

The Australasian SF News Magazine

THYME

November 1993

#94



Contributors

Merv Binns, Ian Gunn, Alan Stewart.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| James Allen | PO Box 41, West Brunswick, Victoria, 3055 |
| Terry Frost | 26 Head Street, Balwyn, Victoria, 3103 |
| Donna Heenan | PO Box 99, Bayswater, Victoria, 3153 |
| Richard Hryckiewicz | PO Box 21, Laverton, Victoria, 3028 |
| Mark (Rocky) Lawson | 4 McKay Road, Hornsby Heights, NSW, 2077 |
| Karen Pender-Gunn | PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130 |
| Justin Semmel | 1470 North Road, Clayton, Victoria, 3168 |
| Alan Small | 37 Chaucer Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria, 3039 |
| Karen Small | 37 Chaucer Street, Moonee Ponds, Victoria, 3039 |
| Jools Thatcher | 31 Loch Street, Geelong, Victoria, 3219 |

Art Credits

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------------|---|
| Cover | Thyme | Ian Gunn | PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130 |
| 2 | Thyme | Ian Gunn | |
| 4 | Thyme | Bill Rotsler | 17909 Lull Street, Reseda, CA, 91335, USA |
| 17 | Thyme | Martin Reilly | 3/61 Barwell Avenue, Marleston, SA, 5033 |
| 2 | ASFN | Ian Gunn | |
| 1, 2 | Artychoke | Gerard Ashworth | 7/70 Queenscliff Road, Queenscliff, NSW, 2096 |
| 3, 4, 5, 6 | Artychoke | Ian Gunn | |

Changes of Address: Mark (Rocky) Lawson 4 McKay Road, Hornsby Heights, NSW, 2077
Ben Schilling 2615 Madrid, Apt1, Madison, WI, 53713 USA

Address conventions: Unless specifically stated otherwise, all addresses published are Australian.

Currency conventions: \$A = Australian dollars, \$C = Canadian dollars, \$NZ = New Zealand dollars,
\$US = United States dollars, DM = Deutsch Marks, NLG = Dutch Guilders, £ = UK pound.

Available for 'The Usual' (arranged zine trades, artwork, letter, article) or a subscription of \$A 12/year (5-6 issues).
Cheques and money orders payable to 'Alan Stewart'.

Contents Copyright © 1993 by Alan Stewart. Rights revert to contributors upon publication.

Editorial Address: Thyme, PO Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005, AUSTRALIA

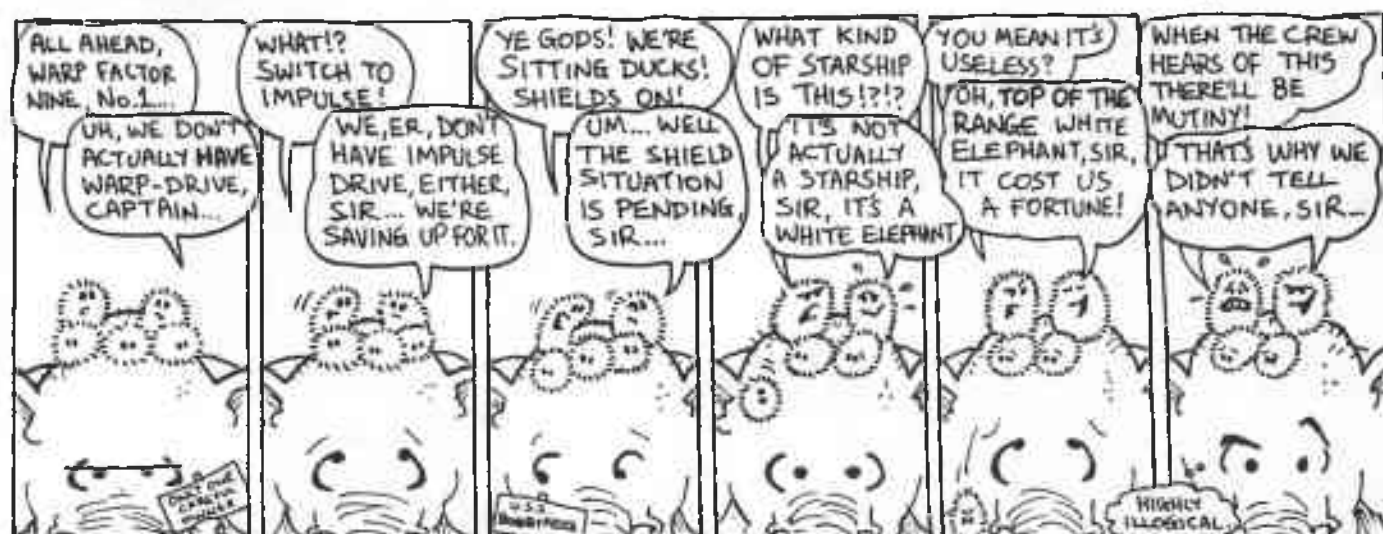
Email: Alan=Stewart@Chem_Eng2%UNIMELB@muwaye.unimelb.EDU.AU

Phone: Home (03) 429 8354 Business (03) 344 4035

Fanimals

TRIBBLE BREWING

BY Ian Gunn 1993



News

People

Karen Pender-Gunn has been awarded prizes in the Craft section at the 1993 Royal Melbourne Agricultural Show. Her "Stegosaurus" won second prize in the Soft Toy for a Teenager's Room section, and she came third in Toy Made Entirely in Felt with "Jester Brontosaurus".

Jan MacNally and **Michael Wilson** announced their engagement in September.

Author **Chad Oliver** died on 9 August, aged 65, in a nursing home in Austin, Texas.

Actor **Vincent Price** died on 26 October, aged 82.

Melbourne fan **Michelle Laws** is apparently getting married and moving to Texas.

Actor **River Phoenix**, 23, died on 31 October.

Film director **Federico Fellini** died on 30 October, aged 73. He had won 5 Academy Awards.

Fandom

A 56-page electrostencilled, mimeographed anthology Tom Digby, Along Fantasy Way has been produced by Lee Gold. Available for \$US 5 (probably more overseas). Write to Lee Gold, 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066 USA. Cover artwork by Phil Foglio, interior art by Brad Foster, Teddy Harvia and Kaja Murphy.

The 1993/94 executive committee of **Melbourne Science Fiction Club Inc** is President Apollo Zammit, Secretary Alan Stewari, Treasurer Sharon Tapner, Publicity Officer Katrine Papworth and Club Activator Derek Screen.

It appears Thyme #88 (November 92) and #91 (May 93) has set off a dinosaur theme in covers. Recently sighted zines including The Captain's Log #194 (September 93), The Mentor #91 (January 94) and Warp #25 (Canada) all had dinosaur covers.

Awards

1993 BSFA Awards

Best Novel: Red Mars Kim Stanley Robinson

Short Fiction: The Innocents Ian McDonald
(New Worlds 2)

Artwork: Jim Burns - Hearts, Hands and Voices cover.

1993 John W Campbell Memorial Award (Novel)

Brother to Dragons Charles Sheffield

1992 Double Gamma (Australian Dr Who Fandom) From various sources such as Sonic Screwdriver, Data Extract and word of mouth. Contradictory results, and apparently there's some scandal involved.

Fanzine - Sonic Screwdriver

Artist - Kerri Valkova

Editor - David Carroll

Writer - Marco Cappiello

Outstanding Contribution - Tony Cooke, Sean Smith
Chose your own winner!

Stoker Awards (Horror)

Non-Fiction: Cut! Horror Writers on Horror Film Christopher Golden

Fiction Collection: Mr Fox and Other Feral Tales Norman Partridge

Short Story: This Year's Class Picture Dan Simmons
(Still Dead)

Novelette: Aliens: Tribes Steve Bissette (Dark Horse),
The Events Concerning a Nude Fold-out Found in a
Harlequin Romance Joe Lansdale (Dark at Heart)

First Novel: Sineater Elizabeth Massie

Novel: Blood of the Lamb Thomas Monteleone

Lifetime Achievement: Ray Russell

1993 Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award (short fiction) This Year's Class Picture Dan Simmons

1993 Mythopoeic Fantasy Awards

Best Children's Book: Knight's Wyrd by Debra Doyle & James D MacDonald.

Best Novel: Briar Rose by Jane Yolen

1993 World Fantasy Awards

Special Award (Non-Professional):

Doug & Tomi Lewis

Special Award (Professional): Jeanne Cavelos

Best Artist: James Gurney

Best Anthology: Metahorror (ed. Dennis Etchison)

Best Collection: The Sons of Noah by Jack Cady

Best Short Story (tie): Graves by Joe Haldeman

This Year's Class Picture by Dan Simmons

Best Novella: The Ghost Village by Peter Straub

Best Novel: Last Call by Tim Powers

Lifetime Achievement: Harlan Ellison

The **1992 Writers and Illustrators of the Future** grand prize winners were Karawynn Long of Austin, Texas, for her story Adjusting the Moon, and top illustrator was Denis Martynec of Kiev, Ukraine. Volume IX in the anthology series was released, and Nancy Cartwright ("voice" of Bart Simpson) was one of the special guests at the ceremonies.

[Thanks to SF Chronicle, Justin Ackroyd and Joyce Scrivner]

Writing and Publishers

Yvonne Rousseau writes that the story *Anzac Day* by **Cherry Wilder** appeared in the recent collection *Terror Australis* without the final paragraph, which radically alters the balance of the story.

After the final printed sentence

The police believed their man was dead: the kids in Claraville are still told to watch out or Old Len Fell will get them.

this following paragraph should be added

In my dreams I go hunting for Uncle Len with my trusty 303.22, a newer weapon. Beryl is there too and even Aunt Madge. We are like furies, wild and blood-stained, stalking our helpless prey through the green twilight. I know this is an evil dream. In the gentle forests of New Zealand there are no harmful creatures, no snakes, no predators.

Lyn McConchie's book *Farming Daze* is to be a 8 x 12 minutes series on national radio in New Zealand. She is still waiting to hear if she'll be doing the reading. It will also be done as cassettes for 'the print disabled'.

Douglas Adams is working on another Dirk Gently book entitled *A Spoon Too Short*.

Paul Collins has edited the collection *Best Australian Science Fiction: Antipodes #1* which will be released by Penguin in August 1994. It comprises stories by George Turner, Damien Broderick, Greg Egan, Sean McMullen, Rosaleen Love, Leanne Frahm, Terry Dowling, Dirk Strasser, Stephen Dedman, Jack Wodhams, David Lake and Paul Collins. The majority of the stories appeared in recommended reading lists, topped Readers' Polls, or appeared in 'Worlds Best SF' collections.

Intimate Armageddons 2, edited by Bill Congreve, is scheduled for release early next year.

Aphelion's original anthology *Alien Shores* will probably be launched at Constantinople next Easter.

Millennium imprint books are distributed in Australia by **Allen & Unwin** (tpb, maybe hc) and **Hodder/Headline** (pb) formats.

Fan Funds

30 November is the deadline to have votes in the 1993/4 FFANZ race to Australia reach Rex Thompson, PO Box 333, Dunedin, New Zealand, or Ian Gunn and Karen Pender-Gunn, PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130

The deadline for nominations in the 1993/4 DUFF race to North America is 1 December. 3 Australasian and 2 North American nominators are required for each candidate, plus a non-refundable \$US20 or \$A30 bond, a platform of not more than 100 words and a brief statement describing any previous visits to North America. If you're interested, or would like to nominate someone, contact the administrators Phil Ware, 77 Railway Place West, Flemington, Victoria, 3031, or Dick and Leah Smith, 410 West Willow Road, Prospect Heights, IL, 60070-1250, USA.

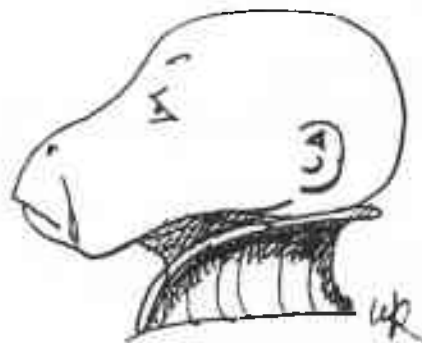
Con Report

James Allen

Cupcon

Cupcon...we went Saturday. Nice hotel, rooms a little spaced apart, had more than 100 attendees I think (I was #96 & Jeanette #97 Sat. Day memberships). Rego & hucksters in same room. Constantinople (Apollo, I sat in for an hour or so...) Gallifrey, Aurealis, Galaxy (double table, with Garfield) & Canberra guy who sells dragon mugs & ceramics. Nice light room. Free tea & coffee facilities in kitchen off this. Detached room on one side was videos/games room, with free tea & coffee too (In fact I think four rooms; main panel & fan lounge had tea & coffee facilities too, needless to say, the art room upstairs didn't.)

GOHs were good, gave interesting talks. David Gerrold, Nick St., Lewis & Marilyn seemed happy; panel on drawing aliens as described by audience was fun - you should see how Picard came out... Hotel staff helpful, as were con runners - they opened up the closed art show so that Jeanette & I could have a look - it was a good varied art show too, very little chocolate box stuff. Masquerade had five entries, mainly groups, some very good costumes, such as the Elizabethan lady and boy, Robert Jan & Gail's picnic in Jurassic Park with Klingons and Jo Toohee's Catwoman. Nick Stathopolous MCed well, asking contestants how long making the costumes took - a nice touch for the audience. Danny Heap's leather Next Gen-like costume for his sticky moments show was amazing... Even the weather was nice for us to eat our sandwiches out in the pavilion near the miniature roses in the garden. The hotel put on cheap good food for fans, who had the run of the whole place. It was good.



Article

by Mark (Rocky) Lawson

NON-FOSSILISED NOVELS

Or: how to write a best-seller, if only we could think of one.

Jurassic Park, the film, has received so much publicity that I doubt whether I'll ever write anything directly about the film, or even breath the dreaded 'Din...' word in a column - at least after this column, where the 'D' word may be difficult to avoid as the text for this sermon is to be taken, indirectly, from *Jurassic Park*, the novel.

For *Jurassic Park*, the novel, holds a few interesting lessons for all us would-be authors (yes, even yours truly, who is 115 pages into the second draft of a would-be block-buster); and when a book has sold so many copies and is turned into such an enormously popular film, those lessons are worth examining. The first lesson is that the central hook is all-important. *JP*, is the worst of the books by Michael Crichton, but because of its more compelling central hook (an island full of Ds) is probably the most difficult to put down.

I was much younger when I read Crichton's early novels, *The Andromeda Strain* and *The Terminal Man* (both made into movies with varying results), but I only read *Sphere* a year or so ago and I do not recall being actively irritated by those books as I was by *Jurassic Park*. At the same time, while I could put down those books when other matters demanded my attention, I was reluctant to drag myself away from *Jurassic Park* even to earn money. Curious. *Sphere* was even reasonably solid SF, although it did have faults - the novel was set deep underwater but the characters went swimming from habitats 300 metres below as easily as I take a dip in the semi-heated North Sydney pool. But aside from minor technical quibbles, and provided one did not expect much in the way of characterisation or insight, *Sphere*, and other books written by Crichton, are sufficiently well-crafted and entertaining to be worth the cover price.

JP, on the other hand, shows signs of having been written in much more haste and with more of a 'message' in mind ('messages' usually kill books). Although Crichton's writing is still very clear, there is some minor repetition and the characters are even more forgettable than usual or, as in the case of the two children and the mathematician who preaches endlessly and unnecessarily about Chaos, simply irritating. For the record, there is no need to use chaos to explain a load of din... um large animals running amok when they should be under control. Murphy's Law (Anything that can go wrong...) will do

just as well, and does not need a mathematician to explain it.

Despite all that and knowing full well the broad outlines of the plot and that the children would survive, I still could not put the book down, easily. In that respect *JP* is in the same category as the non-SF book *The Firm*. That book had few saving graces - although it was clearly written and tolerably well-plotted - but not only did I have considerably difficulty putting down *The Firm* (later made into a disappointing film) I found myself wishing for a sequel. Is there no end to this madness? The main lesson, I suppose, to be drawn from all this is that most of the stuff usually written about authorship is nonsense, at least for those interested in writing best sellers and getting their picture on magazine covers.

Forget about characterisation, subtlety or even reality. The main and most important ingredient for best sellers is an awesome threat - savage creatures created in the image of dinosaurs (there, I said the 'D' word) in *JP*, and a mob family that casually kills its legal representatives in *The Firm*. Add a handful of twists which expose the characters to this enormous threat for lengthy periods of the book, stir in some knowledge of the subject - to give a patina of plausibility to an otherwise highly unlikely concept - and pressure-cook the lot to create a best seller. Oh yes, it helps if the people subjected to this awesome threat are supermen (women) or, as in the case of *JP*, part superchildren.

Cynical? Perhaps. But there is no reason for the resulting literary dish to pass straight through the reader's system, as does *JP* and *The Firm*. A book can still be a thriller and make the move, in time, from having a separate table in bookshops to the 'classics' section, but only by only having the aforementioned frills, such as proper characters.

