

BUSSWARBLE #83

OCTOBER 2004

Busswarble, an ersatz rave, is edited and published by Michael Hailstone, formerly known as Michael of Matala but now as Michael from Mountains, of 8 Durie Street, Lithgow, NSW 2790, Australia. Email: crux@dodo.com.au. This zine loathes tree-haters, global culture, globalisation and economic rationalism. Available for contribution, letter of comment or mention. Copyright © M. Hailstone 2004.

I WANT TO LIE ON THE GRASS

5: Phaestos and Agia Triada 11•••••

We started off.

"Γερμανικο:" the driver asked me. 11•••••

I shook my head. "Όχι Γερμανικο," replied I fervently. "Αυστραλικος." I was anxious for him to know that I was not German, and I was to have to get used to that question from now on. But that was as far as our conversation yode. 11

The road climbed into the mountains, narrow and winding, and the scenery was quite impressive. "Matala?" the driver asked me at one stage, whereto I again hummed and hahd, but when he later asked me "Phaestos?" I replied yes. I wanted to see Phaestos for the same reason as Knossos. For a while we stopped somewhere while the driver got out to talk to some colleagues, then we continued on our way before he finally set me down at the offturn to some tiny tin pot-place called, of all things, Metropolis! 11•••••

I walked a bit from this place, noticing for the first time that the trees beside the road here bore a striking similarity to the gumtrees I'd known back in Australia. After stopping and sitting by the roadside for a while, I finally got a lift in a truck that took me to the Phaestos offturn. 11•••••

It was a couple of kilometres up the road here to a place where several men were building something like a stone wall, and here I let myself get taken in by an old man selling recorder-like flutes made from bamboo-stems. I owned a plastic recorder myself, acquired shortly before leaving Sydney, and I had meant to bring it with me on this trip, but somehow to my annoyance I had left it back in England. The old man showed me one instrument on which he had painted in Greco, (the bastard language used by Greeks to speak to foreign visitors—just like Italians, French and Anglo-Saxons they can't learn to speak foreign languages, so they learn a few words each from English, French, German and Italian and mix them up into one bastard language; this Mr. Looklook had used to speak to us) *Phestos, Creta*. He could play some Indian-sounding music on it, but I'm afraid that I'm very much a westerner and I like the good old diatonic scale, horribly conservative, as I may seem. I found that the instrument didn't run a full octave but only a major seventh, so I asked him to cut two extra holes in it, one on the upper side to obtain upper C, and the other on the underside for pinched notes to provide an extra octave. This extra octave existed only in theory however. He charged me fifteen drachmas for it.

After that transaction, I walked up to the site of Phaestos. It was far more genuine than Knossos, and parts of it were still being excavated, with no phoney ruins built on top. After wandering through it, I yode up on the veranda of the nearby house which served as a restaurant and ordered a salad.11•••••

And there I met Gordon again. He had the Blue Guide to Greece and was doing these ruins very seriously. Of course, we got talking about the lost Minoan civilization, and I asked him whether the Minoans had left any written records. They had written in a script called Linear A, while Linear B, a forerunner of Greek, had appeared on the scene later, round about the time of the Doric invasion. Linear B was understood, whereas Linear A had not been deciphered until about a year ago, and anyway, what they had found told only of the most mundane everyday things like keeping accounts.11•••••

Gordon left shortly afterwards, and later I set off too. I felt rather aimless that day, like a ship without a rudder, not knowing whither to go. I wanted to visit Matala, even if just to look at the place to see for myself what it was really like. The arrangement to meet Tom in Agia Galini seemed so hopelessly loose and vague....1

A sign showed Matala and a third Minoan site, the villa of Agia Triada, straight along the road that I'd followed from the offturn from the main road to Tymbaki, past Phaestos. I followed the tarred road past a sign advertising some tavern in Matala. I walked for three kilometres along this road before coming to a dead-end that consisted of a large space for visitors' cars. A few people stood at the edge of this space haggling with another man flogging those bamboo recorders. They recognized me from Phaestos and told me that the English boy (Gordon) was down there exploring the excavation. A rough track led down a steep slope to the site. Wandering about the ruins, I soon found Gordon who was religiously investigating sections called such odd names as the "archives-room".

