

#87 — July 1992

Thrane

Twelfth Year of Publication

The Australasian SF News Magazine

Eleventh Anniversary Issue

Reports on Swancon 17 ● The ConTract ● Kittycon ● Syncon '92

Ditmar Awards 1992 ● Feuding, Squabbling & Backstabbing

Anatomy of Wonder

CROWN OF THORNS
HAIR OF THE DOG
PARTING OF THE WAYS
EARS OF CORN
TONGUE OF FLAME
PALATE OF COLOURS
JAWS OF LIFE
NECK OF A BOTTLE
SPINE OF A BOOK
ARMS OF THE LAW
HEART OF GOLD
CHEST OF DRAWERS
ROLL OF THUNDER
BACK OF BEYOND
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COCK OF THE WALK
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THUMB OF MY BEST FRIENDS
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WAIST OF SPACE
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BALLS OF FIRE
SEED OF DISCORD
THIGH OF RELIEF
LEG OF LAMB
KNEES OF MOTHER BROWN
BONE OF CONTENTION
NERVES OF STEEL
CALF OF GOLD
SOLE OF DISCRETION

Jan
Turn
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WITH SOME HELP FROM
MR. M. BUONAROTTI

'Carry On Till Morning —'

STAR TREK VI Reviewed by Greg Hills

'Please let me know if there's any other way we can cock up tonight.' — Kirk

A starscape. Pan in on pot-bellied Federation ship. Flip to view of the bridge, where Captain Sulu is about to not have a nice cuppa. The ship begins to vibrate, and a viewscreen suddenly displays an all-too-familiar explosion of concentric ringlike shock-waves. Cut to Sulu, calling the Klingons near the devastated worldlet of Praxis.

Sulu *'Do you need assistance?'*
Klingon *'Bugger off!'*

An explosion destroys the Klingon Empire's main power station. Without help from the Federation, the Klingon Empire is doomed within fifty years. A Chancellor of the Empire is despatched to Earth, and Kirk is ordered to escort the Chancellor's ship with the Enterprise.

The Klingon ship is unexpectedly fired upon, apparently by the Enterprise. In the confusion, two armoured figures beam aboard the Klingon vessel and kill the Chancellor. When the vengeful Klingons restore power and turn to fight, Kirk surrenders. He and McCoy are tried by a Klingon court and condemned to death, the sentence being commuted to life imprisonment in the dilithium mines because of the extraordinary political situation.

With the help of a shapeshifting alien, Kirk escapes the mines and is beamed aboard the Enterprise just ahead of the phasers of the pursuing Klingon guards. Together, Kirk and Spock solve the mystery of the attack and head off to save the day at the 'Camp Khitomer' diplomatic summit between the President of the Federation and the new Klingon Chancellor (who happens to be the old one's daughter).

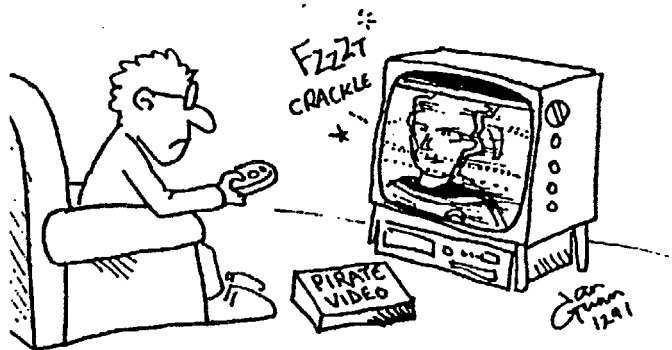
Questions abound. If a Klingon ship in Kirk's time can fire while hidden by the Romulan cloaking device, why does the Federation apparently not possess the cloaking device nor the Romulans the means of firing through it in the time of *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (ST:TNG)*? Why does nobody notice the object on Kirk's shoulder at the trial — and why are the convicts allowed to retain their uniforms afterward? Why is this the first time in all the series that we hear of sensors that will detect a phaser fired on 'kill' aboard the Enterprise — and isn't the scene with disintegration of the pot a somewhat obvious case of having the characters tell each other things they must already know simply in order to instruct the audience? How can three capital ships engage uninterruptedly in a dogfight above a planet where a top secret summit is being attended by the highest officials of both Federation and Empire? This bespeaks remarkable (heretofore unheard-of) trust on both sides, and also remarkable ineptitude on the part of the guards who allowed the summit to continue when photon torpedoes were detonating a few miles above

their heads. Indeed, it's never really explained why the destruction of the power station spells the end for the Klingons (and not the Federation whose border is so near), why it will take fifty years, and why the Klingons can't simply replace the station and go on. It's a long list.

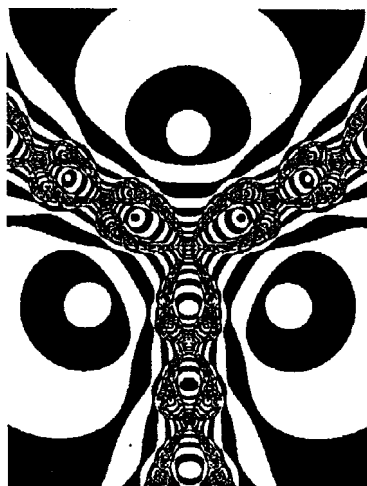
Then there is the simple creative failure in a movie modelled so openly on a remarkably simplistic view of the US/USSR relationship at the time of the script's writing. The story is set so far inside Fairyland as to negate any possibility of meaningful commentary on the course of human events, unless you are already far gone in wish fulfilment.

Aside from all of which it's a great movie with some entertaining lines and enough excitement and fisticuffs to satisfy the casual walk-in viewer. It requires little familiarity with what has gone before — provided you have seen enough of the TV episodes, you need not have seen the earlier films, which is a helpful change from some of those earlier films. The special effects seem not quite up to the standard of *ST:TNG* (an odd point given that the film is new while *ST:TNG* has been around a while now), but this is possibly an artefact of the large screen format, which reveals weaknesses that the TV screen conceals.

I enjoyed the film, but I am disappointed that its shortcomings left it far short of being the highlight of the sf movie year. Why else did they pay all those scriptwriters and other experts so much money?



STAR TREK : THE NINTH GENERATION



Thyme 87 — 6 July 1992

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

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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 for seven issues

Overseas (economy air): \$A2.50 per issue, \$A15.00 for seven issues.

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

Canadian Agent: Lloyd Penney, 412/4 Lisa St, Brampton, Ont, Canada L6T 4B6

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AN APOLOGY

Mark Loney

The last issue of *Thyme* called itself the official Silly Season Issue. I apologize for the fact that the Silly Season has now been going on for a good six months and that *Thyme* has been unaccountably absent since January 1992.

There is, of course, an explanation but, as I'm more interested in getting *Thyme* going again, this issue will concentrate on the news rather than what has been happening to the news service.

As for the future, I would like to be able to say that *Thyme* is back on its feet and that the publishing schedule will get back to normal (where normal is an issue every two months or so), but I can't. The next issue will be published in August and take advantage of the enormous amount of material that has been cut from this issue - but after that I'm not too sure. As reported elsewhere in this issue, I leave Marvelous Melbourne for Washington D.C. in mid-October and won't be back in Australia until 1995. Any volunteers?

In closing, I would like to thank all those who contributed to this issue of *Thyme*, including those whose contributions have been excised after being kept on hold for several months.

FAN FUND NEWS

Roger Weddall has won the 1992 *Down Under Fan Fund (DUFF)* race and taken up the position of Australian Administrator. There were 133 votes cast with Roger receiving 85 first preference votes and Greg Hills 29 first preference votes. DUFF Australia currently has about \$2,700 in the bank.

Roger has already published the first issue of *The Secret DUFF Newsletter* and announced plans to leave Melbourne for North America in mid-August. His itinerary starts with Magicon, the 1992 WorldCon in Florida, and then goes on for another six months or so. At the moment he is looking for suggestions about where to visit and who to meet. Personally, I can't wait for the trip report - will it be as long as *The Harp Stateside*?

Nominations for next DUFF race, to select a North American fan to travel to Australia in 1993, have already opened. Nominations will close on 15 September 1992 with ballots available from 1 October and voting closing on 1 February 1993. The winner will attend *SwanCon 18* in Perth over Easter 1993. Roger Weddall and DUFF can be contacted at PO Box 273, Fitzroy VIC 3065, Australia. The North American administrator remains Art Widner, PO Box 677, Gualala CA 95445, USA.

Rex Thompson, the New Zealand Administrator of the *Fan Fund of Australia and New Zealand (FFANZ)* has been and gone. Nominations for a new Australian Administrator of the FFANZ opened on 1 May and will close on 31 August. The successful candidate will travel to Defcon '93, which is both the New Zealand NatCon and the Australasian Media NatCon, and then administer the fund until the election of their successor (probably in 1995). Candidates require one Australian and one NZ nominator, must post a \$10.00 bond, and must supply a platform. Voting will be from 15 September 1992 to 12 April 1993. The Australian Administrator is Alan Stewart, PO Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne VIC 3005. In New Zealand, write to Rex Thompson, PO Box 333, Dunedin.

Eva Hauser, the 1992 winner of the *Get Under Fan Fund (GUFF)* has also been and gone. From the total 84 votes cast worldwide, Eva received 51 votes to Bridget's 27, with 6 No Preference or write-ins. Votes were received from Australia, Belgium, Britain, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, and the USA. Nominations are apparently open for next Australasia to Europe race. For details, contact Roman Orzanski, PO Box 131, Marden SA 5070.

Last issue we reported Jeanne Bowman's *Transatlantic Fan Fund* win using figures taken over the phone from European Administrator Pam Wells. The official figures are:

	Bowman	Brandt	Hold Over Funds
1st	114	104	2
2nd	85	90	15
3rd	9	6	119
4th	0	2	3

53 European and 125 North American ballots were cast. Although Jeanne Bowman was declared the winner in the first round, there was an irregularity in the vote counting which could cause trouble if repeated in future races, namely the failure to count write-in votes in the first round. There were apparently three first-place write-in votes cast. Like 'Hold Over Funds' and unlike 'No Preference', these are votes for someone or something other than one of the official candidates (ie are protest votes of sorts) and should be counted in the first round even if they would have no effect on the final result.

CONVENTION NEWS

About 150 people attended *SynCon '92* over the Easter break. The following Ditmar Awards were presented: Best Novel or Collection - *Wormwood* by Terry Dowling (Aphelion); Best Short Fiction - 'Alone in His Chariot' by Sean McMullen (Eidolon); Best Fanzine - *Eidolon*; Best Artist - Nick Stathopoulos; Best Fan Writer - Bruce Gillespie. Sean McMullen received The William Atheling Jr. Award for Criticism and Review for 'Going Commercial' (Eidolon).

