

Vapourware

TWO

Another Exercise
in
Virtual Fanac



Vapourware

beta version
Number Two

MADE IN
MELBOURNE

Vapourware (beta version) Number Two,
edited and published by Greg Hills
(address at right), has been sent to you for
reader testing and evaluation.

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Australia

Haeri mai

Vapourware' is computer jargon for software which is much talked about and may even be circulated in test ('beta') form but which never seems to appear in a finished version. In light of my recent publishing track record, I find it an appropriate title for a fanzine.

There is one problem with the title. The problem is that once 'vapourware' actually appears it is no longer vapourware but ordinary software. By extension, the very act of *publishing* an issue of *Vapourware* would make the title a misnomer. Paradox!

The solution I have applied is as follows: no edition of *Vapourware* will ever appear in 'finished' form — all you will ever see are 'beta' versions. ☐

Main Beta Release Edition

What's in it?

I had an eerie experience towards the end of the drawn-out gestation of this issue. I arrived home from work and saw the 'message waiting' light blinking on the answerphone. I hit the button to listen to the messages while stripping off my work clothes. Several messages went by before a sudden chill went down my spine as a new message started.

It was Roger Weddall.

'— Um . . . Geoff and I will be there . . . um . . . uh . . . but anyway, look, if I see you there I'll

see you there; if I don't I'll make sure I drop the stuff in to you on Monday, OK? . . . So either . . . either I'll, I'll see you with the stuff at Bruce & Elaine's . . . or I'll see you on Monday. Um . . . probably at your place or I'll leave the stuff at your place or something like that. We'll probably talk before then. OK? So . . . now let me think . . . I'm ringing, it's about, oh yes, dead on midday on Saturday . . . OK? So, um . . . see you later. I'm not going to be — I don't think you'll be —'

Once my short hairs (and a few longer ones) lowered again I realised that the message was not a new one. I guess the answerphone had simply suffered a mild stroke and missed the cue to stop the playback.

The point is that the message, like a fly in amber and unlike the carefully groomed pickings of mass media replays, was as immediate and real as it had been when Roger casually left it there — replete with the ums and ers of everyday vernacular.

It set me to thinking about the fannish phenomenon of timebinding, whereby a fanzine rucked up from the bottom of a box after a lapse of decades may emerge as fresh and interesting (or otherwise) as it had been when it was placed there. I'd never really thought of my answerphone as being a timebinder. It's obvious once stated, of course; it falls into the 'I knew *that!*' category.

The event was made more poignant by the nature of my current work, telephone support to users of a computer software package. Practically all I know about these people is their voice as we grapple with their problem. They can see but usually can't understand the error messages on their computer screens; I can understand but can't see those messages. To resolve the problem we must achieve a symbiosis, whereby they pass to me every salient point with as few irrelevant details as possible, while I pass back crisp questions and instructions that can be reliably followed by naive fingers. When one or other end of the link fails, the results vary from hilarious to disastrous. Once a rapport is established, the sensation is often sublime — two minds working in harmony, each supplying the other's needs and together achieving results that would otherwise be impossible. It almost makes up for the stress of the job. (I'm not complaining — getting paid for it balances the deficit.)

(Continues on back cover . . .)



Vapourware is pleased to support Delightfully Fannish Faulconbridge in its effort to sell the rest of Australian fandom on the idea of bidding for the 1999 Worldcon. We think it's a lost cause, but so what? Contact:

DF²

43 Chapman Pde
Faulconbridge 2776

(or [email eric@zen.maths.uts.edu.au](mailto:eric@zen.maths.uts.edu.au))



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The 1994 Australian SF Convention
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**Colin Baker • William Gibson
Bruce Gillespie • Narelle Harris**

Why wait for 1999?

**Easter 1994
At the Southern Cross
Under the Southern Cross**

Duffergate

(5th January 1992)

RING-RING... RING-RING

'Hello?'

'Hello, Wodger. Greg here. You left a message for me to call you?'

(Approximately 59,733.5 words omitted)

'... mmm. So you see, Greg, the reason I called is that while Mark and I were talking about possible candidates, your name popped up and, well, hmmm.'

'OK. I'll do it. I agree that it's best not to hold the race over for a year, what with Art's illness and all. I'll have to hurry to get my nominations together, though. Who are your nominators?'

'Umm, well, there's Marc Ortlieb, and Nick Stathopoulos, and Bruce Gillespie. Those are the Australians. In America, Dick & Nikki Lynch —'

'You rat! I wanted to ask them!'

— and Teddy Harvia.'

'Hum. What if I went for the New Wavers? Ian Gunn, James Allen, and Glen Tilley, say. We could turn this into a real New Wave versus Old Wave thing.'

'Well...'

'Only joking. No, I'll take them from round Australia. Ian for sure, but then either Jean Weber or Eric Lindsay, and someone like Craig Hilton, say. In North America, I might ask whatzizname, er, my mind's gone blank. It's on the tip of my tongue. Canadian, in Toronto.'

'Garth Spencer? Lloyd Penney?'

'Yes, Lloyd Penney. And Mark Linneman. And...'

'Sheryl Birkhead?'



'Sure. But I'll have to restrict myself to people whose home address I know so I can phone them so that we can get everything arranged by the deadline.'

'Sounds like a good group to me.'

'Yes. Hey, I could run campaign briefs in *Thyme*. "And now a message from..."'

'Umm, hopefully not a debate...'

'Oh no, I'd give you equal space. My spiel in one column, an empty box headed "a message from Roger Weddall" in the other.'

'Er...'

'Just joking! Well, I'd better go now and get on with it.'

'Well, hmmm. Okay, but first I'd better quickly check on Marilyn & Lewis' new address and give it to you for *Thyme*.'

(107,768 words omitted)

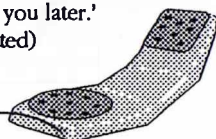
'OK, Roger. Talk to you later.'

(227,653 words omitted)

'Bye, Roger.'

'Seeyuz.'

CLICK



[This article first appeared in Mimosa, in 1988 or 1989. I've always had a soft spot in my heart for it. Honesty compels me to admit that in one small respect it deviates from strict veracity. Every incident in it happened, but I fussed the timing of the titchy wallaby and attributed to fleas deeds actually committed by flies.]

For the Birds

by Greg Hills

Heaven may be found twenty-five kilometres north of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

The YHA (Youth Hostels Association) hostel of 'Bensuta Lodge' at Towlers Bay on Pittwater is probably my single most preferred spot on the continent of Australia. Set high on a tree-clad hillside, in a human enclave in Kuring-gai Chase National Park, it has the air of being isolated on an island far from 'Civilisation'; but draw a quarter-circle on a map, radius fifty kilometres and with the outer arc curving from south to west, and three million people live within the area of that wedge.

I came to Pittwater as a refugee from Sydney. I had arrived in Australia just three days before and had found it impossible to organise myself in the bustle of Sydney. I had previously spent fourteen months managing a YHA hostel in New Zealand. Te Aroha, located on a hillside, backing on forest, and with perhaps fifteen thousand people within a twenty-five kilometre radius, had coaxed me out of love with the big city. Sydney was too much. Pittwater was just enough.

I arrived on a Monday, after the weekend rush had returned to Sydney. Where twenty people had jostled, I and four others sprawled. Our conversations were backed and supported by the sigh of wind, the rustle of trees, and the cries of



birds. At intervals there might be a human shout or the distant putter of an out-board boat, but mostly there was just nature.