Later we ended up on a small concrete building overlooking the ruins. I had left my rucksack there, and now there were two Greeks there. One of them unlocked the door and led us into a room where there were a few crates of empty soft-drink-bottles. "Το σπίτι μου," he told us. He reckoned it was his house.11•••••

Here we talked for a while. The man who had let us in spoke a few words of English, while the other spoke a little more German. Gordon however went out to be able to speak a little Greek---at least he could understand what the former man said to him and reply slowly and haltingly in a few words. I guess his Greek was about as good as my Italian, and I envied him, for Greek seems a lot harder to learn than Italian does.11

The former man wanted to know how to say "Τι θέλετε:" ("*Ti thelete?*") in English, and Gordon told him: "What do you want?" The Greek pronounced it slowly and awkwardly a few times, then produced a pencil and paper and wrote it down---in Greek letters.

Gordon wanted to go to Matala next, just to look at the place, and so this became the topic of conversation. The former man revealed to us his impression of the place as a hippie outhanging, but more important was, how could we get thither? It was now getting dark. The two Greeks thought that we should be able to get a bus from either Tymbaki or Mires. It was fifteen kilometres hence. I had actually expected the road to lead on towards Matala, but this was not the case. To get to Matala, I could either follow the road leading hence back to the offturn near Phaestos, or follow a good track which led to the main road between Mires and Tymbaki---that would be the best way to get to Tymbaki. Gordon however had left his rucksack back along the Phaestos road, so he was

obliged to go that way. I decided to go that way too, although the Greeks had advised me that the other way was better. Actually, the latter road would have been rather useless.¹

We walked back together, Gordon blowing away ridiculously and tunelessly on a mouth organ. After he had retrieved his rucksack from the bushes where he had hidden it, we walked back almost to Phaestos before finding the missed turning to Matala, a rough stony road, and there was no signpost. It was twelve kilometres along this road to Matala. Gordon didn't fancy walking along there in the dark, although I had been prepared to do it. We ended up walking back to the main road with the intention of hitching a ride into either Mires or Tymbaki and tackling the final stretch to Matala in the morning. On the way we discussed the Cretans' hatred of the Germans---even young boys cycling past would call out "Γετμανικο:" and Gordon told me how often one had asked him "*Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*" and he was glad that he didn't "*Sprechen Sie Deutsch*" because this was a distinct disadvantage here.¹¹•••••

On reaching the main road, we decided to take whatever way wherein we could stop the first vehicle. Although it was now quite dark, we stopped the first vehicle that came along, another of those three-wheeled trucks. It took us into Mires. We rode in the back, and on the way Gordon told me that it was illegal for these trucks to carry passengers in the back, and, when hitchhiking through the Peloponnese, he had had lifts from these trucks, but the drivers had asked him to lie flat out of sight. We had a meal in a restaurant in Mires, then walked out along the Matala-road and bedded down for the night. It was seventeen kilometres hence to Matala.¹¹•••••

We lay talking for a while about astronomy, stars and planets, which had always interested me, and then I had the chance-sight of an artificial satellite passing overhead. It took me back to October 1957 when we had all stood in the streets outside our homes to see the rocket-casing of *Sputnik 1* pass overhead (it had flown right along our street) and my father had adapted a short-wave-receiving set, adjusting the maximum reception-frequency from 15 to 20 megahertz, just so that we could pick up the "beep-beep-beep" as it passed overhead. And now it's all taken for granted just twelve years later.¹¹•••••

We awoke next morning to see people around us working in the fields. After getting and packing up, we set off walking down the middle of the road, as Gordon reckoned that would save us the trouble of constantly wending about looking out for approaching vehicles. We had not gone very far when a couple of three-wheeled trucks came along. Both stopped, and one of the drivers got off and instructed us in English: one person on each truck.¹

We ended up somewhere out in the bush on the very sparsely trafficked road. Gordon had told me that he always made the best use of times like this, waiting for a lift, by doing something like reading a book or learning some Greek. He had visited Greece once before---last year---and learnt a few words of the language and since supplemented his knowledge by studying it just as I was, and last evening had shamed me into a desire for a greater effort myself. So while he yode for a shit, I dug out my Greek and studied a little.