The attendance at *HongCon '92* in Adelaide over the Queens Birthday weekend was also around 150. The following ASFMA Awards were presented: Best Audio-Visual Presentation - *James Bond etc* by George Ivanoff; Best Fan Artist - Steven Scholz; Best Fan Writer - Martin Riley; Best Fiction Zine - *Steve & Martins Excellent Fanzine* by Steven Scholz and Martin Riley. Best Newszine was a three-way tie between *Just Alice* by Adam Jenkins, *Captain's Log* by Gail Adams of Austrek and *Ethel the Aardvark* by Alan Stewart of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club.

After successful bids at both *SynCon* and *HongCon*, *Constantinople* is now both the 1994 Australian Science Fiction Convention and the 1994 Australasian SF Media Convention. The Professional GoH is William Gibson while Bruce Gillespie and Narrelle Harrie are Fan GoHs. For information, write to PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne VIC 3005.

OTHER NEWS

Amazing Sheet has metamorphized into *The Australian SF Writers' News* and is now available for free - but only if you subscribe to *Aurealis* (send \$24 to Chimaera Publications, PO Box 538, Mt Waverley VIC 3149).

OTHER NEWS continued...

We Was Wrong. In *Round the Clubs* last issue we reported the fanging of Geoff Tilley by the Wheel of Fortune. This was wishful thinking. In fact it was George Ivanoff who received the vengeful bite.

LOCUS Was Wrong Too. Alan Stewart was amused by spotting the following listing in *LOCUS* (January 1992), page 50: 'Australian Nat'l Con (April 17-20 '92) Shore Motor Inn, Sydney, Australia; A\$95 sngl/dbl. GoH: Sean McMullen. AGoH: Michael Whelan. FGoH: Nick Stathopoulos ...'

SF CHRONICLE Was Wrong Too Too. *SFC*, May 1992 carries the following: 'SFC wrongly reported in *Fan Newsnotes* last May, in a story based on one in the Australian newszine *DOXY*, published by John Foyster, that the 1991 Australian National SF Convention (*SunCon*) was nearly cancelled because it could not afford \$16,000 for airfares and appearance money for Harlan & Susan Ellison. Actually, Ellison did not demand appearance money. *SunCon* offered him air tickets and expense money, and at no time did *SunCon* tell him it was in financial difficulty. He was finally told the convention had been cancelled, only to learn later that it was on again, with other guests of honour. Ellison faxed a letter to Australia noting speaking engagements and writing jobs he'd turned down in expectation of attending, only to be left holding an (empty) bag. Convention chair Cathy Kerrigan expressly stated in a statement to the convention, in reference to Foyster and *DOXY*, "If further articles are published anywhere in fandom defaming my character or my actions ... I will take legal action." *SFC* regrets being taken in by misinformation and being used as a tool in what was apparently a fan feud.'

Marilyn Pride included some goss with her *Dinosaurs* ad (see page 16 for an investment worth thinking about). After a quiet Xmas, 'work has picked up now. Lewis has just made a frowning and smiling gargoyle for a *Dulux Paint* commercial. I helped puppeteer it, in between carving some wooden dingoes for a movie. The shoot was nightmarish (22 hours of hanging around the set while the clients dithered about the shot and tried unsuccessfully to convey what it was they wanted the puppet to do). After about 50 takes they were satisfied and hurried off home to England, taking the puppet and its cables with them in our absence! Anyway, it was good to get some income to pay for 'The Great Wall of Linden', a King Kong-like structure which had to be built when we found that our proposed house-postings were to rest on a sand pit instead of the solid rock everyone had assumed was there. At least we can stick gargoyle faces and artificial skeletons into the gaps between the rocks.' Marilyn also noted that 'meantime' she is going to do another *Dinosaurs* book and that Lewis may do another series of the childrens s/f TV series, *Miraculous Mellops*.

Terry Pratchett, author of *STRATA* and the *DISCWORLD* books was in Australia 20-24 April. Terry was Guest of Honour at *Discontinuity* in Auckland (NZ) at Easter (17-20 April) and will be back in Oz next year to be Guest of Honour at *Swancon* 18, again at Easter (8-12 April). These are obviously voyages of *Disc-covery*.

SWANCON 17

Australia Day weekend, 1992

Not A Bad Media Con

Paul Ewins

I decided to go to *Swancon* 17 after receiving a professional-looking flyer through the mail. After booking my accomodation and flight I found that some of my friends were planning to go too, and eventually seven of us made it over with six of us (including me) attending our first *Swancon*. I had been given various views on what a *Swancon* is like but most of them agreed that they were a lot of fun and on this point they were certainly correct. This was no doubt due to some interesting panels, some lively participation events (spaceship building, theatre-sports, phasar strike, etc) and two talented and fascinating Guests in Nick Stathopoulos and Terry Dowling.

Nick seemed to be in absolutely everything, even managing to be programmed on two panels at once on the Monday. Apart from being a professional artist Nick also manages to be an animator, sculptor, costumier, music historian, and modeller (talented bastard, isn't he?) all of which he is exceedingly good at. Not only that, he is able to talk about these various subjects without boring his audience to tears, which is a major accomplishment in itself (do I sound jealous enough yet?). During the course of the con we were treated to insights into his work as an artist, his animation and television work and an interesting look at plagiarism in film music (I almost forgot, Nick has a law degree as well). I look forward to seeing Nick again at *Syncon '92*.

While Terry's interests are not quite as wide-ranging as Nick's, he is every bit as talented and interesting (and just as friendly). He too is no stranger to television work, with six years work on the world's longest-running sf show (*Mr Squiggle* in case you're wondering). Terry also happens to be one of Australia's leading sf authors. Like Nick, Terry popped up on various panels and was always entertaining. While both are well known they still prove my pet theory that it is better to have an interesting Guest than a big name Guest. The organisers of *Swancon* 17 are to be congratulated for managing to get Guests of this calibre.

The Video programme was a bit of a let-down, with not enough variety. The episodes tended to be shown in blocks, with four episodes of *Red Dwarf* being followed by three of *NextGen* and so on. If you had already seen the show in question there could be a long wait for something different. Japanese animation has received a lot of attention in the last year and had its own video stream at *Swancon*, occasionally taking over the main video stream as well. Having seen Japanimation at both *Conquest '91* (the Melbourne games con) and *Concave 2* there wasn't much novelty factor left in it for me. Unfortunately the majority of the episodes I saw were of the 'Semi-naked Teenage Karate Girls in Space' style aimed squarely at the adolescent male and left a lot to be desired in terms of entertainment value.

The convention also boasted a gaming stream, which was a lot smaller than I expected. As a member of a gaming club which sees 80 regular attendees and being used to the 400+ attendances of *Conquest* and *CanCon* it was a little disconcerting to find only a couple of games running at most times of the day. This was my first lesson in the advantages of a larger population. The Special Guest for the games side of things was Paul Kidd, designer of *Albedo*

and Lace & Steel and another familiar Melbourne face. I didn't catch any of his gaming talks but know from past experience that he has a good stock of entertaining stories of his adventures in the weirder reaches of Furry Fandom.

Having tried a few new events in the program the organisers also dropped some of the traditional convention events. Given Nick's skills as a costumer and artist I thought it rather unfortunate that there was no Art Show and no formal Masquerade. The Masquerade was dropped in favour of judging peoples hall costumes (which in a Perth summer were few and far between) on the grounds that the increase in the number of skits had led to a decrease in the standard of costuming. I think this was a peculiar piece of logic as many of the more spectacular costumes are impractical for hall costumes and that it is the chance to compete on stage in front of an audience that inspires the competitors. Certainly I wouldn't get particularly excited about wandering around for half a day in a hot costume hoping that the judges will see me.

Instead of a formal banquet there was a Pizza Banquet, which was a good idea badly executed. Apart from some logistical problems with the orders and delivery the main problem was that it ended up like a giant dial-a-pizza operation where everyone got their pizza and then went somewhere else to eat it. The essence of a banquet is not so much the food or entertainment as the chance to sit down for a couple of hours over a meal and chat to other fans. The banquet should be a social experience, not a culinary one and in this sense it was a dismal failure. The idea of an inexpensive, fun banquet is worthwhile and deserves another chance. The Sunday night Pasta binge came a little closer to this ideal, but was shared with the general public in the hotel bistro which tended to make the atmosphere a little less intimate. Still, our table bopped along happily as the resident band 'Guido and the Sleazematics' skilfully murdered many of our favourite tunes.

One of the good things about Swancon is that all of the various elements of fandom were represented, from the SCA through to serious Lit fans. After chatting to various people I found that all the usual fannish traditions were being observed: inter-club jealousies, backstabbing committees, petty power plays and the like. It made me downright nostalgic for the old days of Melbourne Fandom. The divide between 'Media Fans' and the 'Lit Fans' is still quite large although efforts are being made to bring the various types of fans closer together. Who knows, one day Swancon might actually have some Science Fiction Fans attending (oops, I appear to have tripped over my soap-box again). Despite all this I found the Perth fans to be nice, friendly people and hope to see them at other conventions.

Overall Swancon 17 would have to be counted as a roaring success, with attendances far exceeding expectations and most things appearing to go smoothly. I enjoyed myself enormously, and despite the cost of the trip would be happy to go again. It will be interesting to see what happens next year as the new committee devote themselves to the serious business of running a LitNatCon.

The Contract

St Valentine's Day weekend, 1992

Gumboots

Greg Hills

It starts like this, see. I am making a three grand heist in February and am looking to lam it to spend the loot. Well, I am drinking in my usual Friday night haunt when this skirt walks up and offers me a ConTract if I will deliver this guy's bedroll to Adelaide for her. Seems he heeled and toed from her apartment recently and didn't even stop to pack. I make a mental note to never cross this dame, but I accept the ConTract and stuff the bedroll in my luggage.

So I leg it to the interstate bus terminal, keeping an eye over my shoulder in case the Feds are closing in. Firefly Coaches, \$30 gets me onto the 8:30 bus for a ten and a half hour journey. The bus is packed, but I don't think any of the passengers are spotters.

In Adelaide I shoulder my baggage and make my way to a seedy backstreets pancake joint, where someone is supposed to meet me. I order breakfast. I fold a copy of a sleazy two-buck rag called *THYME* so that only the title is visible, placing the paper beside me on the table so that my ConTract contact can find me. Not needed — he is 'Spats' Orszanski, sometime GUFF winner and sleaze about town. He is also the jerk who ran out on the skirt I met in Melbourne. A swell guy. He tells me that 'Speedy' MacKereth is on his way with a flivver to take us to the ConTract rendezvous at an exclusive chalet in the Adelaide hills. I pass on a hug the skirt gave me for him and tell him that I have his bedroll.

The rendezvous is Hôchstên's, near Hahndorf, about fifteen miles out of Adelaide. When we arrive the joint is deserted bar the usual non-ConTract public. We break into the main conference room. 'Speedy' occupies the computerised registration desk and begins preparing and printing out name badges from his hot list. 'Spats' and me start setting up trestle tables to hold the equipment for the counterfeiting demonstration. Somewhere around here I shake off the fake '20s facade and resume my normal writing style.

