations began in tertiary education. *Medtrek IV* was a relaxacon, with a little over 100 members; I think I was member 104. They probably got around 120. It made, I have been told, a small profit for its charity, the Camperdown Children's Hospital.

Their Guests were David Prowse and his wife and the Fan Guest of Honour was noted fan artist Marianne Plumridge. They were very interesting. We sat and listened to David Prowse talk about his career in 'the business' twice — once at *Medtrek* without slides, as a suitable slide projector couldn't be obtained in time for his first talk, and again with slides at *Vampiricon*, where he was surprise guest. David Prowse has done a lot more than just Darth Vader, even though the big black helmeted nasty has led to him travelling around the world for fifteen years. He really chose well when he decided to take the role instead of being Chewbacca.

The pace at *Medtrek* was fairly slow. Jeanette and I were sharing a four-bedroom villa with my fellow *ANAZAPAns* Richard and Susan Hryckiewicz. That was interesting and led to the quote from Richard: 'I read your stuff and think "it's got to get better, it's got to, but it doesn't ..." I know he doesn't like what Singular productions does in *ANZAPA*, but that's just one of those things.

Medtrek IV's theme was 'Enchantment under the sea' and the hall used for a lot of items was decorated with lots of streamers, wine cask bladders, and cardboard fish. Linda Cox-Chan later appeared in the *Vampiricon* masquerade wearing some of the decorations as a lost *Medtrek* congoer. It was a hoot.

We missed the Friday night start and fish-making party, we were busy finding Wiseman's Ferry and getting across the Hawkesbury River. Anyway we got in late on Friday night, to be told we were late and that rego was over there. It wasn't too easy to find on the spread-out campus, not being where it was at the previous *Eccentriccon*. We were luckier than the guy who arrived about ten minutes after us and slept in his car.



Dave & Mrs Prowse

We made the opening ceremony the next day and learned about 'reversing polarity'. Later when we went to Sydney and saw *RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN PLANET*, it all became clearer. *RETURN* is a great show, with lots of loud Rock and Roll, based loosely on Shakespeare's *THE TEMPEST* and the 50's movie *FORBIDDEN PLANET*. It is coming to Melbourne. See it — it's great.

The Huckster's Room was often quite empty. More than in Queensland, the recession seemed to be biting in Richmond. Judging by what I was told of auction prices it was affecting *Vampiricon*, too. I must admit I didn't understand much about the Galactic Senate Elections, but I voted for a write-in candidate, Marvin the Paranoid Android. I believe some voted for the Returning Officer as a joke. There was a daily newspaper and it was useful, being computer generated late each night with any programme changes in it. We were staying on campus, with meals at the canteen. They weren't bad, and when Garry Armstrong produced balloons so we could play balloon tennis everything became much more fun. Some of the other people at breakfast must have thought we were mad (well . . .) Morning and afternoon tea was in the hayshed near the horse sheds.

The weather was hot and sunny, hotter than Brisbane in fact. I had a good relaxing time, saw friends from Sydney (some of who had been in Brisbane but who weren't coming to Melbourne) and felt it was worth getting to. It was a good change from *Quartercon*.

Vampiricon

We were back home in Melbourne for *Vampiricon*, which was the Australasian National SF Media Convention. It had about 180 members. Its theme was Vampires and the Guests were Kenny Baker, who played R2D2 in *STAR WARS* and surprise Guest David Prowse. Fan Guest of Horror was Geoff Tilley. His speech was listed as 'Geoff Craps On' and I believe he got his own back by using a tape of Darren Maxwell's messages on his answering machine. David Prowse and Kenny Baker worked well together. Seeing these two old troopers talk about 'the business' late on Sunday was a highlight.

I helped out a tiny little bit at *Vampiricon*, having borrowed two PAs and two monitors from work for the con. I thought it went well, although was annoyed that my admittedly late items for the Auction were not sold. Now I am glad as I realise I undervalued them badly. I think I was interstae when I should have got things together. It was pleasing to see the Business Meeting vote for Defcon in New



Kenny Baker

Zealand as the Australasian Media NatCon for 1993. I know it was disappointing for the *Star Walking II* people and I sympathise, but 'Australasian' takes in NZ and it was a deserved win.

Other things at the Business Meeting disturbed me. I spoke against a motion to make voting for the ASFMA Awards first past the post. I feel quite strongly that adopting the system that elected Maggie Thatcher in Britain is a backwards step and it got up because people don't understand the Australian system used previously. I intend to try and make sure this decision is not ratified at next year's NatCon. There was also another item at the Business Meeting, where an attempt was made to widen who can vote for site selection and the awards to members of recognised clubs and conventions. I don't think this was properly considered. Supporting members at *Vampiricon* didn't get a chance to vote for the ASFMA Awards and I know of people who couldn't come who would have liked to vote. The whole matter needs more discussion. Vote-only memberships of Unsupporting Members need to be considered.

Of the three cons, I think *Vampiricon* had the best masquerade. The guy who won with the superb Edward Scissorhands costume fully deserved it, as did Steve Altman and spouse who had a very funny act. I watched Les Robertson create parts of his costume without realising just how good the total effect would be; it deserved to win also. The group who came as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse were also worthy winners in their category. It was a very dark masquerade, in keeping with the gothic con.

Having a funeral for *Vampiricon* at the end of it was good. Jan Tulley was very tasteful and I felt kind of sad yet it was marking a good end. Both the opening and closing ceremonies were well thought out and it was a worthy NatCon. I am sorry to say that I think it may also have made a small loss. The times are hard and you could see that at all three cons. Fannish activity runs on money.

— James Allen

Postscript

From *CONSCRIPT*, 11 October 1991, mailed to *Quartercon* members:

'Did you have a good time at Quartercon? If you did, read on. If you did not please skip to the bit about the next meeting.'

'As you may remember, Quartercon was a great show. However, despite massive publicity, day registrations were only one third of the normal level. If you enjoyed the convention sufficiently, we would be extremely grateful if you could donate \$20 towards helping us to make ends meet. Think of it as an enjoyment tax. If you are only able to afford \$5 we would still be grateful for the assistance and if you had such a good time and you would like to donate more that would be terrific.'

'Another way you could help us out is to donate any merchandise you may have for us to sell at the next meeting. Any assistance you can give us in this regard would be greatly appreciated.'

'Please remember what a great time you had at the Con and give what you can to raise funds to help to pay for it. Thank you for your assistance.'

While *THYME* is inclined to ask whose idea it was to count on the income from the day memberships in order for the con to break even, we print this here in a spirit of reptilian sympathy. Fans wishing to help them out can write to PO Box 1376, Brisbane 4001.

VAMPIRICON REPORT

'Children In The Audience'

A *Vampiricon* Report by Greg Hills

'Well I step inside but I don't see too many faces ...'

(Dire Straits, *Sultans of Swing*)

It's 10:50 am, Saturday 12th October, 1991. With a blue 3-legged cat pinned to the back of my hat, a card proclaiming me to be 'PHRESS' stapled to the side, and another card identifying me as 'THYME' stapled to the front, I enter the Townhouse Hotel. Across the lobby I see double doors framing the typical confusion of a convention Hucksters Room. Seeing no Registration Table in the lobby, I gravitate naturally to the open doors and venture through. Registration is at left, manned by two red-t-shirted women. They smile and painlessly extract the \$45 day membership that is all I can afford, hand me a badge and a con bag, urge several flyers upon me, then turn to their next victim. I saunter on into the room, looking around for familiar faces. I think I see Glenn Tilley in conversation to my right, but otherwise the room is awash with strangers.

Vampiricon, the 1991 Australasian National Media SF

Convention, runs from Friday evening 11th to Sunday evening 13th October at the Townhouse Hotel, Swanston St, Melbourne. It is my first media con, and due to abject poverty I cannot raise \$90 for a full membership, but I do want to at least taste the con. So I shuck the unaffordable delights of the Hucksters Room and share a lift with Sue Bursztynski to the bright lights and modern trim of the function rooms on the 5th Floor.

The Guest of Honour Speech is just getting under way as I enter and find a seat near the back. Shane Morrissey introduces Kenny Baker, the con's GoH. Kenny played R2-D2 in the *STAR WARS* films, Bongo in *THE WOMBLES*, sat in a deck chair on the Titanic in *TIME BANDITS*, played an instrument in the band scene in *WILLOW*, and was also in *AMADEUS* and *THE ELEPHANT MAN*. At 3' 8", Kenny is unlikely to be mistaken for an elephant as he frolics on the stage, pretending to search for his notes.

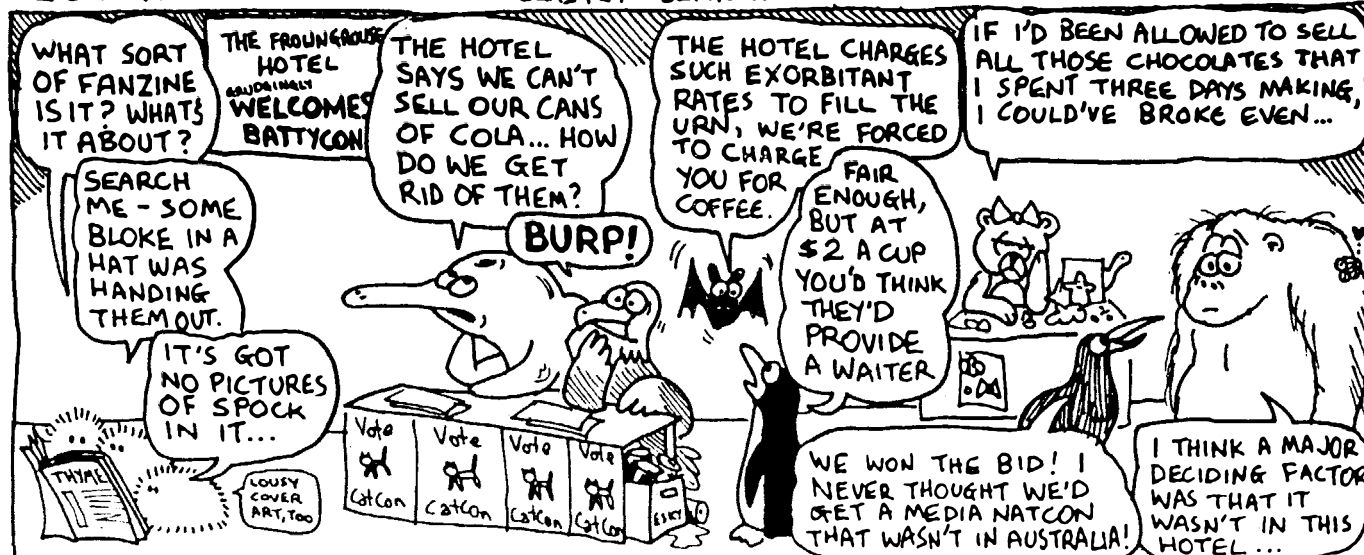
Someone slides into a seat to my left and I slip a quick hello to Ian Gunn. This prompts me to look around. Apart from Sue Bursztynski I see Glen Tilley near the front, James Allen across the aisle to my right, Sue & Richard Hryckiewicz near him, and Alan Stewart seating himself across the aisle a couple of rows down. Suddenly the con is not so barren or unfamiliar. There are still a hundred strangers in the room, but the sight of friends and acquaintances turns the unknown people into backdrop.



"Avago Ya Mugs!" — Karen Pender-Gunn & Ian Gunn

In the Hucksters Room I chat with Ian Gunn, Karen Pender-Gunn, Glenn Tilley, Alan Stewart, Jane Tisell, and all and sundry who cock an ear as they go past. I wander for a while, taking in the Art Show. This is small but varied. One puzzling feature is a painting by Marianne Plumridge — a pegasus done in delicate blue and white amidst blue and white clouds — which is displayed for sale but not entered for judging. I later ask Marianne about this, and she explains that until a few months before the con she had been organising the Art Show and had promised

(KB on the change received when using up Czech currency
buying vodka after the filming of AMADEUS)



not to enter her own work for judgement. A pity — it is the best painting there, and if I see it for sale again when I have some money, I want it!

Upstairs at 4pm, Room 2/3 is crowded. Darren Maxwell introduces MC Wendy Ratter. Wendy is dressed in short back and sides, white shirt and black tails. She knocks over the mike and then, after the standard caution to photographers about flashes on the first run through, introduces the contestants, starting by whipping the sheet off a mysterious object that dominates centrestage. Later I swipe her cue sheet and race downstairs to photocopy it so that I have the acts and the names for this report.

Under the white shroud lies Catherine Scholz, **The Bride of Frankenstein**. Slowly she rises

and stumbles off, stage left. I cannot see what is happening, but suddenly she shrieks in horror and races from view. Perhaps she saw the groom.

Ken Haesler, **Judge Fear**, strides on in mask and horns, a Marvell character brought to life. Not much of an act though.

Les Robertson, **The Shadowmaster**, appears and waves his broadsword around. Apart from the sword his costume looks vaguely Mongol and quite authentic, though I later learn that his breastplate started as a pair of cricket pads.

'I hope there are no children in the audience' says Wendy, introducing Karen Ogden as **The Grand High Witch**. The introduction is more intriguing than the costume, which is not noticeably risqué.

Steve Scholz appears, head and shoulders encumbered by **The Cybernetic Field Unit**. He wanders heroically — or is that dazedly? — around the stage while Wendy narrates the background of a world at war where shortage of manpower leads to wounded soldiers being patched with cybernetic parts and sent back to the front. Unfortunately, some of them get so laden with gear that — 'I can't see!' exclaims Steve at that moment, toppling off the front of the stage.

'I Dream of Jeannie' sings Wendy, and April Claridge appears in a costume out of the 1001 Nights and begins a belly dance. Not a very good one, but April is cute enough to carry it off anyway.

A first con, a first con Masquerade costume, is Glenn Willow-Smith as a very convincing **Edward Scissorhands**. His characterisation and costume detail is perfect, needing only a skit to make it outstanding.

The Rudigoreans — Jan McNally, Marion McNally, Mark Riley, Sarah Berry, and Lisa Poulter — come on and sing. Not too well.

Linda Cox Chan is **A Late Entrant**. Zombie-like, she wavers on stage, hair-mop festooned with streamers. Ho hum, I think, but at that moment she wails, *'Is this Medtrek?'* and the audience cracks up.

Alison Wallace and Julie Hughes appear in appropriate garb for **The Romulan Contract**. Seems someone has sworn vendetta against Shane Morrissey and he has just nine months to live.

Steve Altmann wears a hokey green mask as **The Dragonrider** and strides around the stage telling us how bold and fearless the Dragonriders are, how brave and free and fierce. This lasts until his wife — **The Dragon** — appears in Ponds mask, curlers, slippers, and dressing gown and proceeds to thrash the poor creature off the stage.

Finally, Wendy introduces **The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse**, one by one. War (Andrew McGee) and Famine (Belinda Singe) get on okay, but as Pestilence (Coralie Johnson) appears, so too does Wendy's New Zealand accent. *'Pustulence!'* roars the (mainly Australian) audience, leaving Death (Sharon Mosley) as an anticlimax.

Just twelve entries — a very small parade. Judges Geoff Tilley, Kenny Baker, and David Prowse go off to cogitate while Wendy runs the costumes through again so that the photographers can have their fling.

The judges return, and after a flurry of cross-purposes about the order in which the winners will be announced, we learn that the winners are Best Group — **The 4 Horsemen**, Best Costume — **The Shadowmaster**, Best Presentation — **The Dragonrider and the Dragon**, Best Original Costume — **The Cybernetic Field Unit**, Best Reproduction — **Edward Scissorhands**, and Judges Choice — **The Dragonrider and the Dragon**.

After the winners are announced, everyone mingles for a while and I draft Richard Hryckiewicz (he has a camera; I don't) to be Official **THYME** photographer. By 5:30 the Masquerade has broken up. Since the Banquet (which I cannot afford) is due to start at 7pm while the bar does not open till 6:30pm, this results in a rapidly emptying con venue.

I decide to go home for dinner. Once home, I discover I have a headache and I wimp out of going back later for the room parties.

It was pleasantly similar to a general convention. I am, let me emphasise, a reader not a viewer. I do watch the movies — the big ones — and the TV series — some of them. But they are sidelines to my main interest, which is the written word. However, my role of 'lit' fan amidst the mediafen was a bit like Shadrach amidst the flames. The presence of so many **MSFC** people helped. The **MSFC** straddles the lit/media categories and provides a familiar nest for individuals of either persuasion venturing into a convention of the other persuasion. But the other con members were also friendly and

open, and if the rabid anti-lit mediafen I've heard of were present, I didn't meet any of them. Barring the media fan's visual preferences and their tendency to costume more, there seems little to choose between the Australian 'lit' fan and the Australian media fan. I think it's time we got together.

Based on the single day I attended, **Vampiricon** seemed well organised but light on programming. Breaking at 3pm to prepare for the Masquerade, with only two full days available, was silly — the Masquerade should have started later after an early banquet, and the programme should have run almost till the banquet. There was a lot of waste time.

The two video streams were only lightly attended — usually only a couple of people in either room at any time — and so was the 3-strand main programming. Only the Hucksters Room and the GoH speeches ever had more than about thirty attendees. The Hucksters Room never seemed to have fewer than about forty people in it, and served as the main social crossroads. I guess that as with general conventions, the old fans and tired spent the con anywhere but the function rooms.

The con's worst feature was the hotel's unilateral decision banning the sale of food and drink on the premises. Since all they offered attendees was tea or coffee (at \$2.00 per cupful), this annoyed a lot of people. But I had a good time anyway.

— Greg Hills

Other Vampiricon News

'1990' ASFMA Awards

The Media counterparts of the Ditmars are known as the **Australasian SF Media Awards** and are voted on and awarded in much the same fashion as the Ditmars. This year (for work published in the 1990 calendar year) the winners are **Best Australasian**...

Fan Media Newsletter

ETHEL THE AARDVARK (ed. Alan Stewart)

Fan Media Zine

SPOCK (ed Wendy Purcell)

Fan Media Writer

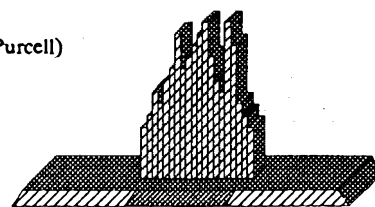
Alan Stewart

Fan Media Artist

Ian Gunn

Amateur Audio-Visual Production

Danny Heap, **HuttCon '90** Opening Ceremony



DefCon Is The 1993

Australasian SF Media Con

(For more news see page 9)

OPINION

by Greg Hills

Merge Lanes Ahead

Almost unknowing, Australian fandom seems to be headed towards a merger of the 'media' and 'literary' streams.

