

# Scratch Pad 67

August 2007



Hitting  
the big

60



**My sixtieth birthday gathering, Greensborough Hotel, 17 February 2007:**

Top (l. to r.): my sister **Jeanette Gillespie**; **me**; Jeanette's partner **Duncan Brown**.  
Bottom (l. to r.): **Myfanwy Thomas**; and two of the contributors to this issue of *\*brg\**: **Tony Thomas**; and **Jennifer Bryce**.

Others who can be spotted on the back table are **Thomas Bull**, **John Davies**, **Alan Stewart** and **Maureen Brewster**.  
(Photos: **Helena Binns**.)

## Hitting the big Six-O

It was time for one of those decade parties that swing by with monotonous regularity. A few moments ago it was my Big 4-O; a short while later the Big 5-O. On 17 February 2007, to my surprise and chagrin I found myself hitting 60, so I thought I had better do something about it. I couldn't quite see Elaine putting on a surprise party, as she was knee-deep in work. I found myself without a Mount Everest restaurant.

There are almost no photos of my fiftieth birthday in 1997. If Helena Binns had been there, we might have had a photographic record of nearly every SF person in Melbourne, plus several from interstate, plus quite a few people from other worlds Elaine and I inhabit, especially publishing. George Turner only lasted about half an hour before leaving, not feeling well; it was the last time I saw him. I saw Brian McCurdy only once or twice more. Mount Everest restaurant, in Collingwood, managed to put on a feast for the 99 people who turned up. At the end of the evening, the genial Nepalese owner presented me with a ceremonial *kris* knife, which I still value highly. Since I assume he meant this as a good-luck charm, he should have kept it for his family and himself, as the restaurant closed less than a year later.

In 2007 I don't know of a restaurant that is both reasonably priced and can put on a real banquet for 100 people or more. The Greensborough Hotel seemed like a good place for a gathering. Its bistro area never feels crowded, as the tables are well spaced. The quality of the food is basic but plentiful and good. But we were told that the kitchen is open only from 7 to 9 p.m., even on a Saturday night. I felt that fifty was the largest number I could invite, and I was right.

As I said on the night, the Greensborough Hotel gathering was not the birthday we were planning. My mother had been quite hurt not to be invited to my fiftieth. We didn't invite her, of course, because there seemed no way to transport her from Rosebud to Collingwood and back on the night. But I had made a mistake. For 2007 I planned a little party somewhere in Rosebud, with just her, my sister Jeanette and her partner Duncan, perhaps even my other sister Robin, and Grant, if they could get down from Queensland, my Auntie Daisy, and a few of Mum's friends. Three weeks before my birthday, my mother fell badly at the door of her unit, broke her hip, and was taken to hospital. She was in hospital on the night of my birthday, and she died on 4 March.

Planning my actual birthday gathering became a bit difficult. Start the list with family and us: that makes eight. Write down the names of the non-SF people I wanted to invite: that took the list to over twenty. Write down a small number of our SF friends, and there were fifty-eight. And most of them accepted, even though we asked them to pay for their own meals. (But no presents, please!)

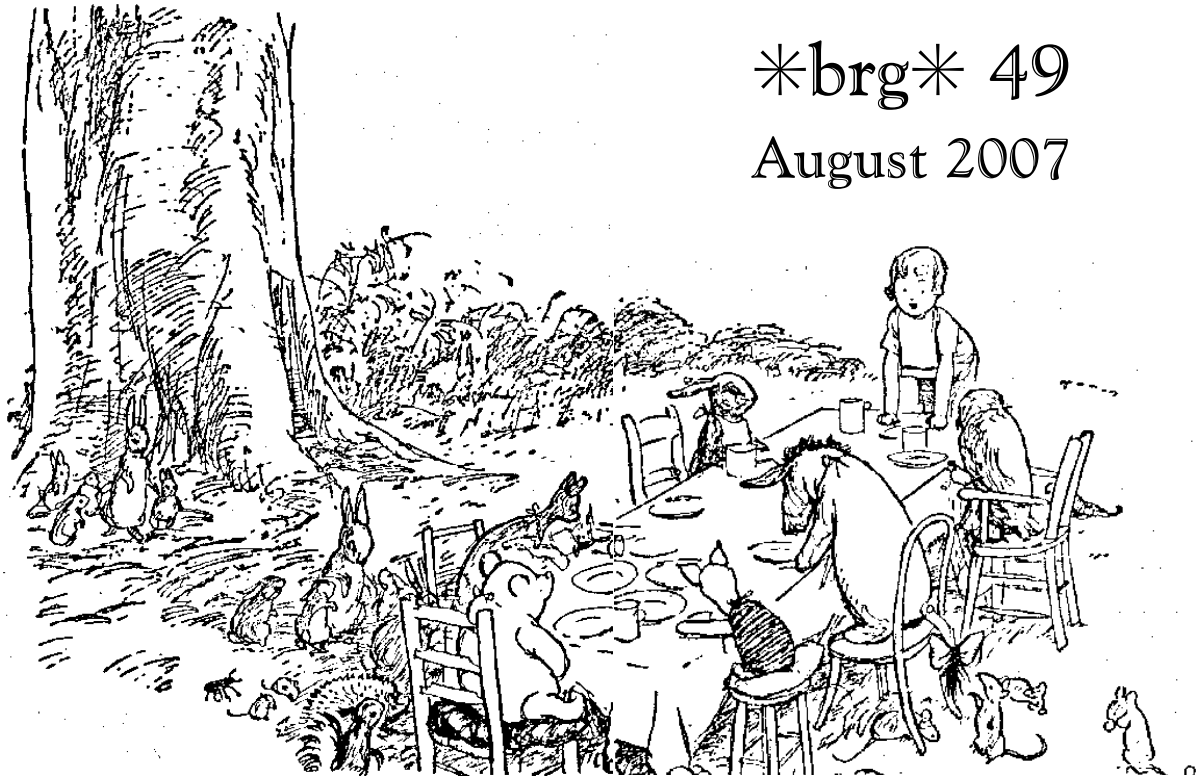
Ooops.

So deep apologies to you good guys in ANZAPA, most of whom somehow did not make the list. I was correct to stop it growing: I have no complaints about the quality of the food on the night, but some people waited nearly two hours for their main dishes. To invite the people I value in the local SF scene, I would have had to send out well over 100 invitations, and that would not have worked.

It was a very enjoyable night. Jeanette made a nice speech, and I didn't fluff mine. Helena Binns caught candid photos of nearly everybody who was there. I even managed to sit down from time to time to hold deep and meaningful conversations with people I hadn't seen for years. A few people gave me presents, despite being told not to. David Russell sent me a huge model steam train, just like the one on the covers of *Steam Engine Time*. Jennifer Bryce wrote the little story that appears in this issue of *\*brg\**. Both were unique surprises.

Since then, Elaine and I have started to catch up with many of the people we couldn't invite in February. It was Elaine's idea to hold our housewarming in episodes. First she held a Sunday afternoon tea party for the Friday-nighters-at-the-Australia; then one for current and past members of the Nova Mob. Can an ANZAPA afternoon tea be far behind?

**Bruce Gillespie, July 2007**



\*brg\* 49

August 2007

## In which Bruce has a birthday

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Written by One Who Is Older\*,  
on the occasion of Bruce Gillespie's sixtieth birthday,  
with apologies to A. A. Milne and E. H. Shepard

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The 'old man of Melbourne Fandom', Bruce, sat at his desk staring. It was his sixtieth birthday, and Elaine had given him a Useful Pot to put things in. He was just trying to decide whether it was half empty or half full when there was a knock and a ring at his front door and in marched John Bangsund.

'Good morning, Bruce', said John.

'Good morning, John Bangsund,' said Bruce gloomily. 'If it is a good morning,' he said, 'Which I doubt,' said he.

'Why, what's the matter?'

'What do you think this is?' said Bruce as he pushed the Pot towards Bangsund. 'It's — it looks like a pot — a Useful Pot . . .'

'Precisely,' said Bruce. 'Indubitably. But what does it Contain?,' he asked.

Bangsund glanced inside the Pot and couldn't see anything (Elaine had cleaned it very thoroughly). 'It seems to be empty . . .'

'Precisely', said Bruce again. 'It seems — and yet — and yet it contains Meaning, it is, perhaps half full, but, my dear Bangsund, more likely half

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\* Owl (otherwise known as Jennifer Bryce)

empty of the Meaning . . . of Life, perhaps?’

Bangsund looked around the walls of Bruce’s study and out into the other rooms of the house lined with books and the farthest room with metres of CDs and DVDs.

‘I don’t *think* so, Bruce’, he said, feeling rather uncomfortable. ‘Remember, you did once say that unless something is written down, it doesn’t exist. There’s no writing inside that Pot.’

Bruce said nothing.

John wondered whether he could cheer up Bruce by whistling the first movement of Shostakovich’s Fourth Symphony or singing his favourite hum, ‘Cottleston Pie’. ‘No’, he thought to himself, ‘I’d better try to get straight to the point.’ He had puzzled over this because Bruce was a Bear of Considerable Brain and long words fascinated him.

‘Bruce’, he said, ‘It’s your birthday, and this morning I made up a little basket . . . just a little, fair-sized basket, an ordinary biggish sort of — well — I wondered whether you were interested in Proust at all . . .’

(He had packed both the old and the new editions of *Remembrance of Things Past* into his basket and driven it over in the back of his Lagonda.)

But we will never know what Bruce thought of Proust, because just at that moment there was a Loud Commotion outside, and in through the front door burst the Nova Mob — not just the present Nova Mob, but Nova Mobs of the Past and Nova Mobs from Foreign Climes, such as Adelaide. They swarmed into the living room and started to devour the little cup cakes with pink sugar icing that Elaine had thoughtfully prepared. Within minutes the plates were empty — not even a crumb for Flicker or Archie, who sat in a corner licking their lips. And there was so much noise that Polly’s plaintive meows from the bedroom couldn’t be heard.

After a while there was a bit of shuffling and things quietened down. Roman Orszanski nudged Justin Ackroyd and he stood up, holding a crumpled piece of paper, from which he started to read.

Three cheers for Bruce!

*Oh, what’s the use?*

(Justin glared at one of the younger members of the Nova Mob who had a sudden loud attack of hiccups.)

We think he is turning sixty!

Three cheers for the Fan

*(This has got to scan)*

He’s travelled from Maine to Dixie.

He went on a trip

In a sort of ship

And we think he ought

To write a report.

For Bruce is a Bear of Enormous Brain!  
Of enormous what? (*asked the hiccupping fan*)  
Well, he eats a lot  
Especially if Himalayan.

But for now we'll give him  
three hearty cheers,  
And wish him good health  
for years and years.

Three cheers for that fan guest of honour, Bruce  
And now it is time to crack open the juice!

And with that, Carey Handfield popped a champagne cork and suddenly there were glasses and everyone was cheering.

Then the littlest and newest member of the Nova Mob, having overcome the attack of hiccups, came forward nervously with a large box. Something in the box was making snuffling noises. Flicker made a growling sound. Bruce had hardly touched the lid when a Spotted *and* Herbaceous Backson leapt out, scampered across the carpet into Bruce's study, clawed its way up the leg of Bruce's desk and leapt into the Useful Pot.

Everyone sat in amazed silence, even Flicker and Archie.

Bruce looked across to Elaine, and a contented smile came over his face as he said, 'So *that's* what goes in the Useful Pot!'

Which is why Bruce never again needed to worry about whether his Pot was half empty or half full.



Indeed, Jennifer Bryce did turn sixty a little while ago. She now says that the sixties are the best time of one's life. We'll see. After some years of working back at ACER (Australian Council of Educational Research), and somehow gaining her PhD in Music Education at the same time, she is now jetsetting around the world, teaching in exotic climes and places. She did take time off to attend the Gillespie Sixtieth Birthday in February 2007. Instructed not to bring a present, she brought a copy of the above enchanting tale instead. (Photo: Helena Binns.)

# Tony Thomas: an introduction



Myfanwy and Tony Thomas. (Photo by Helena Binns, taken at my sixtieth birthday gathering, February 2007.)

Recently Tony Thomas returned to attending meetings of the Nova Mob (Melbourne's SF discussion group) for the first time in many years. I was trying to explain to Murray MacLachlan why Tony Thomas is legendary in Melbourne fandom. I said, 'Because he is John Foyster's brother-in-law' (Myfanwy being a Foyster). Tony said: 'No, it's because the first meeting of the Nova Mob took place at our flat in South Yarra in 1970.'

When I joined fandom in 1968, Tony kept the records of the auctions at conventions while Dick Jenssen performed as auctioneer. Tony also recorded all the panels of all Melbourne conventions until 1971. He was part of that exciting scene, but because of the pressures of his job and a growing family, he disappeared from view within fandom for many years. He has continued to build his vast library, and, as the following article, 'The Versatile Thespian', by **Jane Mitchell** in 3MBS's bimonthly magazine *Libretto* demonstrates, much else beside:

TONY THOMAS was raised firstly in Northbridge, then West Pennant Hills, in New South Wales on a twenty-hectare property, mostly bush with a market garden on one side and National Park on the other. His father was a senior banker and senior CMF Officer in Sydney, which left Tony, his mother and brother to look after the hobby farm and succession of farm animals: 'My mother made a good extra income for a while selling eggs and milk, until the State authorities brought in mandatory pasteurisation and decided that eggs not laid in hen prisons were suspicious.' Tony's job was to feed the hens, which had to be done far too often in the dark and rain, a

job which turned him against farm animals for the following thirty years.

Tony's first radio experience occurred when he was about nine or ten. Radio personality Keith Smith ran a program called *The Pied Piper*, where he interviewed children with a view to coaxing them into making cute, funny or embarrassing remarks on air. Tony's younger brother persuaded his mother to take him to the auditions and Tony was dragged along very reluctantly. While waiting for his brother to strut his stuff, Keith Smith honed in on Tony, who was lured into the studio where hot gossip was elicited. Weeks later the program aired, with Tony telling the listening audience some unkind remarks his father had made about his boss. This caused much amusement for his father's colleagues; Tony's father, however, did not share their humorous reaction.