Other Mobsters enter — Adam 'Pretty Boy' Jenkins with Ruth 'Diamond Lil' Purdy on his arm, Joan 'Jugs' Duff, Juliette 'Bubbles' Woods, Damian 'Knuckles' Warman, Cassie 'Roulette' Helmsley, Tony 'Eyebrows' Penglis, Zoran 'Casper' Bekric, David 'Noodles' Summers. The ConTract is present, except for Alan 'The Book-keeper' Bray and moll Lesley 'Feathers' Bray, who are nursing the 'counterfeiting' equipment — a Roneo mimeo and electrostenciller — on the road from Adelaide. Guest of Honour John 'Capo de tutti Capi' Foyster has gone to Malaysia with Yvonne 'Rubbed-Out' Rousseau, but one of the first items on the agenda is trooping off to Chalet 8 to listen to his GoH Speech by telephone, making him a sort of 'Ghost of Honour' instead. An idea worth trying again elsewhere.

Back at the con venue, The Pot Luck Panel has disappeared but the Fanzine Workshop moves forward to take its place. Roman 'Spats' Orszanski emcees, giving a quick rundown on fanzines and the like. This takes about half an hour, at which point the Mob decides it needs a break from this heavy intellectual stuff and heads off to play on the trampolines and tennis courts for a couple of hours. This sets the pattern for the rest of the convention — the programme is never allowed to get in the way of having fun. The miracle is that so many of the items listed in the

'Putative Program' in the final Progress Report actually happened. (But whatever happened to the instant fanzine?)

Höchstens's was an excellent venue for a relaxacon. The con booked a function room and two chalets; if you didn't mind being crammed in with other fans the 'sardine-can' accomodation was fine. Nobody minded, though the nights were far from free of adventure and misadventure, and were punctuated by the honking of ducks. The local ducks featured strongly in the gestalt of the convention, by reputation being imbued with carnivorous, sinister motives.

The following notes made by Adam Jenkins at the time (and later stolen off the computer by *THYME*) give a more — intimate — taste of the convention. Be careful not to stub your toes on the in-jokes.

'Gossip and Rumours

'Saturday night was witness to many strange and unusual happenings, not the least of which was the first stirrings of a ménage à trois - Bubbles, Spats, and an undisclosed mystery Valentine, who was heard to refer to Bubbles as having "lovely eyes". Other romantic stirrings were sighted between Roulette and Noodles, who apparently remind many a Mobster of Bubbles and Chocolate. You can't have Roulette without Noodles, or Noodles without Roulette.

'Still on Noodles, he offered to share his quite considerable riches to any young lady prepared to marry him and bear his child. So far, only Speedy has announced his willingness to accept this post, and he is precluded from being accepted because of gender-based incompatibilities.

'Spats, well known for his womanising, has been acting in a very unusual fashion. On the first night of his arrival, he turned down an offer of spending the night in the room of two beautiful and unattached women, accepting instead to share with Speedy. On the second night, Spats slept with a table. If even Spats can't make a home run, what hope is there for those of us who are but merely mortal.

'As further proof of Roulette's besottment, she turned down the advances of a fine and mighty knight, the winner of many a tourney. Even when he knelt before her in a fit of chivalry, she still managed to resist the temptation and sit out the next dance. Love is blind.

'Roulette and Bubbles were heard to cry in their sleep "It's got eyes on top!" Pretty Boy and Diamond Lil were not (definitely not and beyond all question not) bouncing on their bed in the early hours of the morning. When left alone by the rest of the mob, they only read books, nothing more, and those books were of exceptional literary standards. These two are most definitely pseudo-fans, and have much to learn about conventions. They also took individual showers.

'Never play tennis with Bubbles and Knuckles. It is a dirty sport. Never share a trampoline, leave in the middle of an Illuminati game, or forget just who you are during Cluedo. Don't play Poker with people who cheat at Solitaire, and never play Solitaire with an audience.'

In the end, and with space running out, all I can say is the eternal 'you had to be there'. I certainly hope to be there again next year.

KITTYCON

March, 1992

Kit Kats Away

Mark Loney

Armed only with a copy of MONA LISA OVERDRIVE, my camera, an umbrella and map 69 as torn from an Edition 16 Melways, I set off for KittyCon. The train trip from Richmond to Oakleigh was uneventful and, while the walk from the station to the 4th Oakleigh Scout Hall was pleasant, it was a little longer than "reasonably close" had led me to expect. But it was still early Saturday afternoon when I found myself at the 4th Oakleigh Scout Hall where, after paying the munificent fee of \$5, I was given a complimentary Kit Kat and a membership badge for the day.

The 4th Oakleigh Scout Hall had a familiar air to it even though I had never been a scout. Although it seems obvious now, that feeling of déjà vu came from the fact that KittyCon looked very much like a Friday night MSFC meeting. The Merv Binns table of books, located by the hallway which led through to the rooms at the rear of the hall, was an additional element but overall the impression was one of St David's Uniting Church Hall. The faces were familiar and that well known MSFC ambience of chaos threatening to spontaneously bring forth a lego competition was definitely overpowering the Scouting Honour Rolls and Rover posters.

Down the hallway was a kitchen supplying hot or cold drinks on demand and, a little bit further on, George Ivanoff talking about a science fiction television series currently being made in Melbourne. Your intrepid reporter must admit to not quite catching the title of series, perhaps it was *Take A Left At The Next Galaxy*, but can advise that it is an Australian German co-production that will probably be in post-production by the time this report is in print. In between takes George had been busy with his camera although, as he regretfully reported, there was no photograph of Bruce Spence, who many readers will remember as the Gyro Captain from MAD MAX II. Just for the record, George asked and Bruce ran away.

Shortly after this, in the finest of television traditions, George was wound up and his audience moved to the adjacent Caloola Reserve for the second ever performance of the human orrery. Directed by Roger Weddall, the human orrery improved on the original 1987 performance — through, for example, the use of coloured flags to mark the orbits rather than string — and involved most of the membership of KittyCon in a reenactment of the birth, life and death of the universe. One disappointing aspect was the refusal of the four observers, two nameless previous editors of *THYME* amongst them, to acknowledge that they too were subject to Heisenberg's Principle. With the rest of the solar system inside the event horizon of the black hole their claim to be objective observers unaffected by the passage of events flew in the face of modern physics. But the cast enjoyed their performance, from the frenetic huddle that preceded the Big Bang to the crushing finale brought about by the black hole. Special thanks must go to Jane Tisell for all her help, while mention must also be made of the careful examination of the human orrery by the local constabulary — who obviously had no idea why all those people were walking around and around and around...

Returning to the hall, human orrery participants and observers found themselves confronted by Celebrity Heads — a game which I am assured has its origins in *Hey Hey It's Saturday*. Whether this vicious rumour is true or false, a good time was had by all except the hapless victims as they tried to work that whether they were Sherlock Holmes, Mad Max, Dracula, Romana, Isaac Asimov, R2D2 or Michael J. Fox. For the record, Mad Max won easily from Dracula and Romana — neither or whom, I think it is fair to say, was at all close to divining their identity.

The next item on the program was the KittyCon dinner, a barbecue/sausage sizzle according to the program book, but I had a previous engagement in St Kilda with some friends from work so, with some regret, I made my way back to the Oakleigh railway station and found myself on a train to Richmond with a felt Constantinople the three legged cat pinned to my shirt. After half a day at KittyCon I was quite prepared to say that it was obviously succeeding as a relaxacon and would have been a very pleasant way to spend the whole weekend. Not, perhaps, the ideal first convention for a neofan but certainly a good way for an established fan to get involved in a lego competition. **Constantinople** the convention promises to be even better.

And while we're on the subject of cats...

Best Fannish Cat Candidates Go Big Time

1991 Ditmar Award Nominees Godzilla and C'Mell have moved on to bigger and better things, entering the Whiskas •Cat of the Year contest. The venture-some pair were recently featured in a photospread about the contest in an issue of *THE WOMAN'S WEEKLY* (see above). 'We're looking for a cat with personality and appeal' said the contest in the accompanying text. Humans Ian Gunn and Karen Pender-Gunn thought that their pets certainly qualified on this score and sent in an entry for the \$30,000 contest.

Which, of course, leads us to...

THE 1992 DITMAR AWARDS

Greg Hills

Thirty-two completed ballots were received for the 1992 Australian SF ('Ditmar') Awards. This represents a very light turnout and the list of voters is notable for its absences (including, half the current *THYME* editorship). The vast majority of the voters are on our mailing list.

Votes were received from: Justin Ackroyd, James Allen, Patricia Anderson, Garfield Barnard, Jeremy Byrne, Katherine Cummings, Dianne de Bellis, Terry Dowling, Terry Frost, Bruce Gillespie, Michelle Hallett, Edwina Harvey, Susan John, Rod Kearins, Mark Loney, LynC, Kevin MacLean, Peter McNamara, Lewis Morley, Clive Newall, Robin Pen, Marilyn Pride, Blair Ramage, Richard Scriven, Gerald Smith, Nick Stathopoulos, Alan Stewart, Jonathan Strahan, Jeanette Tipping, Beky Tully, Karen 'Womble' Warnock, and Roger Weddall.

As usual, expectations of errors in the Ditmar ballot were gratified. The version distributed with *ETHEL THE AARDVARK 41* and some distributed by hand mis-spelled Tim Richards as 'Tim Rickards' and omitted the 'No Award' category entirely. Intercity phone conversations (the telefan network) with Gerald 'Syncon Ditmar Subcommittee' Smith

resulted in a corrected ballot which was to be distributed with *THYME 87*. The best-laid plans, etc, led to this version not being so distributed.

Another notable point was the mention of a Voting Only membership in the original accompanying membership form without mention of just how much such a membership was. This too was fixed up.

In the following summary of voting, '1st', '2nd' etc refers to the allocation of preferences as the less popular candidates are eliminated in the automatic runoff. '+ #' notes the number of votes gained by a candidate; '= #' notes the new total of votes for that candidate. The eventual winner is indicated in **bold and italic type**. All columns total 32.

Item	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
<u>Best Novel or Collection</u>					
From Sea to . . .	5	elim.			
<i>Wormwood</i>	12	+5=17	-	-	-17
Brother Night	0	elim.			
Del Del	5	elim.			
Brainchild	6	+3=9			9
No Award	0	elim.			
Exhausted Ballots	4	+2=6			6

The candidates were: FROM SEA TO SHINING STAR by A Bertram Chandler, ***WORMWOOD*** by Terry Dowling (winner), BROTHER NIGHT and DEL DEL by Victor Kelleher, and BRAINCHILD by George Turner.

Best Short Fiction

Vanities	2	2	elim.		
Nobody's Fool	1	elim.			
A Deadly Edge . . .	5	5	5	+1=6	elim.
Olive Truffles	9	9	+1=10	+1=11	+1=12 12
The Dominant Style	3	3	3	elim.	
<i>Alone in His Chariot</i>	6	+1=7	+1=8	+1=9	+5=14 14
No Award	0	elim.			
Exhausted Ballots	6	6	6	6	6 6

The candidates were Vanities, Nobody's Fool, and A Deadly Edge Their Red Beaks Pass Along by Terry Dowling, Olive Truffles by Leanne Frahm, The Dominant Style and Alone in His Chariot (winner) by Sean McMullen.