This tendency was heralded by the emergence of 'New Wave Fandom' in the late eighties — a group of people who have interests and friends on both side of the sf fence and who see no reason not to enjoy the whole cake instead of half of it. This attitude seems to have appeared first in the Melbourne SF Club, but by now it has spread far beyond it — into 'literary' or 'general' fandom and (as I saw at *Vampiricon*) into 'media' fandom as well. There have always been people who have had their feet placed firmly one on each side of the reader/viewer split, but they have never seen themselves as a group of their own.

Signs of convergence are all around. The *Constantinople* bid for both the Australian SF Convention ('ASFC') and the Australasian SF Media Convention ('ASFMA') is one. *Vampiricon* giving the 1993 Media Con to a New Zealand bid (*DefCon*) which was already the 1993 NZ National SF Convention is another.

DefCon is worth a close look. Separate literary and media streams never really happened in New Zealand. This is possibly a consequence of the peculiar situation pertaining in 1976 when the fanzine *NOUMENON* (circulation circa 500) assembled a largely 'literary' fandom and the National Association for SF (its inspiration in the media side) provided a separate organisational base for fans to hang their interests on. NASF never had more than about 120 members at any time (and usually had much less) but because both literary and media oriented fans saw it as a centrepiece, clubs up and down the country tended to follow its lead.

When, later, *NOUMENON* became irregular and then ceased, the literary side of things declined but because the institutions were already in place, the 'literary' fans simply conducted business as usual in the increasingly media-oriented clubs. When an amateur press association (*AOTEARAPA*) was formed in 1979, it drew its membership from a mixed bag of literary and media fans — who did not make such distinctions among themselves. When the first conventions were held (*WellCon* in 1979 and *WellCon B* in 1980) they too drew their members from all parts of the spectrum and included heavy media programming along with literary talks and panels. By the time NASF too went into decline, unable to cope with the organisational demands made on a nationwide club, conventions were well established, and have formed the common ground for all NZ fans ever since. Thus there was no perceived need for a NZ 'Media' NatCon — the existing NZ NatCon was exactly as 'literary' or 'media' as the organisers thought necessary.

NZ never did lumber its NatCon with a Constitution (unless they have done so since 1989), preferring to rely on custom and common sense. Hence the 'NatCon' title has been passed around like a medal or an award. This means that there can be no Constitutional problems with the

NZ National SF Convention also being the Australasian SF Media Convention in any year. *DefCon* is a good choice — demonstrating (as did *Conjunction*) that it is possible for 'lit' and 'media' to mingle co-operatively and constructively at conventions.

Constantinople faces an additional hurdle because the Australian SF Convention has its own Constitution with its own set of requirements (as well as its own set of customs). Fortunately, after massive Constitutional haggling a few years back, the ASFC 'solved' its problem by replacing the old Constitution with an ultra-short version (reprinted in *THYME* 83, page 3) which includes the interesting line 'No amendment will be in order if it has the effect of increasing the number of words in the Constitution'. At any rate, perusal of both Constitutions finds no insuperable contradictions. Even the disposal of profits is fine.

ASFMA: the benefit of fandom generally. ASFMA: Subsequent SF Media Con, Fan Fund, an organisation or purpose specifically approved by the members. While *Constantinople* might be constrained from giving all its profit to a later ASFMA (contravening the ASFC 'fandom generally') it could give it to fan funds, charities (maybe), split it between the ASFMA and ASFC, and so on. The Australian SF (Ditmar) Awards and the ASFMA Awards would need to be handled by separate subcommittees (or by the same subcommittee wearing two hats) since the requirements for each are Constitutionally specified and are incompatible. The ASFMA permits written site-selection votes for those unable to attend the con. The ASFC is selected by attendees of the Business Meeting. Therefore written votes could be accepted for the 1996 ASFMA but probably not for the 1996 ASFC (this should be checked carefully).

In the event that a 1996 bid wants to hold both conventions (and wins both), the defacto merging of the streams will probably continue indefinitely, whether or not anyone ever bothers to recognise it Constitutionally. In the event that no such bid emerges, the two conventions will simply go their own ways again after 1994.

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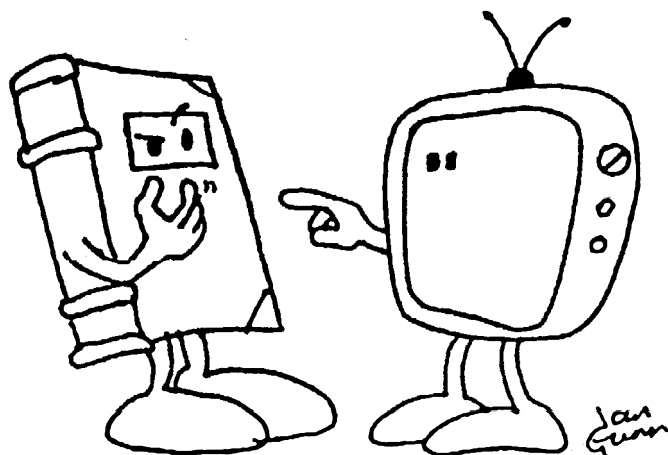
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Phone (+31)-(70)-3950-128
(before 9:30pm GMT)

... Subscriptions f25/8, US\$15/9, £10/10
cash, Eurocheque, American Express Money Order;
add US\$6 for other cheques or international giro transfer.

OPINION

by Greg Hills

Merge Lanes Ahead

Almost unknowing, Australian fandom seems to be headed towards a merger of the 'media' and 'literary' streams.

This tendency was heralded by the emergence of 'New Wave Fandom' in the late eighties — a group of people who have interests and friends on both side of the sf fence and who see no reason not to enjoy the whole cake instead of half of it. This attitude seems to have appeared first in the Melbourne SF Club, but by now it has spread far beyond it — into 'literary' or 'general' fandom and (as I saw at *Vampiricon*) into 'media' fandom as well. There have always been people who have had their feet placed firmly one on each side of the reader/viewer split, but they have never seen themselves as a group of their own.

Signs of convergence are all around. The *Constantinople* bid for both the Australian SF Convention ('ASFC') and the Australasian SF Media Convention ('ASFMA') is one. *Vampiricon* giving the 1993 Media Con to a New Zealand bid (*DefCon*) which was already the 1993 NZ National SF Convention is another.

DefCon is worth a close look. Separate literary and media streams never really happened in New Zealand. This is possibly a consequence of the peculiar situation pertaining in 1976 when the fanzine *NOUMENON* (circulation circa 500) assembled a largely 'literary' fandom and the National Association for SF (its inspiration in the media side) provided a separate organisational base for fans to hang their interests on. NASF never had more than about 120 members at any time (and usually had much less) but because both literary and media oriented fans saw it as a centrepiece, clubs up and down the country tended to follow its lead.

When, later, *NOUMENON* became irregular and then ceased, the literary side of things declined but because the institutions were already in place, the 'literary' fans simply conducted business as usual in the increasingly media-oriented clubs. When an amateur press association (*AOTEARAPA*) was formed in 1979, it drew its membership from a mixed bag of literary and media fans — who did not make such distinctions among themselves. When the first conventions were held (*WellCon* in 1979 and *WellCon B* in 1980) they too drew their members from all parts of the spectrum and included heavy media programming along with literary talks and panels. By the time NASF too went into decline, unable to cope with the organisational demands made on a nationwide club, conventions were well established, and have formed the common ground for all NZ fans ever since. Thus there was no perceived need for a NZ 'Media' NatCon — the existing NZ NatCon was exactly as 'literary' or 'media' as the organisers thought necessary.

NZ never did lumber its NatCon with a Constitution (unless they have done so since 1989), preferring to rely on custom and common sense. Hence the 'NatCon' title has been passed around like a medal or an award. This means that there can be no Constitutional problems with the

NZ National SF Convention also being the Australasian SF Media Convention in any year. *DefCon* is a good choice — demonstrating (as did *Conjunction*) that it is possible for 'lit' and 'media' to mingle co-operatively and constructively at conventions.

Constantinople faces an additional hurdle because the Australian SF Convention has its own Constitution with its own set of requirements (as well as its own set of customs). Fortunately, after massive Constitutional haggling a few years back, the ASFC 'solved' its problem by replacing the old Constitution with an ultra-short version (reprinted in *THYME* 83, page 3) which includes the interesting line 'No amendment will be in order if it has the effect of increasing the number of words in the Constitution'. At any rate, perusal of both Constitutions finds no insuperable contradictions. Even the disposal of profits is fine.

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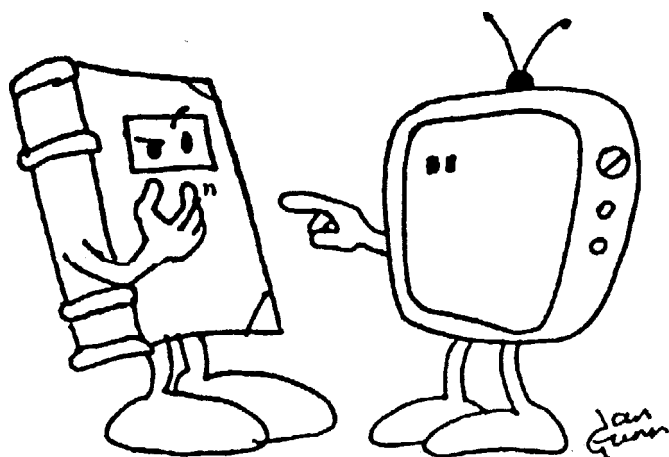
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Have Gall, Will Travel

A Column by Terry Frost

The Fannish Scandals of '92

Fandom has had a number of interesting scandals in the past decade or so. The scandal is a rare and elusive creature. You never quite know when or where it will appear (it comes from some very unlikely places) and half the time when you think some foetal incident will grow into one, it dies stillborn.

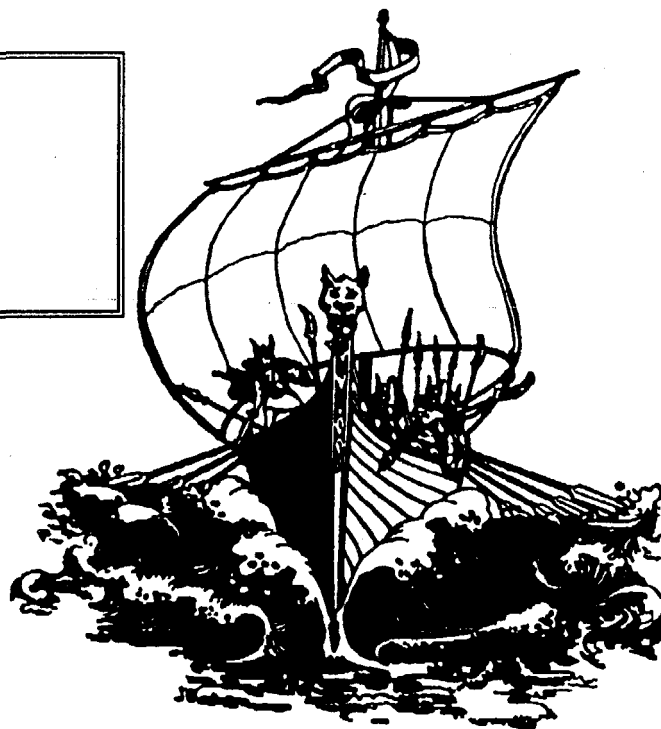
We've had toad, bondage, going-out-with-a-married-woman, cat, coming out of the closet, homophobic Mormon sf writer, violent T-shirt purveyor, and good ole *menage a trois* scandals in fandom. To the sophisticated punter, each has its singular virtues as a sociological phenomenon, every one has a certain piquancy that shines a light more on the scandal monger than the subject of their lip-flapping. But of late the flow of scandals has eased up. El Niño has caused a drought and we're all dying of thirst. So to help out, I've decided to suggest one or two topics of possible application for those of you longing to become infamous.

1) Become a filksinger, then do a Milli Vanilli and tell everyone that you were actually miming to someone else's electronically-enhanced voice.

2) Accuse the most boring fanzine editor you can find of being implicated in a Deep Sleep Therapy scandal and bring out a few booze-head male fans as evidence of diminished intelligence and personality disorders caused by the person's zine.

3) Marry Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Hogan, or Kerry Packer's daughter, then sell your life story to John Foyster.

4) Become John Foyster.



5) Win half a million dollars at the Adelaide Casino and move in with all three female contestants in any episode of *Blind Date*.

6) Become a sperm donor. Hand out cigars and show around photos of the straws filled with semen.

7) Spike the punch at any fannish gathering with enough acid to enable a moron to communicate meaningfully with dolphins, then blame someone else.

8) Run a really abysmal convention, make a great loss, skip out on the debt then move to Rio de Janeiro and father a stripper's love-child.

9) Become Fan Guest of Honour at a national convention, then run off with the Chairperson's girlfriend after the con.

10) Marry a lower life form (media fans don't count).

There you go. Have at it. See you round like a Harry Connick Jr compact disk.

— Terry Frost

Merry Christmas

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Vampiricon News

(Continued from Page 6)

DefCon, already the 1993 New Zealand National Convention, will be the first Australasian National SF Media Convention to be held outside the Commonwealth of Australia. As the NZ National Convention covers both 'general/literary' and 'media' in Australian terms (for example, the organisers of DefCon '93 are largely media; those of ShakyCon '92 largely general), it is also the first time the Australasian SF Media Convention has shared a venue with a major general con.

DefCon's Guests are 'a female writer' and 'a male cast member of ST:ING'. Fan Guests are Mark Harris (NZ) and Gail Adams (Aust). See *Convention Calendar* for address and more details.

The Vampiricon Business Meeting also resolved that future ASFMA's will be 'first past the post' rather than optional preferential.

THYME in the Shops . . .

The Known Space Bookshop,
Level 1, 96 Gawler Place, Adelaide

Muscular Science Fiction

Or: How not to kick the Arnie habit

By Mark (Rocky) Lawson

At one point during the film *TERMINATOR II*, Arnold Schwarzenegger, playing the good android, points a gun at the temporarily super-chilled bad android, says 'Hasta la vista, baby' and pulls the trigger. His shot shatters the all-metal bad android, albeit temporarily.

That scene has stuck in my mind. There is something satisfying in the way Arnie dealt with the bad guy that is difficult to explain, especially as I am unable to imagine myself saying 'Hasta la vista', carrying a gun or shooting anyone. The only time that I handled a loaded firearm, apart from fair ground pellet guns, was on a cadet rifle range. I was allowed 10 shots and scored one hit.

So if I said 'Hasta la vista, baby' before shooting at something it would merely sound silly and I would miss. When Arnie, in his android persona, says it the phrase seems to mean something. Of course Arnie does do that sort of thing rather well, and is paid so much money to do it that he doesn't haven't to worry about hitting anything.

As one might gather, *TERMINATOR II* is one of those warm, touchie-feely pictures that explore human emotions and does not rely on spectacular special effects. Non-stop action, of course, is right out. This may explain why it has made so much money.

I enjoyed the film, in a way, but I don't wish to discuss the *TERMINATOR* films just yet. Instead, in my personal quest for the historical truth underlying science fiction films, I will take a closer look at the film *TOTAL RECALL*.

Here, again, Arnie is a warm, caring character who believes in the peaceful resolution of disputes. One of the tragedies of the film is that he is shot at so much that he never has a chance to practice his beliefs.

This time Arnie is an ordinary construction worker on Earth — although very muscular and with a stunningly attractive wife — who has an urge to go to Mars. As it is too expensive to go to Mars in person, he goes to a memory implantation shop to obtain a dream trip to the red planet. From there, one can choose whether Arnie dreamt the remainder of the film's plot, or was a real, memory-wiped secret agent caught up in an extraordinarily complicated plot to wipe out a group of revolutionaries on Mars.

To the film's credit, the viewer is left in doubt about whether it is the hero's dream or reality. I especially liked the scene where the psychiatrist tries to talk Arnie into returning to reality by swallowing a pill. But when our hero kills the psychiatrist, and a little later his traitorous wife, we know that, dream or reality, Arnie is just being his peaceful self.

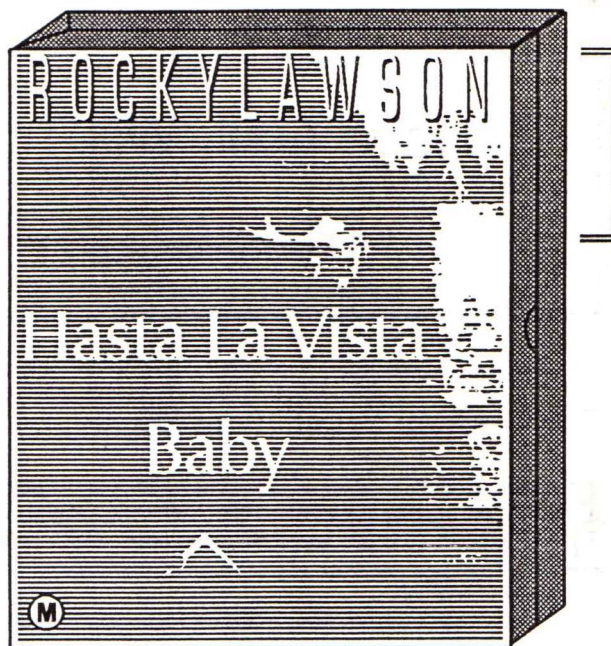
Of course it is a dream. Apart from a main plot which is too contrived and full of gun battles to be anything but made up in a dream, at the very end Mars gets a breathable atmosphere in about two minutes flat — a feat which requires a vivid imagination indeed.

Another clue to this dream state is the political situation depicted, with the authority of a powerful capitalist who founded and now controls the Mars colony, being challenged by the guerilla activities of a group of militant mutants.

As Mars also has major reserves of the vital mineral 'turbidium' (whatever it may be), and turbidium is allegedly necessary for the 'Northern bloc's' war effort, this bloc is apparently willing to put up with all sorts of goings on in order to maintain the supply of the vital mineral.

Yet this situation is so close to that of South Africa up to recent times, with a few things changed such as mutants substituted for blacks, that one suspects that the computers at *TOTAL RECALL* may have just simply pinched it from a South African history book.

For South Africa has the only major reserves, outside the old Soviet Union, of several vital minerals, including chrome, manganese,



platinum and vanadium — not to mention gold and diamonds. Manganese, for example, is used in military applications such as lining jet engines.

Another strategic mineral is cobalt, used to harden the skins of missiles and spacecraft, which is mostly found in Zaire and Zambia and shipped out through South African ports.