A little later two people with rucksacks appeared walking along the road, a fellow and a girl. "These look like a couple of inmates," remarked Gordon, referring of course to Matala. (His use of the word "inmate" had however no derogatory connotation, for he used it in about the same sense as "inhabitant" or "occupant".) The two inmates had been

dwelling there and were now on their way back to leave for good. They told us that a lot of people had been leaving there in the past few days. Then they walked on. •••••

Another of those three-wheeled trucks picked up shortly afterwards Gordon and me, and it also picked up the other two a little farther down the road. It took us into the village of Pitsidia, where we alighted, and the other fellow told us that we were now only 5 km from Matala. We set off walking along the road, and at one point I could see Agia Galini across the water, right on the sea at the foot of the mountains, which rose straight up from the sea and still carried at the top, even now in late spring, a mantle of snow.11••

Walking along the road, the inmates told us that the cave dwellers were mainly Americans. We did not walk far before another vehicle picked us all up. It took us all the remaining distance along the road to the tiny village of Matala, and as we reached it, I saw over to the right, on the opposite side of the bay from the village, the cliff with the caves and their inhabitants.

I was here at last. I had arrived, just one whole month after setting off on the road.

THE ANCIENT TRACK: The Complete Political Works of H.P. Lovecraft, edited by S.T. Joshi. Night Shade Books, San Francisco. ISBN – 0923-19-16—9. 557 pages. \$20 trade pb (there is also a hardback edn.) Order from amazon.com

Today, the “cosmic horror” writer H.P. Lovecraft is the ultimate cult figure, acclaimed as the most read American writer of the first half of the 20th C, his Cthulhu Mythos of humanity as hapless prey to incomprehensible alien forces perfectly in tune with today’s obsession with vast conspiracies.

So it is difficult now to realise just how marginalised he was in his lifetime, his fiction, published in only a few pulp magazines, attracting only a handful of aficionados. And if his fiction barely made it into readers’ radar at the time, his poetry was totally ignored, save by wholly amateur publications.

Now, in a total turnaround, every poem HPL wrote has been gathered together – from famine to feast, as it were. And this has been done in the form of a book, which, despite the low price for such a size, manages to be handsomely produced, in highly readable type, remarkably free from literals, and with a comprehensive array of informative Notes. Having praised the book as a volume, however, it must be said that a very high percentage of the poetry there is likely to appeal only to the fanatical HPL completist, or those seeking psychological insight into the writer’s personality, HPL’s obsession with 18th C England, the place and time where he believed he would truly have been at home, meant aimless jangly imitation of that era’s poetic favourite form, the rhyme content, and an even more sterile wholesale importation of its artificial personal-poetic language, transposing swains, nymphs and suchlike to America in the kind of “cultural cringe” nowadays reversed as Britain adopts American vocabulary wholesale. Hence, sadly, all too much here confirms the view of SF writer L. Sprague de Camp (himself HPL’s first biographer) that Lovecraft’s poetry could be the best insomnia cure ever. (HPL himself later became an even crueller critic of his own verse – “my creating couplets. A mass of mediocre and miserable junk” etc).

Also, since this book’s objective of total comprehensiveness does not permit omission of work that could damage HPL’s reputation in ways other than stylistic, it includes many spiteful, often sour grapesish verse attacks on other writers (albeit balanced by generous poems in praise of favourites like Poe), and places expressing bigotry towards those Americans, unlike himself, not of white Anglo-Saxon ancestry, often deeply unpleasant, and on a couple of occasions wildly racist (attitudes also expressed, it has to be said, all too often by other writers of the time – his fellow-American T.S. Eliot was likewise a bigot as well as a deeply conservative anglophile. That Eliot was also HPL’s biggest bete noire among writers reflects the well-known tendency to most dislike a more successful version of us.)