Tony's mother was very artistic. She played the piano quite well and was delighted when the family inherited one from grandmother: 'My mother always claimed that my brother and I refused to have music lessons.' Tony has fond memories of him and his brother playing old 78 rpm records on his grandmother's gramophone, changing the wornout needles to obtain a better sound from 'Waltz of the Flowers' and the 'Toreador Song'. 'My father's taste ran more to musicals, so when he eventually bought a record player we had lots of *Rosemarie* and *My Fair Lady*. I do recall one LP which was my favourite, containing famous overtures such as *William Tell* and *Orpheus in the Underworld*.'

Tony won a scholarship to Knox Grammar School, a second-rung Presbyterian independent school situated in Wahroonga on the plush North Shore of Sydney: 'My brother was also able to attend the same school, at reduced fees.' Knox had a high academic reputation, which involved a lot of cramming for university entrance. Tony's father insisted upon Tony reading Economics at Sydney University, a situation that was not on Tony's agenda, so he subsequently became a second year dropout.

When Tony's father was promoted to Deputy Manager of the CBA Victoria, the family, minus younger brother who was attending Agricultural College, moved to Melbourne. While there, Tony joined the Commonwealth Education Department, staying with it for thirty-two years: 'I worked mainly in Austudy, which later included setting up a network of regional offices. This took me to Canberra very frequently and many trips around Australia.'

In the late sixties Tony acquired his own record player and discovered 'real' music by purchasing World Record Club vinyls, 'largely on spec'. He discovered great nineteenth-century music, as well as a smidgen of jazz. Some friends broadened his horizon with Dvorak, Janacek, Penderecki and the cantatas of J. S. Bach. Before long Tony's LP collection had risen to a hundred or so. Then tragedy struck — the collection was stolen: 'I was devastated, but never replaced them. I lived without recorded music for about twenty years, other than a few cassettes.'

In 1969 Tony married Myfanwy, also a fervent music lover. From the late seventies they and their children attended many concerts, especially the biennial Music in the Round series at the Abbotsford Convent and other venues: 'These concerts introduced me to lots of great players, especially ones like Jeffrey Crellin, Pru Davis and Graeme Evans, and lots of chamber



music, with string quartets becoming a great passion.'

Tony has now around two thousand CDs, thousands of magazines, and getting on for ten thousand books: 'I haven't counted them in twenty years. Our garage is converted into a library, with shelves on all walls and shelving down the centre packed to capacity. They've overtaken the house as well.'

In the late nineties Tony decided he no longer wanted to work in government and took early retirement. He discovered the Melbourne Shakespeare Society and its readings of the complete Shakespeare canon in three- or four-year cycles. Being an avid exponent of the arts over the years, Tony joined the society, which gave him the opportunity to perform in most of the Bard's plays and also direct quite a number of them. He also founded the Society's newsletter, *The Melbourne Shakespearean*.

All this led to the resumption of theatre acting and dramaturgy, especially for Chambers Theatre Company, which has staged different Shakespearean productions professionally for the last four years. Tony has also participated in other recent theatre projects, including work with La Mama. In last year's Melbourne Fringe Festival, Tony took part in the musical *A Clockwork Orange*, extending his acting repertoire to include singing.

Tony had been aware of 3MBS since its inception, but had only been an occasional listener. Upon retirement, and having plenty of free time, he decided to volunteer his services: 'After training with the inimitable John Barns, I was offered the chance to present the one-hour weekly program *Sunday at Six*.' This continued for about eighteen months, then the one hour extended to two hours with the program *Contemporary Visions*, which is still running on Tuesdays between 8 and 10 p.m: 'Contemporary music is a passion of mine. I've attended many such concerts with music by local and overseas composers. Philip Glass and Michael Nyman are favourites.' Since producing and presenting this program, Tony has contacted many local composers and musicians, inviting them onto the program to introduce and promote their work: 'Brenton Broadstock was the first composer I interviewed; it was most enjoyable and rewarding.' During the last three and a half years this has remained a notable feature of the program, with some hundred interviews broadcast.

Tony is also involved with *CD Collectables* (Tuesdays, 7-8 p.m.), Friday Specials, and a monthly *Notturmo*. During the last year he has also chaired the Program Development Committee.

With such a busy lifestyle he still manages to read a wide range of literature, including history, philosophy, science fiction, mystery and many other genres.

Tony's enthusiasm for his theatre, music programs and 3MBS in general never wanes, and we hope this will be so for many more years.

**Jane Mitchell**

*Libretto*, December 2005–January 2006, p. 13.



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# The Perils of *Pericles*

by Tony Thomas

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Last year I expressed interest in *Pericles*, because I didn't know it very well, but I also knew that there had been a number of recent productions of interest — and also that this was one of Shakespeare's so-called late plays or romances, in which he plays on themes of loss and reconciliation, separation of husband and wife, shipwreck, the seeming death of women, in play after play. If I just name the romances it will make this point for anyone who is at all familiar with their plots: *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*.

And I knew that *Pericles* was one of those plays — mainly from the beginning and end of Shakespeare's career — of which he was not the sole author — or so it was generally agreed, as I thought. But I didn't know that, when *Pericles* was the play I was asked to direct and also to talk about, this would land me in the middle of one of the most vitriolic debates currently to be found in Shakespearean circles.

It was only when I began looking at the editions of *Pericles* in the three main standard series of Shakespeare, Oxford, Cambridge and Arden, that I came to see how much disagreement remained on issues that I thought had been settled long ago. One of these is to do with authorship, or co-authorship: was Shakespeare a collaborator? (even this word has sinister overtones for some); could such a genius ever have stooped to work with men (it's always men) who were so obviously his inferiors? And the other disputed question is to do with how a text should be emended. This latter issue — emendation — is of course one that goes back to the earliest editors of Shakespeare, from Rowe onwards, but it is especially pertinent with *Pericles*, because we have a non-Shakespearean source, the prose narrative *The Painful Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre* by one George Wilkins, two copies of which were only rediscovered in the nineteenth century. This proclaims itself as 'the true History of the Play of *Pericles*, as it was lately presented by the worthy and ancient Poet John Gower', that is, it purports to be a report of the play as acted by Shakespeare's company the King's Men, with Gower of course as the narrator. Like some of the bad quartos, it is thought by some to be a 'reported' text, usually reported by some of the actors who had parts in a production. We'll return to this issue of emendation, and what use can be made of the *Painful Adventures*, in more detail later on.

But for now, let's have a detailed look at the authorship question. And in looking at who wrote *Pericles*, we first have to look at how the play has come down to us. *Pericles* was not published among the thirty-six plays of the first Folio, even though there was a quarto version published in 1609 attributed to Shakespeare, which had been reprinted three times before the first Folio of 1623. Three reasons have been advanced for its non-inclusion, as the editor of the Oxford *Pericles*, Roger Warren, tells us. First, no satisfactory text was available — this can be dismissed immediately, says Warren. *Pericles* was one of the most popular plays of its time (i.e. 1608–1620s), was still being performed by the King's Men when the first Folio came out, and Heminges and Condell (the first Folio editors) must have had access to a useable text. The second reason advanced for non-inclusion is copyright problems. We know that these occurred, for instance, in relation to *Troilus and Cressida*, where the space originally allocated in the Folio for *Troilus* was taken up by the much shorter *Timon of Athens* — but these were resolved and *Troilus* was still printed, although in a different position. The entry of 1609 in the Stationers' Register securing the copyright for *Pericles* was by one of the publishers of the Folio as well. And although the first Quarto was from another publisher, it appears to have been unauthorised, and therefore reprinting would not have incurred copyright problems — unless there are some we don't know about, always a possibility with events this long in the past, about which the records are at best patchy. The third reason for non-inclusion is that the editors may have known that the play was not wholly by Shakespeare. This didn't prevent them printing *Henry VIII*, partly by

Fletcher, and *Timon*, partly by Middleton, if modern scholars are right. But an explanation for the printing of each of these can be given: *Henry VIII* was needed to complete the history cycle, and *Timon* was probably a late inclusion when it looked as though *Troilus* couldn't be printed. Other presumed collaborative plays, like some of the *Henry VI* plays, were so far back in Shakespeare's career that perhaps even Heminges and Condell were not clear about their authorship. So, Warren concludes, 'the *least implausible* of the various theories is that *Pericles* was excluded because Heminges and Condell knew that Shakespeare was responsible for only part of it.'

*Pericles* then joins the group of plays that have been *attributed* to Shakespeare in whole or part. And this leads to a short excursus on such claims. *Pericles* was printed by the editors of the third and fourth Folios later in the seventeenth century in an addendum of disputed plays, in company with *Lochrine*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, *The London Prodigal* and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, none of whose claims, except for *Pericles*, have been accepted. There may be others in this group as well: I'm not sure, not having a copy of the Third Folio to hand as I wrote this. The other omission from the *first* Folio, whose claims *have* been recognised is *The Two Noble Kinsman*, now generally regarded as a collaboration between Shakespeare and John Fletcher, which was first published in a quarto in 1634, as 'by Mr John Fletcher and Mr William Shakespeare'. *Two Noble Kinsmen* joins *Henry VIII* (called by its original title *All Is True* in the Complete Oxford) and the lost *Cardenio* as collaborations by Shakespeare and Fletcher all late in Shakespeare's career, perhaps after *The Tempest*.

I say the lost *Cardenio* and perhaps should add a footnote on this. The claim by handwriting expert Charles Hamilton that a play called *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* was by Shakespeare and could be turned into the lost *Cardenio* by changing some of the characters' names has been totally disregarded by reputable scholars. I don't know why this is, but I presume it's because the claims are regarded as being in the same ratbag category as those who claim Marlowe wrote Shakespeare, or Bacon, or Oxford . . . you know how the list goes on. This *Hamilton* version of *Cardenio* is the one directed by Graham Downey that some of us were involved in staging at the Carlton Courthouse a couple of years ago. The scholarly consensus, based on a detailed study of this play and others by Middleton, is that the untitled play that we called *Cardenio* and which used to be referred to as *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (and is now often confusingly called *The Lady's Tragedy*) is in fact by Middleton, but some still see Shakespeare's hand in revisions to the ms. Evidence for this should be assembled in the new Oxford complete Middleton, which is about to come out, if it's not already.

Now back to Shakespeare as co-author. Also now pretty well accepted into the canon as in part by Shakespeare is the early *Edward III*. This follows the championing of this play by Eric Sams in his book *Shakespeare's Edward III*. Cambridge has printed an edition in their Shakespeare series and it's in the new *Complete Oxford*. But Eric Sams' claims for another play in his book *Shakespeare's Edmund Ironside* have received no support. Oxford is also printing *Sir Thomas More* in their new *Complete*, which since its discovery as a manuscript in the nineteenth century, most have thought is a *little bit* by Shakespeare, *and* in his handwriting, one scene and a bit of another. But clearly the rest of *Sir Thomas More* isn't, as it's in three or four different handwritings. And as for plays that have always been in the canon, apart from the Fletcher collaborations that I've already mentioned: *Timon of Athens* is thought by Oxford and many others to be a collaboration with Thomas Middleton, *Titus Andronicus* now thought to be a collaboration with George Peele, and early plays like the *Henry VI* plays (one or all of them) to be collaborations with unknown others, and even possibly *Taming of the Shrew*. The most detailed evidence for all of this is set out in Brian Vickers' *Shakespeare Co-Author, a Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford, 2002, 550 pages), in the Baillieu Library — and I haven't read all of it yet. Vickers is a veteran Shakespeare scholar probably now in his sixties, Cambridge educated, for three decades based in a university in Zurich, editor in the seventies of six volumes of *Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage*, as well as writer of half a dozen other books, mostly on Shakespeare. The title of his book, *Shakespeare Co-Author*, is a direct challenge to the older guard of Shakespearean scholars, some of whom are not so old at all, and who are most reluctant to admit that anything attributed to the Bard might not be his. There it all is, they say, thirty-six plays in the first Folio, with Shakespeare's name on it, and no doubts about authorship

expressed by the Folio editors, who knew him and worked with him. (The poems are another matter, but not a subject for today.)

Among these deniers can be found the eminent Stanley Schoenbaum, who, in his book *Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, and its update *A Compact Documentary Life*, famously assembled all the small amount of external evidence of Shakespeare's life — wills, baptisms, court cases, mentions in books and so on. And in another book, *Internal Evidence and Elizabethan Dramatic Authorship* (1966), Schoenbaum wants to rely on *external* evidence almost entirely to establish authorship, *that is*, title pages, the Stationers' Register (in which plays were registered for copyright purposes), the Revels office-book, play catalogues and other records. Even where the records are missing or include obvious errors, taking the next step and looking for alternative evidence for authorship, such as inside the plays themselves, was not something he countenanced. He was supremely dismissive of such internal evidence in plays, as word tests, verse usage (which we'll get to shortly in relation to *Pericles*) and particularly the citing by scholars of parallel passages from other plays — the 'parallelographic school', as W. W. Greg once called it — dismissing it all as 'impressionistic' and 'subjective'. So for Schoenbaum, everything in the canon was by Shakespeare alone, with evidence to the contrary dismissed out of hand or not discussed at all, apart from Fletcher's contributions to *2NK* and *HVIII*, which he seems to have accepted without saying so openly.

Well, you can see why the move to regarding *Pericles* as a collaborative effort might be fraught with some of those perils with which I began. But, I hear you say, Schoenbaum's book was forty years ago; surely things have moved on since then; surely modern editors wouldn't take such a head-in-the-sand view of a hundred years of scholarship, which has suggested that occasionally, and like nearly all of his contemporaries, Shakespeare collaborated with another author or authors, for a whole variety of different reasons. Well — no.