Best Fanzine

<i>Eidolon</i>	17	-	-	-	-17
Ethel the Aardvark	4				4
Inconsequential . . .	1				1
Thyme (LynC/Clively)	3				3
Thyme (Hills/Loney)	6				6
No Award	0				0
Exhausted Ballots	1				1

The candidates were ***EIDOLON*** edited by Jeremy Byrne (winner), ***ETHEL THE AARDVARK*** edited by Alan Stewart, ***INCONSEQUENTIAL PARALLAX*** edited by Tim Richards and Narelle Harris, ***THYME*** edited by LynC and Clive Newall, ***THYME*** edited by Greg Hills and Mark Loney.

Best Fan Writer

James Allen	5	+1=6	+2=8	+1=9	9
Terry Frost	7	7	7	elim.	
<i>Bruce Gillespie</i>		11	11	+1=12	+4=16 16
Greg Hills	1	elim.		(Aw, rats)	
Alan Stewart	3	3	elim.		
No Award	0	elim.			
Exhausted Ballots	5	5	5	+2=7	7

Best SF or Fantasy Artist

Ian Gunn	7	+3=10	+2=12		12
Craig Hilton	5		5	elim.	
Nick Stathopoulos	16	16	+1=17	-	-17
Phil Wlodarczyk	3			elim.	
No Award	0			elim.	
Exhausted Ballots	1	1	1		1

William Atheling Jr Award

Jonathan Carroll	10	+1=11			11
Going Commercial	12	+1=13	-	-	-13
Review of . . .	4			elim.	
No Award	0			elim.	
Exhausted Ballots	6	+2=8			8

The candidates were **Jonathan Carroll**, *Storyteller* by Bruce Gillespie (Nova Mob and ANZAPA, since revised for *SF COMMENTARY* 71/72), **Going Commercial** by Sean McMullen (*EIDOLON*) (winner), and a review of *THE FANTASTIC CIVIL WAR* by Blair Ramage (*GALAXY NEWSLETTER*).

Other Awards included the presentation of the inaugural *Bertram Chandler Award for Contribution to Australian SF* — 'the Chandler' (backed by the Australian SF Foundation) — to Van Ikin. *Short Story Contest*: 1st *The Third Storey* by Lyn McConchie; 2nd *Some Things Won't Change* by Ron Ward; Encouragement Award to David Clancy. *Art Show*: 2D Amateur Alan Englert; 2D Professional Greg Bridges; 3D Amateur Kerri Hanlon; 3D Professional Marilyn Pride. Committee Awards 'for contributions to Australian fandom' went to Jack Herman, Eric Lindsay, Ron Clarke, Sue Clarke, and Shayne McCormack. (Shouldn't that be 'to Sydney Fandom'?)

And thus we come to...

SYNCON '92

Easter, 1992

Value For Money

Roger Weddall

It wasn't until two weeks before the convention that I finally decided that I would attend it. The budget had been looking shaky and what, I asked myself, was there going on in Sydney that could make me pack my bags and commit myself to spending hundreds of dollars before the con was done.

The answer came easily: in Sydney there would be friends, and fans and fun. Still, for the many people who were notable by their absence, these things were not enough. We've all been told to death that we're in the middle of a recession and that the money is tight . . . and while this certainly accounted for some people not being there, especially people from interstate, the exceptionally low attendance at this year's NatCon — about 150 people — could probably be properly attributed to the uninspiring and basically inadequate publicity put around about the convention.

(It's interesting to consider that over the last decade, each time there has been a NatCon held in Sydney, the numbers have been down by roughly half. From a high of nearly 600 in 1983, to 300-odd to 150 . . . One wonders if the next time around a scant 75 will attend, and then less than 40; only time will tell.)

That important quibble aside, the fact remains that, viewed in an historical context, the chances are good that SynCon

'92 will be seen as a ground breaking convention. It wasn't so much that the main professional Guest of Honour was an artist — although that has not been tried before in Australia — as that so much attention was collectively and constructively paid to science fictional art and to the position of the sf artist in Australia.

Some credit can be given to the committee in general for their choice of guests, which set the whole show in motion. Particular credit should go to two of those guests, and to Margaret Hilliard who was responsible for assembling what was uncontestedly the best sf art show ever seen in this country, including both the '75 and '85 Australian World SF Conventions.

To put this down to the large amount of excellent Michael Whelan artwork exhibited, as some did, would be to overlook the professional quality work of at least eight Australian artists, three of whom had not exhibited at an sf convention before.

Michael Whelan himself was an excellent Guest of Honour. He came prepared with many slides of his work — as well as the aforementioned originals — about which he was able to talk, at length, with great interest. He and his partner, Audrey Price, were also very approachable, and were very visible during the con. They were excellent value for money.

Sean McMullen gave the keynote speech which opened the convention. Although for the most part it was more a catalogue of the efforts over the years of Australian artists at sf illustration, in closing Sean decried the lack of recognition accorded local sf illustration and artwork, 'especially the best professional work'. Touching briefly on the matter of the Ditmar Awards, and noting that, traditionally there existed only a trophy for amateur or fan art, he then asked the question, 'Where else can [professional sf art] get recognition?' That question was enough to set a few people's wheels turning, which led two days later to the Business Meeting of the convention altering the constitution so that six Ditmars, rather than five, could 'legally' be given annually. The determination of the award categories was left - as before - to the discretion of the relevant committee, but the change to the number of Ditmars was clearly inspired by the possibility that an award for professional sf art as well as fannish art be given; by the possibility that from now on the Australian Science Fiction Convention could take an active role in the promotion of professional Australian sf art and illustration, just as it already promotes professional Australian written sf. And if think about it, it would be pretty churlish of us not to lend a hand to those science fiction illustrators whose works we admire, when that assistance would cost us nothing but our goodwill . . .

So: from that point of view, it's possible that Syncon '92 will be seen to have been a Significant contribution. Apart from that it was business as usual. FFANZ winner Rex Thompson's talk on 'Artichoke Farming in the Himalayas' (improbably combining a pub crawl of Dunedin, the history of New Zealand fan art and cartooning, and risqué stories about various NZ fans) was a great success, as was Dr Karl Kruszelnicki's expostulations on 'Science, The Universe and Everything', while both Michael Whelan and Nick Stathopoulos were consistently entertaining.

Most of the rest of the programming I would rate as

Probably Interesting but Not Vitrally So; although it was hard to tell at times whether the audiences for panel items were as small as were because of the items's limited appeal, or because of the very small number of people at the convention over all.

One area where this showed unmistakably was the nightlife, or the comparative lack of it. The convention seemed not to have enough members attending it to reach what I'd call Critical Party Mass. Would you believe there wasn't one single big room party during the entire run of the con? The closest thing was the Constantinople in '94 bid party on Saturday night, but even at that there was no music to dance to. Melbourne fan Jane Tisell came to the rescue with her trusty portable cassette player, and nearly all was right with the world. Rex Thompson was persuaded to put down his beer bottle collection and prove his dance party animal credentials, along with Donna Heenan, Miss Jane, Kerrie Hanlon, yours truly and a number of other fans from time to time until about daybreak. The Mardi Gras it wasn't, but we had some fun.

Sunday night was Dittmar night, and all that entails. By the time Sean McMullen came up to accept his second award he'd really lost it, and the early indications were that we were in for a three hour long isn't-life-really-wonderful-and-thank-you speech — but isn't life really wonderful; and isn't this sort of thing what award nights are all about? GUFF winner Eva Hauser was up to present the award for Best Fan Writer to Bruce Gillespie, but had to wait a week until she was in Melbourne to give it to him in person. And Nick Stathopoulos, for 'SF Artist', picked up one of Lewis Morley's art deco Dittmars in a nice reversal of the '88 awards ceremony, where Lewis collected one designed by Nick.

Again, the number of people wanting to celebrate anything at all were able to fit into a fairly small suite. But, talk about making use of the available materials . . . Gigi Boudville and I formed the Secret Society of Fan Fund Candidate Carolers, and our first two targets were Jane Tisell and Kevin Maclean, both of whom we successfully convinced to get pissed and stand, respectively, as candidates for GUFF and FFANZ. And there will be more to follow — stay tuned to the grapevine for details. Speaking of Fan Funds, Eva Hauser showed her true colours as being someone with a wicked sense of humour: portraits of various British and Continental European fans kept the peanut gallery more than adequately amused. And Rex Thompson was still wearing that damned velvety vest he bought in Melbourne and which seemed to attract a more than reasonable number of beautiful women — and the occasional man — to fondle it. I was only angry because I forgot to ask him where he bought the thing so I could get one too. Also at the 'party' were Nick Stathopoulos, in fine conversational form, and Alan Stewart was in fine form too, apparently being quite 'cheeky', I think that was the word used . . . or was that at the bid party on Saturday? At this point everything starts to blur, and Monday was more of the same but even less in focus. I think Gigi and I enrolled another couple of fan fund candidates but I'll have to check it with her to be sure . . . There was a wild and wacky radio play starring Jan 'What, Me put on a Russian Accent?' McNally, Danny Heap as 'The Advertisement Breaks', James Allen as the mild-mannered invisible monster, and a host of others. Rod Kearins, in a display of what I tend to think of (at least when I indulge in it) as 'martyrdom approaching sainthood', promised that he would chair

another science fiction convention . . . I'm not sure that, by that stage, anyone was listening.

Finally, in the end, eventually, it was all over and the fans from Melbourne headed off by plane, bus, train but mostly car. The few sluggards left congregated at Gerald and Womble's place for the Dead Dog party but we were all too tired. Well, so much for Syncon '92. It was fun but you had to be there. Roll on HongCon.

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS MEETING *Jack Herman*

Held in the Board Room, Shore Motor Inn, Artarmon.
Sunday, 19 April 1992 at 1106.

Present: Jack R Herman (Chair) and 40 members.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Suncon 91 Business Session were tabled and on the motion of Patricia Anderson, seconded by James Allen, they were accepted.

2. Motions

(a) Terry Frost moved and Roger Weddall seconded:

'That in the opinion of this Business Meeting, "Best Fannish Cat" awarded at Suncon 91 should be declared an Australian SF ("Dittmar") Award for that year.'

After some discussion, this was carried by 15 votes to 11.

(b) Roger Weddall moved and Rod Kearins seconded:

'That the Constitution be amended by changing the number of awards from five to six.'

There was a long discussion, centred around the need to create a new category to distinguish 'fan art' from 'professional art'. It was strongly suggested that future concorns should use the five categories that have become traditional in the last few years (Novel or Collection; Short Fiction; Fanzine; Fan Writer; and Fan Artist) and should add a new category of 'Best Australian SF Artist'.

As the meeting reached a consensus on this, the motion was passed without dissent.

(c) Blair Ramage moved and Kevin Dillon* seconded:

'That the last sentence of the Constitution be deleted.'

After a brief discussion, this motion was overwhelmingly defeated.