One example of a book that made the transition from thriller to classic is *The Island of Dr Moreau* by H. G. Wells; a book which I only picked up very recently, as an antidote to *JP* and *The Firm*. Technology has long since overtaken this classic, probably the *JP* of its day (1896), but *The Island of Doctor Moreau* has qualities that transcend mere technical quibbles. Besides having that all-important hook of an awesome danger (although, a less compelling one than the more recent thrillers), the book is set apart by the vivid characters of Dr Moreau himself - a god to an island full of poor animals he has turned half human - and his assistant, the weak, exiled medical student Montgomery. It has vivid scenes - the main character, Pendrick, losing his way and being stalked by one of the island's inhabitants, his meeting with the sayer of the law that helped keep the animals half human, and the law itself.

'Not to go on all-Fours; that is the Law. Are we not Men?'

'Not to suck up Drink; that is the Law. Are we not Men?'

The Island of Doctor Moreau thus still repays reading almost a century after it was written - a test of time that very few books will pass; including JP and The Firm, despite both books occupying my time for a few hours this year. I do not pretend, for a moment, that my novel (if and when I finish the wretched thing) will be even a small piece of a Crichton or a Grisham (The Firm), or a Wells. If I do manage to achieve a small piece of the first two I will, perhaps, make some money. If I manage a small piece of Wells, I will have achieved something.



George Ivanoff, Paul Ewins, Danny Heap

Found in the Thyme files inherited from Mark Loney. Taken about 1991 ? Photographer unknown.



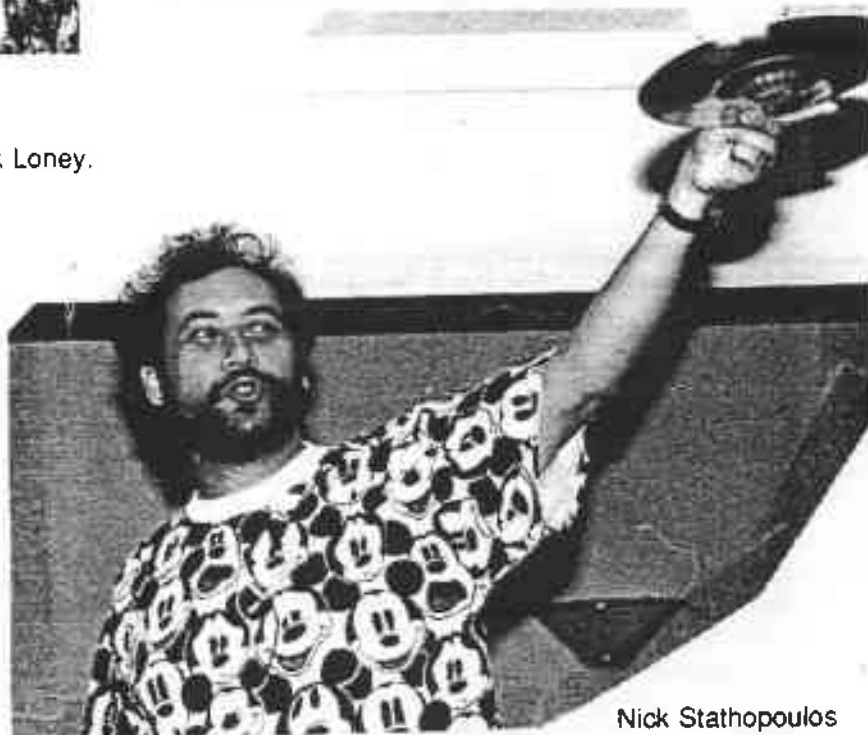
Faces of Fandom

Hopefully an ongoing feature of Thyme which will attempt to put faces to the names of fans in Australia and overseas. If you have photos you'd like to send in, go ahead. Fairly recent, say taken since 1990 would be best, and all originals will be returned.



Terry Dowling

Photographer: Ken Moylan, Syncon '92



Nick Stathopoulos

Photographer: Ken Moylan, Syncon '92

Dianne Debellis

Photographer: Ken Moylan, Syncon '92



a column by
Terry Frost

GEE WHIZ In the lettercol of the last *Thyme*, Buck Coulson seemed to suggest that it was copacetic to bail up a Guest of Honor in the pissoir and throw questions at him while he was straining the spuds, on the basis that guests have a certain giri toward their hosts. It's an interesting concept and may well define another cultural gap between Middle America and Lower Australia. Over here, pissing is a mediative thing. A short time of solo contemplation of the ineffable in a life far too short on such times. But let's take this intriguing possibility a small step further.

Why not have entire panel items in the bog? Convention room space is often expensive and economies could be made by holding every second or third panel in the men's room. It does present certain logistical problems. What if the con toilets are too small for a reasonably sized panel? What do you do when you've finished making rain at the steel trough? Do you stand there, schlong in hand and pretend to whiz until the panel's over? Do you zip up and lean against the wall? Do you compare size with the GoH as a balm or a boost to your low self-image? And what of women? Do they shout questions in muffled tones from the toilet stalls? What if the GoH herself is female? Then there's the problem of those people who bring still and video cameras to panels...

Certain themes suggest themselves for this venue. A discussion of Aldiss' *The Dark Light Years* perhaps or maybe the works of Piers Anthony, Orson Scott Card or John Norman can be deconstructed to the sound of long then staccato splashes. Of course, this would only work with talking-head type panels. I don't for a moment suggest that Improvisation Games or the Fannish Olympics be held in the tiled and mirrored precincts of a dunny. Or the Awards Banquet for that matter. But the idea has a certain weird validity and should generate any number of intriguing con-reports were it ever taken up by a concomm.

DESPAIR AND CALCULATION This is the bit where I wrote three passionate pages about the Victorian State Government and the way that they compare unfavorably to born-again Christian neo-Nazi rabies-infected vampire paedophiles with HIV. But I decided to cut that bit and say instead that I wish they would all wash up on polluted beaches, die and swell up grotesquely like mutated puffer fish before seagulls bite their eyes out and Japanese restaurant owners turn them into decorative lanterns.

VOX POPCORN Ditmar voting time is rapidly approaching. Just thought I'd mention it.

OTHER STUFF Word on the hot line is that Jerry Lewis is going to do a sequel to *The Nutty Professor*, the only halfway decent movie he ever made. I wonder if he's going to reprise "That Ole Black Magic" (I prefer the Louis Prima version) and "We've Got A World That Swings". Lewis' Mr Hyde character in that movie, Buddy Love, has had a small but discernible influence on the Australian popular cultural scene and in particular, the Melbourne music milieu. Henry Maas, the vocalist from "Bachelors From Prague" has been known to do gigs in coffee shops and gallery openings with a new group called The Buddy Love Big Band including a couple of JL covers. Come to think of it half of the Australian Tonight Show hosts of the 1960s from Digby Wolfe to Don Lane seem to have acquired their idea of what "cool" was from Buddy Love. BL may also have influenced Norman Gunston's tailor. Those black lapelled rayon suits with thin bow-ties lasted way past their use-by date.

Not that I expect a sequel made by Touchstone Pictures to have a commensurate influence on the artistic landscape of Australia. Generation X just doesn't have what it takes to appreciate the more stratospheric levels of kitsch. They think that remembering Scooby-Doo cartoons is hip. That's why they're called Generation X. X is the way half of them sign their names.

DEADMAN'S CURVE I'm getting this column finished while recovering from a traffic accident. I skidded out my mountain bike on a wet tram track at 20 kph and managed to contuse the epidermis off a knee and an elbow, sprain at least one wrist, rip a couple of muscles and make myself feel like a steel drum band had used my arms, torso and legs for practice. Fortunately the x-rays of the wrist are okay and Worker's Compensation is paying for the time off.

KARAOKE I'm told by Jocko Allen that the Melbourne SF Club is planning a karaoke night. My advice is this: don't do it. I recently suffered through one of these events and if you're wise you'll do something less painful on the night. You know, donate bone marrow or learn fire-walking or tell your least favorite in law what you really think of them or call Jean-Claude Van Damme a bum-sucker to his face. Any of these things will cause you less anguish than seeing people you know attempt "Jailhouse Rock", "Doo Wah Diddy" or "Bye Bye Baby" (in the manner of the Bay City Rollers) with a flatness that gives geometry a whole new dimension. Forget this ethnic cleansing stuff, karaoke is the real evil afoot. It should be locked away like killer viruses and nerve gas.

Catch you next time - like Joe Louis said to Billy Conn - You can run but you can't hide.

Thyme LoCs

Harry Andruschak PO Box 5309
Torrance CA 90510-5309 USA

As always it is good to read a newszine that actually prints news. File 770 is mostly Worldcon stuff nowadays, which means little to me since I have not been able to attend a Worldcon since 1988, I think. Although I certainly am trying to get the money together for the 1995 Worldcon, and would try to do the same if Australia wins the 1999 Worldcon.

As always, some of what you print really is news to me, such as the announcement of the new *Star Wars* movie in 1997. Given the general need of every new *Star Wars* film to top the previous in such things as special effects, utterly C*U*T*E creatures and Evil Lords, I sort of wonder just what can be done.

I chuckled a lot at Terry Frost's article. In some respects we have a different problem here in the USA. With so many cons going on every weekend the same GoHs tend to get recycled again and again. That is the pros. As for the fan GoHs, I have no knowledge of most of them. A read through the upcoming conventions listings in Locus will confirm this to you.

Much of this issue, including the letter column, is devoted to TV stuff. I'll have to pass comment on all that, since I still do not have a TV set.

Thank you for sending Thyme #93, always a fascinating insight into fandom outside the USA, not to mention the ever hilarious *Fanimals* of Ian Gunn.

Last week the newspapers carried the story that Sydney has won the 2000 Olympics. I am wondering how this will affect the 1999 Worldcon bid? If Sydney goes on a hotel and facilities building boom, enough should be on-line in 1999 to hold any size of a worldcon.

Wynne Whiteford is correct that there are many bloopers in SF writing, but that is true in just about any genre of writing. He mentions some good ones, but the classic must still be the first edition of Larry Niven's Ringworld, which has the Earth rotating in the wrong direction. Oooops. He also states "they needed Rider Haggard or Zane Gray to take them to a mysterious Africa or gun-slinging American west that were actually never quite like their romantic image". An even better example, in my humble opinion, would be the Waverley novels by Sir Walter Scott. Not only did his Romantic Scottish Highlands have little to do with the nasty reality, but some of his fictional inventions became reality. One example was the concept of 'family' and 'clan' tartans. Or the idea of burning crosses as a warning...that piece of fiction

was made real by the KKK here in the USA, of course, but it never existed in Scotland. Strange indeed.

BBSs. I happen to visit my brother's house two or three times a week to use his word processor to type up my fanzines and fan articles. But I also access a BBS system that contains 'Recovernet', a series of conferences for those on 12 steps programs. I wonder if that Recovernet is "echoed" (I think that is the slang term) on any BBS in Australia? If so, you will find me right there. And that is my ONLY BBS commitment, and I have stuck to that resolution.

Speaking of fanzines, I am still in the process of putting together Intermediate Vector Bosons #38. It will be my 1990 vacation report, the five week Trans Sahara Coast to Coast truck trip. It is taking a bit more time than I thought it would to do a proper job of it, even with the help of my brother's word processor. Of course, the fact that I also spend a lot of time playing doting Uncle with my three nieces may have something to do with the slow process. Whenever I run into a problem with the computer I just ask them what to do and they get me going again.

As always thanks for the slew of book reviews. I will keep an eye out for any that appear in the local libraries. Due to lack of space, and funds, I mostly read SF and fantasy from the libraries. Alas, a bad series of budget cuts have affected library opening hours and new book acquisitions. But I was finally able to get around to reading The Gripping Hand (USA title), the latest Niven/Pournelle collaboration.

Mervyn Barrett

7 Pitarau Street
Wellington NEW ZEALAND

I'm embarrassed to say that I have nothing newsworthy to pass on to you. I would like to think that the lack of such items is because nothing ever happens here but it could be because things are going on all the time that I don't know about or don't notice, or worse still nothing fannishly interesting happens to me. Nothing out of the ordinary anyway. For instance I went to the National Convention here in June and thought it was very good but so did the other 200 or so who attended and you've probably heard all about that by now.

I read a science fiction book a couple of weeks ago written by someone I'd never read before - can't remember his name now - and it was very boring. Can't remember the title. Then I reread for the first time in twenty years Doctor Mirabilis and Black Easter and got a real charge out of them.

Fandom in Wellington is as fragmented as ever and about the only time you get to see other fragments is at a major convention. There is a club (Phoenix) which

started out with the high minded idea of devoting its meetings to the study and discussion of written SF. It has devolved to a holding company for special interest groups and a social club for people who want to play games (see your Social Calendar listings). Since I find such things as board games and panel games mind-rottingly boring I got out. A few of us old-time fans get together once a month in a pub to eat, talk and drink and while there might be no more direct talk of SFnal things than at Phoenix, it's free and informal and unpretentious.

Irwin Hirsh seems to be sending a curiously mixed message about conventions. He decries the failure of Australian Natcons to award GoH status to Australian professionals, goes on to agree with somebody that most people attend cons to meet old friends not to look at big names and ends with the argument that Con committees run the risk of moving into the red if they bring in overseas writers. Great thinking Irwin. Let's honor Australian professionals by making them GoHs, then humiliate them by not showing up to listen to them talk (we're only here to see our mates after all) and you save money by using locals. Leaving aside the question of how often you can recycle George Turner and Damien Broderick, the position he seems to be taking is a fairly stupid one. If conventions aren't to shrink away into nothingness they need new fans attending and I can't imagine that a convention that offered nothing more than Irwin Hirsh getting together with old friends is the sort of thing that would make a first timer want to be a second timer. Having a name from overseas is a way of bringing in new people and giving them something for their money. (I've been to too many cons here where that is the only thing new fans get for their money.)

Implicit in the opinion he endorses is that if one isn't there to meet old friends and make new ones, one is there to gawp at big names. This is patronising at least. If I go to a convention where Fred Pohl, say, is talking, I go and listen, but not gawp, because I can be pretty sure that a guy who writes stuff that interests me is going to say something that will interest me. When Irwin talks about con committees going into the red because of the costs of bringing someone from overseas what he's really talking about is incompetence. A con committee should have its biggest and most expensive items costed out before it makes a bid and once it has won should start raising money to cover everything it wants to do, not just sit around hoping that attendance will cover everything. A convention without a guest is not cheaper to run, the running costs are the same whether you have a guest or not.

It's the above the line costs that are different and I don't think that these make all that much difference to the attending fan. For a fan having to travel inter-city

and stay at the con hotel the cost of the con membership is the smallest single item and I can't believe that the ten or so bucks extra that having an overseas guest may add to the membership makes all that much difference. (A disclaimer: All this is written by a fan who hasn't attended an Australian con in years and who accepts that, because of the possibility that there exist in Australia bizarre and convoluted conditions of which he knows nothing, what he has said may have no relevance to things in Australia at all.)

Fanimals is terrific!

Sheryl Birkhead

23629 Woodfield Rd
Gaithersburg MD 20882 USA

Wow! Look at the fanzine list. Humungous! At a quick count I get 16/52, about 15%, not so hot, but that tends to keep me in my place when I begin to think I get a goodly percentage of the zines coming out today.

I can envisage a geological cover, in the style of the one you had, named appropriately BYOA/P (bring your own, or perhaps PYO paint your own) nifty idea.

ASFN has a flavor all its own. I see the review of A Wizard In Absentia is of Magnus Gallowglass. How time flies. I haven't read any of them since it was his rather Rod (I think) as the Warlock.

Artychoke, the gravity cartoon, my three (capable of jumping, the fourth one cannot) cats seem to take great glee in skating/sliding/pushing just about anything off of chairs, tabletops and anything else you can name. They don't even ahve the good grace to feel guilty when I yell, they race off, but sit there chuckling.

Dennis Caswell

2424 Maryvale Ct, Burlington
Ontario L7P 2P2 CANADA

It is interesting to read about fandom in Australia and New Zealand, in addition to Dave Langford's Ansible.

Regarding Mark Lawson's article on Time Travel in SF. Travelling in time is a long tradition in SF, starting (I think) with H G Wells' The Time Machine. There were several flaws with Back to the Future, particularly #2. Consider this, if Biff managed to change the past/future with obtaining the sports book, then how was he able to return to the future/present day with the Delorian? Wouldn't that future have been altered so that it no longer existed? What would have happened to McFly and his friend? One could say that the older Biff would not have been in the past long enough for the change to have rippled to the future, but I'm not sure of this. The suspension of disbelief was lost at that point.

Speaking of time travel, there is a good, if somewhat artificial, book by Dr Robert L Forward called Timemaster. The plot exists to illustrate several speculative theories, time travel being among them. The author states in his introduction that he will ignore any letter claiming the impossibility of this book unless they can disprove the theory given in *Cauchy Problem in Spacetimes with Closed Timelike Curves* by Friedman, et al. I looked up this article (published in Physical Review D 42, 1990, pages 1915-1930), finding that this article postulates, among other things, that if a wormhole in space exists then this can be used as a time machine. The reader is invited to attempt to disprove this theorem; I don't have the expertise to do so.

I am glad to see that Australia is bidding for the 1999 Worldcon. This will give me another excuse to travel there. By then I should be able to afford it.

Lorraine Cormack

PO Box 983
Woden ACT 2606

Every time I receive Thyme I have every intention of sitting down to write a LoC. But as you may have noticed, it all seems to escape me .. I enjoy Thyme and wouldn't want to miss it. One thing I must compliment you on is how few typos etc appear. That may sound petty, but a large part of my job is proofreading, and you really get into the habit of noticing! I loved the cover on #92. Just the sort of thing that appeals to my sense of humor.