We are fortunate in having one-volume editions of *Pericles* from each of the three main Shakespeare series, all published within the last few years. This is not the case for many of the individual Shakespeare plays: half of all Ardens are still in the second edition, which often goes back some fifty years or more, and even the third series Ardens and the earliest Oxfords can be twenty-five or more years old now. The New Cambridges can also be twenty-five or thirty years old. So here are the three newest one-volume editions of our play: Doreen DelVecchio and Anthony Hammond's *New Cambridge Pericles* of 1998. And Roger Warren's *Oxford Pericles* from 2003, a reconstructed text closely based on that published in the *Complete Oxford* twenty years earlier by Gary Taylor and Mac Jackson. And the newest, Suzanne Gossett's *Arden Pericles* of 2004. And they take, for Shakespeare editors, radically different positions on authorship and text. The Cambridge *Pericles* rejects the idea of multiple authorship almost completely; they 'express the gravest doubts that Wilkins had anything to do with *Pericles*', to quote them, and in doing so, according to Vickers, they ignore much of the time, rather than argue against, a weight of scholarship going back a hundred years. This leads them also to rely much more than most editors on the Quarto text (which has always been recognised as obviously corrupt in many cases) and to reject many emendations made by editors over 300 years, especially any more recent ones that rely on Wilkins' prose narrative to clarify what would otherwise be obscure.

The Oxford editor Roger Warren, by contrast, follows the lead given in the *Complete Oxford* and accepts that Wilkins is the main author of the first two Acts (Scenes 1–9 in his edition, which omits the Act divisions inserted by seventeenth-century editors), and that Shakespeare is the main author of the rest, but with some overlap, as it is possible, even probable, that each author may have revised parts of the other's sections. The Oxford text is based both on the Quarto and on Wilkins' narrative, so, as well as adopting many readings from Wilkins, this edition is not afraid to insert stretches of reconstructed verse from Wilkins, especially in the first half, where there seem to be gaps in the main text. This is a procedure not original to the Oxford editors, as it had long been noticed that Wilkins' narrative often seemed to fall into verse lines, and Geoffrey Bullough, for instance, in 1966 had reconstructed sections of the verse. But this is the first edition, as far as I know, that prints these lines as main text, the purpose being, as the editor explains, to get closer to the lost original text, which they speculate lies behind the 'reported' texts of both the Quarto and Wilkins.

The Arden edition, coming after both of these, takes a middle ground. Suzanne Gossett agrees with the scholarship that finds Wilkins to be the author of Acts 1 and 2, but argues against the idea that Wilkins' narrative is a reported text of the lost play. At least some of the time she does, because she is occasionally willing to accept improvements to words or lines based on Wilkins' text, but always rejects the reconstructed passages or even whole short scenes that the Oxford editors insert. There are a host of reasons for doing so which she espouses: first, the introduced passages may strengthen or change a character in subtle ways (well, yes, of course, they have to, otherwise why bother). And she also notes that an editor's prejudices and the prejudices of his time may influence the adoption of one passage rather than another (well, yes, we are all of us the sum of our prejudices, even Suzanne Gossett). Here's how she sums up her Arden approach:

Certainly, the text can be improved; rejecting the entire tradition of editorial clarification will appear perverse. However, editors' commitments, including their sexual politics [she is thinking here of the brothel scene with Marina, the subject of much amendment], have varied radically over the centuries and need not reflect those of the authors. Since these commitments have potentially differing textual consequences and, in a post-modern age of fragmentation, any all-encompassing hegemonic explanation for the state of the text will be greeted with scepticism, more limited intervention seems appropriate.

Happily, this coincides with the generally conservative Arden approach to their editions. I think it's called sitting on the fence, and a clue to her uncomfortable position, straddling both camps, is the sudden inclusion of some favourite post-modern terms, 'sexual politics' 'hegemonic' 'fragmentation', here and almost nowhere else in the 163-page introduction.

But all this sounds a bit pedantic and academic and remote from the play itself, so I thought we'd have a look at some of the results of these three editorial approaches on a short section of *Pericles*. In the appendix to this article (pages 18–21), I've printed on the third page (p. 21) a selection from the only two sources relied upon by most editors, and I want to look at this page first and then come back to what the editors have made of it. You'll see there is first of all an extract from the Quarto of 1609, which is the only contemporary source of the whole play — the later Quartos are all reprints with almost no change, and as I said, earlier *Pericles* was not included in the First Folio. When *Pericles* is added to later Folios, these reprint the Quarto text. And the other source (also on page 21) is Wilkins' *Painful Adventures*, from which I've printed a short extract relevant to this scene. Both of these come from appendixes to the Oxford *Pericles*.

This is the end of Scene 9 in *Oxford*, or the end of Act 2 in other editions, and is just about the end of the first part of the play thought to be by Wilkins, so the verse isn't very good here: not very bad, just not very good. At this point, the young Pericles, voyaging from country to country, has recently been shipwrecked on the shore of Pentapolis, identified as Cyrene in North Africa, modern Libya. Pericles and Thaisa, the daughter of King Simonides, have been smitten with one another. Even though Pericles is not known to be a prince, Simonides is happy with the match, though he pretends otherwise for reasons that are a bit obscure, except that he likes to dissemble and he wants to play with the lovers and test their love.

To begin with the Quarto: you'll see it is printed in original spelling and with original punctuation. My transcript reproduces the original faithfully, except for the long 's'es, which look like 'f's without the middle bar, used for 's' except at the end of words — unfortunately, I couldn't find the long 's' on my computer keyboard. But this means that we avoid misreadings like these (from the beginning):

Then as you are as virtuous as fair  
Refolve your angry Father, if my tongue  
Did ere folicit, or my hand fubscribe  
To any fillable that made love to you.

Now this section of the Quarto illustrates some of the problems with this text I've referred to already. But perhaps before we come to these, I might get somebody to read it out. U and

v swap places sometimes, and i substitutes for j, but other than this you shouldn't have any trouble with the original spelling: just read it phonetically.

[read]

And now if we look at the extract from George Wilkins: you see where this might fit. Just near the beginning of the King's first speech. And perhaps someone could read that out.

[read]

These are the fossils of verse, as they are called by the Arden editor. But I think you might agree that these are a bit more than fossils. It takes very little to turn the prose into quite acceptable verse, as the Oxford editors have done, if we turn now to page 18 and look from lines 75 on beginning after the dash 'Is this a fit match for you'. Read it through, and it is almost word for word directly from Wilkins. As well, it gives Thaisa a striking defence of her love for Pericles, and adds about one-fifth to her part in the play. This is acknowledged by the Arden editor Gossett in a footnote that occurs at the *beginning* of this scene, under the heading 'Location', so you have to search for it a bit. Here's what she says: 'The present scene is considerably expanded in *Painful Adventures* and contains many lines that fall easily into pentameters (so called 'verse fossils') . . . The most notable line is "A struggling Theseus born I know not where"; the most important moment, often adopted by stage productions, is Thaisa's more extensive defence of Pericles, his virtue and her love.' So, this is a section of the play agreed to be by Wilkins, and from a book by Wilkins we have a section of this scene that looks like it dropped out of the Quarto, and which most agree considerably improves the scene. So why not print it? The innate conservatism of the Shakespeare industry is the only reason that comes to mind, except for the Oxford editors, all praise to them, who were willing to take the bull by the horns.

Well, let's have a look at some of the other editorial decisions that each edition made. The punctuation has been modernised in each case, differently, but unproblematically. There is one obvious punctuation mistake at line 1045 of the Quarto: 'Will you not, having my consent, / Bestow your love and your affections . . .' which should clearly be changed to 'Will you, not having my consent . . .', and all the editors have done this.

And the stage directions are all added, often by editors long ago, except for two asides in the Quarto, rare appearances these, that are not quite accurately placed and have therefore been moved slightly. Oxford's more expansive stage directions are often taken from Wilkins, and also reflect actual performances using the Oxford text in Stratford, Ontario and Stratford-upon-Avon in 1986 and 1989.

The lineation is interesting (and this is something that goes wrong in the Quarto frequently). Have a look at each editor's version of the three or three and a half lines from 'Therefore, hear you, mistress . . .' — line 1053 of the Quarto, line 79 of the Arden and Cambridge. Each of the editors has departed from the Quarto, and wants to make 'Man and wife' the end of a line, for dramatic effect. But they each take different methods to get there. It's probably a matter of taste, but the Oxford version sounds the most poetic to my ear.

Then, a few lines further down, we have Simonides last half-line in this passage, 'What, are you both pleased', as the Quarto has it. All the editors want to make this the first half of a line with Thaisa's reply, 'Yes, if you love me sir', but only Oxford drops the 'both', which makes the line scan a bit better, so it would now go, 'What, are y' pleased. / Yes, if you love me sir.' Their reason? A couple of lines later we have Simonides saying, 'What are you both agreed', and this type of repetition of a word ('both') is the sort of common mistake we find in reported texts, a 'suspicious anticipation' as they say in the *Textual Companion* to the *Complete Oxford*.

Next, Pericles' immediately following line. All the editors follow the Quarto exactly, but deleting the comma, 'Even as my life my blood which fosters it,' which means '[I love you — understood] as my life loves the blood which nourishes it.' But this is extrametrical, and would certainly be said, 'E'en as my life my blood that fosters it', and what's more, this last version with the elision is the one that the *Complete Oxford* printed. Oxford editor Warren has said it's his policy to print full versions rather than contractions, as the contracted version can easily be picked up by a speaker, but he's inconsistent in this, as we can see

even from this brief extract. See Oxford, line 76, where he prints the shorter version of even: 'Of thy perfections e'en the least allowance.'

Just one more editorial point before we turn to other matters. The last two lines of this scene, spoken by Simonides, 'It pleaseth me so well that I will see you wed, / And then with what haste you can, get you to bed.' The first of these two lines has twelve syllables, it's a regular alexandrine, and all three editors leave it as such. The second line is a pentameter, with an extra syllable in the second foot, which could be elided, and a reversed stress, a trochee in the fourth foot. The elision could work like this: 'And then, wi'wh'haste you can, get you to bed.' Cambridge leaves it alone: the other two editors, following the eighteenth-century Malone, drop the first word, so turning the line into an iambic pentameter, with trochees in the first and fourth feet: 'Thén, with what háste you cán, gét you to béd.' Or possibly, 'Then with what haste you can, get you to bed.' I can't really see the reason for regularising just the last line. On the other hand, it would be quite easy to regularise the whole couplet, as follows:

'It pleaseth me so well I'll see you wed,  
Then with what haste you can, get you to bed.'

Did no one think of this? Who knows?

I want to leave these editorial and textual matters for a while now and focus on some other issues. We've been hearing a lot about George Wilkins, but who was he? Certainly, not a Jacobean playwright whose name is even slightly familiar, like Middleton, Rowley, Beaumont, Fletcher, Ford, Massinger, Dekker or quite a few more. Little was known about him till recent decades, when Roger Prior in the 1970s published two articles in *Shakespeare Survey*, based on his research into Middlesex sessions court records. Most of what follows comes from Vickers' *Shakespeare: Co-Author* and the Oxford *Pericles*, which in turn rely on Prior.

Wilkins was born around 1578 and died in 1618, probably the son of George Wilkins, the poet, who died in 1603. Wilkins kept a tavern, which probably was also a brothel, in Cow Cross, Turmill St, Clerkenwell, an area notorious for whores and thieves, and he led a disreputable existence, being involved in numerous lawsuits. Some of these involved him in extreme violence against women. Prior says, 'Once he kicked a pregnant woman in the belly; he beat another woman and stamped upon her so that she had to be carried home'; and this second woman was later before the courts for being a common bawd. One of the few cases where Wilkins appeared as a witness, rather than in the dock, involved Shakespeare. It was in 1612, a quarrel between Stephen Belott and Christopher Mountjoy, two French Protestant wig-makers, for non-payment of a dowry. Prior again: 'Both Shakespeare and George Wilkins gave depositions. Shakespeare had lived in Mountjoy's house, and testified that he had known Belott and Mountjoy for ten years "or thereabouts". Wilkins had known them for seven years.'

Wilkins emerged as a writer in 1606, with an English version of the historian Justinian, *The History of Justine*, most of which is copied from an earlier version by Arthur Golding (whom you might remember was the translator of Ovid that Shakespeare usually turned to). Wilkins published a pamphlet *The Three Miseries of Barbary* (c.1606–07), and one play wholly of his own composition, *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage* (1607). This is a domestic comedy about the ruining of a young heir, and in 1614 Wilkins was involved in a suit about the ruining of a young heir James Bonner, who had died the previous year. *Miseries* was probably performed by The King's Men, Shakespeare's company, in 1606, and was a popular success. With Dekker, Wilkins wrote part of a jest-book, *Jests to Make You Merrie* (1607), and he contributed some scenes to *The Travels of the Three English Brothers* (1607), a play written in collaboration with Day and Rowley. In 1608, Wilkins published *The Painful Adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, a novel partly based on Laurence Twine, *The Pattern of Painful Adventures* (c.1594, reprinted 1607), and partly on our play *Pericles*, which was written and performed c. 1607–08, but not published (in the Quarto we've been referring to) until 1609. Twine, in turn, was based on a Greek story about Apollonius of Tyre that had widely circulated in Europe since the fifth century AD, appeared in the *Gesta Romanorum*

and in Gower's medieval poem *Confessio Amantis*. And that's the end of the known writing career of George Wilkins.

It's clear then that Shakespeare knew Wilkins, both because they had acquaintances in common, and because Wilkins' play *Miseries* was a success in 1606, for the company in which Shakespeare was a sharer. There are some other possible clues, too, that suggest Wilkins' interest in the story that became *Pericles*. These were outlined by E. A. J. Honigsmann in 1965. Wilkins' *Justine* is a 'narrative dealing with the same historical period as the unhistorical *Pericles*', Antiochus the Great figuring largely in both works, and it shares with the play 'the same geographical centre (the eastern Mediterranean), the same literary atmosphere (the history specializes in tales of violence, shipwrecks, incest, brothels, sudden reversals etc), and some names not found in the Apollonius sources of the story . . . such as *Pericles* and *Lysimachus*.' Not only this, but some of Wilkins' other literary efforts, *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, and the *Three Miseries of Barbary*, share the same eastern Mediterranean location. It's possible then that the aspiring playwright Wilkins, with a success in his pocket from *Miseries*, came to The King's Men with a proposal for a play with this locale, perhaps with part of it written, as we know from Henslowe's diaries was a common practice. Shakespeare at the same time was returning to themes drawn from Greek and post-classical romance — shipwrecks, separation, danger, loss, family reunion — some of which had figured in his earlier work, like the framing story to *A Comedy of Errors*. Wilkins, with his special interest in the eastern Mediterranean and its adventures, might have seemed like the most suitable dramatist to work with.