Now while the Western Powers never condoned the South African system, and no toleration of any sort would have extended to allowing a foreign secret service to stage a running gun battle on a crowded Western urban transport system, which Mars Intelligence does on Earth, the Western Powers stopped short of full-blooded sanctions.

To this mixture of circumstances we can add South Africa's Bureau of State Security (BOSS), which in the late nineteen sixties had to deal with bomb attacks by Umkhonto de Sizwe, the military wing of the African National Congress. BOSS managed to get a man inside Umkhonto and cleaned it up almost in one swoop when a raid on a farm netted most of the leadership. Sound familiar?

There is no particular capitalist-politician in the recent history of South Africa who really fits the part of Koehagan, the leader of the 'normal' (read 'white') Martian colonists. Harry Oppenheimer, the chairman of the giant mining group Anglo-American, is one possibility, although Cecil Rhodes (as in Rhodesia) might do at a pinch.

A better possibility is seeing Koehagan as the embodiment of the four or so major conglomerates, including Anglo-American and the world diamond cartel operator DeBeers, which dominate the whole South African economy. DeBeers, incidentally, was founded by Rhodes.

This only leaves the mystery of the machine which Arnie switches on in the last few scenes, thereby saving himself from an impossible situation (the security forces couldn't keep missing forever), and giving Mars a breathable atmosphere at the same time.

The machines seem rather big to have been designed, built, installed and then abandoned before being used — dream or not. But then the 'turbidium' on which the machine is supposed to operate does not exist, so it is likely that the machine is a gigantic bureaucratic blunder.

Probably, at least in the dream, the machine had been intended for a different star system but was set up, by robots following scrambled orders from a distant source, on Mars instead. One can imagine an Alien bureaucrat saying 'the machine has been built WHERE?'.

Before firing the distant descendent of the subordinate who had not checked the position co-ordinates given to the robots, that same bureaucrat may have said 'Hasta la vista, baby', but I doubt it. Only Arnie can say things like that and get away with it.

— Mark Lawson

Total Liability

Or: The Defence Recalls...

by Mark Loney

Like the majority of the readers of *THYME* I have only the greatest respect for Mark Lawson and his continuing quest for the historical truth underlying modern science fiction films. Many of his previous articles in this intellectually sophisticated series have left me, and no doubt many others, with a rigorously based understanding of the fundamental historical reality that had been warped and distorted by highly paid propagandists posing as script writers and directors. It is with deep regret, therefore, that I find myself unable to agree with the interpretation of *TOTAL RECALL* that Rocky offers in his latest article, *Muscular Science Fiction*.

Tim & Tracey Get Married

By Our Social Correspondent

Saturday the 16th of November 1991 saw a number of fans and a larger number of relatives and other friends gather in the Australian National University Union in Canberra to witness the wedding of Alison Tracy Fenton to Timothy Patrick Reddan. None of those attending would have guessed that Timothy Patrick Reddan was Black Irish Catholic and proud of it from the exceptionally brief civil wedding ceremony. In a flagrant breach of tradition that has already been reported to Pope, there was no opportunity for objections to the marriage to be voiced. This disappointed a considerable number of ~~trouble-makers~~ responsible citizens who, after enthusiastic consumption of the ceremonial wine, were heard making a number of outrageous claims that would have had to be made across Lake Burley Griffin in Parliament House for *THYME* to be prepared to repeat them.

Although brief, the wedding ceremony was heartfelt with Tim and Tracy making commitments to each other of love, trust, openness and honesty. Other verbs were used but the heart of ceremony, which had been penned by Tim and Tracy, was centred on these life-long commitments. The presence of their baby daughter, Madeleine Courtney, as well as a number of other young children only emphasised the importance of family to all those present. After a slight difficulty with the exchange of rings, the crowd burst into wild applause and a number of photographers attempted to blind the newly-weds with high-powered camera flashes.

The wedding over, the crowd retired to the adjacent tables and the reception began. Tim declined to make a speech but, with the assistance of Tracy, tore colourful wrapping paper off a large number of presents and discovered that modern capitalism produces a wide range of casserole dishes. The crowd drank, played music on the CD juke box, ate a very pleasant dinner, drank some more, had dessert and then decided to keep drinking. By this stage, crazed mothers were disco dancing with their babies while the menfolk considered what to do about the great casserole dish surplus.

After 10pm the focus of the evening moved from the ANU Union to a party held to the immediate north in the suburb of Ainslie. Your correspondent, however, must instead admit to proceeding due south to Tuggeranong and a comfortable bed leaving only wild rumour and innuendo as the basis for any further reporting of the events of the evening — a course of action which *THYME* would never countenance. Thus, having kept to the high moral ground, *THYME* extends its best wishes to Alison Tracy, Timothy Patrick and, of course, to the baby that made three — Madeleine Courtney.

We are all aware that, in comparison to the society of our forebears, modern society is tremendously complex. This complexity has resulted in people specialising in jobs and knowledge to an extent unimaginable only one hundred years ago. The revisionist historian of modern science fiction films, although as specialised in function as any other shockwave rider, must bring to bear the greatest possible knowledge when making critical judgements or risk the simple error that can destroy a hard-won reputation overnight. By way of example, no writer with even the slightest knowledge of contemporary developments in civil law could consider for more than a moment the proposition that the bulk of the action in *TOTAL RECALL* is a dream.

As all watchers of *LA Law* are aware, recent years have seen significant developments in product liability law in the United States. Those of us who follow domestic politics will also be aware that the Federal Parliament is currently debating a bill that would allow Australian consumers to initiate class actions against the manufacturers or retailers of defective or dangerous goods or services. There is no indication that, in either the United States or any other country, the rights of consumers to this type of legal action will be inhibited.

With this in mind, let us consider the ramifications of the statement that, 'Of course it [*TOTAL RECALL*] is a dream.' Arnie, a warm and caring character who believes in the peaceful resolution of disputes, goes to a memory implantation shop to obtain a dream trip to the planet Mars. Taking due care and having regard for the long term psychological health of its client, the memory implantation shop provides Arnie with an engram that portrays his loving and attractive wife as a paid assassin whose loyalties lie elsewhere. Not only will Arnie remember that his wife attempted to murder him and that she was the paramour of a man who repeatedly attempted to murder him, Arnie will wake remembering killing his wife in visceral detail!

At this point it is worth noting that we are not even considering the effect on Arnie, a warm and caring character who enjoys the simple pleasures of the construction site, of his involvement in the senseless murder of dozens of his fellow citizens. We are considering only the effects of the purported engram on his relationship with his wife. Arnie, quite understandably, would have extreme difficulty going home and telling his wife about his holiday on Mars. He would be suspicious of her behaviour, remembering her previous attempts to murder him, and may even attack her in the mistaken belief that it was in self defence. Equally likely, Arnie would not go home at all but decide to separate from his wife and seek a more trustworthy and less dangerous lifetime companion — like a Rottweiler or a Pit Bull Terrier.

In either case, or in any other conceivable variation, a cursory study of the relevant precedents in *LA Law* reveals that Arnie can sue for several million dollars worth of emotional trauma and much more for punitive damages. Arnie's wife, should she survive, is also a plaintiff guaranteed to receive a Very Large Sum of money.

But, of course, there will be no product liability case against the memory implantation shop. No corporation would ever expose itself to the unnecessary legal risk that *Muscular Science Fiction* must assume when it proposes that, 'Of course it [*TOTAL RECALL*] is a dream.' Of course, *TOTAL RECALL* is not a dream. It is self-evidently an accurate account of the terraforming of Mars and the simultaneous overthrow of the brutal Mars dictatorship by Arnie. This may seem an unlikely achievement for a mild-mannered construction worker but, to someone who can give a thumbs up from well under the surface of a vat of molten steel, it's all in a days work.

The revisionist historian of modern science fiction films, therefore, must consider the ramifications of all aspects of modern culture when interpreting and criticising texts. In particular, *LA Law* is essential viewing for any informed consideration of the true meaning of *TOTAL RECALL* in the same way that a grasp of modern Los Angeles argot is essential to a true understanding of the philosophical complexities of *TERMINATOR II*. And given that Rocky has already demonstrated a sophisticated grasp of the subtle nuances of apparently everyday LA phrases, it is true that only Arnie can say 'Hasta la vista, baby' and get away with it, I look forward to considerable enlightenment from his examination of the historical truth underlying *TERMINATOR II*.

— Mark Loney



Banned in the USA

Lucy Sussex, inveterate seeker of the strange and wondrous, has passed us a cutting from a magazine called *FORECAST* which, in its August 1991 issue, listed books 'banned, challenged or restricted' somewhere in the USA between May 1990 and May 1991. The list is interesting, including some books that may be of particular interest to sf readers. Such obviously depraved titles as TOM SAWYER and HUCKLEBERRY FINN by Mark Twain, CHRISTINE and THE SHINING by Stephen King, and MISSION EARTH 3: THE ENEMY WITHIN by L Ron Hubbard. The complete list is available from the American Library Association in its BANNED BOOKS WEEK '91 Resource Book.

The resource book contains an annotated list of books banned or challenged from 387 BC to the present... [and] an article on the Bill of Rights and its absolute importance to us all', *FORECAST* goes on. This is no doubt a valuable resource, but we cannot help but feel that this historical perspective is more likely to deceive than to inform, as books have been banned for many reasons down through the years and the Amendment itself neither existed prior to about 1789 nor applies outside the territory of the USA to this day. Most countries ban books; most have laws designed to preserve freedom of speech. The American fixation on their Constitution tends to obscure the underlying reasons for the original insertion of that and other Amendments.

Attempts have been made to ban *THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE* in the UK. It is felt that the male-engine/female-carriage split is an inappropriate role model for an egalitarian society.

Governments and other authorities, by their nature, attempt to control. This is because people, by their nature, tend to resist control when it is applied by others to themselves and assist it when they see it applied to others (particularly to others with whom they disagree). I must be free to state my views; they must be restrained from spreading their slander. Books and magazines are especially vulnerable to this double-think, since the printed word is preserved beyond the context in which it was written and may therefore be used later in a context beyond the thought or intent of the writer. (With the recent advent of video and audio recording, this is now true of other media, but books are the oldest examples.) The oral tradition may twist with the years and the needs of the moment, but something on paper is (relatively) forever fixed. This is often inconvenient to governments when some of their people want them to do something to others of their people, whether or not the doing is justifiable in the modern context.

Attention Australian SF Authors and Publishers

Ron Clarke
6 Bellevue Rd
Faulconbridge 2776

While I was in the USSR in September I had talks with Russian SF & F publishers and Agents. They said they were interested in publishing Australian

authors' works — previously published or not. They asked me to represent them in Australia.

The stories they are looking for 'must have strong plots'. The publishers said they have enough humorous sf at the moment. They are looking for stories between 10 and 20 double-spaced pages long. I am to

The Adult List

V C Andrews	...	My Sweet Edwina
Maya Angelou	...	I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings
Margaret Atwood	...	Handmaid's Tale
Berkley Pub. Group	...	Juggling
Paul Cameron	...	Exposing the AIDS Scandal
D Merrilee Clunis	...	Lesbian Couples
John Gardner	...	Grendel
Nikki Giovanni	...	My House of Poems
L Ron Hubbard	...	Mission Earth 3: The Enemy Within
Stephen King	...	Christine
Stephen King	...	The Shining
Eric Marcus	...	The Male Couple's Guide to Living Together
Gabriel Garcia Marquez	...	One Hundred Years of Solitude
John Steinbeck	...	Of Mice and men
Mark Twain	...	Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
Mark Twain	...	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
Alice Walker	...	The Colour Purple

It is not hard to deduce reasons for banning the Twain books, which were written for an audience now many decades in the grave and which contain ideas acceptable in their time but unacceptable in a time attempting to rid itself even of the term 'nigger'. In a time when a fatal disease is spreading and perceptions of homosexuality are changing rapidly, attempts to ban books on gay guides to living together and on reactions to AIDS are inevitable. Similar deduction may be made for most of the other books on the *FORECAST* list. The people who push through the banning of a book are generally well-meaning. In the case of the US, some of the book-banners are religious believers who would indignantly rebuke any infringement on their (First Amendment) freedom from a state-imposed religion (unless it was their own, of course). The one truly universal human trait is our ability to believe simultaneously two or more mutually incompatible things.

In the end, even within the USA, the importance of the Bill of Rights is not 'absolute' but relative. What is truly important is that individuals and groups must be able to *be* and to *do*. Rigid, restrictive societies become brittle and fragile while freer societies flourish. Complete freedom cannot exist within a societal framework, and an attempt to create it destroys either the freedom or the society. Universal freedom is self-limiting, since it is acquired only by surrendering some of the freedom to beat an opponent's head in or force them to accept your ideas. Documents such as the US Constitution are just one means by which societies formalise this freedom; they are a consequence, not a cause. Freedom of speech, then, cannot be absolute (since the freedom on which it is based is not), and the attempt to make it so is as foredoomed as the attempt to destroy it. Both are based on delusion.

In the end, then, *FORECAST*'s list is no more than an entertaining spotlight on some current shibboleths of American society.

— Greg Hills

read and vet them in Australia, then send them to an Agent in Volgograd, who will vet them again, before sending them to the publishers. The publishers I spoke to publish *MEGA* magazine, which has a circulation of 100,000 copies.

If you are interested in being published, please contact me at the address above. Include an Stamped, Self-Addressed Envelope for reply. I will write to you later when I am reading manuscripts.

I was also told that there will be a Conference in Minsk in May 1992 at which there will be some 30 Soviet sf publishers. One of the Directors of the Eridan publishing house (who publish *MEGA*), asked me to invite any Australian sf publishers or authors who would like to attend to discuss publishing their works in the USSR. If you are interested in going, please contact me at the address above.

— Ron Clarke

FFANZ Results 1991

	Aus/US	NZ	Total
Rex Thompson	5	31	36
Linette Horne	16	9	25
Write-ins —			
Horse	1		1
Bruce Grenville	1		1
Nigel Rowe		1	1
	—	—	—
	23	41	64

Rex Thompson will attend SynCon '92 as the NZ FFANZ representative and will administer the NZ end of the Fund till after the next NZ-to-Oz race. Congratulations to Rex and commiserations to Linette. An interesting feature of the voting (apart from the high turnout that is, 64 voters being a very respectable response for almost any Fan Fund) is that the receiving voters voted decisively for one candidate (16 to 5) and the sending voters decisively for the other (31 to 9). We naturally hope that Rex will do as well in motivating local voters in the races he will administer as he seems to have done this time!

For the naive, *Horse* is a cat character in the NZ-based Murray Ball cartoon strip *Footrot Flats*, *Bruce Grenville* is an Auckland anarchist and fan, and *Nigel Rowe* is a former FFANZ winner and part of the current caretaker junta for FFANZ (NZ).

Two votes were received from the USA. These were run in with the Australian votes in order to maintain confidentiality.

The Australian/ US voters were: Justin Ackroyd, Patricia Anderson, Gigi Boudville, Megan Fleming, Michelle Hallett, Greg Hills, Eric Lindsay, LynC, Mark Manning, Roman Mazurak, Michelle Muijsert, Janice Murray, Clive Newall, John Newman, Cath Ortlieb, Marc Ortlieb, David L Russell, Gerald Smith, Alan Stewart, Jane Tisell, Julie Vaux, Jean Weber, Roger Weddall.

The NZ voters were: James Bishop, Janice Bishop, Felicity Black, Gaynor Bradfield, Martin Buick, Pauline Butler, Gregor Cameron, Tom Cardy, Victoria Craig, Julie Cross, Martin Den Decker, Jonathan Depree, James Dignan, Stephen Ede, Les George, Simon Greenfield, Peter Hassall, Wayne Hennessey, Jillian Hormann, Mike Hormann, Linette Horne, Kerin Jones, Tim Jones, Stephen Litten, Marie-Claire Mabon, Dan MacCarthy, Lyn McConchie, Murray MacLachlan, Frank Macskasy, Paul Marley, Pauline Meinung, Camilla Owen, Nigel Rowe, Keith Smith, Julie Stegter, Malcolm Stennerson, Gregory Scott, Rex Thompson, David Tulloch, David White, Kate Yianakis. (Taken down over the phone — apologies for any misspelled names!)

FFANZ Australia reports a balance of \$A819.34 at 13th November; FFANZ NZ had NZ\$647.00 in June (presumably more now).

The 1993 race (Oz to NZ) may be keenly contested as the destination is DefCon, the joint NZ Natcon/Australasian Media Natcon.

Addresses for FFANZ: Alan Stewart, PO Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne 3005, AUSTRALIA. Rex Thompson, PO Box 333, Dunedin, NEW ZEALAND. Lyn McConchie, Farside Farm, RD Norsewood, NEW ZEALAND. Nigel Rowe, PO Box 27-432, Upper Willis St, NEW ZEALAND.

GUFF 1992 Ballot

The bottom of this sheet of paper is a tear-off GUFF Ballot. See next page for details.

CUT OR TEAR HERE

GUFF 1992

What is GUFF?

The Get Under Fan Fund (known in alternate years as the Get-up-and-over Fan Fund) was established in 1979 to further contacts between European and Australian fandom by bringing a well-known and popular fan from one hemisphere to attend a convention in the other. GUFF exists solely through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted for by interested fans all over the world and each vote is accompanied by a fee of not less than NLG 5, GBP 1.50, or \$A4.00. These votes and the continued interest and generosity of fandom are what makes GUFF possible.

Who May Vote?

Voting is open to anyone who has been active in fandom (fanzines, conventions, clubs, etc) prior to January 1990 and who contributes at least GBP 1.50 or the equivalent in another currency to the fund. Contributions in excess of this minimum are gratefully accepted. Voting is by secret ballot, only one vote per person is allowed, proxy votes are forbidden and you must sign your ballot. 'Write-in' candidates are permitted. Cheques and money orders should be made payable to 'Roman Orszanski' if in \$A, to 'Eve Harvey' if in GBP and to 'Roelof Goudriaan' if in NLG or US\$. If you cannot provide these, any currency in notes will also be accepted.

Deadline

Votes must reach the administrators by 31 January, 1992.

Voting Details

GUFF uses a preferential ballot system, which guarantees an automatic run-off and majority win. Rank the candidates in order of your preference. If the leading first-place candidate does not get a majority of the total votes cast, the first-place votes of the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped and the second-place votes on these ballots are then counted. The process goes on until one candidate has a majority. It is therefore important to vote for second, third, etc. on your ballot.

Hold Over Funds

This choice, similar to No Award in the Hugo Award balloting, gives the voter the chance to vote for no GUFF trip in 1992, should the candidates not appeal to them or if they feel that GUFF should slow down the frequency of its trips. Should Hold Over Funds receive a majority of votes on the final ballot no GUFF trip will be awarded.

