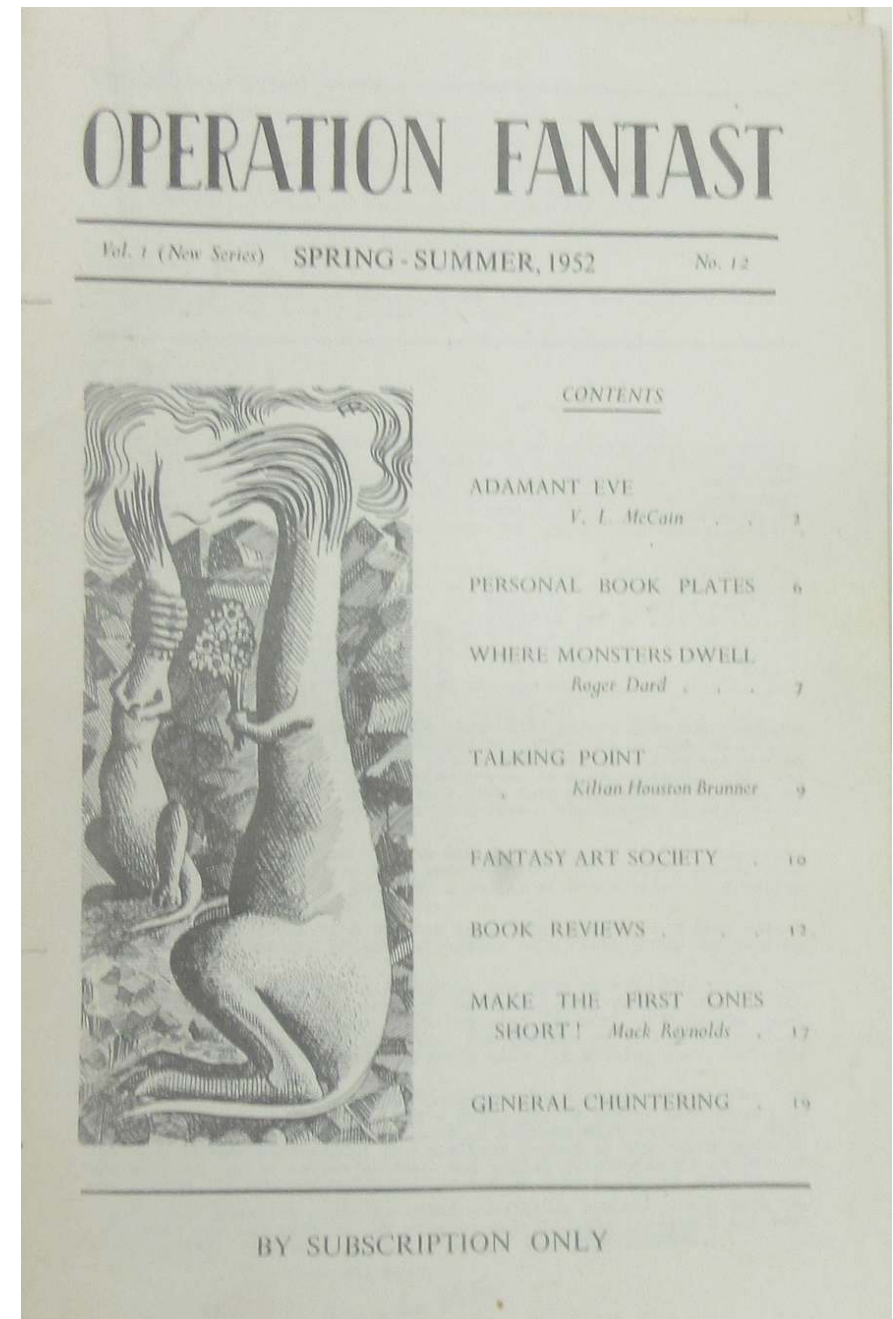


iOTA 04

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iOTA is the little efanzone put together by Leigh Edmonds who can be contacted electronically, and in almost no other way, at hhandc@hemsleypark.com.au.

This little efanzone is produced as a progress report on my current project to research and write a history of Australian fandom, focusing on the period between 1956 and 1975. It is also a place where I can publish little bits and pieces of the writing and art of Australia's fan past to help introduce you to the rich vein of material that previous generations of Australian fans have left us.

If you want more details about this history project you'll find them in the first issue of iOTA.

iOTA is more or less available for 'the usual' but, since it's costing me almost nothing to produce and send it, all you have to do is ask me to send it to you and I'll probably put you on my emailing list. Alternatively, issues of this efnz - and previous issues - can be found on efanzone.com.

Thisish's Cover

Although it was a British fanzine, *Operation Fantast* makes it onto the cover of iOTA because it was an important and formative part of Australian science fiction fandom in the 1950s in a much more important way than most other overseas fanzines. *Operation Fantast* was a small business run by Ken Slater that supplied science fiction books and prozines by mail order and this fanzine was the shop window into that business. At a time when it was very difficult to obtain American science fiction in Australia, the local product was scarce and of poor quality and British stf was also scarce, Slater's *Operation Fantast* became a popular source of stf for many Australian fans. It may also have given them ideas about what a good fanzine should be like.

Editorial - of sorts

I had hoped that I would be able to include more and better art work and photos in iOTA by now. On my recent trip to Perth (more soon) I took my laptop and scanner with the intention of making some good quality scans of covers and interior art but when I set up the equipment it wouldn't work. It worked fine when I tested it here, but refused to work in the West. So much for plan A, it's back to a less illustrative plan B again.

While I'm mentioning things that aren't happening, this issue I'm leaving aside your gentle lessons in the historian's art for lack of space. Back next issue, I expect.

And while I'm at this editorializing: When I'm King of Fandom all faneds are going to be required, by Royal Edict, to put dates on their fanzines. Those who have long since expired or gafiated will be required to return to this realm and retrospectively put dates on all their fanzines. I ask you, how is a humble historian of fandom supposed to make sense of all the fanzines he sees in university repositories if there are no dates on them. (And I know how you think, Eric Lindsay, I'm watching you. No spurious dates like 1066 or 1848 or even future dates, and no Stardates either. I want real dates.)

1962 - The New Melbourne SF Club

After the other early members of the Melbourne SF Group had drifted off Mervyn Binns kept the show on the road, with the help of a few new members. He also published an occasional newsletter and booklist called *The Australian Science Fiction Newsletter* for the Melbourne SF Club, which was newly located at 19 Somerset Place in Melbourne when he published the April 1962 issue. In the first few lines he answers a question which has

been puzzling a few of us for a long time.

Some issues of the Newsletter contained only information about the new and recently published stf that Merv and the club could provide. In some other issues Mervyn was more chatty and in this issue we learn quite a few interesting things about how the Melbourne SF Club operated in the early 1960s.

The New MSFC is continuing to gain new members at an average of one a week. Since moving to our new premises last November, people have paid their dues and at least a third of these are completely new members. The main interest is still the library but regular attendees are making good use of the new table tennis table, the chess sets and the darts. It has been suggested that we hold tournaments for the various games - a different game each week - and give small prizes to the winners. More about this later.

As secretary of the club I would like to point out to members that very little co-operation is being given me in keeping the clubroom in order. The committee members are not in the main doing their jobs. What about it fellers?

No film night was held during the months of March or April but the next show will be *The Incredible Shrinking Man* on Friday May 11. At the clubroom as usual. Coffee and sandwiches will be provided.

We had a little projector trouble the last show scheduled for the 23rd of February but *Curse of the Demon* was eventually shown on the Saturday the 24th. We hope we have a better show next time though most of the people attending were quite happy. It is becoming increasingly harder to obtain sf

films good or bad. All the good titles are not available at the present. So it appears we will have to show other than sf films. If you have any particular likes in movies you would like to see, let's have a list of as many as possible. In this way we can work out a list of what most of the members want to see and check what is available.