Well, this is an attractive scenario, but what is the proof that anyone other than Shakespeare wrote any part of *Pericles*? A whole book now has been written on this subject by Mac Jackson, who worked on the *Complete Oxford* text with Gary Taylor, and was at one stage going to edit the single-volume Oxford. But perhaps he put this aside to write *Defining Shakespeare: Pericles as Test Case* (Oxford 2003), 250 pp., available in the Baillieu Library, and once again not all read by me — but a lot of it I have.

Jackson begins with a brief historical survey of readers' reactions to *Pericles*. From the earliest editors, some felt parts of the play were very un-Shakespearean. Some, like Pope, rejected it as too bad for Shakespeare. Some, like Wilson Knight, recognised its deficiencies, but wanted to claim it for Shakespeare because of the coincidence of themes with his other late writing. Perhaps you, like me, read through *Pericles* and found the beginning hard going. Not only has one got to cope with the stumbling archaic tetrameters of Gower the narrator, but the verse in the early scenes, while serviceable, doesn't sound like the late Shakespeare we know, the ideas don't flow; there are a lot more rhymes than usual; the characters all lie pretty flat on the page. Then something changes about the beginning of Act 3, and 'like a revelation', as one reader said, we are in the world and hearing the voice of the Shakespeare we know.

We can set a couple of speeches side by side to illustrate this point, and at the same time look at some stylistic characteristics of Wilkins' verse that differentiate it from Shakespeare's. I've put them on yet another handout so we can all look at them. These are representative speeches, not chosen for their great poetry, but as characteristic of good verse, first from the beginning of the play, and then from the second half.

*Pericles*' soliloquy in the first speech occurs just after he has solved the riddle posed by Antiochus, the discovery being the incestuous relationship between the king and his unnamed daughter. If we could have a *Pericles* to read out the first speech:

[read]

Any things that people have noted here which may look un-Shakespearean? Well, Mac Jackson and others have had a close look at Wilkins' other works, and have noted some characteristics of his verse (and not of Shakespeare's) that appear in this passage. First the mingling of blank verse and rhyme: notice the assonance rhyme at lines 2 and 3, and then the rhymed couplets towards the end, but, characteristically, for Wilkins, separated sometimes by one or more unrhymed lines. Then notice 'The which', to open the third line, often in Wilkins, rarely in other writers. And the missing relative 'who' down in the second half of the speech:



Antioch farewell, for wisdom sees those men  
[Who] Blush not in actions blacker than the night

Also characteristic of Wilkins. A Wilkins habit of saying what is not emerges in the fourth to sixth lines, which are a bit hard to hard to understand:

If it be true that I interpret false,  
Then were it certain you were not so bad  
As with foul incest to abuse your soul,

That is, 'if I've got it wrong, then it would be true that you would not be so bad as to commit incest.' Then there are some more subtle points. Jackson describes a typical Wilkins technique in constructing a speech as a process of accretion. So look at:

Murder's as near to lust as flame to smoke.

There's no inevitable connection between lust and murder; the lines simply accumulate crimes applicable to evil men. And this process can be seen as applying to the speech as a whole. The lines are mostly end-stopped (that is, the thought pauses briefly at the end of the line, often signalled by a punctuation mark), and this deprives the speech of a sense of forward momentum; one point is simply added to another without much sense of development.

Now if someone would like to read Cerimon.

[read]

How does this speech strike you in contrast to the one we just read of Pericles?

There is a sense of continuity and development, of a man thinking through what he is saying. And this is achieved in part by setting the sense units against the verse units, resulting in a lot of mid-line pauses. Rather than the process of accretion we noticed with Pericles, this speech moves logically from one point to another. So virtue and cunning (learning) are prized over worldly possessions in the first sentence, with the second setting out examples of the consequences of this. This naturally leads into Cerimon's description of the medical skills that he has acquired, occupying the third sentence and the whole of the rest of the speech, ending with his pleasure in these attainments, in contrast to worldly honour and riches which will be taken away at death. And so this returns us neatly to the beginning. At the same time the language and its placement in the verse reinforces the sense: notice the contemptuous 'careless heirs' at the end of line three, the weighty monosyllables of 'making a man a god', the concreteness of 'the blest infusions / That dwells in vegetives, in metals, stones', and the bite of the final phrase, as he dismisses worldly wisdom 'To please the fool and death'. This, I suggest, is masterly dramatic writing and entirely characteristic of the Shakespeare we know from the plays from Hamlet on.

Mac Jackson, in his book, uses these sort of characteristics, and others, to establish several conclusions. First, by looking separately at the two sections, *Pericles* falls into intuitively for many readers, from early editors Rowe and Theobald to the present; that is, Acts 1 and 2 on the one hand, and Acts 3 to 5 on the other. Jackson can demonstrate that the first section cannot be Shakespeare (not early work revised, not later work attempting to be archaic), while the second section resembles closely the Shakespeare of around 1607. These tests occupy fifty pages of his book, and use both card indexes and computers and the availability of texts that can be scanned, and I'm not going to even attempt to summarise them, but I'll list the sorts of things they do. There are vocabulary tests: one looks at words that appear in at least two of Shakespeare's plays, but not more than ten times altogether, or in another test, words used just two or three times. Verbal parallels between plays is another test used: these are more problematic, because more subjective, but still valuable. Metrical data — that is, percentages of blank verse lines with extra syllables, overflows, unsplit lines with pauses, split lines — all of which can be accumulated into a single metrical index. Also metrical data concerned with the falling of the stress in the regular pattern: di-dum-di-dum-di-dum-di-dum-di-dum, or irregularly. Use of elisions,

use of rhyme, use of lexical items (that is, common words). These and more consistently demonstrate that the second part of *Pericles* is like contemporary 1607 Shakespeare, and the first part is not like it: it may be most like early Shakespeare, or in some tests, not like any other Shakespeare.

The second part of Jackson's book then looks at a further range of tests that can establish who the author is of the first part of *Pericles*. This is harder, because if Wilkins is the candidate we're looking at, there is only one play in verse wholly his, shares of another, and some prose works — not much text to compare, even less verse. But nevertheless, looking at a whole range of similar tests to those I've just mentioned, and picking up some of the characteristics of Wilkins' verse that we noticed in the passage spoken by Pericles that we looked at earlier, as well as others, and by looking at the whole corpus of English Renaissance Drama (luckily now on-line), Jackson is able to come to a conclusion. Though Wilkins was a minor writer, his verse turns out to be quite distinctive, and this style can be seen in *Pericles*, Acts 1 and 2, *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, Wilkins' share of *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*, and nowhere else in English Renaissance drama.

So, the Cambridge editors are wrong, and Oxford and Arden are right. *Pericles* is co-authored, and the co-authors are Wilkins and Shakespeare. Rarely, if ever, can literary studies come to such a firm conclusion about such a hotly contested matter.

In our perilous voyage we've ended up with the gentle Shakespeare in partnership with an extremely insalubrious character, writing on a subject to which they were both able to make a contribution. And we have to thank Wilkins, if it was his draft play that reawakened Shakespeare's interest in those themes — loss of family, the seeming death of women, adventure, shipwreck, reconciliation — themes that were to fill the rest of his writing life.

I realise that I've said very little about *Pericles* as a play. This was deliberate, because I wanted to concentrate on other more controversial matters. But I refer you to Harold Bloom's I think excellent but short summary of the play in his *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*. I think he gets it just right when he sees *Pericles* as a forerunner to the late romances (as many, notably Wilson Knight, have done before him). And I also think Bloom's right about the lack of personality of the main characters: Pericles and Marina are much more universal father and daughter than they are human beings, and this is so even if we think of only the Shakespearean part of the play, and not the earlier scenes, which Bloom thinks are generally awful. In the theatre, the play works better than it does on the page, because much can be made of pirates, music, dumb shows and spectacle. But there are still two scenes that stand out: Marina's defiance in the brothel, where as well as Marina the minor low characters come vividly to life for a minute (and it is possible Wilkins' hand may be present here), and the 'sublime recognition scene' (to quote Bloom) between Marina and Pericles on board ship at the onset of Act V.

I hope that we can make these and the rest of the play a memorable experience for you in two weeks' time.

*Pericles – textual comparisons – see next page*

**Oxford: Sc 9, 63ff.***Enter Thaisa*PERICLES (*to Thaisa*)

Then as you are as virtuous as fair 63  
 By what you hope of heaven or desire  
 By your best wishes here i'th' world  
 fulfilled,

Resolve your angry father if my  
 tongue

Did e'er solicit, or my hand subscribe  
 To any syllable made love to you.

THAISA Why sir, say if you had,

Who takes offence at that would make  
 me glad?

SIMONIDES

How, minion, are you so peremptory?  
 (*Aside*) I am glad on't. — Is this a fit  
 match for you?

A straggling Theseus, born we know  
 not where,

One that hath neither blood nor merit  
 For thee to hope for, or himself to  
 challenge

Of thy perfections e'en the least  
 allowance.

THAISA (*kneeling*)

Suppose his birth were base, when  
 that his life

Shows that he is not so, yet he hath  
 virtue,

The very ground of all nobility,  
 Enough to make him noble. I entreat  
 you

To remember that I am in love,

The power of which love cannot be  
 confined

By the power of your will. Most royal  
 father,

That with my pen I have in secret  
 written

With my tongue now I openly  
 confirm,

Which is I have no life but in his love,  
 Nor any being but in joying of his  
 worth.

SIMONIDES

Equals to equals, good to good is  
 joined.

This not being so, the bavin of your  
 mind

In rashness kindled must again be  
 quenched,

Or purchase our displeasure. And for  
 you, sir,

First learn to know I banish you my  
 court,

And yet I scorn our rage should stoop  
 so low.

**Arden 3: 2.5.65ff***Enter Thaisa*PERICLES (*to Thaisa*)

Then as you are as virtuous as fair, 65

Resolve your angry father if my  
 tongue

Did ere solicit, or my hand subscribe  
 To any syllable that made love to you.

THAISA Why sir, say if you had,

Who takes offence at that would make  
 me glad?

SIMONIDES

Yea, mistress, are you so peremptory?  
 (*aside*) I am glad on't with all my  
 heart.

**New Cambridge: 2.5.65ff***Enter Thaisa*PERICLES (*to Thaisa*)

Then as you are as virtuous as fair, 65

Resolve your angry father if my  
 tongue

Did e'er solicit or my hand subscribe  
 To any syllable that made love to you?

THAISA Why sir, say if you had, who takes

offence

At that would make me glad?

SIMONIDES

Yea mistress, are you so peremptory?  
 (*Aside*) I am glad on't with all my  
 heart.

## Oxford cont

For your ambition, sir, I'll have your  
life.

THAISA (*to Pericles*)

For every drop of blood he sheds of  
yours  
He'll draw another from his only  
child.

SIMONIDES

I'll tame you, yea, I'll bring you in  
subjection.  
Will you, not having my consent, 98  
Bestow your love and your affections  
Upon a stranger? — (*aside*) who for  
aught I know

May be, nor can I think the contrary,  
As great in blood as I myself.  
Therefore, hear you, mistress: either  
frame your will to mine—  
And you, sir, hear you—either be  
ruled by me,  
Or I shall make you  
[*He claps their hands together*]  
man and wife.

Nay, come, your hands and lips must  
seal it too,

*Pericles and Thaisa kiss*

And being joined, I'll thus your hopes  
destroy,  
[*He parts them*]

And for your further grief—God give  
you joy.

What, are you pleased?

THAISA Yes, (*to Pericles*) if you  
love me, sir.

PERICLES

Even as my life my blood that fosters  
it.

SIMONIDES

What, are you both agreed?

PERICLES and THAISA Yes, if't please  
your majesty.

SIMONIDES

It pleaseth me so well that I will see  
you wed,  
Then with what haste you can, get  
you to bed.

*Exeunt*

## Arden cont

— I'll tame you, I'll bring you in  
subjection.

Will you, not having my consent, 74  
Bestow your love and your affections  
Upon a stranger? (*aside*) Who for  
aught I know

May be (nor can I think the contrary)  
As great in blood as I myself.  
— Therefore hear you, mistress: either  
frame your will  
To mine, and you, sir, hear you, either  
be  
Ruled by me, or I'll make you—man  
and wife.

Nay, come, your hands and lips must  
seal it too,

And, being joined, I'll thus your hopes  
destroy,

And for further grief—God give you  
joy!

What, are you both pleased?

THAISA Yes—if you love me sir?

PERICLES

Even as my life my blood that fosters  
it.

SIMONIDES

What, are you both agreed?

BOTH Yes, if't please your  
majesty.

SIMONIDES

It pleaseth me so well that I will see  
you wed;  
Then, with what haste you can, get  
you to bed.

*Exeunt*

## Cambridge cont

(*Aloud*) I'll tame you, I'll bring you in  
subjection.

Will you, not having my consent, 74  
Bestow your love and your affections  
Upon a stranger? — (*Aside*) Who for  
aught I know

May be, nor can I think the contrary,  
As great in blood as I myself.

(*Aloud*) Therefore hear you, mistress,  
either frame

Your will to mine, and you sir, hear  
you,

Either be ruled by me, or I'll make  
you—

Man and wife.

Nay come, your hands, and lips must  
seal it too;

And, being joined, I'll thus your hopes  
destroy,

And for further grief, God give you  
joy!

What are you both pleased?

THAISA Yes—if you love me sir.

PERICLES

Even as my life my blood that fosters  
it.

SIMONIDES

What are you both agreed?

BOTH Yes, if't please your majesty.

SIMONIDES

It pleaseth me so well that I will see  
you wed,  
And then with what haste you can,  
get you to bed.

*Exeunt*

**Quarto: lines 1039 ff**

*Enter Thaisa.*

*Peri.* Then as you are as vertuous, as faire,  
Resolve your angry Father, if my tongue  
Did ere sollicite, or my hand subscribe  
To any sillable that made loue to you?

*Thai.* Why sir, say if you had, who takes offence?  
At that, would make me glad?