Donations

GUFF needs continuous donations of money and material to be auctioned in order to exist. If you are ineligible to vote or don't feel qualified to vote, why not donate anyway? As important as donations is publicity — in fanzines, letters, convention literature and by word of mouth — to increase voter participation and fandom's overall awareness of GUFF.

The Candidates

Each candidate has promised, barring acts of God, to travel to the 1992 Australian National Convention in Sydney, if elected, has posted a non-refundable bond, and has provided 5 nominations and a platform. The platform and nominators are detailed overleaf.

VOTES AND CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO:

EUROPE: Roelof Goudriaan
Cann van Necklaan 63
2281 BB Rijswijk (ZH)
The Netherlands

AUSTRALASIA: Roman Orszanski
PO Box 131
Marden, SA 5070
Australia

GUFF Notes

The bottom of this sheet of paper (both sides) is a GUFF ballot which you may tear or cut off and use. Since the ballot backs on itself, the text of your copy of *THYME* will not be affected. Here is a copy of some of the info on the ballot which you may want to keep:

Candidates Platforms

Eva Hauser: I am a Czechoslovak fan, editor and writer. I write BIOPUNK stories which are (according to some people) disgusting. I like to write funny articles for fanzines. Unfortunately, I can't write anything funny in English. I am also very fond of discussion — about society, the future, feminism, the environment, literature etc.

Nominators: John Foyster, Jenny Glover, Ian Mackereth, Cyril Simsa, and Bridget Wilkinson.

Bridget Wilkinson: Acquired a know of European fandom through Fans Across The World, where she also learned to tie knots in red tape, and how to raise funds. She hasn't yet learned how to duck under the table fast enough, which is why she ended up becoming Treasurer of the European SF Society. Known from her FATW newsletter and *Worlds Apart*, her fan writing has made erratic appearances in respected places. The has been a member of *The Woman's Periodical* (an amateur press association) for several years. Having discovered how room parties run all over Europe, it's time to check out the Australians'.

Nominators: Justin Ackroyd, Paulina Braiter, Piotr Cholewa, Elzbieta Gepfert, and Roger Weddall.

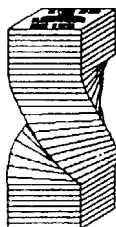
EUROPE: Roelof Goudriaan
Cann van Necklaan 63
2281 BB Rijswijk (ZH)
THE NETHERLANDS

AUSTRALASIA: Roman Orszanski
PO Box 131
Marden, SA 5070
AUSTRALIA

DUFF Reminder

The deadline for nominations in the 1992 US-to-Oz race is 20th January. Ballots will probably be distributed with *THYME* 87 (March 1992) but should be available earlier from Australian Administrator Greg Turkich (8 Protea St, Greenwood 6024). The winner will attend *SynCon '92*.

Ditmar Nominations Ballots Available



THYME has received a copy of the nominations ballot for the 1992 Australian SF ('Ditmar') Awards. It is attached inside the mailing wrapper this issue along with a list of eligible fiction. The 1992 Awards, which will be announced at *SynCon '92*, cover work published in the 1991 calendar year. There are five categories: Best Australian ... Novel or Collection,



Short Fiction, Fanzine, Fan Writer, SF/Fantasy Artist. There is also the William Atheling Jr Award For Criticism or Review. Nominations close 31st January 1992. Completed forms should be sent to: **Ditmar Subcommittee**, GPO Box 429, Sydney 2001.



CUT OR TEAR HERE

Candidates Platforms For GUFF 1992

Eva Hauser

I am a Czechoslovak fan, editor and writer. I write BIOPUNK stories which are (according to some people) disgusting. I like to write funny articles for fanzines. Unfortunately, I can't write anything funny in English. I am also very fond of discussion — about society, the future, feminism, the environment, literature etc.

Nominators: John Foyster, Jenny Glover, Ian Mackereth, Cyril Simsa, and Bridget Wilkinson.

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Nominators: Justin Ackroyd, Paulina Braiter, Piotr Cholewa, Elzbieta Gepfert, and Roger Weddall.

I Vote For (rank 1, 2, 3 etc)

() Eva Hauser

Signature: _____

() Bridget Wilkinson

Name & Address: _____

() Hold Over Funds

() _____
(Write-in)

I enclose _____ as a donation to GUFF (make \$A cheques payable to 'Roman Orszanski', GPB cheques payable to 'Eve Harvey' and US\$ and NLG cheques payable to 'Roelof Goudriaan').

If you think your name may not be known to the administrators and that your vote might be disqualified, please give the name & address of a fan (not a fan group, a candidate or their nominators) to whom you are known: _____

Reproduction of this sheet is encouraged provided that the text is reprinted verbatim. Anyone doing so should substitute their name here: *THYME*

LETTERS



Under Fhyre



Comic Strip and Pen Pal Wanted

Jean-Pierre Mournon
La Magali, Chemin Calabro
83160 La Valette
FRANCE

I have been looking for years for the adaptation into a comic strip Stanley Pitt made from Alfred Bester's THE STARS MY DESTINATION. How can I get it?

If there is no other way I shall be

content with very good photostats. In exchange I can send sf material in English from the Eastern countries or/and European comics. Or I can send money. Have you this comic strip or, if you haven't, do you [know] another fan who has it and can you give me his address?

If you know an Australian French-speaking fan I also need a contact for book-swapping.

Ditmars Keep You Regular

Kim Huett
PO Box 679
Woden 2606

So you are going to be regular! Lots of Ditmars for you, I suspect. In the meantime here is my subscription as demanded. Just a thought, might it not have been politer to explain how poor you

boys are in your first issue so that we all knew the score before you became aggressive about people paying?

Interesting comments on the Fan Guest of Honour situation. I do think a little more emphasis could be put on the point about it being done because it is traditional without any thought to what that means. People all too frequently don't consider the why of some activity. The result is they have no conscious goal resulting in an inferior performance.

[Thanks for the cheque. We did say we were poor in issue 83, but we have become poorer since. We always planned last issue's blitz. A lot of people were due for the Red X with issue 84. We made the most of it — we were going to have either a lot more subscribers or a lot shorter mailing list this time. Either way it takes some weight off our pockets. (Or should that be 'leaves some weight in our pockets'?) A Ditmar would be nice ('take one Ditmar annually for regularity?') and certainly appreciated but you can't spend it. If forced to a choice, we'll take cash over awards. Greg]

Addresses: We do not print a correspondent's address unless the writer specifically requests it or it is clear from context that the writer would desire their address to be printed.

Typographical Critical Mass

Brian Forté
Adelaide, SA

Okay, okay, here's the up-to-date information on the doings of **Critical Mass** for the next year or so. I'll presume that this calendar will keep you

'penurious bastards' off my back until nextish. With just a bit of luck (ie assuming Kerry Packer will honour the debts of *THE AGE*) I might even be able to send you \$12 before *THYME 85* comes out.

Concerning the issue in my grimy mitt: if you are going to use 4pt type you are going to have to get your camera-ready copy done on something better than a 300 dpi laser printer; especially on the letters page it sometimes became unreadable. If I had my druthers a little dialogue box would come up every time someone tried to send a print job containing 4pt script, saying, 'This is so bloody small you are going to give your readers both eye-strain and a headache; Are you sure you want to do this?'

Also, how about following typographic norms and use *italics* and not **bold** for book titles. If nothing else it doesn't break up the visual unity of a text column. And while I'm bitching about layout and such, I may as well throw in a couple of words re underlining; don't do it please!

[Razz! to you too. *THYME's* (ahem) *House Style* uses CAPS for books & movies, *ITALIC CAPS* for periodicals & series of books & movies, *Bold* for organisations & short items, and *Bold Italics* for serial short items. I vary this as seems appropriate — the titles in *Small Press* or *Book Releases*, for example. Underlining is generally used for special emphasis when important info is several words into a bolded line of text. The 'typographic norms' you allude to are not graven in stone but are merely common styles.

[But when you're right, you're right. The 6pt type (not 4pt, but I forgive the hyperbole) for the lettercol was an experiment that did not work out and which has been scrapped. 8pt is as small as I can reasonably go. I don't have any 9pt fonts. We can't afford the extra pages a 10pt font would entail. Greg]

Sydney Fans Incorporated

Harry Andruschak
PO Box 5309
Torrance, CA
90510-5309, USA

As for the news/gossip/slander in this issue, the main item of interest to me was the news that Sydney in 95 is still publishing. I never even knew they had published *SINCHRONICITY*, since I never received a copy in spite of being a pre-supporting member. I wonder if a future copy might be sent to me??

Fanimals

WHO'S WHO AT THE ZOO

By Jan Gunn 1191



For that matter, I wonder if there will ever be another Australian Worldcon? I'd like to attend one before I die, having missed the first two due to time and money problems. Currently I am now supporting Glasgow in 1995. After all, airline fares tend to be cheaper to Europe.

[Don't look for a credible Australian WorldCon bid for any date before the turn of the century. There has been talk of a Melbourne bid for 2003. There are also, er, rumours of an Adelaide in '99 bid. If a 4-year (US, US, US, Overseas) rotation is ever voted in, you can probably forget about Australia altogether. Greg]

The Burning Issues

Irwin Hirsh
26 Jessamine Ave
East Prahran 3181

Thanks for the two issues of *THYME*, even if you did write me out of GUFF history in 83. My initial reactions are that a) you don't like your letter-writers, b) your cover logo is ghastly, & c)

the whole thing is still a bit too technical and made for rather flat reading.

After your first issue I had thought of offering to do a small, fannish column, appearing about three times a year. I thought I'd review a few fanzines, discuss the burning issues of the day, that sort of thing. But now I'm not so sure. Getting one issue for each contribution doesn't seem to be a fair return for the effort. To spend a couple of hours just to save \$2 — no way. Especially after I take in account of the postage involved in sending you the contrib, the stationery, and the electricity involved in using the computer. The way I figure it [is] if it requires more than the time available in ad breaks of a TV show to contribute to *THYME* I'll forget about it. So once my free sub runs out look for me to send money.

[The list of GUFF winners in #83 should, of course, have read '... Eve Harvey (1985), Irwin Hirsh (1987) ...'. Our typo. For the rest, how many ad breaks would it take you to edit, lay out, type up, print, collate, label, and post 250+ copies of a 20,000 word fanzine seven times a year? How much would it cost you? Our critical shortage is neither material nor time, but money, and it is that shortage that our contributions policy addresses. In practice we have credited some particularly valuable contributions with two issues, entirely at our discretion, but these are exceptions.]

[Just to please you — we have, of course, no other motive — we have a new masthead this issue. Greg]

[Mark wrote to Irwin, expressing some bemusement at his comments given that all previous editors of THYME were receiving their copies gratis. In response:]

I fail to see how my receiving a free sub has anything to do with my objection to your policy on 'payment' for contribution, given that *THYME* editors make up a small part of your mailing list. I mean, you wouldn't have been bemused if Ian Gunn, or John Foyster, or Harry Warner had written that paragraph. My receiving a free sub doesn't make your policy any better. The fact is that if I wasn't getting a free sub I still wouldn't want to contribute, given your contribution policy. I'd be happy to pay \$2 per issue, devoting my fannish contribution to other fanzines.

I think that when someone spends a couple of hours on a contribution that they should be entitled to receive not just the issue in which their contribution appears but the next two issues as well. Not only is it fair recognition for that person's time but it allows them to see the response to their work. (And I don't just limit this to just article writers. Writing a LoC can take just as much time as contributing an article.) It is true that 'egoboo pays no bills' — but you want your contributors to pay to receive their egoboo. I think that the egoboo should go hand-in-hand with the contribution. While I am sympathetic with anyone's financial problems (particularly those who are unemployed), I fail to see how that is relevant. You are publishing *THYME* because you want to; no-one is compelling you to publish it. It is how you wish to spend your 'hobby' time and money. If publishing *THYME* is too much of a financial burden, don't publish it. And given that each paid-for-by-money copy subsidises the cost of almost three free copies I fail to see how your and Greg's finances stop you from giving contributors a fair reward for their effort.

I agree that newszines are slightly different from other forms of fanzines, but I limit the difference to 'payment' for small items of news and trading for irregular fanzines. A column discussing fannish issues and reviewing fanzines is not the sole province of a newszine. If someone had offered me such a column for *LARRIKIN* or *SIKANDER* I'd have jumped

at the offer and I would've been giving them 3 or 4 issues for each column as a matter of course. Perry and I would have happily accepted Jane Tiscell's article on GoH and she would've gotten 3 or 4 issues of *LARRIKIN* in return. Instead of sending you a fanzine review I could LoC the fanzines directly, or offer my fanzine review elsewhere, or, if I was publishing, publish it myself, or do nothing fannish and just watch tv.

[It's difficult to know quite where to pick up the thread of the argument but a minor point first — each paid-for-by-money copy of THYME does not pay for almost three free copies. It would not even if we only distributed THYME in Australia, which we don't, and overseas postage costs a lot more (both proportionately and in real terms) than it used to.]

[As for the broader aspects of contribution policy, I think that both Greg and I are happy to register our disagreement with you and leave it at that. If I was publishing THE SPACE WASTREL I would be following a contribution policy similar to the one that you describe. But Greg and I are publishing a newszine, which we are trying to publish frequently and distribute widely. One way of measuring interest is through the usual, another is through money. We feel that the threshold for the usual should be higher for a newszine than for other types of fanzines. You obviously feel differently.]

[Both of us feel that there is no point in publishing THYME less frequently than every second month. A longer gap between issues is perfectly acceptable for genzines or perzines but a disaster for a newszine. And yes, we are publishing THYME because we want to but we have limited cash to put into it. So we are chasing subscriptions in order to publish THYME to the standard and frequency we prefer. The response to date, given that this is only our third issue, indicates that it is also the standard and frequency preferred by the majority of the readership.]

[As I said in my letter to you, THYME would be delighted to publish an occasional column from you. I do hope that the final victor is not the television ... Mark]

Ingenuous Flattery

Leanne Frahm
Slade Point, Qld

I thought I'd let you know how much I'm enjoying your editorship of *THYME*. Lots of good reading and I feel really up-to-date, which from up here, is saying something. Also I owe *THYME* a debt (under the previous editor, LynC, so don't let it go to your heads), as a while ago she published the name of an editor in America who was looking for stories for an anthology, and it looks like one of mine will be used. As well, the US editor has given me several leads on the smaller US presses which I'm pursuing with vigour. So *THYME* is a Really Useful Thing.

I've also been interested to read of the continuing saga of *SunCon '91*. Somehow I have the feeling that Harlan Ellison would not have been too disappointed at his cancellation. Someone might have asked him about his and Terry Dowling's anthology that was proposed eight years ago, and which kept a story of mine in limbo for that time. I've finally pulled it this year, after two letters to Terry that received no response. Oh, well, win some, lose some ...

[Thanks for the flattery praise and, particularly, the news (which was a little too short on detail to cut out and put under Professional News). Keep us posted on the progress of the quest! Greg]

Professional Con-Running

Jean Weber
7 Nicoll Ave
Ryde 2112

In answer to Greg Hills' question on page 3, no I don't think that involving professionals in running fannish conventions is silly — although it depends on who the 'professionals' are. If they are people who know little or nothing about fandom, I agree it's not a good idea. If, however, they are fans themselves, who happen to be professional convention organisers, it sounds like a rather good idea to me, actually. McDonnell-Herman (better known to most fans as Cath & Jack) spring to mind as obvious possibilities, and are probably the people Nick Stathopoulos had in mind when he made the remarks Greg comments on. There are probably other people around who'd also qualify.

There are good arguments for and against non-professionals being in charge of con-running, but we con-goers need to be more clear

about our expectations, and our requirements, of our conventions. There are many aspects of a con that professionals could handle, without turning it into a non-fannish event. Such an approach might even allow the convention committee to enjoy themselves without also exhausting themselves — and, perhaps, avoid some of the embarrassments.

Using professional fannish organisers won't guarantee a trouble-free con, but it would greatly improve the chances! I don't think we should reject the idea out of hand, on the grounds of ideology. Let's look at the practicalities.

If your city would like a con, but you realise that you really don't have enough people available who are interested in conrunning, know how to do it, are willing to do it, and have the time and commitment to carry through the plans, you might seriously consider hiring someone to do some of the work — at least the time-consuming, tedious, essential stuff like getting out publicity, selling memberships, doing hotel and guest liaison, organising the program (actually following up with people to be on the program, not necessarily deciding who they should be), and other things.

If you've got enough people who fill the requirements above, by all means, continue to run cons using volunteers. I'm not against that at all — when it works.

Other than that issue, I agree with the rest of Greg's comments on Guests of Honour at conventions.

[It's not exactly or entirely a matter of ideology but rather a practical observation of the outside world, where 'professionals' prefer to deal with other 'professionals'. This is not elitism on their part but rather a response to their need for reliable assistants if they are, in fact, to organise a con any 'better' than amateurs already do. No matter what jobs they are given, they will, in attempting to carry them out, tend to expand the parameters and recruit certain reliable amateurs and more professionals. 'We need them', the argument will go, and as the amateur organisers come to rely on the professionals they will get them and the amateur voice will be squeezed out. This I see as being eventually deadly to a participatory disorganisation such as fandom. Participants would become audience. The name might go on and might even seem to grow, but the essence would be gone. I would think that sad, which is why I oppose even the relatively benign foot-in-the-door offered by people such as Cath & Jack. Greg]

Guests of Honour

Annie Hamilton
Ipswich, Qld

Come on, guys, where's your sense of humour?
The story of Karen Pender-Gunn's experience at
Concave struck a real chord. *Deja-vu, n'est-ce*

pas?

I haven't laughed so much about a convention's mishandling of a guest since I learnt that Paul Darrow was handed a tram timetable when he and his wife asked to see Melbourne. (Mind you, Ed Bishop volunteering the information that there's a really great bus tour of the same city for a mere \$13, with all that implies, does rank a close second!) And to cap off a really resounding series of jokes, the treatment meted out to Harlan Ellison ensures a truly classic comedy line-up. I am beginning to think, however, that the punchline is wearing just that little bit thin.

I went to **Zencon**. I came away with the naive belief that what I saw happen there was an aberration. I went to **Huttcon**. I came away with the suspicion that something might just be rotten in the state of Denmark and perhaps what happened at **Zencon** was not an aberration after all. Then I went to **Suncon**. (**Suncon**, let me make the point before I go on, was a Melbourne con. That it was geographically located in Brisbane should not distract anyone from the bizarre but unequivocal fact that it was conceived, organised, and almost totally executed by Melbourne fans.)