The poetry is conveniently, if sometimes rather arbitrarily, grouped into various categories like Juvenilia, Satire, and Seasonal & Topographical. – Steve Sneyd

THE BEST OF HARRY WARNER JR (Busswarble #5)

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland
21740, U. S. A.
February 7, 1993

Dear Michael:

It was good to find a fanzine from you in the mailbox again. When someone's fanzine stops arriving, it never occurs to me that it's because no issue has been published for a considerable time. My guilt complex always takes over and informs me that I've missed lots of the issues because I've been cut from the mailing list for not responding to the fanzine frequently enough.

I remain skeptical that science can get out of the question of what caused the condition that preceded the big bang as easily as Paul Davies claims. It's the old question of the Prime Cause. If science dismisses theological beliefs about how the universe came into being, it must provide materialistic explanations and eventually science runs up dead against the barrier of how there could have been a prime cause with nothing to cause it. Religion simply postulates the fact that a deity unbound by material cause and effect requirements could have created the universe and could have created himself too.

On the other hand, I am ignorant enough of scientific theory to feel unfit to have opinions on how black holes are supposed to affect things around them. My untutored brain wonders how a black hole with gravitation so intense that light can't get out could exist in the Earth without sucking into itself everything around it too rapidly for a science fiction author to write a novel about such a situation.

One of the nicest things about this issue of Busswarble is the freedom from the typographical peculiarities that used to plague The Matalan Rave. I'm not one of those fans who get hysterical and complain at length when a fanzine has typographical errors and other problems with the way the words appear. But I do feel great relief when such problems end and they're finally absent from Busswarble. I hope this doesn't represent a clue to the fact that the Conspiracy has wiped out the real Michael Hailstone and almost succeeded in creating a counterfeit Michael of Matala that would have fooled me if the typos weren't missing. Instead, I'll just assume that that you've acquired better publishing equipment and perhaps a spellchecker or two.

Twenty years ago, when black holes were still a fairly new concept, it was thought that, if the smallest black hole got stuck inside the Earth, it would swallow our whole globe "within a minute or two". But one must take into account, that a small black hole, even of the mass of an asteroid in the billions of tons, would be much smaller than an atom and so would take a long time to swallow much mass. Furthermore, Brin applies Hawkings quantum theory to black holes, saying that they evaporate in time, so that a small black hole even inside the Earth could evaporate faster than it sucks mass into itself, this depending on the black hole's mass and the density pf the stuff around it. -- MfM.

BACK TO THE GREENHOUSE

THE COSMIC CONSPIRACY

(Matalan Rave #17)

Let's look again at the dreaded greenhouse effect. I've already looked at the evidence against it, but now, okay, let's look at the evidence for it. The world is indeed warmer than it was a hundred years ago. There was a cooling trend in the northern hemisphere between 1940 and 1970, but the southern hemisphere warmed over that same period. Now in the eighties, they tell us, the world has had some of the warmest years on record, the two warmest, it seems, being 1987 and 1988. Furthermore, the United States have been hit by a searing hot dry summer, to be expected with a warming climate as predicted by theory. (But on what measurements is the statement about warmest years based? Were they made in cities, and can we be sure, that by the "world" they don't again chauvinistically mean just the northern hemisphere?)

Okay. But a few things just aren't right with the theory, or at least the theory as presented to us by the media. Last year the ubiquitous John Gribbin (who seems to hop on just about every scientific bandwagon going) gave a series of talks on the Science show about climate through the ages. Two interesting points arose out of this. Firstly, a thousand years ago the climate was a good deal warmer than even now, believe it or not. Remember, the Vikings sailed across the Atlantic to North America and colonized Iceland and Greenland, which had less ice then. More interestingly, in that warmer climate what is now the wheat belt of the United States was moist and lush, because the moisture-laden winds off the Pacific blew around the northern end of the Rockies, so that the Indians practised a kind of agriculture on the plains. However from about 1200 to 1850, the "little ice age", when the climate was colder than now, this area dried out and actually became desert. The Indians gave up agriculture and became nomadic, as they were when the white man found them.

So. If the American plains were wetter in the warmer climate a thousand years ago and dryer during the little ice age, how come they are expected to dry out in the warmer climate due to the rising greenhouse effect? And remember also that Salt Lake City is wending back to the cooler wetter climate that prevailed before 1850.

