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REQUIEM FOR A FUTURIAN

Edward Russell



## ASSAULT ON MT KOSCIUSZKO

*Thredbo, NSW, 22 April 2010*

8:45am: We stand at the base of the Kosciuszko Express Chairlift, our thoughts focused on the challenge ahead of us. Already, our intrepid team is one member short--Megan having remained in Canberra to study. After a few days reconnoitering the region and very careful preparations (a big buffet breakfast at the lodge and sandwiches from the takeaway shop) our crack team is ready for their attempt to conquer Australia's highest peak.

9:05am: Our first goal is reached without loss or injury. Already we are at 1925m, just 303m short of Mt Kosciuszko's summit! Too bad the chairlift doesn't go all the way to the top.

9:06am: Stop to put on jackets and caps. The temperature has fallen here, so we watch our steps. Ruby dons her panda bear disguise, in case we encounter any. (You never know.)

9:44am: Using our keen orienteering skills, we are able to navigate a path across the prickly alpine heath and jumbled granite outcrops with ease. The metal mesh walkway helps, too. We make it to Kosciuszko Lookout in good time. Sadly, clouds obscure the summit.

10:21am: Signs placed along the track by NSW Parks and Wildlife alert us to the unique flora around us, including the diverse wildflowers that, in a spectacular blaze of colour, cover the hillsides during their flowering season in January. A pity we've come in April, really.

10:43am: The Rams Head Range dwindles on our left, providing less protection from the chilly winds. Party members show signs of fatigue. Youngest narrowly avoids being throttled by stifling query: "Are we there yet?" Allocate ration of chocolate. Spirits revive.



11:15am: Spectacular scenes of the Snowy River Valley appear on our right as the track dips down across bogs and trickling streams. We keep an eye out for the small, attractively-named native fish, *Galaxias*, in the trickling waterways but only manage to find them with both eyes in.

12:08pm: Stop for lunch.

12:11pm: Discover that when surly woman at takeaway shop agreed to make "chicken and salad" sandwiches for the girls, what she actually meant was: "I'll make chicken *blubber* and salad sandwiches for them and by the time you find out your asses will be up a mountain and there won't be a *damn* thing you can do about it! Ha, ha!" Bitch. I bet this never happens to expeditions climbing Mt. Everest. Administer liberal amounts of chocolate.

1:07pm: After long and arduous trek, braving high winds, low oxygen levels and chicken-blubber induced tummy rumbles, reach lookout above Lake Cootapatamba. Find it over-run by hordes of high school students experiencing the pristine alpine wilderness with iPods stuck in their ears. We are within sight of the summit, but it is still 1.4 km away and we can also see storm clouds moving in at a rapid rate. Decide circumstances demand a strategic retreat.

3:56pm: Descend in chairlift to lodge.

## EDWARD HERBERT RUSSELL, 1927-2011

Edward (Ted) Russell was born around four years after his brother, in January 1927. All of his involvement with fandom occurred in association with Eric, but he nevertheless played a significant role in the pre-war Australian scene.

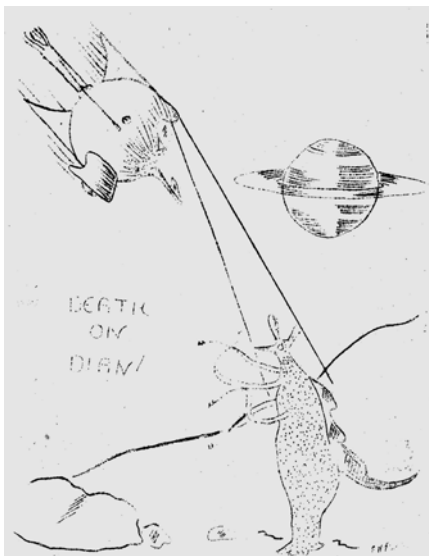
Ted would have been only 11 when he became a member of the Junior Australian Science Fiction Correspondence Club founded by Eric with Bill Veney and Bert Castellari in 1938. The club published one issue of *Australian Fan News* in May 1939 before petering out.

The brothers' enthusiasm for fan publishing was undeterred and in October 1939 they launched *Ultra*, the most substantial pre-war Aussie fan magazine. Eric was the editor while Ted was a versatile contributor of stories, articles and artwork. From the December issue, Ted was also named as the Associate Editor.

Edward's greatest contribution, however, was as the technical expert. The first two issues of *Ultra* were laboriously produced as typed carbon copies. The rest were all duplicated after Ted -- always more practical than his older brother -- made a flatbed duplicator. This auspicious start in fandom hid a tragedy at home, for their mother also passed away in 1939.



The entire membership of the Futurian Society of Sydney at their fourth meeting, 14 January 1940. In the back row, from left to right, are Ralph Smith, Bill Veney and Eric Russell. In the front row are Edward Russell, Bert Castellari and Vol Molesworth. The venue was the Molesworth residence.



Back cover of *Ultra* no. 3 by Ted.

Ted provided material to a number of other fan magazines and in 1941 he was chosen as editor of *Future*, which was to be an organ of the Futurian Society. It lasted only one issue, in part because Ted took a break from the FSS later that year to study for his Intermediate Exam.

Neither brother served in the war. Eric did not pass his medical and Edward was too young. So as their fellow fans were called up, they remained involved in Sydney fandom alongside Graham Stone, Arthur Haddon and others. The Futurian Society went through its various contortions and name changes, eventually becoming the Southern Cross Futurian Association under J.W. Heming. Heming had published a number of stories as Currawong pamphlets but the brothers also knew him through his amateur theatre group, The Masque Players. Eric had seen an ad for the group at his business college; Ted later recorded some of their performances. Within the wartime SCFA, theatrics soon became a stronger element than science fiction and fan activities eventually wound down.