Let me make myself more plain. The point was brought up in **Talking To Our Friends** in **THYME 84** that it may not take many of these incidents to give Australian conventions a bad name. Don't delude yourselves, guys. *We've already got it.* With a vengeance, in some circles.

I sat through **Zencon**, disbelieving, as I watched Paul Darrow in particular and Mike Keating to a lesser extent, systematically insulted. All around me fans were laughing, while I struggled with the possibility that I was just stick-in-the-mud over-sensitive and perhaps the comments

hadn't gone quite as far as I thought they had into the demeaning category. Indeed, I debated through Saturday with several other Queenslanders, finally deciding that I had imagined it all. I subsequently settled down by dinner time to what we all agreed was the best media con we'd ever attended. (We were, after all, having an immensely good time and the only thing spoiling it was the constant little niggling doubts about the way the guests were being treated. Once we'd decided we were reading more into the situation than was warranted, there was nothing to mar our enjoyment.) By late evening, however, I'd changed my mind. So had every other Queenslander I knew at the con. None of us were in any doubt any longer about whether or not the treatment of the guests was 'appropriate', because by the end of the costume parade the insults had reached staggering proportions. Throughout the next day we watched as the guests were subjected to more of the same until Mr Darrow, at least, had had enough. He took one of the committee aside, informing the individual in question that he would not be insulted again. I have this on the word of a good friend who overheard the rebuke and described the tone as 'Avon at his chilling best'.

But the most disturbing aspects of this whole situation are twofold —

- 1) That of the several hundred fen at that convention who attended the same panels, the same programming items, the same speeches which I did, only a handful seem to have been aware that the jokes, the repartee, the comments made in public by committee members, went too far on occasions too numerous to mention.
- 2) That perhaps those who, belatedly, have come to realise that perhaps insults were given, albeit unintentionally, the majority have concluded that since no offence was intended by the committee then there's really nothing to concern ourselves over.

The point that I would like to make is that the Darrows and Mr Keating were quite deeply offended. My international correspondence is neither vast nor various. Nevertheless, during the aftermath of **Zencon** I was regaled with news, written to me by fans overseas, relating to behind-the-scenes details which I find personally offensive. The incident of the tram timetable came to me from an exceedingly reliable source in New Zealand who claimed to have heard it from Paul Darrow himself. Other dubious and unpleasant incidents were related to me by persons also claiming to have heard them from the horses mouth, and as I know these individuals know the Darrows, I have no reason to disbelieve them. I do however have some reason to call into question the revisionist history that seems to have been circulated since.

At the risk of being accused of being a victim of cultural cringe once more, I will reiterate what I have said in print on more than one occasion previously — Australia has already achieved a lamentable reputation in certain fannish quarters overseas. This is the plain evidence of letters I have received even before **Huttcon's** spectacular ineptness in dealing with their guest, Ed Bishop.

The major difference between **Huttcon** and **Zencon** in this regard was that at least **Zencon** managed to fool most of the people all of the time. **Huttcon**, however, could hardly hide the fact that they forgot to take their GoH out for the Saturday night banquet, leaving him to puzzle his way with the hotel staff was to where he was supposed to dine. A major *faux pas*. But other, more subtle insights may have eluded the average attendee — I was there when Ed Bishop revealed during a morning tea that he had brought the Ed Straker wig to the con. He expressed considerable surprise that anyone would want to see it because the committee had informed him that no-one would be interested in viewing it, or in his accompanying talk. This was also the time when, on learning that the fans sharing morning tea with him were all from out of town, if not from out of state, he volunteered the startling piece of information about the cost of a bus tour of Melbourne! He went on to say later that he had expressly asked to be kept busy the whole weekend. He was being very stiff upper lip (too many years in Britain?) about having nothing to do on the Sunday apart from judge the Art Show and appear ever so briefly at the Closing Ceremony, but this gentle rebuke and reminder apparently failed to be understood by the committee.

[A question: if his audience was non-Melburnian and the committee was all-Melburnian, did anyone report his 'rebukey and reminder' to the committee at the con? If not, why not? Greg]

Was he offended at his treatment? Well, with fans falling over themselves left, right, and centre to apologise for the committee's oversights, he could hardly have said so. Nevertheless the most significant point in knowing whether he was or not rests on the realisation that he *accepted* the apologies, he didn't rebuff them. There was no suggestion, furthermore, that he was displeased about the committee's casual dismissal of his suggestion for a GoH speech and his asking for a styrofoam stand for his wig, since he wasn't prepared to risk displaying it without one. And for those with ears to hear between the lines at the Closing Ceremony, his reference to the fact that although he was a second choice guest he couldn't have been more delighted to be there, held rather unsubtle overtones.

I could go on but I hope I've made my point.

And yet the most unsavoury aspect of these sorry situations is still to come. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, there are still fen who claim that Ed Bishop wasn't offended. There are still people who maintain much the same opinion about Paul Darrow, Janet Lees Price, and Mike Keating. There are people who say that if no offence was intended then letters such as this are over-reactionary trouble-making, needlessly offending committees who have gone above and beyond the call to create a wonderful con atmosphere for attendees.

Frankly, nothing seems to make an impact — *all* criticism is regarded as invalid and either rationalised away or dismissed as the personal gripe of some disaffected individual or faction. Granted that cons consist of well-meaning individuals. I don't dispute their good intentions. I am absolutely certain that no-one went out deliberately to insult any of the guests I have named. And yet it happened. Why is it a crime to say so? It's a well-documented fact that the truth occasionally hurts but only with a degree of honesty and humility in fandom are we going to have any chance of learning from the mistakes we've already made. Yet with the way the subject keeps being swept under the carpet any time anyone has the temerity to bring it up, it's obvious that no-one is even willing to admit that disastrous mistakes have been made, let alone learn from them.

What prompts this ostrich-like behaviour? Honestly, I don't know. I do know, however, that Ed Bishop was paid a pittance and *Zencon* did not pay appearance fees. In view of that, I'm prepared to come out and call the treatment they received abominable. It would have been appalling regardless of how much they had been paid, but when one realises that the Darrows were out of pocket to make the trip and Ed Bishop actually put off a play in order to keep his promise to come, the situations are tainted with even more unpleasant aspects. The lack of elementary courtesy displayed toward them was almost incomprehensible.

Indeed, 'incomprehensible' is a fitting description for what a number of interstate fans have begun to perceive of the Melbourne scene. Incomprehensible, insensitive, and when the occasion is most public it seems, obnoxious as well.

In the past I've said that we, as Australian fans, have a problem and we need to clean our act up with respect to the treatment of GoHs. I have no hesitation in repeating that statement. I can honestly say that I have been to some really atrocious local and interstate cons, but none of them, not one, used their guests as public whipping posts the way I have seen these Melbourne cons do.

Admittedly I may have been unlucky to have chanced upon the only cons to have mistreated their guests in a public fashion, but *Talking To Our Friends* and the review of Jane Tisell gives me considerable pause. And regardless of whether or not I have singled out the only cons responsible, the damage done has already affected the good name of Australian cons internationally & Melbourne fandom on a national basis.

Perhaps, of course, we Queenslanders have warped perceptions of what constitutes an insult. Granted that we may, but we know for a fact that these perceptions are shared by Mike Keating, Janet Lees Price, Paul Darrow, and Ed Bishop to name but four.

It is a sad reflection on the state of fandom that only when a Fan GoH is hard done by that an editorial addresses the issue.

It is an even sadder reflection that criticism in Australian fandom is almost invariably viewed as destructive and negative (no-one seeming to have any idea of the value of constructive criticism any more) and as a result we have reached a pass where nothing but a diatribe as accusatory and inflammatory as this is going to shake cons out of their complacent, self-congratulatory cocoons.

And it is an incredible indictment on Australian fandom that anyone could, by splitting hairs over the definition of an insult, condone the degrading way cons have treated their guests.

Enough, however. Before the indignant denials occur, let me make one last observation: any disputation of the facts which ignores or fails to address the following two fundamental issues will be treated with the contempt it deserves —

a) That, if a number of fans (without prejudice or bias, knowing no-one and nothing of the local scene) think that there's a problem with the way several Melbourne cons have treated their guests (and have the evidence of their own eyes and ears as well as

reports from overseas to back them up), then maybe, just maybe, there is a problem whether you want to believe it or not, and

b) That an insult is an insult whether it's intended to be or not.

Finally, may I extend my apologies and exemption to the fan who took a taxi to Coles to get Ed Bishop a wigstand for the closing ceremony of *Hutcon*. *Salute*. If ever you venture north into the Queensland fannish wilderness, be assured you will receive a hero's welcome! We aren't the hub of fannish civilisation by any means, and we have our own problems. Some of us also value old-fashioned courtesy, thoughtfulness, and constructive criticism, but try not to hold that against us. For in the parochial, narrow-viewed, close-minded stakes, we finally admit ourselves to be severely outclassed.

[It is not my intention to address the central issues of this letter (after all, I wrote the item which introduced the topic to THYME — it wasn't an editorial, by the way, Annie, but a leading article; which is why I have changed your references to 'editorial' in two places to Talking To Our Friends. The Editorial was on page 13 and labelled as such.) However, some points for future debaters to consider in this regard are: 1) Melbourne fandom is enormous, diverse, and fractured. Until Mark and I took over THYME and decided to extend its coverage from its traditional area (general or 'literary' fandom) to all areas of Australian fandom, events such as Zencon and Hutcon were beyond its usual compass. To say that "only when a Fan GoH is hard done by does an editorial address the issue" is an unfair and inflammatory insult of the very type you claim to be excoriating. We addressed the subject in the second issue of THYME we ever edited, at a time when it became relevant. 2) Again relating to the total size of Melbourne fandom, we (and I include myself only by courtesy of residing here — I am a Kiwi by birth and upbringing) cannot help our numbers, and I can accept no attempt to hang a guilt trip on us because other cities feel threatened by the size and influence of Melbourne fandom. Many of your comments are anti-Melburnian in tone rather than being directed just against those individuals or groups who are the putative target of your remarks. This is not likely to evoke reasoned responses from Melburnian readers. To generalise from the Zencon/Hutcon/Suncon/Concave committees to 'Melbourne fandom' is a bit like going from the bullseye to the barn wall. 3) Mark and I are, in the jargon of media fandom, 'liu' fans. Until we took over THYME we had virtually no contact with Melbourne media fandom. Since then, my experience at least has been very positive with those local 'media' fans I have met and talked to. However they may treat their guests of honour, they are as worthy of human respect as any fans I have met anywhere and no more deserving of the label 'parochial, narrow-viewed, close-minded' than any other part of Australian fandom. Take that any way you like. Greg]

WAHP: *Harry Andruschak* (again), *Rocky* ('I couldn't help it. I tried to fight the urge but an article burst forth anyway. Will the horror never end?'), *Mike McGann* (thanks for art), *Ken Moylan* (alas no, we cannot take credit cards; try a cheque, money order, or even well-wrapped cash), *John Newman*, *Pierre Moumon* (again), &c, &c, &c, but we're out of room.

(The Editorial)

Call Me Thyme

We keep getting *THYME*-specific mail that is just addressed to one or other editor. This causes confusion and delay in collating the information for inclusion in *THYME* because both editors also receive their personal mail at the same box as *THYME*. So please, *please* include the word 'Thyme' in the address of *all* your *THYME*-related correspondence!

Clubs and Conventions

We're starting to get a useful amount of feedback on what happening Out There — thank you. We do want to emphasise that if you're not on our mailing list this issue, ie you're reading someone else's copy, it's either because you've had two issues and we've heard zip back from you and so we have given you the chop, or else we simply haven't heard of you. In the case of conventions in particular, you should consider that if we haven't heard about you despite our large and grubby ears, you're probably missing potential members who, like us, simply don't know you exist. Kick your publicity people into gear.

Contributors Addresses

As Old Fans and Tired, we are well aware of fannish mores concerning the printing of addresses. In our personal fanzines we invariably print them. In the case of *THYME*, however, we have decided to be conservative and to not print the address unless we *know* (by ESP, previous experience, because they ask, or whatever) that our correspondent doesn't mind their address being printed. If you're not sure what we'll do, just note 'Please (do/don't) print my address' in your letter.

This Issue In Hand

This issue has, almost of its own accord, taken on a rather 'media' stance — affected in large part by the recent triple-play of media cons, but emphasised by Rocky's unexpected (and most welcome) TOTAL RECALL discussion. However, in balance we have been able this time to give *Gruntphuttock's Book Pile* the space it needed and we think that overall *THYME* is starting to embody the global coverage we hoped to achieve when we took up the editorship earlier this year.

— Greg Hills & Mark Loney

News, People, Events

Changes of Address

Michael McGann	Nick A Price	Vic Terwiskyj
2 Victoria St	2 Rogers St	GPO Box 4673
Lewisham NSW 2049	Richmond Vic 3121	Sydney NSW 2001
	ph (03)-427-0691	ph (018)-21-8592

Short News

Correction: *Who Et Brutus* (see *Social Calendar*) has been moved from 15th to 8th February 1992.

Aparently *MedTrek* had to share its venue with an Old Boys Reunion, which resulted in some disharmony. We hear that someone broke into the Registration area and trashed the contents, including Sue Clarke's video recorder and other property.

DisContinuity, being run in Auckland at Easter 1992 by the NZ SF Modellers Club, keeps looking more and more broadly-based. They have a 'lit' Pro Guest (Terry Pratchett), a US *STAR TREK* Fan Guest (Maureen Thomas), and a media-biased NZ Fan Guest, Peter Hassall. They are running a wide-open Short Story Competition (*"Humorous s/f stories must incorporate the line 'Don't point that thing at me'; serious stories have no constraints. Maximum length 6000 words"*), Art & Modelling Competitions, and a Filking Competition. They are also hosting *RoleCon '92*, the NZ National Role-Playing Game Competition. T-shirts \$20. KAOS, Quiz, Theatre Sports. See *Convention Calendar* for more details.

The Convention (see *Convention Calendar* and also *THYME 84* page 14) has asked *THYME* co-Editor Greg Hills to organise the judges for their Story Contest. He has accepted.

Return To The Forbidden Planet — A Constantinople activity to see this play on 18th January 1992; all welcome. Contact Jane Tisell (at a Friday Night or MSFC Meeting) for more info.

Puffing Billy a day trip and picnic or BBQ in the Dandenong Ranges. Run by the MSFC (just for fun). Starts noon at Belgrave Station; BBQ circa 1pm at Lakeside for those not taking Puffing Billy (return fare \$12.50). Booking: \$3 to Carol Patterson at any MSFC Meeting or PO Box 203, Glenroy 3046. Numbers strictly limited so book early!

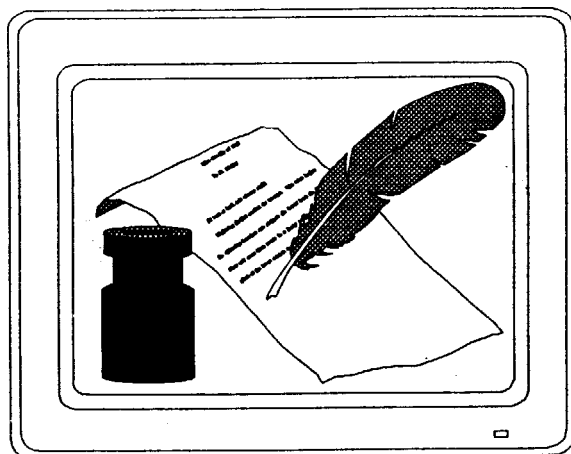
EuroCon '92, due to be held in Zagreb 22–24 May 1992, may be moved to either Germany or Rumania if the civil war in Yugoslavia doesn't settle down soon. *SHARDS OF BABEL 33* (see *Magazines*) reports Freudenstat in Germany (in conjunction with *FreuCon XI*) or Timsoara in Rumania (in conjunction with — what?) as possible alternative sites.

Births, Deaths, & Marriages

It's happening again — a new wave of births and marriages is sweeping BOPdom. Peter Burns and Yoko Otomo quietly brought Frances Setuko Burns into the light on the 13th of October. Carey and Jo Handfield added Breanna Zoe Claire Handfield to their tally on the 25th of October. Alan and Judy Wilson hope to conclude a nine month mission in late December. Patricia Crowther and Rob Cox are also waiting, while rumours from the Eastern Isles say that Sue and Vince Martin-Smith are ushering in the Kiwi side of things. Anyone else care to get in on this?

In the marriage department, Tim Reddan married Tracey Fenton on the 16th of November — 'they' said it would never happen. Meanwhile, across the Tasman, Pauline Butler married Aaron Nicholson on the 23rd of November. Congratulations all.

NZ fan, long-time NASF member and voter in the 1991 FPNZ race, Les George died in his late 60's in October. Suck air and grab clusters — no other deaths to report, though Karen Vaughan had to be cut out of the wreckage in late September after her car was struck by another car at an intersection. She ended up in hospital with cracked ribs and pelvis.



Professional News

Sources this issue: *AMAZING SHEET* (AS), *CRY HAVOC* (CH), Greg Egan (ge), LynC (lc), Lucy Sussex (ls), Ron Clarke (rc).

Ron Clarke (6 Bellevue Rd, Faulconbridge 2776) is acting as Australian Agent for Soviet publishers *Eridan*, who publish the magazine *MEGA* (circulation circa 100,000). They want stories (10–20pp with strong plots) by Australian writers. For more detail see bottom of page 12. (rc)

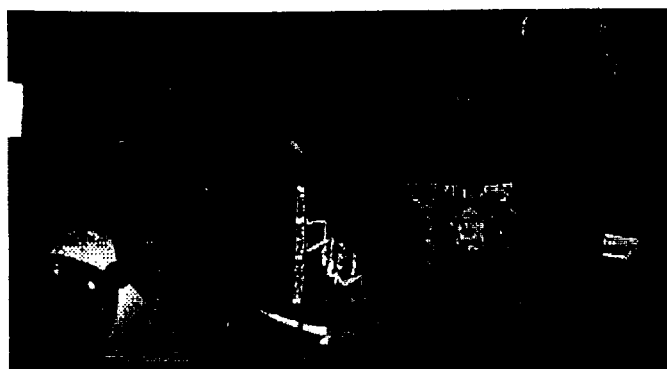
Greg Egan has signed a contract with Legend for two novels and a collection of short stories. The first novel, *QUARANTINE*, should be out in October 1992. (ge)

Lyn McConchie has sold a second story, *What Happy Ending*, to *MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY'S FANTASY MAGAZINE*. It will appear in the Fall issue. (CH)

Gene Roddenberry, creator of *STAR TREK*, died of a massive blood clot on the morning (US time) of Thursday 24th October. He was 70. (lc)

Nick Stathopoulos is currently working full-time for Strategic Studies Group doing computer graphics for their computer war games. He is doing *War Lords* and *Carriers of War* at the moment. In his spare time he is working on his own animated feature. (AS)

James Tiptree Jr Award — For 'Gender-Expanding SF'. A jury-award set up to honour sf/f that explores and expands gender roles. Named after the pen-name of Alice Sheldon, a pioneer in this area of writing. The award will be funded by means of 'bake sales' and donations. First jury is Suzy McKee Charnas, Vonda MacIntyre, Bruce McAllister, Debbie Notkin, and Sherry Goldsmith. Main organiser is Pat Murphy. More information: James Tiptree Jr Award, c/- Pat Murphy, 2238 23rd St, San Francisco, CA 94107, USA. (ls)



Richard Hryckiewicz, Nick Stathopoulos, ?, Susan Hryckiewicz

Round The Clubs

Here is the list of clubs who were sent *THYME*s 83 and 84 and have *not* responded in any visible way: Aust Dr Who Fan Club, Aust Legion of Batman Fans, Aust SF Gaming Soc, Black Mtn/Bundabella, Canberra Games Soc, Companie of Knights Bachelor, Curtin Imagination Assoc, Dandenong Valley SF/ Future Soc, Free For All, Friends of Pern, HHGTG Appn Soc, Liberator Australis, New Horizons, Orgasm, Prisoner Soc, Qld Star Trekkers, Red Squadron, SasTrek, Secret Squadron, Sedang SF Club, Starfleet USS N'Dele, Supreme Council of Timelords, V Pan Club of Vic, WesTrek. Lots of luck, enquirers.