On the same night as the next film show we will be holding a sale of SF books and magazines so if you have anything to sell, please bring it along. On Thursday 10th of May a discussion night is to be held. If this proves successful more will be held in the future. The first topic will be; Author Robert Heinlein and whether his latest book *Stranger in A Strange Land* is rubbish or brilliant.

.....

Since starting to write this Newsletter the club has had a few quiet nights. It has also been made plain by some new and many present members that the charges for attendance are too high. Mr N Volynksy was kind enough to make enquiries about other premises for us but we decided they would not be suitable. However we have put in for a reduction in the rent where we are and we are hopeful of obtaining same. In which case it has been put forward that we reduce attendance fees to 2/6 and charge another 2/6 for those who wish to make use of the club's games facilities. Please attend in the next few weeks and let us have your views on this matter.

Recent visitors to the club of note have been ex-chairman Bob McCubbin, who we had not seen in the club for over two years and Bob Smith who is down on leave from Sydney for a

few weeks. Another local fan and now pro of note Leo (Lee) Harding climbed out from under his rock and visited me personally, when we recalled some of the early days of the Melbourne SF Group, *Perhaps*, *Etherline* and so on. Leo rated a write up in *New Worlds* recently where he has been having a few stories published. He hopes to go to England in the near future with his wife to further his writing career.

.....

As you will see by the pb list on the next page Bert Chandler is having another title published by Ace Books, *The Rim of Space*. Bert will be in Melbourne soon and we hope to see him at the club.

Progress Report Research Trip to Perth

Let's begin with some background.

Western Australia's second university, Murdoch University, opened its doors for students in 1975 but even before then the infrastructure was being established, including the University Library. The Librarian was keen to build up the Special Collection with a focus on popular culture and a then young assistant librarian, Grant Stone, hit upon the idea of science fiction as one of the collecting areas, and then discovered stf fan culture. He began contacting Australian faneds with the result that the following appeared in *Fanew Sletter* 12 in July 1974:

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY FANZINE COLLECTION: Fanzine editors will know that they are supposed to send copies of their publications to the National Library and their state library but most of them will also have recently been contacted by Grant

L Stone of the Serials Section, Murdoch University, Murdoch, WA 6153 who has expressed interest in subscribing to Australian fanzines. Grant seems very interested in collecting as many Australian fanzines as possible and while fanzine editors are usually not too happy with the idea of sending copies of their fanzines to libraries which don't provide the usual fannish response I think that sending fanzines to this library will be a good idea if everybody can be encouraged to do it because the library is willing to look after them properly and it will mean that somewhere in Australia there will be a full set of Australian fanzines ...

(Me, *Fanew Sletter* 12, 30 July 1974)

This means that not only have Grant and I known each other for *mumble* years, it means that the fanzine collection at Murdoch has been gradually growing since then. This gradual growth has been enhanced by the acquisition of the Don Tuck fanzine collection and some of the contents of John Bangsund's legendary garage, and I 'dumped' (to use the eloquent description of a well known faned) my collection on the Murdoch Special Collection in the mid 1980s. (The Tuck and Bangsund collections have been integrated into the shelf collection of the Special Collection and can be located in the catalogue while mine, which are filed in what might be called an idiosyncratic fashion, are not and appear under the general heading of 'Edmonds Collection'.)

After over forty years collecting there is now an awful lot of fan material in the stf and fannish collections, but it is still only a small part of the entire Special Collection.. On the Friday afternoon Grant showed me only the large comic and student



One of the rows of compacti that make up the Murdoch University Special Collection

newspaper parts of the collection (and we found the *Esquire* and *Playboy* part of the collection by accident when Grant misremember accession numbers (so he says)). The feminist and gay/lesbian collections are also, so I am told, big and extensive and they are also only small segments of the overall collection.

The new University Librarian wants to enhance the reputation of the university's Special Collection with some presentations and displays and chose to launch this program by highlighting its fanzine collection. This will be done with a special public display of fannish material and was kicked off with a presentation at Murdoch University on Friday 3 March. As

Jessie Lymn (see iOTA 01) was planning to be in Perth for the event and I needed to do research in the fanzine collection, we both went to Murdoch early where the helpful Library staff set us up in a seminar room with all the help and encouragement we needed.

It was a tiring visit. Part of it was the weather which was so fearfully hot and humid that even Perth folks were complaining about it, part of it is the amount of work that I got through and part of it was all the people I met and talked to.

I had the opportunity to meet and talk with the University Librarian, Susan Ashcroft, who told me, and later said in public, that the thing that distinguishes one university library from another is their Special Collections and so she is determined to use the Murdoch collection to the fullest. She is starting with the fanzine collection, which is an amazing concept to me - seeing as how it's science fiction we're talking about here.

I guess, however, that the point is that fandom is about communities of people and while there are many other communities of people around the world they do not record themselves for the future in a way that fandom did and does. Not that we intended to make a historical record, it's just that our process of communicating on paper preserves the interpersonal communications of our community in a way that (so far as Grant is aware) no other community has and does.

In the east there were rumors of the poor or neglected state of the fanzine collection at Murdoch a while back but, as far as I could determine, they are largely untrue. It is true that Grant Stone was removed from the library staff rather unceremoniously and unpleasantly by a previous University Librarian, but now that

the new Librarian has established herself Grant has been welcomed back to advise on the collection - a task which he fulfills admirably. He tells me that in the time that he was not



Grant Stone with part of the fanzine collection. The shelves on his right begin with a few pulps and then hold the Australian fanzines with my old fanzines at the end. More of the fanzine collection fills up the shelves that he is leaning against, with more again in the next compactus along.

there the fanzine collection sat quietly on the shelves, sleeping until it was needed. In short, after my visit I am certain that if I had any fanzines I wanted to get rid of they'd go to Murdoch because I have no fear about their long term preservation. I would fear, perhaps, that the fanzines could become a hidden corner of

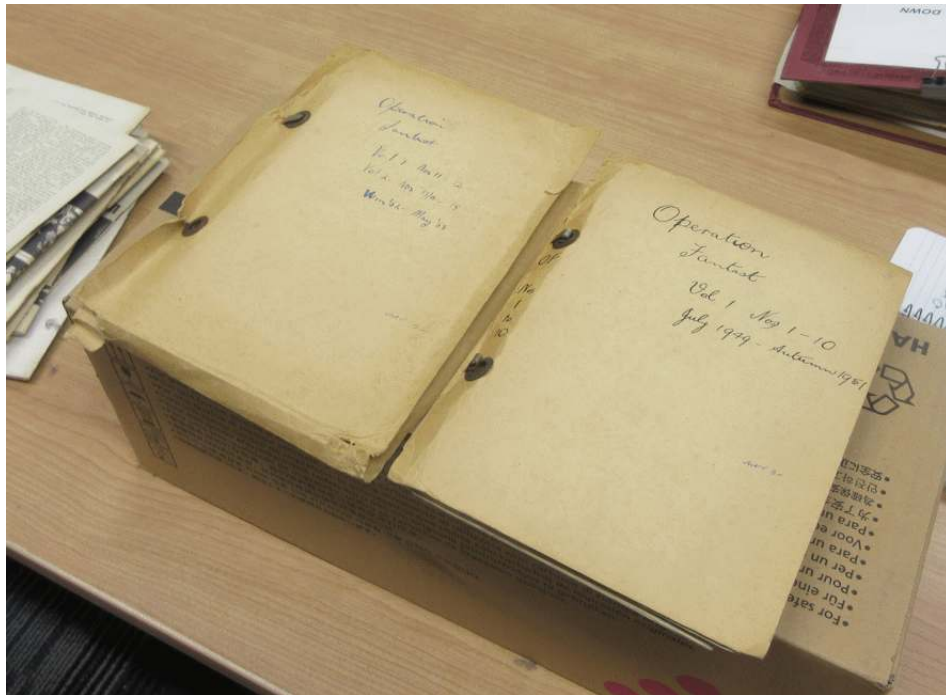
the collection and not promoted, but that would not threaten their survival.