Edwin was a Scotsman of middle years, and half-aware that he was growing old. We got on well enough; but then, since we shared a dormitory, we had to. He was full of opinions and willing to share them. I agreed with few of them.

Susan, Sarah, and Anna — it is hard to think of the three individually, as it was rare to find one alone — were English, from London. Susan was the easy-going one, open and disarming but feeling, somehow, artificial. Sarah was cynical and often sarcastic, but she held the group together and was always the first to help someone else. Anna was dark where the others were blonde, legacy of her half-Indian parents, and her reserve was fierce, but she was naturally friendly and was certainly the most intelligent of the three.

We were all seasoned hostellers, well versed in the traditions of that curious fandom-like subculture. Yes, *fandom*-like. Hostellers have clubs, with clubzines. There is an etiquette and a language unique to the hostels. There are no fanzines, travellers not being given to publishing, but the void is filled by the hostel visitor's books. (These are not the limp 'name, address, three-

word comment' that you may have visualised. The hostel visitor's book is a repository of the thoughts, deeds, and findings of generations of hostellers. Some entries are, indeed, a mere scrawled line, but others can take up pages of tiny writing.) The whole thing is somewhat reminiscent of a convention., spread out temporally and spatially, with programming events and room parties running simultaneously at many different places.

I spent four nights at Pittwater, and came away with memories that seem more like four *months*. The problem I face in this article is not finding something to talk about, but deciding what *not* to talk about. If I started to cover everything, I could fill this fanzine from end to end and have material left over for the next issue. So, narrow; narrow . . . ah, there's an image: black wings beating along a green backdrop, and a voice: 'Bandits at nine o'clock . . .'

A wing of magpies came in on a strafing run. 'Here they come again,' said Anna. The currawong, dropping a raucous cry, took to its tree. The lorikeets, being more interested in pecking indiscriminately at seed and each other, paid no attention; they knew the magpies would not dare bother *them*.

Edwin, Anna, and I were relaxed in a row on the wooden bench, backs against the table and feet propped against the veranda railing. I had just been watching a curl of smoke rise above the hillside across the bay. I had also been thinking what a contrast there was between the three sets of legs I could see: the knobby, the chubby, and the shapely.

'Poor little bugger,' said Edwin of the currawong.

We watched it jitter from branch to branch of its sanctuary, white-rimmed mad eye watching the magpies descend voraciously upon the seed-pile that the lorikeets had somehow overlooked.



**Front view of
Pittwater YHA Hostel.**

The conversation reported here is taking place on the verandah, midway along the section at right of picture. The sunbathing lawn is the patch directly below this section of verandah. The kitchen door is at the right-hand end of the verandah; the other doors are dormitories. The currawong's tree is just out of the picture at right. ☐

'Throw the poor beast some seed,' said Anna, compassion in her voice.

I tossed a handful of seed in the general direction of the tree. The currawong eyed it greedily but remained in the branches. If it dropped to pick seeds from the ground, the magpies would chase it back into the tree. It had learned.

Suddenly magpies and lorikeets alike deserted the piles, scattering away into the trees. 'Oh, see, it's a kookaburra,' said Anna, and she was right. It landed on the railing a couple of yards from us and turned an expectant eye our way. Behind the kooka the currawong fluttered from its tree and began hastily — and not without many a fearful glance — picking seed out of the grass.



My favourite Australian bird, the kookaburra is the largest member of the kingfisher family. The Australian version is often better known as the 'laughing' kookaburra, and I doubt I need to explain why. The kookaburras at Pittwater are very tame; they will not climb onto your hand, but they will feed from your fingers. Scorning seed, they prefer food containing meat. Their skill at removing food from between fingers without touching the fingers is impressive. You approach, morsel dangling between thumb and forefinger. The kookaburra watches you until you are within reach then orients on the food like a gun settling on a target. A blur, a slight tug, and the morsel has

been transferred to the kookaburra's beak. It bangs it on the railing (just to make *quitesure* it's dead), tosses back its head, and swallows.

The currawong is a large black bird, related to the crow, something like a slim raven. The only touch of colour about it is the circle of white around the pupils of its eyes. The bird is ubiquitous in Australia, and has a fondness in the cities for squatting atop telephone poles and cawing at intervals. [1993 note: I have since been told that the city birds are crows, not currawongs.] It is a born coward, despite its size, and is often 'beat up on' by magpies, which are smaller but more vicious.

The lorikeets mentioned above are Australia's famous Rainbow Lorikeets, the Technicolor parrot. Electric blue head, brilliant green back, scarlet-and-canary chest, and more blue on the belly. Clownish ragamuffin antics do not stop the observer noticing the respect with which they are treated by the apparently more formidable magpie. The beak is very strong.

Do I need to explain magpies? Black-and-white cousins to rooks and crows.

Pittwater boasts more than just birds. Wallabies and the occasional wombat wander across the lawn beside the currawong's tree. A goanna lives in the rocks in back of the hostel. (If only you knew how close I came to titling this article 'Goanna Round Out Back' — you were saved only because Pittwater, being on the coastal side of the Blue Mountains, doesn't qualify as being in the Outback.) By night, opossums wander down from the trees to seek out food scraps on the veranda and in the kitchen. The Australian opossum (no relation to the North American 'possum') is a pest in New Zealand, where it was introduced many years ago because of its fine pelt. To drive down a road in NZ is to pass by and over a succession of very dead pedestrian opossums, losers in the game of crossing roads. Many people make a living

hunting opossums in NZ; meanwhile in Australia where they're native they are protected zealously. When I moved over here and first learned this, it made for a mild case of culture shock.

Sarah and Susan came out of their dormitory and joined us on the veranda. A wallaby came by, cropping the lawn and pausing periodically to scratch its flanks furiously. Wallabies look like small kangaroos, and what this inspired we five watchers to say of AA Milne's mother and baby characters is best left in the place where it was said. Sarah had always felt that Kanga and Baby Roo were somewhat idealised, and had never been convinced by the scene in which Kanga attempted to bath Piglet. 'True,' I said, 'but Kanga *knew* Piglet wasn't Roo, so it could all have been a big act.' This was

mullied over in silence before the subject suffered a sea-change. I can't understand why; it made perfect sense to *me*.

The wallaby scratched itself out of sight and Edwin followed, muttering about finding the hostel's boat and going for a paddle round the headland — did anyone want to come along? (No volunteers.) He vanished down the track and the Trio blurred into action: though their dormitory and out the other door, towels in hand. Down onto the lawn and strip to catch the sun.

As three examples of Young English Womanhood lie topless on the grass, scratching at the first bite of the fleas left behind by the wallaby, watched by a nervous currawong from its tree, I'll take this opportunity to show you the way out of this brief tale. S'long . . . ☐

— Greg Hills

[While fossicking through boxes, I found pages containing part of the first draft of this article. The rest is presumably with Secant 6's 'History' section (from which the article was culled), possibly thrown out during one of my several changes of address since 23rd May 1988 (the date on the ms).

The title is 'Goanna Round', and the ms contains several bits (including the source of the ultimate title) that didn't make the final cut but which are interesting in themselves.]

For the birds, the Manager of the hostel keeps a large jar of special seed. Knowledge of this jar, and where to find it and how to use it, is passed from one generation of hostellers to the next. Everyone I have met who has been to Pittwater knows about The Jar, and every one of them learnt it from another hosteller: none from the Manager. Faced with such a tradition as this, how could I do otherwise? Before I left on Friday, I watched the German couple I had initiated into the Mystery of The Jar

on Wednesday telling the odd collection of new people who arrived late on Thursday how to Feed The Birds.

