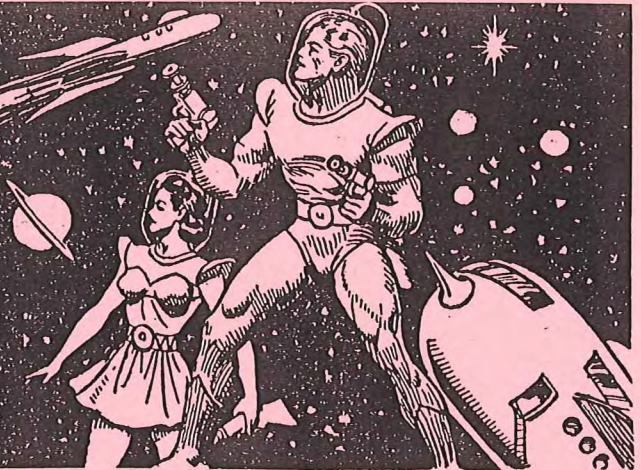


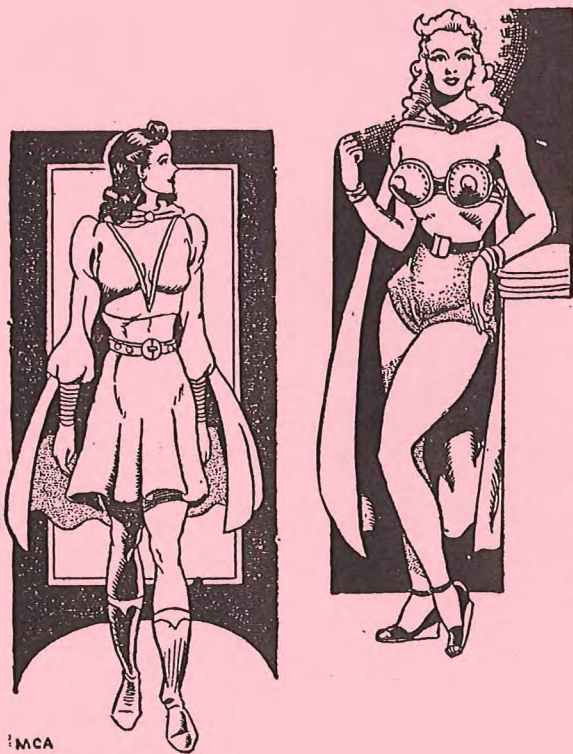
PLANET MUMBLINGS

FROM MUNCHKINLAND



12

Introduces



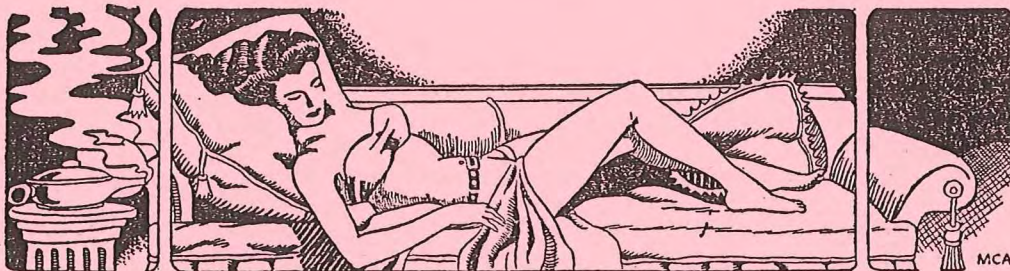
MCA



*Miss
UNIVERSE,*

2016!

on p.3...



MCA

TWO NEW AUSSIES



No prizes for guessing who the first new Australian is. Ella was born on August 3rd, just before the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. It's tempting to say she has caused similar devastation to the Nelson & Lee household but in fact we are coping reasonably well. And she's so cute she can get away with anything anyway.

The birth did not go exactly as we'd planned (do they ever?). We'd booked into a birthing centre adjacent to the maternity hospital in Launceston, hoping to have a baby with as little medical intervention as possible. Of the other couples in the birth classes we'd been attending, only one other planned to do this, though some of the others had second thoughts after we'd toured both the cosy centre and the antiseptic wards. Incidentally, Megan and I had a habit of being last to the classes and we joked about how we might be last to have the baby, too. This didn't seem very likely, since Megan was due in the third week of July and other women in the class were due later.

The third week of July, however, came and went without any signs of imminent labour. The baby was very active in utero, kicking, jumping around and occasionally getting hiccups (which *was* hilarious to watch) but in general it seemed quite happy to stay where it was. I say "it" because we had made no attempt to determine the sex of the baby before the birth and had no preference.

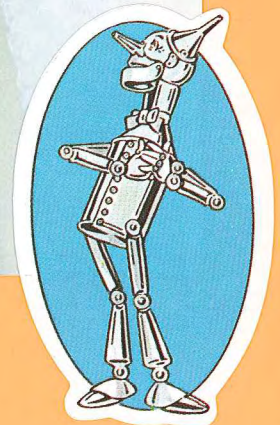
Megan eventually *did* go into labour, of course, in the first week of August. After a long and restless night at home we loaded up the car and went to the birth centre. Our midwives met us there. Megan was already tired and grew more so as the labour progressed, getting more relief from the pain by lying in a warm bath than she did from a shot of pethidine or puffs of nitrous oxide gas. After ten hours or so, she was exhausted and it became clear that we would have to go up to the labour ward.

I won't bore you with details of exactly what happened next. A few days before, Megan had had a dream in which the baby just *appeared* in her lap, smiled up at her and said "Happy Birthday, Mum!" This struck both of us as an excellent way for the birth process to occur. Reality was not so kind. Part of the problem, as it turned out, was that the umbilical cord had a knot in it. A beauty, too. Acting on instructions I did not have my camera in the delivery room, which is a pity -- I would have liked a photo of that knot. It was the damndest thing I've ever seen.

Ella Frances, as she became the instant her sex was revealed, was the cutest thing I've ever seen, despite the muck. She had been distressed in the womb because of the knot and needed suction to clean out her air passages, but otherwise was fine. Megan's first words upon seeing her were "Oh my goodness" and that about sums up my reaction too. It was amazing to see this livid living creature emerge from within Megan. Intellectually, we knew a baby was there in the womb. We'd seen it grow and squirm and kick, had heard it's heartbeat on the ultrasound devices, and seen images of it at an early stage. Despite all this, nothing could quite prepare us for the instant when Ella emerged, wet and yucky, writhing and crying, reeking of blood and amniotic fluid. So tiny and yet so *big*, to have been squashed up inside Megan for all that time. What can I say? It was a magical moment.

After a short stay in hospital, mother and child were allowed home. We were indeed the last of our class. Megan recovered quickly; Ella enjoys teaching us new skills and new meanings for words like "patience", "sleep deprivation" & "social life". We're loving almost every minute of it.