3. Bids for the 1994 Natcon

The Meeting heard a bid by Jan McNally, Alan Stewart and a videotape on behalf of Constantinople in 94. Questions were asked from the floor and a vote for the Site of the 33rd Australian SF Convention was, then, taken. Constantinople in 94 was selected unanimously.

Jan McNally announced that the con would be called Constantinople and be held at Easter 1994 (April 1-4) at the Southern Cross in Melbourne. Guests of Honour to be announced after Hongcon where it will be bidding for the

1994 Australasian SF Media Convention. Currently memberships are available for \$80 (attending), \$20 (supporting). The Committee address is PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne 3005, AUSTRALIA.

The Meeting closed at 1155.

* [Actually this was seconded by Rex Thompson, not Kevin Dillon. Greg]

NEWS RELEASES & CORRECTIONS

Greg Hills

Along with the above Minutes, *Thyme* received the following 'Press Release' (by Jack Herman and Gerald Smith) for the mundane press:

'Dr Van Ikin has been awarded the inaugural A Bertram Chandler Award for Outstanding Achievement in Australian Science Fiction.

The award was announced at the 31st Australian Science Fiction Convention, *Syncon 92*, held in Sydney over the Easter weekend. It was attended by over 150 sf readers, writers and artists.

'Dr Ikin, who lectures in English at the University of Western Australia, has been a leading figure in Australian sf for over 20 years. In that time, he has edited two major collections of Australian sf (AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION and GLASS REPTILE BREAKOUT), written many published short stories and produced the most important magazine in the field, *SCIENCE FICTION: A REVIEW OF SPECULATIVE LITERATURE*. He is currently the sf reviewer for *THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD*.

The award is named in honour of Captain A Bertram Chandler, a former merchant seaman, who was Australia's most prolific and best-known sf author.

The Australian sf ("Ditmar") Awards for work in 1991 were also presented at the Convention. Winners included:

- Terry Dowling for Best Novel or Collection for the work, *WORMWOOD* (published by Aphellon);
- Sean McMullen for Best Short Fiction for the story, *Alone in His Chariot* (first published in *EIDOLON*);
- Nick Stathopoulos for Best SF Artist (for his covers on several Aphellon books and illustration in *EIDOLON* and *SCIENCE FICTION*);
- *EIDOLON* (edited by Jonathan Strachan, Richard Scriven and Jeremy Byrne) for Best Magazine. *EIDOLON* is a semi-professional magazine that publishes fiction and review in the field of science fiction and fantasy.'

Jack noted in his covering letter that 'no slight was intended' by the omission of Best Fan Writer (Bruce Gillespie) and the Atheling (Sean McMullen) from the release. *THYME* hopes that the description of *EIDOLON*'s award as 'Best Magazine' was inadvertent, as future researchers would have a hard time finding a 'Best Magazine' category in the 1992 Ditmar Awards. Is *EIDOLON* likely to be ashamed of winning a 'Best Fanzine' award? On another note, the Press Release gives the impression that the Chandler was sponsored by *Syncon '92*. We're sure the Australian SF Foundation would like to pass on an expense or two in that case.

Although the Minutes presented above do not mention it, the *Suncon* Minutes as presented at *Syncon* had been

amended since their previous distribution so that the first clause now read:

'1. Minutes Roger Weddall (Secretary of *Danse Macabre* Business Meeting) was not present at the start of the meeting, so the matter of the minutes of the 1990 *Natcon* was tabled. When Roger appeared later in the meeting, and was asked by the Chair (before he even had a chance to be seated) where the *Danse Macabre* Minutes were, he informed the Meeting that the Minutes were unavailable, probably in the possession of the Meeting Chair, Mark Loney. (The *Suncon* Meeting Chair takes full responsibility for this faux pas. Mark Loney had previously distributed the Minutes widely in Australian fandom and they were published in, at least, *SWEETNESS AND LIGHT*, *THYME* and *DOXYI*, and had been given to the *Suncon* Chair, Cath Kerrigan. Cath wasn't in attendance at the meeting and the Chair had forgotten the earlier distribution. Roger's (reasonable) excuse was that it was early the Sunday morning of a *Natcon*.)'

SWANCON 18

Easter, 1993

Next Year's Model

Peter Cooper

Swancon 17 was a very successful convention with more than 200 attendees (with at least 20 from interstate), 7 guests (all Australian), and an extremely popular program. *Swancon 18* expects to build on the success of *Swancon 17*.

The main focus of the committee is currently on programming. Recent experience has shown us that having more than one focus guest is very popular with attendees. An enthusiastic group have come together to provide input to the program. We hope to have a more discussion-based program, and we will investigate inviting other guests. We expect to provide both the traditional favourites and some innovation. In addition, gaming events proved extremely popular at *Swancon 17*, and at least one freeform will be run at *Swancon 18*, as well as the various sponsored roleplaying and wargaming tournaments.

The publications group are chugging along and the following schedule has been proposed: PR 2 will be out before Easter 1992; PR 3 will be out during Sept/Oct 1992; PR 4 will be out in late January 1993; PR 5 may or may not be out in late March 1993, depending on other work. The Program Book will have its submission deadline set to 22/2/93. Advertising rates are set, for general and fan rates respectively: Full Page \$40.00 (\$20.00), Half Page \$25.00 (\$12.50), Quarter Page \$15.00 (\$7.50).

Membership rates are as follows: \$50 until Easter 1992; \$60 until 31 December 1992; \$70 until 7 April 1992; \$75 at the door, with day memberships also being available. Supporting memberships will cost \$20, and upgrading will cost the difference between the current rate and the supporting price. Children's membership is set at \$25 for an attending child who is 15 or younger at the 8th of April 1993.

The Ascot Convention centre performed well during *Swancon 17* and its convention facilities have proved able to handle a large convention's activities. Several nearby motels and hotels are being investigated as possible overflow sites as the Ascot is now, unfortunately, almost completely booked out.

All in all, progress is satisfactory and we expect that *Swancon 18* will be a hugely successful *Natcon*.

SUNCON '91

Easter, 1991

While we closed our Suncon discussion a couple of issues back, the subject lives on elsewhere. In the latest development, a number of Suncon members have received copies of the following letter from a company calling itself 'Credit Control Centre Pty Ltd':

'Re: GATEWAY HOTEL (RECEIVER APPOINTED)

'We have been appointed by the Receiver of the hotel, Mr Ross Duus of Ernst & Young to collect all monies owing to the business. A copy of our authority is enclosed.

'According to records supplied to us, you were a delegate at a conference called 'The 30th National Australian Science Fiction Convention' held at the hotel between 29th March and 1st April, 1991. The hotel's account for the convention of \$5941.00 has never been finalised.

'The reason for this letter is to seek your assistance as to who was responsible for payment of the account and where they might be contacted.'

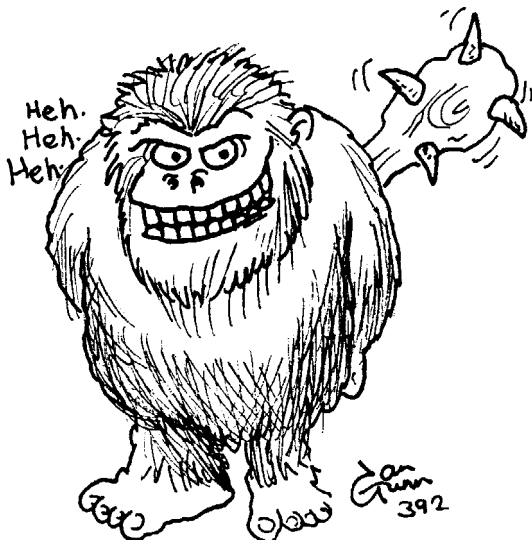
THYME contacted Patricia Anderson (Suncon's caretaker Chair) in order to get Suncon's side of this. She supplied the following:

To the Suncon Attendees and Fandom,

'I have been informed by both Justin Ackroyd and Greg Hills that a letter has been sent to attendees concerning the account for the Suncon convention. This letter is to inform you that this account has been paid and I am currently in contact with my bank to obtain copies of the cleared cheques. I have also written letters to both the hotel and the Credit Control Centre to this effect and will be forwarding the copies of the cheques as soon as they are in my possession.

'I again assure you that this account has been paid and no-one has contacted me either in writing or by telephone about this account being unpaid.'

It is unclear why CCC mailed this letter out to, apparently, everyone who stayed at the hotel and left a forwarding address, since the hotel has both Patricia's address and her phone number and so should have been able to tell CCC exactly who to contact. We can only suggest that if the hotel forgot the contact address, it is perhaps not beyond belief that they forgot receiving the payment too.



ROUND THE CLUBS

Greg Hills

Tim Richards writes from Perth to bring us up to date on Network 23 and other clubs. Network 23 ('Proudly part of New Wave Fandom') can be contacted at PO Box 499, South Perth 6151 (phone Sue Ann or Shane (09)-367-5201 or Tim or Narrelle (09)-313-1568). They have changed their venue and some other details. They now meet at 2/36 Gardiner St, Como; more details in *Social Calendar*. Free For All, a *The Prisoner* club, might also be contacted care of the above box (phone Damian (09)-387-8755 or Tim (09)-313-1568). Meets quarterly at members homes. The West Lodge is a *Dr Who* club that can be contacted at PO Box 190, Mt Lawley 6050 (phone Brian (09)-364-8036 or William (09)-342-8780). Meets monthly at the Collins St Centre, Collins St, South Perth and has a \$2 door fee.

Conquest held their first Beach Meeting for '92 at Bridle Island on 27th January (delay in reportage obviously our fault, not theirs), 'on Queensland's gorgeous Sunshine Coast. Twenty or so fans turned up to brave ant attacks, laze around, pig out, get themselves lost, play water volleyball, attempt synchronised swimming, and discover the their horror that seawater had got into the Coke bottles!'

(Lucy Zinkiewicz)

Austrek will be holding monthly meetings this year on a trial basis. The first meeting (January) was 'Camp Khitomer: The Federation, Racist or Racially Mixed?', and attracted about 100 attendees. THYME missed this but attended a later 'half-hall' meeting. What with the tables set up along the walls to sell this or promote that, and the formal programme muttering away (almost disregarded) at the far end of the hall, it was as large as but far more formal (and quieter) than an MSFC meeting, though many of the faces were familiar. There were surprisingly few costumes. Derek Screen's Quokka, which for a while had worn halo and wings due to the ministrations of Karen Pender Gunn's needle at an MSFC meet, was back to normal but spent most of the day wearing a white polystyrene cup.

The recent Puffing Billy trip organised by the MSFC went off well, with about 35 fans tootling off for a day in the Dandenongs. For the trip up Carol 'Penguins' Paterson (who became 'Carole' on the RESERVED sign) had booked an entire carriage. The windows were quickly festooned with fannish legs. Derek Screen's quokka had a field day, though somewhat overshadowed by the monkey in the next car ('he's got his hand up its bum!'). The picnic at Lakeside went off relatively smoothly, though the fans were unable to muster the co-ordination to block-book the paddle boats (possibly just as well considering the mayhem they caused severally). Three intrepid souls (we won't tell on you) braved the waterslides, belying the myth that fans don't swim. A video camera caught some of the high points, including a very romantic passage captured by Terry Frost starring Jocko and Jeanette and proving that both participants can breathe through their noses (congrats on the forthcoming marriage). Let's do this again some time!