New Star Trek Club in Canberra. Next Gen is aimed at *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and currently has 'just over 40 members'. Membership is \$10 Ordinary, \$15 Family, \$30 Overseas annually. They plan a clubzine to be titled *LOCUTUS*. Next Gen, PO Box 463, Civic Square 2608.

Sydney: There are now at least three sf groups in Sydney's suburbs. One is the **Blue Mountains SF Group**, with meetings the first Friday of the month. Another is the **Penrith Area/Western Suburbs SF Group**, with contact phone nos (047)-313-035 or (047)-36-5795. It meets on the second Saturday of the month. The third group had its first meeting in Lugarno on Saturday 2nd of November. It is the **Southern (Sydney) SF Group**. Its contact number is (02)-534-3595. It meets at 2pm on Saturday afternoons. Its next meeting is December 7. (Ron Clarke)

Austrek noted in *THE CAPTAIN'S LOG 171* that their 1992 committee (9 nominees, 9 vacancies, no election) is Gail Adams, Tracey Hamilton, Kaye Morrissey, David O'Connor, Paula Ruzek, Derek Screen, Sharon Tapper, Beky Tully, and Person X. Their Car Rally was moved from 3 to 10 November (grumble, due to inertia in the **Austrek** mailing list, we learnt this too late to correct *THYME 84's Social Calendar* note).

The **Nova Mob** meeting of 1st October featured Bruce Gillespie on Jonathan Carroll. After the usual dinner at the usual restaurant (Erawan Thai, 205 Swan St, 6pm) the Mob gathered at 8pm at the usual place. The talk was up to Bruce's usual standard. As usual he has since published it in *ANZAPA*. The Mob was Bruce Barnes, Elaine Cochrane, Terry Frost, Bruce Gillespie, Donna Heenan, Greg Hills (intermittently), Craig Hilton, Michelle Muijsert, Marc Ortlieb, Alan Stewart, George Turner, Julian Warner, Roger Weddall, Wynne Whiteford, Lin Wolfe.

The **Nova Mob** meeting of 6th November featured Bruce Barnes on Japanese Animation. Bruce put together an interesting video presentation involving edited episodes and highlights from various shows and films, with a cued narrative/translation as required. It was a smallish meeting. The Mob comprised Bruce Barnes, Bruce Gillespie, Donna Heenan, Greg Hills, Sean McMullen, Alan Stewart, George Turner, Wynne Whiteford.

The **Melbourne SF Club** meeting of 15th November was a 'kiddie games' night. Over 45 people turned up — a good turnout considering some key members were out of town. The games theme was largely submerged in the usual general milling, but the hopscotch court was well supported. The Leggo table, a standard feature of **MSFC** meetings, was unusually well attended and a number of wondrous structures emerged from the mountain of loose pieces. Plans were circulated for future outings including a day trip into the Dandenong Ranges on Puffing Billy and a group booking to see *RETURN TO THE FORBIDDEN PLANET*.

The **Melbourne SF Club** meeting of 22nd November was the AGM and 'bring a salad'. Flat gingerbread cats dusted with blue sugar (aka 'the Constantinople roadkill') were a notable addition to the normal munchies. 40+ members turned out for the most hotly-contested **MSFC** election in years, one position (**Club Activator**) actually having two candidates: Karen Pender-Gunn and Glen Tilley. Glen won on a secret ballot. The rest of the committee is Treasurer Katrina Papworth, Secretary Alan Stewart, President Ian Gunn, Public Relations Jan McNally. In the club Library, plans were made to begin restoring some of the bound volumes that have deteriorated in the nearly 40 years of the Library's existence.

The THYME Social Calendar

December 1991

- 1 dec [S] SPInc All-BYO Xmas BBQ 11:30am Woodstock Centre
 6 dec [M] MSPC Gourmet Hot Dog Night
 6 dec [S] Blue Mts Monthly Meeting?
 7-8 dec [C] Circulation 5k (see *Convention Calendar*)
 7 dec [A] Crit Mass Xmas Party at Allan & Lesley Bray's house (ring (08)-261-3721 for address & time)
 7 dec [M] Austrek Xmas Party, Club's 15th Birthday, ST's 25th, 6pm St Luke's Church Hall, Coventry St, South Melb. \$6, with plate \$3.
 7 dec [M] Nova Mob Saturday midday Yum Cha at the Dragonboat
 7 dec [P] Net 23 Quiz Night
 12 dec [C] Canberra SF Soc Xmas Party, Tower Restaurant, Black Mt
 13-15 dec [S] SynCon '91 (see *Convention Calendar*)
 13 dec [M] MSPC Frankenstein night - movies & other fun
 14 dec [M] Rogers St 2 Rogers St, Richmond; party 8pm on
 15 dec [B] Conquest Christmas Party
 15 dec [M] Threads Kiddies Xmas, noon-5pm, 11 Ronald Ave, Bulleen
 20 dec [M] MSPC Xmas Party! Bring food...
 21 dec [P] Net 23 Xmas Meet - Bring & Receive Prezies
 27 dec [M] MSPC Meet at Valhalla Cinema, 89 High St, Northcote:
 Movies: 21:30 ANIMATION INVASION, 23:30 AKIRA
 27 dec [P] Westrek Monthly meeting?
 31 dec [M] The Convention Dances With Dingoes 7:30pm; The Convention (see *Convention Calendar*). \$8 (\$7 con membs)

January 1992

- 1 jan [A] Crit Mass NO MEETING
 1 jan [M] Nova Mob NO MEETING
 3 jan [M] MSPC True Confessions - Scandals & broken resolutions!
 4 jan [P] Net 23 Coffee & Conversation
 10 jan [M] MSPC Foot Rally (explore area & test your observation)
 17 jan [M] MSPC Wheel Of Fandom
 18 jan [M] MSPC BBQ on the Yarra 11am, Batman Park near Spencer St Bridge (Melway map 1A, B-12). BYO everything
 18 jan [M] Constantinople Return To The forbidden Planet outing
 18 jan [P] Net 23 Lego Building Competition
 24-27 jan [P] The Festival of the Imagination (SwanCon 17). Targets the sf professional, includes seminar on Teaching SF, Writer's Workshop, Short Story Competition. (See *Convention Calendar*)
 24 jan [M] MSPC Coffee & cake & conversation
 25-27 jan [C] CanCon '92 (see *Convention Calendar*)
 25 jan [P] Net 23 NO MEETING due to SwanCon 17
 27 jan [B] Conquest Beach Party
 31 jan [M] MSPC Spot the Brain Cell. Can you act? Ham it up!

February 1992

- 5 feb [A] Crit Mass L Bray: Science Fiction Art
 5 feb [M] Nova Mob Monthly meeting
 8 feb [M] Who Et Brutus? Fundraiser, Glenhuntly Park Pavilion, Neerim & Booran, Caulfield. \$35. Info (03)-557-7088 8-10pm.
 8 feb [P] Net 23 Fortnightly meeting?
 9 feb [M] MSPC Puffing Billy/Lakeside BBQ (Belgrave Stn noon)
 15/16 feb [A] The Contract (see *Convention Calendar*)
 15 feb [M] St Valentine's Feast 2 by Red Squadron. Townhouse, 701 Swanston St, 7-12pm. Formal dress. SSAE and \$30/head to 'Red Squadron', PO Box 221B, Ballarat East 3350 by 10 Feb
 22 feb [P] Net 23 Fortnightly meeting?
 23 feb [B] Conquest Meeting, Qld Uni of Tech, Garden Point Campus, Building B

March 1992

- 4 mar [A] Crit Mass B Forte: either The Left Hand of SF or A Week With George Turner
 27-29 mar [B] Conquest Camp Warrawee Relaxacon

Later 1992

- 1 apr [A] Crit Mass J Harris An Oddly-Shaped Tree-Root (reprise) else What is it that Jeff and John have been arguing about?
 26 apr [B] Conquest Meeting, Qld Uni of Tech, Garden Point Campus, Building B
 6 may [A] Crit Mass Z Bekric The World's Greatest Comic Magazine: FANTASTIC FOUR 40-70
 31 may [B] Conquest Party
 3 jun [A] Crit Mass I Mackereth Another Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Critical Mass
 28 jun [B] Conquest General Meeting, Qld Uni of Tech, Garden Point Campus, Building B
 1 jul [A] Crit Mass J Felis Multimedia SF: SF in Rock'n'Roll
 26 jul [B] Conquest Meeting - Location to be announced
 5 aug [A] Crit Mass A Bray The Fantasy Universe of William Blake
 30 aug [B] Conquest PreJudgement Day Meeting (only 5 years to go), Qld Uni of Tech, Garden Point Campus, Building B
 2 sep [A] Crit Mass J Duff Facing the Unknown
 25 oct [B] Conquest Meeting - Location to be announced
 25 nov [B] Conquest AGM. Qld Uni of Tech, Garden Point Campus, Building B

Continued Next Issue...

Regular Events

- [A]Adelaide Critical Mass meets 8pm first Wednesday monthly. Venue South Australian Writers Centre, 2nd Floor, 155 Pirie St, Adelaide. Info (08)-261-3721
 [B]Brisbane Conquest meets 12-6pm Sunday 6-weekly. Info (07)-355-6687
 [B]Brisbane Brisbane Dr Who Fan Club meets 10am-5pm Sunday in alternate months. Venue 'OUT'. Info PO Box 10308, Brisbane 4000
 [C]Canberra Canberra SF Society meets alternate Thursdays (public service paydays) at Griffin Centre or a restaurant. Info (06)-290-1698
 [M]Melbourne Friday Nighting is probably the easiest way to meet Melbourne fans. Front up at Myers K&M Food Mall (off Elizabeth St) 6pm Fridays; the fans take over the two big tables in the main section of the mall
 [M]Melbourne Melbourne SF Club meets 7:30pm Fridays at St. David's Church Hall, 74 Melville Rd, West Brunswick. (Take a No. 55 tram, get out at Stop 33. Melway map 29, C-6). Info (03)-370-0503
 [M]Melbourne Nova Mob meets ~6pm first Wednesday monthly for dinner (currently the Erawan Thai, 205 Swan St, Richmond). Info (03)-429-8354

- [P]Perth Network 23 meets 7:30pm every 2nd Saturday at 16 Balmain Rd, Nedlands. (Bus 72 or 103). Info (09)-386-6110, (09)-313-1568
 [P]Perth Westrek meets 8pm last Friday monthly at Lapidary & Rock Hunting Hall, 31-35 Gladstone Rd, Riverdale. \$2 door fee. Info (09)-362-5713
 [S]Sydney Blue Mountains SF Group meets first Friday monthly. Info (047)-51-5740 or (047)-59-2187
 [S]Sydney Pearlth Area/Western Sydney SF Group meets 2nd Saturday monthly. Info (047)-313-035 or (047)-36-5795
 [S]Sydney Southern (Sydney) SF Group meets 2pm Saturday (frequency not stated). Info (02)-534-3595
 [S]Sydney Sydney Fans Incorporated organises things, including Woodstock Round Table (a Sydney version of the Nova Mob). Meets 2pm, Woodstock Community Centre, Church St, Burwood. Info (maybe) (02)-635-4025, (02)-798-8001 A.H.

Information in Social Calendar is updated each issue with whatever comes to hand. To get your group listed in Regular Events drop us a line with basic contact info similar to that shown above. Ditto to correct info in either listing. Our next deadline is 10th January.

The THYME Convention Calendar

1991

CIRCULATION 5X (Canberra Relaxacon) 7-8 December 1991

Burton & Garran Hall, ANU, Daley Rd, Acton. Rates \$30 (includes Sat buffet & Sun sausage sizzle). Add \$6 for cinema. Mail Circulation 5X, PO Box 47, Civic Square 2601

SYNCON 91 (Sydney General) 13-15 December 1991

St Andrews College, Sydney Uni. Theme Future Directions, High Tech. GoH Wynne Whiteford. Rates \$35. Rooms \$35 per night Bed & Breakfast. Mail PO Box 462, Newtown 2042

1992

DOCTORCON II (NZ Dr Who) 18/19 January 1992

Newtown Community Cntr, cnr Rintoul & Columbo Sts, Wellington. Rates NZ\$15 (day \$8). Mail Doctorcon, 26 Palm Ave, Lyall Bay, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND

SWANCON 17 (WA General) 24-27 January 1992

The Ascot Inn, 1 Epsom Ave, Belmont, Perth. GsoH Terry Dowling and Nick Stathopoulos. Rates \$45 to 1nov91. \$15 Sup. Rooms \$50 night, sing/doub. Mail PO Box 227, North Perth 6006

CANCON '92 (Canberra Games) 25-27 January 1992

University of Canberra. By Canberra Games Soc. Games, roleplaying, dinner, costume parade. No other info. Mail CanCon, GPO Box 1016, Canberra City 2601

THE CONTRACT (Adelaide General) St Valentine's (15/16 Feb) 1992

To be held in the Adelaide Hills. GoH John 'The Godfather' Foyster. Run by 'The Mob' (sounds more like Critical Mass to me). Rates \$5 Sup. No other details, but Roman Orsanski, PO Box 131, Marden 5070 or + Ian MacKereth, PO Box 428, Prospect 5082 know what's happening

NEWTCOON '92 (Sydney Trek Relaxacon) 6-8 March 1992

Hunter Country Lodge & Restaurant, Cessnock/Branxton Rd, Pokolbin, Rothbury. Rates \$15. Rooms \$95 sing, \$60 doub, \$65 twin, \$53 trip, \$45 quad, per person. Two nights deposit. Wine tour \$45, includes Sat lunch. BBQ \$15. Mail c/- Peter McMullen, 34 Brown St, Cressnock 2325

SYNCON '92 (1992 Australian NatCon) 17-20 April 1992

Shore Inn, Artarmon. Theme The Art of SF. GsoH Michael Whelan, Nick Stathopoulos. Keynote Speaker Sean McMullen. Rates \$70 end 91, \$80 to 10apr92. \$25 Sup. Rooms \$95 per room (sing/doub/twin). Banquet \$25 person buffet. Mail GPO Box 429, Sydney 2001

CONTRADICTION (NZ General) 17-20 April 1992

Picton Whalers Inn, Picton. GsoH Heinlein, Herbert, Hubbard (all RIP). Rates NZ\$25, NZ\$10 Sup. Banquet NZ\$27 buffet. Rooms NZ\$70 sing, NZ\$44 doub, NZ\$29 trip, NZ\$22 quad (per person) 1 night's deposit by 15/8/91. Mail PO Box 11-812, Manners St, NEW ZEALAND

DISCONTINUITY (NZ Modellers/General) 17-20 April 1992

Allenby Park Motor Lodge, 481 Gt Sth Rd, Papatoetoe. GsoH Terry Pratchett, Maureen Thomas (US STrek fan), Peter Hassall (NZ fan). Rates NZ\$45 to 31mar92, then NZ\$50. NZ\$15 Day. NZ\$20 Sup. Banquet NZ\$30. Rooms NZ\$85 sing/twin, NZ\$90 trip, NZ\$125 family. Mail PO Box 74013, Market Rd, Auckland, NEW ZEALAND

HOLODICTION (1992 Star Trek) 15-17 May 1992

Gazebo Hotel, Elizabeth Bay, Sydney. GsoH Patrick Stewart, Richard Arnold. Rates \$140 to Feb92, then \$160. \$20 Sup. Rooms ? - 35% discount on normal rates. Mail PO Box 157, Matraville 2036

SHAKYCON (1992 NZ National) 29 May-1 June 1992

West Plaza Hotel, Wellington. GsoH Joe Haldeman, Rex Thompson. Rates NZ\$45, NZ\$50 door, NZ\$20 Sup. Rooms \$100 + GST/room. Phone (+64-4)-4770-165. Mail PO Box 11-559, Manners St, NEW ZEALAND

HONGCON '92 (1992 Media NatCon) 6-8 June 1992

Hotel Adelaide. GsoH Neil Gaiman, Danny Elfman, Paul Cornell, Shane Morrissey. Rates \$75, \$95 door. \$30 Sup. Rooms \$90 doub/twin, third person. Mail PO Box 160, Rundle Mall, Adelaide 5000

MAGICON (1992 WorldCon) 3-7 September 1992

Orange County Civic & Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida. GsoH Jack Vance, Vincent DiFate, Walt Willis. TM Spider Robinson. Rates \$A125 to 31/3/92, \$A145 to 15/7/92, US\$135 door. \$A40 Sup. Cheques payable to Justin Ackroyd (Oz Agent). PRs are airmailed. Mail: J Ackroyd (Magicon Agent), GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne 3001

CONJUNCTION 3 (Melbourne Fusion) 18-20 September 1992

Sheraton Hotel, Melbourne. Theme Animals in SF. GsoH Merv Binns, Shane Morrissey, Cath Ortlieb. Rates \$40 to end '91. \$10 Sup. Phones (03)-386-2518, (03)-370-0503. Mail PO Box 273, Fitzroy 3065

ROBOCON (Brisbane Media) 18-20 September 1992

Gateway Hotel, North Quay, Brisbane. Theme Robots. GoH tba. FGoH Ian MacLean. Rates \$75. \$15 Sup. Phone (07)-398-1561. Mail: Conquest '92, GPO Box 1376, Brisbane 4001

1993

THE CONVENTION (lit/media, mostly media) 22-25 January 1993

Melbourne - tba. GsoH Bjo & John Trimble, Ray Barrett, Peter Sumner, Paton Forster. Rates \$100 to 1jan92, \$120 to 1jul92, \$140 to 22jan92 (installment plan avail). \$20 Sup. Phone (03)-557-7088 8-10pm. Mail PO Box 322, Bentleigh 3204

SWANCON 18 (1993 Aust NatCon) 8-12 April 1993

Ascot Inn, 1 Epsom Ave, Belmont, Perth. Theme Apocalypse Wow! GsoH Terry Pratchett, Craig Hilton. Banquet tba. Rates \$50 (\$25 Child) to Easter 1992. \$20 Sup. Rooms \$65 sing/doub/twin/trip. Payable to The Ascot Inn. Mail PO Box 318, Nedlands 6009

DEFCOON ('93 NZ National/Aust Media NatCon) 4-7 June 1993

Hotel St George, Willis St, Wellington. GsoH tba, David Gerrold, Mark Harris (NZ Fan), Gail Adams (Aust Fan). Rates \$A45 to 1/6/92, \$A50 to 31/10/92. \$A25 Sup. Hucksters Tables \$A20 amateur (club, con), \$A80 professional. Rooms NZ\$60 sing, NZ\$75 twin/doub, NZ\$85 trip. NZ\$20 deposit required. Mail PO Box 30-905, Lower Hutt, NEW ZEALAND

STAR WALKING II (Melbourne Media) 12-14 June 1993.