Also, it is relevant to remember that the summer of 1988 was not the hottest on record but only the hottest since 1936. Yes, there were three very hot dry summers back in the nineteen-thirties, in the "dustbowl years", when many parts of the world including Australia were stricken by drought. There was also a very hot dry summer in parts of the United States in 1980. And here I must repeat myself.

Towards the end of 1979 I read a novel titled *Heat* by Arthur Herzog and wrote thereof a review which appeared in *Crux* #2, which came out in April-May 1980. Let's quote a little from that review:

Perhaps the most frightening aspect is the book's setting against present-day speculation---that is, of a cooling world climate with the fierce American winter of 1976-7 as history...

Scientifically a couple of details of this book are highly questionable...The heat strikes very suddenly (scientifically questionable, but necessary in order to fit the novel into a convenient timescale) in the summer of 1980. The description of by far the most terrible heatwave in America's history is a horror story in itself...

Right, now since 1986 we seem to be dwelling in Herzog's fantasy with the self-styled experts telling us to expect the "greenhouse-effect" to "strike" soon, and even saying that it has already "struck", as in the American summer of 1988. Indeed the greenhouse effect has become so fashionable that it is now blamed for every climatic anomaly, even the drought in the Sahel, which is apparently due to the weakening of the winds, which had a quite different explanation twenty years ago. No mechanism has been found to explain the greenhouse-effects responsibility, but who cares over such a trivial detail as that?

But did Herzog know something that we don't? Was his fictional forecast of a deadly heatwave in 1980 just a lucky guess, was he psychic, or was he privy to some inside information? How did he know that much of America in 1980 would have both an erratic spring and a terrible heatwave that summer?

I refer you to the article "Strange Energy from the Earth" in the July/August 1982 *Omega*. It deals with Nikola Tesla and especially his invention known as the Tesla magnifying transmitter, which can draw off unlimited energy from the atmosphere by tuning into its resonant frequency (see the introduction to Don Boyd's article in this issue [*Matalan Rave* #17]). Most relevant here is that this comparatively simple device can be used to modify the weather. Back in October 1976, it seems, the Russians began experimenting with a transmitter at Riga, 1000 km west of Moscow. This caused the worlds radio- and radar systems to go haywire. The Russians were experimenting with very low frequency. Two months later huge standing waves 1500 km long were reported all over the world. Then early in 1977, a strange blocking effect was reported down the west coast of America and on the east coast and on the Russo-polish border up to Finland. Remember, this was the aforesaid great American winter of 1977, when a high sat for a month or more over the west of the continent bringing continual northerly winds over the Midwest and east of the country. The mean temperature in New York City for that January was 22°F (-6°C), ten degrees Fahrenheit below normal, while in Indianapolis it was a bitter 10°F (-12°C). Snow fell in Florida (though not in Miami as the article ses, I understand).

About ten years ago, David Norman sent me a news cutting saying that many nations were working on weather warfare. All that has been hushed up since then. The reality of the outside world around us that we perceive is that presented through the media, and that changes from time to time, depending on what they choose to tell us, and even more weightily, what they choose *not* to tell us. How long is it since we last saw or heard anything about weather warfare? Uo, xld grddhouse-effect is all the rage now, and they've been bombarding us with that mercilessly since 1986.

But hell, if a Tesla magnifying transmitter can be used to set up blocking highs to bring about that bitter winter in America in 1977, what is to stop it from being used also to set up high pressure to cause a searing summer and drought as in 1980 and 198?

LETTERS

Chester D. Cuthbert
1104 Mulvey Avenue
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July 22, 2004-09-0

Dear Michael,

BUSSWARBLE #81 is another jumbo issue with interesting material; thanks very much.

A kidney infection disturbed my usual good health and my wife Muriel and I had little energy for other than watching baseball games on TV; in fact, we often fell asleep while watching.

A couple of science fiction fans visited me yesterday afternoon; one I had not seen since he moved to Ontario 25 years ago. We had a wonderful time reminiscing about our old club meetings and the friends we made.

Your scientific articles are often beyond my understanding but your travel articles continue to amaze me. My responsibilities to my father's family in my early life kept me wishing I were free to travel, but since then wanderlust has never ruled me and I am most content to stay at home.