There is an art to it. For those with cameras, it is pointless to spread the seed thinly along the verandah. A lorikeet here and a lorikeet there is pretty but not very effective as a tableau. On the other hand, a single large seed pile, while amusing because of the free-for-all that invariably develops, is wasted effort. Forty or fifty lorikeets make a kaleidoscopic carpet in which it is almost impossible to pick out individual birds. The individual is important, for it is the antics of one bird in relation to another which identifies the lorikeet personality.

Each morning, whoever first feels so inclined fetches The Jar from wherever it went to the night before. Pouring a careful handful from it for each pile, they establish from three to six piles of seed at well separated places along the verandah. Then they go and fetch their own breakfast, to eat while watching the melee develop . . . ☐

[On 10 June 1988 four intrepid fans crammed into Peter Burns' car to drive to Sydney for the Natcon, Conviction. I toyed with the idea of doing a trip report, but the following fragments were all I ever wrote. The 'Roger' featured is, of course, Roger Weddall.]

..... Prologue

by Greg Hills

Prologue (1)
The Night Before:

Cheddar Rd, 9:50 pm. GREG and

PETER talking on PHONE.

GREG: Ah, Peter. What time were you thinking of going to Sydney tomorrow?

PETER: Oh, well, there isn't much sense in arriving in Sydney tomorrow *night* so we might as well leave early. I'll probably go past your door about six am.

GREG (dismayed): At . . . six.

PETER: Yes, that's right.

GREG: Then I suppose I had better start packing.

Prologue (2)
The Ungodly hour:

Cheddar Rd, 5:00 am. GREG in BED.

ALARM: *BeepBeepBeeBeeBeeBeeBeeBee* —

GREG: Bloody Hell, he must be joking. I don't even get up for work at this hour. Well, I'm in no fit condition to get up. I'll just ring Peter and —

GREG: No, I can't ring Peter. What if *he* isn't up? It would be cruel to wake him.

GREG: On the other hand . . . (Stumbles up and into shower.)

GREG showered): Coffee!



GREG (finally awake): Five twenty-five. He *must* be up by now, or even on his way to Mark Linneman's place. (FX: Zweet, tickaticka. Zweet, tickaticka . . .)

ROGER (from Peter's place): Hello.

GREG: Hello, Roger.

ROGER: What are *you* doing ringing this early?

GREG: Well, Peter was going to ring me from Mark's place, just to make sure I was awake. But I need to go down to the money machine and that'll take me about twenty minutes or so, and I didn't want Peter ringing me while I was

gone and thinking that I was too sleepy to answer the phone, so . . .

ROGER: Well, Peter's just got up. He's in the shower. That is, I *hope* he's in the shower.

GREG (thinks: Bloody typical. *People* . . .): Okay, fine; see you then.

GREG (standing half-way to door): Hold it . . . I have \$485 in that account. I need \$350 next week to pay the rent, and another hundred or so to play with, and then I want some margin. How much have I got to play with in other accounts if I leave that money where it is?

(Calculates mentally.) Hmm, should be plenty for four dissipated days in Sydney. I already have more than a hundred cash on me . . .

GREG (goes to typewriter, sipping cooling coffee): Ha, yes, I'll get a head-start on the trip report. Probably be the only comprehensible piece of writing I'll be able to make about the con! (Thinks: I should have gone to sleep Wednesday, or caught up yesterday.)

Prologue (3) The Long Watch:

Cheddar Rd, after 6 am. GREG at TYPER.

GREG: There, that should do for a starter. Time . . . hmmm, six oh-five am. Where *are* they? Should I make another cuppa coffee? Have I forgotten anything?

GREG: 6:34 am. Ah, at last. (Grabs luggage — one black overnight bag and grotty little green cloth anything bag ((feels virtuous about keeping to a minimum, even if decision trees kept him up till midnight packing)) — and

bolts, having thoughtfully typed this paragraph earlier, leaving just the time blank . . .)

Epilogue:

You walk through the open door. You see a typewriter.

EXAMINE TYPEWRITER

There is nothing extraordinary about the typewriter, but it has a piece of yellow paper rolled into it.

READ PAPER

It is in the typewriter and difficult to make out.

TAKE PAPER

You take the piece of yellow paper.

READ PAPER

It is the prologue to a trip report. You read it and smile. You roll the paper back into the typewriter and type:

14TH JUNE 1988, 8:17 AM: THE END. ☐

— Greg Hills

Time is the most valuable thing you can spend.

Debits and Credits

Art credits (with addresses):

Ian Gunn 4(top), 23.

PO Box 567, Blackburn 3130.

Chris Morrin 9, 21.

Somewhere in NZ.



Peggy Ranson 12,13,14,15, 22.

1420 Valmont, New Orleans, LO 70115, USA?

Phil Włodarczyk 3(bot, ink original).

PO Box 41, West Brunswick 3055

A 1993 Electoral Guide 7.

The usual assortment of more-or-less mangled clipart was ripped off from the usual suspects.

'For the Birds' was first published in *Mimosa*, probably issue 3 or 4. The other words here have not been previously published.

Availability:

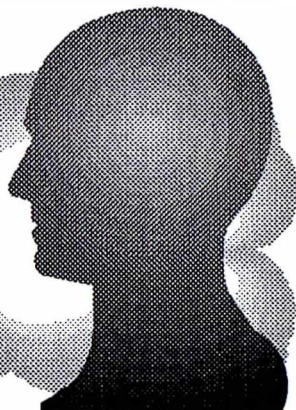
If I've sent you this you're eligible to receive future issues. It's easy — all you have to do is persuade me you're worth the effort. If you're not interested in seeing more issues, do nothing and sooner or later I'll go away. ☐

Unlikely moments
in computing
No. 00101010

Press any key to continue
. . . please?

[This article was first written in 1988, intended for Lyn McConchie's Dum Vivamus, Vivamus!. I wasn't happy with it; it was an early experiment verbalising something which is, for me, innately nonverbal — something which, indeed, often helps my conversation by occupying my hands and the nonverbal part of my brain. I've now rewritten and expanded it.]

Scalp Hunting at Conventions



by Greg Hills

As Lyn McConchie once wrote, 'If you thought this article was going to be about sex then you are out of luck.' Or rather, mostly so. Actually I want to talk about the fine art of the convention massage, but I want to concentrate on an unusual part of it: my speciality, the scalp rub.

Back rubs and foot rubs have been a standard feature of convention room-parties for many years now, and I guess most people reading this have encountered one or the other at some stage. Strangely, I seem to be the only person in the business of handing out scalp rubs. This is strange because it is such a relaxing way to get close to someone you like without raising the spectre of sex. Although the scalp rub can be used as an accompaniment to sex, it is in itself non-sexual. Both participants can be fully clothed and discreet use of cushions can even prevent body contact, without detracting much from the shared pleasure. This is one advantage of the

scalp rub over the back rub (which loses a lot if heavy clothing is in the way) and the foot rub (which demands removal of footwear and socks and often requires the subject to wash their feet first).