The Murdoch Library has recently advertised the position of Special Collections Librarian to take responsibility for the collection and Grant will not be applying for it - he enjoys being retired too much and has too many other interests. However it is likely that he will mentor the new holder of the position and it may also be that his services, knowledge and experience will be used in other ways to promote and strengthen the collection.

Jessie Lynn has been exploring the Murdoch fanzine collection as a real honest-to-ghod academic with a joint fellowship from the Australian Society of Authors and the Council of Australian University Libraries. She is a lecturer in librarian studies and that kind of thing at Charles Sturt University who discovered fanzines through the Murdoch University Library on-line catalogue. At the moment she is fascinated by apas and, in particular, ANZAPA, and spent all the time I was there reading, thinking and writing about what she found there. We were set up in the seminar room in the staff section of the library with free access to the special collection on the floor below if we wanted it. Jessie was on one side of the conference table working her way through parts of the first 100 ANZAPA mailings and I was on the other side photographing pages of old fnz as quickly as I could. There were lots of interruptions when people dropped in to talk to us and Grant Stone is an irrepressible distraction. Still, we got a lot of work done.

Jessie is aware of and has made contact with the major fanzine collections in the Monash and Sydney University Libraries. There is also, it seems, a significant collection

(including John Ryan's collection) in the National Library in Canberra. While her short term area of study is the Murdoch collection I gather that her longer term plans involve all three collections, which is encouraging. Jessie comes from a



For my money Don Tuck's fanzine collection is the treasure of the entire fanzine collection. He had a special way of binding his fanzines in cardboard covers to protect them and here is his set of Operation Fantast, beautifully preserved in their cardboard jackets.

background in 'zine making, which is perhaps one of the grandchildren of fandom, but she started out with photocopiers and their potential, rather than the restrictions of the mimeo and ditto machines, not to mention hekto which I never used. She is very sympathetic to fandom and fanzines and it is interesting to

watch her working her way to an understanding of what we were and are about and how we operate. On one occasion she said that she needed a copy of *Fancylopedia* by her so that she could understand some of the things we were writing about, but she's getting the knowledge. At lunch one day a group was talking about apas and I mentioned 'minac' to her, a concept she found so novel that her eyes lit up with excitement. We won't get a convert to the path that leads to the Enchanted Duplicator with Jessie, but we will have a fellow traveler who is sympathetic to what fandom is about.

The culmination of our visit was the event to promote the special collection on Friday afternoon. Over 60 had said they were coming but only about 40 or so turned up, due, we'd like to think, to a prang on the Kwinana Freeway, and if you want to get to Murdoch that's the prime way of getting there. The lecture theatre was nice and modern with a few innovations I'd not seen and would have used had I know that they existed.

The University Librarian led off with a short explanation about what was happening and why, with special mention of the reason of promoting the special collection and the stf part of it in particular.

Following that Jessie talked for 15 or 20 minutes about the collection and about fanzines and how they work. All this is obvious and commonplace to us, so much so that we don't even think about it. As a result, I didn't take any notes, but I have asked Jessie to write me something along those lines for a future issue of iOTA. After that Grant gave a short talk about how he built up the collection and then I gave a short talk about how my part of the collection had come together and then an observation on what it

was like to come back to all the fnz that we had produced decades earlier. Then there was a general discussion and then we went outside for 'refreshments' on the lawn where we talked for another hour or so. The Librarian and the library staff were mightily pleased with the event, which was a relief for me. I gather that the whole session was recorded by cameras built into the ceiling of the lecture theater and it will be included as part of the special collection.

Then it was time to come home. The trip has left me with a lot to think about and copies of 211 fanzines and seven ANZAPA mailings to trawl through in coming months.



The panel discussion during our presentation. From the left: Grant Stone, Jessie Lymn, me and Anne Surma, the moderator

To Be Done

As I just said, 211 fanzines and seven ANZAPA mailings to trawl. That should keep me busy for a while.

Another Big Dollop of Fannish History

So, I'm standing in the seminar room in the Library of Murdoch University busy copying the pages of old fanzines when Grant comes in and shows me some sheets of foolscap paper, stapled together and looking a bit old and tired. 'What do you think of this?' he asks. I look, 'Early Australian Fanzines', hmmm, 'I had something about that written by Bill Veney in the previous issue.' Grant was not deterred, 'It's good, just what you need'. I was not enthusiastic, but it took it and made a copy.

Grant was right (he is, sometimes). The Veney article I reprinted in *iOTA* 03 about Australian pre-war fanzines was written by a participant in their production who gave an insiders' view. This article, which was prepared by Ron Graham for Syncon II in 1972, is written from the collector's perspective and therefore has a different point of view. Ron was a natural born collector and well enough off to indulge his passion for things sfnal to the full. In this article you can feel Ron giving us a description of what he has in his collection, touching the covers lightly and reading again some of the content. He probably talked to some of those early fans too because he mentions a few things that Veney didn't.

We can't rely on Ron's account entirely which, of course, can be said of any account. I am not sure if he sometimes means FSS (Futurian Society of Sydney) when he writes FAA (Futurian Association of Australia) and his account of Warwick Hockley's *Melbourne Bulletin* does not match exactly with the copies of that

fanzine that are now available on the interweb. Still, Ron's account also pushes the story into early 1942 whereas Veney's ends with the beginning of the Pacific War. So, putting the two articles together, we now have a fairly decent account of pre-war fanzine publishing in Australia.

EARLY AUSTRALIAN FANZINES

Prepared for 'Syncon II' by Ronald E Graham

The honor of producing the first science fiction fanzine in Australia fell to a group of Sydney schoolboys - William D (Bill) Veney; Bert F Castellari; Ron Lane; Ron Brennan and Kevin O'Keefe, all students at Randwick Intermediate High School in 1937.

Under the leadership of Veney and Castellari they formed 'the Meteorite Club', and, deciding to have a fanzine, hand printed a single copy of a twelve page magazine which was handed around the small circle of readers and eventually finished up in the keeping of Castellari.

Spacehounds, as the fanzine came to be called, ran for ten issues. Contents included fan fiction, picture stories, articles, poetry, reviews and editorials. Stories included were 'Conquest of Venus', a serial; 'Snowy Hunter', a picture story series by Bill Veney; and 'Moon Pirates' by Bert Castellari.

Australia's second fanzine, dated February, 1939, originated in Adelaide, it was a 'one shot' called *Science Fiction Review* - 16pp, octave, hectographed in blue on white with a circulation of fifteen copies. It was produced by John Devern, a fan who had organized the Adelaide Science Fiction League. Contents included a letter section, an article by Bill Veney, news

articles, a humor column and a section called 'Flashes'. At least one copy went to the USA and one to England. Some of the contents proved controversial being apparently reprinted without permission from US sources with author's name slightly changed either by accident or by design. In the US Harry Warner Jnr showed a copy to Mark Reinsberg who was incensed to find his article 'New Amazing Stories' printed and credited to 'M Reinberg'.

After a short period of correspondence with Sydney fans Devern dropped out of fandom and when last heard of was in the Army.

Meanwhile, back in Sydney, stalwart Bill Veney had been active in gathering sf fans together with the idea of founding a science fiction club with himself as General Secretary (later 'Director'), Eric Russell as Secretary, Bert Castellari as Assistant Secretary and with Bob Meleski and Eric Russell's younger brother Ted - not yet a teenager - as ordinary members.