Unlike Eric, Edward did not rejoin the revived Futurian Society after the war. He followed his electrical engineering interests and joined the Post-Master General's Department to help with the rapid post-war expansion of telecommunications services across the country. The PMG Department at this time also supplied technical staff to other agencies and in 1950, while he was assigned to the ABC, Ted volunteered to join Australian journalists covering



Ted (at left, wearing headphones) with an Australian jeep convoy under fire outside Chongju, Korea. Published in *The Illustrated London News* of November 25, 1950, Ted recognised the photo while in his dentist's waiting room some time later.

the war in Korea, attached to the US Army. Ted was responsible for maintaining and operating all of their recording equipment in the field. He was accorded officer status and promoted to Supervising Technician upon his return to Australia. He was also given a glowing reference signed by the ABC Director of Talks and, years later, received a Korea Medal from the Australian government for this service.

During one period of home leave from Korea, Eric had introduced Ted to an attractive young woman he had met named Elinor. Upon completing his service overseas, Ted and Elinor renewed their acquaintance, hit it off very well, and were married soon after.

Edward stayed with the PMG (later Telecom Australia) his entire career. He was a technical adept, making and repairing various electrical appliances for his family, neighbours and friends. He was a film buff, often filming the family -- the couple raised a daughter and two sons -- with his Super 8 camera. He was also something of a magpie, collecting all manner of electronic equipment and parts. One of his uncompleted projects was building a replicate Logie Baird television, which he abandoned only when he found the appropriate lenses would be too expensive to acquire. He built his own Apple computer instead. Much of his accumulated equipment was later donated to the Telstra Museum in Bankstown.



Walking the Ginza, Tokyo, 1950/51

After retirement, Ted and Elinor enjoyed travelling overseas, particularly trips to Indonesia in 1982 and Egypt in 1984. Ted loved cats and Elinor recalls that everywhere they went, cats would approach him as he walked along the street. Tall and gentle by nature, Ted's health deteriorated towards the end of his life when he developed Parkinson's Disease. He passed away just short of his 84<sup>th</sup> birthday in January. *Rest in Peace, Ted.*

## TIM'S TRAVELS 6: HARPOONING A LATE NIGHT CLASSIC

*Chicago, August 2009*

Settling in to the Nelson Residence I tuned in to some essential viewing...TCM, otherwise known as Turner Classic Movies. Discovered myself watching a Sterling Hayden classic from the 1950s - can't quite recall the name now, "Texas Terror" or something like that - a good old-fashioned western. Sadly, I missed most of the movie, only catching the last five minutes or so. But what a five minutes!

Scene opens with blind girl sitting in chair, staring blankly ahead, being menaced by bad guy (dressed all in black - *that's* how I knew). Actually, not so much "menaced", as sort of "lectured to", about something. And, oh yeah, she's not actually blind, just not a terribly good actress.

Okay, scene cuts to town meeting being held in local church. The girl enters. At this point it becomes reasonably clear that she's the "town scarlet woman", because she looks *awfully* uncomfortable in that church and everybody else is looking pretty surprised to see her there. She asks permission to speak...and then goes ahead and speaks without even waiting for an answer! Typical wom...(ahem). However, it's all in a good cause (at this point it becomes clear that she's the "town scarlet woman... with a heart of gold").

It seems there's this man, you see. A good man (Sterling!). And he's walking down Main Street all by himself, to face the bad guy, the meanest, dirtiest hombre west of the Pecos... "walking down that street alone, to face a gunslinger...with nothing but a whale harpoon!"

So then she-- *Whoa!* Hold on there! Back up a minute! Did she say "*whale harpoon*"?! No way! C'mon, now. No, I misheard that. Yeah. Misheard. Wonder what she actually said?

Anyway, she proceeds to ask everyone "what are you going to do about it?" and some old codger gets up and says, "Well, I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm going out on that street!"

So we cut to a scene of every man and his dog piling out of the church onto the street.

*Then* we cut to a scene of a lone man (Sterling!) walking down the street, looking grim, determined, taking purposeful strides...and carrying a whale harpoon over his shoulder!!!

*Important note: I have NOT made this up.*

He's carrying a *whale harpoon* over his shoulder and then this mass of people from the church appears behind him and they all march down the street to where the bad guy awaits. (Mind you, the crowd stays a pretty healthy distance back *behind* Sterling, so it appears that their support falls more into the category of "moral" as opposed to the "I'm going to risk my life to help you, no matter what" type).

Sterling stops in front of the bad guy, who sneers at him.

"Well, Sterling," he says (sneeringly). "Why don't you take five steps closer?"

This strikes me as a little odd, as by my estimate they're only about four steps apart. But what do I know?

"C'mon, Sterling. Just five steps closer. Give yourself a fairer shot with that, ha, ha... *whale harpoon!*"

*Oooh.* This guy is mean. He not only sneers, but he *taunts* as well.

Sterling says nothing.

"C'mon Sterling. Just five steps."

Sterling says nothing.

"Just four steps."

Sterling says nothing.

"C'mon, just two steps..."

He's getting desperate now, he forgot three.

But Sterling looks defeated! He sighs. His shoulders sag in weary resignation... Then...he *suddenly throws his whale harpoon!* The bad guy draws and fires!

Sterling is hit!

The bad guy has an enormous whale harpoon sticking out of his chest!

Sterling collapses to one knee!

The bad guy collapses to the ground!

He's dead (the bad guy, not Sterling)!

The old codger comes up behind Sterling and squeezes him on the shoulder, as if to say, "Hey, nice shot with that whale harpoon...". Then he walks on, because he wants to see the dead guy with a harpoon sticking out of his chest. And everyone else rushes right by Sterling (who is clutching his chest and, very likely, requires urgent medical attention) because they, too, want to see the dead guy with a whale harpoon sticking out of his chest.



Then, fade out...

"THE END"

## AMAZING AND FANTASTIC LETTERS:

*An annotated index to Australian and New Zealand fan content in Amazing Stories and its companion magazines (Part 2: 1940-1959)*



Herewith, a continuation of the listing in the last issue of all readers' letters, reviews of fanzines or mentions of fan activities from "Down Under" to appear in *Amazing Stories* or its stablemates before 1960. In this period, that means *Fantastic Adventures*, it's (initially) more sophisticated successor, *Fantastic*, and the short-lived *Dream World*.