In the scalp rub as I perform it, the masseuse/seur sits with their back against a firm vertical surface such as a wall, a chair, or the head of a bed, and with a soft surface beneath their buttocks (floors get pretty hard after you've been supporting your own and another person's weight for a while). A few cushions within easy reach can be a nice touch, allowing various altered positions and providing soft things for the recipient to cuddle if (as often happens) they feel the need. The massager stretches their legs out along the floor or bed and the recipient sits between them, back to chest. Experiment will find the best relative height. I find that when my chin can naturally rest on the crown of their head the placement is optimal. If either participant is nervous a couple of cushions can be inserted between the participants, one resting on the floor

and the other atop the first, covering from groin to chest. The scalp rub is not then so intimate but the feeling of security gained by a nervous person can make up for this. Unless the recipient is relaxed, or not very nervous, the scalp rub can be hard work for the massager. I find that people who insist on cushions the first time generally don't bother the second. Play it by ear.

If possible, clothing should be loosened around the neck to allow entrance of the massager's hands. This is not essential but does make the task easier. Necklaces and earrings should be removed, and you should check whether the recipient is wearing contact lenses as this will influence your movements around their eyes. Remove any pins or scrunchies from long hair.

Unless otherwise specified, use the sides or balls of your fingers, not the hard tips. This is particularly important if your fingernails are long or if the recipient is delicate compared to the massager.

Start at the shoulders with the normal kneading motion used in massage to loosen the muscles in neck and shoulders and establish rapport. Some strength may be required for this; masseuses may find that male recipients will require (and can take) most of their strength. Masseurs, on the other hand, will find male recipients easier and may need to force themselves to be gentle with female recipients. The sex-based statistical spread of strength holds, of course: some women are stronger than some men, so adjust pressure to suit each pair of participants.

After a while, extend the range of massage up and down the neck. If you care to risk it, follow the muscles down the back and arms as well.



Handle the neck muscles *carefully*; they bruise easily, especially in office workers. Work them between thumb and first three fingers. Spend some time using small circular motions around the base of the skull.

This can be *very* relaxing! (For the proper movements, refer to almost any book on massage and try out various combinations on your first victims.)

The signal to move up to the scalp is subtle. The nearest I can come to explaining it in words is that the recipient will slump against you very slightly. Their arms, which might have

been folded or resting in their lap, will often flop a little loosely. It's a complex interpretation of body language, and only hands-on experience can teach it. After a while you won't think about it — when the time comes you will *know*.

I play it by ear from here, following the messages I'm getting from the recipient. A good general policy is to use one hand to steady their head and move the other hand up from the base of the skull in a scuffling motion. Finish the stroke at the crown and run your fingers through their hair on the way down for the next stroke. Do this three or four times, then change hands to do the other side. Short hair causes no problems, but you should take care not to tangle stray strands of long hair. Note that a scalp massage will ruin a hairdo; warn elaborately-coiffed recipients about this in advance. However, because of the motions used and because no oil is used, most hair can just be brushed out later and be none the worse for the experience.

Tilt their head forward and move both hands to the base of their skull, just behind the ears.

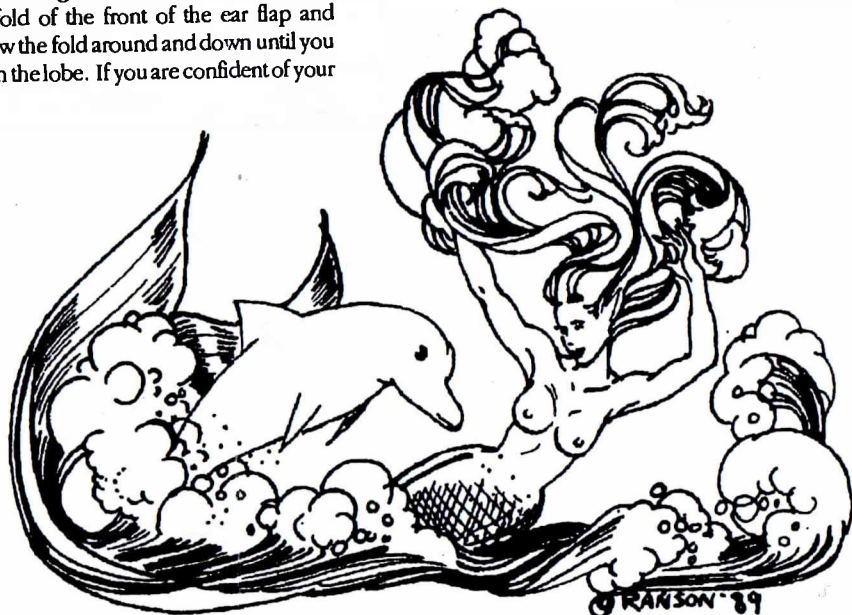
Move your hands upwards and back-and-forth, meanwhile moving your fingers in small circles (right hand clockwise, left counterclockwise). When you reach the crown, rest the heel of your hands just above the ears and work your fingers back and forth along the crown, still in small circles but with most pressure being applied on those parts of the circle where the fingers are moving down and/or back. Lift the heels and continue the circles as you bring your hands down the head, close behind the ears. Repeat the whole process two or three times from the base of the skull.

From the base of the skull, work a finger up around the join between the ear and the skull (I find the middle finger best). *Gently!* When the finger reaches the top of the ear, pivot your hands outward and pull the finger over the top of the ear. (If you attempt to push it over the skin wrinkles up in front of it and the ear can get in the way, ruining the sensation.) Work a fingertip into the fold of the front of the ear flap and follow the fold around and down until you reach the lobe. If you are confident of your

skill you can use the middle finger for this and use your thumb and forefinger to caress the outer edge of the ear. When you reach the lobe, grasp it gently and tug it down and back, down and forward, just enough so that the whole flap of the ear moves. This feels *really* good to a tense person, as the muscles being played with are those that run up towards the temples and the corners of the eye and to the hinge of the jaw.

Now go back to the base of the skull and start over. A nice touch, by the way, for use while following the fold of the ear or just after the lobe-tug and just before starting over, is to gently press the triangular fleshy bit that separates the duct of the ear from the cheek. Place your fingertip on the point and press in and forward. Jiggle your finger a trifle.

Scuffle your fingers up the back of the skull again, using both hands, and bring them up over the crown close together then down to the



hairline on the forehead. Moving your fingers in small circles, pull your hands apart, working along the hairline down to the temples. With a balding recipient, use an imaginary hairline about six centimetres above the eyebrows. With a woman you know or suspect to be over the age of thirty, be especially careful as some older women fear that over-stretched skin may wrinkle.

Rub the temples gently, in a circular motion; this may be done either clockwise or counterclockwise, and you may use the same direction or a different directions for each hand. An interesting effect can be obtained by placing the fleshy part of the heel of your hand over the temple and pressing gently while moving it to and fro, so that the skin moves with the hand.

With the heel of your hand on the temple, curve your fingers so that they meet tip-to-tip in a row down the middle of the forehead. Lift the heels and pull your fingers apart, following the line of the forehead back to the temples. Repeat. A variation is to scissor your fingers as you draw your hand apart, so that little folds of skin are alternately caught and released as you go.

If the recipient has a headache, there may be a patch — between the eyes or high up on the dome of the skull — that is sore or sensitive. Kneading this patch can cause some headaches to fade. If you brace their skull by cupping the back with one hand, and place your other hand flat against the top of the forehead, a firm press upwards and back or a gentle circular motion can also help a headache. Other headaches can be helped by paying particular attention to the shoulders and working the whole area over and between the shoulder blades in back, and the pectorals and the flat muscles below the collar bones in front. In males the massage can very fruitfully extend over the

whole of the chest, but in females should stop short of the swell of the breast unless — and I emphasise this — each partner is fully at ease with the other; in which case the breasts can be manipulated gently so as to work indirectly on the muscles that can be worked directly in males.