I quite enjoy reading all the con reports and fan gossip, although I don't make "personal appearances" myself. While this is partly due to shyness that resolves into unmitigated terror at times, it's also partly due to the political infighting that I hear about. I've seen that all too often, in student politics, the public service (or shouldn't I admit to that?), even in student housing. I don't know that I'd want to spend my leisure time playing those games any more. Anyone want to leap to defensive posts and tell me I'm only hearing about a really teeny group of people who go to cons?

Must admit I haven't seen, and don't intend to see, *Jurassic Park*. (Having said that, someone will ring me tonight and say, "Hey, want to see...") It sounds distinctly shonky to me, which Mark Loney's review only reinforced. Not that I've got anything against dumb movies. I've loved some of the dumbest movies of all time; it's just movies that rest solely on special effects that don't appeal to me. *Star Wars* stood up as a great movie and would have without the special effects. *The Lawnmower Man* wouldn't have been made if they couldn't chuck in all the pretty effects.

I see very little movie/TV SF for the simple reason that I don't own a television and therefore not a video. TV

shows go over my head and unless I catch a movie in the cinema I'm not likely to see it either. This is a pity sometimes - I recently read Orson Scott Card's novelisation of *The Abyss* and would now like to see the movie. Of course since I think he's a truly wonderful writer I may be disappointed if I ever get to see the movie.

I like the book reviews, though as usual I don't agree with everything said. I was confused to see *The Mists of Avalon* (Marion Zimmer Bradley) listed for an August 1993 release. Didn't I buy that in paperback a couple of years ago? I've just read a chunk of Jack Higgins' thrillers and was morally outraged to find the same scenes appearing almost word for word in several books. Saving himself the trouble of having to redraft or even think up a new scene...that's something I've never yet found in any of the SF or fantasy authors of whom I read quantities. Definitely a point in their favor!

[The Local Releases listing includes reprints or reissues of books, sometimes even revised editions, as well as first run hard cover or paperback issues, which the publishers have announced will be distributed in Australia at the given date. The Mists of Avalon would be a reprint. AS]

Buck Coulson

2677W-500N
Hartford City IN 47348 USA

Thyme #93 came in very handy; it arrived while I was having a bad case of hay fever complicated by an infection, and was fun to read while I wasn't feeling like doing anything more strenuous than reading. Jumping on poetry for not being literally accurate seems a bit off the point, as poems are supposed to be inspirational rather than accurate. I commend to Whiteford, however, American poet Martha Keller, who wrote about folklore and history; I've checked out a good bit of her work and never found an error. I do think his literal criticism of Masfield should have won points for originality and inspiration.

Whiteford does make an error in the case of John Cleve Symmes, however. His petition to Congress to send an expedition to one of the poles to find the hollow earth was not "voted out". The original motion was tabled, but Symmes' disciple Jeremiah Reynolds continued to agitate, and eventually Congress voted for a voyage of exploration which became the United States exploration expedition of 1838-1842. Looking for the hollow Earth was shuffled to the background, but the expedition owed its origin to Symmes, and was highly successful. A travelling exhibition of the expedition came to Indianapolis some years ago and Symmes' original hollow globe was part of it, and he was credited with the original impulse for the exploration. The exhibit also contained a map Tarawa, drawn by this expedition, which was used in WW II

because it was the best available. (I've been to Symmes' grave and his tombstone is topped with a hollow globe. I considered throwing a doughnut onto it as a tribute, but there were none available.) An account of the affair is in The Great United States Exploring Expedition, by William Stanton, University of California Press, 1975.

Earlier societies didn't persist forever, but some of them **did** persist through several generations of humans, which was quite enough to make them seem immortal to the people making them up.

On ASFN page 2, that's **Inside**, not "Insides". Though the latter would be a lovely fanzine title; individual issues could be named instead of numbered, "The Spleen", "The Red Corpuscle", "The Large Intestine", and so on. I disagree with listing George Turner with Stanislaw Lem and J G Ballard, but then I loathe Lem and Ballard...with Clarke and Niven, yes. And Keith Roberts. For Ansible I loved the Piers Anthony quote. And the Ellison quote, for that matter. Offhand I'd say that peanut butter, hazelnut spread and Barbara Cartland are equally yucky, though I've never actually tried the hazelnuts. They just sound yucky.

jan howard finder

"The Place"

522 Weldon Drive, D-2
Watertown NY 13601 USA

I love Hallucigenia. There was an article on the critter in Stephen Jay Gould's latest collection of essays: Eight Little Piggies. If you haven't read Gould, run, don't walk to the library and give him a try. He is marvellous. His monograph on intelligence: *The Mismeasure of Man* resulted in two SF books being written.

I got to present the Hugo for Fanzine at Confrancisco. Thank the Ghreat Wombat there was no screw up like last year. It was a treat and exciting. No one really expects to be named an Honoured (Tell Craig Macbride that some Yanks can even spell "honored" in strine. So there.) Guest. Oh sure, you wonder what it takes, I still don't know, but that is what happens to OTHER PEOPLE! Even in the "past tense" I'm excited about it. I loved it.

While my Aussiecon I reunion party didn't turn out as expected, does anything, it was a good party and the '99 bid got some good publicity. A goodly number of Aussies showed up as I had hoped. The Australia in '99 bidding party went off well from what I could see. We disconnected or they could have had some violet crumbles, pollywaffles and vegemite to add to their store of goodies. Besides Australia there are three other bids for 1999 with mailing addresses. How serious they are remains to be seen. At this point I believe Australia is odds on favorite (take that Macbride).

I found Wynne Whiteford's article right on the mark. Of course it is fun to find a howler or two in books. Clive Cussler writes a series about a character who sounds something like an American "James Bond". The initial books were quite good. Lately they have become almost a parody (can't spell, so looking up "parody" I came across "parbuckle". A word like that needs to be worked into SF stories, along with fubsy, hirci and gleet). In the last one, Sahara, Cussler has a solar furnace working "day and night".

I found your GoH discussions of interest. I have been FGoH on several occasions. I take it as a great honour. I make myself available to the concom for lots of programming. At Confrancisco I was listed for 12 items and I felt they could have added several more. I feel that part of my job as a FGoH is to make sure that everyone has a good time. I realise that this isn't realistic, but that is my approach. I have seen GoHs who have done the minimum (for me the worst seem to be media, TV/film, guests) and never drop by the con suite or mingle with the common folk who just happen to be paying their way. I both agree and disagree with Irwin Hirsh on the matter of non-Australian pro-GoHs. First, there is no reason why an Australian writer can't be a GoH at the natcon. You should honour your own. On the other hand why not have an overseas writer as well.

As to why fans go to cons, I think Irwin might wish to do some sampling. Sure, many of the readers of Thyme go to see friends. However, there are a lot out there who are drawn to a con by the opportunity of meeting someone they have been reading for a short or long time. In fact, if you aren't drawing in these types of people, then you aren't going to grow and get the new blood needed to keep cons and fandom going. What's wrong with keeping an eye out for someone who just might enjoy a con. Note, I didn't say someone who might become a fan. Going to a con and becoming a fan can be two entirely different things. Their comments to you after the con might be of use to the SMOAF. Lloyd is correct in noting that the Boston in 1998 has moved to 2001. However, another Boston bid has formed for 1998.

Ian Gunn's comix is rather unusual. A little bit different from my normal (?) fare. I found this issue to be entertaining.

[Thyme's editorial policy that it should be spelled 'honored' was relaxed for this letter. AS]

Jan also included a copy of the following letter which he sent to Canadian.

1 October 1993

I was a little bit surprised by your attitude towards persons requesting admittance to the Hugo Nominees party hosted by you. I'm given to believe, however,

that the party was financed by Confrancisco which made your treatment of me even more of a puzzle. I was disappointed in not getting into the party and in you.

Belike I was a little bit presumptuous in expecting to gain admittance to the party. I might not have been a Hugo Nominee, however, I was a Hugo Presenter and, peradventure, more to the point one of Confrancisco's Honored Guests.

Yet at the door I was treated with a rather large amount of disrespect. To be truthful I found the attitude of the "Door Wardens" to be very low rent.

I do hope that at Conadian, you treat your Honored Guests much better that you treated me and Confrancisco's Guests.

Teddy Harvia
701 Regency Drive
Hurst TX 76054 USA

Before seeing Phil Wlodarczyk's cover art, I didn't realise that the hippo was an unknown fauna of the Cambrian age. Ha, ha, ha! Ian Gunn's sappy rebuttal to Mr Huett's complaint made me sick. I pray the fanimals ripped each other to pieces off camera. At Confrancisco a female fan accused me of being one of those males who stare at tits. I'd identify her for you, but I never got a look at her face. Beast Wishes

Craig Hilton
PO Box 430
Collie WA 6225

My efficient little den is becoming increasingly unusable like a small pothole in a rainforest, overgrown with an abundance of foliage which is in urgent need of dispatch, but which all but precludes entry even to get at it. Piles of letters, piles of 'zines, drawings, things to be mailed by Christmas, breakfast cereal, guitar, videotape, plastic spacemen, plastic dinosaurs, drawing paper, medical business, College business, Rotary business and an enormous, overflowing waste paper bin. I'm going through the stack one by one. So if this issue of *Thyme* I'm loccing - #92 from July 1993 - is not the latest, please bear with me.

Ironically my reflection is on Mark (Rocky) Lawson's essay on time travel. I take you back to the heady days of July 1993. (Remember them? What times we had!) If I had a time machine I could dupe people into thinking I was a prompt and reliable correspondent by writing the following:

I understand a working time machine could be created thusly: take two black holes, connected by a wormhole. Spin one around the other so that one is travelling very fast and the other is stationary. When you stop it, the moving one will have experienced time

passing more slowly than the other and will therefore not be as far into the future as the other, yet they will still be connected by a passage that will take you instantaneously in one hole and out the other. Like being simultaneously in the same universe and different ones, temporally out of phase. You could jump in one end and pop out of the other before you had gone in the first. Hurry from point B back to point A, jump back down the hole, come out the other end, back to the hole, out the other side ...you get the picture.

It seems to me that apart from the obvious problem of ending up in a traffic jam with yourself at the entry portal, you could only ever travel back in time to when the machine was created in the first place. I've yet to see a good, working explanation of one that could get you to meet Leonardo da Vinci. Parallel universes, the *deus ex machina* of the time travel paradox conundrum, simply don't wash with me when I'm looking for some good reason why people aren't going back in time to kill their fathers and stomp on bugs, at least not one that's satisfying.

If a character went back in time to change the past and then returned to the present, having put right all that was terribly wrong, he or she would (simplistically) find everything slightly different that used to be the same. The parallel universe guys would have you believe (while smiling beatifically, of course) the hero was returning in fact to a different universe, ideally a better one than the one left behind. The one left behind, might I add, would be populated by the protagonist's friends, family and loved ones, all destined to fall victim to their inevitable grisly fate minus the time-traveller who, from their point of view, had nipped out at the last moment, never to return. A fat lot of good that was. Okay, I mean sure, he/she went to a better world, where parallel copies of all the people he/she held dear lived happily ever after. So what? Imagine if the Joker was about to detonate a nuke in the centre of Gotham City and Batman decided his best coping strategy was to move to the Bahamas and start making new friends. It makes just about the same amount of moral sense, which is to say not much.

When we watch the *Terminator* films we only follow Sarah Connor through one track of reality, although we get a glimpse of another one, with a pretty depressing future. So what is Kyle achieving by heading back into the past? Finding a rather nice parallel universe to inhabit? You betcha. He might just as well have said "Look, Mister Terminator, do what you like. You can only ever influence events in the particular reality you exist in. There must be dozens of other realities where I beat the pants off you, and human beings live forevermore in peace and harmony. So there." (And two seconds later was dead, but that's irrelevant to my argument). Knowing that all

things are not only possible but also have, will and are happening in every physically allowable permutation gives one a numbing sense of fatalism. It's the justification that would have allowed Kyle a clear conscience while he sat down and began to torture little kittens for two weeks, since logically there were - would **always be** - scenarios which had him doing just that, as surely as there were ones which had him marked down as a benefactor of old ladies. No matter how good he was in one universe, he could be guaranteed that other universes were happening at that very moment which, like it or not, were just chock full of despicable acts, and whether or not he did them would have absolutely no bearing on whether or not they were done by him.

In *Terminator 2* Sarah Conner saved her world. It was a hollow victory. That's the easy version. Chaos Theory dictates that it's not as simple as all that, good heavens no. We delude ourselves when we think we can predict cause and effect any more than we can draw precisely the weather map for three days hence. Remember how the beating of a butterfly's wings in Japan can cause a hurricane in Florida? Or possibly mean it happens in Cuba on a different day? Douglas Adams was the first author I encountered who approached it, in Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency. Adams described it as being like trying to push down an air bubble in some wallpaper, you'll just make another one come up in some new, completely unpredictable spot. Sergeant Kyle might have coughed and caused the hurricane that crashed the plane that the robotics scientist was in and saved the world that way. Hey, in some universes he **did**!

Many years ago (*Return of the Jedi* was just out, if that gives you any clues), I was at a party at Damien Brennan's in South Perth. A group of us began to play "What if..." games. I tossed in a time-travel one. It's tricky when you make it non-interventionist, like in that old telemovie *The Flipside of Domenic Hyde*. You can look and you can touch, but you must never intervene. Tricky and boring. I mean, what can you say to da Vinci (my choice, by the way), so as not to alert his suspicions? "Hi there, look you don't know me but hey I was just passing through the neighborhood and I thought you might like to show me your latest ideas. What? Oh, nobody in particular. Just a sort of fan." That and getting your Renaissance Italian word perfect. A friend of mine, Peter Williams, had previously set me off on this idea. His was to sit in at the opening night of the original, uncut version of *Fantasia*, unkind audience reaction and all. Hmm...yes, can be done.

But that's no fun. What if you did disobey orders and allow yourself a few liberties? For instance, Ian Nicholls wanted to explore the library at Alexandria...with a photocopier. But Bob Ogden's wishes were simple. He wanted to stand present when

the first *homo sapiens* created the first fire. And then whip out a fire extinguisher, hoo hoo hoo! The looks of stunned disbelief on their faces! And then you could duck off into a parallel universe where they'd never find you. There exist, mark you, a copious supply of universes where they **do** find you and string you up by the toes. Just make sure the "you" is some other you. Confused? I am.

Karl Johanson

4129 Carey Rd
Victoria B.C. V8Z 4G5 CANADA

Some interesting reading, although I haven't had a chance for an in depth look. Were the toes of the Sleazyosaur supposed to be 666s? Shouldn't then the next issue have had 13 stars instead of 11? (Sorry, I'm practising to be superstitious. I'm not very good at it yet.)

Tim Jones

20 Gillespie Street
Dunedin NEW ZEALAND

Thanks for Thyme #93. It was good to see Timbre back in somebody's list of fanzines. Mind you, there was a time (say, ten years ago, when I first produced a zine) when an integral part of the fanzine editor's job was to carry comprehensive reviews of all and every zine received. That seems to have changed in recent years; in Timbre the best I can manage is a brief list of my personal favorites amongst the zines I've received, followed by a long list of addresses. Perhaps this signals that there are now too many zines coming out to be reviewed, which in turn gives the lie to the theory that fanzine fandom is dying.

I hope you'll forgive me for saying that I found the book reviews the best feature of Thyme/ASFN. Yours is one of the best zines for intelligent book reviews which tell your readers things they need to know about the books without giving the story away. Damien Broderick is a particularly perceptive reviewer, and his writing is good enough to hold one's interest even if the book he's reviewing isn't, although I think that only Damien could have come out with a sentence like "It struck me right away, totally irrelevantly, that 'Alvar Kresh' is a sort of anagram of 'Isaac Asimov'".

I enjoyed Merv Binns' reminiscences. I've been doing my own recapitulation of my early days in fandom in 'recent' Timbres, and am partial to the same from other authors, especially those with the range of memories and connections that Merv has. I can vouch for Robin Johnson's continued presence at WorldCons. I met him at ConFrancisco and he was the only Australian fan there whom I knew even slightly, proving that I need to get over to Australia to acquaint myself with a new generation of fans; an unsubtle plug for FFANZ votes there, as I'm sure you'll agree.

The various enclosures that come with Thyme add to its strength: I enjoy Ansible and Artychoke but Space Time Buccaneers most of all. Ian Gunn cartoons are spread throughout the fannish universe - they were prominent in the ConFrancisco program book - but I've not seen him do better than this strip.

Finally, Garth Spencer ponders the whereabouts of Tom Cardy, long a New Zealand fanzine fan extraordinaire. Tom now lives in Wellington, our nation's capital, where he keeps in touch with fandom but hasn't (to my knowledge) produced a fanzine for a while. This could have something to do with his occupation, he's now a journalist, hard-bitten, leather-jacketed, but probably no more cynical than before.

Lyn McConchie

Farside Farm, R.D.
Norsewood NEW ZEALAND

I loved Wynne's article on "Bloopers in SF", particularly the bit at the beginning where he demolishes Cargoes. I could just see it and it illustrates so well the difference between fact as it is historically, and the poetic license of the writer. I suspect that an awful lot of other classic poetry and writing could be dissected in a similar way and proven to be historically inaccurate. But as Wynne says, we love it anyway.