Notably, a higher proportion of the entries in this listing are from known fans as opposed to casual readers, with the Futurians in Sydney and, later, Roger Dard in Perth particularly well represented. Also noticeable is the cost-cutting repetition of complete letter columns between *Amazing* and *FA* by Ray Palmer in the 1940s and the long drought of letters both during and after the war (broken only by Tom Cockcroft's 1944 letter). Post-war, fanzine reviews were introduced into the Ziff-Davis magazines, but only a few local titles ever featured.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Issue</u>	<u>Mag</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Type:</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Notes on contents with quotes of interest</u>	<u>Location</u>
1940	Jan	<b>Amz</b>	136	<i>Loc:</i>	Russell, Eric.	Sends congratulations on improvements to <i>Amazing</i> and announces publication of <i>Ultra</i> . Signs off as "President, Amazing Rehabilitators Consolidated". (See full letter on page 10.) (Palmer, again confusing Eric with his English namesake, replied: "When Eric Russell congratulates us, that's <u>something!</u> ")	[NSW]
			140	<i>Loc:</i>	Molesworth, Vol.	Sends thanks for publishing his letter in the August 1939 issue and asks how overseas readers can compete for covers given the delay in receiving issues.	[NSW]
	Feb	<b>Amz</b>	137-8	<i>Loc:</i>	Molesworth, Vol.	Comments on Adam Link and other stories and announces publication of <i>Luna</i> .	[NSW]
	Apr	<b>Amz</b>	142	<i>Loc:</i>	Dwyer, Noel.	Brief. Asks for penpals around 15 years old.	[NSW]
			143	<i>Loc:</i>	Turnbull, N.W.	Brief. Requests correspondents in the navy or interested in ships.	[NSW]
		<b>FA</b>	95	<i>Locs:</i>	Dwyer and Turnbull letters repeated from the <i>Amazing</i> above.		[NSW]
	Jun	<b>Amz</b>	142	<i>Loc:</i>	Castellari, Bert F.	Brief. "Would like new fans in Australia to join The Futurian Society of Sydney; this is especially slanted toward Alan Connell."	[NSW]
		<b>FA</b>	144	<i>Loc:</i>	Castellari, Bert F.	Brief. Same as in <i>Amazing</i> for this month.	[NSW]
	Jul	<b>Amz</b>	145	<i>Loc:</i>	Veney, William D.	Notes delivery of <i>Amazing</i> has become delayed due to the war. "Ugh! During 1939 your stories have degenerated lower than any other year in the history of <i>Amazing Stories!</i> .. P.S. Best of luck to the Chicago chaps and their convention from the members of the Futurian Society of Sydney". (See excerpt on p.10)	[NSW]
	Oct	<b>Amz</b>	142	<i>Loc:</i>	Tuck, Donald H.	Brief. "Would like to exchange science fiction magazines, current and pre-1937, for mint stamps or postcards."	[Tas]
		<b>FA</b>	142	<i>Loc:</i>	Tuck, Donald H.	Brief. Same as in <i>Amazing</i> for this month. (Surname mistyped as <i>Luck</i> in both instances.)	[Tas]
1941	Jan	<b>Amz</b>	140-1	<i>Loc:</i>	Morton, J.A.	Brief. Requests US/Canadian penpals.	[NSW]
			140-1	<i>Loc:</i>	Bryant, Hannah.	Brief. Requests penpals anywhere, of any age.	[NSW]
			140-1	<i>Loc:</i>	Usher, Iris.	Brief. Requests penpals in USA or Canada.	[Qld]
			140-1	<i>Loc:</i>	Downes, Jack.	Brief details listed.	[NSW]
	Feb	<b>Amz</b>	141-2	<i>Locs:</i>	All letters repeated from the Jan <i>Amazing</i> above.		["]