Place two fingertips — fore and middle — into the eye orbit. Don't press on the eyeball but start with the middle finger on the tear duct and pull your fingers from the bridge to the outer corner. As before, be especially careful if the recipient is worried about wrinkles. I generally pull out along the top edge of the eye then move the heels of my hands so that I can pull back across the soft skin where the lower eyelid merges with the cheek. A *gentle* press with one finger on the tear duct, one on the eye, and one at the outer corner of the eye, often goes down well.

Place two fingers of the same hand on the dip in the nose between the eyes. Keeping them together, pull them down the nose, one each side of the ridge. Push them back up. A variation is

to use both hand and press two fingertips together to do the same thing. This allows you to continue the return into a stroke of the eye orbit.

Place two fingers from each hand on the dimple and pull them down the side of the nose, one on the nose and the other on the cheeks, so that at the end of their path they are just beside the outer corners of the mouth. Move them to the fleshy part of the nose and blob the nose around a bit. Reactions vary; almost



everyone seems to find the sensation very funny — and very nice.

Place a finger of each hand in the little hollow that connects the nose with the centre of the upper lip. Pull your hands apart, following the curve of the lip to the corners of the mouth. Repeat. For variety, place fingers about midway along the curve of the fleshy part of the upper lip and palpate it gently. Place fingers just below the pout of the lower lip and pull them apart to the corners. For variety, push them back. This often has a salutary effect on a talkative recipient.

Rub the chin, then hook fingers under the jawline and pull them back to the neck. Repeat. For variation, use the palm of your hand and start from just over the centreline of the underside of the jaw.

Finish the last stroke back at the base of the skull and work through again from the ear. If the recipient is not properly relaxed, go back to work on the back, shoulders, and neck.

Done properly, this massage can put the recipient to sleep. Done roughly it can give them a crick in the neck. If you are male and have a reasonably deep voice, talking quietly to female recipients seems for many to enhance the gestalt, I'm not sure why; possibly it brings up childhood memories of daddy's lap and bedtime stories, though the effect is often most notable on people who claim to have had unhappy childhoods. It is noticeably less effective on male recipients than female.

This routine is relatively unstructured, in that you can move between neck-and-shoulders, scalp, and face according to the needs of the moment, and may do so several times in the course of the massage. There is no predetermined 'end' point.

I strongly recommend finding a good book on sensual (rather than therapeutic) massage and using strokes from that to supplement the rest of the routine. Some adjustment will be required as most such books assume the recipient is lying down. The key advantage of the routine de-

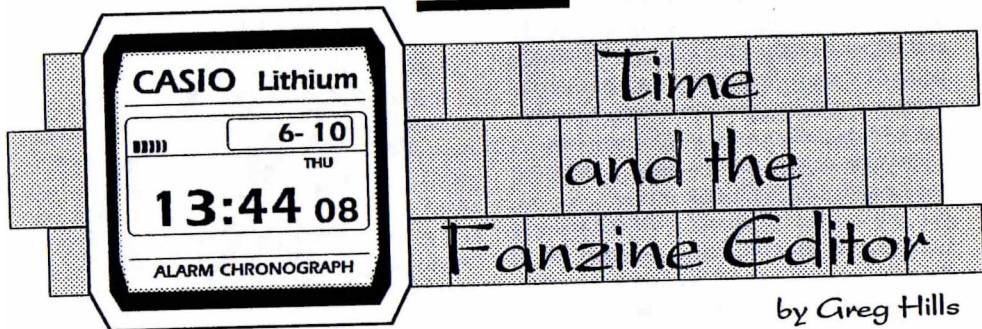


scribed here is that it can be done anywhere that two people can find space to spoon, ie in almost any convention room party. In addition, the intimacy of the position seems to help break down the barriers.

A key point is that this *is* intended to be sensual, neither therapeutic nor sexual. It can be effective against headaches and tension, and can certainly be used in sex or seduction, but is primarily intended as a 'feelgood' activity, something friendly that you do for someone you like. I developed it as a social tool, not really being at ease in social groups unless my hands are busy doing something constructive. If you use it, you'll have your own reasons. Just remember that nobody likes being badgered into doing something they don't really want to do, neither to give massage nor to receive it. 'No' means 'No', and so does 'I don't think so'. On the other hand, no reasonable person is offended by a courteous suggestion, provided you've established some sort of acquaintance with them before asking. ☐

— Greg Hills, 8apr88/1jun93

[Like 'For the Birds', this was written for Mimosa, but unlike it was probably never sent. It was an experiment in recursive writing, a deliberately circular article whose end leads back to its beginning. For my own amusement I designed in two alternate break-points, either of which could serve as beginning-and-ending.]



by Greg Hills

J bought a watch in 1981. I still own that watch, and it still works. *[1993: same watch, still works.]*

To understand what this statement means to me, you need to know that before I bought this paragon of watches I owned many watches, stretching back into the mists of mother's milk and soiled nappies. Each came to a bad end. Two I smashed, one I immersed too long in sea water, and one — well, I dropped the innards on the kitchen table one day while changing its batteries. It was one of those early digital types with numerals which glowed in ruby LED when you pressed a button. After I dropped it the numerals still glowed when the button was pressed, but the filaments lit more or less at random. Cuneiform would have been more legible.

In 1981, after a watchless interval that nearly cost me my job — the boss was not impressed by my excuses for lateness arriving at work — I gave in and paid NZ\$89.00 for a Casio digital with LCD and lithium battery. The battery was the clincher: now I need worry about dropping the innards on the table every four or five years instead of every six months.

The watch is dignified. It beeps *once* on the hour, not the bathetic 'pip-pip!' that characterises so many electronic watches. It has an alarm loud enough to wake me but not so persistent as to dig me out of bed if I really don't choose to rise. It has a stopwatch function, useful to give me something to think about when engaged in the tedium of collating fanzines. I can 'race against the clock'. It also gives me a choice of 12- or 24-hour clock. When I bought it I was doing shift-work, and the 24-hour option was handy. Before I bought the watch, I had twice arrived at work twelve hours early. I was fortunate about that: it could as easily have been twelve hours *late*.

The watch has carried the burden of the years well. It gains perhaps a second a week, and the casing has gathered many scratches. The edges of the crystal are a trifle chipped, but not seriously so. The weakest link, in fact, is just that: a link in the stainless steel watchband. As long as I wear the watch, it functions perfectly; but when I take the watch off and cast it on the bed preparatory to taking a shower, this link often opens and allows the wristband to fall in two. I don't let this bother me: it merely adds character to my

temporal partner. For this reason I neither buy a new band, nor have the old one repaired, though either option would be cheap and easy. (1993: I finally replaced the band in late 1992.)

The watch helps me in my fanatic. It tells me whether I have time today to do another page — of a letter or fanzine, or this article. It tells me whether it is still early enough to make it worth venturing thirty kilometres across Melbourne to visit Peter Burns in Oakleigh and use his electrostenciller. It tells me when my 2130 (sorry, my 9:30 pm) bedtime rolls around. When I have to get up at 0530 (5:30 am) in order to start at 0600 (6:00 am) I cannot afford to stay up too late.