They founded 'The Junior Australian Science Fiction Correspondence Club'. No meetings were held but with the idea of getting all Australia fans together and producing a regular fanzines. The secretariat listed above contacted all known fans in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Queensland.

Response was poor and eventually the Sydney fans decided to go ahead on their own. The first formal meeting of the club was held in February, 1939, and that meeting decided that a fanzine should be produced. Several months in the making, called *Australian Fan News* Australia's third fanzine

although dated 'May, 1939' finally appeared in August of that year. Shown as Vol 1 No 1 it would proved to be a one-shot. Including the pink cover it was of 12 pages, foolscap size and mimeographed. It was widely distributed and 200 copies were said to have been printed!!!

The cover, showing a spaceship in flight, was drawn by Bill Veney who was also Editor. Co-editors were Bert Castellari and Eric Russell, with young Ted Russell the remaining staff member.

Contents were good and consisted of fiction:- 'John Kent - Dimension Explorer' by Bert Castellari (2,000 words); and '5998, The Year of Frustration' by Eric Russell (1,000 words); three science articles, 'The Universe'; 'Splitting the Atom' and 'Life on Mars and Venus.'

Other articles and features were 'Calling All Fans!' - news of the fan scene by the Editor; 'Graveyard Gossip', by A G Ghoul; 'News and Views' by Eric Russell; 'Fannews' by Bert Castellari; 'The Sydney Scene' by Bill Veney, JASFCC (dealing with club matters) and 'We Wonder' plus 'Last Minute News.'

The fanzine was mimeographed by Frank Flaherty, and the delay in issuing the fanzine was due mainly to the fact that the machine originally intended to be used for the printing of the fanzine was no longer available to him. Eventually he was offered use of another machine and the project went ahead.

Two months later, in October, 1919, Eric and Ted Russell produced the first copy of their *Ultra*, in an edition of fifteen copies. It was type written, carbon-copied, half foolscap size, twelve pages on white paper plus a pink cover with a carbon-

copied design in blue on front and rear covers, (the pink paper was left over from *Australian Fan News*.)

This was a neat, well-produced, chatty little newszine which would not be sneered at even today and which, for its time, was the outstanding Australian fanzine.

There was one fiction story, 'Tyme' by Ted Russell, but the accent was definitely on news and articles - an 'Ultra News Waves - a chatty, nutty, newsy department' by Bert Castellari; 'A Science Fiction Review' by Bill Veney; 'It's Ghoulossal' by A G Ghoul; 'Those Enfants' Terribles' - an American's view of the fan magazines' by Harry Warner Jr (specially written for *Luna's* debut); 'Rambling in Science Fiction' by the Rambler, plus other items including 'The RSFTPOTDETI' The Royal Society for the Prevention of the Defeat of Extra Terrestrial Invaders) - a send-up of Bob Tucker's well known alphabetical society 'The SPWSSTFM'. *Ultra* went on to become Australia's first multi-copy fanzine to last more than one issue. In all it survived for 25 months and 13 issues in an unbroken run ceasing in October 1941. A fourteenth *Ultra* (Vol 3 No 2) was apparently published in September, 1942, but the writer has never sighted this. By popular request issue No 1 was re-issued as a 'Reprint Edition' dated June, 1940, mainly for fans in the USA.

With its third issue in February, 1940 *Ultra* graduated to a 14 page quarto-sized mimeographed fanzine and Ralph Smith joined the staff as illustrator.

Ultra published two large Anniversary Issues, the first in October, 1940 and the second in October, 1941, the latter being a 48 page production. A much respected paper, it had many

noted contributors and a fine permanent news column 'Rambling in Science Fiction'.

Vol Molesworth published his first fanzine *Luna* in December, 1939. This was a mimeographed foolscap-sized 12 page production. It lasted only three issues, the second appearing in January and the third in February, 1940. These latter two issues were 8 pages quarto-sized. *Luna*, an undistinguished fanzine, printed fiction and articles by fans of the period including stories by Vol himself.

On 13th January, 1940 appeared the first issue of a fortnightly news sheet called *Futurian Observer*. Editors and publishes for the first 29 issues were Bert Castellari and Bill Veney. Castellari alone edited issues 30 and 31. With issue No 32 he was joined by Ron Levy and this team continued 'Obs' until it folded. Excepting the first and second Anniversary Issues (Nos 27 and 53) each of six pages, it consisted of a single foolscap sheet duplicated on both sides.

'Obs' as the fans affectionately christened it became quite a force in fandom. It appeared regularly and its news was reliable. Its editors were fearless and frank critics of the fan scene and used biting satire when they considered it justified.

It lasted for 54 fortnightly issues folding (apparently) on 25th Jan., 1942. However on 8th March, 1942 appeared No 57 the last issue. The writer doubts whether issues Nos 55 and 56 ever appeared. He has never sighted a copy of either issue and has never met anyone who has. It may be that the 'No 57' was a last issue joke perpetrated by the Editors. One can imagine the amusement they would get watching serious fans and

collectors such as Graham Stone and Vol Molesworth searching for the 'missing' issues. On the other hand, of course, there may have been issues Nos 55 and 56 which have, in 25 years of collecting continued to elude the writer.

On April 20th, 1940 appeared the first issue of *Cosmos - The Galactic Gazette* (later referred to as 'Oz') an all-letter fanzine produced by Vol Molesworth. Because of a temporary lack of funds by Molesworth, Veney and Castellari edited and published issues Nos 5, 6 and 7, Molesworth taking over again from issue No 8 onwards. All told, *Cosmos* lasted for thirteen issues, the final one appearing on 26th Jan., 1941; (not '1940' as the cover of the issue itself states!). Based initially on 4e's [Forry Ackerman] *Voice of Imagi-Nation*, but quickly deteriorating *Cosmos* was in every way a patchy production. Irregular in date of issue it varied in appearance from good to poor, in size from one sheet to five sheets, and had contents which varied from good material to rubbish.

In June, 1940 Melbourne came into the fanzine field with *Austra-Fantasy*, produced by a previously unknown fan Warwick Hockley (soon affectionately known as 'Wog') with partner and co-editor, Keith Taylor. The first issue of *Austra Fantasy* was a carbon-copies 16 page, 8vo format. In September the second issue appeared in a 30 page hectographed format, and in December, 1940, as a 14 page duplicated issue.

In November, 1940 the Hockley-Taylor duo added *Melbourne Bulletin* to their publications. Whereas *Austra-Fantasy* was a quarterly fanzine slanted to serious fiction and articles in its contents, *Melbourne Bulletin* was a monthly

newssheet - all sorts type 'zine. Both fanzines leaned heavily on Sydney fans for material. Necessarily so, for Melbourne fandom, later to become the strongest in Australia, was then in its infancy, Hockley and Taylor being the pioneers.

Austra-Fantasy improved from issue to issue appearing finally as a mimeographed multi-color inks and paper fanzine extremely attractive in appearance, bright and breezy in content and with fine illustrations.

Austra-Fantasy and *Melbourne Bulletin* were responsible for a decided improvement in the other fanzines as the spirit of competition developed, doing a lot of good for Australian fandom in general. Both fanzines suspended production late in 1941. *MB* folded in August with its 8th issue (nine counting a '61 Extra' in April). *Austra-Fantasy* folded with the sixth issue in September.

In August, 1940 in Sydney *Zeus* appeared, produced and jointly edited by K Noel Dwyer, Ralph Smith, Ron Levy, Bill Veney and Bert Castellari. It was quarto-sized, mimeographed and had interesting stories and articles, humor and a round-robin story.

The influence of *Austra-Fantasy* showed up in *Zeus* which also adopted vari-colored inks and attractive illos, the final issue being 36pp. The consortium of editors quickly fell away and the second issue of Xmas1940 was produced by Bert Castellari and Ron Levy with Roma Castellari as Art Editor.