The SF Modellers Club of NZ (in the form of Felicity Scoones) wrote to various Australian clubs and zines offering reciprocal ad space in their zine and in *DisContinuity's* (17-19 April) con book. 'I would like to stress that the club is a general sf club and modelling is just one of many activities in which we are involved... The club produces a zine called *MODEL SPACE* which we have not seen. The address is PO Box 74-013, Auckland, NZ

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The lack of attention to programming and great attention to the GoHs gave the distinct impression that the GoHs were all-important but that anything else was irrelevant. Jon Pertwee's comment along the lines that his committee minder hadn't left him for a minute makes one wonder whether this was for Jon's benefit, or just to make sure Jon wouldn't accidentally associate with any of the lowly attendees. The closed room party with the concom and the GoHs was the final statement by the concom of who the con was for: Them and their guests! — Craig Macbride, *PERSPICACIOUS PERSPICUITY 2*, on Conquest '90

[A debate started in THYME 85 when we printed a letter from Annie Hamilton (Queensland) which criticised some Melbourne conventions over their treatment of their Guests of Honour. *Huttcon*, the 1990 Australasian SF Media convention, was one target. Last issue we printed a second letter from Annie as well as one from *Huttcon* Treasurer James Allen. This issue the brown matter is well into the fans and the knives are out. Most of the following letters arrived after our 1st March deadline, but since this issue is late we eventually decided (on or about April Fool's Day) to clear the backlog to make way for next issue's barrowload. For those chanting 'WE WANT ANNIE!' in the back rows, she also has a letter (her third) later on in the column. You will be frisked for knives before entering.

[The area being discussed is large; we welcome input. But please try to not rehash old ground; we are not interested in 'yes you did, no I didn't' childishness (just mature childishness).]

A Guest Responds

Karen Pender-Gunn

I was the Chairbeing of *Huttcon*. It was the second convention I had been involved in. I made mistakes. The main point is I can and have learnt from my mistakes and will endeavour not to make the same or similar mistakes in any future cons in which I am involved. As Guest of Honour Liason at Constantinople in 1994, I will endeavour to the very best of my ability to do the best for the guests, including the Fan Guest of Honour. After my treatment as FGoH at *Concave*, I'm sure I have a much better idea how to treat Guests of Honour: to treat them with the honour and respect they deserve. I am not perfect. I do make mistakes. It is a human failing. But I will try not to repeat any mistakes that have happened in the past.

Word From The Committee

Edwina Harvey

I am so pleased Annie has chosen to state her criticisms in print, as it gives the right to reply publicly. It makes a change from having to privately defend against the rumours that have been circulating since *Huttcon*.

While I still have the ability to write (ie before my other hand is nailed to the cross) let me once and for all give my side of the story, which is not the complete picture, because I wasn't present for some of the alleged goings-on.

In the last half of 1990 we sent invitation to possible Guests of Honour to replace Simon Jones at *Huttcon*. We did not hide the fact that we were seeking a replacement, of 'second choice' as Annie puts it.

We also itemised what we were sure we could afford in terms of airfares, accommodation and appearance fees in this letter. We offered what we thought we would be able to afford, which was preferable to bringing a guest here on promises which we wouldn't be able to keep.

We thought our offer would have been suitable to anyone between jobs and interested in a brief holiday in Australia,

especially as it clearly stated that we could expect our guest only if work commitments permitted (ie if a job came up, they were under no obligation to attend the con.) The 'pittance' we offered was meant only to be pocket money as accommodation and travel costs were covered by *Huttcon*. While Annie might have found the 'pittance' objectionable, Ed Bishop did not.

Annie also fails to address the fact that as it later seemed the con would be a financial success, 'added extras' were provided to Mr Bishop, such as a pair of expensive opals, given as a gift to Mr Bishop by the convention, and a three-day Sydney stop-over after the convention.

The 'joke' about the cost of a Melbourne bus tour loses its humour when all the facts, rather than just the 'punch line' are known. On the evening of his first day in Melbourne Ed Bishop discussed with myself and another committee member his plans for the next day. He made it quite plain that he (sans entourage) would like to get to see the city in a little more depth. This is precisely how he spent the day. It was what he wanted. It was *not* neglect on the committee's behalf as Annie tries to imply.

I make no excuses for the mix-up re the banquet, but it was just that — a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing, not the intentional slight that some fans try to make it out to be. It happened, and having the story do the rounds of the fan grapevine over and over again cannot make it un-happen. At least we tried to make it up to Ed Bishop, and at least he was willing to accept our apologies.

In her efforts to label only Melbourne conventions as the source of all evil in Australian fandom, she overlooks several points, high on the list of which is the fact that the saga of having a Guest of Honour miss out on a banquet was only just averted at a recent con in Brisbane. (It was someone who had learned from *Huttcon*'s mistake and intervened that directed the Guest to the right area.)

The astute reader may notice how Annie relies on only two conventions, coincidentally both in Melbourne and inviting Guests who Annie is particularly fond of, to base her arguments on. Annie has also conveniently overlooked the fact that *Huttcon* at least was not run solely by Melbourners. Three of its committee members were from other cities, including Sydney and Queensland.

The allegation that 'the (*Huttcon*) committee had informed (Ed Bishop) that no one would be interested in viewing (the Ed Straker wig) or his accompanying talk' was certainly news to me. If there was a committee meeting about this with Ed Bishop, I certainly wasn't invited to join in. This is not to deny that it may have happened, but to point out that there seems an effort to tar us all with the same brush when in fact it may have been an individual who was at fault.

Is it not possible that Annie is endeavouring to 'palm off' what she would construe as insulting/offensive behaviour on committee members *only*?

I can recall two unrelated incidents brought about by well-meaning fans which could have been thought of as offensive but which had nothing to do with Huttcon committee members. Let's face it, Annie, if the individual was over-sensitive, just about anything could be seen as an intended offence or insult.

We were fortunate that in Ed Bishop we had a Guest who was polite, easy going, and tolerant, and who forgave us our transgressions. What a shame Annie can't.

Finally, if you think Australian fans need to 'clean up our act' with regards to Guests of Honour, Annie, when are you going to hold the con that achieves this goal?

Melbourne Fans Are Bastards

Wendy Ratter

I think that Melbourne fandom's alleged universal mistreatment of convention Guests of Honour lies not with Melbourne, but with Annie Hamilton's perceptions of Melbourne fandom. Yes, there have been conventions in Victoria where the Guests have not been treated in the correct manner. I am sure that there have been conventions in other states where the same thing has occurred. There have also been conventions in Victoria where the Guests had a terrific time.

I refer in particular to *Star Walking*. Jeremy Bulloch was the Guest at *Star Walking*. He said at the time, in public and in private, that he and his wife Maureen had had a lovely time. When I visited England last year, we went out for a drink and Jeremy and Maureen were still enthused and said they would love to come back at any time. No doubt there are Guests from other Melbourne conventions who feel the same, but I couldn't comment on that as I would be basing my opinion on hearsay, not first-hand knowledge.

Speaking of first-hand knowledge, while I was a member of NSW fandom I was asked to be a Fan Guest of Honour at *Conjunction (Not Your Normal Convention)*, a Vic con, and have no complaints at all about my treatment. In fact, I had a great time.

Annie's comments generally seemed to boil down to 'Melbourne fans are bastards totally lacking in manners; but everywhere else in Australia, especially Queensland, the fans are paragons of virtue and real sweeties.' Maybe that's not what she meant, but by golly that's what it sounded like.

Gee, by that reckoning I guess the fan who insulted John de Lancie at *Conquest* by asking, 'Are you American?' You seem too intelligent, would just have to have been from Melbourne; and gee, I guess the *Conquest* committee must have taken them aside and given them a good talking-to, because after all, insulting Guests (whether intentionally or by an accidental case of foot-in-mouth) just is not done at Queensland cons.

Being a New Zealander who was a member of Sydney fandom for three years, has been a member of Melbourne fandom for two, and has close friends in SA, WA, and Qld fandom, I think I'm in a reasonable position to question the validity of Annie's claims. I have no intention of slagging off at Queensland fans (Hell, 'some of my best friends are Queenslanders'), but merely wish to point out that I think Annie is wrong in her jingoistic support of Queensland

fandom and total criticism of Melbourne fandom.

Regardless of Annie's letters there were already moves afoot acknowledging that in some cases Guests could have been treated better, and will be in future. Personal minders are a good place to start.

Constructive criticism as to how situations could have been improved would have been preferable to letters that read like they're trying to start a range-war.

Laughing Teabags

Kim Huett

Are we being laid back like Uncle Kim told you to be? I certainly hope so now that your first brouhaha, proper one that is, not one of these storm in a teacup specials, is on with this Queensland/Melbourne debate. I ask you this because I can't help but feel it was an error to say 'other cities feel threatened' in reply to Annie Hamilton's letter in #85. It probably wasn't meant to suggest what it seems to, ie fannish communities with members who don't like Melbourne are all jealous but the implication is there. A bad choice of words my boys, even more so when you then complain about Annie laying the blame on all of Melbourne fandom for the acts of a minority. You really must be more careful about this sort of detail. Remember that the most important party to convince in any such argument is not the one with whom the argument is. In most cases there is small chance of you changing your opponent's mind. No, it is the third parties looking on who must see you being more reasonable than your opponent. If they don't then most are unlikely to take you seriously.

Moving onto other matters, I was struck by certain comments made by James Allen in his report on *Quartercon*. In the first paragraph he mentions that the convention made a loss despite an attendance of 240. In the second he then talks about the large number of guests the convention provided, six if I have counted correctly. Now what interests me is that James seems a little surprised that the convention made a loss. Given the facts as presented it sounds like the reason for this loss was the excessive number of guests. This is only supposition on my part but it sounds reasonable. If this is indeed what happened then it is an important lesson for all future media conventions to learn.

I'm pleased to see I can fob the idea of polling Australian fandom about which overseas authors they would like to see off onto you boys. I simply couldn't do the idea justice as *PL* doesn't go to enough local fans (only about sixty) to obtain a worthwhile response. Making it part of a larger *THYME* poll seems like a reasonable idea. It might also be interesting to ask if people want Fan Guests of Honour.

[Your interpretation of 'people feel threatened' is badly phrased and not entirely clear, but we meant exactly what we said. There seems to be a wide misperception of Melbourne Fandom as if it were some large hairy individual standing close behind you, snorting bestially and thinking up mischief. Every now and then this nervousness is expressed in print, spreading the mistake. So THYME turned the paranoia round and piped it in the opposite direction (in a spirit of bestial mischief). It's not nice being blamed en masse for ideas expressed (perhaps even held) by a minority, is it? Greg]

The Emperor Has No Clothes

Annie Hamilton

James Allen's thoughtful, gracious letter is a nugget of gold. It is rare to find an apology not only humble, but so unalloyed by excuses. James has obviously misunderstood the thrust of my letters, but that only makes the reply more welcome. It was not him or his fellow committee members to whom I directed my remarks, but the body of fans which permits insults to a GoH to be condoned.