But sometimes in the stilly night when slumber's chains should bind me, I hear the cheery *beep!* and I curse my watch, for it is telling me that time is running out.



Today's fandom has been called *Last Fandom*. Wherever I turn today I

see the dreary musings and predictions, all written with a tone of — well, surprise — and all announcing that (1) there aren't as many fanzines around as there used to be, (2) fanzine fans are getting older, and (3) we aren't attracting the bright young faneds that used to ensure the continuity of fanzine fandom into the future.

It is hard to argue with this pessimistic viewpoint. To tell someone that you think they are reading their personal aging into fandom is to invite a storm of 'facts' and figures 'proving' the contention. To mention the 18-year-old fan sending you her *Trekzine*, the young guy (exact age uncertain) sending you his clubzine filled with grumping about the 'establishment' fen who want him to fit into the old mold (I use this word advisedly — 'mould' might fit as well), the other guy sending you his *apazine-come-perzine* — to mention these invites the riposte that these formula trickle compared to the torrent of the good old

days. To suggest that fans are just becoming interested in fanzine fandom later today is to invite a scornful sniff and a shoulder's dismissal.

When I gafiated in 1983, the pages of fanzines were full of doom and gloom. The recent rapid rises in postage and printing costs had brought on a glut of predictions that big fanzines were a thing of the past and that fanzines in particular had but a short time to live. There had been a headlong rush to join the apas, where publishing could still be a cheap enterprise and egoboo came easily.

Compared to 1983, today's fandom (1988) is fairly bursting with fanzines — and some of them are large and of high calibre. Many of the established names weren't around in 1983.

That the average age of fanzine fans is higher is evidently correct. That this can be attributed to the decline of new blood is evidently *not* correct. Instead, the new fans seem to serve a couple of years apprenticeship in conventions and clubs before graduating into fanzines. Instead of flooding the post with crudzines and adolescent *angst* they get laid at cons, get out of college, and *then* pub their ish. If this be the end of fandom, it seems a good end to be around in.

Where are the apas today? Dead, or dying, or sick and desperate for members.

Apas are a wonderful institution. You sit down at your typer or your word processor or your computer, and you churn out thousands of words off the top of your head. You print up a few dozen copies and post them off to the Official Editor. In a month or a couple of months you receive a huge envelope, carefully torn open by the Post Office, with lots of other peoples zines bursting out of it. Zines produced just the same way as yours, and filled with remarks such as 'Joe: Rycto Jill: Yea, man!'

or 'Bob: Rycto Jean's cto Allan: I once had one, too... (HHOK)'.
This is the fast food of egoboo.

Almost as sustaining as a cardboard Big Mac. It is easy to understand why the apas proved incapable of holding those who fled the genzine field when the Post Office sent its price-hike cavalry around the left flank of fandom. Do you like mixing metaphors? I do.

Improved access to laser printers and computers has played no small part in the resurgence of fanzine fandom. We may not have the numbers and the youthfulness we once had, but by crackey we look nice! You don't see wrinkles through printed pages, and you must read between the lines to see the cobwebs in the brains.

You aren't bothered by preposterous accents, either. I recently had cause to ring the editors of this august publication (*Mimosa*). Talking to Nikki proved a disconcerting experience. She... speaks... so... slowly... and... with... a... long... pause... for... thought... before... each... reply. I would say something, and wait. The silence would lengthen, as the phone silently ticked away my money in international



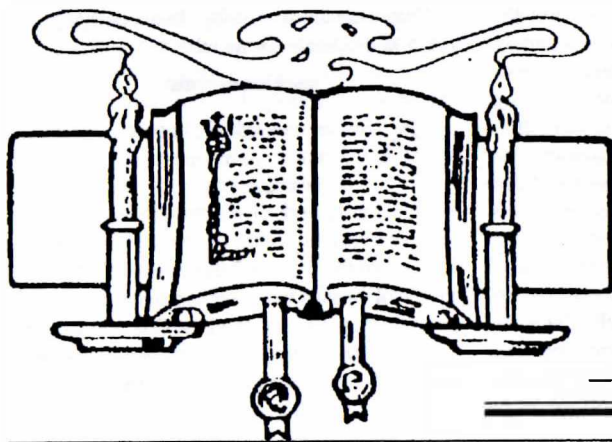
toll charges. I would just decide that my rapid speech and Kiwi accent had proven indecipherable, when the reply would come rolling down the line in measured sentences — unless I had been overcome with impatience and had started simultaneously to say something more, whereupon Nikki would break off and wait, digesting my words and framing a new response. After all

that, I never did learn what I had sought: for Dick handled that sort of thing and he was out of town for something-or-other.

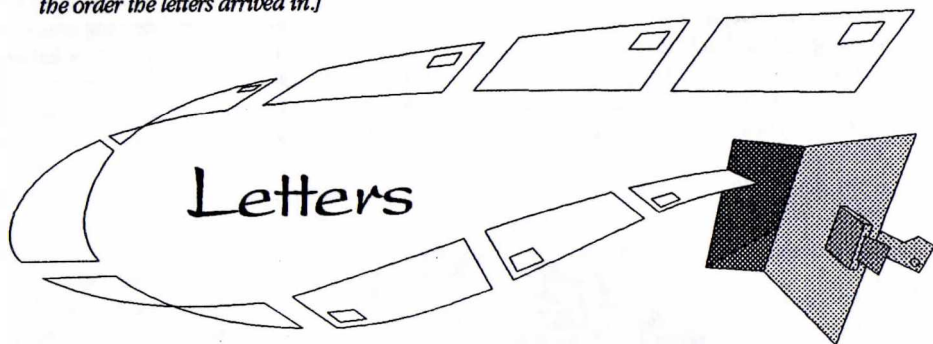
In telefandom — telephone fandom — you must struggle with stream-of-consciousness at its worst. All you have is this thread-thin voice whispering into your air after a rough passage through an imperfectly-conducting length of copper wire. It's bad enough speaking to someone of your own nationality, but when you call internationally it is bad *cubed*.

After such experiences, a genzine is a relief. You open it and slip into a world where you can build your own picture of the other person at leisure, where you do not 'hear' the accents unless it be in an occasional strange word or unusual construction. The quality of writing averages higher, because the writers know the egoboo they get back will be worth reading, and because the editors will weed out and reject the worst material before it reaches print. You can lose the cares of the day in reading a genzine, drifting timelessly from article to article until the sudden sharp *beep!* of your watch tells you it's time to do something else. ☐

— Greg Hills, 21 May 88/10 Jun 93



[An anticipated feature of a second issue of a fanzine is, of course, a lettercolumn. While I hate to be predictable, in this case what the hell — it saves having to think up my own words to fill out the zine. (Heh, heh — just kidding, OK?) The flow is entirely original and uncontrived: it's the order the letters arrived in.]



James Allen [30/6/93] Thanks for the beta test version of *Vapourware*. Page 7 — I can see where the space between the top of the box & the text is less than on page 6 — personally I would have moved all the text — if I had even noticed!

[Life's hard for we fustians. Sigh. The answer to your implied comment is, of course, that I would have noticed! And noticed and noticed . . . One solution would have been to reduce the leading in the two paragraphs of the main text by a fraction of a point; another would be to tweak the line below 'Facts on File' so that the box could move down a trifle. GRH]

It's a nice little zine — even if the 'I Go Shopping' article is a bit disturbing. In one of the Myth books Robert Asprin says something like 'after you complete a bargain with a Deveel, count your fingers, then count again, and then count your cousins'. What happened to you is quite legal I am sure. I had wondered what happened in those little shops — I assumed they merely sold items like market stalls — I didn't realise that they also ran scams. Did you ever get a tape deck? *[Nope. GRH]*

I first read 'Devaluing the Egobuck' in *Stet* — it is interesting but it seems to have two subjects.