He's right that many readers nowadays wouldn't know what a slide rule is. You don't have to move into the younger generation to discover that ignorance either. I've always had a vague idea but had never actually seen one. Then a few years back I was at a huge jumble sale near where I was living at the time. On a table of bric-a-brac I found a very odd looking ruler in a cardboard case. I enquired what exactly this 'ere thing was, to be informed that it was a slide rule. A real slide rule as used for years by her father the Engineer, and now deceased. I promptly paid out a dollar and became the new owner of a piece of real SF history. I treasure it and somehow it makes me closer to all the writers who mentioned slide rules (or slipsticks - as per Heinlein) in earlier SF.

Wynne's suggestion that the origin of the dragon myth arose from the discovery of a mostly intact pterodactyl skeleton - well, I don't want to be contentious - but I think it unlikely. Far too many countries have that legend from before they were in communication. An awful lot of pterodactyl skeletons would have to have been tripped over accidentally to explain the number of places that had the legend. On the other hand he says that 'dragons' vanished well before humans arose. Hummm. Just a few months ago they found a complete pygmy mammoth intact and frozen in the ice on a small island off Siberia. Carbon testing showed it to have lived only 3,500 years ago. So what else was still surviving? Admittedly a pygmy mammoth is hardly a pterodactyl or a dinosaur. But if we are

finding such later creatures survived until well into our own history, isn't it possible that older creatures survived into our own period, at least into it long enough to become legends? I know I seem to be having it both ways and I hope Wynne will forgive me, but I still feel that the idea of dragons might have been based on more than an odd skeleton.

[I learnt about sliderules in High School, just after log tables, where they had four or five to hand around in the class. I bought one second hand a few years later, but have never really used it for calculations. AS]

Bruce Pelz

Tripe Report card 8 (18/9) Appropriately enough for the Sandwich Islands, visitors are expected to have a lot of bread and to put up with a lot of baloney from a lot of cheesy tradespeople. As Fast Food Junkies, of course, this quite suits our tastes.

Tripe Report card 9 (23/9) American Hawaii Cruises have two ships: the Independence and the Constitution. Both have US Registry and carry an American crew. This may explain why they are more expensive than many of the International cruise lines.

When you care enough...you send the Furry Beast Zocard 3 (Asiatic elephant, Honolulu 26/9) We heard that the Zoo in Honolulu was in reality an overgrown Aquarium but it turned out that was a fishes rumor.

Postcon Pocketsard 17 (5/9) San Francisco cannot, in all fairness, be compared to New Orleans. There were no Jazz halls nearby to escape to, and no one had even HEARD of Beignets! Of course, it probably didn't help that Elayne asked for "beg-nets".

Lloyd Penney

412-4 Lisa St., Brampton
Ontario L6T 4B6 CANADA

Thyme #92...I imagine Jurassic Park has overrun Australia, which will make dinosaurs even more popular than kangaroos or koalas. So far, the film has made over \$US 350 million, which means it may soon become the second-highest grossing film of all time, behind E.T. The merchandise and dinosaur spin-offs are everywhere, including various dinosaur shows, and the kids' favorite, Barney...if you don't know, don't ask, you don't want to know about Barney. Trust me.

Terry Frost's article about GoHs is a valuable one for con managers and habitual con members like myself. We've tried to keep our ear to the grapevine in order to find out from others which writers and artists and other pros make good guests. For the most part we've been very successful. We've had Zelazny, Bova, Brust, Cherryh, Freas, Bujold, Kurtz, Pratchett and more, with good results each time. Our few faux pas in the guests department include Jerry Pournelle

(extremely militaristic) and John Varley (very moody, introspective and dull), but not much more than that. Our good guests have been friendly, vociferous, outgoing and very participatory. They give us a new angle of thinking, and can sit down with you and chat over a beer. Jerry tried to hustle most of the female members of the con, and John kept company with a Pepsi machine over most of the weekend. Granted, as Paul Ewins said in his con report, he goes to see friends at cons, and many people are like that. Still, the good name of the guest becomes part of the marquee on your flyer, and that will still attract people to the con. They are also the ones who will purchase copies of your guest's work from your local booksellers, who would like you a lot if you notify them about the guest in advance.

As Brian Earl Brown says in his LoC, *Quantum Leap* got very silly in its last season. The final episode had the bartender who knew about leaping, evil leapers, etc. I know of at least two fans who did nothing but scream at each other over the phone once the episode and series was done. The series was left in the air, unconcluded, and the final episode was leading up to some interesting ideas. I can see "movie" in its future, and should such a movie be done, all the loose ends can be tied up, and Sam really can go home, no matter what the messages at the end of the final episode said.

Buck Coulson is absolutely right when he says that people become Trekkers because Trek is part of their first exposure to SF as a whole, and they will embrace SF and its fandom if given a chance. This is exactly what I've tried to do in Toronto. I've tried to trace my own journey from Trek fandom to SF fandom, and also tried to see if others will take that same journey. We've tried to show some of the local Trek diehards that there are other things to see and do, and this has met with some success. Also, I find that many local Trekkers, once they reach a certain age, ask themselves "Well...what else is there here?", and I try to be there to provide the answer. As a result there are now readers where there were just watchers, and there are Whofers and Trekkers on our SF convention committees. This has swelled our fannish numbers in the local SF fandom community and may be its only hope...most of the new fans enter fandom through the large and small screens.

Greetings to Jan Finder, and thanks for his remarks on Ad Astra. We try our damndest, and are always open to suggestions about how we can improve it. Also, greetings to Alex Vasilkovsky. A shame that *Chernobylization* has been delayed, but it's great to hear that you have become part of the professional SF community in the Ukraine. Congratulations!

When I have to explain to others why there is the appeal of SF, and why we have conventions like the

ones we do, I say that SF is an interactive genre of literature, where you can read a book one week, and meet the person who wrote it the next, and ask questions of him or her. The interactive feature fascinates people, but then they remember it's that sci-fi stuff, and it can't be much good anyway...still, talking about interactivity makes them think, even if only for a minute. Mike Glicksohn is a friend of mine, and I believe was just married to Susan Manchester of New York. Rob Bloch was a new acquaintance last year at a con in London, Ontario.

Harry Warner Jr

423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown MD 21740 USA

Sometimes I wonder why I should take an interest in reviews of books I'll never read, doings of individuals I'll never meet, and cons I am certain not to attend, but I do. Maybe it has a genetic origin, maybe it comes from force of habit, or maybe you make these pages so interesting I can't resist them.

I'm afraid "director's version" is doomed to become a merchandising gimmick, designed to persuade people to spend a lot of money on videotapes and laser discs whose contents don't differ to any great extent from what was shown in theatres and on television. Obviously it's good to have more complete editions of films that were mercilessly chopped on first release, whose "director's version" may contain a half-hour or more of omitted material. But I foresee the practice turning into a cinematic version of what happened to phonograph records when stereo LPs were introduced. With great ceremony and publicity every recording firm produced new stereo discs derived from monaural recordings that had been available for years, and in most cases it required a vivid imagination to detect any improvement in the new and more expensive stereo versions.

I enjoyed Mark Lawson's dissertation on those time travel films, although the only one I've seen, among those he cites, is the first *Back to the Future* which was spoiled for me by too much reliance on coincidence. The popularity of time travel movies that he wonders about might be explained away simply by the monkey see, monkey do philosophy of Hollywood. One successful movie that is a little different will immediately be imitated to repletion by both the producers of that film and by competitors.

My sense of wonder was stirred up once again by the LoC from a fan living in Cairo, Egypt, describing a visit from another fan. Fandom is truly conquering the globe. I suppose another quarter-century will produce large fan clubs and major conventions in Egypt; but even this small beginning is hard to get used to for a person who remembers when a visit of New York City fans to Philadelphia was considered a significant globetrotting event.

Fanzine awards always seem to encounter difficulties. The worst one originating from Hugo awards came quite a few years ago when Richard Bergeron published the largest fanzine in history, crammed full of material by and about Walt Willis. It didn't even make the Best Fanzine nomination list at the next Worldcon because the Hugo committee didn't think it was a fanzine and disregarded nominations for it. And it took years of prodding and complaining to establish a semi-pro Hugo category to separate them from the genuine fanzines in the nominating and voting. As for proposals to switch the rules from Best Fan Writer to Best Fan Article, I think it contains serious difficulties. In the US, there might be fifty or so fans deserving of nominations as Best Fan Writer. But there might be five hundred examples of fanzine writing during the year that are good enough to be considered nominatable items. If the change were made, the nominations would be diluted among so many possibilities that only three or four votes might gain a nomination for an article. It's bad enough under present circumstances when the Hugo Fan Writer nominations usually total only two or three dozen for each individual who makes a place on the final ballot. (There would also be endless problems with eligibility for a fanzine article since sometimes a fanzine is partly distributed by hand at a con and later mailed out to other fans, or appears in an APA Mailing long after some copies have been mailed out separately. And what about fanzines distributed late in the year to native fans but received overseas only in the following year?).

[I think a '5%' rule precludes very few nominations resulting in appearance on the final Hugo ballot. Has anyone checked to see if work by past Hugo Fan Writer nominees has appeared in the appropriate Fanthologies ? AS]

I suppose it's correct to write that "No other field of popular literature can claim the same close contact between the readers and the authors as SF&F". However, mystery fiction fans and authors aren't far behind in this respect. I don't know how it is in Australia, but in the US it's possible to meet and talk to a lot of prominent mystery fiction writers by watching for announcements of book signings in nearby towns. Hagerstown is a smallish city that is sort of out of the way of civilisation but even so, a local bookshop has had as many as five big names in mystery fiction doing signings on the same afternoon. These signings don't normally attract the hordes of kids who flood conventions so it's possible to have coherent conversations with the writers.

All the Marionettes should be delighted with the publication of Rediscovery. If it seems different from previous Darkover books, this could result from the fact that Marion Bradley has been having health

problems so Mercedes Lackey may have done a good bit of the work on the new novel. Karen Pender-Gunn may not be aware that The Grail of Hearts is based on the characters and circumstances that Richard Wagner derived from the ancient Parsifal legend for his opera. If Kundry seems confusing, that might result in part from the fact that there were two women in the original legend, the one who laughed at Christ on the Cross and another who serves as messenger for the knights of the Grail. Wagner meshed them into Kundry for his purposes.

Wynne Whitford's article on bloopers was easily the most interesting item to me. I wonder if he deliberately inserted a blooper of his own invention into it near the start, just to determine if fans were paying full attention ? The Skylark of Space was first published in Amazing Stories in the late 1920s, not in Astounding Stories. The first Skylark novel published in Astounding was The Skylark of Valeron in the mid-1930s.

I'm sure most readers of this article who write LoCs will contribute a favorite blooper or two to add to the assortment that Wynne has written about. My own nominee for the most blooperous SF story of all time is the celebrated and often anthologised The Cold Equations. The whole plot depends on a stowaway in an emergency space vehicle whose weight will cause the ship to be unable to land at its destination, a planet to which it is taking badly needed medicine, because it doesn't have a reserve supply of fuel. But the planet in question is one that is just beginning to undergo exploration by a few individuals, there's no chance there would be a supply of fuel on that planet, and the emergency vessel would have been given enough fuel for a round trip to spare its pilot from spending eternity on this unknown world.

I think Wynne is a bit hasty when he blames Ray Bradbury for blooming conditions on Venus. The planet as Bradbury depicted it in that story was just about the way science portrayed it on the basis of observations and calculations made at the time of writing. Only when the first probes were sent to the vicinity of Venus did scientists drastically revise their beliefs about its atmosphere and temperature.

He might also have mentioned a blooper in one of Anne McCaffrey's early dragon novels, maybe the very first one. The good guys are fighting a losing battle against the invading threads. Since time travel into the past was a given in this story, all they would have needed to do was to make repeated trips into a time in the past when the threads had just begun to arrive, and get rid of them before they had gotten a foothold or knothold or whatever threads use to establish themselves where they aren't wanted.

It seems to me that a fan can experience all the phenomena that Terry Frost ascribes to computer nets by just turning on the AM radio and listening to the talk shows, at least if he lives in the United States. They provide the same half-baked opinions, the information on unimportant matters, and stupid arguments free that cost a couple of thousand dollars to experience via a computer and telephone lines. There's no way to convert them to printouts but they can be taperecorded if anyone thinks something is worth preserving. I don't know if the listener-callin talk shows are as numerous in Australia as they are around here, but after dark there must be at least thirty of them running at any given time on various AM frequencies.

As for ASFN I'm sorry to learn about George Turner's stroke-created handicap. But I have hope that he will regain full use of that arm. Medical science is doing remarkable things in rehabilitation of stroke victims nowadays.

I'm afraid I can't share Damien Broderick's liking for sequels of sequels, trilogies, expansions of short stories into novels, "shared world" projects and the like. I fell in love with SF originally because every story I read gave me a new vista of some sort into future possibilities or conditions on distant planets or scientific marvels. I thought this was much better than mundane fiction where new authors could only write variations on the same intelligent race and one world that had already been fictionized by many previous generations of authors. I stopped reading SF regularly when more and more stories were nothing but looks from different angles at previous stories or more adventures of the same sort for a cast of characters from a previous book or an exercise in theorising how it will be if a current trend continues into the future. SF was becoming too predictable. It was as dull reading, for the most part, as the way singers try to put slight variations into a national anthem by adding a grace note here and changing the length of another note there.

I had a brilliant idea the other day when I heard the audience applaud a singer of pop music when he began a tune associated with himself which he'd performed hundreds of times in public. Maybe the day will come when there will be interactive SF, stories arriving electronically to readers who will be able to burst into applause as soon as they've read the first few pages and have recognised its plot from dozens of previous uses and the author and publisher will be able to hear this particular form of backward tribute. This ability would be sufficient goad for me to buy computer equipment.

Postcards to Artychoke

Mervyn Barrett

7 Pitarua Street
Wellington NEW ZEALAND

I've been getting Artychoke along with Thyme and some other zines and enjoying it incredibly. To find a small press comic strip that has story, characters, humor, style and a lively quality when most "alternative" strips - even a lot of US professionally published ones - can't provide even one of these elements is a particular joy.

[Thanks, your cheque's in the post. Space-Time Buccaneers is certainly the most involved and preplanned project I've ever done, as well as the most heavily researched. All the dates, times and costumes are as historically accurate as I could make them. Most of the vessels you can spot in the limbo zone, for instance, actually disappeared in the Bermuda Triangle. There are bloopers - I've since heard that vikings never wore horned helmets - Sven obviously picked up his in the nineteenth century. One thing that does annoy me about Space-Time Buccaneers is that I've failed to develop the minor characters enough. If I ever do a sequel, that'll be a priority. IG]

WAHF Sheryl Birkhead, Lawrie Brown, Lorraine Cormack, Michelle Dean, Mrs H Gibson, Anne Grundy, Rob Hamilton, John and Eve Harvey, Lea Henderson, Kim Huett, Van Ikin, Known Space Books, Patricia McKinley, John Millard, Sarah Murray-White, Sian O'Neale, Cath and Marc Ortlieb, Ben Schilling, Malcolm Smith, Colin Steele, John Stewart, Joseph F Szabo, Charles Taylor, R B Turnbull and Lucy Zinkiewicz.



GROUCHO DE MILO



1993 Hugo Award Winner!

Science Fiction Chronicle

Prints All The SF, Fantasy, & Horror News That Will Fit!

Each monthly issue of Andrew Porter's *Science Fiction Chronicle*, published since 1979, brings you all the news of what's happening in SF, horror & fantasy: who's written what, what editors are buying, where artists are showing their work, awards, conventions, news of fans & fanzines, a monthly convention calendar, and 600 book and small press reviews a year of US and UK books, many before publication.

There's more: obituaries, three American market report updates a year and an annual British market report—the most complete in the field, bar none—for hopeful or established writers, letters, Jeff Rovin's *S.F. Cinema* on the world of Hollywood and TV, for bookbuyers a monthly Buyer's Guide of upcoming SF, fantasy and horror titles, with prices and many cover reproductions, from both large and small presses in the US, fanzine reviews by London's Avedon Carol. Plus, World Fantasy and Bram Stoker Award-winning Steve Jones & Jo Fletcher's *British Report*, also with many cover reproductions and photos, keeps you up to date on books and events in the UK. And interviews with Mary Gentle, Storm Constantine, Paul McAuley, Terry Pratchett, others.

All in a package that's clean, attractive, with minimal use of continued lines. Every issue has a full color artwork cover, featuring some of the best artwork in SF and fantasy, by artists including Don Maitz, J.K. Potter, Kelly Freas, Ed Emshwiller, David Mattingly, Barclay Shaw, Bob Eggleton, and Tom Kidd.

Issues are posted by Airmail to Australia, so you get them less than a week after publication. And, they're sealed in polybags for added protection from the Postal authorities. SFC was a 13-time Hugo nominee; its editor is the recipient of special awards from both the 1991 World Science Fiction Convention and the 1992 British Fantasy Convention! **Subscribe, today!**

Make cheques payable to Hexagon Press, and post to:

Want to see one issue? Send \$A5 for a single copy

Hexagon Press, P.O. Box 337, Blacktown NSW 2148

☐ 1 Year (12 issues) only \$A54

☐ 2 Years (24 issues) only \$A99

Name _____

Address _____

I wish to start my subscription with the _____ issue
 Expect 4-6 weeks before delivery of first issue.

