



More Balls 2

March 2004

The best tag line I've seen on a fanzine in ages - Tony Keen



Here we go again.

Which is a strange way to start an editor's comment but then this is the second time I've started **MB#2**. Due to a series of HILARIOUS events I wiped my hard drive early last month and the new edition of MB was the one thing I hadn't backed up. Yes. I know. And I'm actually paid on the grounds that I know enough not to do stupid things like that.

It wasn't until after the publication of **MB#1** I realised that people who didn't actually know me (in real life or through the power of Livejournal) might read it. Thank you to those who wrote and expressed an interest in lethal traffic-calming, cylons and potatoes. There isn't really room in MB for a regular letter column but I'm saving them all and hoping there will be room for them in **Even More Balls** which is travelling to World-con with me. This bigger issue is even going to have a theme - Culture - and I hope to have some other contributors. If not you'll be getting bigger pictures of my cat.

Finally, say hello to Mr Potatohead. He's here to represent the theme of the current issue which is me. Hopefully it'll introduce me to those who haven't met me and explain a lot to those who have.

The lost editorial was a lot more interesting than this.

All about Ang

I asked fellow livejournalist to write some bullet points about me. They needn't have been strictly true, but I did ask that they "kept it clean." Thanks, in order, to livejournal users yonmei, whotheheckami, hawkida, alexmc and big_bad_bri.

- Ang is the Potato of Love.
- Ang is the Brown Owl of Brownies.
- Ang has the power to destroy unpleasant politicians by pointing her finger and going "Oobledegoo!"
- But she does not use this power because she feels it is undemocratic.
- Well, hardly ever.
- Ang is charming.
- Ang is chocolate.
- Ang likes cheese and welcomes 100+ threads on cheese with gently smiling jaws.
- Ang is clean. Very clean.
- **ang_grr** makes me grin.
- Ang bites chunks off people who think that scouse stereotypes are funny
- Ang kisses potatoes in the hope of finding her ~~King Edward~~ Prince Charming
- Ang has been known to Go Postal on cocky Welshmen
- Ang is not odd, is completely average and has no strange foibles or anything about her unusually worthy of comment.
- But don't call her Angie or mistype her online username, the consequences can be dire.
- Other than that, she's entirely normal. She may be raising the next generation of Brownies to take over the world but doesn't everyone? Other than that she's entirely average.

- Apart, maybe, from the cheese cravings.
- And maybe the potatoes she receives in the post are worthy of some comment. Along with the whole potato obsession.
- And you might notice her mentioning some concern about the possibility of her house being knocked down to ~~make way for a hyperspace~~ ~~bypass~~, which is pretty understandable really. She denies the bit about the bypass.
- Ang should come with special tape - the sort which says "Police Line - DO NOT CROSS".
- Ang shows admirable restraint in the face of stupidity.
- Ang scares me.
- Ang is bubbly when in a good mood.
- Ang joined the original Monty Python crew for 'The Life of Brian' but soon left the Popular Front of Judea after a dispute involving Michael Palin and a potato.
- Ang has a very aesthetic cleavage.
- Ang is renowned for her choice in exotic friends and pets, often bringing them home to stay in a tartan lined kennel in her yard.

Potatohead...

My email address, missing from **MB#1**, has now been added to the contact details. My apologies to Tony Keen, too, for prematurely slaying **The Convertible Bus**.

A Book is For Life, Not Just For Christmas

While browsing the "prepare and bring" section of the Paragon 2 website I find that I could

find and practice reading your favourite bit of Tolkien.

I think I have a favourite bit of Tolkien: the Council of Elrond segment in Fellowship of The Ring. Unfortunately as it's about five years since I read the book my recollection is based on the films, and what makes a good piece of cinema isn't, necessarily, the greatest piece of literature.

I should really know what my favourite part of the novels is, though, because until a few years ago I had a copy of LoTR and I would read it through once every couple of years. This copy I'd got for Christmas in 1983 as being on a child's library ticket I couldn't read LoTR, firmly placed in the adult section [1].

I'd like to say that then, at the age of 12, I romped through LoTR. Sadly I'd be lying. I got through Fellowship fairly quickly but by the middle of The Two Towers I was starting to find the elvish singing a chore and by the dull trudge through Moooooooodooooo I'd given up, skipped to the last few pages and then moved on to an Agatha Christie novel. It was two or three years later before I tried to read it all the way through again. By now I was able to appreciate the power of the Mordor section, tolerate random appearances of elves and just **not read** the poetry.

By my late twenties LoTR and I had a relationship. We had bonded beyond the normal bounds of woman and book. Every time I re-read the novel I found something new to enjoy—hell, by now I even took time to try and read the songs. I wouldn't have classified myself as Tolkien

fan - I hadn't reached the heady heights of speaking elvish for example - but the book was resonant with memories. Not least because books are the few birthday and Christmas presents I've kept from my childhood.

More prepare and bring...

What I **can** bring with me to Eastercon is material for a toga: I emailed Max to ask if she wanted me to pick some up for her and Tobes and so she texted him. I can now exclusively reveal that Tobes will not be wearing a goat at this event.

When the first film was released and someone I knew asked if I had a copy of the book I'd answered yes before I realised what this answer could potentially mean. The next question was, "I've never read it, can I borrow it?"

pause for dramatic effect

Some people would say "no" immediately and firmly. Other people would say "no," but apologetically, maybe explaining that while they trusted their friend the book had so much emotional meaning that they couldn't lend it out. Maybe other cowardly people would say "yes" when they meant no and then, later, pretend to have lost the book.

I'm not that quick-witted and, anyway, she was a good friend. Just in case, as I passed her the book, I told her how it was a present to me when I was a teenager and meant a lot to me.

Months came and went. I casually asked if she'd started it. She'd not had time, she told me. A year passed. By now I'd moved desks in work and I was no longer working on this particular project but I still saw my friend occasionally. On one of these occasions I asked if I could have my book back because I

wanted to read it again before the release of the next film.

"I gave it back to you, didn't I?"

Oh how these words drove a stake right through the heart of our friendship. She'd obviously lost the book - she'd certainly never passed it back to me. The fact that someone I thought of as a friend would treat a book so carelessly—a book that I'd already said had been a present from my parents—shocked me. I was doubly upset that she couldn't be honest about it and it was a blow that our friendship never recovered from.

The saddest thing is that she probably has no idea of how upset I was and even if she did she'd never be able to understand it. I mean, it was just a book, after all.

[1] I've been meaning to check if this is still the case.

More Balls is available "for the usual" from:

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Email: lister@liv.ac.uk

Or as a pdf file via that new fangled interweb thingy:

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/~lister/balls/>

A page that also includes links of interest connected with this fanzine.

Ang's livejournal is at:

http://ang_grrr.livejournal.com/

Your one stop source for information on pasta-stuffing, knife-juggling and the state of current health and safety legislation with respect to adhesive dressings.