The first is the marginalisation of 'sixth fandom like' zines (whatever sixth fandom means; I know it is a US fan group — perhaps these are the ink duplicator/Twiltone people? — and that is addressed satisfactorily by saying that reaching out to new fans helps. (I have heard of Walt Willis, Lee Hoffman, and *Quandry* — I just know little about them and wonder how relevant they are to me.)

Then we go on to the second issue of trading/locs and costs. As you know a problem with zines today is cost. I have seen electronic stuff but I am not convinced. The situation described can be summed up as 'change, but not for the better'. Basically costs are rising and the fun the fanzine editor gets from publishing either stays the same or diminishes. Perhaps editors should sell subscriptions? For example as *Thyme* does. Other trading could be as 'prizes' for worthwhile contributions.

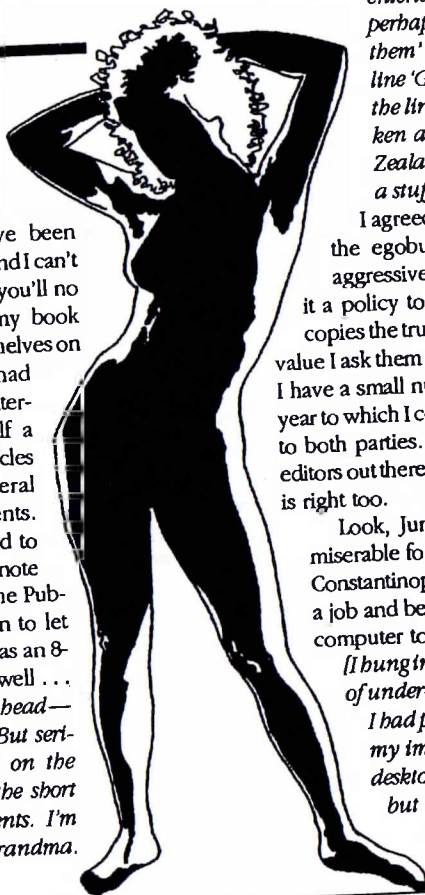
[Actually you're one of the 'fans indeed' I had in mind when I wrote the article. The joke, you see, is that 'Sixth Fandom' started out with pretty much the same attitude towards the

fannish establishment that Australian 'New Wave Fandom' did. The concept is still valid, but unfortunately hardening of the attitudes has set in during recent decades, particularly in individuals joining after Sixth Fandom became, de facto, the new establishment. 'Devaluing the Egobuck' was an unsubtle (but not unsubtle enough, I suspect) jab at these attitudes. Incidentally, since key founding members of Sixth Fandom (Walt Willis, James White, and Bob Shaw for three) lived in Ireland, it can hardly be described as a 'US' group. GRH]

Lyn McConchie
Farside Farm
RD Norsewood
New Zealand

[9/7/93] Things have been pretty good this year and I can't say they haven't. As you'll no doubt have heard, my book appeared on the NZ shelves on Mayday. After that I had a couple of phone interviews for Radio, half a dozen newspaper articles about it, and several speaker engagements. Just as all that started to die down I had a note with contract from the Publishers in Wellington to let me know I'd sold it as an 8-part radio series as well . . .

[Yeah, yeah, go ahead—grind it in . . . But seriously, congrats on the book and also the short story achievements. I'm proud of you, Grandma. GRH]



Sorry you're unemployed and you don't sound that happy either. Are things that bad or is it that you're making a good story out of it all? Vapourware was great, a lot of stuff to make one think — hard. Your editorial struck a nerve; the prats in Parliament here are following overseas trends that have already proven to be a failure, and making a bad situation even worse even faster. I love my country and sing our National Anthem very fervently lately, but I have a nasty feeling we too are rotating down the gurgler.

[I was trying to make a depressing situation entertaining. For non-Kiwi readers, perhaps I should note that the 'Anthem' mentioned above contains the line 'God defend New Zealand'; this is the line to sing fervently. The unspoken addendum is 'God defend New Zealand . . . because nobody else gives a stuff!'. GRH]

I agreed with your article on devaluing the egobuck. Sure it was — well — aggressive. It was also true. I have made it a policy to tell editors who offer me free copies the truth too. If I don't feel I can return value I ask them not to send the zine again. Thus I have a small number of fanzines arriving each year to which I contribute solidly. I feel this is fair to both parties. I may have left a few irritated editors out there, but hey, I have to do what I think is right too.

Look, Junior, I do hope things aren't as miserable for you as they sound. By the time Constantinople rolls around maybe you'll have a job and be back with a new zine and a new computer too. Good luck, hang in there.

[I hung in there. Eventually, after two years of under-employment, I figured out that as I had perfectly saleable professional skills my immediate need was not courses in desktop publishing and graphic design but a course in how to get a job. I graduated with honours, being offered two positions on the same

day in the second week of the course. One job was safe and steady but likely to be dull and slow to flower. The other job was decidedly insecure and stressful but likely to be interesting and a real boon to my career. I chose the latter. GRH]

Lewis & Marilyn
60 Martin Place
Linden 2778

[14/8/93] Despite our differences of opinion on wood and economic rationalism of egoboo I

found the issue well worth the read. I can relate to your financial straits — although as a perpetual freelancer the uncertainty of where the next cheque is coming from is nothing out of the ordinary.

The rundown on the Anzus debacle was informative and given a historical perspective since the new World Disorder has allowed the US to pull back on some of the defense bucks (or so they would have us think). Having just read a book called *We Almost Lost Detroit* by John G Fuller on the system dealings and assumptions within the civilian nuclear reactor program and specifically about the inability of the operators to evacuate populations should a 'super prompt critical excursion' result in an energy 'release', I wonder about the patriotism of allowing a potential source of contamination to dock at our primary CBD. Given the poor response of private industry to such possibilities, the thought that the good ol' US Navy could provide any sort of compensation should an accident occur is fairly unlikely given material costs

(not including people) would run into billions of dollars. One can only hope that with 'a temporary cessation of hostilities' the pressure to accept such visits will be reduced.

[Fat chance — with the Philippines going their own way, NZ and Australia are the main US bulwarks south of Asia. With popular sentiment in NZ still strongly anti-nuclear, Australia in particular faces the certainty of heavy US pressure to remain a loyal 'ally'. In the pathetic hope that by doing so they can somehow persuade the US to protect Australia from the US/Europe and US/Japan trade wars, successive ministries will continue to bleat about their loyalty to Big Brother. Meanwhile the US, as it has always done, will look after itself first and us only when convenient. GRH]

The 'Virtual Paradise' article was good — I find it a constant frustration when working on sf films (which I have done in the past) that the art directors and directors usually have no foresight as far as technological changes are concerned. Whether this equates to explaining their ignorance 'because their target audience will not

understand them if they don't or what I'm not sure, but it irks me to build the inside of a robot's head to have the Director stuff it full of vacuum tubes on set or the Producer insist that a micro listener device should be big enough to have an operating LED so you know it's working. I find it quaint when I think of the robot from *Lost in Space* (not due to be built for another three years according to the story) having transistors and magnetic tape storage. Today he'd no doubt have integrated circuits

DUE TO POWER CUTS
I'LL HAVE TO KEEP
THIS SPEECH
SHORT...