Lloyd Penney is not alone in trouble finding permanent work. In fact, the changes every day in merging corporations mean loss of jobs for many workers. The complexity of technology in the workplace today makes me marvel at the clerks at counters in the grocery stores, who have to process various credit cards, take cheques and cash and at the same time run through the purchases made by customers. I'm glad to have retired.

July 23^ I have just finished mowing and trimming the lawn and today is Friday. There is no mail pickup Weekends and on holidays, and I have several letters to mail before the last pickup today at 5 o'clock, so as I want you to hear from me I am closing this letter.

David Redd, Waterford 16.8.04
Dear Michael,

Resuming our annual visits to Eire while I can still afford it, as I take early retirement next month. (Our plan then is to actually spend some time at home together, after years of working away.) The southern root of Ireland is delightful as ever. I'm looking across the harbour to Regwald's tower as I write (round tower in places). Hope all is well with you down south.

It's not really, unhappily. – MfM.

Steve Sneyd
 4 Nowell Place
 Almondbury
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 West Yorkshire
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 Sept 804

Dear Michael,

Sorry to hear of your reading problems – must try to spare you handrot in future.

A few comments on #82 – brief as in traditional behindness-with-things mode kvetch kvetch.

Re the detailed analysis of “An Australian Supersleuth” – the problem of when words first in use is a perennial hassle for writer trying to get past authentic. Often much older than you think (as with ideas/technologies) – a classic I encountered, I jibed at the use of phrase “tender loving care” in a radio play set in Britain in WWII, as I’d assumed was ‘60s or ‘70s California psychobabble in origins – turns out is in Shakespeare! Re S’peare’s “new words”, I’ve seen a fairly extensive list of words that first appear in print in him, but doesn’t follow he invented ‘em necessarily, they could’ve been around in oral usage, and it’s just he was first to put down on paper. Verbising nouns/nounising verbs in English well precedes – there are 14th C eggs (and was commonplace long before in Latin) – one of handiest tools for growing scope of language.

Literal in “The Wae of the Worlds” Darlington title one of those that open new dimension/superstition – wae Scots for woe.

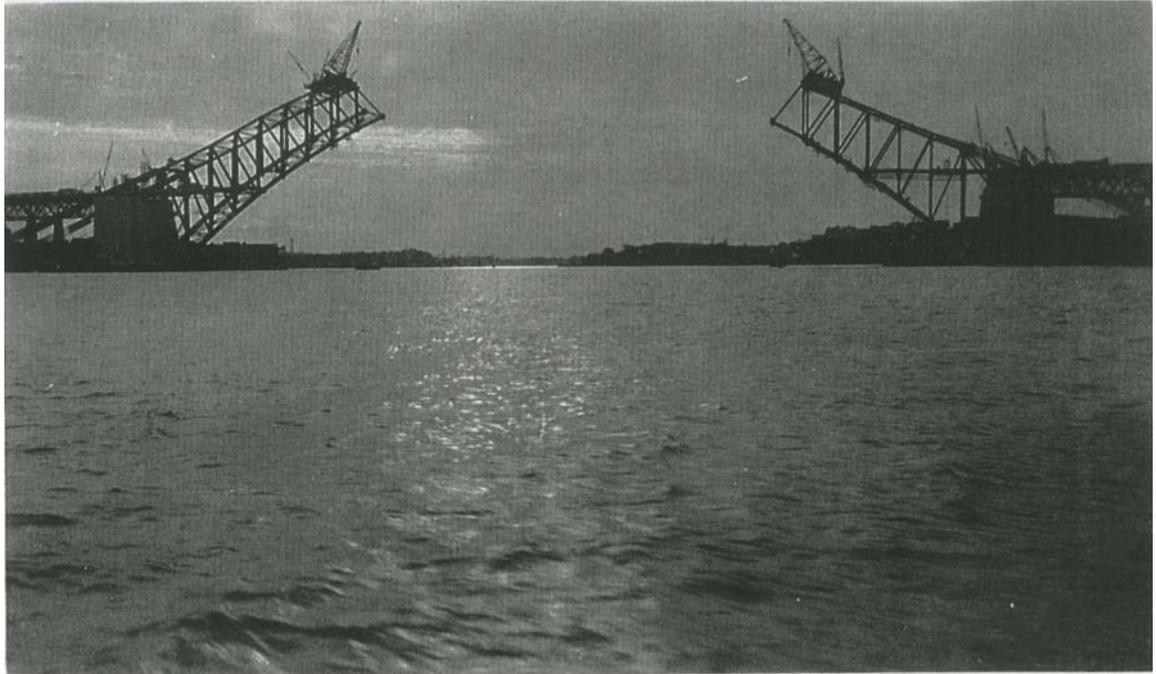
One of papers closed down by the occupation in Iraq was Moqtada al Sadr’s – supposedly one trigger for his militia’s uprising. More recently, Al Jazeera TV had its offices closed/its reporters expelled, though that technically down to supposedly independent interim admin, not directly by US.