	Mar	<b>FA</b>	144	<i>Loc:</i> Murtagh, Jack. Brief. Wants back issues of <i>Amazing</i> .	[NZ]
	May	<b>Amz</b>	241	<i>Loc:</i> Murtagh, Jack. Brief. Repeated from the March <i>FA</i> .	[NZ]
1944	Dec	<b>Amz</b>	203	<i>Loc:</i> Cockcroft, T.G. Comments on Bloch story in March issue, problems of size reduction stories in general and Finlay art.	[NZ]
1950	Apr	<b>Amz</b>	179	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Taurasi's <i>Fantasy-Times</i> (2 Oct. 1949 issue) notes the seizure of sf magazines sent by US fans to Australia.	[US]
	Jun	<b>Amz</b>	180	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Taurasi's <i>Fantasy-Times</i> (1 Dec. 1949 issue) refers to Don Ford's article on "Fandom's Marshall Plan" to send parcels of donated promags to England and Australia.	[US]
	Oct	<b>Amz</b>	152	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Taurasi's <i>Fantasy-Times</i> notes that it includes an article on "the lifting of the Australian ban on American stf mags".	[US]
		<b>FA</b>	124	<i>Loc:</i> Dard, Roger. Notes few letters from "down under" have appeared in <i>FA</i> and assures editor that <i>FA</i> and <i>Amazing</i> rate highly there. Rates covers as the best of any fantasy magazine and suggests the return of back cover illustrations by Paul. Disagrees with fans objecting to the unhappy ending of a story and offers readers British hardcovers in exchange for the <i>FA</i> quarterlies.	[WA]
1951	Jan	<b>Amz</b>	149	<i>Loc:</i> Harding, Ralph H. A reader since the first issue of <i>Amazing</i> , but war and the "dollar position" have prevented mags getting through regularly. Asks for back issues in exchange for copies of Australia's one sf magazine [ <i>Thrills, Inc.</i> ]	[WA]
	May	<b>Amz</b>	148	<i>News:</i> <i>A Checklist of Australian Fantasy</i> (Futurian Press) noted.	[NSW]
		<b>FA</b>	122	<i>Loc:</i> Dard, Roger. Suggests a portfolio of Paul's "Life on Other Worlds" back cover illustrations be published, noting the success of <i>The Conquest of Space</i> with Bonestell's paintings.	[WA]
	Jul	<b>FA</b>	122	<i>Loc:</i> Dard, Roger. As a "collector and keen reader of science-fiction, fantasy and weird stories" he wants "a magazine which I can be proud to show my non-fantasy friends, and perhaps help to convert them to fandom". Objects to the trend towards "lousy digest-sized magazines" and pleads for <i>AS</i> and <i>FA</i> to retain their present size. Also suggests an annual and a weird stories companion.	[WA]
	Aug	<b>Amz</b>	136-137	<i>Mention:</i> Vol Molesworth mentioned in review of Taurasi's <i>Fantasy-Times</i> . Includes brief news from Australia.	[US]
	Sep	<b>Amz</b>	144	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Woomera</i> (Feb. 1951, ed. Nick Solntseff). "It's really wonderful to get a fanzine from our friends down under...". Notes contributions from Stone and Dard.	[NSW]
	Nov	<b>Amz</b>	148	<i>Loc:</i> Meyer, Rex. Notes difficulty in obtaining sf magazines despite softening of "currency barrier" and asks if any US readers wish to exchange. Applauds 'The Club House' and 'Readers' Forum' but states story quality is well below par. "It is distressing to see a fine old pioneer fall by the wayside." ( <i>See excerpt on p.10</i> ) ( <i>Ed. claims Amazing has highest circulation of any sf mag to dispute "under par" rating.</i> )	[NSW]
1952	Jan	<b>Amz</b>	155	<i>Review:</i> <i>Blinded They Fly</i> (by Vol Molesworth, Futurian Press). "It's a dollar and a half, which seems like a steep price for a 31 p. fantasy." Notes that it is a fan publication, sent around the world, in a limited edition of 200 and calculates that <i>Amazing</i> would cost \$20 a copy under the same circumstances.	[NSW]
	Feb	<b>FA</b>	127-8	<i>Loc:</i> Dard, Roger. Holds a complete run of <i>FA</i> apart from the October 1940 and asks if anyone is willing to sell or trade for it. Also seeks back issues of <i>Weird Adventures</i> comics.	[WA]
	Mar	<b>Amz</b>	149	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Silverberg's <i>Spaceship</i> notes that it includes a report from Australia.	[US]
	Apr	<b>Amz</b>	149	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Woomera</i> (ed. Nick Solntseff). "A nice little fanzine from down under." Notes contents and plan for a convention in 1952.	[NSW]

Jun	<b>Amz</b>	153	<i>Loc:</i> Manning, K. Philip. "I am an old reader, and used to get my <i>Amazing Stories</i> in England before the war...if any of your readers would send me copies published since 1940...I undertake to send back Australian [magazines or] stamps." Describes himself as "a Pommie Down Under".	[WA]	
		155	<i>Loc:</i> Harding, Ralph H. Thanks AS for publishing letter last year. Many readers wrote to him or sent parcels after seeing it. Offers to trade British magazines for further US ones.	[WA]	
Jul	<b>Amz</b>	138	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Silverberg's <i>Spaceship</i> notes that it includes a report from Australia by Roger Dard.	[US]	
		139	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Telepath</i> (Dec 1951 issue; ed. Arthur Haddon).	[NSW]	
Aug	<b>Amz</b>	146-7	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Silverberg's <i>Spaceship</i> notes Dard's 'Report from Australia' "will make you feel you know the fans down under".	[US]	
Sep	<b>Amz</b>	144	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Friedman's <i>Current Science Fiction</i> notes its world-wide correspondents. "Of particular interest were Roger N. Dard's column, 'Presenting Australia' and..."	[US]	
Oct	<b>Amz</b>	144	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Woomera</i> (Jan 1952 issue, ed. Nicholas Solntseff), mentions William Veney's "A Survey of Fan Affairs".	[NSW]	
1955	May	<b>Amz</b>	80	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Etherline</i> (#36, ed. Ian Crozier). "A small fanzine devoted mainly to news of our friendly Australian fan groups and reviews of prozines and books."	[Vic]
1956	Jun	<b>Fan</b>	126-7	<i>Loc:</i> Blake, Rex. "I have just finished reading your June issue... the stories certainly live up to the title, but never-the-less make good reading". A printer by trade, he rates "the production of your magazine o.k. and the colour and design of your cover all right too." Invites correspondence from other readers.	[Vic]
	Aug	<b>Amz</b>	121-2	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Etherline</i> (#57-65, ed. Ian Crozier). "13 issues \$1...The outstanding quality to be found in these issues of <i>Etherline</i> is enthusiasm... Full of zest, it's worth getting--especially at that price".	[Vic]
	Nov	<b>Amz</b>	83	<i>Fanzine review:</i> <i>Etherline</i> (#66-68, ed. Ian Crozier). " <i>Etherline</i> must be as valuable to Australian sf fans as <i>Fantasy Times</i> is to those of the US...especially noteworthy is Ether's checklist of individual authors... Departments include reports on sf fan groups in Brisbane, Canberra and Melbourne". (See excerpt on p.10)	[Vic]
1957	Jan	<b>Amz</b>	121	<i>Mention:</i> Review of Taurasi's <i>Fantasy Times</i> (#254) mentions Roger Dard's "summing up of sf in Australia".	[US]
			125	<i>Loc:</i> Dard, Roger. "35 years old, Roger has been reading sf for over twenty years and has been an active fan for almost ten. Wants to hear from those in North America who are interested in trading magazines, paperback books and Sunday newspapers containing colored funnies".	[WA]
	Feb	<b>Amz</b>	67	<i>Loc:</i> Harding, Ralph H. "47 years old, Ralph hopes to establish contact with sf fans throughout the world...He began this pastime back in 1926".	[WA]
1958	Feb	<b>Amz</b>	123	<i>Loc:</i> Brasher, Gene H. "Gene has been a science fiction enthusiast for 7 years and he considers himself pretty much an expert in the field. He is 17 years old...[and] a member of the Melbourne SF Group".	[Vic]
1959	Aug	<b>Fan</b>	128, 130	<i>Loc:</i> Dard, Roger. Relieved by results of recent questionnaire indicating reader preferences for "all fiction" and more horror and weird stories. This "has given you a mandate to go ahead and make <i>Fantastic</i> into a magazine which will be worthy to take the place of the late, lamented <i>Weird Tales</i> ".	[WA]
			130	<i>Loc:</i> Brady, Mary Cecile. Recently read an issue for the first time and finds it "ideally suits my reading tastes. I'd like to see more stories slanted towards horror, werewolves, vampires, etc. What about some stories by Robert Bloch?" Offers exchanges for US magazines and notes "I have personally met science fiction writer A. Bertram Chandler and George Adamski the UFO expert."	[WA]