MISS UNIVERSE, 2016 (AND FRIEND)



NELSON-LEE, Ella Frances
— Chris and Megan are
happy and proud to an-
nounce the birth of their
daughter on August 3, 1995,
at QVH. Many thanks to
Elaine, Jean, doctors,
Jonathon and QVH staff.

Ella is an Australian by birth. Anyone not born here has to undergo another process to become an Australian, a strange rite which used to be called "naturalization". Until recently, this involved pledging allegiance to Queen Liz as well as God and Australia. As part of its push for Australia to become a republic the Keating government has removed the Queen from the pledge, made God optional, and launched an advertising campaign encouraging permanent residents to take out citizenship. (That Labor usually gets more of the votes of new citizens than any of the other parties is probably just incidental.)

The US government has also recently changed its rules, which previously disallowed dual citizenship. Encouraged by all these changes, I rang for a citizenship brochure after seeing the ad on SBS. Since I've lived in Oz for most of my life, married a native, pay taxes here, and have no immediate desire to return to live in the U.S.A. (especially given the swing to the Right there) I could see no real reason not to become an Australian. It wasn't as though I was dragging my feet or anything. We'd only been in the Lucky Country for 22 years...

The first hurdle was to attend an interview at the Hobart office of the Department of Immigration & Ethnic Affairs. This was to ensure: (1) that I understood the rights and responsibilities of becoming a citizen and (2) that I handed over a cheque. I duly made the trip down, showed up at the desk and answered a few questions put to me by a fellow as he filled in yet another form.

"Right, thank you very much," he said. "Do you have any questions?"

"Er, when is the interview?" I asked.

"You just had it," he said.

He added that the next ceremony in Launceston was on Australia Day. This was a problem, since Megan and I were due to be in Perth then. Was there any chance of my taking the oath in Perth? He said that would be very difficult to arrange.

"It would be great for me, since all of my family will be there, even my sister from Darwin," I said.

"Well, I...just a minute," he said and went away to confer with a colleague. After a while he came back and told me they couldn't promise anything but they would see what they could do.

What they could do was everything I'd wanted. The ceremony was held on the banks of the Swan River on Australia Day, 1995 -- a beautiful day in Perth. I stood among a very multicultural group, including an elderly Indian woman in a gorgeous sari, a turbaned Sikh, several Italian and Chinese families, a couple from Sri Lanka and a number of Poms, as the mayor of the City of Melville managed to drop her list of dignitaries' names, spend too long trying to get the pages back in order, and then give a dreadfully dull address.

I suffered a brief moment of terror when my name was not announced (we were called in alphabetical order) until I realised that the group had been separated according to those who wished to give their oath "under God" and those of us who thought He ought to have better things to be getting on with. Eventually, we Pagans were called up, given our pieces of paper and asked to recite the oath. And then Her Worship taught us each the secret handshake and we were *in*.

So next time I call around, be prepared to throw another shrimp on the barbie and crack another tinnie for me, mate.

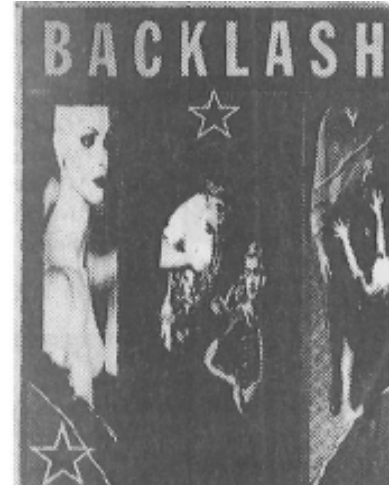


THE MIND OF A SCIENCE FICTION FAN

"That's an oxymoron, isn't it?" says Megan, peering over my shoulder. If we scowl at her, however, she'll wander off, sniggering, and we can get on with it.

It's a well-known psychological phenomenon that observers tend to see what they want to; our interests predetermine what we will perceive in the world around us. SF fans, therefore, might be expected to notice things science fictional more frequently than other folk. Since the last *Mumblings* this has certainly been my experience. So much so that it's a bit worrying.

For instance, when browsing in Angus & Robertson's one day I was struck by the cover design for Susan Faludi's book *Backlash* because of its central image. How many people outside of fandom would realize that this was originally an Ed Emsh cover for *Galaxy* in 1954? Not many, I reckon. (And few will find out from her book, either. No credit is given to the original artist anywhere.)



The appropriation of science fictional imagery by advertising agencies and pop culture artists is nothing new, of course. The famous British Airways ads featuring flights to the Moon of some years ago were one good example; currently we have a mobile phone ad with a distinctly *Blade Runnerish* look to it. But real estate?

Other fantastic references, like the name this publisher has chosen, are a bit more subtle.



My mind has also made sf connections in some quite obscure instances. Such as when helping to weed a library collection in Melbourne and coming across *Bicycling for fun and health* by Lyle Kenyon Engel. Yes, the same Lyle Kenyon Engel that edited the short-lived *Space Science Fiction* in the 1950s. The same weeding uncovered two electronics books published by Gernsback Press. These names mean nothing to non-sf people, but I was startled to find them in my mundane work.

Quite apart from the notion of having a mind "attuned" to science fictional connections, I wonder at times if I'm *attracting* the damn things. This idea began innocently enough at a morning tea at my present workplace when the conversation drifted around to who owned the rights to writers' works after their deaths. "My wife and her siblings inherited the estate of a famous English author," stated one colleague. "Oh, yes, who's that?," I asked, expecting to hear a name I wouldn't recognize.

"John Wyndham," he said. "Have you heard of him?"

Heard of him! Only the most well-known British sf writer before Arthur C. Clarke. *The John Wyndham Parkes Lucas Beynon Harris of Chrysalids, Triffids, waking Krakens and Midwich Cuckoos fame!* I was flabbergasted. Apparently the mother of my colleague's wife used to play in the Wyndham's yard as a child in England. The neighbours became close enough for Wyndham to nominate them as the heirs to his literary estate.

And then there were the "coincidences" of my recent trip. Now I admit I did have an overt sf agenda on this trip and I did take the opportunity to meet or catch up with a number of sf acquaintances and friends, including Graham Stone and Terry Dowling for the first time. But I also had a number of sf allusions thrust upon me from quite unexpected quarters.

It started on the flight to Sydney. Opening the Qantas in-flight magazine I found an essay by the Melbourne comedian Michael Veitch, which began by mentioning sf films of the 1950s:

"I used to love those films. All through my childhood they ruled the Saturday afternoon timeslots. It was usually the same story: an expedition was sent to the Moon (or beyond!) to rescue a colony in distress, only to be thwarted by evil aliens wearing gum boots and full-length novelty swimwear. The aliens themselves were always controlled by an evil scientist who laughed a lot and looked remarkably like someone who ran my local delicatessen..."