Trading Thyme

Magazines that have arrived in the Thyme PO Box since the last issue. Full address and ordering information will only be given if it's a new zine since the last semiannual full listing was done (#93 September 1993). Thanks to all who sent them and if I've cribbed some news without supplying due credit I apologise. Thyme is available for 'The Usual' which includes air mail arranged trade, contribution (letter, article, artwork) and editorial whim.

Astromancer Quarterly May/August 93

A Very Occasional Paper #5½ (August 93)

Barry R Levin SF & Fantasy Literature Fall 93

Catalog - Barry R Levin

726 Santa Monica Blvd, Suite 201, Santa Monica, California 90401 USA.

Bento #5 (September 93)

Perzine - Kate Yule and David Levine

1905 SE 43rd Ave, Portland, OR 97215 USA

Available for 'The Usual', or \$US 2 cash.

Black Light #6 (October 93)

Busswarble #9 (September 93), #10 (October 93)

The Captain's Log #194 (September 93),

#195 (October 93)

Chernobylization #6 (June 93)

Cry Havoc September 93

Data Extract #102 (August 93), #103 (October 93)

doxa! vol 3 #3 (August 93)

Doxy July 93

Ethel the Aardvark #51 (October 93)

The Frozen Frog #7 (August 93)

The Mentor #81 (January 94)

Merv Blinns Books SF Trading Post #51-52

(Sept-Oct 93) Advance Order List Sept 93, Oct 93

Opuntia #14.1 (August 93), #14.5 (September 93)

Phlogiston #34 (1993/2), #35 (1993/3)

Phoenixzine #50 (September 93)

Pink #14 (August 93)

Science Fiction Chronicle September 93

Severed Head #1 (November 93)

Newsletter - Edited by Chris A Masters

Melbourne Horror Society, PO Box 7545, St Kilda Rd, Melbourne, Vic, 3004. Available to members, \$15 first year, \$10 to renew thereafter. Cheques payable to 'Chris Anagnostopoulos'.

(Replaces Daarke Worde)

SF Commentary #73/74/75 (October 93)

Genzine - Edited by Bruce Gillespie

GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001.

Subscriptions: A\$25 in Australia, £12.50 airmail to Britain, US\$25 airmail to USA. Also available for written or art contributions, traded publications, advertising or donations.

Sonic Screwdriver #79 (August 93)

Clubzine - Edited by Marco Cappiello

Doctor Who Club of Victoria, GPO Box 4782UU, Melbourne, Victoria 3001. Available to members (\$12/year), arranged trades.

Space Time Continuum vol 2 #4 (July/August 93)

Strange Matter #10 (August 93)

Media genzine - Edited by Sian O'Neale

185 Toorak Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142.

Available for LoCs, articles, fiction, reviews on music, Doctor Who or whatever, or \$2.

The Texas SF Inquirer #50 (June 93)

Clubzine - Edited by Alexander R Slate

8603 Shallow Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78239 USA.

Available for \$US 1.50 (\$US 2 overseas) per individual copy, or the usual.

THREADS Newsletter September 93

Under the Ozone Hole #4 (May 93)

Genzine - Edited by John Willcox Herbert, Karl Johanson. 4129 Carey Rd, Victoria, B.C. V87 4G5, Canada. Available for 'The Usual', \$CorUS 12.50/4 issues (and One Free Neat Thing).

Warp (New Zealand) #91 (June/July 93)

The Whole Fanzine Catalog #31 (July 93)

Social Calendar

| | | | |
|----|--------------|---------|---|
| 5 | November | MSFC | 7.30 pm, 74 Melville Rd, West Brunswick. Dalek races. |
| 12 | November | MSFC | Video night. |
| 19 | November | MSFC | Soft toy auction. |
| 26 | November | MSFC | Film premiere <i>Addams Family Values</i> , more details later. |
| 3 | December | MSFC | Salad night (All you can eat for \$3). |
| 10 | December | MSFC | Karaoke night. |
| 12 | December | MSFC | Car rally. |
| 17 | December | MSFC | Christmas party. |
| 7 | January 1994 | MSFC | Celebrity heads. |
| 12 | February | Threads | St Valentine's Day Ball, 'Romance at the Final Frontier', \$35 Mail: PO Box 257, Brunswick West, 3055. |

The **Nova Mob** meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6 pm for a meal at Erawan Restaurant, 205 Swan Street, Richmond (Victoria) and further discussion later. So far proposed meetings for 1993 are:

| | | |
|------------|--------------|--|
| 3 November | Lucy Sussex | Making Things Difficult for Yourself |
| 1 December | Saturday 1pm | End of year break-up. Smorgasbord yum-cha. |
| | | Lotus Inn, 26 Market Lane, BYO phone (03) 662 3059 |

Critical Mass usually meet to discuss SF and debate first Wednesday of each month, from 8 pm at SA Writers' Centre, 242 Pirie Street, Adelaide, with dinner beforehand at East End Coffee House.

The **Melbourne Horror Society** now meets monthly at 7.30 pm on the first Friday of every month at the Pancake Parlour, Market Lane, Melbourne. For more information contact Chris Masters (03) 509 5366.

The **Dandenong Valley SF & Futurist Society** meet at 7.30 pm, Dandenong Library Conference Room.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 16 November | Does SF contribute to violence in our society ? |
| 21 December | Christmas portrayed in SF (Party) |

The **Phoenix SF Society** meets in Wellington, New Zealand, at 7.30 pm on the second wednesday of every month in the Hotel St George, cnr Willis and Boulcott Street. Their current program for 1993 is:

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| 10 November | Literary Panel | 8 December | Quiz / Christmas Party |
|-------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|

The **SF Modellers Club** meets in Auckland at 869 New North Road, Mt Albert.
Enquiries to Felicity Scoones (President) Ph: 630 4757. Meetings at 7.30 pm, usually on a Wednesday.

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|-------------------------|-------|----------|--------------------------|
| 6 | November | Guy Fawkes party | 8 | December | AGM |
| 10 | November | Animation and computers | 11-12 | December | Christmas party and camp |

1993 CONVENTIONS

FANTASY FEST 6 November 1993

Melbourne Town Hall. Presented by Gallifrey and DWCV. Collector's Fest Fair - merchandise and collectibles, 10am-4pm. \$3 admission. Huckster's enquiries: phone (03) 557 6132. Banquet - 7pm-1am. \$35 per head. Payments Payable to Doctor Who Club of Victoria. Mail GPO Box 910G, Melbourne, Victoria 3001.

DITTO 6 (Fanzine Relaxacon) 19-21 November

Sheraton Commander Hotel, Cambridge, MA USA. Rates \$US 30 at door Mail 74 Mt Vernon Street, Arlington MA 02174 USA.

CIRCULATION 6 December. Canberra SF Society relaxacon.

Capricon '93 10-12 December

Gaming Con. Monash University. Features AD&D, Aliens, Ars Magica, Call of Cthulhu, Cyberpunk, Elric, Runequest, Space 1889, Trauma, Traveller New Era, Warhammer. Fees Registration \$5, all sessions \$2 each. Mail C/- Monash University Role Players, Union Building, Monash University, Clayton, Vic. 3168. Phone Information from Dave on (03) 509 9516 or (03) 543 1741

1994 CONVENTIONS

STARFEST February 5-6 (Melbourne), February 12-13 (Brisbane)

Melbourne: Southern Cross Hotel. Brisbane: Mayfair Crest Hotel. GoHs George Takei (Suii *Star Trek*, Dave McDonnell (*Starlog*) Hours Saturday 9am-midnight, Sunday 9am-5pm. Rates \$32 one day, \$60 weekend. Children under 12 half price. Bookings (additional fees apply): Brisbane - Ticketworld, Melbourne - Bass.

CONSTANTINOPLE (1994 Australian Natcon/Australasian Media Natcon) 1-4 April

Southern Cross Hotel, Melbourne GoHs William Gibson, Colin Baker, Bruce Gillespie, Bean & Medge, Narrelle Harris (non-attending) Features Art Show, Masquerade, Film Preview, National Awards, Panels, Dessert Banquet. Membership \$A 100, sup. \$A 20, voting \$A 5. At 1-4-94 Child aged 5-12 \$A 40, under 5 free Charities Cat Protection Society of Victoria, Royal Melbourne Zoo Mail PO Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005. Phone (03) 429 8354

INTERACT (SF Media Convention) 23-25 April

National Convention Centre. Contact: GPO Box 2080, Canberra, ACT, 2601

SILICON (1994 New Zealand National) 3-6 June

Bentley's Hotel (ex Alglan), Dunedin. GoHs Barbara Hambly, Tom Cardy Membership \$NZ 40, \$NZ 10 sup. T-Shirt \$NZ 30 Mail PO Box 333, Dunedin, New Zealand

SWANCON 19 June (No details available)

CONFUSION 15-17 July

Perth Media Con. Mail PO Box 190, Mt Lawley, WA, 6050

AUSTRALIAN



NEWS

Number 55

November 1993

Edited by

Merv Binns
PO Box 491, Elsternwick
Victoria 3185

Alan Stewart
PO Box 222, World Trade Centre
Melbourne, Victoria 3005

First up this issue I would like to thank all those old friends who have subscribed to the new style ASFN. I must also point out that you would not be seeing it if it was not for **Alan Stewart** who is really doing all the hard work.

Continuing my SF memoirs, I want to emphasise how lucky I have been to meet the SF people I have met over the years. Space Age Books and the many conventions I have attended gave me the opportunities to meet most visiting fans and authors to Melbourne, from interstate and overseas. Our Worldcons gave Australian fans the opportunity to meet people from overseas that they have known through correspondence and fanzines and, in the case of authors, read their writing. My attendance at the Worldcon in Toronto, Canada, in 1973 gave me the opportunity to meet many people who had just been photos in Locus. The late **Susan Wood** introduced me to **Robert Bloch** who in direct contrast to his writings about nasty people is a very nice guy. I later invited him to be the GoH of Cinecon, which I organised in 1981. Being an avid reader of Locus and Science Fiction Chronicle and having always read the blurbs and studied the photographs of authors on the dust jackets of their books, it was easy for me to recognise the luminaries attending Torcon. Wow, there's **Isaac Asimov**! Never got to meet him personally as it happens, nor **Robert Heinlein**, but I did speak to Heinlein on the phone when he called in to Melbourne on one of his much publicised sea voyages. He unfortunately had the flu and could not leave his cabin. As mentioned previously Melbourne fans had the pleasure of meeting **Arthur C Clarke** here in the early 50's, when he was on his way to the Great Barrier Reef. But getting back to Torcon, I spent most of the convention walking on air and the ultimate was a party my friend and partner the late **Ron Graham** wangled me an invitation to, where I met **Poul Anderson**, **Marion Zimmer Bradley**, **Harry Harrison** and so many others I have forgotten.

Seven Australian fans, I think, attended Torcon in 1973 when our bid to hold the Worldcon in 1975 was decided, but a few more I think made it to Seacon in Brighton England in 1979, where it was said that more

SF&F authors were in attendance than at any SF convention up to then or probably since. There had not been a Worldcon in England for many years and the Americans came over in droves and I think every British and many European authors and Asian writers were there also. Conventions are great fun and it is great to see friends you may not have seen for a long time. The recent ANZAPA get together was attended by a few old friends I had not seen for years, and it was great to see them again. The Worldcons I attended, both in Australia and overseas, were great because of the opportunity to meet correspondents and make new friends, particularly overseas people, but seeing the people who make our literature and our world wide fandom what it is was the icing on the cake.

Attending conventions and book signings at Space Age gave me the chance to dine with many fans and pros. Sometimes they were disasters but most are etched in my memory. The earliest was the MSFC meeting with Arthur C Clarke, which because of the crummy restaurant and ordinary food may be forgotten, but it was my first meeting with a "big name" author. Trying to put things in context in the following years is, I am finding, hard to do. So many Space Age parties and dinners, and we did have some great parties at Christmas and so forth. Mostly Chinese restaurant dinners I remember. One Chinese affair was in Acland Street, St Kilda, which **Lee Harding** organised when **Roger Zelazny** and **Brian Aldiss** were guests of Unicon IV, organised by the late **Roger Weddall** and others, at which we went through over twenty courses. Another memorable Chinese meal was a small group with **Anne McCaffrey** at the Flower Drum in Little Bourke Street. **Harlan Ellison** was impressed with a Greek restaurant we took him to in Richmond. It reminded him of home in New York, but when we tried to go there with **Jack Vance** they were closed and we ended up in South Melbourne. We were the only customers that night and we were very well looked after. When **Larry Niven** was in town on a fleeting visit my father and I took him and his wife on a drive down the peninsula. It was not a very impressive trip and we had a less than impressive meal and to top it

off we got them to the airport a lot later than they wanted. That one is best forgotten, but it is in the minority. Dad and I, again, picked up **Frank Herbert** and his lady from the airport after a convention in Adelaide and we had lunch with them at Pellegrino's I think it was in Bourke Street. **John Bangsund** entertained them and a group of fans at his home in the evening. An extraordinary meeting with **Doris Lessing** comes back to mind. She wanted to meet and talk to a local bookseller and her publisher or their publicist asked me if I would like to take her out to dinner. Did I say no! I took **George Turner** along and I'm sure she was impressed with George at any rate. But the pièce de résistance was without a doubt the night Cinecon took **Robert Bloch**, the auctioneers **Keith Curtis** and **Justin Ackroyd**, **Paul Stevens**, my father and myself to probably the most expensive fish restaurant in Melbourne at the time, The Reef. Yes, Cinecon did make a loss!

Well, enough of my name dropping. What is happening in the SF world today? The major event in Australian SF at the moment is another anthology in Coronet paperback. Hodder & Stoughton recently brought out a collection of horror stories by Australian authors, edited by **Leigh Blackmore**, titled **Terror Australis**. Now they have done a SF collection edited by **Terry Dowling** and **Van Ikin**, **Mortal Fire**, due for release this month. Hodder by the way have scooped the pool with the Hugo winners this year, distributing both the co-winners in mass market pb with **Doomsday Book** by **Connie Willis** from NEL, and **Fire Upon the Deep** by **Vernor Vinge**. A quick check indicates that a tie in the Hugo voting for novel has only happened once before, in 1965, when **Roger Zelazny's And Call Me Conrad (This Immortal)** tied with **Frank Herbert's Dune**. Incidentally there is a new edition of the book listing all the award winners in the SF&F field, **Reginald's Science Fiction and Fantasy Awards** edited by **Daryl F Mallett** and **Robert Reginald**, published in the **Borgo Literary Guides** series, trade paperback or hard cover

Anne McCaffrey I am sure must have had herself cloned or something. How else could she keep up the stream of her books that are being published. Admittedly she has joined the growing throng of authors who are "collaborating" with others to produce new novels based on their original novels or even short fiction pieces, usually of special note, but she is also still turning out **Pern** books of her own. Transworld are releasing **Chronicles of Pern: First Fall** this month, probably a collection, in hard cover as well as a trade pb edition of **Damia's Children**. **All the Weyrs of Pern** was the last book in the main series she said in **Locus**, but that doesn't mean there cannot be more set in earlier times. Besides "Chronicles" there is at least one other on the way. Out of 42 books published, 11 have been about **Pern**, but **The White Dragon** was really the one that put **Pern** on the map. A fourth "Damia" is in the works and further collaborations are also in view.

A fairly recent trend has been the 'talking books' phenomena. If you cannot read or find it difficult because of disabilities and time, you can buy readings of more SF&F titles on cassette. Transworld are releasing three of **Terry Pratchett's** books, **Truckers**, **Diggers** and **Wings**, read by actor **Tony Robinson**. They are also releasing an original **Star Wars** novel in December, **Truce at Bakura** by **Kathy Tyers**, both in hard cover (\$29.95) and on audio cassette (\$16.95). Pratchett's novel **Only You Can Save Mankind** is also a December paperback release. We have seen a run of books on the colonisation or exploration of the planet Mars and the latest is **Kim Stanley Robinson** with **Green Mars**, a follow up to his successful **Red Mars**, due from Harper Collins hard cover in December. The fifth in **Douglas Adams' Hitch-Hikers Guide** series, **Mostly Harmless**, is at last out in paperback from Pan this month. A full list of known recent and forthcoming local releases will be found after this column. If you want to know all the overseas releases subscribe to **Locus** or **SF Chronicle** or get on Merv Binns Books mailing list.