## WE ARE REHABILITATED

Sirs:

AMAZING has at long last improved and you may have my congratulations. But give more and more of Leo Morey and less of those hacks Krupa and Fuqua, also I would appreciate the return of the COMET-TAIL. Alec Gorey, W. T. Barnes, and Stanley Kay wouldn't be pseudonyms for Krupa and Fuqua would they?

Now for the real purpose of this letter. With the collapse of Australian Fan News and S-F Review I have started ULTRA and this mag is nearly complete. ULTRA costs 5c or 3d and consists of 16 foolscap pages, and a back (satirical) cover, and appears quarterly. In conclusion there will be a very limited supply of ULTRA. So don't delay, order your copy now. My big grouch is your ugly untrimmed edges. If you don't trim them you lose a reader (perhaps!). I have heard that you will soon publish another two magazines, one S-F and one Weird. Is that true?

Eric Russell,  
(President, Amazing  
Rehabilitators Consoli-  
dated),  
274 Edgecliff Road,  
Woollahra,  
Sydney, N. S. W.,  
Australia.

*When Eric Russell congratulates us, that's something! But be careful of your fellow fans, when you "hack" at Krupa and Fuqua! Poor Comet-Tail, too. It's our most famous relic of the "old days," but really AMAZING has done so well with its new dress, we certainly couldn't dream of doing anything but keeping her in style. No, those pseudonyms you mention couldn't be Krupa and Fuqua, to be entirely truthful. In fact, Mr. Barnes especially resents being called Krupa. We admire your fan efforts with the new fanmag, and we wish you success with it. As for trimmed edges, and new magazines, no and yes, with a maybe thrown in. In other words, the future is still beyond reach of the time machine!—Ed.*

Above: Eric Russell announces publication of *Ultra* (*Amazing*, January 1940).

Below: In the 1950s, *Etherline* became the most frequently noted Australian fanzine in the pro magazines (*Amazing*, November 1956).

ETHERLINE. Nos. 66, 67, 68. AFPA, 6 Bramerton Rd., Caulfield, S.E. 8, Victoria, Australia. U.S. Agent: John Hitchcock, 15 Arbutus St., Baltimore 28, Md. 13/\$1. 26 pp.

ETHERLINE must be as valuable to Australian s-f fans as FANTASY-TIMES (see below) is to those of the U.S. The three issues reviewed here are filled with factual material (except, of course, for those press agent fantasies dreamt up by fjAckerman); especially noteworthy is ETHER's checklist of individual authors. In these three issues, Murray Leinster, Dr. E. E. Smith, and Algis Budrys are covered, with lists of their short stories, magazine appearances, books, dates of initial appearance, pseudonyms, and collaborations.

## WE HAVEN'T "CONQUERED" AUSTRALIA YET!

Sirs:

The December issue of AMAZING STORIES has at last arrived. It's two weeks overdue, but I fully realize that is the result of the dislocation of shipping owing to the war, and no fault of yours. Here are my opinions of the "Bests" and "Worsts" of the year now concluded.

Cover—There have been many excellent paintings this year, but I think the free trip around the Solar System should be awarded to Mr. Fuqua for his March cover illustrating "The Raid from Mars." On the other hand, that guy who brutally mutilated the June cover with his interpretation of the surgeon of Saturn should have the thing tied around his neck as an abject warning to all S-F artists. The most disappointing cover was Mr. Morey's for "Warriors of Mars." It was not bad, mind, but far below his usual standard.

Fiction—Ugh! During 1939 your stories have degenerated lower than any other year in the history of AMAZING STORIES!!! They have become glorified fairy tales or wild west yarns!! I never thought I'd live to see the old aristocrat come to this end. (Hand the sheet round, Mr. Editor).

Have been most interested in comparing the general standard of 1951 magazines with that of '39. "Amazing" has made tremendous contributions to fandom with Rog Phillips' "Club House" and with the liberal editorial policy in organizing the "Reader's Forum." These sections alone make continued subscription worth while.

I can't, however, be enthusiastic about the standard of the stories—definitely well below par. In this regard your mag. must be rated well down on the list of contemporary zines. "Amazing" seems to have the policy "quantity rather than quality." How about a policy of buying fewer stories at higher rates and producing a smaller but better collection of fiction.

Inside art work is only average pulp standard but an occasional cover is slightly better than those of several of your competitors.

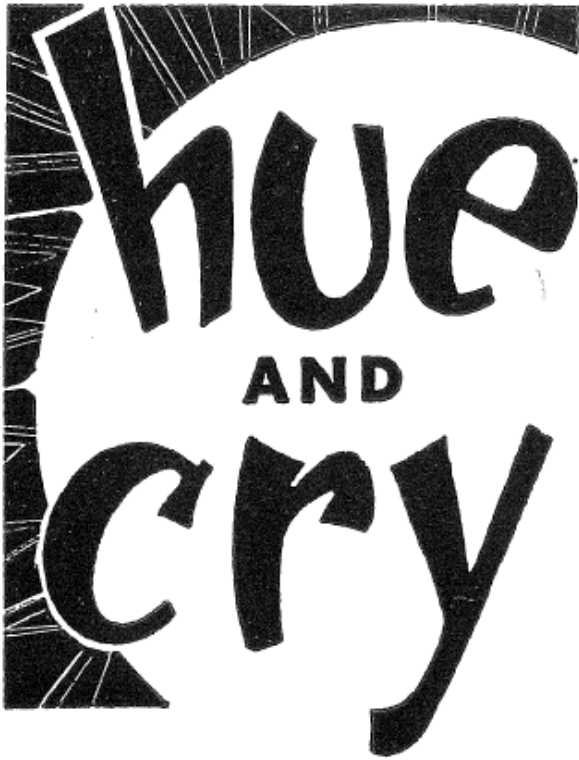
It is distressing to see a fine old pioneer fall by the wayside. How about a shot of rejuvenator?