You get the idea. SF played for laughs, mostly, though there's also a nostalgic element and a sense of how odd it feels to be living in an era which represented the far future to so many writers and film-makers of the 1950s -- many of whose works we still read and watch today.

The main reason I was in Sydney, however, was to attend an on-line information conference. That used to mean mainly dial-up databases like Dialog but at this meeting more and more attention was being paid to the Internet and CD technologies. One of the speakers was the CEO of the aforementioned Dialog, Patrick Tierney. Like Veitch, his paper considered the track record of predictions made about our era in the 1950s. Not surprisingly, he tried to demonstrate from these that nothing ever develops the way people imagine it will and, thus, the forecasted imminent demise of dial-up online database providers (like, say, Dialog) are wrong. You'll never guess how he introduced his topic. Here's a quote from the published paper:

"[My] fascination for the future was brought home to me on the flight [from Los Angeles to Sydney]...We were shown two feature-length films and a series of shorter ones, including, by great coincidence, an episode of my absolutely favourite boyhood serial -- Flash Gordon. Obviously from the laughter some of you recognize Flash Gordon...[he] was the hero in one of a series of serials that were very popular in the early 1950s. They were science fiction serials that looked at the fantastic future we could look forward to..."

To interrupt for a moment, I'm pretty sure he's referring to the Buster Crabbe serials which were made in the 1930s, rather than the 50s. Poetic licence, I suppose. Here's a bit more:

"Remember robots of the early sci-fi movies? They were little tin men with arms, and legs, and eyes, and spoke and were lifelike in virtually every respect. They did errands. They fought the bad guys. They were like The Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz*. They could do everything that humans do -- they only lacked a heart."

A devastatingly perceptive analysis, I think you will agree.

To escape from all of these unsolicited science-fictional allusions I had dinner at an Indian restaurant that night. Only a few other tables were occupied, the one nearest me by two couples. Imagine my surprise when I overheard them talking about *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, Niven, Gerrold and others! I have no idea who they were; I might have enquired if one of them hadn't told Rodney Rude's joke about the cat that chewed Roy's new shoes and tried to claim it as his own.

[continued on p.15]

EARLY AUSTRALIAN FANZINES

There are several academic institutions in Australia which have taken an interest in science fiction, though only two include much fan material in their collections (as far as I know). In Perth, Murdoch University Library, due to Grant Stone's efforts, has the largest collection of amateur sf publications, including the former collections of several key figures, Don Tuck and Leigh Edmonds. On the other side of the country, fan materials can be found (thanks to Pauline Dickinson) in Fisher Library at Sydney University, which received most of the late Ron Graham's extensive collection.

As with family history, I have an interest in the history of fandom in Oz. The only published history of the earliest days is Voltaire Molesworth's, recently reprinted in Ron Clarke's *The Mentor*. It's a long, at times turgid, account, so dense in parts that it can be difficult to keep track of all of the names and titles Molesworth mentions. To comprehend who did what when, I started to plot the dates of the fanzines he mentions on a timeline. Since I had some free time during my trip earlier this year and it happened to take me to both Perth and Sydney, I made a point of visiting both libraries to collect further information for this purpose. Whilst in Sydney I also talked with Graham Stone (no relation to Grant), who provided much information on titles not held in either library, as well as clarifications of points in Vol's history.

The timeline appears overleaf. I cannot claim either completeness or complete accuracy for it. Neither Murdoch nor Fisher hold complete runs of all of the titles which appear, not even collectively. Fanzines are, after all, fairly ephemeral things at the best of times and those from the earliest days have become very rare beasts, as you would expect. Some titles in Fisher Library are represented only by photocopies donated by Graham Stone; some of the titles mentioned by Vol are not represented at all in public collections and, in some cases, copies probably no longer exist.

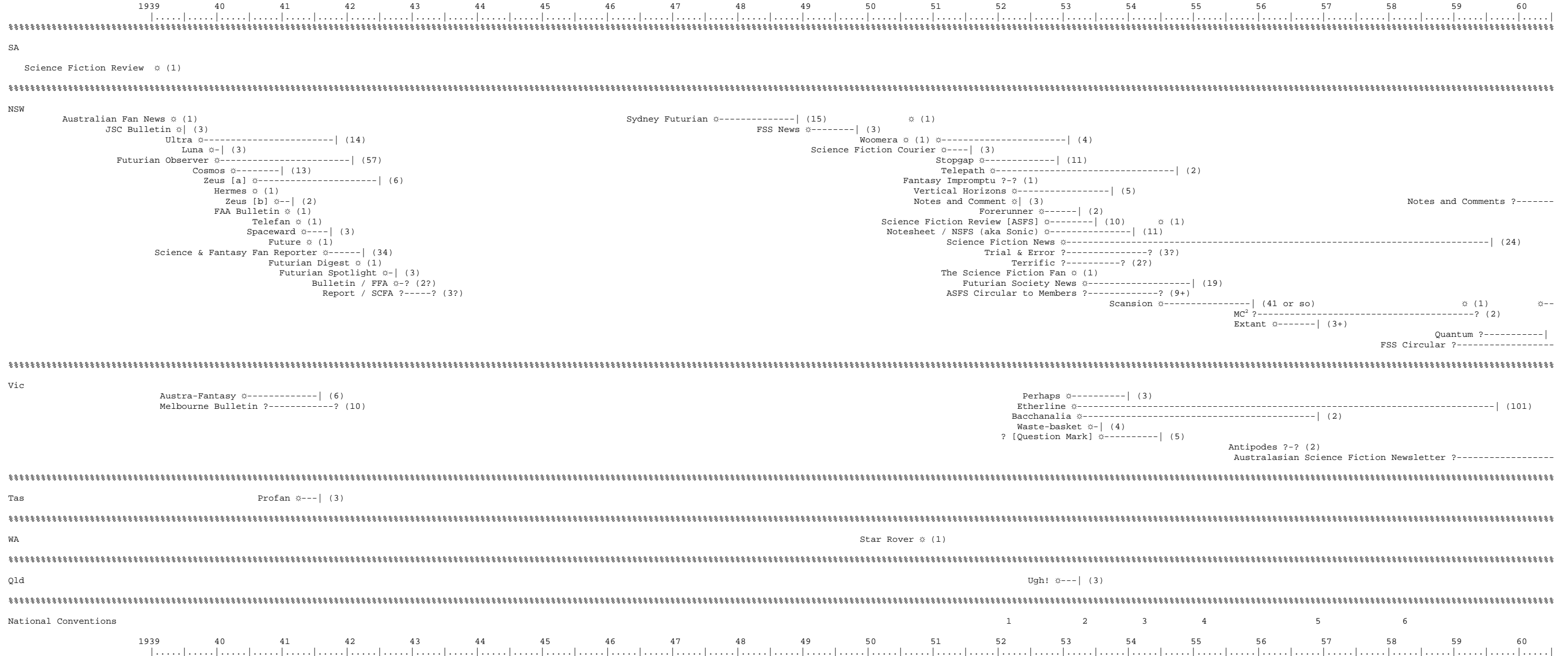
Vol's history itself is uneven; it begins with great vigour and excruciating detail, but after 1954 or so his enthusiasm wanes considerably and exact start and finish dates of fan magazines are not given. He covers the latter 1950s and early 1960s in just a few paragraphs; no doubt he was less central to events at these times than he had been earlier. And Vol lived in Sydney, so his account is also less comprehensive when discussing activities elsewhere.