However, I have nothing but contempt for the attitude underlying Ian Gunn's cartoons, *Thus Nature Balances Itself* and *Natural History*.

If derision is the only response Ian feels is warranted to what are some fairly comprehensive accusations, then I congratulate him on proving my point, with impeccable irony, beyond any doubt whatsoever. I, at least, had sufficient respect for Melbourne fandom to go to the trouble of pointing out at some length and in detail why we found certain aspects of the Southern scene incomprehensible. It seems Ian has chosen not to enlighten us, but to misunderstand our confusion (deliberately?). It is well known up here that a mutuality of respect has never existed, but to resort to open bigotry, rather than addressing any of my assertions, or even challenging the validity of them, is cheap and tawdry. The contrast with James Allen's conciliatory gesture is stark. If this is the attitude of most Melbourne fans, then accept our compliments on your remarkable hypocrisy. We once looked up to Melbourne fandom, but it's beginning to look distinctly like the Emperor has no clothes.

Queenslanders are, by the way, not as vacuous as Ian would suggest in *Natural History* — we don't find the emergence of Melbourne fandom incomprehensible at all. What we do find incomprehensible is the attitude that allows fen to deny, against all evidence to the contrary, that certain GsoH were insulted, and to castigate those who, like myself, maintain that they were. This attitude has been intractable in the past. At least now, if Greg's comment is anything to go by, a *normal* reaction appears to be emerging — that of blaming others, citing other cons, even if not in print. Progress!

I have given fen the opening several times to tell me that I am wrong, but it seems (James excluded) that you are intent on reinforcing our mystification. Could I ask for one small point of clarification: why does the cartoon *Thus Nature Balances Itself*, and incidentally a significant amount of other literature we've seen, begin with the comment that outsiders think Melburnians are up themselves? Nobody here accused you of it, so don't try to pin it on us. Indeed, we've had great respect for Melbourne fandom, but it's beginning to wane. So, why is this particular phrase such a constant refrain? Is it paranoia, a pre-emptive defence, or simply the case that protestation is just the proverbial too much?

By the way, Greg, I *never* wrote, suggested, or even implied that Qld fandom was a bastion of sweetness and light (believe me, it isn't). I thought you'd understand the irony of the statement about 'parochial, narrow-viewed, close-minded' and believed the comparison to Queensland would be perfectly obvious. We haven't become any better. It's just that the grass isn't greener south of the border any more. Grow up, guys — don't demean yourself by promoting prejudice.

[Item One: in all the responses I gathered while looking into this matter, not one person denied the Ed Bishop incident, nor other cases. Your accusation that people are trying to 'deny' the incidents then, Annie, is a straw man of your own devising.

[Item Two: see Ian Gunn's response below for an example of 'outsiders think Melburnians are up themselves'.

[Item Three: 'By late evening I'd changed my mind. So had every other Queenslander . . .'; 'Perhaps we Queenslanders have warped perceptions of what constitutes an insult . . .'; 'Some of us also value old-fashioned courtesy, thoughtfulness, and constructive criticism . . .'. When you laud Queensland fandom in practically every mention of Queensland fandom, while condemning Melbourne fandom en masse in practically every mention of Melbourne fandom, how dare you now snottily claim you 'never wrote, suggested or even implied that Qld fandom was a bastion of sweetness and light'? You've demonstrably done all three. Greg]

Gazza the Barbarian

Gary Jackson

I read a mate's copy of the last *THYME* and found it pretty interesting. I'm not involved in sci-fi fandom, though a lot of my mates go to conventions. I've been to a couple of gaming conventions though.

I didn't like the bit in the cartoon [*Fanimals: Natural History*] where one of the animals says they can gang up on all the role-play gamers. Has the cartoonist got it in for gamers? I get the impression that a lot of sci-fi fans do. I'm told that at conventions gamers are either ignored or frowned upon. Some so-called multi-media conventions will run a gaming stream with just one token free-form or a table hidden away in some corner with a chess set on it.

Alright, so not everyone likes RPGs, but I can't understand this elitist snobbery against people who do. After all, so many RPGs are sci-fi based: *Paranoia*, *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, *Judge Dredd*, *Cyberpunk*, etc.

Reading books or watching TV or going to movies are fine — I do it myself — but they're all kinda passive. With RPGs you've got to use your own imagination and think for yourself. I guess it's a challenge not everyone is willing to meet.

Our Cartoonist Replies:

Oh, dear. My little scribbles seem to have drifted into the realms of the controversial. There's been complaints, so let's get them sorted out.

*Garry Jackson seems to be of the opinion that I've got it in for Role Play Gamers, because of a comment in the *Fanimals* strip *Natural History* (THYME 86). Not so — I've played a few RPGs myself in my time. Even ran a couple. Hell, I even designed one. It's not a big part of my fannish activity, but it's there.*

Please don't assume that the opinions expressed by my cartoon characters are the same as my own opinions. They do, however, frequently coincide with the opinions held by the people I happen to be caricaturing.

I agree that there is an anti-Gamer element in fandom. That's what I was sniping at. There are also anti-Media, anti-Lit, anti-Costuming, anti-Trek, anti-Tall Poppy, anti-Fill-in-the-State-Name-of-Your-Choice-Here and other factions, but I haven't tackled all of those yet.

Annie Hamilton also took offence at this strip, claiming that it implied that Queensland fandom was vacuous. Admittedly, the germ of an idea for the cartoon came from a comment of hers, but there's been much talk in this zine of supplying context and/or background detail. The real inspiration drew from the concept that someone, anyone, may find any aspect of Melbourne fandom confusing, and here are the fanimals talking about Melbourne fannish history.

The strip neither insults nor even mentions Queensland fandom. If anything, it takes the piss out of certain aspect of Melbourne fandom, and indeed, the frequently esoteric nature of the Fanimals series itself. I don't really see how or why Annie finds this insulting, but I apologise if she does.

*I will not, however, apologise for the other cartoon, **Thus Nature Balances Itself**. This was simply true and accurate reporting, albeit in the form of a caricature.*

All the comments in the strip were direct quotes. Yes, Annie, somebody there really did accuse Melburnians of being 'up themselves', so I can pin it on you. (You really ought to learn to get your facts straight before you make such sweeping statements.) The person in questions was your colleague Peter Booth. I presume you know him; you 'and every other Queenslander assaulting Australian fandom' received a dedication in his last zine. The quote comes from a particularly coherent rave in Eric Lindsay's GEGENSCHNITT 61, and the full description reads '... the up-themselves fucks of Melbourne, who think Australia ends at Wodonga.' This, I presume, is the great respect for Melbourne fandom of which you speak.

As I said, the comments in the strip were direct quotes — yours and Peter's — and the assorted Melburnians rolling around laughing was a direct quote, too. I didn't claim that 'most Melbourne fans' were laughing at you; the carefully-chosen word I used was 'many'. I try to avoid the sweeping generalisations that colour so much of your own correspondence. You seem to be accusing Melbourne fandom of hypocrisy because James Allen wrote a conciliatory letter and I didn't. We're not clones down here. We are capable of independent thought, we can hold differing opinions. The fact remains that there is an element of Melbourne fandom who find (some) Queenslanders well deserving of derision. I can't be held responsible for that, I just draws what I see.

For honestly reporting a phenomenon, I stand accused of bigotry and prejudice. Gee, Annie, wasn't it you who came up with all the big generalisations and anti-Melbourne name-calling to begin with? Now that is cause for derision!
— Ian Gunn

Paranoids of Australian Fandom

Gerald Smith

*I see from your piece titled **The Great Melbourne Fannish Conspiracy** that Melbourne might be ready to take the mantle from Sydney of 'Paranoids of Australian Fandom'. You're welcome to it I'm sure.*

*I can assure Bruce Gillespie that Sydney Fandom does exist. You may remember, Bruce, that not so long ago Melbourne Fandom lacked the central focus while Sydney had the **Sydney Science Fiction Foundation**. Now, Melbourne has the **Melbourne Science Fiction Club** (reborn) and Sydney is the home of the true SMOFs.*

*At least now it is explained just what it was that **Conjunction** did that was new — it included literary and media fans in its organisation. But, hang on a minute, that isn't new either — any more than is the idea of promoting and appealing to both 'streams' of fandom.*

As one part of the Ditmar Sub-committee for 1992 I feel I must make some sort of reply to Craig Hilton. The Constitution only allows for the awarding of '... up to 5 awards ...'. No matter how you cut it someone is going to complain about comparing apples and oranges. We could have one category for Australian Fiction for example. Or maybe merge fanzine and fan writer in some way.

*Unfortunately the artist category is the one that is merged, primarily (and I'm sorry to have to say this) because it is usually the least popular in terms of nominations and votes received. When I was last involved on the Sub-committee (for **Conviction** in 1988) we limited the category to fan artists and were castigated for that. You can't win.*

*Finally, a little note concerning **Sydney Fans Incorporated**. As all our energies are presently going into **Syncon '92** the regular monthly meetings are temporarily in abeyance. Once **Syncon** is behind us we hope to get them going again bigger and better than ever. All memberships will be extended as a result of this hiatus.*

[Melbourne would never dream of stealing the paranoia mantle from Sydney — you do it much better than we do. You see, 'they' really are out to get us, as I think the record clearly proves.

*[You should however probe more deeply into the past and present activities of the **Conjunction** people. They are not 'lit' fans attempting to cater to 'media' fans, nor vice-versa; nor have they abandoned one stream to join the other. They are fans who are and have been active and interested in both streams of fandom. What they attempted is not entirely new; the difference is that they really did it rather than just making a hoopla about additions to the regular features of an otherwise 'lit' or 'media' con — the 'token nigger' syndrome.*

[The New Wave is the next generation of Melbourne general fandom, but they do not fit the profile of the 'general fandom' that media fandom came to refer to as 'literature' fandom. As long as 'we' think of ourselves as 'general' fandom and look down on media fandom (the attitude is still discernable in places) the merging of streams is impossible. As long as 'media' fandom looks upon 'lit' fandom as stuck-up elitists the merging is impossible. The emergence of the New Wave (fandom should be fun!) pointed out how silly this division really is, and how much Australian fandom loses because of the existence and persistence of the split. Greg]

A Non Response

Bruno Ogorolec

[The label said] 'How about some news' — are you guys serious? [Only in leap years divisible by 100. Actually we're a bad joke; ask anyone. Greg] The real news from this here place you do not really want to know: 10,000 dead, 600,000 refugees, people in bomb shelters for weeks on end, etc. C'mon, why don't you adopt the old Roger Weddall policy he outlined so succinctly: 'I send you THYME and you don't respond.' I mean, it suited me perfectly. The subsequent editors complicated that simple deal quite needlessly.