Issue 3 appeared in February, 1941; Issue No 4 in March, 1941 and finally with Issue No 5 of June-August, 1941 *Zeus* folded as Bert Castellari joined the Army.

A strange situation developed shortly after the first issue of *Zeus* had been published. On August 14th, K Noel Dwyer resigned from the Futurian Society. He nevertheless, and one would think quite reasonably, still considered himself a fan and wished to continue as a co-editor of *Zeus*. Levy and Castellari would not allow Dwyer to remain on the staff so Dwyer published a second issue of *Zeus* himself. Fans were diverted to find that they had two second issues - the 'official' one from Levy and Castellari and the 'pseudo *Zeus*' from Dwyer. Both were quite good fanzines. After a second issue of the 'pseudo *Zeus*' (Vol 1 No 3) the competing editors came to terms and the pseudo issue folded. Dwyer, however, later alienated fandom by contributing abusive articles to 'Obs' denigrating fandom and fans.

August 1940 also saw the issue of a one-shot by the Russell brothers called *Hermes* and in January 1941 Eric published the one and only issue of *FAA Bulletin* (later succeeded by *Spaceward*). In early 1941 Vol Molesworth finally published his long-promised letter-fanzine *Telefan* which proved to be also a one-shot! This was quarto-sized, four pages mimeographed.

In April, 1941, Tasmania entered the field when a quartet of Hobart fans - Don Tuck, Bob Geappen, John Symonds and Lindsay Johnson - produced *Profan* a quarto-sized fanzine which lasted for three issues, folding in September, 1941. Issue No 3 was produced and edited by Don Tuck and Bob Geappen only.

Don Tuck was the predominant member of the quartet and in later years became Australia's only 'Hugo' winner - a well

deserved award for his magnificent *Handbook of Science Fiction and Fantasy* now soon to be replaced by Don's labor or love over many years *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* the production of which will undoubtedly be a landmark in the history of sf publishing and of Advent Publishers, who will produce it.

In May, 1941, the Futurian Society of Sydney with Eric Russell as editor, published a one-shot called *Future* a 12 page, semi-quarto mimeographed issue. May, 1941, also saw the first issue of *Spaceward* subtitled 'Official Organ of the Futurian Federation of Australia' edited by Vol Molesworth - the best produced and neatest of Vol's fanzines. This was of four pages quarto-sized sheets, green ink on yellow sheets with a neatly printed title but no illos. The second and last issue, of August, 1941, comprised eight pages with several illos and several colored inks and papers.

In August, 1941 another fine news fanzine appeared. This was *Science and Fantasy Fan Reporter*, semi-quarto in size mimeographed in blue ink on blue paper and published weekly by Colin Roden, Eric Russell and Graham Stone. This fine little publication appeared with absolute regularity every week and as a matter of policy took no part in any of the feuds or quarrels that rocked Sydney fandom at that time. It folded with its 34th issue dated 31st March, 1942.

In July 1942 *Futurian Spotlight* appeared edited by Graham Stone and Vol Molesworth, It was modeled on 'Obs' but survived only four issues. The influence of Graham Stone, always a stickler for neatness and good appearance was quite

evident in *Spotlight*. The sheet had a printed heading and the text was neatly typed and attractively set out. It folded in September, 1942.

The last of the war-time fanmags was *Bulletin of the Futurian Federation of Australia* edited by Colin Roden. This was a quarto sized four page sheet for Issue No 1 of September 1st, 1942 and a single sheet for Issue No 2 (the last) of September, 22nd. This last issue coincided with the virtual disbandment of the FFA only a few inactive members other than Eric Russell and Colin Roden remained in it, Roden staying only to finish his outstanding duties as Editor of the *Bulletin*.

Most of the former members of the FFA had combined to form a new club 'The Southern Cross Futurian Association'.

Because of the war, paper was now extremely scarce and the fans found that to publish a fanzine they had to have paper. That necessitated a permit from the Division of Import Procurement. One by one the fans requested a permit and one by one they were refused. So ended the first exciting period of fanzine publishing activity in Australia!

1946 - The State of Australian Fandom

It seems appropriate to follow Ron Graham's article with an item about what happened next. This comes from an undated and unnumbered issue of *Ugh!* published by Bill Veney, but it is likely to have been produced in 1946 or early 1947. Vol Molesworth's history tells us that the Futurian Society of Sydney was revived in August 1947, Veney would have been aware of that event and there is no mention of it in this fanzine.

This is a very poorly reproduced fanzine that gives the

feeling of having been dashed off very quickly. Although Veney mentions other things that might be in this issue I have reprinted everything in it, a mere three pages. After this Bill Veney published three numbered issues of *Ugh!*, well written and reproduced with very good material about the state of Australian fandom in the early 1950s. You will no doubt see parts of these issues in future *iOTAs*.

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

No sooner had the last shots of the Pacific War died away in the jungles of Borneo and Burma - and across the island straddled waters of the Japanese Inland Sea - than Australian science fiction enthusiasts started discussing the possibilities of reviving fandom. Which just goes to prove there is no chance of pleasing some people. Long dormant typewriters rattled out familiar tunes as fans thumbed through well-worn note books and decided to drop a short line to Joe or Fred.

In the years following the end of World War II, many long and detailed letters passed from state to state, informal gatherings were held in such widely separated places as Sydney, Australia, and Fukuyama, Japan. The receptive soil was tilled, the idea was planted and then everyone sat back and slyly waited to see how the idea would germinate.

The position in Australia was pretty grim indeed. The war had almost destroyed Australian fandom. Professional US magazines were under the general import ban. There wasn't a single club operating in the country. The last fan publication saw the light of day in 1942. Bruce Sawyer, Bert Castellari, Charles La Coste, Don Tuck, Graham Stone and many others

were in the forces. Almost every other fan was engaged in essential war work that necessitated abnormal hours and often long periods away from home.

Now, would it be even possible to find the scattered elements of Australian fandom? What would be the reaction to the suggestion that 'something should be done' to rebuild old ties?

One thing was certain. The fans of yester-year were still friends. The Russell home at Edgecliff Rd, Woollahra, was an open house, and strange people, both in and out of uniform, arrived at all hours of the day or night. The first port of call for any interstate fan in Melbourne was to see Wog and Pam Hockley. If any fan met another fan in the swamps of New Guinea or the islands of Torres Straits, they were instantly on the best of terms. On more than one occasion a bunch of ex-futurians have been seen rolling out of some Sydney tavern calling on such deities as Smith and Campbell to damn their enemies.

Another fact was also obvious. The balmy days of early fandom were gone for ever. Nobody thought of reviving the hectic round of activities that characterized 1940-1941-1942. If Steve issued a magazine, well, the mob would support it; but Steve didn't seem too keen on using his spare time for the benefit of the mob. So it was with Alex and Dick and Frank. Violent bursts of energy would have to come from a new and younger generation.

UGH must NOT be regarded as the efforts of one fan or a group of fans to start the ball rolling. It was the result of the

seasonal monsoon that confines even the best of us to the shelter of house and home. The editor had a grudge against the world and took it out on fandom.

UGH must not be regarded as a regular publication. There is considerable doubt if there will be a second issue. (There is even some doubt if there will be a first issue.) The material for this worthy publication has been scrounged from odd places half way round the world. It will be printed on a broken down flat bed that guarantees to ruin the sight of even non-readers. It will be full of errors, mistakes, distortions, under statements and even out-right lies.

Finally, the letters that fill most of this issue consist of extracts from letters received over the last six or seven months. No permission has been asked to print these extracts so the very least reaction will be a full size feud. As a cynic once remarked over a flagon of ale: 'The revival of Australian fandom will mean the beginning of World War II½'. Right-oh, chaps, take it away. It's all yours!