This Sydney bias should be noted -- at least one Melbourne publication, the precursor of *Etherline*, cannot be shown because it gets only a passing reference in Vol's history -- but I doubt the picture would change drastically with more research. Sydney *was* the fannish centre in the early days.

In case it's not obvious, question marks indicate uncertain dates -- best guesses, based when possible on postmarks found on copies of the fanzines. The single-digit numbers near the bottom of the chart indicate when the first six national sf conventions were held, the first four in Sydney, the final two in Melbourne. I added them to see if the conventions encouraged the production of fan magazines, but can't detect a consistent correlation. The 2nd convention might have been the impetus for *Vertical Horizons*, *Notes and Comment*, and even *Forerunner*; and the 5th (Olympicon) probably provoked publication of a second issue of the long-dormant *Bacchanalia* -- but who knows?

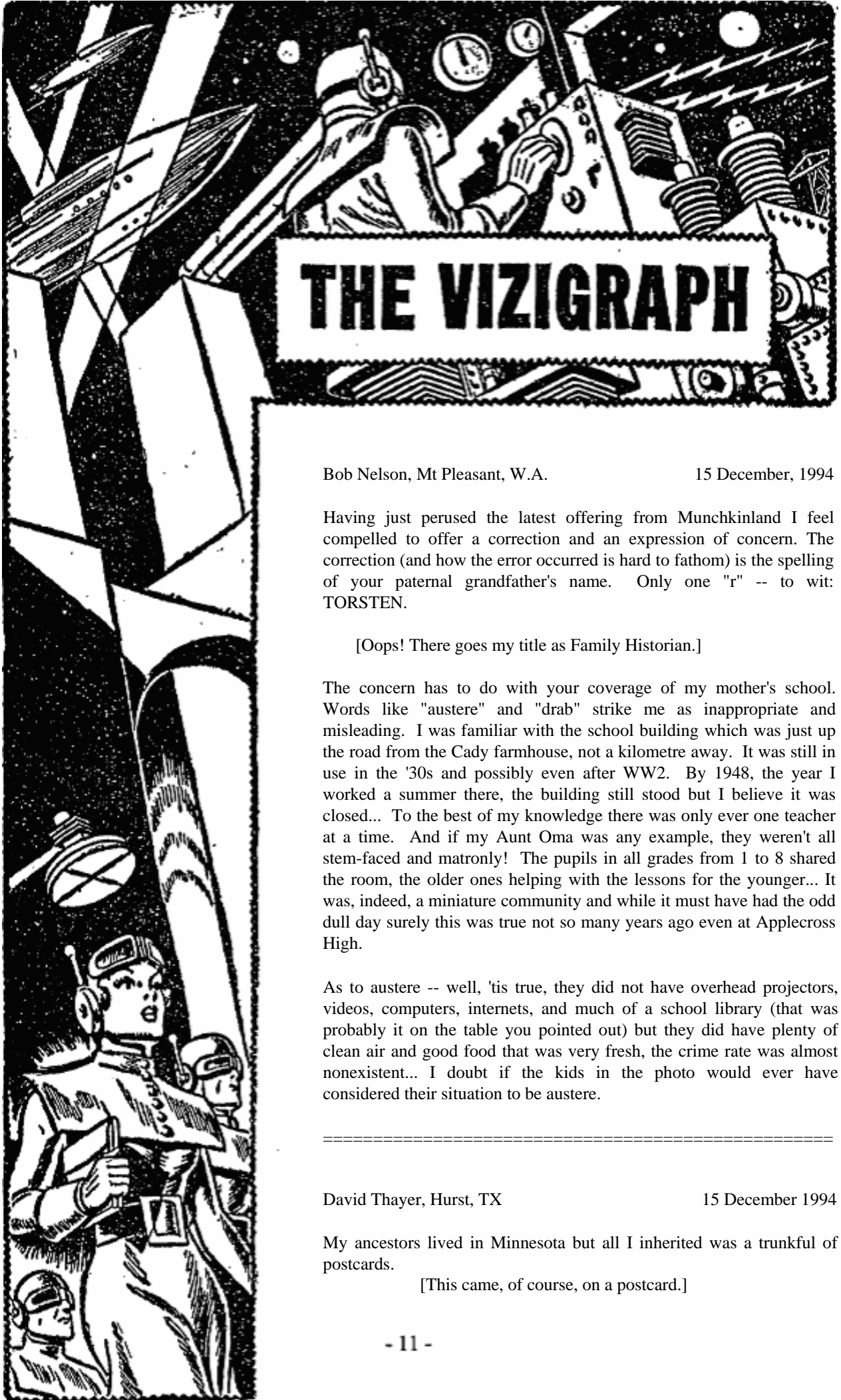
Note that a long line does not necessarily indicate a long-lived publication. In the 1950s, for example, *Telepath*, *MC²* and *Bacchanalia* all had only 2 issues, widely spaced. The only significant points on these particular lines, therefore, are their two end points. The lines *do* give some idea of when a particular fan was active, but not much more. Even then, as with these examples, the fan(s) in question might have hibernated between issues.