Rex Meyer  
91 Bowdon Street  
Ryde, N. S. W., Australia

Some things never change.

At top: Bill Veney compliments aspects of *Amazing* but pans the quality of stories (July 1940)...

Below: ... as does Rex Meyer over a decade later (November 1951).



# Hue AND Cry

Mark Plummer, Croydon, UK 16 Jan. 2011

Our household copy of *MF* #29--for which many thanks--has clocked up some mileage. Aside from its initial trip up from the ACT which is about 10,500 miles, it's now been on an excursion to California and back which is about the same distance again. It had been a last-minute addition to the cabin baggage and thus gave me something to read while sitting jet-lagged in a friend's house in Mountain View about a week before the recent Corflu. We don't usually give our fanzines holidays.

Good piece about Don Tuck. I don't believe I'd ever heard the explanation for his absence from Aussiecon. Also your annotated index is, as LynC says of the previous instalment, incredibly absorbing. I was charmed by the revelation that John Straede's letter to the February 1932 *Amazing* with its mangled byline was reprinted in the following issue with a differently mangled byline. Having watched the old-time Melbourne fans--including the son of that correspondent--failing to agree on exactly when the MSFC moved to their Somerset Place clubhouse, there seems something very Australian about this inconsistency.

This was the splendid Somerset Place panel on the Fanhistoricon track, undoubtedly the best programme item of A3 and quite possibly the best convention panel I've ever seen. Bill Wright, Dick Jennsen, Bruce Gillespie, Leigh Edmonds, Merv Binns and Mervyn Barrett were orchestrated by John Foyster, with several others, including John Straede, contributing from the floor. Claire wrote at the time:

*'From the point in his introduction at which John Foyster cheerfully explained that they have to do the panel now before everyone on it dies -- at this point Merv ducked below the table to retrieve a photograph: "Look, one's dropped off already," added Foyster -- almost every comment engendered a mix of near-total joy in the atmosphere of the panel and genuine sorrow that we couldn't do this panel in the UK, partly because so many of the potential participants are dead, failing or no longer interested but mostly because no one would show up to listen.'*

The irony is, of course, that 12 years later they're all still going strong -- except John.

Race Mathews, South Yarra, Vic. 11 Jan. 2011

Great to read your comprehensive appreciation of Don Tuck. To the best of my recollection, we only met once and it was to jointly visit a young (older than me but maybe a bit younger than Don) guy named McDonald who had a mouth-watering *Astounding Science-Fiction* collection, and I think may have been some sort of PMG telecommunications engineer. We had a good time together talking about our favorite ASF authors and stories, but McDonald wasn't interested in fandom and I doubt if we ever saw one another again.

Kim Huett, Woden, ACT 11 Jan. 2011

[*Mumblings* 29] turned up in the post yesterday and looks to be an interesting issue. Quick impressions are that the Tuck biography is well done and includes information I was not previously aware of (I didn't realise Roger Dard was active in the 40s for example). Am also pleased you didn't just list those letters in *Amazing & Fantastic* but quoted from them as well as this makes the index far more interesting. Will be interested to learn if anybody else recognises your cover artwork as being from *Science Fiction Times*. Must say the use of colour has made it even more impressive.

I'd also meant to write on #28 and Robert Lichtman's letter gives me a further opportunity to do so, and specifically, to agree with you about corrections while reprinting. Our practice has always been to correct minor typos. There is a small danger that as a result we'll disrupt some accidental error that came to have great significance, and obviously if we spot something like that then we'll let it stand, but actually it's pretty unlikely. It's easy enough to make mistakes, and we don't see it does anybody any favours to enshrine the original bad typing for the ages.

I do however think it's particular important to in some way indicate and correct where there's an error of fact in the original, such as the Eric F. Russell example you note. A few years ago I was browsing an online fanzine when I saw a reference to an author pseudonym that didn't seem right. I wrote to the editor, pointing out that I thought he was mistaken, and he replied to say that he was going on something he'd found on the net somewhere. The difficulty is, though, that I'm pretty sure his original source was wrong--based on my admittedly limited research including a few reference books--but his fanzine now serves to corroborate it, and thus increases the chances of the mistake being repeated again.

Moreover, I think it's especially important to make corrections for online versions of something like *MFJ*. To a certain extent deliberate hoaxing is very much in the fannish tradition, but your fanzine does contain some serious scholarship on early Australian sf and fandom. It may be a fairly narrow field, but it seems to me that you're developing a real resource here that people will come to rely on, and if you make an unlikely claim people are likely to believe you because your writing seems to be the product of research rather than being merely the agglomeration of unsupported assertions that so many of the rest of us manage.

It was good to finally meet you at A4. At the moment, and always assuming continued employment which is by no means certain for public sector workers like us, we hope to be in Australia for 2012, probably for the Melbourne Natcon. Not sure exactly what our other plans will be beyond that but it's not inconceivable that we'll be up your way -- it being the only way we get to see Kim Huett -- so if we are we'll get in touch.

Eric Mayer, Penn.

18 February, 2011

After totally burning out on fanac I've been trying to resume loccing and found this issue very interesting. Over the years I have heard the name Don Tuck and seen references to his work but had no idea who he was or even that he was Australian so this was educational. What a job, and with index cards no less! I recall when I was in school struggling to save research for papers using index cards and filing boxes. That it was possible to compile a complete index of science fiction materials in a few hundred pages back in the fifties certainly shows how much things have changed.