* * *

VOL MOLESWORTH, now living at 6 Balfour Rd, Kensington, NSW is the only ex-Futurian to come out solidly on the side of fan organization. This letter, incidently, was sent originally to Eric Russell and by a round about way finally reached this office.

I am writing to you to find out whether enough interest in what we loosely termed science fiction has survived the war. If so, I have been wondering whether the time is ripe to contact all former 'known' enthusiasts, ascertain the strength of

Australian fandom and then endeavor to contact England and America.

Before the war, most of the self-styled 'fans' were youths who derived their interest in Futurianism from the American promags. Our finances were smaller and it was often a hardship to produce good fanzines.

Now, I think, we have matured (at least we are several years older) and in many cases our interests have been elevated to books rather than magazines and to less antagonistic and more creative discussion and thought processes.

We have seen many of our dreams come to concrete reality. We have seen the atom bomb, jet propulsion, V-2 rockets, radar, attempts to contact the moon, vast improvements in television, undersea exploration, and the Russian experiments with reviving the dead. The list could go on to include the vast improvements in social services, the development of new drugs, new materials, plastics, etc.

It seems to me a pity that the group of young people who considered these things possible (and inevitable) when the majority of non-fans considered them Speed Gordon nonsense, should not at least have some medium for expressing their ideas now.

The war killed fan activities and perhaps it did us a service. I am hoping that now we shall forget the conflict of personalities (which is natural in formative years) and attempt to rebuild, not a replica of the previous bickering fandom, but a new organization by which those interested in things futuristic and fantastic can exchange ideas.

My aim is, if possible, to reform the Futurian Society of Sydney on a more adult basis, independent but not necessarily oblivious to American professional magazines. I think we have got passed the purely fan stage and reached a level where the club could (and should) be a meeting place for the discussion of futuristic and fantastic ideas in relation to publications, films, plays showing in Australia, etc.

One or two (better) fanzines would provide a medium for interstate fans and an exchange could be effected with magazines being revived now in America and England.

Your old friendly enemy,
VOL MOLESWORTH.

Your Say

Gary Mason began:

I could spend the rest of the week commenting on the two most recent issues of iOTA, so resplendent were both of them with rich comment hooks. But that way lies madness!

Don't let me stop you!

Let me say, however, that I don't think it is necessary to be absolutely silent about that which has not been properly recorded — just to make it clear that whatever is said is the result of a combination of hazy memories and clever deduction. Frankly, a lot of what was recorded in fanzines should attract the same disclaimer!

I can assure you that I have no intention of letting a lack of full documentation stop me from using what the professionals call my 'historical imagination'. I didn't spend a year and a half at ANU studying the byways of the upheavals in England in the 17th

Century for nothing. It taught me how to wring the maximum amount of history out of the minimum amount of evidence and I intend to put that skill to full use in this project where the fans of the time did not make a full record. (This reminded me of the trawling I did in the 'Thomason Tracts' which were, in the 1980s, available on microfilm. Oh, my poor eyes!)

In the case of the implosion of early Sydney fandom, I did encounter a few of the survivors in my early days in fandom, and I have little doubt that the implosion was caused by massive personality clashes — which also threatened at times to undo Sydney fandom in the late 1960s. Those people were of course 20 years older by the time I met them, and more mature and calmer, but there were some very dogmatic personalities who would brook no disagreement from anyone about anything. I think particularly of Graham Stone and Pat Terry (although just what Pat's history was always seemed a little murky, since the earlier fanzines don't seem to mention him). I guess I tended towards the strong expression of strong views back in those days too — and so, on occasion, did you! — but I managed not to have any falling out with them because, being a comics fan, I was beneath their contempt anyway! I suspect Vol Molesworth might also have been what we might call a Difficult Person — he died before I came along, but I met his widow Laura several times, and while she was perfectly charming, she also seemed distant and reserved.

Everything I've read so far tends to suggest that Sydney fans in the 1950s were prone to being crabby with each other. It is tempting to think there might be some underlying reason for this

which would make a good historical argument (like, something in the Sydney water supply) but the difficulties that Sydney fans had might simply have been nothing more than people rubbing each other the wrong way. If that is so, then we are lucky that most of the early Melbourne fans got along well with each other so that we have the fandom that still exists today, even if some of its members are now showing significant signs of wear and tear.

We also heard from: Keir Reeves and Bob & Margaret Reip.

Fanzine Review

Operation Fantast, Vol 1 (New Series) No 12, Spring-Summer 1952; Capt K F Slater, 13 Gp, RPC, BAOR, 26, c/o GPO, England; available only by subscription, 6/3 in Australia which includes four issues, membership in *Operation Fantast* and any Newsletters issued in the subscription period.

Operation Fantast was not, as you can tell from the address, an Australian fanzine. However, it is worth looking at here because of the significant influence it had on Australian fandom. For many Australian fans *Operation Fantast* was the best way in which they could get their hands on overseas science fiction and, through Roger Dard in Perth, the Australian agent, some Australian fans first came into contact with each other.

It is my impression (and I hope to be set right on this by those in the know) that this fanzine was only part of the overall *Operation Fantast* offering which included lists of books and magazines that Slater sold. In earlier issues, Vol 1 No 2 of September 1949 for example, there are lists under the heading 'Operation Fantast Offerings', and exhortations to use the Order Form. They later disappeared from the fanzine itself but I assume lists and order forms were sent out separately in packages that

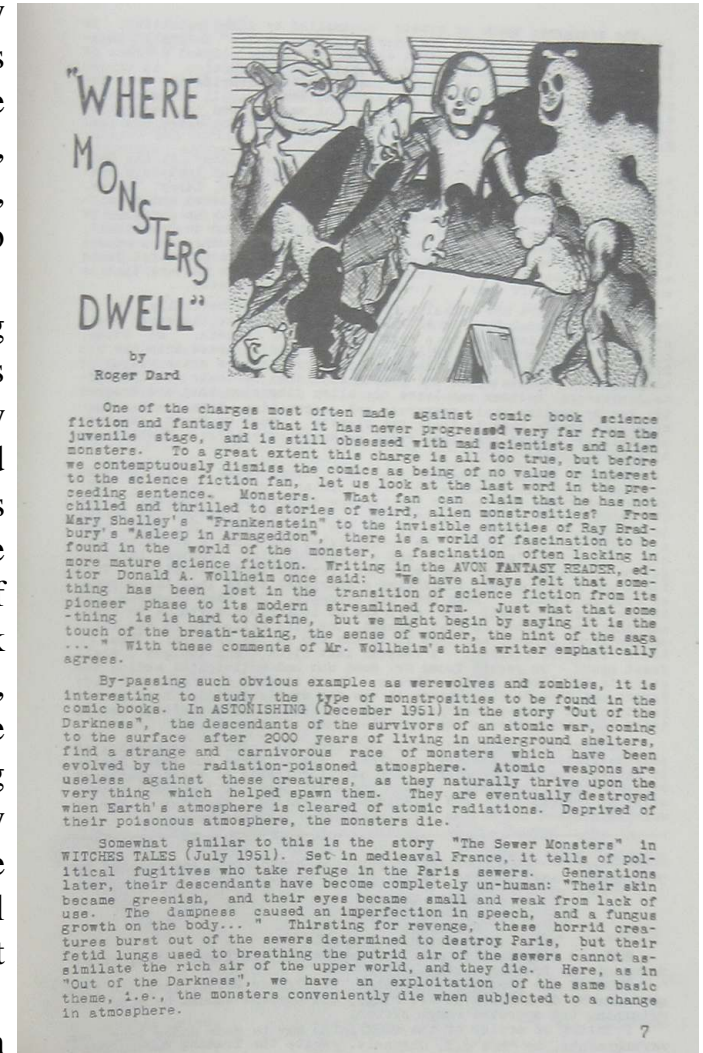
included this fanzine and others in this series.