TIMELINE OF EARLY AUSTRALIAN FANZINES



INDEX TO AUSTRALIAN FANZINES, February 1939 – January 1960

<u>Title</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Began</u>	<u>Ended</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Editor(s), Publisher(s) / Organisation</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Antipodes	2	Jun 1956?	Aug 1956?	Vic	Leo Harding	
ASFS Circular to Members	9+	May 1953?	Ju1 1954?	NSW	Graham Stone?	Most appeared between 1953 and 1954; had at least one other ca.1958.
Austra-Fantasy	6	Jun 1940	Sep 1941	Vic	Warwick Hockley	The first fan magazine published in Victoria. The first issue was carbon-copied, others hektographed or duplicated.
Australasian Science Fiction Newsletter	4+	1959	>Jan 1960	Vic	Merv Binns / MSFC	
Australian Fan News	1	May 1939		NSW	Veney, Castellari & Russell / JASFCC	JASFCC = Junior Australian Science Fiction Correspondence Club. The first typed & mimeo'd fanzine in Oz.
Bacchanalia	2	Apr 1953	Dec 1956	Vic	Race Matthews / AFPA	Began as a fantasy-oriented companion to Perhaps. Second issue possibly produced for Olympicon.
Bulletin / FFA	2?	Sep 1942	Sep 1942	NSW	Colin Roden / FFA	FFA = Futurian Federation of Australia. Two issues were published in Sept. 1942; others may have been.
Cosmos	13	Apr 1940	Jan 1941	NSW	Molesworth, Veney & Castellari	An all-letter zine which ranged from 2 to 12 pp.
Etherline	101	Mar 1953	Sep 1959	Vic	Ian Crozier / AFPA, later MSFC	The most successful title of the 1950s in terms of the number of issues, at least.
Extant	3-4	Apr 1956	Dec 1956	NSW	Michael Baldwin & Bill Hubble	A fourth issue, apparently unpublished and with no clear date, was discovered in 1975. Held at Fisher Library.
The FAA Bulletin	1	Jan 1941		NSW	Eric Russell / FAA	FAA = Futurian Association of Australia, later renamed Futurian Federation of Australia by Molesworth.
Fantasy Impromptu	1	1952		NSW	Vol Molesworth	Probably published early in 1952.
Forerunner	2	Spr 1952	Aut 1953	NSW	R. Douglas Nicholson	Published fan fiction, intended as the <i>forerunner</i> of a fully professional Australian sf magazine.
FSS Circular	35+	1959	>Jan 1960	NSW	Graham Stone / FSS	FSS = Futurian Society of Sydney
FSS News	3	Feb 1949	Nov 1949	NSW	Eric Russell / FSS	
Futurian Digest	1	Feb 1942		NSW	Vol Molesworth / FSS	
Futurian Observer	57	Jan 1940	Mar 1942	NSW	Veney & Castellari / FSS	A single foolscap page of news & satire, fortnightly until March 1941, when 5 issues at a time became the norm.
Futurian Society News	19	May 1953	Jan 1955	NSW	Brian Finch; later Bob Thurston / FSS	Finch edited during 1953, Thurston for the rest of the issues.
Futurian Spotlight	3	Jul 1942	Sep 1942	NSW	Molesworth & Stone / FSS	Each a single sheet.
Future	1	May 1941		NSW	Eric Russell / FSS	
Hermes	1	Aug 1940		NSW	?	Apparently a rider to Zeus.
JSC Bulletin	3	Jun 1939?	Ju1 1939?	NSW	Vol Molesworth & Ken Jeffreys / JSC	JSC =Junior Science Club, a rival to JASFCC. Two issues were carbon-copied, 1 duplicated.
Luna	3	Dec 1939	Feb 1940	NSW	Vol Molesworth / FSS	
MC ²	2	1956	Jun 1959?	NSW	Pete.Jefferson & Roger Sebel	
[Melbourne SF Group newsletter]	?	1952/53		Vic	Bob McCubbin / MSFG	Vol Molesworth mentions a MSFG newsletter produced irregularly by Bob McCubbin, until Etherline began.
Melbourne Bulletin	10	Oct 1940?	Dec 1941?	Vic	Warwick Hockley	
Notesheet / NSFS (aka Sonic)	11	Oct 1952	Mar 1954	NSW	Michael Bos & Richard Mowle / NSFS	Renamed Sonic from #7 ca. August 1953.
Notes and Comment [a]	3	Apr 1952	May 1952	NSW	Molesworth & Ken Martin / FSS	First series.
Notes and Comments [b]	4	late 1959	1964	NSW	Graham Stone / FSS	Second series, with minor title change. Single issues appeared in 1959/60, 1962, 1963 and 1964.
Perhaps	3	Feb 1953	Jan 1954	Vic	Leo Harding /AFPA	
Profan	3	Apr 1941	Sep 1941	Tas	Don Tuck	Tassie's first. Tuck went on to write the first encyclopedia of science fiction.
Quantum	8	Jun 1959?	Jun 1960	NSW	John Baxter	First of a new generation of fan publications, Quantum gave way to Bunyip later in 1960.
? [Question Mark]	4	Aug 1953	Ju1 1954	Vic	Bruce Heron & Kevin Wheelahan /AFPA	"?" was the only character on the cover, though the title was spelt out as "Question Mark" in the magazine.
Scansion	41+	Jul 1954	Dec 1955	NSW	Sydney SF Group	Each issue was edited by a different member of the Sydney SF Group. Short-lived revivals occurred in 1959 and 1960.
Report / SCFA	3?	Jan 1943?	May 1943?	NSW	J.W. Heming? Colin Roden?	SCFA = Southern Cross Futurian Association, successor to the FFA.
Science & Fantasy Fan Reporter	34	Aug 1941	Mar 1942	NSW	Colin Roden; Eric Russell, Graham Stone	This was an excellent source of news for its short life.
Science Fiction Courier	3	Mar 1951	Aug 1951	NSW	Graham Stone / ASFS	
The Science Fiction Fan	1	Mar 1953		NSW	Graham Stone	Mostly reviews.
Science Fiction News	24+	Jan 1953	Aug 1959	NSW	Graham Stone / ASFS	Printed issues were the spiffiest of their day, but the money ran out. Revived in the 1960s.
Science Fiction Review	1	Feb 1939		SA	John Devern [John Dauvergne Gregor]	Australia's first -- from Adelaide! Hand-lettered, bound in a black manilla cover, less than 20 copies produced.
Science Fiction Review [ASFS]	11	Oct 1952	Aug 1954	NSW	Rex Meyer; Graham Stone /ASFS	Meyer edited a run which ended July 1953; Stone produced one more in August 1954.
Sonic <i>see</i> Notesheet / NSFS						
Spaceward	3	Apr 1941	Sep 1941	NSW	Vol Molesworth (2), A. Haddon (1) / FFA	First two produced by Vol Molesworth, last by Arthur Haddon.
Star Rover	1	Nov 1950		WA	Roger Dard	Western Australia's first by the country's then #1 fan.
Stopgap	11	Oct 1951	Dec 1952	NSW	Graham Stone / FSS	
Sydney Futurian	16	Sep 1947	Sep 1950	NSW	Vol Molesworth / FSS	First run ended December 1948. Vol.2, no.1 (only) of a revival appeared in September 1950.
Telefan	1	Mar 1941		NSW	Vol Molesworth	
Telepath	2	Dec 1951	Oct 1954	NSW	Arthur Haddon	An immaculate printed magazine.
Terrific	2?	1953	1953	NSW	D. Kenyon / NSFS	NSFS = North Shore Futurian Society, something of a rival to the FSS in the 1950s.
Trial and Error	3?	1953	1954	NSW	Doug Stanborough	A lesser-known fanzine devoted to amateur fiction.
Ugh!	3	Dec 1952	Apr 1953	Qld	William Veney	First from Queensland.
Ultra	14	Oct 1939	Dec 1941	NSW	Eric & Edward Russell	One of the more durable titles of the 1940s. First 2 issues were carbon-copied; the rest, duplicated. 12-50 pages.
Vertical Horizons	5	Apr 1952	Oct 1953	NSW	Rosemary Simmons / "the Femme Fan Group"	The "Femme Fan Group" was composed entirely of women. Early feminist criticism of sf? Not really.
Waste-basket	4	Jun 1953	Aug 1953	Vic	Leo J. Harding	Intended by Harding as an outlet for material not used elsewhere.
Woomera [first run]	1	Aug 1950		NSW	Nick Solntseff & Mike McGuiness	The first independent post-war title.
Woomera [second run]	4	Feb 1951	Feb 1953	NSW	Nick Solntseff	When you've thought of a great title for your magazine, why waste it? Excellent in appearance and content.
Zeus [a]	6	Aug 1940	Spr 1942	NSW	Castellari, Dwyer, Smith, Levy, Veney	Had a 6-person publishing committee which altered over the life of the magazine.
Zeus[b]; a.k.a. pseudo-Zeus]	2	Nov 1940	Feb 1941	NSW	Ken Dwyer	A disgruntled Ken Dwyer produced two "pseudo" issues on his own after resigning from the FSS.