*King.* Yea Mistris, are you so peremptorie?  
I am glad on't with all my heart,  
Ile tame you; Ile bring you in subiection.  
Will you not, hauing my consent,  
Bestow your loue and your affections,  
Vpon a stranger? who for aught I know,  
May be (nor can I thinke the contrary)  
As great in blood as I my selfe:  
Therefore, heare you Mistris, either frame  
Your will to mine: and you sir, heare you;  
Either be rul'd by mee, or Ile make you,  
Man and wife: nay come, your hands,  
And lippes must seale it too: and being ioynd,  
Ile thus your hopes destroy, and for further grieve:  
God giue you ioy; what are you both pleased?

*Tha.* Yes, if you loue me sir?

*Peri.* Euen as my life, my blood that fosters it.

*King.* What are you both agreed?

*Ambo.* Yes, if't please your Maiestie.

*King.* It pleaseth me so well, that I will see you wed,  
And then with what haste you can, get you to bed. *Exeunt.* 1065

**From George Wilkins' *Painful Adventures of Pericles*  
(compare Oxford: Sc 9.71-96)**

1039 'How, minion', quoth her father ... 'is this a fit match for you? A  
stragglng Theseus born we know not where, one that hath  
neither blood nor merit for thee to hope for, or himself to  
challenge even the least allowance of thy perfections?', when she,  
humbling her princely knees before her father, besought him to  
consider that, suppose his birth were base—when his life showed  
him not to be so — yet he had virtue, which is the very ground of  
all nobility, enough to make him noble. She entreated him to  
remember that she was in love, the power of which love was not  
to be confined by the power of his will. 'And my most royal  
father', quoth she, 'what with my pen I have in secret written unto  
you, with my tongue now I openly confirm, which is that I have  
no life but in his love, neither any being but in the enjoying of his  
worth.' 'But daughter', quoth Simonides, 'equals to equals, good  
to good is joined. This not being so, the bavin of your mind, in  
rashness kindled, must again be quenched, or purchase our  
displeasure. And for you, sir', speaking to Prince Pericles, 'first  
learn to know I banish you my court, and yet scorning that our  
kingly engagement should stoop so low, for that ambition, sir, I'll  
have your life.' 'Be constant', quoth Thaisa. 'For every drop of  
blood he sheds of yours, he shall draw another from his only  
child.'

*Aside.*

*Aside.*

1050

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# Turning sixty: The Theory of Creative Grumpiness

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It's very liberating to turn sixty. Now I can join the ranks of the Grumpy Old Men. It's so much more fun being irritated — and irritating — than pretending to be polite. Not that I aim to grump about *everything* — only about the things that matter: books, fanzines, music and films. No longer do I have to put up with the second rate in those fields. In particular, I don't have to put up with second-rate books just because they are new or highly praised.

Do I have any justification for feeling grumpy? You've given me reason enough for self-satisfaction. Through the Australian SF Foundation, at this year's national convention in Melbourne (ConVergence 2, 8–11 June 2007) you awarded me the A. Bertram Chandler Award for Lifetime Achievement in Australian SF. In 2005, the fan writers of America gave me their highest lifetime achievement award. Both awards were unexpected, and all the more valued because of that. Thank you — but I don't yet plan to shuffle off to the Tucker Hotel.

My father seemed a lot happier during his last decade — he died at the age of sixty-nine — but he had been able to retire at the age of fifty-eight; and he was affected by short-term memory loss. I can't ever afford to retire, except at the age of seventy-two *if* the old-age pension is still operating in 2019. I forget names when I most want to remember them, but I do remember with crystal

clarity what I haven't achieved yet.

Even while I can't afford to retire, I am beset by long periods of unemployment. I can't draw on my inadequate superannuation until the age of sixty-five, and meanwhile I try to survive on \$1000 a month. Hence I'm spreading the word to readers of *Steam Engine Time*, *SF Commentary* and *The Metaphysical Review* to download my fanzines from <http://efanzines.com>. I can no longer afford to print issues and post them to anybody but subscribers, paper-fanzine traders and contributors.

I'm so enjoying being a Grumpy Old Fan that I'm offering my Theory of Creative Grumpiness. Part One of my theory is: beset by old-age poverty, one is free to stop spending money on trivialities, such as printing and postage. No longer worried about printing and postage, one is free to revive sleeping fanzines, such as *SFC* and *TMR*.

Part Two of my theory is a corollary of the above: no fanzine one has produced in the past can match the brilliance of the fanzine one might produce in the future, provided one can afford it.

Part Three of my Theory of Creative Grumpiness is (reformulating the first paragraph of this article): one is no longer obliged to read any books or magazines or watch any films or listen to any CDs except those that promise to be really interesting. No obligation remains except to the pleasure principle! Not that I obey my principle; I still read review copies, and am usually disappointed. But during the first three months of this year, I ignored the stacks of new books and DVDs in order to watch the DVD of the Russian film of *War and Peace* (directed by Sergei Bondarchuk), all seven-and-a-half hours of it; watch the American film of *War and Peace* (directed by King Vidor, starring the divine Audrey Hepburn), which is more than three hours long; and re-read Tolstoy's novel for the first time since 1966. That re-reading was the most satisfying experience of all, which led me to take from the shelf another of my favourite novels read during in 1966, Patrick White's *The Tree of Man*. I'd forgotten how rich and enjoyable is White's prose. My longheld opinion proves to be correct: Patrick White is the best writer of English prose during the twentieth century, so I plan to re-read all his major novels.

My Theory of Creative Grumpiness might yet have no validity. Ill health would stop me dead in my tracks (so to speak). Continuing absolute lack of income could also destroy my plans. But lest I despair, I remember the achievements of my mentors and contemporaries.

In 1975, Bob Tucker attended Aussiecon I when he was aged sixty, and he was the liveliest person there. He was brought to Australia by the Tucker Bag fan fund, because he had been forced to retire at the age of fifty-eight without benefit of a pension fund. These days, retired fans such as Earl Kemp and Peter Weston provide the most interesting fanzines downloadable from [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com). And Dan McCarthy is one of the most highly valued members of ANZAPA.

I continue to be inspired by the songs of two Grumpy Old Musicians who are contemporaries of mine: singer-



Here's a pic of the astounded recipient of this year's Chandler Award: big blue bowl, plaque and citation. Cath Ortlieb handed me the award on behalf of the Australian SF Foundation, and she took this photo.

songwriters Warren Zevon and Loudon Wainwright III. One has turned sixty within the last year, and one is dead. A third favourite is Ry Cooder, but I'll write about him elsewhere.

Warren Zevon, born 24 January 1947, died in 2003, but his songs still cheer me up. Three of his best albums have just been re-released. *Stand in the Fire* has a strong claim to being the best live rock album ever. It's been unavailable since its LP release in 1980. *The Envoy*, one of Zevon's finest studio albums, disappeared after its original release in 1982.

Zevon's reputation is for the defiant lunacy of the lyrics of songs such as 'Excitable Boy', 'Roland the Headless Thompson Gunner' and 'Ain't Too Pretty At All'. Who could resist a lyric such as:

Well, I've seen all there is to see  
And I've heard all they have to say  
I've done everything I wanted to do . . .  
I've done that, too  
And it ain't too pretty at all  
Ain't too pretty at all  
So I'm going to hurl myself against the wall  
'Cause I'd rather feel bad than not feel anything at all

That's a vivid summary of the Theory of Creative Grumpiness. After Zevon's death, a group of his friends made a CD in tribute to his career. They called it *Enjoy Every Sandwich*. As the photo on the previous page shows, I've followed this advice.

Loudon Wainwright III (born 5 September 1946) has written many of the 'tracks of my life', those songs connected in my mind to important events in my life. During my more overwrought periods of the 1970s I knew all the words of both of Loudon's suicide songs, but I would also sing along to his 'Swimming Song' ('swim that old Australian crawl'). When Charlie Taylor and I were getting stuck into the grog in the mid seventies, we sang along to Loudon's 'Wine With Dinner' (from *T-Shirt*): 'Wine before dinner, wine with dinner, and after

dinner too . . . / Gimme alcohol!'. Loudon's life quietened down after the 1970s, even as his fans' did. Neither Charlie nor I swapped partners the way Loudon has done, but each detail of his painfully funny relationship songs has an echo in some aspect of our lives. Loudon Wainwright's 'Sometimes I Forget' (from *History*), written after the death of his father, remains the greatest tribute song to dear lost relatives and friends. Elaine and I played the song first in December 1992, on the night before Roger Weddall died. Wainwright's recent CD *Last Man on Earth* is his agonised, supremely musical tribute to his mother.

How is Loudon going in the Creative Grumpiness department? He looks a lot younger than most of us, especially me. To judge from the cover of his latest CD, *Strange Weirdos*, he's lost a bit of hair on top, and that cheeky grin no longer allows him to look thirty-five. He hasn't put on weight and he seems set to last another few decades. To judge from the lyrics of *Strange Weirdos*, which is also the soundtrack to the recent movie *Knocked Up*, Loudon's in love again: 'I was such a fool to be so afraid of that thing they call love/I forgot my fear we're standing here, what was I afraid of?' ('Passion Play'). Poor fool. At sixty, one likes to feel that one doesn't have to go through *that* again. (Let that be Part Four of my Theory.)

We trust Loudon Wainwright to speak up for we sixty-year-olds who've bought his records since 1971. In a song called 'Doin' the Math', Loudon Wainwright at sixty meditates: 'You may make it to 80 or you could kick tonight/Either way to me you know it just don't seem right/That body of yours is no longer your friend/And your mind starts to wander where and when will it end?'

Elaine took me to see and hear Loudon Wainwright III at the National Theatre on my fiftieth birthday (1997). He didn't get back to Australia this year. I sure hope I get to see him in 2017, when we're both seventy.

Meanwhile, let's raise a glass to creative grumpiness! And enjoy every sandwich.

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## We get letters

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### MY LAST LETTER FROM NOEL KERR

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NOEL KERR

86 Leila Rd Carnegie VIC 3163

Many thanks for your publications on the trials and tribulations of moving house. Any thoughts we may have of doing the same have been swiftly swept from our minds. Doing it on foot must have just been torture. Strange how many SF fans do not drive cars. John Alderson, Foyster, Paul Stevens, yourselves and myself, etc, must have been run over by one of them as a youth. On the other hand: cats seem to be the preferred pet by most fans and the public. Well I don't care . . . I love my dog!!!

Looking at your two publications reminds me of how far we have come from the days of electronic stencils, paste-ups, typing stencils, and the fun (?) of running fanzines off on the Roneo/Gestetner machine. Four-colour process photos and art were undreamed of

(although John Bangsund and I managed to do a few using three Roneo colour drums and electronic stencils; at best, we couldn't match the definition of the text and illos and the quality of the printed stock). I often wonder if just some of the fun of publishing fanzines has been lost.

Looking at your photo of the front of your new home it is hard to believe that so much internal work is required. (I dare say you checked the insulation in the roof!) When the pace gets back to normal and you have found everything from the can opener to the old Bix Beiderbecke records, I would like to suggest that you will realise that life in a new home with a country atmosphere has been worth it all.

Hurtsbridge is a bit of a folky area with a pleasant bush atmosphere. Both Irene and myself have travelled there several times by train and enjoyed the experience. Even the single track train ride is . . . well, interesting.

Best wishes for your future at Greensborough and many thanks for the two fanzines.

P.S. I don't know if you heard but possibly the greatest comic strip artist, Will Eisner, passed away on





One of the most famous houses in fandom: the Rottensteiner family home in Ortmann, Austria, which was Franz's address for many years. Franz tells us that the top floor is full of books. (photo: Franz Rottensteiner.)

3 January 2005. I was most sad.

25 January 2005

\*brg\* But not as sad as we were at losing you, Noel. I'm glad you cheered us up all those years.

FRANZ ROTTENSTEINER

Marchettigasse 9/17, A-1060 Vienna, Austria

I am writing you mostly to return to you some Australian stamps that you can re-use, and to send you some US stamps that you will be able to put to good use during your journey to the country of that Great Idiot who fights for freedom and democracy by trying to make 1984 come true. I really wonder why the American taxpayers are willing to pay exorbitant sums to finance Mr Bush's private war against a country most wouldn't be able to find on the map, and for establishing an academy and training ground for future terrorists. For working in collusion with the drug lords of Afghanistan alone Mr Bush should be executed as a drug dealer.

\*brg\* Nearly everybody I met on the West Coast of the USA would have agreed with you. The division between different parts of the country was very strong in early 2005. Now Bush is struggling to find anybody to agree with him, but nobody wants to go through the agony of impeaching him.\*

I have yet to read your overview of Australian SF, but will probably order the anthology to read the stories myself, and I read with interest your report on house moving and renovating. Houses seem to be much cheaper in Australia than here, and I am glad that I do not have to move again. When I moved into my current flat in Vienna in the early seventies, I had just a bag of possessions; that was fine, because I had to renew all electrical lines in the flat, paint the doors and windows and the walls, build a new bath etc. All that took several years, but I was in no hurry then. Now I would need several trucks to move everything, although I have very few books in Vienna (most are in my country house, where I have a really large library). I am also building again this year; we need a new bathroom in the country house (the previous one I built as a very young man right into the mountain, with almost no isolation). Your new home seems to be very nice.

Aside from that, I am now retired, but still doing some things, a little writing and editing, and also editing my fanzine *Quarber Merkur*, which had number 100 last year. I look very much forward to reading about your American experiences, and hope they don't turn you back for un-American fingerprints or some information gathered by controlling your emails!

21 February 2005

Time is passing so quickly, I don't remember when you were supposed to be in the USA, but I suppose that you'll be already back and that we can soon read about your experiences.

I just re-read your old mail, and I am afraid that Elaine's problem may also become my own. My knees sometimes hurt, and it has been predicted by a physician that I will get problems with my knees; or rather my hip, and that I will need an artificial hip some day (this runs in the family; both my mother and a sister have this problem). But this nevertheless hasn't prevented me from driving a fully loaded wheelbarrow in mountainous terrain, for I am building again. In old age a house all on one level might be convenient, but that isn't possible here where we have a hill right after the house, and if we dig a little we are right into the mountain, and no way a bulldozer could operate without demolishing the whole house. But I hope that even in old age I will be able to creep up the stairs to get at my books.