I've chosen this issue of *Operation Fantast* because it has a Roger Dard article in it, but it is fairly representative of most issues of this fanzine. There is a bit of fiction, lots of pretty good book reviews, a few ads, Roger's article about horror in comics and an article by Mack Reynolds

about how to make your first sale, lifted, incidentally, from a Bob Silverberg fanzine.

The whole thing runs for 24 pages of good quality lithographed printing. The illos are well above the standard of Australian artwork for this period, probably because of the printing used but probably also because of the larger talent pool in Britain at that time.

The section



to look out for in all issues is Slater's 'General Chunterings' which runs for two tightly packed pages of print in this issue. It seems to be a collection of all the news that he had received since the previous issue and often there is news particularly relevant to Australian fans. In this issue, for example:

ROGER IN BLUNDERLAND... Aussie rep Roger Dard has had more trouble with the Customs, and lost no less than 62 mags and pbs seized and destroyed ... but the joke (not in Rog's view) that under the heading of 'prohibited imports' on the list sent him was - Lewis Carroll: ALICE IN WONDERLAND!! ... when he recovers, Rog will continue his present programme, which includes getting married ... congrats, Rog ... another fan from 'down under', Miss Laurel Ryde, is visiting UK in '53, and will study the British fan in its wild state at some of its more noted assembly points ... Don Tuck, residing in Australia for some long time, has now returned to Tasmania and so 'Tuck of Tasmania, Tasmania's No.1 Fan' is once again his correct title ...

This fanzine is part of the business of promoting science fiction after World War II and fits nicely into the pattern of development of science fiction in post-war Britain. It is designed to meet the needs of fans and the quality of the writing is sufficiently high so that it will not offend the general reader dipping into this science fiction stuff. It also fell on rich soil in Australia where the embargo on important American magazines forced local readers and fans to turn to Britain. In 'I Remember AFPA' Lee Harding writes vividly of receiving his first *Operation Fantast* package, even though the quality of his purchases was limited by what he could afford at the time. If I were of his age in

the early 1950s I too would have looked upon this as the door to an Aladdin's Cave.

I don't know that I would really want to kick the time machine into gear to go back to get this issue of *Operation Fantast* but I'd be very keen to pick up some of the items listed for offer in it. The bookplates advertised on page 6 looks pretty good (are you reading this Grant Stone?), the Jeeves set of ten fantasy cards for 2/6 advertised on page 9 look attractive while the books on the Dells advertisement on page 11 would have me in the machine and on the way: Van Vogt's *The Weapon Makers* and *The Weapon Shops of Isher* for 15/3 each. Wilson Tucker's *The City in the Sea* for 13/9, Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* for 15/3 and on it goes. Then there's the magazines; 12 issues of *Astounding* for 36/-. 12 issues of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* for 29/- and *Weird Tales* for 25/6. This was a golden age in stf and this would be your chance to get some of it first hand, and in mint condition too..

The Long and Winding Road to Aussiecon

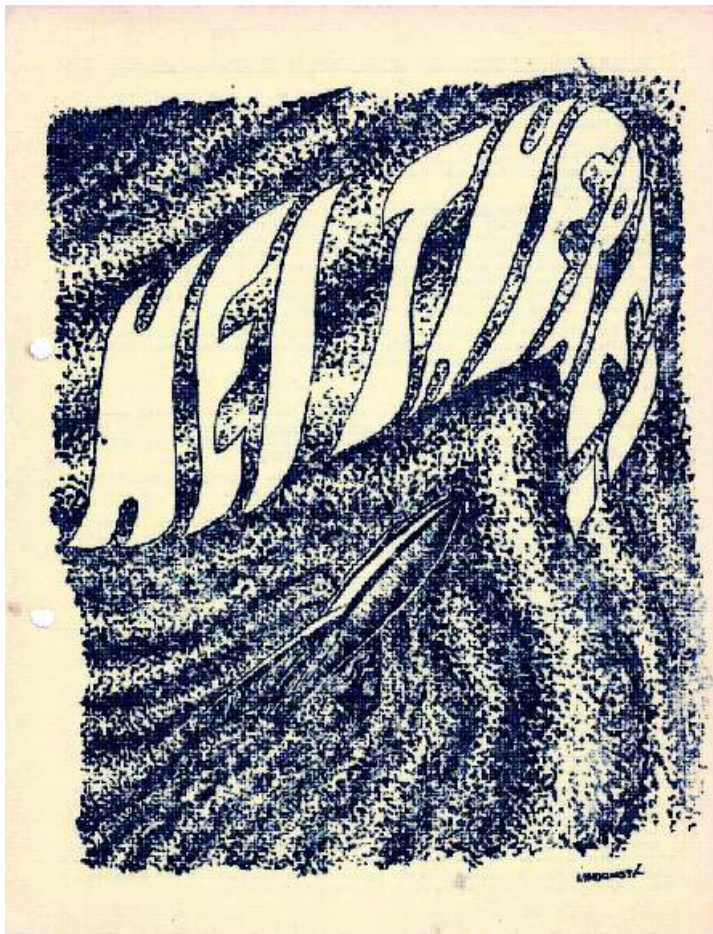
The idea that Australian fandom might bid for and hold a World SF Convention came into our collective heads in the late 1960s and had become a serious consideration by 1970. The work that went into the bid and then holding the convention will become something of an obsession in coming issues of *iOTA*, but we're starting with something fairly obscure which might only make sense to the 17 fans in the Sevagram who truly understand the mystery that is the WorldCon constitution and its evolution.

This contribution comes from Gary Mason (who is a lawyer and thus might have been one of those 17 fans), who writes:

I just came across the handout we (the Australia in 75

Committee) did for Heicon in 1970. We were initially thinking about heading it "Hei Jack" rather than "Hei there", since we were expressing concern about a hijack of the Worldcon rules, but I seem to recall we decided against that because some copies might be passed around on a plane, and at that time there was a bit of paranoia in the world about aeroplane hijacks. How things change!

I think the handout was done at the Sydney end - the text is clearly typed by me, and I suspect it was composed by me. I seem to remember running it off with Peter [Darling] on the Roneo that was parked in the Darling family's basement garage.



FOR THE INFORMATION OF ATTENDEES AT THE HEICON '70 BUSINESS SESSION ...

At St Louis last year the Rules of the World Science Fiction Society were modified in several ways. A new section (3.01) was written in which makes major changes as follows:

(1) The conventions previously known as Worldcons shall now be styled NASFiCs ("North American Science Fiction Conventions"). The HEICON is thus the last "Worldcon" (as these have been understood to date) to be held outside North America.

(2) An entirely new convention is to be set up, and this will be called the "Worldcon" (maybe). The report to the St Louis convention recommended the setting up of a committee at that convention to decide upon the mechanism for this new convention, but this was not done. This being the case, it may be presumed that at least some attempt will be made in this direction at the HEICON. Preferably, of course, the whole matter will be cleared up here, but that will only be finally possible if this Business Session is prepared to work hard, and if it is thoroughly representative.

(3) This new convention will award the Hugos when it is held in an English-speaking country. The NASFiC will award the Hugos when the "Worldcon" is held in a non-English-speaking country.

It should be noted that:

(1) No rotation plan has been established for this new convention—in particular, that a "two-year" plan is not in operation. If any plan can be said to exist, it must be the plan under which the old Worldcons were held (namely, a five-year plan with options for variation).

(2) The rules regarding the award of the Hugos is entirely separate from the rules which establish the new Worldcon and the NASFiC.