Bob Nelson, Mt Pleasant, W.A.

15 December, 1994

Having just perused the latest offering from Munchkinland I feel compelled to offer a correction and an expression of concern. The correction (and how the error occurred is hard to fathom) is the spelling of your paternal grandfather's name. Only one "r" -- to wit: TORSTEN.

[Oops! There goes my title as Family Historian.]

The concern has to do with your coverage of my mother's school. Words like "austere" and "drab" strike me as inappropriate and misleading. I was familiar with the school building which was just up the road from the Cady farmhouse, not a kilometre away. It was still in use in the '30s and possibly even after WW2. By 1948, the year I worked a summer there, the building still stood but I believe it was closed... To the best of my knowledge there was only ever one teacher at a time. And if my Aunt Oma was any example, they weren't all stem-faced and matronly! The pupils in all grades from 1 to 8 shared the room, the older ones helping with the lessons for the younger... It was, indeed, a miniature community and while it must have had the odd dull day surely this was true not so many years ago even at Applecross High.

As to austere -- well, 'tis true, they did not have overhead projectors, videos, computers, internets, and much of a school library (that was probably it on the table you pointed out) but they did have plenty of clean air and good food that was very fresh, the crime rate was almost nonexistent... I doubt if the kids in the photo would ever have considered their situation to be austere.

David Thayer, Hurst, TX

15 December 1994

My ancestors lived in Minnesota but all I inherited was a trunkful of postcards.

[This came, of course, on a postcard.]

Your delvings into family history fascinated me, no matter how much you worried about whether others would be interested. When you think about how difficult it was to travel, how hard it was to get reliable information on distant realms, until the 20th century, you feel great admiration for individuals and families that had the courage to migrate from one part of the world to another. Your ancestors obviously had a lavish share of this sort of bravado.

As for me, I know next to nothing about my previous generations beyond my grandparents. I've outlived all but a handful of distant relatives so there is nobody to ask if I decided at this late date to search ancestors. Maybe I've failed to do so out of a sense of guilt. If I don't know who all these great-great grandfathers and aunts and uncles and cousins several times removed and so on were, I won't feel ashamed of myself with regard to specific, known individuals for my failure to have progeny. Sometimes I lie awake in the middle of the night and think about all those countless generations of men and women down through the centuries whose combined efforts finally resulted in me and now I've gone and broken the chain that could be traced back to Adam and Eve, if the Bible is be taken literally, or several unusually strong flashes of lightning in prehistoric times, if the evolutionists are right. I have no brothers or sisters, so I can't even console myself with the thought that others have done the job of carrying on the family for me.

[But your fan writings over the years have encouraged so many of us. You're a father to fandom, Harry!]

As you may know, I'm a computer phobe, so your material about the Internet didn't exactly inspire me with an unholy desire to go and do likewise in communicating. Maryland's public libraries have installed computers for the public to use and they're connected to the Internet. I've never felt the least desire too benefit from this particular use of my tax payments and in fact have almost stopped visiting the library because its computers make me nervous and occupy space that was formerly devoted to reading matter and its users. I know a nice little library in a Pennsylvania town that is still free from the computer blight and I've been in it more often than the Hagerstown library in recent years.

Incidentally, I got confused once again by the loc from Grant Stone. I couldn't believe what I was reading until I looked at the name again and saw it wasn't Graham Stone as I had thought. It's a good thing I looked a second time because I might have made some highly uncomplimentary remarks to Graham over this Barbie interest so late in life.



David Thayer, Hurst, TX

21 December 1994

Enclosed is a cartoon inspired by the comments about your wedding and the wilds of Tasmania. I took my future bride on a 4-hour hike at midday in the desert of west Texas and nearly killed her. She could have used a waterfall at trail's end.

Diana did not understand the cartoon. I explained to her that a creature having only seen other creatures carrying birds in their mouths would naturally realize that a man carrying a woman, looking very much like a bird in her wedding dress, was not a native. She then told me that it was not funny. Women!

Harry Pol, Nieuwegein, The Netherlands

17 January 1995

Recently remains of a 13th or 14th century water-well were found in our own backyard which has reignited my nearly dormant interest in local and family history. Some day I will get around to some research.

Craig Hilton, Collie, W.A.

22 January 1995

My receptionist is very heavily into the genealogy bit. Apparently at some time, in some way, we are all related to John Smith of London. How about that?

[Must have been a randy old bugger, eh?]

Kim Huett, Woden, ACT

10 June 1995

The article on your family's history while not riveting was not totally without interest. The problem is such history will only ever be as interesting to non-family members if something particularly exotic is included. My family [for instance] has a ratbag streak in them wide enough to drive a car on so consequently our history is not lacking in interest. The ancestor burnt at the stake by Henry VIII for betting on the wrong religion, the fortune held by the Bank of England which isn't worth claiming because it would have to be split too many ways, the great-uncle into drug smuggling who dies under suspicious circumstances, the Gypsy Princess connection [?], the bastard offspring of Samuel Terry [?].two brothers on my mother's side of the family who emigrated to the USA...one of them acquired a Sioux bride before they eventually moved back to Australia.