Fanimals

DEAD CERTAINTY

BY Jan Gunn

Merv B



Local Releases

hc = hard cover

tpb = trade paperback (C format)

pb = paperback (mass market, B format)

October 1993

| | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------|-----|---------|
| <i>Asterix the Warrior</i> [omnibus - reprint] | Gosciny & Uderzo | Hodder | hc | \$19.95 |
| <i>Mr Murder</i> | Dean Kootz | Headline | hc | \$34.95 |
| <i>Magic's Pawn</i> [reprint] | Mercedes Lackey | Roc | pb | \$10.95 |
| <i>The Western Wizard</i> | Mickey Zucker Reichert | Millenium | tpb | \$19.95 |

November 1993

| | | | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| <i>Mostly Harmless</i> | Douglas Adams | Pan | pb | \$10.95 |
| <i>Heaven Cent</i> | Piers Anthony | NEL | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Man From Mundania</i> | Piers Anthony | NEL | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Question Quest</i> | Piers Anthony | NEL | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Vale of the Vole</i> | Piers Anthony | NEL | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Forward the Foundation</i> | Isaac Asimov | Bantam | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>The Robber Bride</i> | Margaret Atwood | Bloomsbury | hc | \$34.95 |
| <i>The Best of Marion Z Bradley</i> [reprint] | Marion Z Bradley | Sphere | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>The Forest House</i> | Marion Z Bradley | M Joseph | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>Nights Daughter</i> [reprint] | Marion Z Bradley | Penguin | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>The Doll Who Ate His Mother</i> | Ramsay Campbell | Headline | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>The Little Country</i> | Charles De Lint | Pan | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>Yarrow</i> [reprint] | Charles De Lint | Pan | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Mortal Fire: Best Australian SF</i> | Dowling & Ikin (Eds) | Hodder | pb | \$13.95 |
| <i>People of the River</i> | M & K Gear | Pan | pb | \$10.95 |
| <i>Television Late-Night Horror Omnibus</i> | Peter Haining (Ed) | Orion | hc (tpb) | \$34.95 (\$19.95) |
| <i>The Hollowing</i> [Mythago Wood novel] | Robert Holdstock | Harper Collins | hc | \$35.00 |
| <i>Dr Who: The Sixties</i> | D J Howe | Virgin | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>Dr Who: Timeframe - Illustrated History</i> | David J Howe | Virgin | hc | \$29.95 |
| <i>The Life of Sean Connery</i> | John Hunter | Bloomsbury | hc | \$34.95 |
| <i>Prophecy</i> | Peter James | Roc | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Stone Angels</i> | Mike Jeffries | Harper Collins | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>Ultimate Dinosaur Book</i> | David Lambert | R D Press | hc | \$40.00 |
| <i>The Farside Gallery 4</i> | Gary Larson | McPhee | tpb | \$18.95 |
| <i>Chronicles of Pern</i> | Anne McCaffrey | Bantam | hc | \$29.95 |
| <i>Damia's Children</i> | Anne McCaffrey | Bantam | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>Songsmith</i> | Norton & Crispin | Pan | pb | \$ 9.95 |
| <i>White Mists of Power</i> | K Rusch | Headline | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Love Death</i> | Dan Simmons | Headline | hc (tpb) | \$44.95 (\$19.95) |
| <i>Wrinkles in Time</i> [non-fic] | Smoot & Davidson | Little Brown | hc | \$29.95 |
| <i>The Days Are Just Packed</i> | Bill Watterson | McPhee | tpb | \$17.95 |
| <i>A Promise of Miracles</i> [non-fic] | Robyn Williams | Penguin | pb | \$14.95 |
| <i>Doomsday Book</i> | Connie Willis | NEL | pb | \$14.95 |
| <i>Virtual Worlds</i> [non-fic] | Benjamin Woolley | Penguin | pb | \$16.95 |

December 1993

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----|---------|
| <i>Fractal Mode</i> [reprint] | Piers Anthony | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Mercenary</i> [reprint] | Piers Anthony | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Politician</i> [reprint] | Piers Anthony | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Refugee</i> [reprint] | Piers Anthony | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Dead Girls</i> | Richard Calder | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Master</i> [reprint] | Louise Cooper | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|
| <i>Horror for Christmas</i> | R Dalby (Ed) | Headline | pb | \$14.95 |
| <i>To Your Scattered Bodies Go</i> [reprint] | P J Farmer | Harper Collins | pb | \$10.95 |
| <i>Complete Guide to Middle Earth</i> [reprint] | R Foster | Harper Collins | tpb | \$16.95 |
| <i>Grunts</i> | Mary Gentle | Corgi | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Further Adventures of Wonder Woman</i> | M Greenberg (Ed) | Corgi | pb | \$ 9.95 |
| <i>Dog Wizard</i> | Barbara Hambly | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Moat Around Murcheson's Eye</i> | Niven & Pournelle | Harper Collins | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Mote In God's Eye</i> [reprint] | Niven & Pournelle | Harper Collins | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Diggers</i> | Terry Pratchett | Corgi | audio | \$16.95 |
| <i>Only You Can Save Mankind</i> | Terry Pratchett | Corgi | pb | \$ 7.95 |
| <i>Truckers</i> | Terry Pratchett | Corgi | audio | \$16.95 |
| <i>Wings</i> | Terry Pratchett | Corgi | audio | \$16.95 |
| <i>Sprouts of Wrath</i> | Robert Rankin | Corgi | pb | \$10.95 |
| <i>Green Mars</i> | Kim Stanley Robinson | Harper Collins | hc | \$35.00 |
| <i>Darklands</i> | N Royle | Headline | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>History of Middle Earth: 9</i> | Christopher Tolkien | Harper Collins | tpb | \$19.95 |
| <i>History of Middle Earth: 10</i> | Christopher Tolkien | Harper Collins | hc | \$49.95 |
| <i>Star Wars: Truce at Bakura</i> | Kathy Tyers | Bantam | hc (audio) | \$29.95 (\$16.95) |
| <i>Deathgate 6: Into the Labyrinth</i> | Weis & Hickman | Bantam | hc | \$32.95 |
| <i>Firstworld Chronicles 3</i> | Phillip G Williamson | Harper Collins | pb | \$11.95 |
| <i>Harvest</i> | R Wilson | NEL | pb | \$12.95 |
| <i>Chung Kuo 5: Beneath Tree of Heaven</i> | David Wingrove | NEL | hc | \$34.95 |

Reviews

Alan Stewart

Karen Small

The Last Arabian Night by Craig Shaw Gardner

Ace pb April 1993 236 pages \$US 4.50
ISBN 0-441-47054-8

The final novel in his latest fantasy trilogy, the Sinbad series, features Scheherazade telling how she prevented her beheading by narrating stories. Her series of tales nested within tales, all left unfinished, forms much of the bulk of the text. The rest is how she and her fellows survive and solve the evil problems besetting their harem and mad king.

Here the adventures of Ali Baba and the Other Sinbad, begun in the earlier volumes, are also concluded. Unfortunately the comedy falls down in this volume, perhaps because of its preoccupation with evil and death. The action and changes of scenery don't work as well, mainly because most of it occurs to characters in Scheherazade's tales within tales. I'm not sure how much of the stories' ingenuity is Gardner's or drawn from his source material. An entertaining read, but you feel there's no real point to it. A lightweight, sometimes amusing, treatment of Arabian myths.

Doomsday Book by Connie Willis

NEL pb November 1993 650 pages \$14.95
ISBN 0-450-57987-5

This is a time travel story. Nothing should go wrong but, between an idiotic bureaucrat and a virulent and unexplained flu in the "present" (the future from which Kivrin jumps), not only has something gone wrong, but there's no-one to fix it.

Although this basic plot sounds mediocre and the subject one which has been done, re-done and over done, the story is one of the best and most gripping I've read in along time. Careful detail is given to describing the 14th century, including the language shift, the living conditions and the personalities. The chapters set in the "present" are brought to life by the everyday concerns of the characters which, in their minds, far outweigh the major dramas going on around them. Most of the stars are three dimensional (or should that be four?). Within the limits of the plausible impossibilities inherent in most speculative fiction they are believable and easy to sympathise with. The ending is uncertain until virtually the last page and I found my identification with the players such that I still want to know what happened next.

If this is any indication of the standard of the Hugo winners, I can't wait to read the others.

Alan Stewart

Warpath by Tony Daniel

Millenium tpb July 1993 295 pages \$19.95
ISBN 1-85798-077-8

A native American canoe above a planet on the cover captures the feel of this novel. Future human travellers to distant planets find Mississippian Indians already there. Able to navigate via the 'true world' through an exercise of will, the Indians discovered how to leave earth centuries ago, a voyage only recently mechanically duplicated by the majority of mankind. Other things in this novel include disembodied intelligences manifesting from clay matrixes, real personalities controlling a planet's weather, and lots more.

Expanded from a novella published in Asimov's SF (June 1991), Warpath is an impressive first novel. His protagonist, a "resurrected" newspaper man, through friendship and inquiry experiences much of the good/evil battle raging around an Indian wanderer and his guardian spirit. A battle which impinges on the existing uneasy peace between the Indians and more recent settlers, and changes which threaten all planets and human societies.

Suspend your disbelief and accept Daniel's premise, and there's action, strong feelings and adventure in this techno-colonial future. It will be interesting to see what his next novel brings, given this work and his body of short fiction. Recommended.

Karen Pender-Gunn

Ecstasia by Francesca Lia Block

Roc tpb May 1993 183 pages \$US 9.00
ISBN 0-451-45260-7

I will apologise for this review before I start. I'm sorry I couldn't find anything nice to say about this book.

This book is awful. Truly awful. It positively reeks of pomposity and is chock-full of hidden agendas, overblown language and a very highly stylish form of writing. It reminds me of an art critic who is standing in front of a canvas with a splodge of colored paint in the centre, waffling on about the wonder, the style, the talent of the artist. You tend to turn away and go and have a stiff drink at this point. This book is the written version of that. Let me give you an example - "Knocking myself against the sparkling glass windows to get inside to the champagne and the champagne-colored lights" (page 14). There is a lot more like that. Overdone, flowery, and full of adjectives.

The story is slight, a page would have covered it. The characters are hollow. They are the sort of people you wouldn't give a monkey's toss for. The story is jumbled. It tries so hard to be clever rather than good. I'm also very suspicious of books that throw in poetry. The overblown style doesn't add to the story.

The book is dreadful. Even the colored cover doesn't help.

Richard Hryckiewicz

Teklab by William Shatner

Pan pb July 1993 223 pages \$12.95
ISBN 0-330-32740-2

Tek Vengeance by William Shatner

Pan tpb July 1993 224 pages \$19.95
ISBN 0-330-32967-7

These two books follow the further "adventures" of Jack Cadigan, ex cop, ex tek addict and now full time private investigator for the Cosmos Detective Agency. If you want a serious read, with lots of depth in the plot, hidden meanings, something of "high literary value", do not bother reading either of these books. They are really light weight books that can be covered with a quick skim to pass away a few hours.

I tend to be a completist in terms of book series, except for the Xanth series, and when offered these two books to review, decided that it was better than buying them and discovering that they were not worth the effort. However, given my penchant for not looking too deeply into a story, these two books whiled away a couple of afternoons of interrupted reading.

If you have read the first book in the series, give these a go just to find out what happens to the characters. In my opinion, the results, while predictable, are probably worth the effort. You are not going to expend a great deal of time and effort going through the books, but it will fill in the odd trip on public transport, or even a plane flight. Both are really light mysteries, with somewhat predictable characters and events. Some scenes are telegraphed and you wonder why our heroes don't see through the traps as quickly as you would like them to, other scenes are a genuine surprise. It is almost as if two people were involved in the writing and they weren't always talking to each other when they were writing their individual chapters.

All in all, two quick, light reads, predictable, but something to while away a quiet afternoon on the bus, train, tram, aeroplane.

Karen Pender-Gunn

The Book of Ultimate Truths by Robert Rankin

Doubleday hc September 1993 272 pages \$32.95
ISBN 0-385-40413-1

I've read quite a few of Robert Rankine's books now and all strike in the same sort of way. He seems to be trying so desperately to be as funny as he can be. Sometimes this works, other times it doesn't. If the humor isn't working, he throws in the unexpected, like a piano falling from the sky or some such.

This novel is a quest novel. Cornelius Murphy is hunting for Hugo Rune. He has a companion, along the way he has lots of adventures, meets lots of nice people and some not so nice people. He has triumphs and failures. The book has a not unsurprising ending. So far so good. Seeming straight forward sort of story. Wrong. Now the weirdness creeps in. Cornelius's mate is a midget called Tuppe. From then on the tone is set. Magic makes an appearance, as does alternative universes, a karaoke machine, monks with halos, a changing alien. You name it, Rankin tries to throw it in.

It's a strange sort of book. It's not bad, but it's not great either. The characters were interesting but I didn't really care what happens to them, they were just really a story element. What I feel this story suffers from is just too much action and adventures and I have no idea how it could be cut down. This is an easy book to read. You do need your wits about you to keep the characters straight and remember what is happening to who. Give it a go, you might like the style of humor.

Justin Semmel

Red Orc's Rage by Philip José Farmer.

Grafton pb September 1993 282 pages \$11.95
ISBN 0-586-21122-5

Do you think fantasy leads inevitably to psychotherapy? Philip José Farmer does. In his new book Red Orc's Rage the characters, inpatients at a psychiatric hospital, use the books of Farmer's "World of Tiers" series and their imagination to find characters with greater self esteem, courage and assertiveness to model themselves upon and gain these qualities.

I'm very dubious about the validity of this concept. However, arguments in the afterword by Dr A James Giannini MD ring true. Dr Giannini argues that the artificial reality of the "World of Tiers" series can form a useful middle ground between the psychiatrist and the changing realities of paranoid psychotics and schizophrenics, which are very volatile.

Occasionally, a nasty story emerges of a role player who retreats a bit too far into fantasy. (Notably, the proportion of people doing this in role playing probably matches the general proportion of others who have mental problems in other hobbies or occupations.) The role player has gone 'too far' and is now living more in a world of the imagination than reality. His or her ability to relate is based more upon the desired traits of the imagined character than those natural to the person. Then The Truth gets a hold of the story and reality really disappears.

In Red Orc's Rage, Jim Grimson, a kid with no future, burns his home down in a pure rage at the torments his father has put him through. At the last minute he is rescued from the blaze to find himself with the option of therapy or jail. Jim chooses therapy: Tiersian therapy, where he imagines himself as the character of Red Orc, ruler of Earth in Farmer's previous books, in his early youth. Jim barely escapes into Orc's universe as the strength and anger of Orc take control.

Red Orc is one of the Lords - a violent race that act totally without conscience. The Lords are the original creators of this and many other pocket sized universes (yes, the stars are painted on.) Totally aristocratic, other races are the dust beneath their feet. There are only a limited number of universes and each Lord wants one for their own, so violent wars are fought through hidden gates lethally barbed with traps.

Orc battles his father for independence. Cast out to die for showing an act of mercy, he finds himself stranded on one of the world's first created, a rejected prototype made by those who came before the Lords. He is lost until he comes across another Lord who shows him the map his father has tattooed to his back. The other Lord is killed escaping to a crystal world, which is in fact a giant symbiotic computer. He cannot stay long without turning to stone, but upon leaving is captured again by his father, surgically altered into a snake man and once more left to die in a pit made of jewels. Of course, Orc battles his way out to become the hidden ruler of Earth, but not in this book.

The story becomes rather tiresome when you realise that it's not really about Red Orc, but the soul searching of Jim Grimson. There is a sort of weariness about it. Although the fiery vibrancy of Farmer's descriptions is still there, it seems as if Farmer can't really trouble himself to develop the plot. Maybe Farmer's getting old (Damn).

Although I am just lusting to read another book from the "World of Tiers" series, I'm a bit put off, because this book is not from the "World of Tiers" universe, just our own rather sad one.

Alan Small

James Allen

Steel Beach by John Varley

Harper Collins tpb October 480 pages \$22.95
ISBN 0-586-21735-5

This book would seem to have been written in two separate stages. The first two-thirds reads like a mainstream novel, albeit set in the future and not on Earth. The book is written from the viewpoint of a reporter/journalist for one of Luna's major news publications. Asked by the editor/publisher to write an article per week on how life is different "now" to what it was before Earth was invaded and quarantined the character then gets involved in a couple of major incidents. It is obvious that Varley has been influenced by Heinlein fairly heavily. But my thinking is that he actually reread half a dozen books before writing the last third of the book. I really liked this book - it's in my top five for the year.

Jools Thatcher

Deerskin by Robin McKinley

Ace hc June 1993 309 pages \$US 17.95
ISBN 0-441-14226-5

Twice now I've read this story and twice I have promised myself never to read it again. This time I will listen. Lissar is a hero to whom I could neither relate nor warm to. She subjects the reader to a seesaw of emotions which if she had had a modicum of common sense would have been desirably avoidable. Not an unreasonable ask as the story does require her to show common sense and quick wits in other situations.

The story revolves around the life of Princess Lissar and the rather devastating consequences of her mother's death when Lissar is 14 years of age. At the age of 17, Lissar's father decides to marry his daughter. Any normal person would have run away, or at least made the attempt. Not our hero. She and her dog Ash finally run away after she is repeatedly raped and brutally beaten by her father. After many adventures, during which she acquires more dogs, a princely suitor, the protection of a feminine deity and even manages to exact vengeance on her father.

Okay putting aside my gripes about the clumsy way the principal character is portrayed, my other major problem with this book is the writing style. It seems to fluctuate between stilted story telling mode and a more lyrical style and it almost seems like a conscious effort on the part of the author to prefer the former (maybe to give it more of a folksy feel), though I personally think it suffers as a result. If you enjoy retellings of fairytales for big folk with all the grit and rude bits left in, this one is for you.

The Suburban Book of the Dead - Armageddon III: The Remake by Robert Rankin

Corgi pb September 1993 314 pages \$11.95
ISBN 0-552-13923-8

I loved this book. I also love the Weekly World News (a tabloid from Florida that first broke the "Elvis is alive" story and regularly writes about space aliens), Mojo Nixon (an American singer who has written such wonderful songs as *Debbie Gibson is having my two-headed love child* and *Glen Frey must die*) and hard boiled first person narrative detective stories. All of these feature in The Suburban Book of the Dead.