[In Roger's day it was sometimes cheaper to post THYME overseas surface than to post it domestically, hence the large overseas mailing list. Not true now. Greg]

Stingy Contributions Policy

Leah Zeldes Smith

[This letter on #85 arrived too late for inclusion in #86:] Greg's **Books Banned in the USA** makes it sound like we've got FAHRENHEIT 451 live. Nothing could be further from the case. No books have been banned by the US government, or by any state or local government here — not in the sense of denying anyone the right to walk into their local bookstore and buy a copy.

The books on the ALA list have been 'banned' from the shelves of a few school libraries (or occasionally, municipal libraries) or denied use as textbooks by local boards of education (or library governors) who have said 'we don't want to spend the taxpayers' money on that smut/ politically incorrect trash/ what-have-you'. This is regrettable but it's not really the same as government thought control.

It's your fanzine and you can do what you want to, but I'd have to agree with Irwin Hirsh that your contributions policy is a little stingy, and not likely to have the desired effect of making more people send cash. Unlike Irwin, most people won't decide to send money instead of contributing, they'll just not bother. Or they'll send you a lot of postcards of the 'Great job. Send more' variety but little substantive comment.

Another policy of yours with which I disagree is the one regarding addresses. If you'd phrased it the other way around — 'we print a correspondent's address unless the writer specifically requests otherwise' — I'd have nothing to argue with, but as it is I think you're hampering fannish communication to no good purpose.

I was disappointed to see that Best Fannish Cat was not to become an annual award of the Ditmars. It seemed a wonderfully lighthearted category to have. And a far more interesting contest than, say, the Hugo Award for Best Semi-Prozine.

[Syncon '92 gave out a 'Best Fannish Pet' Committee Award. Strangely, the nominees all seem to have been Sydney pets.

[People can send us useless postcards saying 'Great job. Send more' if they like — it's their money they'll be wasting. We'll wallow in the egoboo, but it won't get them any issue credits. If the effort is too much for them, the mailing list is well shot of them.

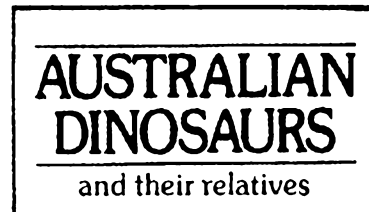
[Our addresses policy suppresses few addresses. Most of our correspondents are well enough known that there is no point in not printing their

addresses. By the way, when will STET add a fanzines received listing (with addresses)? Greg.]

Letters have been held over from . . . Chaela, Star Walking Incorporated, Benoit Girard - they will appear in *Thyme* #88.

We Also Heard From . . . (Gets you egoboo but no issue credit) Mark 'Anti-Trek' Bernstein ('Thank goodness STAR TREK 6 is the last one' — Care to bet?), Sheryl Birkhead ('What is the craft that is mentioned with respect to Karen Pender-Gunn?' — Soft toys among others), Leanne Frahm ('Where the Hell is issue 87?'), J R Madden (US\$12 cash by air is simpler all round than \$A15 IMO by sea), Joseph Nicholas ('British fanzines may indeed be self-referential, but you can hardly argue that this excuses THYME's self-referentiality, as though two wrongs make a right.' — No, what we're arguing is that you're chucking stones in a glass house), Marilyn Pride, Ricky the Road-Culled Squirrel ('People Pass Water, You Only Pass Thyme!' — Aw shucks, mate, we're chuffed! Spend another stamp on us, soon!), David L Russell ('Is Karen Pender-Gunn's Teddy Bear really called Mr Wibbly?' — No, but several of them are called 'Fortesque Mullins'), Leah Zeldes Smith (misc), BJ Stevens ('The AD is disposable' — How politically correct). We also Also Heard From lots of people who can be paraphrased by reference to our bald quasi-quotation of Leanne Frahm's more politely-phrased query.

We Received Subscriptions From . . . Gigi Boudville, Lawrie Brown, Joan Duff, Scott Campbell, Betty Franklin, Michelle Hallett, Rob Hamilton, L Henderson, Gary Jackson, J R Madden, Shane Morrissey, Sharon Mosley, Neil Murray, Steve Roylance, Colin Steele, John Stewart, Joe Szabo, R B Turnbull. As usual, Welcome / Welcome Back all!



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Aurealis is produced with the assistance of a grant from the Victorian
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Social Calendar

[Due to the lapse between issues, the Social Calendar is feeling a little under the weather. Just remember that a listing here is free and, who knows?, might just help attendance at your next fannish event.]

July 1992

- 1 jul [A] Crit Mass J Felis Multimedia SF: SF in Rock'n'Roll
- 1 jul [M] Nova Mob S McMullen Before Galileo: SF by Australian Women From the War to Galileo
- 4 jul [M] Austrek Monthly meeting (half hall) & Marathon video
- 4 jul [P] Net 23 Hot Dog Night
- 4 jul [P] West Lodge Monthly Meeting
- 18 jul [P] Net 23 SF Craft Night
- 26 jul [B] Conquest Meeting
- 29 jul [A] Brecknock Monthly pub night

August 1992

- 1 aug [M] Austrek Marathon video
- 1 aug [M] West Lodge Monthly Meeting
- 5 aug [A] Crit Mass A Bray The Fantasy Universe of William Blake
- 5 aug [M] Nova Mob M Orlieb An Attack of the Willics
- 8 aug [P] Free For All Meeting
- 11 aug [M] Austrek Monthly meeting (whole hall)
- 22 aug [M] Rogers St Collective Birthday & Engagement Party from 8pm
- 26 aug [A] Brecknock Monthly pub night
- 30 aug [B] Conquest PreJudgement Day Meeting (only 5 years to go)

September 1992

- 2 sep [A] Crit Mass J Duff Facing the Unknown
- 2 sep [M] Nova Mob W Whiteford
- 3-7 sep [USA] Magicon (Worldcon) (see *Convention Calendar*)
- 5 sep [M] Austrek Monthly meeting (half hall) & Marathon video
- 5 sep [P] West Lodge Monthly Meeting

October 1992

- 3 oct [M] Austrek Monthly meeting (whole hall) & Marathon video
- 3 oct [P] West Lodge Monthly Meeting
- 7 oct [M] Nova Mob B Gillespie
- 25 oct [B] Conquest Meeting — Location to be announced

Later 1992

- 4 nov [M] Nova Mob G Turner On the Receiving End of Criticism
- 7 nov [M] Austrek Monthly meeting (half hall) & Marathon video
- 7 nov [P] West Lodge Monthly Meeting
- 14 nov [P] Free For All Meeting
- 25 nov [B] Conquest AGM. Qld Uni of Tech, Garden Point Campus, Building B
- 5 dec [M] Austrek Marathon video
- 5 dec [M] Nova Mob Yum-cha break-up
- 5 dec [P] West Lodge Monthly Meeting
- 12 dec [M] Austrek Marathon video — Kirk/Spock in other shows

Continued Next Issue . . .

Who Did What

THYME is co-edited by Greg Hills and Mark Loney.
 Artist: Ian Gunn. Columnist: Terry Frost.
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 Special thanks this issue to Phil Wlodarczyk and Alan Stewart.

The following people had contributions cut from this issue of *Thyme*:

Marc Orlieb (book review), Alan Stewart (book review, Iain Banks interview), Greg Hills (book reviews), Beky Tully (SwanCon 17 report), Lucy Sussex (SwanCon 17 report), Terry Frost (column, SynCon '92 report), Justin Semmel (article), Ken Moylan (photography) and Ian Gunn (artwork)

Most of these contributions will appear in *Thyme* #88.

Regular Events

- [A]delade Critical Mass meets 8pm first Wednesday monthly to talk about sf & related subjects. Venue South Australian Writers Centre, 2nd Floor, 155 Pirie St, Adelaide. Some members eat dinners downstairs beforehand. Inpho (08)-261-3721
- [A]delade Brecknock meet 7pm last Wednesday monthly at Brecknock Pub, King William St.
- [B]risbane Conquest meets 12-6pm Sunday 6-weekly @ Yungaba Migrant Hostel, 120 main St, Kangaroo Point. Inpho (07)-371-5196
- [B]risbane Brisbane Dr Who Fan Club meets 10am-5pm Sunday in alternate months. Venue 'QUT'. Info PO Box 10308, Brisbane 4000
- [C]anberra Canberra SF Society meets alternate Thursdays (public service paydays) at Griffin Centre or a restaurant. Inpho (06)-290-1698
- [M]elbourne Austrek meets St Luke's Anglican Hall, 210 Dorcas St, Sth Melb, 2-4:30pm; video Marathons 6pm AMP Theatre, 535 Bourke St. Info POB 5206AA, Melb 3001
- [M]elbourne Friday Nighting, Front up at Myers E&M Food Mall (off Elizabeth St) 6pm Fridays; the fans take over the two big tables in the main section of the mall
- [M]elbourne 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). Inpho (03)-470-5036
- [M]elbourne Nova Mob meets ~6pm first Wednesday monthly for dinner (Brawan Thai, 205 Swan St, Richmond) then at 8pm adjourns to member's house to talk about sf & related subjects. Inpho (03)-429-8354
- [M]elbourne Threads SF Handcrafts & Costumes. Each meeting features different aspects.

- [P]erth Free For All (Prisoner) meets 7:30pm quarterly; inpho (09)-387-8755 or (09)-313-1568
- [P]erth Network 23 meets 7:30pm every 2nd Saturday at 2/36 Gardner St, Conna. (Bus 108 or 104). Inpho (09)-367-5201, (09)-313-1568
- [P]erth West Lodge (Dr Who) 1pm 1st Saturday monthly @ Collins St Centre, Collins St, South Perth; \$2 door fee. Inpho (09)-364-8036 or (09)-342-8780
- [P]erth Westrek meets 8pm last Friday monthly at Lapidary & Rock Hunting Hall, 31-35 Gladstone Rd, Riverdale. \$2 door fee. Inpho (09)-362-5713
- [S]ydney Blue Mountains SF Group meets first Friday monthly. Inpho (047)-51-5740 or (047)-59-2187
- [S]ydney Penrith Area/Western Sydney SF Group meets 2nd Saturday monthly. Inpho (047)-313-035 or (047)-36-5795
- [S]ydney Southern (Sydney) SF Group meets 2pm Saturday (frequency not stated). Inpho (02)-534-3595
- [S]ydney Sydney Fans Incorporated organises things, including Woodstock Round Table (a Sydney version of the Nova Mob). Meets 2pm, Woodstock Community Centre, Church St, Burwood. Inpho (maybe) (02)-635-4025, (02)-798-8001 A.H.
- [W]ellington Phoenix SF Society meets 7:30pm 2nd Wednesday monthly @ Hotel St George, Willis St. Inpho (+64-4)-477-0165

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 August.

Animals

DRAWING THE LINE

BY *Jan Gunn* 292

— SECOND FOLD —

Thyme — The Australasian SF News Magazine

Registered by Australia Post

Publication No. VBH91 5466

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