[I don't agree that family histories have to be "exotic" to be interesting to others. Michael Palin made a movie called *American Friends* based on the diary of one of his ancestors. Nothing terribly exotic happens, but it's a terrific movie. Just as much depends upon the skill of the story teller, I reckon.]

6 July 1995

Thank you for the back issues. Losing track of what's in what box is something I can understand from my own experiences. Mind you there is something about the sf attuned mind which encourages the sort of disorganisation that leads to serious kipple. I'm reminded of the story about Lester Del Rey in which visitors while excavating somewhere to sit came upon a fried egg.

[Back issues of this rag are still available. Send two box-tops from your favourite cereal and anything is possible.]

Irwin Hirsh, East Prahran, Vic.

3 August 1995

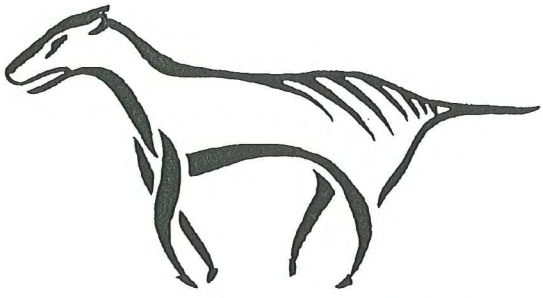
I found your "Ancestral Voices" to be most interesting. But then personal history has long been an interest of mine...when doing my first degree I enrolled in an unit, Sound Production, purely as a way of recording some of my family history. I interviewed my mother, uncle and grandmother about the period when my grandparents decided to emigrate from Poland to Australia, and their first years here. That part of my family left Europe in mid 1939. My uncle remembers that the boat was in the Mediterranean when Germany invaded Poland -- he was eight years old. He was in a large room when one of the ship's crew came in to tell them the news, and he described the feeling of despair which shook that room quite vividly. Most of the people there were Jewish and everyone there would've been overcome with a feeling of what was going to happen to the people they'd left behind.

Within Melbourne's, and maybe Australia's, Jewish school system every Year 7 student has to do a major project writing their family history. My nephew did his last year, and it was about thirty or forty pages long. Year 7 is an appropriate year in which to do such a project as that is [when] every child goes through their bar or bar mitzvah or is preparing for the ceremony. More recently, my son Adrian came home from Kindergarten with the message that his teacher wants everyone to find out how they got their names. Since a lot of people are named after a relative or two, this got Adrian involved in some ancestral research.

["Ella" was suggested by Megan as she is a big fan of Ella Fitzgerald, but it was easy for me to agree as this was also my dad's mum's name. (Perhaps this will help to restore my credibility as Family Historian.) I don't recall where "Frances" came from, but we both liked the combination and it sounds nice.]

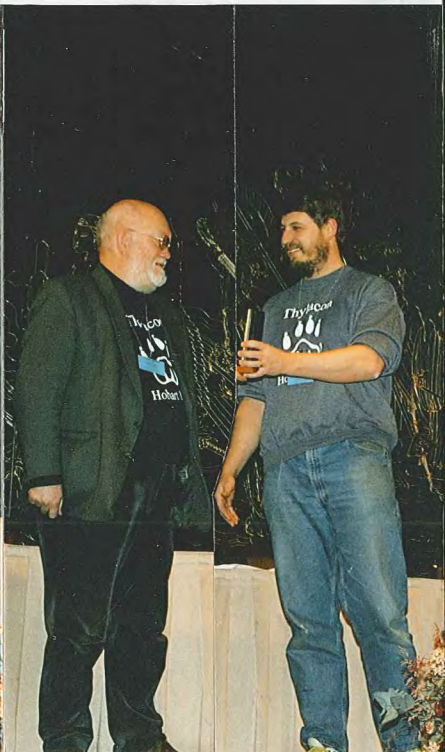
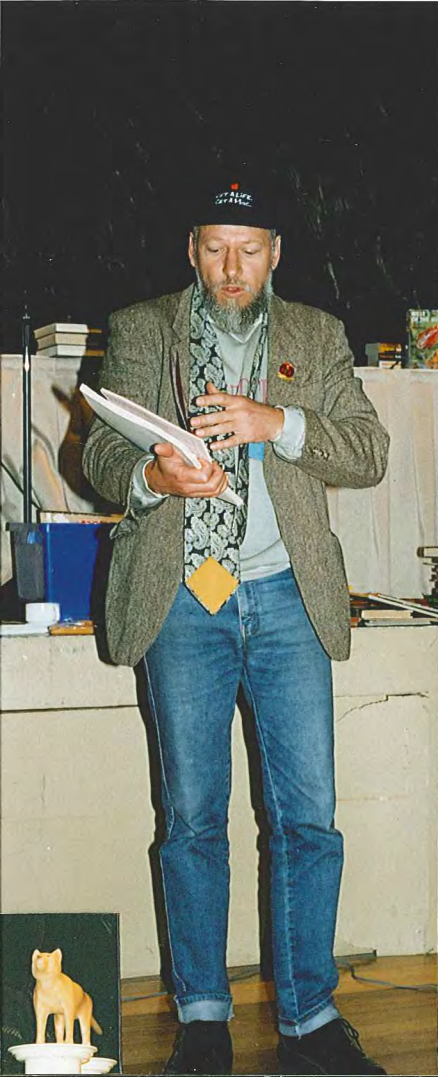
WAHF: Bill Danner (*Stefantasy*), Roger Dard, Dick & Nicki Lynch (*Mimosa*), Graham Stone, Jean Weber (*Weber Woman's Wrevenge*)

AUSTRALIA IN 1999!

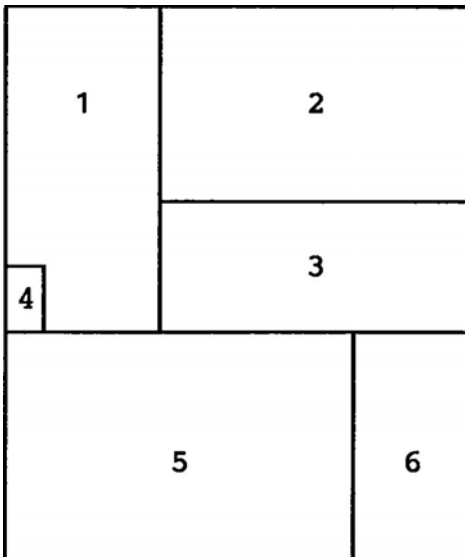


Thylacon

Hobart
9 - 12 June 1995



KEY TO THYLAACON PHOTOS



- 1: Fan GoH Grant Stone in action at the auction.
- 2: Keith Curtis boldly points where no fan has pointed before.
- 3: Panellists debate the morality of terraforming (from L to R: Sean McMullen, Senator Robert Bell, Thylacon Treasurer Mike O'Brien, Wynne Whiteford, overseas GoH Kim Stanley Robinson, Cary Lenehan).
- 4: The Thylacon mascot.
- 5: Award recipients (and Ditmars or other awards) from L to R: ~~Some mad old fart~~ Australian GoH Peter Nicholls (with a special Thylacon committee award); Terry Frost (finally, a Ditmar for Best Fan Writer); Wynne Whiteford (ASFF's A. Bertram Chandler Award); Donna Heenan (accepting for *Thyme* and Ian Gunn); Grant Stone (accepting two Ditmars for Greg Egan); Nick Stathopoulos (accepting for Sean Tan).
- 6: Thylacon Co-Chairs Robin Johnson and Cary Lenehan.