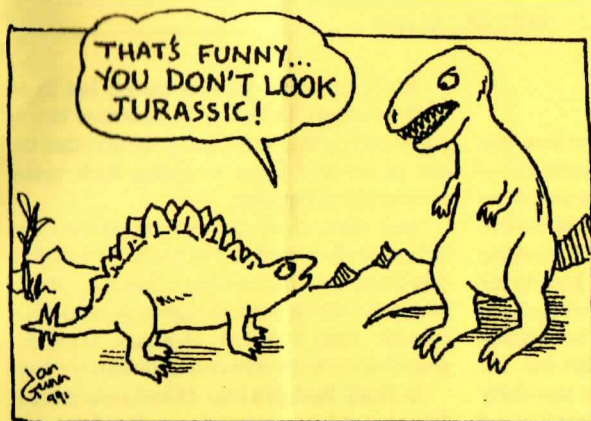
and floppy discs. One assumes that in 'reality' he'd have neural networks and magnetic bubbles, but maybe even this is not advanced enough. The film makers always fall back on the argument that they're working for today's audiences. This not only leads to a film that looks dated in five years time but also forces us to watch idiotic scenes of Donald Moffat with Atari circuit boards and printer cables hanging out of patently fake chest cavities.

The real problem with visual sf is that it demands 'eye candy' rather than ideas and given the scant screen such props receive, if they don't look vaguely recognisable the audience is going to waste time thinking rather than following the plot. I do feel that the public is underestimated. The average viewer has some nonce and when Harrison Ford drops the model Statue of Liberty and retrieves a Krypton relay the size of a small beer can I'm sure I'm not the only one who says 'they're not that big, I saw a photo of one in *Time* magazine the other week ...'

[The limitations of the camera impose strange conditions on what it can portray – and how it must be portrayed. Consider the contortions required to film sex, ballet, or parties. On the other hand, think of the realism made possible by the camera as opposed to the props of the stage. Think of Jurassic Park versus One Million BC. What will happen when the screen is abolished and the images move entirely inside the watcher's head? GRH]

I can understand how a computer can induce total inactivity in an individual as I've just entered a new phase of man/machine interface myself. I'm not a technophile (as you can tell if you've ever seen my car) so all I'll say is it's an IBM 487DX with 8 Mb RAM and a CD ROM (and I still feel like a wanker). The reason for me getting involved with this expensive time waster is my own personal fear of the future. You've no doubt noticed the prevalence of computer animation in films and more so in TV ads. It doesn't take a





moron to realize that for every shiny CGI spaceship you see there is a special effects miniature that didn't need to be built, filmed, etc.

I've been frightened too long by massive technology and inflated production costs and I'm damned if I'm going to sit down wailing about how some bunch of sallow-faced button pushers has taken the bread from the mouths of my ferrets. The last three weeks has been a full-on intensive course in button punching, as Marilyn has noticed. I'm learning to drive a good quality low-end animation package (which in plain English is \$4000 and a peptic ulcer) and I'm hoping to produce stuff to a similar standard to my 3D models. At the moment this is pure science fiction — I seem to spend more time screaming impotently at invalid path commands and deleted meshes than actually getting on with anything remotely creative. As I write the box is grinding through frame 204 of 550 at an average speed of 24 seconds a frame for the fourth time in an attempt to create a viable flic file.

The thing I really hate about these systems is their dumb insolence when even the help menus (of which this program has none — it's for professionals, remember!) shed little light on your very specific problems. There have been enough virtual carrots dangling just beyond

reach to keep me going, but these situations elicit a response similar to the rubber/walrus fetish horse in *The Ren & Stimpy Show*, namely 'no sir . . . I don't like it'.

[Lewis, I sympathise completely. For the last month or so I have been spending up to eleven hours a day wearing a headset providing crisis telephone help desk support to users of another 'professional' software package with a wtmppy 'help' feature.

One of my workmates swears by Autocad for artwork (another 'professional' package), but I doubt he's ever tried to use it to produce art for publication. The very people whose keyboard time is most valuable — the professionals relying on their output for their living — seem unanimously to be afflicted with software which, for all its power, would never make the grade if it targeted amateurs and dilettantes. They would avoid it in droves. Ease of use and user friendliness is why the DTP for this publication is being done with Pagemaker rather than Ventura. Vapourware is the latest expression of my favourite hobby, and I decline to waste leisure hours struggling with a tool that seems designed to make things harder rather than easier, no matter what wonderful features it offers. Truly 'professional' software must suit the needs of the end user, not the programmer. Software companies that forget this simple rule have no future.

[In the meantime, look on the bright side — your new technology gave you the, er, 'spare' time to handwrite a four-page loc. It's an ill wind and all that. Persevere! It only looks impossible. GRH]

WAHF, Perry Middlemiss.

(... Continued from page 3)

Roger Weddall, as noted elsewhere here, was noted for his brief telephone conversations — and briefer phone messages; the fragment above is the tail end of a message originally about five minutes long; the earlier portions were overwritten by subsequent callers. It was odd hearing his voice again, and I wonder — in how many tapes in how many fannish and other households around the world does Roger's voice live on? How will I feel if I should dig up this tape thirty years on and again hear this voice from beyond the grave telling me he'll be dropping in for a visit by and by? Will I still understand the background? Will I even know who is speaking?

Roger's voice on the tape was tired — partially physical, for he yawned at least once, but also tired in tone. Cues in the message appear to date it at midday on Saturday 2nd May 1992. Just seven months one day and 4½ hours later he was dead, cut down by cancer at an age where he should have been barely starting in on the main projects of his life.

Wrapping it up

I'm running out of zine here — suddenly there's no room for either fanzine reviews or the other material to hand. Next issue, with luck.

As those who arrived here by reading through the length of the zine will know (and as the rest of you will learn) things have changed a bit since last issue. In the last month I have gone from bones-of-the-arse poverty to relative affluence. It may not last — there are signs that the job is winding down, with no guarantee of a swift redeployment and no word (at least to date) of possible long term work where I am — but as my bank account grows and the initially long hours at work shrink towards normal office hours, I find

But is he dead? Dead or merely lost in an endless dream, locked up in countless bits of paper and plastic, each waiting no more than the cue of an idle finger to spring forth again, undimmed and ageless.

And what of my own words, spoken and written, similarly scattered far afield? My thoughts, sent flying forth in hope that somewhere sometime they will meet the thoughts of some other person? Little fragments of myself, once dispersed never to be collected again in one place.

In Frank Herbert's later *Dune* books there is the concept that every sandworm that developed from the sandtrout that once formed the skin of Leto Atréides, God Emperor of Dune, nourishes a tiny kernel of Leto's being, lost in an endless dream. *He* knew. Herbert knew. Hidden in his metaphor there is proof that I am not the only person to feel this way about the millions of words scattered during my mad career from childhood to decrepitude.

Seeyuz, my friend. Dream well — and I will dream with you. ☐

— Greg Hills, 25aug93

my confidence reviving. I've rejoined the MSFC and hope to start being social again soon. This could all change again at similarly short notice, but for the moment life's 'on the up'.

This issue of *Vapourware* is dedicated to Roger Weddall, a true friend and colourful acquaintance from 1982 to his death last December. Everything from page 2 to page 10 relates to his memory.

Zine completed
29 August 1993 —

Greg Hills