It may help to have read Armageddon - The Musical and They Came and Ate Us - Armageddon 2: The Sequel to get all the jokes in this, the third book of the trilogy. However, it is not essential. The hero of the first two, Rex Mundi, is back, plucked from New Eden 2061 into a parallel world where Elvis is worshipped as God. Most of the action takes place in Presley City, as Rex and Lazlo Woodbine (hardboiled dick who only works four sets: the alleyway, his office, Fangio's bar and a roof top for the final climactic battle with the villain) try and sort out what happened to a load of religious art featuring Elvis in the two days before the city is blown up by the Third Holocaust.

This is an amazing book, where some characters know they are characters in a book and make jokes about that. Various running gags appear, like the complicated psychology one, the one about Marc Bolan's song *Pewter Suitor*, "large weapons" and many more. Rankin actually jokes about with the structure of the book. He even puts in a couple of continuity slips and makes fun of that. The last two pages which list 'the cast' are fun, with a couple of old favorites from the earlier Brentford trilogy, Omalley and Pooley listed as producer and writer/director respectively.

This book is a romp, switching narratives from the third person story of Rex, to the Demons (some of whom are really stupid) to Laz's first person story and back. Each chapter begins with a quote, usually from "The Suburban Book of the Dead", which is the Bible rewritten with the ever-living Elvis in it as he tries to stop the Anti-Christ being born throughout history, after he does a deal with God after travelling back to the dawn of time. The religious satire should offend some people, but basically this is a humorous book and should be treated as such. What will Rankin write next? Whatever it is, I want to read it.

Ian Gunn

The Sorcerer's Appendix by Andrew Harman

Legend pb July 1993 229 pages \$10.95
ISBN 0-09-928471-5

When something's a success, it usually spawns imitators. *Star Wars* led to a batch of hokey space operas, car manufacturers make clones of each others designs and most of the dinosaur toys flooding the market at the moment are very tenuously connected with official *Jurassic Park* merchandise. So when Terry Pratchett hit the best seller lists with the sub-genre of comic fantasy, it sparked a bandwagon full of imitators. And what's the best way to show that your book is a funny story about wizards (just like Pratchett's!) why, you get Josh Kirby to design the cover, of course.

But what if you can't get Josh ? Well, you hire someone to imitate a Josh Kirby cover! Not too closely, but enough to cause a glimmer of recognition. *The Sorcerer's Appendix* is just such a book. All the stock characters are here. The boy hero and his sidekick. The naive king with his evil adviser. The vampire, the wizard. There's some funny bits, some good one liners, some appallingly punny names.

One thing I did find irritating was that the story was set in two different time periods and the narrative keeps hopping back and forth across a fifteen year gap. It wasn't so much confusing as annoying, especially with the continual Oh Look, This Character Fifteen Years Ago Is Really This Present Day Character In Disguise ploy. I suppose as comic fantasy goes this one isn't too bad, but I much prefer the real thing.

Donna Heenan

The Wars of Light and Shadows 1: The Curse of the Mistwraith by Janny Wurts

Harper Collins hc August 1993 \$35.00 560 pages
ISBN 0-00-224070-X

A tale of two half brothers, one Lord of Light the other Master of Shadows. Heirs to lost kingdoms and doomed by a curse to hate each other forever. This is the premise behind Janny Wurts' latest novel. Two half brothers separated from birth with an ancient blood feud between them are thrown from the world of their birth to another. A world doomed to death by the Mistwraith, a miasma of hatred and evil that covers the skies above. Arithon, Master of Shadows, and Lysaer, Lord of Light, together have the power to destroy the Wraith. But the enmity between them does tend to get in the way. As they defeat the Mistwraith

it curses them to undying hatred. They must destroy each other, driven into unreason by the curse.

One of the main problems with this book is that I could find little change in the characters pre-curse and post-curse. Her people are shallow, little more than archetypes to hang the plot around. This tends to occur in most of Janny Wurts's books but is particularly noticeable in this one, perhaps because this book is so loooong. There is plenty of room for character development it just doesn't happen much. I found myself wishing that Janny Wurts had spent more time on her characters because it was the characterisation that let down an otherwise good read.

Merv Binns

A Million Open Doors by John Barnes

Millennium (Allen & Unwin) tpb September 1993
314 pages \$19.95 ISBN 1-85798-082-4

There may not be that many new ideas in science fiction these days, but the authors are endeavouring to present them in new ways. Humanity spreading out through the stars discovers instant travel and the thousand or more worlds colonised by humanity are able to be suddenly in direct contact with one another. How this affects one world in particular is the basis for this novel.

A group of people from an 'enlightened' world are sent to a planet that is ruled by somewhat repressive philosophies. The travellers are there to help soften the blow of contact with other societies but are instrumental in bringing instant sociological change to the 'un-enlightened' world.

Contrast between the visitors' society and the world they come to is evident in the early part of the story and I found it very slow going before the point is made, but the people and places described and some of the ideas are very interesting. The idea of recording a deceased person's memory in a device that is implanted in a living person, and the dead person is then able to communicate through the living, is cute. Particularly when you learn that the memory will be implanted in a specially grown new body. The idea of instant travel is certainly not new, but speculation on the effects that this may have on widely spread societies is the object of this story. I found it very slow moving, but the characters and their interactions were interesting, though not enough for me to be entirely enthusiastic about this tale. Those readers looking for lots of action adventures should give it a miss, but I will be giving this highly regarded writer by the critics another try.

Donna Heenan

Justin Semmel

Athyra by Steven Brust

Ace pb April 1993 243 pages \$US 4.99
ISBN 0-441-03342-3

I have always been an admirer of Vladimir Taltos. His sardonic tongue and cutting wit get Taltos into trouble every book, but his reputation as an assassin and dagger help him out every time. In this, the sixth book of the series, we find Vladimir Taltos trying to enjoy his retirement from the Jhereg and, like the Mafia in our own world, the Jhereg have only one kind of retirement plan - death! Taltos is not keen on this option and is trying a new style of retirement - hiding where no Jhereg will find him. It is not successful for wherever Taltos hides trouble will always find him.

Steven Brust has taken a new approach to the Taltos story for he has written Athyra in the third person. Without Taltos as narrator the book seems to lose much humor and style. A muddled and uncertain plot add to the difficulty of enjoying this book. I don't know why the book starts the way it does or why it finished where it did.

If you've read the first five then be warned this book is very different to your usual Taltos story. For those who have never read the Taltos saga then do yourself a favor - read them! The series starts with the title Jhereg. The first three books in the series are the best.

Jools Thatcher

Beauty by Sheri S Tepper

Grafton pb October 1993 476 pages \$12.95
ISBN 0-586-21305-8

Beauty after whom the book is named, is anything but a typical 15th century unemancipated flower of feudal womanhood. Here in her journal, she chronicles her adventures and life, spanning time, both backwards and forwards. Meddlings in magic by Beauty and her kin are responsible and pivotal in forming the basis of a number of well known fairytales. It is a convoluted tale which winds its way through some highly improbable places and escapades.

The one really jarring aspect about the story is the fact that Beauty responds to situations as any 20th century woman would - no hint of future shock here. This story keeps you on your toes, a scary bad guy, some very engaging characters and a strong environmental message, combine to make a story worth reading.

The Deceiver by Louise Cooper

Grafton pb September 1993 280 pages \$11.95
ISBN 0-586-21475-5

Do this, do that. The life of Ygorla was regimented by the confines of the Sisterhood, dull and dreary and struck with the knowledge that she was the illegitimate child of one of the sisters who died in childbirth. Eyes seemed to accuse, to point out that it was she who killed her mother having her. No one knew who the father was, and no one had any real time for an angry tempestuous child who had grown into a woman while no one noticed.

That is, until her real father arrived. Her real father, in fact, was a demon of Chaos, Narid na Gost, by name, who led her into an understanding of the stirrings of magic officially said to be only the property of men and an opportunity to gain what she truly longed for....
power!

The Deceiver is a new story for Louise Cooper and one that follows on from the earlier Time Master series. Years have passed and now a rebel duke of hell plots control of the world by creating a daughter half-human half-demon and totally sorcerous. She is to take control of this world of weak mortals, while he seeks to rule the heavens by taking prisoner the heart of a god. Held hostage like this, the Gods of Chaos have their hands tied, while those of Order seek to undermine them and break an agreement made by Tarod (the hero of the Time Master series, who came down to the world to become a human being, and forgot that he was a god) that took away their dominance. I must be getting old, I read all that and thought (yawn) *Oh no, not again.*

This is another good book to get from your local library, but think twice before getting it at home. Louise Cooper likes to make **big** series, her last one was an octet - so beware publishers marketing ploys. Overall, I thought it was pretty OK.

LOUISE
COOPER



Karen Pender-Gunn

Alan Small

Crashcourse by Wilhelmina Baird

Ace pb September 1993 277 pages \$US 4.99
ISBN 0-441-12163-2

Okay, it has an embossed cover with the camera lens and writing raised. Gold and red are the basic colors. It has a recommendation from William Gibson on the cover, suspicious. Thankfully no pages of how wonderful the book is reviews in the front of the book. Now into the book.

I'm pleased to say this is quite a good book. It's not often you find a female writer writing in the 'cyberpunk' universe. I know this probably sounds dreadfully cliched, but the world of this novel is the hard, brutal world dominated by companies.

Now, there are three people in a relationship. Cass, is a thief. Dosh is a very pretty boy prostitute. Moke makes sculptures out of large pieces of metal. These three would like to go off world and start a new life. Up comes the chance of starring in a movie. Not just an ordinary movie but a movie of real life where people die, are born and get hurt, except for the star, and none of these three is the star of this particular movie. Toss in a selection of strange, interesting and just plain nasty characters and the story just rolls along.

It took me a while to get into the story. It's a little slow at the beginning. A lot of scene setting goes on for quite a few pages. After that the story barrels along nicely. I suspected what happens to Dosh would happen, maybe a little bit of the morals there. It's a book full of action. Lots of weaponry, guns, lazars and other nasties. Maybe the end is a bit of a cop out. The story slumped a little towards the end, like Ms. Baird had run out of steam and wanted just a nice ending.

For the sake of a bit of cyberpunk genre, give his book a read. You might be surprised.

TIM POWERS

**Hearts, Hands and Voices** by Ian McDonald

Gollancz pb June 1993 320 pages \$11.95
ISBN 0-575-05373-9

Ian McDonald has painted a rich and varied world in this book. The background is a story of the struggle between peoples of totally different religious/philosophical persuasions. But mainly it is the story of Mathembe, a small mute girl who loses her family one by one and her long search for them. During Mathembe's search you discover more and more about the world McDonald has brought us. A world where transport is bred, politics is religion and disembodied heads are all over the place.

Early on McDonald hits us with everything and the story gets quite heavy. If you can get through the first 30 odd pages, you will be hooked and end up reading one of the best books for the last year. Once I got started I couldn't put it down. The only disappointment I could note is that the end of the book seems quite rushed compared to the rest. There is enough unanswered questions at the end to leave room for a sequel, but it would be of a totally different nature. -- A good read -- get it!

Alan Stewart

The Stress of Her Regard by Tim Powers

Grafton pb October 1993 605 pages \$12.95
ISBN 0-586-07283-7

This latest UK pb from Tim Powers continues his run of strong novels with intriguing ideas. Here he takes the historical romantic poets Keats, Shelley and Byron, involves them with protagonist Dr Michael Crawford, and runs his own interpretation of the vampire legends and classic tales such as the Riddle of the Sphinx. Using historical details of his European settings, Venice and Switzerland spring to mind, Powers weaves a powerful imaginative tapestry.

With over 600 pages this novel drags in places, and is a bit repetitious. His blending of fact and fantasy, blurring the historical real and wildly imagined, continues to fascinate but without the snappy freshness of his earlier works. Recommended for Powers fans, but probably a pretty hard slog first time up.

Alan Stewart

Red Dust by Paul J McAuleyGollancz hc October 93 320 pages \$32.95
ISBN 0-575-05488-3

In the current rush of colonising/terraforming Mars books, McAuley sets his novel five hundred years after the major terraforming. It's a time of war as the human-machine Consensus of Earth with the Chinese overlords want to halt any ongoing terraforming and let Mars return to desert, while anarchists from the asteroids seek help amongst the descendants of Tibetan conscripts to maintain the greening. Narrator Wei Lee gets caught up in the excitement.

As we follow Lee, his adventures reveal much about his society and in particular his origins and the family group he claims. There's strange monastic settlements, battles with genetically and electronically enhanced war horses, and a sense that the good guys should win, although the corporations and AIs seem to hold most of the cards. It's a pro-freedom and greenie novel, with intriguing ideas and a great sense of fun and adventure.

Red Dust shows one possible future facet, drawing on the 20th century for the icons of its "present", and even basing the virtual reality dangers on current maybe trends. If you accept McAuley's assumptions of Chinese rule, failed Yankee efforts, and the five hundred year jump, the novel is full of action and interesting details. Even the Jim Burns cover illustration suits the book, borrowing elements from the text and including dust. Recommended as an entertaining read.

Karen Small

Dirty Work by Dan McGirtPan pb September 1993 286 pages \$10.95
ISBN 0-330-32391-1

When I was asked to review this book, it had been a long time since I'd read the first books Jason Cosmo and Royal Chaos, and I didn't remember them too clearly. To do justice to Dirty Work I thought I'd better read them again. This was probably a big mistake. The reason I didn't remember them is that they are not at all memorable. Maybe they were not intended to be taken in one lump, but I found them tedious, repetitive and incredibly contrived. I don't mind the odd reference in a comedy book to the author, the audience or the fact that they're just characters, but these appeared so often it ceased to be amusing.

The nubile nymphs from the first two books deserted him so he could have a new love interest. This isn't my interpretation, it's stated. Cosmo and his wizard friend sneak out of town, not because anyone is after them but because that's how heroes start quests. His new love interest hates him at first and that's how he knows she's his love interest. The list goes on.

Some people read to say they have read, Dan McGirt wrote to say he has written.

Alan Stewart

Against A Dark Background by Iain M BanksOrbit hc July 1993 487 pages \$32.95
ISBN 1-85723-031-0

In his latest SF novel, not part of his Culture series, Iain Banks deals with hunters and pursuit. There's the protagonist Sharrow who is being hunted by a religious sect legally sanctioned to kill her. She reforms her team of thieves and glory seekers and tries to outwit her pursuers. Along the way it turns into a treasure hunt using clues from Sharrow's ancestors, and there's enigmatic twins who always seem one step ahead and to be toying with her party. In the end it's all tied up with Sharrow's past and family, quest and bloody resolution strings pulled together, and the future isn't that different from today.

The interest and fascination of the treasure hunt aspect, the race against time and ingenious details of thwarting the pursuers keep the reader turning the pages. Depressingly human acts of torture and pain show Banks' future humanity to be unchanged, and the vendettas and revenges of families and cults echo today's national and religious squabbles. The sought prize seems so unearthly and above the seekers that it's finding emphasises an uneasy marriage in the text. It's hard to believe the fallible humans have created the technologies which abound, let alone use them as a matter of course.

Perhaps the gentleman thieves of the narrator's party are exceptions, but they're all we're given to judge future humanity. Banks has written a far future thriller, but details of the path between here and then are lacking. There's excitement, chases and death, but no suspension of disbelief, you don't believe this is how it will be. There's no background to justify this as a reasonable extrapolation. Just buy it as recommended entertainment, exciting reading, more space opera even than his earlier work.

Terry Frost

Angel by Garry D KilworthGollancz hc September 1993 286 pages \$32.95
ISBN 0-575-05523-5

This book has nothing to do with the Cliff Richard song with which it shares a name - though while I was reading the book, the wretched pop tune kept going around in my head. Angel is one of those books that looks like a film script that couldn't find a producer and was transmogrified into straight prose. The build up, characters and resolution are all in the horror movie tradition. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it is an ordinary one.

The story's this: around the world the incidence of arson is increasing enormously. Mysterious white fires are appearing from Paris to San Francisco and a couple of San Francisco cops decide to find out What The Hell's Happening. As it turns out, Hell is happening, though the arson isn't infernal, it's the

result of holy fire. A rogue Angel is out there playing celestial Dirty Harry with the whole human race in the role of punk, (as in "Feel lucky, punk?") as he hunts down a demon who is hanging out in sleazy dives to mask his 'scent of evil' among the lesser naughty stench of hookers, pimps and strippers.

Played for kicks, this book might've had some interest. As is, I was left wondering whether this stuff was meant to be scary or not. The movie of the book, were it ever made, would be a melange of a number of components: cop film, buddy film, horror movie, theological satire and a bit of sex to vary the kind of action. Kilworth does have a few wry observations on stock-standard Christian theology but none that I haven't heard before. The book isn't bad, it's just ordinary. One of those ones where you wonder why the hell they bothered with a hard cover edition, unless it's for the public library part of the market. Angel: a commuting kind of book. Good for train trips in the morning when the mind isn't yet focused.