The letters were fascinating to read through as well, kind of a little time travel experience. Not the sort of literary criticism one sees today. Darnn that Wells and his social commentary, not to mention ruining readers' enjoyment with "sex interest"! Could the Claire Beck who wrote been the same Claire Beck who I recall from Donn Brazier's title in the seventies?

The covers were terrific! Was the front colorized? I love the effect and the choice, almost like ditto.

Oh, I had to laugh seeing the Mercury on the *Profan* cover. The place where I worked, Lawyers Cooperative Publishing in Rochester, had a statue of Mercury in exactly that pose on the roof of the building. Man did he look cold in the winter!

*[I've no idea on the Claire Becks. Anyone?]*

*The front cover was 'colorised' by copying Paul's original a number of times and then erasing different lines to create 'plates' for each colour. Easy enough in principle; very time-consuming to do in practice, but I liked the effect, too.]*

=====  
Marcus Tuck, Seaforth, NSW

19 Jan. 2011

Thank you very much for writing and publishing the article about my father. I thought it was spot on. It struck exactly the right balance between factual content and appreciation of his work.

*[Thanks for your help with it, Marcus.]*

Garry Dalrymple, Bexley North, NSW

15 Feb. 2011

Running an eye down the lists of names of Australian letters to the OS pulp SF magazines I seem to see some familiar names, enough to suggest a line of enquiry.

Issues of the 1940 *Futurian Observer* make reference to 'Five Futurians' attending a BAA NSW Branch meeting as a group outing and make occasional reference to meetings hosted by a Mr Pinnock, a committee member of the BAA NSW. These suggest a strong if informal connection between some Sydney Futurians and the BAA NSW Branch.

I have a suspicion that there will prove to be a significant degree of overlap between the Sydney Futurians (and other Sydney fans) and the members and recorded visitors to meetings of the NSW Branch of the British Astronomical Association. It rather makes sense, the Branch at the time having much the same monopoly on 'Space Fact' as the early Sydney Futurians had on 'Space Fiction'?

Before I disappear into the Library to look through Visitors books and other Branch records I thought I'd let you know in case someone else has done this before, and to seek advice from your readership.

*[Well, it wouldn't be unusual for sf fans to have an interest in astronomy; I don't know if any joined the BAA NSW. However, Pinnock had some known connections with Futurians. Bill Veney stated that Pinnock was interested in joining the FSS at a meeting in June 1940, but this may have been just wishful thinking, for he never did. Soon after he was listed as an Honorary member of the FAA (Futurian Association of Australia, the first attempt at a national body). His name also appears in the FAA Bulletin (only issue, January 1941), this time on their Advisory Board. The talk the five Futurians attended was published in Ultra (February '41) and a later issue named BAA members giving astronomical talks on radio. Graham Stone has speculated that Pinnock may have known members of the Sydney SFL Chapter in the 1930s. One of these (Charles La Costa) joined the FSS, so it was natural for the boys to try to get Pinnock involved, too. A measure of how close they became is that he is only ever named as H. Pinnock.]*

Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke, Ont. 21 Feb. 2011

Thank you for a real, paper fanzine! It has that great cover, I will bet there's even better stuff on the inside.

Great biography of Donald Tuck. It takes a while for people to find their niche in fandom, and find a way to excel. The fact that it is often easy to be recognized overseas but not at home is also all too Canadian. There seems to be the attitude of "How dare you have aspirations? How dare you do well somewhere else?" As long as Tuck was happy with his efforts and felt that he'd added something of value to fandom, that's all that really matters.

Was my spelling in my loc that bad? Otibicoke? I am still looking for editorial work, but it looks like my hunt may be in vain. Books seem to be old-fashioned these days, with more novels downloaded than sold these days. Still, I've got to find some work, so I must find something. I have not put anything on my Facebook page that might detract potential employers. At least, I hope not...

Your comments to Robert Lichtman...I though I'd read something about the *Bullsheat* being revived? Quite some time ago, I did a little market research to see if a national fannish newszine would be of interest to Canadian fandom. The answer would appear to be no, few would be interested in finding out what's going on elsewhere in the country.

The list of A&NZ correspondents in *Amazing* and *Fantastic* is a piece of true research, and good to see. I wonder who's getting the pulp-zines these days, and who's writing letters to the editor these days?

*[Not sure what happened with Etobicoke; I had it right in #28. Yes, The Bullsheat found a new editor, Wendy Palmer, just after my last issue was sent out. It can be seen at: <http://www.bullsheat.sf.org.au/> ]*

Robert Lichtman, Oakland, Cal. 28 Mar. 2011

Thanks for *Mumblings From Munchkinland* 29, which washed up on these shores some time ago and was fairly promptly read, but then the press of daily life and other fanac overtook my intentions to respond...until now.

The clear highlight of this issue is your "Appreciation" of the late Don Tuck, in which I learned much about the man and his bibliographic activities that I didn't previously know. Thank you for filling in details of his life so well. In these latter days I tend to read books *about* science fiction more than the mother literature itself, so of course I've long owned a complete 3-volume set of his *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy* (bought piecemeal from online booksellers, saving me considerably over going for one of the full sets from a single seller) and find it a valuable, if occasional, reference. It meshes well with other reference works [by Tynn, Ashley, Barron, Day, Clute & Nicholls].

This might give you some frame of reference for why, over the years, I've enjoyed the bibliographic work you've presented in *Mumblings*, of which the "Amazing and Fantastic Letters" article in this issue is only the latest example. It's fascinating to read these excerpts, and to stop a moment and realize the astounding amount of work represented by these pages.

Reading in Grant Stone's letter that he "acquired for Murdoch Leigh Edmonds' fanzine collection (rich in APAs)" I realize that one of the apas

would be the Spectator Amateur Press Society (SAPS), of which Leigh has been a member since 1970 (and continues)—and that because of this quite a few of *my* fanzines would thus be in the Murdoch collection. How cool is that!?! I look forward to the update on that collection you requested in your editorial comment to Grant's letter.