Townhouse Hotel, 701 Swanston St, Melbourne. Theme All Things Strange and Alien. GoH tba. Special GoH Lisa Cowan (mktng consultant to Lucasfilms). Rates \$120 (\$150 at door), \$50 day. \$30 Sup. Banquet \$45. Phone (03)-755-2361. Mail PO Box 118, Springvale 3171

CONFRANCISCO (1993 WorldCon) 3-6 September 1993

Moscone Convention Centre. GsoH Larry Niven, Tom Digby, Alicia Austin, Wombat (Jan Howard Finder). Toastmaster Guy Gavriel Kay. Dead GoH Mark Twain. Rates US\$70 to end '91, then US\$85. US\$25 Sup, Age 0-8 free with guardian, Unattended Child 7-12 at 1sep93 US\$30 Mail: 712 Bancroft Rd, Suite 1993, Walnut Creek, CA 94598 (note new address - we finally got PR #2!)

1994

CONSTANTINOPLE (Bid for BOTH 1994 NatCons) 1-4 April 1994.

Rates \$5 Pre-sup. Mail PO Box 212, World Trade, Melbourne 3005

To the best of our knowledge, information in these listings is correct at time of printing. However, prospective members of any Convention listed here should contact the Convention concerned for up-to-date information. We accept no responsibility for loss or inconvenience due to incorrect or out-of-date information.

Books & Periodicals

Book Releases

These listings are distilled from release lists sent to us by Australian publishers and distributors. As we don't list titles from lists we don't see, we make no claim of completeness.

Books will be available in the shops or you can order direct (don't forget to add postage & packing) from:

Penguin Books, PO Box 257, Ringwood 3134
TransWorld, 15-25 Helles Ave, Moorebank 2170

Format is: Author/s, (Series Title) Title, Publisher, ISBN, Price.

December Releases

Penguin Books Australia

Anderson/Wagner (Judge Dredd) Tale Of The Dead Man, Fleetway, 1-85385-245-2, \$14.95
S Biskie/A Grant Judgement on Gotham, Fleetway, 1-85386-249-5, \$16.95
John Brosnan Primal Screen: A History Of SF Film, 7, 0-356-20222-4, \$40.00
Chalker, Jack LARP TIMES2) Empires of Flux and Anchor, Penguin, 014-012315-6, \$10.95
Robert N Charette (Shadowrun: Secret of Power 3) Find Your Own Truth, Penguin, 014-015241-5, \$11.95
Arthur C Clarke The Ghost From The Grand Banks, Futura, 0-7088-8357-5, \$10.95
Gordon R Dickson Wolf and Iron, Futura, 0-7088-4955-5, \$12.95
Anne Gay Mindsail, Futura, 0-7088-8352-4, \$11.95
Jamie Hewlett/Peter Milligan Hewlitt's Haircut, Fleetway, 1-85386-246-0, \$14.95
Gary Larson The Prehistory Of The Far Side, Futura, 0-7088-4982-2, \$19.95
Hughes/Morrison Dare The Future, Fleetway, 1-85386-211-8, \$16.95
A Grant/A Ransom Shamballa (Judge Anderson), Fleetway, 1-85386-247-9, \$14.95
Sokol (Canardo 1) Shabby Dog Story, Fleetway, 1-85386-260-6, \$14.95
Tracy Hickman/Margaret Weis Dragonance Tale Omnibus, Penguin, 014-015742-5, \$24.95
Stephen King (The Dark Tower 3) The Waste Lands, 7, 0-7474-1188-3, \$17.95
Richard A Knaak (Dragonrealm 4) Shadow Steed, 7, 0-7474-0815-7, \$10.95
Wendy Leigh Arnold: The Unauthorised Biography, 7, 0-7474-0806-8, \$11.95
Douglas Niles (Forgotten Realms 3: The Mazica Trilogy) Feathered Dragon, Penguin, 014-014524-9, \$10.95
Bob Shaw Orbitville Departure, 0-7088-8359-1, \$11.95
Robert Charles Wilson The Divide, 0-7088-8365-6, \$11.95
K R Woods Schwartzegger: Musclemen to Terminator, 7, 0-451-82249-8, \$9.95

Transworld Publishers

Cassidy Flynn (Gods of Ireland 2) The Enchanted Isles, Bantam, 0-553-29151-3, \$10.95
Zenana Henderson The People Collection, Corp, 0-552-13659-X, \$12.95
Anne McCaffrey All The Weyns Of Pern, (7), 0-593-02224-6, \$29.95
Terry Pratchett Wings, Corp(7), 0-552-52649-5, \$7.95

Magazines

Shards of Babel 33 12pp A4 Act/Subscribe (Oz rates to be announced). Babel Pubs, 2281 BB Rijswijk ZH, THE NETHERLANDS. In this October issue we learn that Zagreb's fans are alive & well (so far), that Confiction broke even (they print the figures to prove it), and other news and discussion covering European fandom, including an engrossing transcription of Czech writer Josef Nesvadba's WinCon speech, *The Future That Just Ended*. Mark Loney is *SOB's* Australian Agent. Rates \$A

Small Press

Amazing Sheet 1 4pp A4 \$5/5. Steven Paulsen, PO Box 461, Belgrave 3160. Filling the market info void for Australian sf, fantasy, & horror writers. Steven hopes to produce it monthly. Good luck!

Australian Playbeing 29 12pp A4 Act. HHGTG Fan Club, PO Box 41, West Brunswick 3055. Largely typed and written by James Allen, with 2-page cartoon strip by Ian Gunn. HuttCom valedictory.

Belize Qotha 5 8pp A5 Act. Geo Bondar, 33 Ragstone Rd, Slough SL1 2PP, GREAT BRITAIN. Geogre's travelling zine. This time he's in Belize, Central America, suffering divers injuries.

Canberra SF Society Newsletter 10/91 20pp A4 \$2.00. CSFS, PO Box 47, Civic Square 2608. Club news & reports, lots of fiction, list & capsule reviews of new books available for order through the club at low prices.

Chemobytization 3 28pp A5 Act/books. Alexander Vasilkovsky/ Boris Sidyuk, Poste Restante, General PO, 252001 Kiev-1, UKRAINE. News, reviews, conreports, in *English*. The independent Ukraine is finding freedom to be a heady but perilous brew.

Cry Havoc Sep/Oct 40pp A5 Act. Keith Smith, PO Box 2836, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND. The NZ Newzine — a double issue. Lots of news & reviews. Lots of ads for US events, zines, and organisations.

Cry Havoc Nov 24pp A5 Act. Keith Smith, PO Box 2836, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND. Back on schedule, but the PFANZ insert *didn't* include a list of voters (the back was blank).

EOD 3 & 4 56 & 80pp A5 Trade/\$3.50/1, \$9/3 to 'Chris Agonostopoulos'. Chris A Masters, PO Box 7545, St Kilda Rd, Melbourne 3004. Horror fiction fanzine. #4 is a Special Lovecraftian Issue. These are dated July & Sept; delay in review is our cockup, not theirs.

Ethel the Earthpig 39 23pp A4 Act/Join (\$12pa). MSPC, PO Box 212, Melbourne 3005. News, reviews, letters. *ETHEL THE AARDVARK* suffers an identity crisis, with a little help from B.Ware and others.

Fandom 6/7 48pp A5 Trade/?. Miguel A Martinez, Apdo.53019, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN. In Spanish but the editor says he is adding an English-language section for those of us behind the English Curtain. Capsule reviews (with front covers) of Spanish sf books and magazines, the former mainly translations of English & American works.

Just Alice 4 23pp A4 Act. Adam Jenkins, 82 Highland Dr, Bellevue Hills 5050. Personalzine verging on general contents zine. Letters, reviews, Confectionary report, New Wave Fandom. Yes, it really is a fanzine.

Nemesis 15 31pp A4 Trade/Join. Adelaide Uni SF Assn, c/- SAUA, Union Bldg, Adelaide Uni, North Terrace 5000. Occasional zine of AUSFA. Fiction and book reviews, Article on asteroid prospecting.

Phoenixzine 27 19pp A5 Trade/Join (NZ\$40pa). Phoenix SF Society, PO Box 11-559, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND. Monthly zine of Wellington sf group. Club News, Alex Heatley Muttters about Sturgeon's Law.

Preferred Lies 2 8pp A5 Act. Kim Huett, PO Box 679, Woden 2606. Marc Ortlieb looks at the fanzine family tree in typical Ortlieb fashion, with illustrations by John Packer.

Robots & Roadrunners 6/3 16pp US Act/Join (US\$12pa). Unsa Major, PO Box 691448, San Antonio, TX 78269-1448, USA. Letters, reviews, club news. There is less here than meets the page count.

Star Walking: The Newsletter 12pp A4 Trade/Join. Star Walking, PO Box 118, Springvale 3171. Zine and con PR for Star Walking Inc. For info about the convention, see *Convention Calendar*.

Stet 2 36pp US Act. Leah Zeldes Smith, 17 Kerry Lane, Wheeling, IL 60090-6415, USA. Perzine rapidly becoming a genzine. 'The House the Smiths Bought, Pt.2' and Lots of letters.

Continues on the Mailing Wrapper . . .

CAPSULE BOOK REVIEWS

Gruntphuttock's Book Pile

Reviewers this issue: GRH (Greg Hills), MOL (Mark Loney)

Robert Asprin

M.Y.T.H. Inc. In Action

Acc pb 6/91, 245pp, US\$4.50, ISBN 0-441-55282-X

grh

Eighth in the *MYTH* series. Viewpoint character is Guido, bodyguard to The Great Skeeve, which makes a refreshing change from Skeeve himself. While Skeeve is off searching for Pervert ally Aahz, the Queen of Possiltum has decided that her kingdom is too small and she has started an ambitious project to, er, remedy the defect. Skeeve's team (sans Skeeve) decides to bore from within, and Guido and fellow bodyguard Nunzio join the Possiltum army. But things don't go smoothly. If you've read the previous books, this is all you need to know. If you haven't, go read 'em.

Lois McMaster Bujold

Barrayer

Baen pb 10/91, 389pp, US\$4.99, ISBN 0-671-72083-X

grh

Lois McMaster Bujold's books are written into a common background, and most of them deal with events in the life of one Miles Vorkosigan (or Naismith), the exceptions being *FALLING FREE* (200 years earlier) and *SHARDS OF HONOUR* (how Miles' parents first met). *THE VOR GAME*, which won a Hugo, takes place when Miles is twenty. This one is also about Miles' parents, but surrounds his birth. It's stand-alone, but refers to many events in the earlier book. It's a mild, unambitious space (soap) opera which, barring the birth scene, could have been written a decade back without raising a ripple or challenging the paradigm. Candy for the intellectually undemanding reader.

Harry Harrison / Jack C Haldeman

Bill, The Galactic Hero (4)

On The Planet Of Zombie Vampires

Avon pb 4/91, 217pp, US\$4.95, ISBN 0-380-75665-X

grh

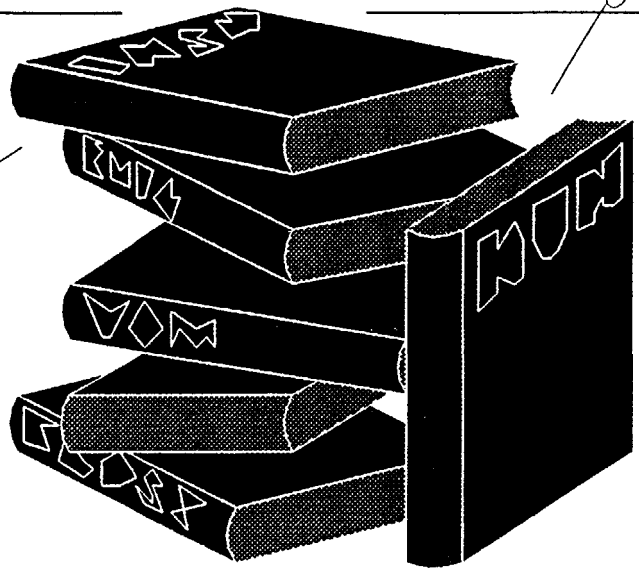
Having stumbled upon the original *BILL, THE GALACTIC HERO* at an impressionable age, I have always held a soft spot for that book. It slickly parodied a good many books of its time and was entertaining in its own sordid little right. Alas, years later, Harrison has allowed other writers to get their hands on Bill. This book is the fourth in the line. It takes in *ALIEN* along the way, slips in titles, lines, and references from other books ('Make room — *make room!*') and other places ('It was a twisty little maze, and all the side branches looked alike'), puns, in-jokes, slapstick, and whatever the fertile imaginations of the authors could produce. It's a lousy novel (be warned), but may raise a giggle.

Hoffman's Guide to SF, Horror & Fantasy Movies 1991-92

Corgi 1991, \$24.95, ISBN 0-552-99478-2

mol

It is always difficult to comprehensively review books claiming to be comprehensive guides to a subject. The approach which I chose for this rather specialised guide to the movies which readers of *THYME* are supposed to be interested in, was to look for movies with which I was familiar as starting points for random wanderings through the listings. *HOFFMAN'S* came up quite well when subjected, over a period of several days, to this type of testing. Every sf, horror or fantasy film that I was able to think of was listed and critiqued in *HOFFMAN'S* and most of the time I found myself in agreement. If I could digress for a moment and put in a good word for one of the movies that we did disagree over, *THE KEEP* was a film that entranced me when I first saw it on the big screen and subsequent viewings on video have simply demonstrated the limitation of



the cathode ray tube. I strongly recommend *THE KEEP* should it ever show at a cinema near you (*HOFFMAN'S* felt that *THE KEEP* was 'Strange, incoherent and above all terrible!').

In closing, I think that the greatest praise that I can give this book is to say that, when I have a television again, it will be an indispensable companion during those difficult visits to the video store when I am trying to work out whether the latest unknown title in front of me is another Z Grade waste of time and money or a little known gem. To this end it is worth noting that *HOFFMAN'S*, a trade paperback size publication, is a convenient size and weight to carry around. Recommended for all VCR owning fans of sf, horror and fantasy movies.

Robert Jordan

The Wheel of Time Volumes 1-3

Eye of the World / The Great Hunt / The Dragon Reborn

EoW: Tor Trade pb 2/90, 670pp, US\$12.95(?), ISBN ?

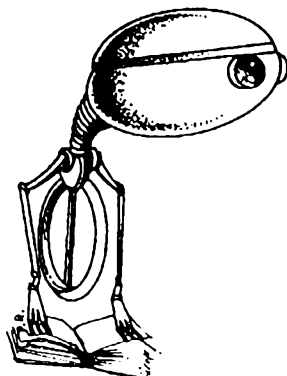
grh

TGH: Tor Trade pb 11/90, 598pp, US\$12.95, ISBN 0-812-50971-4

TDR: Tor Trade pb 11/91, 589pp, US\$22.95, ISBN 0-312-85248-7

Strange things accumulate in the bookpile. The first volume here is an 'advance reading copy', the second a standard bookshop edition, and the third wears a plain black & white cover and is labelled 'advance uncorrected proofs'. The back covers bear effusive praise by Piers Anthony, Fred Saberhagen, Gordon R Dickson, Andre Norton, and *LOCUS*. 'This looks very like the next major fantasy epic' raves Anthony; 'a completely new allegory in a fantasy concept', yells Dickson; 'I shall be eagerly awaiting the sequel' murmurs Norton. If mass is the criterion for a major fantasy epic, the 1200 pages and 12 bookshelf centimetres occupied by this still-incomplete saga make it undeniably major. If remixing and relabelling old fantasy ingredients makes a completely new concept, it's new, but at Norton's age there seems little point in waiting for a sequel when the writer hasn't even finished the original opus yet.

At the end of each volume the hero faces down and defeats Shai'tan and takes a minute step forward; at the beginning of the next, Jordan tears half the structure down and scatters his characters off across his world to start over. At the end of the first book they learn that some at least some of *Beelzebub's* *Morgoth's* *The Dark One's* avatars are free. By the end of the third book, they realise that at least some of the *Coven* the *Ringwraiths* the *Forsaken* are free. So it goes, over and over again, cliffhanger without end. There is considerable character development in the course of the three volumes, but not so much as to require three books to achieve it. By the end of volume 3 I was beginning to feel all thin, sort of *stretched* ... like butter that has been scraped over too much bread. Given that I have annually devoured *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* without distress since the age of 13, that can't be right.



1992 AUSTRALIAN SF ("DITMAR") AWARDS

The 1992 Ditmars for work in Science Fiction and Fantasy during 1991 will be awarded at SYNCON 92, the 31st Australian National Science Fiction Convention, to be held in Sydney over Easter 1992 i.e. April 17 to 20.

The Constitution of the Australian National Science Fiction Convention 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 fannish endeavours) and the William Atheling (Jr) Award for Criticism and Review."

For this purpose the Syncon 92 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 Syncon 92.

Send completed forms to:

Ditmar Sub-Committee
GPO Box 429
SYDNEY NSW 2001

NOMINATIONS CLOSE on 31 JANUARY 1992

DEFINITIONS OF CATEGORIES

(The following definitions are intended more as a guide for nominators rather than a restriction on their choice.)