I wasn’t saying Tertullian predicted quantum physics per se, but that the mindset his quote indicates his striking parallel with thinking that seems to underlie much quantum theorising, i.e. the more counterintuitive something appears to be, the likelier it is to reflect underlying reality.

There was one Net-only issue of The Mentor after paper version ceased. It called for loc, so sounded like Ron Clarke did (? Still does) intend more in cyberspace sometime.

Memory Hole library (Greg Pickersgill) address: 3 Bethany Row, Narberth Road, Haverfordwest, Pembs SA61 2XG. Email address for him given in Ansible: <fanzines@gostat_demon.co.uk>. As far as I know, he’s still adding to the library, although no longer lends from it or supplies bundles of duplicates to fanzineistas.

I never thought of “tender loving care” as a new phrase, but I’d say its trendy reduction to the initials TLC would be. – MfM.



Lloyd Penney.
1706-24 Eva Rd.
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September 15, 2004

Dear Michael:

Many thanks for issue 82 of Busswarble. It arrived a few days ago, none the worse for wear, and now that time has presented itself, I'll use it to respond.

I haven't read of Rod Marsden's writings, other than what's appeared in fanzines, so I can't comment on quality or writing style, or any of the usual things that could appear in a book review. You list so many anachronisms...could this book have been intended for an American market, seeing the average Australian reader could have spotted all these problems? I've always liked time travel stories, so I think I might like the chaos of time story in John Light's book.

Given the fact that Greece recently hosted the Olympics, I must wonder how much Greece has changed since you left. Places I grew up in and lived in have changed substantially over the last few years; a couple of decades would make those places completely strange to me. That's the true meaning of never being able to go home again.

It is very easy in this day and age to become depressed. Our consumer society teaches us to demand the best right now, and to be disappointed when you don't get it. I think we've transferred that unreasonable expectation to our everyday lives, so we are disappointed so often. Real life is no fun, and we dream of something better, or at least different. Perhaps that is where our enjoyment of science fiction comes from, a temporary respite from a disappointing reality, and a trip into an appeasing fantasy. I've always felt that such a trip is mentally good for you; it's a psychological vacation.

Our polluting of the atmosphere is changing climate all over the world...lethal temperatures in Europe, massive hurricanes going through the Caribbean and into the US. I hope cleaner methods of power generation can be found, but anything perfectly clean is impossible. There will always be some kind of exhaust byproduct that will rise into the atmosphere. There are some methods that give off water as exhaust, but there are some gases that escape. As I sit in Toronto, there is a hazy brown layer that sits over the city; this didn't start occurring until about 15 years ago. Much of the pollution this city suffers under actually is blown up from the Ohio Valley, where pollution controls are nearly non-existent.

I know all too well what's happening in Iraq right now...once you get past the patriotic prattle of CNN, CBS, ABC, NBC and Fox, there is the BBC, CBC and other news services that actually bring you the real news without the fancy graphics. The Iraqi war is truly bad...over 1000 American soldiers dead now. Dubya appeals to the worst in the American soul, and now American citizens can brag that they kick butt. Even the atrocities of Al-Ghraib that America of the past would not tolerate from anyone else smacks of more butt-kicking, this time of the hated Arab. Unfortunately, all of this will probably insure Bush's re-election. John Kerry appeals to the more reasonable American, but he also speaks of more war, and more isolationism, and more action against any other country, even allies. I am pessimistic about the future when it comes to how the USA affects the rest of us. There have been no American shutting down of papers or imprisonment of reporters; truth and impartiality have been the true victims here, with true stories about American atrocities being declared unpatriotic by a large number of American citizens.