We in Australia are concerned about some aspects of this situation. In the first place, we feel that this new convention may be rushed through without sufficient thought having been given to the consequences. In the second place, we suspect that the arrangements with regard to the award of the Hugos may easily become extremely complicated. In the third place, we are not at all sure that the whole thing is necessary.

The consequences are that the new convention, competing with a NASFiC, cannot expect to get the same sort of support from North American science fiction readers as have overseas Worldcons in the past. In the event that the new convention is held in a non-English-speaking country it will not (as the rules now stand) have the prestige of awarding the Hugos. To such a country, then, this new convention is a stab in the back. If the Hugos are awarded sometimes at a NASFiC and sometimes at the new Worldcon, it is fairly obvious that the confusion will soon lead to a loss of prestige for the Hugos and possibly the setting up of rival awards.

There has never yet been a non-North American country which has been prevented from holding a Worldcon more or less when it wanted to under the old Worldcon rules and rotation plan. In Australia, we believe that until such a situation arises, changes of the type some fans envisage may be disastrous. Therefore, we suggest that, for the time being at least, the holding of Worldcons outside North America more often than once in five years is not really necessary—and that the HEICON Business Session should therefore return to the pre-1969 rules.

Published as a public service to world fandom by The Australia in '75 Committee, P.O. Box A215, Sydney South, New South Wales 2000, Australia.

1973 - A LONG WEEKEND WITH SYDNEY FANS

And now that we need something to steady and clear our brains ...

I sometimes wonder if the Sydney Futurians of old knew how to relax and have fun. I suspect that they did, but they didn't let it intrude into their fanzines so we have no record of it. Sydney fandom had changed by the 1970s and many of the fanzines they produced conveyed a spirit of fannish camaraderie that fans around the world would find familiar. In this article, published in *Canberra's Nini Hii?* 8 in March 1973, John Snowden recalls a long weekend spent in the company of fannish friends. I've done a bit of light editing to reduce this article in length so it will fit in iOTA but all the best bits remain.

As an aside, Kevin Dillon, mentioned here a few times, was probably the only fan who had been a card carrying member of the Futurian Society of Sydney in its heyday. Ron Clarke was also a card carrying Futurian, but he was a late comer.

1973 - A REPORT ON

THE AUSTRALIA DAY WEEKEND SYDNEY MINICON

Subtitled 'How to annoy people by telling others what went on'

On Saturday 28th January, I met Blair Ramage at Central Station at 10am. (Blair and I usually meet on Saturday morning. We give the local second hand book shops a going over for cheap sf paperbacks and comics which might hold my interest.) True to form we headed off to the bookshops.

There was nothing there to interest me (although Blair

might have considered buying a few paperbacks) so we headed back towards Central with the intention of awaiting the arrival of some other fannish personality. Sure enough we saw Mimeomaster (Secret Assassin of fannish fanzines; also known as Eric Lindsay) walking towards us across the road. Eric had just arrived and of course wanted to look around the local bookshops as well as having lunch. We decided to troop around the bookshops again.

Magic! The Lindsay presence had caused several large piles of comics to appear in McKeogh's book (and porno) exchange. After industriously buying up about fifty comics I was interested in, we had a look at the uninteresting range of sf they had. I don't remember anybody buying anything. While Eric was looking a sf, Blair and I amused ourselves by laughing at the prono book titles. (Titles such as *Bared Birds*, *Lesbian Mirror Erotica*, *Bound to Satisfy* - naked mail tied up with two naked females - 'Simulating expose of lustful vengeance', said the blurb.

After a giggle or two someone suggested that we try the local greasy spoon, better known as the 'People's Palace'. However we wound up going where all the big spenders go - Coles Cafeteria! After lunch we hired a cab and headed for 128 Hereford Street, Glebe; the site of Glebe Con I.

Arriving at Glebe, our belongings were soon disposed of upstairs. Out came the comics - great piles over the floor and chairs. We settled down to some serious reading. Shayne McCormack looked disgusted and asked whether we still read those 'things'? She went on to say she only bought the 'Star

Trek' ones. About this time, Kevin Dillon arrived and started looking at some comics. He showed me 'Vandalia West' gun girl drawn by some European artist whose name I can't pronounce. Nice and bloodthirsty. I showed him a No 1 copy of 'Dracula', a big English colour comic book containing a Conan type character as well as a few weird side pieces by Europeans. (It has since become a race between Kevin Dillon, Keith Curtis and myself to see who can get the most copies of this 40¢ magazine).

The program went completely haywire - not in the order it was supposed to. This was good as it gave everybody a chance to talk about things they wanted to discuss. A discussion on professional magazines started the con. It finished at 4pm (the discussion, not the con). The Glebe Tonight Show was scrapped and instead the Austion was held. Rare, valuable and just plain junk, mostly the latter). This would have to be seen to be believed. ... Eric Lindsay was put up for auction, reserve price was 2¢ but it was considered too much. Naughty pictures of Ron Clarke and Sue Smith (not to be shown to people under 18 years old) were said to be for sale, but were not shown to the audience.

During the afternoon, a sketchy start had been made on the Great Australian Science Fiction Novel. There being nothing else to do, I started writing while others lounged about the floors and talked in the kitchen. The plot concerned Eric Mindsay. Into this plot, after careful scheming, I introduced Shameless McCallgirl and her funny friend Victor Desireless. Unfortunately someone saw it and Sue Smith read it to the

assemblage. My Anzapazine was also read out. (It described a typical SSFF [Sydney Science Fiction Foundation] meeting.) For the rest of the night I had to watch out for flying objects - hatchets, carving knives and the like.

[Here follows several paragraphs involving sleeping arrangements, sleeping bags, defenseless feet and 'Super Puss']

After this episode, breakfast was served. The rest of the morning was spent in general small talk and discussion of sf films of the 70's. The films discussed were *A Clockwork Orange*, *THX 1138* and *ZPG* (which was so bad that it was sued by the ZPG Committee; at least that's what I heard.)

The rest of the day was spent on discussions and doing nothing by annoying Super Puss and listening to Blair and Shayne argue.

About lunchtime Shayne decided to leave us (for something like three months she is going down to Melbourne). Shayne' departure ended on this manner;

Shayne	Goodbye Eric
Eric Lindsay	Goodbye Shayne
Shayne	Goodbye Kevin
Kevin Dillon	Goodbye Shayne
Shayne	Goodbye John
John Snowden	Goodbye Shayne
Shayne	Er ... Blair?
Blair Ramage	Yes?
Shayne	pokes tongue out and makes razzing sound.
Blair	!!!Xj %?x! (Blair makes a rude gesture).

Thus Shayne made her departure. However it turned out

that her Volkswagen had broken down. (This was determined after the car had been rolled down the street a few times.) The NRMA was unavailable for three hours (in all fairness this was due to the petrol strike, cars were running out of gas all over town). Eric Lindsay thought he'd found the trouble and when I last saw him there he was heating up a screwdriver.

By this time it was about 4.30pm. Blair and I decided to walk back to the station. There was a mist-like rain falling and the sky above was a dirty grey. Near the Union Arts Theater we caught a taxi back to Central. While wandering around the bookstalls whom should we meet but Eric Lindsay. Soon my train to Caringbah pulled in so I left.

If anybody wants to know what happened to the (plug) Great Australian SF Novel, Shayne McCormack ran off with it; intending to publish it in her fanzine.

John Snowden

Canberra's Nini Hii? 8, March 1973

1955 - Sydney Convention Critique

Eighteen years earlier fans had watched the disintegration of organized Sydney fandom at the 1955 convention. It was not quite that bad, various groups continued to meet in Sydney in following years but the conflict between fans and groups meant that this generation of Sydney fandom could not recover. In a later issue of *Etherline* Ian Crozier wrote a long and detailed report on the convention but this more immediate response in *Etherline* 48, published toward the end of April 1955, summed up the situation eloquently.