Books Received

| | | | |
|--|------------------------|----------------|-----|
| <i>A Tupolev Too Far</i> | Brian Aldiss | Harper Collins | hc |
| <i>Lucky Starr 3</i> | Isaac Asimov | Bantam | pb |
| <i>Crashcourse</i> | Wilhelmina Baird | Ace | pb |
| <i>The Tolkien Companion</i> | David Day | Mandarin | tpb |
| <i>Legion of the Damned</i> | William C Dietz | Ace | pb |
| <i>Strange Dreams</i> | Stephen Donaldson (ed) | Harper Collins | tpb |
| <i>Majyk by Accident</i> | Esther Friesner | Ace | pb |
| <i>Apotheosis 1: Lightless Dome</i> | Douglas Hill | Pan | tpb |
| <i>The Hollowing</i> | Robert Holdstock | Harper Collins | hc |
| <i>Stone Angels</i> | Mike Jeffries | Harper Collins | tpb |
| <i>Stan Lee's Riftworld: Crossover</i> | Bill McKay | Ace | pb |
| <i>9: New Nature of Catastrophe</i> | Jones & Moorcock (eds) | Millenium | tpb |
| <i>Angel</i> | Garry D Kilworth | Gollancz | hc |
| <i>Magic's Pawn</i> | Mercedes Lackey | Roc | pb |
| <i>Magic's Promise</i> | Mercedes Lackey | Roc | pb |
| <i>Winds of Fury</i> | Mercedes Lackey | Daw | hc |
| <i>The Cygnet and the Firebird</i> | Patricia A McKillip | Ace | hc |
| <i>The Stress of Her Regard</i> | Tim Powers | Grafton | pb |
| <i>Viravax</i> | Bill Ransom | Ace | hc |
| <i>Andrakis 3: Dragon Lords</i> | Tony Shillitoe | Pan | pb |
| <i>Beauty</i> | Sheri S Tepper | Grafton | pb |
| <i>Virtual Girl</i> | Amy Thomson | Ace | pb |
| <i>Steel Beach</i> | John Varley | Harper Collins | tpb |
| <i>Steel Beach</i> | John Varley | Ace | pb |
| <i>Catspaw</i> | Joan D Vinge | Pan | pb |
| <i>The Mists From Beyond</i> | R Weinberg et al (eds) | Roc | hc |
| <i>Ghost Legion</i> | Margaret Weis | Bantam | pb |
| <i>Doomsday Book</i> | Connie Willis | NEL | pb |

MARTIN GO PRO

Number 5

November 1993

Edited by

Ian Gunn

PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130

The big news story this ish is, of course, *Steve And Martin Go Pro*. Well, what actually happened was that fanartist Steve Scholz and fanwriter Martin Reilly have submitted artwork to the Australian edition of *MAD* magazine and had them accepted. Anyone who has seen their ribald movie send-ups in the award-winning *Steve And Martin's Excellant Fanzine* would know that this is exactly the sort of work that *MAD* would be looking for. They had one collaborative piece printed in the September edition, Martin teamed up with another artist for the October edition and Steve's done a further two pages for the November issue.

So, congratulations, guys. With any luck, Martin's work-seeking shift to Atlanta, Georgia won't put too much strain on the collaborations. Perhaps they are now eligible for the Best Professional Ditmars in the fields of Artwork and Short Fiction?

Speaking of collaborations, the award for the Largest Number of Participants in a Single Fannish Art Project must go to the people behind the upcoming *1994 George Ivanoff Diary*. A host of regular and first-time fanartists and writers have banded together in order to ~~amuse~~ honour local fannish victim and TV personality George Ivanoff by publishing a handy appointment diary crammed full of Georgetoons, George trivia and embarrassing anecdotes. When George finally hits the big time and heads for Hollywood, this tome is destined to be the most sought after collector's item in fandom. The price is roughly \$12, depending on how many are produced. Pre-publication details and trade enquiries are available from Kerri Valkova at GPO Box 910G, Melbourne, 3001.

FEATURE ARTIST - GERARD ASHWORTH

The creator of dark, busy, rambling philosophical monologues in cartoon form, Gerard is best described in his own words....

"Gerard Ashworth got borned in 1963. That was a mistake, and since it wasn't his own, he felt cheated. His life was of middling inconsequence, except for the parts ripe with autobiographical

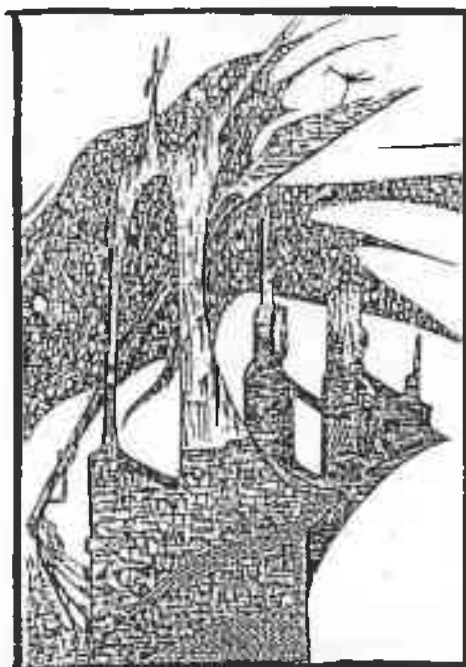
distortions. A long time comic reader, he picked up the pen as his personal instrument at a very early age. After the scars healed, he decided that paper is better than skin, and doodled. It wasn't until he realised the doodling wouldn't go away and that whatever he was up to was too damn personal and odd that he discovered Small Press - that, and the photocopier. That helped. So, in mid '87, *Electric Ferret* appeared - a comic that started out totally ignored and has now reached a position of relative obscurity. *Electric Ferret* is a comic full of obsessions, misanthropy, psychosis, errant cynicism and other odd parts of the author's nature. It either has people falling about in hysterics, or walking away. Fast.

"Gerard prefers black and white pen, ink and pencil; tools of his manicness. *EF* also features other guest cartoonists, and "The Weird Stress Kittens" - gremlins of his mind. A new development was the appearance of a character called 'Limbo' August; a calm female absurdist with living hair, which surprised many. Good. Keeps 'em on their toes.

"He has appeared in *Fox*, *Eddie*, *Woozy* and lots of Small Press comics. He also co-edited four issues of *Nervous Breakdowns*, a comics anthology, and is extremely involved in the burgeoning Australian comics scene, particularly as a critic..."



Gerard Ashworth and Sabrina Weird Stress Kitten
by Gerard Ashworth



SPACE-TIME BY John Green

Buccaneers

EPISODE FIVE

ADRIFT IN A STRANGE, GRAVITY-LESS LIMBO. THE TIME-SHIP IS ABOUT TO BE RAIDED BY A WARSHIP CREWED BY THE MEANEST BUNCH OF CUT-THROATS FROM ALL OF HISTORY...

YEEHAR! IN'ERCEPT IN THIRTY SECONDS, COMMODORE! WE'S GONNA WHUP THESE DUDES GOO-OD. HAWHAW HAW!

BLAST YE TER BLAZES, McBAIRD! THERE'S THEM BELLS AND SIRENS AGAIN! ARE WE UNDER ATTACK??

WE MUST BE, BUT I'M NOT FUTZING VELCROING ROUND HERE TO INPUT WHO IT IS. THE SHIP'S READY. LET'S TURBO!

STEADY AS SHE GOES, MEN.... I WANT THE CREW TAKEN ALIVE AND THE SHIP UNDAAGED. SET ALPHA-SONICS TO TRANG....

THAT SHIP FITS THE DESCRIPTION... I'VE STUDIED THE LEGENDS... IT HAS TO BE THE TIME-SHIP - AND THAT SHALL BE MY PASSAGE OUT OF THIS GOD-FORSAKEN GHOST DIMENSION!

IT'S A DESTROYER, SIR, HEAVILY ARMED!

TIME TER TAKE OUR LEAVE, McBAIRD! START YER ENGINES!

YOU GOT IT, CAP!

SONICS LOCKED ON TARGET!

ENGAGE!

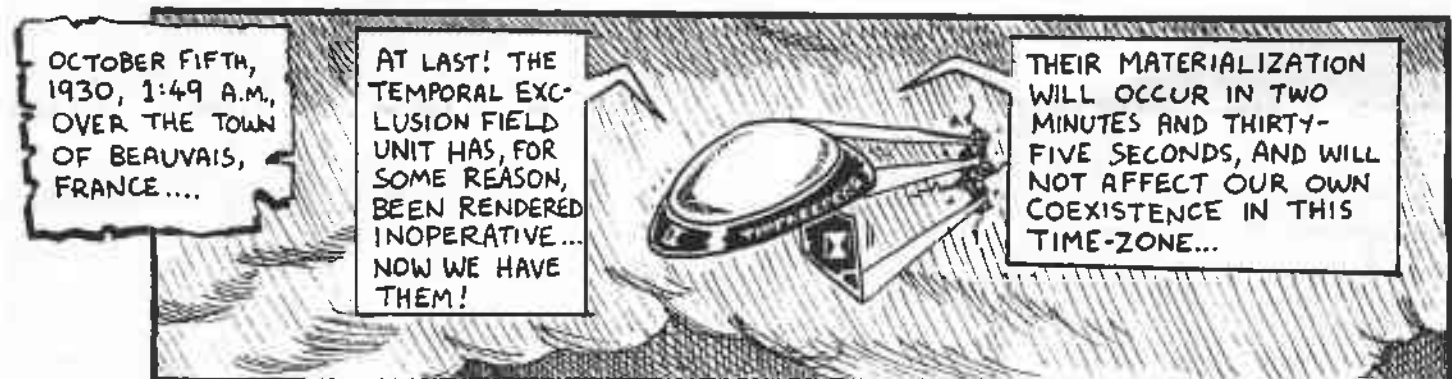
OH NO!!

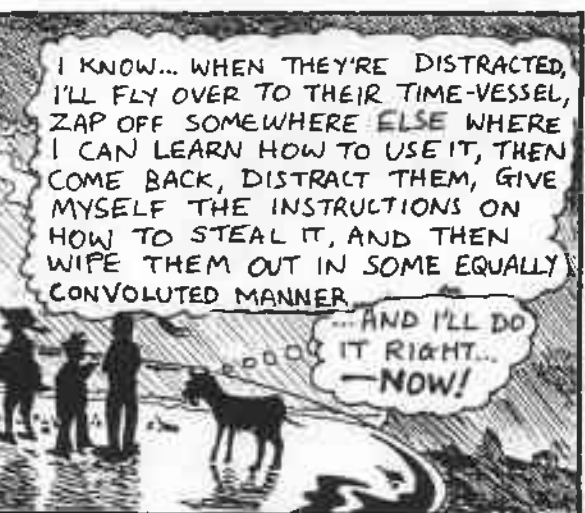
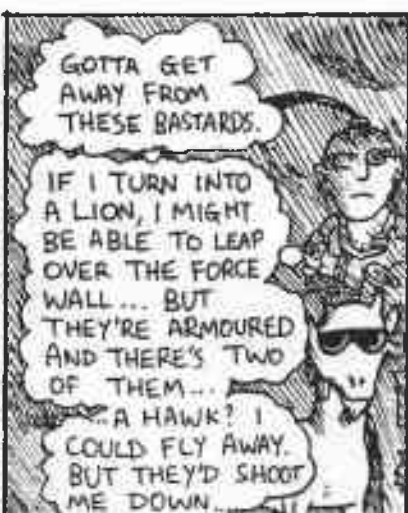
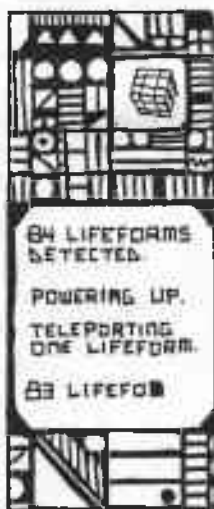
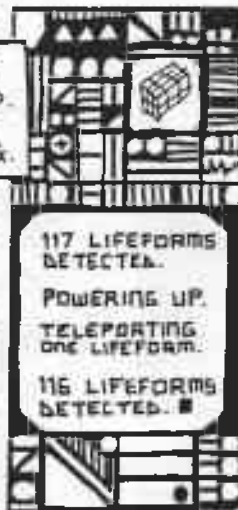
REVENGE!

INTERCEPT!

FIRE!

TEMPORAL EXCLUSION FIELD GENERATOR. DO NOT DISCONNECT DANGER







HMM...
OBVIOUSLY
IT DIDN'T
WORK...



NOW THAT WE HAVE FINALLY
INTERCEPTED YOU, WE CAN
RETURN EACH OF YOU TO
YOUR RESPECTIVE TIME-
ZONES...



WHAT!
YOU
CAN'T
SPLIT
US UP!



HANG ON A MIN-
I'VE BEEN GETTING
MESSAGES FROM
MY FUTURE SELF.
IF YOU PREVENT
ME FROM DOING
THAT - FROM SEND-
ING THOSE MESSAGES
- YOU'LL BE
CREATING A TIME-
PARADOX!



TRUE...
BUT WE
COULD
FORGE
THOSE
MESSAGES.
YOU WOULD
NEVER
KNOW...



BUT, WAIT, SIR!
WHAT OF MY
HISTORY? THIS
IS MY SECOND
JOURNEY ON
THE TIME-SHIP...



WHEN I WAS A
BOY OF TWELVE
WE WENT A-
VIKING IN OUR
LONGBOATS. WE
STRUCK A
TERRIBLE STORM



I DRIFTED FOR
HOURS UNTIL I
WAS RESCUED
BY STRANGE
PEOPLE IN AN
UNEARTHLY
SHIP...



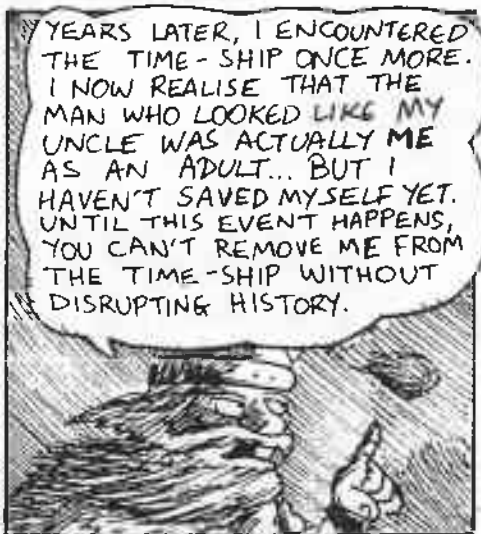
ONE MAN
RESEMBLED
MY UNCLE
OLAF - BUT
WITH HIS NOSE
STILL INTACT.



I WAS BEWILDERED
AND AFRAID WHEN
THE SHIP TIME-
WARPED - I LEAPT
OVERBOARD AND
WAS WASHED ASHORE
- IN AFRICA! IN
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY!



I WAS RAISED
BY SOME
SCOTTISH
CHRISTIAN
MISSIONARIES
WHO ADOPTED
ME AS THEIR
OWN SON...



YEARS LATER, I ENCOUNTERED
THE TIME-SHIP ONCE MORE.
I NOW REALISE THAT THE
MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE MY
UNCLE WAS ACTUALLY ME
AS AN ADULT... BUT I
HAVEN'T SAVED MYSELF YET.
UNTIL THIS EVENT HAPPENS,
YOU CAN'T REMOVE ME FROM
THE TIME-SHIP WITHOUT
DISRUPTING HISTORY.

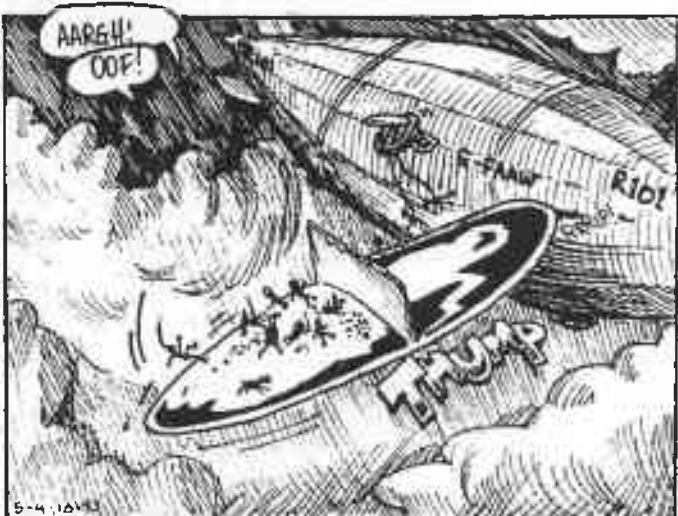


THERE ARE
WAYS AROUND
THE PROBLEM.
WE COULD IMP-
PERSONATE YOUR
FUTURE SELF
THROUGH HOLO-
GRAPHIC PROJ-
ECTION. A SIMPLE
PROCESS...



LOOK OUT!
AN AIRSHIP!
BEHIND YOU!

COME, COME, WHAT DO YOU
POSSIBLY HOPE TO GAIN
FROM SUCH A TIRED OLD
TRICK LIKE THA-



AARGH!
OOF!



AAAARGH!!

OH, NO! FEEDBACK!

OH DEAR. THE
MARKETS TAKEN
A DIVE...

WILL McBAIRD PLUMMET TO A MESSY
DEATH? WILL THE EVIL TIMEKEEPERS
RETURN EVERYONE TO THEIR HOME TIME
ZONE? DON'T MISS THE CONCLUDING EPISODE