E-mail seems to be working, so I will e-mail this loc, and see what happens. Take care, and see you next issue.

I believe that Greece became a much more fun place after the colonels stepped down.

Actually, I doubt that many Australians would pick up such anachronisms, since, like Americans, they have an appalling grasp of their own recent past. – MfM.

Pamela Boal, 4 Westfield Way, Wantage, Oxon. OX12 7EW, UK.

Dear Michael,

Thank you for Bus 82. Please do not publish my e-mail address, as we are away from home boating so much (even if I could afford lap top we don't have the facilities on our little boat) my mailbox gets over full. I keep it for close friends, family and favourite fan Eds.

We are just off again so once more I write briefly and in haste. I so agree with Lloyd Penny the demise of The Mentor left a hole in the zine range that has not been filled.

David Redd is so right the Waverly and other paddle steamers are well worth seeing. They have a majestic serenity peculiar to themselves, each has a special history. We travelled on one that does trips on a Scottish Loch, which had been dismantled and sent south by road to help at Dunkirk. At the other end of the scale is the annual rally of steamboats on the Thames from elegant Victorian picnic boats to others that are virtually no more than converted bathtubs.

Chester D. Cuthbert
(Address above)

September 24, 2004-10-05

Dear Michael,

Many thanks for sending me BUSSWARBLE #82. The reviews and letters were all of interest, but your travel serial outshone them again because for me the mystery of your desire for travel remains unexplained.

David Blair, my local fellow-member of FIRST FANDOM died on August 16 and I attended a family memorial service on August 21, since when his son Donald has been consulting me about his father's extensive and remarkably fine collection of books, magazines and paperbacks. David was a meticulous researcher whose favourite magazine was ASTOUNDING/ANALOG concerning which he published three books of his opinions. Unable to find a commercial publisher, he sold copies for the cost of photocopying them. Donald estimates that the collection numbers 7000 items; perhaps more; and most were purchased new and carefully used.

My own experience at selling books to dealers has not repaid me the cost of acquiring them, so I am donating the remainder to two grandchildren who have access to the web and can net much more although it will take up a great deal of their spare time.

Lloyd Penney's employment problems should soon be solved as his intelligence and capabilities become recognized, but as I have said before, a guaranteed annual income on a universal basis like our old age pension would eliminate worry and distress and keep the economy operating by its purchasing power. When old age people outnumber the working force, what can any alternative be?

I'm glad you see such a positive solution to something that the media and politicians paint so bleakly and negatively. – MfM.

Sydney J. Bounds
27 Borough Road
Kingston on Thames
Surrey
KT2 6BD
England
24 Nov 04

Dear Michael,

I have been laid low by a bug, which gives me the chance to catch up on letters.

BW82: Thanks for this, one of your more interesting issues. Two reviews of sf; you seem over-critical, while Steve allows his enthusiasm to run away with him.

Interesting to see the Kipps quote in I want to lie on the grass. Although it is many years since I read the book – and I read a lot of Wells in my youth – I don't remember this passage at all.

David Redd: Like Michael, I missed the chance to take a trip to the islands on my one and only visit to Pembrokeshire many years ago. With John Newman and friend, I stayed at a Trust place on a painting course; I still remember red cliffs.

To end with I wish you

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS
And
A HEALTHY NEW YEAR

WAHF: John Kaemmerer, who sent me an article from some magazine on the ice age; John Thiel, who has published part of my article "Of earthly and Martian Physics" in *Surprising Stories*; Bruce Gillespie with a COA: 5 Howard Street, Greensborough, Vic. 3088, Australia.

Please visit my web sites:

www.busswarble.dragnet.com;au and members.dodo.com.au/~crux



Boy in hollow tree

(Correction of a wildly disproportionate painting I saw at an exhibition in Melbourne. Hollow trees are a common sight in the Australian bush, formed by termites.)