20 April 2005

STEPHEN CAMPBELL

Flat 2, 29 Kelp St, Warrnambool VIC 3280

After six months of living out of one bag I have found myself a pleasant little place in Warrnambool where I have sorted through twenty years of gathered things (to my relief) and settled into the solitary life of the artist again. Jennifer (whom you met at the last convention I attended) needed some space while attending Melbourne University studying to become a teacher, and my attempts to find a decent place in Elwood or St Kilda proved fruitless because of the sudden increases in real estate prices, so I have made my way back to places of earlier memory. I'm not sad to be away from the big machine that is Melbourne Metropolis, and am enjoying the country air, although I am missing beautiful Jen. She has been the best muse for me, and last year especially I became quite productive. I am currently finishing an exhibition's worth of paintings, and am ten pages away from completion of an eighty-page comic book called *Transitoria*. This has been an interesting exercise, and I consider it publishable. At the previously mentioned convention I attended I met Grant Stone, who actually remembered my comic-strip work from the eighties, and with enthusiasm. I wonder if he has the wherewithal to see such a body of work in print.

This is, of course, musings over the difficult work of making money and reputation for myself, but I still dream on while otherwise engaging with the mundane world of hardcore realities. Fortunately I live in a country where the people contribute to the welfare of unemployed/able? misfits like myself by providing me with a pension to survive on. It's lean living, with no toys and

little entertainment, but it does give me opportunity to paint, which is mainly done at night when the atmosphere is peaceful. I'm becoming more satisfied with the refinement of my works, but this means they can't be painted quickly, so my time on my hands is not squandered.

Being alone has given me more time for reading words and I always enjoy that (I'm reading *The Metaphysical Review* again). I was given an old Silver record player, which I use to play my thirty or so vinyls, and the local community radio broadcasts are sometimes quite enjoyable. Every now and then I go and have a couple of beers at the Warrnambool Hotel, which is always time well spent. As you know, I grew up in that environment, and the waterhole is a familiar social scene for me (cafés also now), giving me stimulation and outlook.

My mum is battling on with the help of her fine husband, and we celebrate her eightieth birthday this August.

My children are growing well; Raphael sings and plays instruments, and Dayne is beginning the study of the psyche at university. Both are adults now, and I get a little shocked that I might become a grandfather in the not-too-distant future. Temporal horrors aside, I feel healthy and reaching the peak of my creative powers.

I hope this letter finds both you and Elaine in good health and spirits.

22 June 2006

I was a little abashed and pleasantly surprised to read your report on me — you let me know that I am not forgotten, and in the future I certainly hope to renew closer acquaintance with fandom. I would have liked to have attended the most recent Melbourne SF convention at your invitation, but that weekend coincided with my mother's eightieth birthday, which turned out to be quite an event. I met many people from my childhood, especially my Auntie Bev, who has been living in New Zealand for the last few decades. ConVergence, maybe . . .

I saw my children (by Rowena) last year, and that was excellent, as I had not seen them for about five years. My daughter Raphael is twenty-two now, and has gained entrance to the Conservatorium of Music in Queensland after two previous tries. My son Dayne will be twenty-one this year, and seems to be interested in psychology and criminal profiling. Both seem to be good and balanced people, which gives me pleasure that I have not bred in vain.

Give Elaine my fond regards, and I hope she's recovering from her physical problems of the year before. I enjoy reading stories of your cats. Unfortunately the landlord here doesn't allow animals other than humans to live on the premises. The last loved cat that I lived with was when I was in a place in South Yarra, at a time when my love for Rowena was consummated, but this delightful animal was stolen or disappeared, and for the life of me I can't even remember its name. I was so hurt by the loss that I have not been with a cat since. I remember that the ten years I lived with Micheline was always in the company of two or more cats, and for some human reason I always loved them dearly.

Currently I am finishing a double portrait of Jennifer and her grandmother (now deceased), which I intend to send to Jennifer's mother here in the country to repay her for her kindness when I would visit with Jen's parents. I have not heard from Jen for over a year now (despite writing to her) and still miss her greatly. I believe that I loved her, or maybe it is just the romantic artist's temperament that refuses to let my memory of her go.

She was the first muse for me since Rowena twenty years ago, and my ability to become inspired has almost ceased, although the workmanlike side of me doggedly carries on. Some work is still being produced, but lacks some spirit. I am reminded of your 'crushing blows' of the 1970s. Nevertheless, life continues, with ageing, and I do feel that my years start to show on me.

(3 March 2007)

LEIGH EDMONDS

12 Raglan Street, North Ballarat VIC 3350

I keep on being impressed by your prolific production of fmz. As you will gather from the little packet that may have arrived in your mail box by now, I find it difficult to keep up even minac these days.

Thanks for the ANZAPA OBE (a joke that seems sadly to be out of date). Yes, I am tempted but I really don't have the time for one apa, let alone two. When SAPS folds — members keep on dying — I shall probably also have less work to do and, you never know. Nice cover; didn't we all look young and energetic?

Thanks also for the John Brosnan ish. Strangly, I have very little memory of him, but he was one of those who took the brave jump out of Australia at a time when it was what one did. I was never imaginative enough to do that, and by the time it did occur to me I was too cautious. When I went to the US in 1993 to have a look around I decided I'd rather be poor in Australia than rich in the US. The most startling events was three days in Alabama (I rang Valma and told her I'd seen the third world — but that was before I went to the Kimberley in WA and saw the third world there) and accidentally finding myself into a black ghetto a few blocks from the centre of Washington DC. Not much of a comment on John, but there you go.

The photo of your hardback room reminds me of a dream I had last night. For some reason unknown — a dream, you know — Valma and I were thinking of buying a new house, apparently a mansion, because when we had a look in the library we realised we'd have to buy new books to fill it up. We try not to buy books these days because we don't have room for them, and I'm not the reader I used to be. Valma uses the local library a lot, and these days goes through a lot of romances, which, she assures me, are a lot better written than most stf. One of the reasons for that genre is that the library has shelves of large-print romances and very little of anything else.

Another list!! A couple of years back, when it was possible to download music from the internet illegally, I compiled some of my favourite rock and roll onto one CD — it was done using dial-up and probably cost me about \$50, which makes paying \$1 a tune these days cheap, if only the sites I've seen had the music I want. There are some tracks that are not my first pick but they were easy to find, and I'm not as keen on REM as the list suggests. So, here it is straight off the iPod (one of the most wonderful inventions of the modern age).

- Australian Crawl: 'Girls of the Northern Coast'
- Australian Crawl: 'Hoochie Guucci Fioruci Mamma'
- Cream: 'Crossroads'
- Cream: 'Politician'
- Divinyls: 'Ain't Gonna Eat out My Heart Anymore'
- Divinyls: 'Boys in Town'
- Guns n Roses: 'Sweet Child of Mine'
- Hunters and Collectors: 'Holy Grail'
- Jimi Hendrix Experience: 'Hey Joe'

- Kinks: 'All Day and All of the Night'
- Kinks: 'You Really Got Me'
- Midnight Oil: 'Beds are Burning'
- Powderfinger: 'Don't Wanna Be Left Out'
- REM: 'Orange Crush'
- REM: 'To the One I Love'
- Who: 'Magic Bus'

Like your list, mine is a bit of a time capsule, except that it stretches from the early 1960s to the late 1990s. Odd that there are no Rolling Stones, Beatles or AC/DC there; I wonder what it means, although I do have AC/DC's *Power Age* on the iPod too, and it gets played often enough.

You were paid money for *The Latham Diaries*. It may be good or bad, but I can't imagine that it is something we will look back on with any fondness, and only historians or political scientists will find it of interest in a couple of years. I've still got the Kerr and Whitlam books about the events of 1975. I only bought and read them because they were on the list for the course; I wrote an essay about them but I have no memory of what either of them said.

10 July 2006

Thanks for your email. I'm responding so quickly to avoid work, which is the tedious part of preparing a chronology of which road or bridge was opened when and when this or that politician became the minister. Yawn.

Let's both consider ourselves flattered because I consider myself flattered that you keep on sending me your massive and usually very interesting fmz for so little response. The effort and money you put into them is prodigious; and I appreciate it also because I still like to get paper fmz. As I probably mentioned in one of my SAPSazines, I consider the paper part of fanac an intrinsic part of the deal. Of course, I must be terribly old-fashioned to have such a primitive attitude.

The interesting thing about my mother dying is that now she is gone my father is a lot more talkative. In the past couple of visits I've learned a few interesting things about them that I never learned while she was alive. I guess he is making sure that the stories are passed on before he dies too. In any event, I'm now getting the opportunity to talk to him in a way that was not possible while my mother was alive so I guess I've been doubly lucky.

From the way you'd written about *The Latham Diaries* I'd made the assumption that you had looked at the index from a professional point of view, not that you'd actually prepared the index. The Professional Historians Association had a session on indexing, which was very interesting and made me appreciate the skill even more. I'm surprised that the index for his book was so restricted. What we will do with the names of individuals for the Haileybury book had already been a topic of conversation, even though the manuscript isn't due until the end of next year.

They tell me that the compression used on iPods means they are not very good on really serious speakers, but they are fine for earplugs or the speakers I have here in my room. I bought the 2 Gb one, and after a year and a half I've only filled up about half of it. The main purposes it serves as is my 'cone of silence' when I'm down in Melbourne. Little old ladies like to chatter incessantly on the train or students like to chatter in the library and archives, so I use it to blot out their noise with some music instead. It is also useful when ABC's

Classic FM puts on one of their programs with too much chatter and not enough music.

The only places I'd expect to find my books are in the secondhand shops or places like that, because most are not published by people who know anything about distribution or care particularly much. Of course this is no problem for me, because I don't get paid royalties and it saves me all the hassle of having to do any promotion beyond attending a launch. You might find a copy of *Living by Water* at bookshops in Geelong, and the new Beechworth Prison book might be available in tourist traps up there. The books I wrote in Western Australia probably haven't escaped from there, and I find that the first Main Roads book is these days given out to new starters. The other thing I discovered about it the last time I was there is that there are a large number of well-read copies in Main Roads, which is exactly the audience I was writing for. The current Main Roads project is even more specific, and it may not get beyond the boundaries of Main Roads, but for \$30,000 I'm not complaining. They all go on the CV and they occasionally get good reviews in the journals, and that's all I really need from them. I just look upon them as a very specific form of fan writing for an audience that doesn't know what fan writing is. I'll send you down a copy of the Beechworth book and you can see what I mean.

11 July 2006

\*brg\* Thanks very much for the copy of your book on Beechworth. And Robert Lichtman found that your book on Western Australian main roads is available from amazon.com

DAMIEN BRODERICK

San Antonio TX 78212, USA

Several sad occasions memorialised. I'm sure I must have been at several gatherings in the vicinity of John Brosnan, but I really don't remember ever meeting him. Very frustrating.

It sounds as if you're both becoming properly suburban. Or is that exurban? We're still in the process of buying another house in the country — well, in a small town anyway — and of course the banks and everyone else concerned keep egregiously fucking the paperwork up. Civilisation and its discontents.

14 July 2006

JIM LINWOOD

125 Twickenham Road, Isleworth,  
Middlesex TW7 6AW, England

I think I've worked out why I was miscredited for the photos of John Brosnan's funeral. You asked on one of the e-groups if anyone had recent photos of John, and I found the 1997 one at Forbidden Planet on the internet, and suggested you get in touch with Roger Robinson for his permission to reproduce it. Ian Maule, of course, was responsible for all the others, although I'm not sure how he managed, in one of them, to photograph himself.

You were partly wrong when you wrote about the Powell and Pressburger e-group that 'none of them has so far been revealed as an SF fan'. I've been a largely silent member of PnP for some time and have noticed your recent postings, although I must apologise for not saying 'hello'. I've been a PnP fan since the numerous times my folks took me to see *The Thief of Bagdad* and *A Matter of Life and Death* — the latter was chosen by Ron Bennett as the sole film shown at the Harrogate Eastercon of 1962. My favourite film of theirs is *A*

*Canterbury Tale*, a quirky right-wing mysticism tale, made nominally as a 'Why We Fight' wartime propaganda film. Its central character, played by Eric Portman, must be one of the strangest *heroes* in British cinema; by day a respectable Justice of the Peace, by night the dreaded 'glue man' who pours glue into the hair of girls who were going out with local soldiers, so preventing them from attending Portman's lantern-slide lectures extolling the virtues of a 'merrie England' that never really existed. The opening sequence contains what is probably the second longest jump-cut timewise in a motion picture; a medieval falconer with the Canterbury pilgrims lets loose his falcon, the camera follows it upwards and it is transformed into a Spitfire. I wonder if the young Stanley Kubrick saw the film in a Bronx cinema and thought he could do better.

14 July 2006

\*brg\* It's pretty hard to believe that the 2001 jump cut isn't a direct tribute to that in *A Canterbury Tale*. I've been watching all the extra material that arrived with the most recent edition of *ACT*, thanks to Dick Jenssen, who lent the set to me. In his commentary, Ian Christie takes a quite different viewpoint from mine, but he argues it superbly. And the Extras disk has a documentary film showing many of the 'PnP' group on their own annual pilgrimage retracing the paths of Powell and Pressburger's 1942 pilgrims.\*

PHYRNE BACON

3101 NW 2nd Avenue,  
Gainesville FL 32607-2505, USA

Wow! Two personalzines, and two emails from you in one day. I walked out to my mailbox without my glasses a few minutes ago, planning to pick up my mail. No glasses means that except for up real close, my vision is about 20/400. When I looked in my mailbox, I saw a tan envelope about fanzine size mostly hidden at the bottom of the pile, and I wished it were a real paper fanzine, just like the good old days.

And it was two real paper fanzines! \*brg\* 45 and 46. My wish was granted twice.

Then I got on the internet to thank you, and downloaded two emails from you, which I read.

I would start reading the \*brg\*s now, except I promised to be at Sandy's for supper in an hour.