1. **BEST AUSTRALIAN NOVEL OR COLLECTION:** A science fiction or fantasy novel, or collection of stories by one author, written by an Australian citizen or permanent resident, which was published in Australia for the first time during the 1991 calendar year.
2. **BEST AUSTRALIAN SHORT FICTION:** A science fiction or fantasy story, other than a novel, written by an Australian citizen or permanent resident, which was published in Australia for the first time during the 1991 calendar year.
3. **BEST AUSTRALIAN FANZINE:** A non-professional publication devoted to science fiction, fantasy or related subjects, produced by an Australian citizen or permanent resident, which was generally available in Australia and first published during the 1991 calendar year.
4. **BEST AUSTRALIAN FAN WRITER:** An Australian citizen or permanent resident who wrote material that appeared in a fanzine during the 1991 calendar year (whether or not that fanzine qualifies for the Best Australian Fanzine category).
5. **BEST AUSTRALIAN SF/FANTASY ARTIST:** An Australian citizen or permanent resident whose artwork with a science fiction, fantasy or related subject theme was published in Australia during the 1991 calendar year.

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 1991 calendar year.

1992 AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION ("DITMAR") AWARDS

NOMINATION FORM

1. BEST AUSTRALIAN NOVEL OR COLLECTION

2. BEST AUSTRALIAN SHORT FICTION

3. BEST AUSTRALIAN FANZINE

4. BEST AUSTRALIAN FAN WRITER

5. BEST AUSTRALIAN SF/FANTASY ARTIST

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

NAME:SIGNATURE:

ADDRESS:

.....

Syncon 92 Membership No.:

I am not a member of Syncon 92 and may not be known to the Sub-committee,
however the following person or organisation can vouch for me.

.....

NOTE: The sub-committee is the final arbiter on the eligibility of a nominee.

NOMINATIONS CLOSE: 31 JANUARY 1992

REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS ENCOURAGED PROVIDED IT IS VERBATIM

AUSTRALIAN FICTION PUBLISHED IN 1991

The following is a list of novels, collections and short fiction written by Australians and published in Australia during 1991. It is not a comprehensive list and is published only to provide a guide to works eligible for Australian SF ("Ditmar") Awards. The sources for this list include Sean McMullen, Thyme and Eidolon.

Novels:

Doug Buckley; State Of Play (Albatross Books)
Victor Kelleher; Brother Night (Julia Macrae Books)
George Turner; Brainchild (Morrow US)
Eric Willmot; Below The Line (Hutchinson Australia)

Collections:

Damien Broderick; The Dark Between The Stars (Mandarin) ¹
A. Bertram Chandler; From Sea To Shining Star (Dreamstone) ²
Terry Dowling; Wormwood (Aphelion Publications)

Short Fiction:

P. Raymond Booth; "Darklove" (EOD 2, May 1991)
Simon Brown; "The Final Machine" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
" ; "Cannibals Of The Fine Light" (Eidolon 6, Oct 1991)
Paul Collins; "The Witch Queen" (True Blue, 1991)
Tim Collins; "Nuts" (CSFS 15, December 1990) ²
Marilynne Cromarty; "Is There A Fate Worse Than Death" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
Stephen Dedman; "Errand Of Mercy" (Glass Reptile Breakout)
Bill Dodds; "First Impressions" (Thyme Fiction 5, July 1991)
Terry Dowling; "Vanities" (Glass Reptile Breakout)
" ; "Nobody's Fool" (Wormwood)
" ; "The Honour Of Them" (Wormwood)
" ; "A Deadly Edge Their Red Beaks Pass Along" (Wormwood)
" ; "Roadsong" (Eidolon 6, Oct 1991)
Graham Eade; "Moon Flying" (CSFS, January 1991)
Greg Egan; "The Moat" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
" ; "The Demon's Passage" (Eidolon 5, July 1991)
" ; "In Numbers" (Asimov's, April 1991)
" ; "The Infinite Assassin" (Interzone/Aboriginal SF, June 1991, Aug 1991)
Lesley Foley; "All Their Worldly Goods" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
Wendy Frew; "Love Story" (Thyme Fiction 5, July 1991)
Leanne Frahm; "Olivetruffles" (Eidolon 5, July 1991)
Andrea Gawthorne; "Streetdreams" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
Donald Hendricks; "Koala Kong Done Me Wrong" (Thyme Fiction 5, July 1991)
Grai Hughes; "Twenty-First Century Dreamtime" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
Sue Isle; "The Last Guardian" (Glass Reptile Breakout)
" ; "Remembering Names" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
Rick Kennett; "Log Recording Found In A Dead Man's Gut" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
" ; "The Battle Of Leila The Dog" (Eidolon 5, July 1991)
J.A. Kewley; "Trev's Statue" (Australian Short Stories 33, March 1991)
Rosaleen Love; "Blue Venom" (Eidolon 6, Oct 1991)
Andrew McBurnie; "Dawn" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
Maria McKernan; "The Day Of The Sun" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)

Sean McMullen; "The Dominant Style" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
 " ; "Alone In His Chariot" (Eidolon 4, March 1991)
 Geoffrey Maloney; "The Last Lion In Africa Is Dead" (Eidolon 4, March 1991)
 " ; "Cock Of The Dunghill" (Eidolon 5, July 1991)
 " ; "Green On Red" (Eidolon 6, Oct 1991)
 C.A. Masters; "The Dark Window" (EOD 1, March 1991)
 " ; "What's For Dinner" (EOD 2, May 1991)
 Dorothy Mitchell; "The Rainbow Serpent" (EOD 2, May 1991)
 Steven Murphy; "Door To Door" (EOD 1, March 1991)
 " ; "Killed In An Instant" (EOD 1, March 1991)
 " ; "Roma And Julian" (EOD 2, May 1991)
 Michael Pryor; "Softly They Go Feral In The Night" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
 P.J. Roberts; "I Am Nyarlathotep" (EOD 1, March 1991)
 " ; "The Dream" (EOD 2, May 1991)
 Jai S Russell; "At Bright Star's Coming" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
 Stephen Stanley; "The Robot Inspectors" (Eidolon 5, July 1991)
 Nick Stathopoulos; "Linear Perspective" (Eidolon 6, Oct 1991)
 Louise Steer; "Just A Little Bit More" (EOD 1, March 1991)
 B.J. Stevens; "The Diary Of Howard Clarke Long Phillips" (EOD 2, May 1991)
 Alan Stewart; "Death Is To Fulgin, As Fulgin Is To Black" (Time Frames)
 " ; "I Hear The Horn Of Herne" (Time Frames)
 " ; "No-one Beach" (Time Frames)
 " ; "Fitting In" (Time Frames)
 " ; "The Ashes Of Forever" (Time Frames)
 John T. Stolarczyk; "A Shadow Guard's Passing" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
 Dirk Strasser; "The Final Birthplace" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
 David Tansey; "Manoeuvres Off The Great Attractor" (Aurealis 4, June 1991)
 " ; "Multi-Dysfunctional Polis" (EOD 2, May 1991)
 George Turner; "Worlds" (Eidolon 4, March 1991)
 E.R. Van Helden; "The Tourist" (Aurealis 3, March 1991)
 Walter Vivian; "Space Stuff" (CSFS 15, December 1990)²
 " ; "Meths" (CSFS, January 1991)
 Roger Wilcox; "The Vampire Hormones" (Interstater, Jan/Feb 1991)
 Sean Williams; "Playing Radio" (EOD 2, May 1991)

NOTES:

Glass Reptile Breakout is an anthology edited by Van Ikin and published by the Centre for Studies in Australian Literature.

CSFS is the Canberra Science Fiction Newsletter

EOD is the Esoteric Order Of Dagon

Time Frames is edited by Terry Garey and published by Rune Press.

1. Published in 1991 but all stories are reprints.
2. Publishing date is 1990 but work not available till 1991.
3. Alan Stewart's works are all poetry.

For more details, don't miss *THE WHEEL OF TIME: THE BOOK REVIEW*, Volume 2, coming to a fanzine near you Real Soon Now.

Anne McCaffrey *All The Weyrs Of Pern*
Bantam hb 1991, 494pp, \$29.95, 0-593-02224-6 grh
This is it! This is the capstone to the *DRAGONRIDERS OF PERN* series! This book contains the definitive permanent solution to the Thread menace and ties off many of the loose ends that trail from *THE WHITE DRAGON*. A major character dies, a system goes down, and the Pernese get their past back. All of which is not to say there won't be more Pern books. *ALL THE WEYRS* is set after *RENEGADES OF PERN* and picks up on the scene in which the Dragonriders find the still-operational AIVAS (Artificial Intelligence Voice Address System) of the original colony at Landing. After 2525 years of peace and quiet in which to think, and taking into account the unexpected abilities of the dragons, the AIVAS comes up with a plan that will prevent future Passes, though it won't stop the current Pass. There is therefore ample scope for additional Pern stories, but the mainline started by Flar in *DRAGONFLIGHT* culminates here.

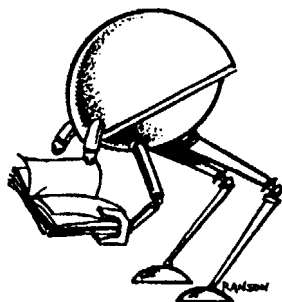
The book has some problems with time. It features 400-Turn trips *between*, similar to the one Lessa made in *DRAGONFLIGHT*, the catch being that (1) it's kept secret even from the large number of dragons involved (yeah, none of them notice that they're out of contact with their friends . . . and in contact with a lot of strangers), and (2) it seems to have none of the deleterious effects Lessa experienced. Also, after a lapse more than 2500 years, the AIVAS just turns on its printer and supplies hard copy *on paper* for its shopping list. Must be pretty good paper — definitely acid-free! (Pretty good printer, too.)

The book also has problems with science. The three spaceships are in decaying orbits. The flagship, *Yokohama*, has fuel to correct this. For the others, 'a slight alteration in their speed and altitude will send them harmlessly off into space . . . eventually to be captured by the sun's gravity and pulled into it'. Dropping them into the sun Rukbat would first require stopping them dead in Pern's orbit, which is a more than slight alteration in speed, particularly as none of the ships has enough fuel for such a jaunt. And McCaffrey is still working on some bizarre notion that the Oort Cloud is so dense that one planet smaller than Mars can pull fifty years worth of Thread after it all the way to Pern's orbit. Actually, compared to (for example) Sol's Asteroid Belt, any Oort Cloud is a pretty thin place indeed, and the Asteroid Belt is none too dense. If Thread is floating loose in the Oort Cloud rather than growing on the Red Star, this is a sticky trick indeed.

On a more positive note, this book, despite its 400-page length, is almost as lean and to-the-point as *DRAGONFLIGHT* and *DRAGON-QUEST* (don't be fooled by page count — the print is large) and concentrates heavily on resolving the story rather than spinning off new plot convolutions and fostering romance. Apart from the death mentioned earlier in this review, there are no major developments in the characters, no love affairs, no weddings; even the obligatory Hatching is matter-of-fact and free of serious drama, though the introduction of yet another Queen (and a new character to fly her) hints at a new adolescent series in the offing if McCaffrey lives long enough to write it.

On the whole, this is the book long-time dracophiles have been demanding. For them it is a must-buy. Those who dislike McCaffrey's work will probably do well to stay clear of it, since it really does demand some knowledge of how the story got here. For those who are open-minded but unfamiliar with the series, a minimum list for prior reading would be *FLIGHT*, *QUEST*, *WHITE*, and *RENEGADES*, in that order.

Charles Platt *The Silicon Man*
Bantam pb 3/91, 253pp, US\$4.50, ISBN 0-553-28950-0 grh
A virtual reality is set up inside a supercomputer. Anyone can enter it if they're willing to have their body destroyed by the scanning process that digitises them into machine-readable form. But the man who designed the system is an old hacker, and is already there — several million times over. An interesting book that plays with ideas within the limits of what may soon be possible. Unfortunately, others have played in the area before so this book doesn't actually have a lot of really new ideas in it.



Robert Reed *Down The Bright Way*
Bantam pb 4/91, 312pp, US\$4.50, 0-553-28923-3 grh
The Bright is a method of travelling between thousands, maybe millions of identical human-habited Earths scattered around the Galaxy. Builders: unknown. Purpose: unknown (though Reed drops a hint of his own view on the last page of the book). A million years ago one person had the idea of travelling down the Bright in search of the Builders, and sold that idea to her people. Now they're here. A few novel ideas, but in the end it's cops and robbers.

Eluki bes Shahar *Hellflower*
Daw pb 6/91, 252pp, US\$3.99, 0-88677-475-6 grh

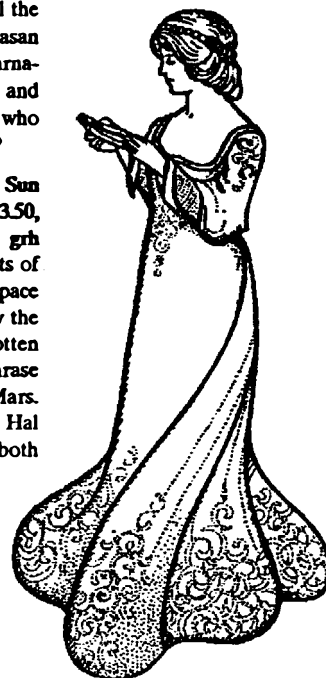
A Galactic potboiler with a hard-bitten female loner-merchanter and a male mercenary both out of their depth, ably assisted by a sentient computer, against various murky enemies which in the end turn out to be fronts for another sentient computer, this one hostile to humans. The book is patchy and seems to have been cobbled together from shorts published in various places: *Hellflower*, *Casablanca*, and *Light Fantastic*.

Dan Simmons *Hyperion / The Fall of Hyperion*
H: *Headline Trade* pb 1990, 346pp, \$19.95, ISBN 0-7472-7983-7 grh
POH: *Doubleday Trade* pb 3/90, 517pp, US\$8.95, ISBN 0-385-26747-9

These books should never be considered or read separately; they are the halves of a single novel. In a future where the hundreds of worlds of the Human Hegemony are linked by instantaneous teleportation operated by autonomous Artificial Intelligences, and the descendants of the early space habitats have used faster-than-light drives to travel beyond the Hegemony to become the new barbarians, the world Hyperion is an enigma. What is the Shrike and what are the Time Tombs, and what do they have to do with everything? This book has enormous flaws to go with its enormous size and enormous complexity, but it is fascinating even so. Simmons has recognised that our future is tied to computers, but for the sake of his plot builds up a hokey DNA / Silicon straw man which he can later tear apart in a dramatic climax. The intelligent computers are more likely from the start to be built between our ears than in the space between one mathematical point and the next.

Thomas Thomas/Roger Zelazny *The Mask of Loki*
Baen Books pb 11/90, 340pp, \$10.99, ISBN 0-671-72021-X grh
In 12th-Century Palestine, Thomas Amnet of the Templars and Hasan al Sabah of the Assassins front off and Thomas loses. Thereafter the immortal Hasan pursues the eternally reborn Thomas down the years until the present day in a deadly fugue. Hasan must keep Thomas' successive incarnations ignorant, lest good triumph and evil be confounded. He fails — but who is the winner and is he really good?

Wynne Whiteford *Lake of the Sun*
Ace Books pb 5/89, 249pp, US\$3.50, ISBN 0-441-46991-4 grh
Human beings, stranded descendants of some long lost civilisation's space exploration, live 8 kilometres below the surface of Mars. They have forgotten there is a surface — until (to paraphrase the back cover) Earth invades Mars. This book belongs very much to the Hal Clement school of writing, sharing both its strengths and its weaknesses.



Small Press (Continued from Page 21)

The Captain's Log 171, 172 28pp & 28pp A4 Trade/Join (\$15pa). Austrek, GPO Box 5206AA, Melbourne 3001. Monthly zine of Victorian *STAR TREK* club. 171 (Oct) continues the 25th Anniversary theme started in 170; 172 (Nov) covers the Australian TV debut of *ST:TNG*.

The Convention Update 1 16pp foolscap Act/Join (see *Convention Calendar*). **The Convention**, PO Box 322, Bentleigh 3204. First PR from **The Convention**. Rundown on the theme, help for out-of-towners, etc.

The Mentor 72 70pp A4 Act/\$2. Ron Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd, Faulconbridge 2776. VolgaCon Report (Part 1), fiction, columns, letters, book reviews. VolgaCon sounds like it was quite a bash.

The Norman Exile 18pp US Act. Harry Andruschak, PO Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309, USA. Features 9-page Confiction report by Betty Knight. Balance is stream-of-life by Andy.

Warp 81 31pp A5 Trade/Join (NZ\$20pa). NASP, PO Box 5516, Dunedin, NEW ZEALAND. Magazine of NZ's national sf club. Club news, reviews, letters, Alex Heatley Mutters about Contributions to Fandom.

Phoenixzine 28 16+8pp A5 Trade/Join (see review on page 21). The November issue; includes 8-page insert detailing the most draconian club Constitution I have ever seen — worth reading (once only).

Act = Available for Contribution or Trade (also known as 'the usual') as well as any other means noted. If a magazine is not marked 'Act', you must send money.

— FIRST FOLD —

— Deadline for next issue: 10th January 1992 —

Who Did What

THYME is co-edited by Greg Hills and Mark Loney
Layout and design: Greg Hills. Subscriptions: Mark Loney
Artist: Ian Gunn. Columnist: Terry Frost

Address: **THYME**, PO Box 428, Richmond 3121

Word processor and desktop publisher: **Word Perfect 5.1**. Hardware 80386-25MHz IBM-compatible computer, GeniScan 4500 hand scanner, Sharp JX-9500E laser printer, temperamental Canon NP-500 photocopier.

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Late Convention Notices

TOLKIEN CONFERENCE (NSW Tolk) 3-5 January 1992
Uni of New England, Armidale, NSW. In conjunction with the **Mythopoeic Literature Soc of Australia**. Rates \$35 employed, \$20 other. Rooms \$40 per day full accomodation. Phone (067)-73-2313. Mail Dr K Massingham, Master, Wright College, UNE, Armidale 2351.

KITTYCON (Melbourne General) 28/29 March 1992
Site tba. A small relaxacon, open to all but with a literary tilt. Get psyched up to attend **SynCon**. **Constantinople** drops its, er, *litter* preparatory to bidding at **SynCon** to become the 1994 Australian SF Convention. Rates tba (Probably \$30-\$35). Mail **KittyCon**, PO Box 212, World Trade Centre 3005.

— SECOND FOLD —

Thyme — The Australasian SF News Magazine

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VBH91 5466

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