[continued from p.6]

Clearly defeated in my attempts to avoid unwarranted science fictional associations, I flew home in disgust. Just in time to hear a progress report from Robin Johnson about the organization (if that's the right word) of Thylacon, the first national sf con to be held in Tasmania. He informed me that I'd been drafted onto the con committee and asked me what I was going to do to help out. Given higher duties at work, a pregnant wife at home and a home undergoing severe renovations, I had to tell him "not a lot". In the end I did contribute a bibliography of Kim Stanley Robinson's fantasy & sf for the programme booklet, as well as helping at the con, but not much else.

Thylacon was the smallest national convention for many years and although this had both pros and cons, I think the pros won. It was a cosy con, in a great venue, with some excellent guests of honour and unannounced visitors such as Karen Joy Fowler. Like most of the attendees I've spoken to, I had a great time. Paradoxically, it was just what my sf-weary mind needed.

I have to thank a number of people for assistance with the timeline. Namely: Grant Stone, Helen Gibson and Margaret Solosy at Murdoch; Pauline Dickinson and Bruce Belden at Fisher Library; and Graham Stone, Bill Veney, Arthur Haddon and Bert Castellari, all of whom were there at the time.

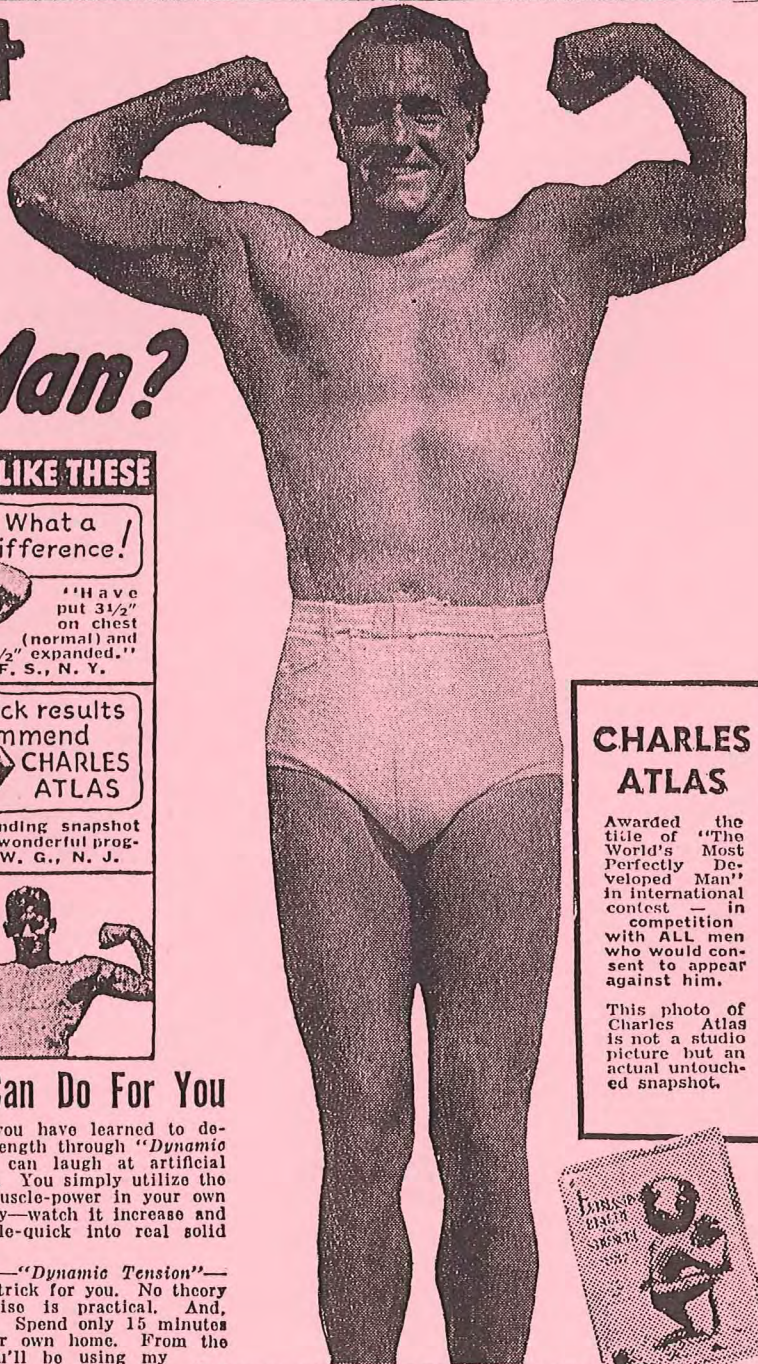
All of Ella's competitors on the front cover originally appeared in *Planet Stories* during 1945/46, illustrating such classics as "Spider Men of Gharr". The artists were "H.L.", Doolin, Murphy Anderson and uncredited. "The Vizigraph" also comes from *Planet*. To avoid charges of sexism, I've used a classic ad on the back cover featuring the original He-Man himself, Charles Atlas. Maggie and Homer Simpson on pages 2 and 4 are from novelty pasta shapes. What will they think of next? Most of you will have black & white photos of Ella and Thylacon because I can't afford the colour photocopying for an entire run. You want colour? Send money.

The next issue of *Mumblings from Munchkinland* will be a while in coming (so what's new, you ask) if fanzine-publishing and baby-raising prove to be immiscible.

Chris Nelson, 23 Henty St., Invermay, Tas. 7248 AUSTRALIA



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<p>Here's what ATLAS did for ME!</p> <p>John Jacobs BEFORE John Jacobs AFTER</p>	<p>For quick results I recommend CHARLES ATLAS</p> <p>"Am sending snapshot showing wonderful progress." —W. G., N. J.</p> <p>GAINED 29 POUNDS</p> <p>"When I started, weighed only 141. Now 170." —T. K., N. Y.</p>

CHARLES ATLAS

Awarded the title of "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man" in international contest — in competition with ALL men who would consent to appear against him.

This photo of Charles Atlas is not a studio picture but an actual untouched snapshot.

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