15 July 2006

LLOYD PENNEY

1706-24 Eva Road,  
Etobicoke, ONT M9C 2B2, Canada

Many thanks for the recently arrived \*brg\* 46. In many ways, it's a sad issue. You've lost two great friends, John Brosnan and Sophie. It's a shame that, in so many zines, our friends are passing away, and we mark that passing with our sorrow and a little anger that our world has changed for the worse. A new kitten may make things interesting, shall we say, in your household. I hope the other cats can adapt.

For a lot of people, life just isn't exciting and packed with events to keep a blog going with regular new content. For those people, which I believe consists of most of us, a fanzine does quite nicely. It eases the deadlines, and still concentrates those occasional events into a good read. I still think blogs are starting to fade, with the novelty of a new technology fading before the drudgery of keeping it fresh. Those who do blog seem

to have escaped into a technology that I just can't or won't follow into. I would need a list of blogs to get started on. Maybe some British fans could provide a list.

I'm letting as many faneds know about this . . . even after these words about blogs, I am using a blog to archive my letters of comment. I don't think I'll be indulging in the idle chat that most blogs contain, but as usual, I am using this new tech to my own ends. If you go to [lloydpenney.livejournal.com](http://lloydpenney.livejournal.com), you'll see how busy I've been in July. This is all an experiment, but so far, things seem to be working well, and feedback has been all positive.

I completely sympathise with your efforts into freelance book publishing. I have made a living in the past as a proofreader/copy editor, but not these days. I wish I'd been more successful at what I do, but I have found there's lots of people locally who seem able to make freelancing a living, something I've never figured out. Once we get back from the Worldcon, we are both going to make fresh attempts to get better employment. It's out there, we just need to find it. Or win the lottery, you never know . . .

It's been a little while since I've heard anything from him, but have you heard much from Michael Hailstone? I haven't seen a paper or electronic issue of *Busswarble* in some time now.

\*brg\* We do have a new black kitten, named Archie, and the others had no choice but to get used to him. He keeps them exercised and amused. :: Michael Hailstone is now posting on [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com). It's not clear whether or not he's going to resume full-scale publication of *Busswarble*.\*

To Eric Lindsay . . . I just had my computer upgraded to Windows XP, and now I have to download XP-compliant drivers for my own HP printer. I might just call them up and ask if they can send me a CD with the drivers I need. We'll also see if the fonts work.

The numbers of fanzines that I receive has tailed off so much, that with this loc, I am completely caught up, and waiting for more zines to arrive in the papermail and e-mail. Bring them on, folks, I'm waiting. In spite of my comments above, I am archiving my locs on my blog.

31 July 2006

MERV BINNS

PO Box 315, Carnegie VIC 3163

Being on the Melbourne Convention and Fanzines panels at Continuum next weekend, I wrote out a speech about the subject. I thought it would be a good idea to at least show it to you beforehand. I could possibly read it as is or just use it as a guide. See you at the con.

Fandom and conventions

Having attended between 50 and 100 conventions in my life, I think it is obvious that I have enjoyed being part of SF fandom, attending the cons and producing fanzines. What it is really all about, though, is meeting people who share your interests and making friends and keeping in touch with them.

I found out about conventions and fanzines when I joined some other SF readers to start the Melbourne SF Club in 1952. I helped produce the club's fanzine *Etherline*, and attended my first SF con in Sydney in 1954. They had held four cons up to that date, and we decided to run our first in 1956, which we called *Olympicon*, it being Melbourne's Olympic Games year.

Since then I have helped run cons here in Melbourne,

and organised a few myself with others. From an attendance of 70-odd in 1956 to 500 or so for Continuum last year, fandom and cons have certainly grown. I attended a few in other states and three overseas, when my financial situation was much better than it is now. To use a fannish term coined quite a while ago, FIAWOL — and fandom has certainly been my way of life.

Putting a program together in my day was pretty easy, and worrying about the cost was never too big a deal until I had the bright idea to run a SF&F movie convention in 1981, CineCon. It was a pretty ambitious program, with American author and fan Robert Bloch as the Guest of Honor. It went quite well, but with a budget of \$13,000, which was pretty big at that time. We finished \$2000 in the red, which my business, Space Age Books, had to cover. So it became evident to me that the cost of bringing people from overseas was a major cost item, and cons since have do doubt had to budget for that. Having a popular author as GoH, though, seems to be essential, if you want to run a well-attended and successful con — look at Continuum last year, with many new people coming along to see Neil Gaiman and all. Attendances have grown over the years, however, and membership charges have been significantly increased, so organisers now can operate with much higher budgets than we did years ago.

Melbourne fandom had some memorable get-togethers during the period from 1968 to 1975 (our first Worldcon), and some of the best of those were held here in the Victoria Hotel. They were all great fun.

1 August 2006

JOHN HERTZ

236 S. Coronado St., No 409  
Los Angeles, CA 90057

Dear Doug Barbour,

When I saw by your letter in *\*brg\** 46 (June 2006) that you'd lost touch with John D. Berry, I wrote to him. He receives my fanzine *Vanamonde*. John D. says I may send you his address, and 'I would love to get back in touch with Doug': 525 19th Ave. East, Seattle, WA 98112.

*Vanamonde* (named for a creature in Clarke's classic *The City and the Stars*) uses Times New Roman. I was hyphenating — well, I'll show you.

I hyphenated an expression like *ham-and-eggs breakfast* this way, so I could distinguish end-of-line breaks with a different mark. On the rare occasions when ham-and-eggs breakfasts, or something of the sort, broke at the end of a line, I thought this would be easier on the eye.

John D. disagreed. They're conceptually the same,' he said; 'you should punctuate them the same.' So I have, feeling like Van Vogt's introduction to the revised *World of Null-A* (sorry, I can't get a macron).

You're welcome to *Van*. Here are some back issues.

*Van* is a tail wagging a dog. First written for APA-L (Amateur Publishing Association—Los Angeles, weekly (yes!) since the 1960s), it's acquired much wider circulation.

I can put five issues, each being two sides of one sheet, under a first-class stamp. People outside APA-L get a packet a month; about a third overseas.

It's a challenge to keep the quickness of good apa writing, while somehow managing that for the reader who won't see the other side of the conversation — for most readers, over some years now — this won't matter.

Another one too. Over time I've now and then slipped

a month. That's easier to fall into than to climb out of. So *Van* arrives some months behind. Until I catch up — real soon now — I have to write so this won't matter either, while reflecting the moment of my life, gosh.

I find it exhilarating, excruciating, and nourishing. Readers seem to think likewise.

Less than half of *Van* is apa comments (if I do my work, the best part); the rest is reviews, essays, verse, notes of what I've been reading, letters and drawings people send. Letters — severely excerpted, no room — every fifth ish.

As Alison Scott says, a fanzine is a gift.

4 August 2006

*\*brg\** People like your gifts, John. Congratulations on your Hugo nomination this year for 'Best Fan Writer', and having a fan fund established to get you to Japan and back for this year's worldcon.\*

PETER SULLIVAN

1 Englemann Way, Burdon Vale,  
Sunderland SR3 2NY, England

Interesting to see Julian Warner talking about re-releases. I guess that, with today's technology, the resurrection of just about anybody from the entire history of recorded music is possible. There certainly seems to be a website for just about everything these days, no matter how old or obscure. I guess that we are shifting from an era of mass production to an era of 'micro production'. (I've heard this trend described as 'mass customisation' when applied to clothing and consumer durables, but 'micro production' sounds better when talking about things like CDs and books.) Any garage band can self-record and knock off a small run of a CD, to sell off a table at the back of a gig. This doesn't necessarily improve the ratio of listenable stuff (if anything, it probably reduces it, for new stuff anyway). But it does make it economically viable to re-release the back catalogue, even if the quantities sold are too small to justify a full run pressing.

I agree with both Alan Sandercock and you on coffee. The assumption that, from lunchtime on, everybody will want tea instead seems to be an English disease as well as an American one. The old saw about caffeine keeping one awake might make sense were it not for the fact that tea contains just as much caffeine as coffee.

Unlike you, I am not a great watcher of DVDs, and have banned myself from buying any more until I make a dent in the backlog still waiting here from Christmas 2004. I did finally get through the Peter Jackson *Lord of the Rings* films, but that was mainly because my wife insisted that I finally sit down and watch them with her. And much of the remaining backlog is vaguely sfnal, including the complete set of *The Prisoner*, and (at the other extreme) *Futurama*.

With Acnestis in limbo, I should really be trying to entice you to join e-APA as your 'other' (i.e. non-ANZAPA) apa. Especially since (being all-electronic), postage dues and copy count are irrelevant. However, despite it being a science fiction apa, I can't really pretend that we talk about books that much, or even at all. Which is presumably what you miss most about Acnestis. However, I'll send you a paper copy of a recent distribution anyway (sent under separate cover as Printed Matter).

7 August 2006

*\*brg\** Thanks, Peter, for both printed and electronic versions of a recent 'mailing' of e-APA. However, keeping up with

ANZAPA as both a member and Official Bloody Editor stops me from joining any more apas for the time being. I do miss, however, the particular slant on books and life that I found in *Acnestis*. Despite the existence of *Foundation* and *Vector*, Britain badly needs a resurrection of *Speculation*.\*

TONY THOMAS

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Thanks for the two \*brg\*s. Most of it's beyond me now, but I know a few of your correspondents at least. Hardly knew John Brosnan even; I only remember meeting him once.

Since you've been persevering for years sending me your fanzines with only very rare acknowledgment (but I do appreciate the literary ones especially, when you find yourself able to produce them), I thought I'd return the favour — sort of — by sending you something I've been doing.

So, enclosed is my recent paper for the Shakespeare Society, 'The Perils of *Pericles*', together with a few handouts referred to in the talk. The performance of this play, only rarely done, went off quite well last Saturday.

Just finished Matthew Hughes' *Black Brillion*, which I think I mentioned to you, and which Justin tells me did very badly for the publishers. Quite undeservedly, I think, as it's a nice mixture of Jack Vance and Jung, with reminiscences too of Phil Dick, if you can imagine that.

Am halfway through *Bleak House* for the first time, and thought Ep. 1 of the BBC series was very good — but this was because I had the book very much in mind. Myfanwy was less taken with the series, which covered a large number of characters very quickly — perhaps too quickly if you hadn't got Dickens descriptions running in your head. Anyway, this might settle down over the next few instalments.

In the next few weeks I have to pre-record one of my radio programs, *Contemporary Visions*, so as to be able to act Tuesday nights, which takes much more time, so I'll spend lots of time running between rehearsals/performances and 3MBS. But I must finish *Bleak House* before the series gets into its full stride — only another 400 pages to go.

11 July 2006

Sorry I didn't get back earlier, but it's been a hectic three weeks performing *Hamlet* nearly every day. I'm not sure it would have been worth the trip to Montsalvat — we got a fair bit better in the second and third weeks in the city and Williamstown.

*Hamlet* tended to shout too much at first, but after a review in the *Age* he tempered his attack a bit and became much more subtle — though Myfanwy, who saw the show twice, including the last night, didn't think it was nearly enough. But I enjoyed playing the Ghost again — this time on stage for the bulk of the play, reacting to *Hamlet*'s soliloquies, putting weapons in his hand etc. I've done this same role now in three different productions over the last six years for a total of about 60 performances — not much for professional hits that go on for years, but a lot for independent theatre.

Glad to hear you quickly got a new kitten — I was going to write replaced, but this is of course never the case. We haven't acquired new cats since the kitten, Geoffrey, who was dumped in a bush on our nature strip, took his life in his paws once too often crossing our busy road and was hit by a car. And not long after our fifteen-year-old cat Ferd died of the kidney problem that

had taken his sister many years earlier. So we continue only with our one bantam, Spec, who I must admit lacks quite a few socialising skills.

Am reading history about Henry VIII at the moment, in association with our current reading of this play in the Shakespeare Society and preparation of a short paper on Katharine of Aragon. Alison Weir's book on Henry, more about court life and its trappings than politics, brings this society marvellously to life.

Saw Yvonne yesterday for dinner after Continuum, which I didn't even know was on — it sounded more interesting than most recent conventions, but I would have had difficulty getting there, with *Hamlet* on during the weekend.

Are you an Altman fan? ACMI has a mini-festival coming up later this month over a week or so, which I think I'll go to some of. Unfortunately, the underrated *Popeye* (which John Foyster also liked) is on Tuesday when I'm broadcasting, but other classics, many not seen by me for decades, are on. Most I suppose are on DVD, but the cinema has its own ambience.

\*brg\* Non-Melbourne readers should know that ACMI is the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, which includes a film library, research facilities and two state-of-the-art cinemas inside Federation Square, corner of Flinders Street and Swanston Street. Its adventurous programming often draws small audiences. My fault, too; I don't often travel in by train from Greensborough to Melbourne just to catch a film. So I'm one dummy who missed the Altman Festival, including *Popeye*, which I've never seen. Some Altman films, such as *Kansas City*, have appeared on local DVD, but only in 4:3 ratio. Some are only in Criterion Collection editions from America, so they are hard to find in Melbourne. *Three Women* (which cost me over \$40) is even better than I remembered it. So are *A Wedding* and *Buffalo Bill and the Indians*, which recently turned up all over Melbourne, each for under \$15. I'm still waiting for *Brewster McCcloud*, one of my favourites from the 1970s. If *Popeye* ever comes to DVD, finally I will get to see it.\*

8 August 2006

ROSS CHAMBERLAIN

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\*Bruce wrote: 'Hi, Joyce and Ross: It's the narcissus aspect that bothers me about web sites, weblogs, and even fanzines placed on efanazines.com. I'm in fandom for the communication, and it's only publishing paper fanzines that seems to get communication for me. I've got vast amounts of stuff on efanazines.com, and receive very little feedback on it. However, some of my fanzines receive nearly 50 per cent response, and nearly all of them get at least 20 per cent response. But websites, blogs and efanazines.com fanzines are affordable. That's their only advantage (hah!) over paper fanzines.'