Revisiting the matter of corrections in the on-line archive of *Mumblings*, I agree with your taking exception to my comment that "No harm is done in perpetuating the wrong middle name of the Australian Eric F. Russell." And I had a thought about how corrections might be made in the archive—that would be by putting a clickable icon in the original text where an error occurs that would take one to a secondary file containing the relevant correction.

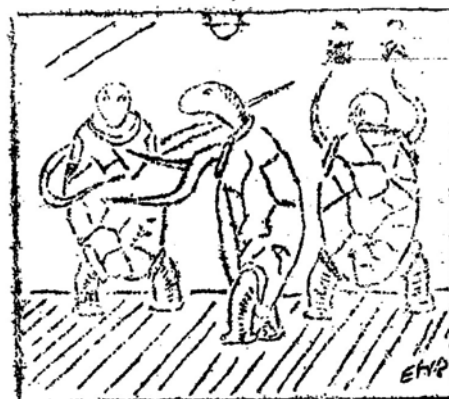
I loved the Paul cover this issue and was surprised to learn in your editorial notes that it first appeared on an issue of *SF Times*.

*[Grant did much to build up the special collections at Murdoch University, but I've not heard an update on this yet. Years ago, I helped to sort fanzines donated to it. Joy!]*

## CLUES TO TED RUSSELL'S 1941 CROSSWORD ON BACK COVER

### ACROSS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1) "The Three -----"                                      | (81) Initials of cover artist, ToW no. 11          |
| (9) Los Angeles  | (83) Science Fantasy Review (initials)             |
| (11) Capt. Meek's story "The Synthetic -----"              | (86) 1st Christian name, 2nd initial of Aussie fan |
| (17) Edward  | (91) Two thirds of etc.                            |
| (20) First 2 letters of Christian name of satirical writer | (93) 1st & 3rd initials of editor of Fantast       |
| (23) Eng. name of villain in Captain Future                | (95) The evening star                              |
| (30) First woman   | (100) "---- 18" story in Ast of football match     |
| (33) Nickname of US fan mag & Christian name US gangster   |  |
| (35) Christian name of hero of "The Blue Spot"             |  |
| (39) It germinates to produce a plant                      |  |
| (44) Tales of Wonder                                       |  |
| (47) Rockets will reach there (initials)                   |  |
| (51) Fantastic Adventures                                  |  |
| (53) Heavier light mass atom (abbreviate)                  |  |
| (62) Terrestrial animal exchange                           |  |
| (65) -. . Smith (rocketer)                                 |  |
| (69) Red planet  |  |
| (73) The Time Travel Series (initials)                     |  |
| (78) Possessive pronoun 3rd, Sing, neuter                  |  |



DOWN

- (1) Author of Triplanetary
- (2) Explosive
- (3) Two thirds of etc.
- (4) Edge
- (5) Non terrestrial (initials)
- (6) A fan, George -----
- (8) One publisher of Unknown
- (18) Editor
- (24) Mind ---- -----

- (27) Organ of smell
- (29) Editor of Alchemist
- (36) Vol
- (47) Robert Tucker
- (56) 1st, 5th, 19th, 19th, 3rd, 21st letters of alphabet
- (60) Rocklynne
- (84) Formation catches enemy (initials)
- (86) 5th & 22nd letter of alphabet
- (90) Fans yearbook (initials)
- (92) The Universe (initials)

Special thanks this time start with Elinor Russell, for meeting with me to chat about Ted and for providing me with the photographs of him on page 4 and photocopies of a complete run of *Ultra*. Among the copies was the crossword on the back cover, with clues opposite and above. This is a reproduction of one Ted originally created for the February 1941 issue of *Ultra*, so a few of the clues may appear rather arcane now. Ted's illustrations on pages 3 and 14 are also from that fan mag. Graham Stone clarified several points on Ted's fan activities.

Bert Castellari kindly supplied the photograph of the Futurians on page 3. Minutes of that FSS meeting record that the boys were "watched by madly cavorting barbarians next door". Also on the agenda that day were a quiz (the Russell brothers beating Ralph Smith and Bert, 15-9), a round robin story involving the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> dimensions, and discussions on evolution and what occurs after death. On the last, all agreed that Ed Hamilton's story "The Man Who Solved Death" (*Science Fiction*, August 1939) presented the only possible answer. It was "an especially enjoyable meeting"-- only the FSS's fourth, and obviously before divisions set in.

I thank Tim for his patience, for as the date reveals, I've had his contribution to this issue for some time. It's not so much a travel tale as a movie review, but it cracked up some of my colleagues at work and had me thinking it might be a hoax until I trawled the web and came up with confirmation of the film and the still on page 6.

I acknowledge once again the assistance of the heroic rare book librarians of the University of Sydney and the University of California at Riverside in my compilation of the letters index.

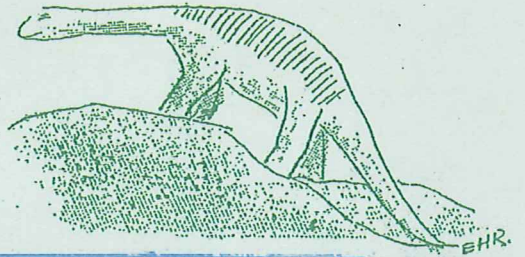
Finally, the cover art is by Desmond Walduck and first appeared in *Stirring Stories for Boys*, edited by Eric Duthie (Odhams Press, 1960), illustrating 'Robin Hood, F.R.S.' by Arthur C. Clarke. It reminded me of the astronomical covers that *If* ran in the early 1950s, hence the emulation of that magazine this time around. In his encore below, Africa and Europe seem to have drifted south rather alarmingly, but at least the UK is appropriately centre stage.

This and previous issues of *Mumblings* are all online at [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com), thanks to Bill Burns. Letters of comment on any issue and general egoboo are always welcome, to:

Chris Nelson,  
25 Fuhrman St., Evatt, ACT 2617 Australia  
or

[nelsonleeoz@hotmail.com](mailto:nelsonleeoz@hotmail.com)





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*E. H. Russell*