Teresa Cochran wrote: 'No, in my opinion, not their only advantage. But I'm only one of the vast numbers of blind fans, so again, I'm comfortable in my round hole as a square peg . . . again. By the way, I met maybe ten people at WorldCon whom I've met online, and it was amazing to continue conversations in person that I started in emails.'\*

Yes, your point is well taken, Teresa, and likely it's not just limited to blind fans — or others whose best access is through electronic readers. Joy-Lynd, who is dys-

lectic, can read with effort, but absorbing meaning while doing so is additionally difficult, whereas she absorbs information very well when listening to the material read out loud. She made good use of Books for the Blind in getting her degree back in Cleveland, and if she were more fan orientated, would probably get best results from such readers online.

But for many people, everything on line has a transient feel to it, even if it's interesting and one can readily can absorb its message, or if it takes time and study to grasp its nuances. Online, there's always the next thing one can switch to — even if there's no match in the quality or nature of its content. And the moment, the comment hook, gets lost in the spate of new information/sensation/inspiration/exclamation . . . With a fanzine, or pretty much any hard copy, as it were, it's packaged, practically in an enclosure separate from other, distracting influences. If it works, things that might distract you don't, they're not at the touch of a finger or mouse click, or in some cases calling for attention on the page (for an essentially linear process, such as reading electronically, that may not be a factor). If it doesn't work, of course, any old thing will do as a distraction . . . But that would be true of any production, so shouldn't particularly apply to my point.

I think Bruce's complaint, and that of most of us who have attempted to place work online for general consumption and hopefully acceptance, to garner egoboo, is that unless we can get someone to not just focus on a particular place on the Internet, such as eFanzines.com or Trufen.net, but linger and savor the delectables offered there rather than just graze — Hmmm. It must be getting near suppertime as I write. No, not quite, but I'm thinking about getting up and fixing a snack . . . Uh, oh. I'm being distracted from my own composition. Maybe it's time to let it go — and perhaps provide food for thought . . . (heh heh)

29 August 2006

PAUL HAINES

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I totally agree on the attraction of the novella! I'm working on one now (it's close to 30,000 words) and two of my recent pieces (including the Kali Yuga story) are at about the 10k mark. At 10k I think you can really establish plot, idea, and character. I've found myself approaching the 10k limit (or the ability to approach it!) several times and consciously pared back the story so it won't go anymore than say 7000–7500 words, and even that length is a push to sell. Everyone wants a 3000–5000-word story, which are cool for idea, but not so good for character development (or even an immersive plot). I'm happy to see that Russell B. Farr is looking at doing something novella-wise in the near future for Ticonderoga Press. I'm aiming the one I'm working on at him.

Still haven't managed to crack the digest market yet (or as Jack Dann says, 'the big slicks') but have been getting the autographs of the chief editor these days on the rejection slips. It's even getting harder to crack into the second tier these days too.

30 August 2006

CASEY WOLF

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Okay, I am numerically challenged. I just grabbed the top of the pile and started to read. Now I am midway

through \*brg\* 45 and I am bursting to ask you a couple of questions, inspired by your Enid Blyton comments:

- What did you think, as a child, about Patricia Wrightson? I had never heard of her till I visited Australia in 1985. I bought three or four of her books and gobbled them up when I got home. They weren't perfect, but they were yummy.

\*brg\* Patricia Wrightson's books appeared after I had stopped reading children's books. However, since my childhood *The Nargun and the Stars* has become famous among Australian adult readers as well as children. It was Elaine's favourite book read during 2006. I've read it recently. It's not my favourite novel for the year, but Wrightson's prose has a tang and . . . yes, yumminess . . . not often found in other children's and young adults' books. It's better written than, say, Katherine Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia*, which I read recently.\*

- As a child I read a book that I absolutely loved. I had remembered the name as *Adventure in Mystery Castle*, but no search has ever turned up a lead on that. One friend suggested it sounded like an Enid Blyton book. My main memory of the story was that one of the boys (there were both girls and boys, as I remember) kept a pet hedgehog in his pocket. Any clue what this might have been?

\*brg\* That would have been *The Castle of Adventure*. The 'Adventure' series were Blyton's longest, best illustrated, and overall the most interesting of her children's books, telling of characters who manage to travel all over the world. The 'Secret' series was my other favourite set of Blyton books: *The Secret Island*, *The Secret River*, etc. I'm not sure whether or not they have stayed in print, as the 'Adventure', 'Famous Five', and 'Mystery' series have. I read somewhere that Blyton still sells millions of copies per year.\*

Very interesting comments on nineteenth-century English versus Russian, French, etc. literature. I have never been able to sit through an English novel of the time, although even at thirteen I was sucking up Dostoevsky, Hugo, and so on. Finally I have one clue as to why.

The talk about movies in both \*brg\*s urges me to mention a couple I have really enjoyed in the last year or two. First off is *Jibeu* or — its English title — *The Way Home*, by Korean director Jeong-Hyan Lee (2002). Not to be confused with a hundred different films entitled *The Long Way Home*, or with the bloody but gut-wrenching American independent film *No Way Home* (1996), written and directed by Buddy Giovinazzo (also excellent, but I never want to sit through it again).

There is not a lot of dialogue in this film, and the pace is slow, but it is never dull. A young boy from Seoul is taken to stay with his mute grandmother in the country while his mother looks for work. He is lonely and aggressive, and gramma is extraordinarily unperturbed by his behaviour. The Korean countryside, the grandmother, the whole film is just beautiful. Apparently the elderly woman who plays the grandmother had never even seen a film before being chosen for this role.

Another I enjoyed a lot, though more distressing to watch and less perfectly formed, was *Walk On Water* (2004), a joint Israeli-Swedish production directed by Israeli director Eytan Fox. It follows an Israeli intelligence agent (hit man) who is ordered to kill an aging Nazi shortly after his own wife has committed suicide. The German side of the equation is less thoroughly examined



than the Israeli's, but it is still a powerful film.

I also very much enjoyed Paul Greengrass's 2002 film about the incident in Derry, Northern Ireland, known as 'Bloody Sunday', although all that realistic confusion, well, confuses me. For once the supplementary materials in the DVD are truly worth watching, and they fill in the gaps left by the movie's in-the-moment style. This piece was filmed using some of the British soldiers that had been involved in the original incident, as well as people from the neighbourhood in Derry where it occurred. The intent clearly is to bring healing to both sides.

And since I am on a roll here, I will also mention the amazing film *No Surrender* (1985). You have to have a particular sense of humour and of history to appreciate this film, but I loved it. *No Surrender* focuses on two Irish characters in their very different communities in England. One is a Protestant ex-hit man, the other a Catholic nightclub manager who finds himself working for a very dangerous employer. The previous manager has left a lunatic legacy: hiring out the same hall for New Year's Eve to two groups of hardline seniors, one Catholic, and one Protestant. He has hired a very bizarre Elvis Costello band to perform.

1 September 2006

Back from Haiti this week and feeling zippy and *alive*. Had a wonderful time, combining the experience of three very different places and groups of friends.

In Cap Haitien I visited a dear missionary family (yes, missionary — my horizons have definitely been expanded living there) — American mom, Haitian pop, and two burgeoning defiant teenage kids. From their place in the country I tap-tapped into town each day. (No, I didn't dance: a tap-tap is a world-worn pickup truck with two benches and a cover, usually beautifully painted with anything from curlicues and French psalms to *vodou lwas* and *krèyòl* phrases like: *Wap Pale*, *Map Travay* (You're Talking, I'm Working) or *Honè, Rèspè* (Honour, Respect: the traditional country greeting exchanged when visiting someone's home).)

In town I visited my many friends, all poor, some much more so than other, all struggling, and the town itself depressed and dirty — a far cry from the neat pride that prevailed there not so many years ago. I love my friends there very much; it is difficult to witness how hard life is for them.

When I left I flew down to Port au Prince, and from there to Jacmel in the south. I tap-tapped out a couple of hours into the mountains to spend a little over two weeks in a beautiful valley with peasant farmers I know — members of a homegrown organisation I support in a small way. What a wonderful experience that always is: good, hard work, no English (translation: even more hard work, re-learning enough *krèyòl* to be able to communicate), lots of laughter and music and play. And the happiest animals I have seen in Haiti (who of course loved me).

I finished up with ten days in Port au Prince. This was the part of the journey that I was most nervous about, and that had many of my friends wishing I wasn't going at all. Surprise: not only was I not kidnapped (I didn't really expect to be, but that's almost all you hear about in the news, so you get a little edgy), I *loved* my time there. Old friendships deepened; activism, theatre, music all explored. a dream came true, to sing with a Haitian band, even if only once. The video will be shown on Haitian TV. I even got to teach a couple of friends some co-counselling.

Being a city, there is a certain freedom for me in Port au Prince that is absent in the places I have mostly visited in Haiti. I wasn't a big interesting thing to everyone who walked by, so I got to enjoy a lot more anonymity and repose. Yet at the same time, it was still Haiti, and I was able to continue learning both the language and the many lessons the country always teaches me, while having a lot of fun. I have to admit I was very tempted to stay.

But I'm home, and as happy to be here as I was to be there. I even got up and wrote nine pages of tight prose before ten o'clock today; very pleased with that. Life just feels pretty darn good at the mo.

I sat down and devoured *\*brg\** 46 yesterday and enjoyed it very much, as I always do enjoy your writing, particularly the bits about your life, your cats, your friends. Thanks for continuing to send these zines to a borderline gafiate all these years.

1 September 2006

Ah! I was just firing up the computer to say a final word on *\*brg\** 45 before I pass it on, along with 46 (and in that order) to Howard Cherniack, who always reads them as well, and then 'files' them in his madhouse of magazines, books and comics (which I have had the pleasure and pain of organising, reorganising, and despairing over for many years). All I wanted to add was what a pleasant read it has been to actually sit down and munch through them both with few breaks for real life. I think I may have to adopt that approach in the future. I enjoy the dribdrab method usually, but the concentrated approach is much more satisfying.

I have often thought I should also read a *Canadian* fanzine, or a nearer-by American one, failing that. I know more about Australian fandom than I ever will of fandom closer to home. Part of my problem — well, maybe all of my problem, besides laziness — is that I have only stumbled across zines in recent years that don't really interest me. Is it because I don't know the people they are talking about as well as I do, say, the Nova Mob? Or is it because they are actually talking about things that bore me? I don't know, off the top of my head, but I thought I would consult with you about it. Can you recommend a literary fanzine I might tap into?

*\*brg\** Opinions vary on this. Everybody is waiting for some new Dick Geis to arise in America, but I doubt if it will ever happen. Bob Sabella's *Visions of Paradise* has moved to efanzines.com, but some people don't like it as much as I do. Lisa and Joseph Major (1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville KY 40204-2040, USA) send me their *Alexiad* with amazing regularity. *The New York Review of Science Fiction* (PO Box 78, Pleasantville NY 10570, USA) is not a fanzine, because it relies on a strong subscriber base, but it inspires much envy from me because of its range of material (super-academic to near-fannish) and variety of authors (I've just picked up the April 2007 issue, which includes pro writers Michael Swanwick and Brian Stableford, fan writers Niall Harrison and Henry Wessells, plus 'pictures from Boskone, short reviews and an editorial on bulk mailing'). Subscriptions from Canada are \$US40, and for me in Australia, \$US48. The best 'sercon' fanzine apart from mine is *Vector*, the reviews magazine of the British Science Fiction Association, but a BSFA sub is beyond my means these days.\*

I wonder if *The Castle of Adventure* is the book I read. I'll try to track it down. I'm heading to the library today to pick up a book — hopefully Michael Coney's *The Celestial Steam Locomotive*, which I put on hold months

ago and has been lost in the stacks all this time — and to order Colin Bateman's *Belfast Confidential*. A Northern Irish friend recommends him highly, and suggested this book for me to start on. (Start is an exaggeration. I don't read mysteries often, so I will probably only read a couple of his books over my lifetime, even if I love this one. I'm a bit like you in that I don't like knowing the pattern of a series, although I will read substandard mysteries from the same series if I like the setting a lot, and feel like I am learning something of interest — as with Peter Tremayne's 'Fidelma' series.)

I'm pleased to have offered you some new movie titles. A couple I did see in film festivals — *No Way Home* and *Boy Soldier* (a Welsh film about an unemployed Welshman who joins the English army out of desperation and ends up in Northern Ireland; not a lucky thing) but we do have a surprisingly adventurous first-run cinema in Chinatown that balances the usual American films with quite a few Canadian and 'foreign' films.

Does it surprise you that American films are *not* considered foreign? Or that in many DVD rental shops here *Canadian* films *are*? They're actually quite hard to track down. Luckily, the First Weekend Club now alerts me to Canadian films when they're released. What can I recommend? How about *Hank Williams' First Nation*? Though I suspect a lot of the films I like wouldn't turn your crank, that one might. It's about life on a Northern reserve, and an old guy who wants to see Hank Williams' birthplace, deathplace, something or other before he dies.

\*brg\* Australian films often have their own little spot in DVD shops, just so they won't be confused with *real* films — those from the big studios. At least it's possible to buy the occasional Australian film in Greensborough; the only subtitled films ever to make it to the local DVD Ezy are *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and a few shelves of *manga*.\*

I've assumed you hear everything about Aussie SF so I don't think I ever mentioned to you that our own Edge Publishing released a book by an Australian writer last year. His name is K. A. Bedford, and the book is *Eclipse*. They also published his *Orbital Burn* a couple of years ago. I haven't read either. Oh, yes, you would know it. It was the Aurealis Award that it won. This is the same publisher that put out my first story, which is why I noticed it.

Anyway, I'm off. *The Nargun and the Stars* was one of the ones I had, too. Great fun. (Some sod stole them all, if you can imagine, so I have none now.)

3 September 2006

DOUGLAS BARBOUR

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A sadness attached to the deaths mentioned therein. I only knew of John Brosnan through letters to your magazines. I am pretty sure he wasn't about the few times I met fans in various parts of Australia. Clearly a lot of people cared about him, even if he kept too much to (or within) himself.

Interesting, as always, to see other lists than yours (and not to see one of yours there, but knowing full well that it is a-building). I continue to fail to make them, even as I read and listen on.

I also continue to use the library for various CDs, checking out a number of roots and folk groups that way, as well as a lot of contemporary classical or avant-garde

orchestral music. So I've found out a few more singers named Williams, Dar being another singer-songwriter I enjoy. It's interesting to note that the library manages to get old of some material I've never seen in any stores here, not just some jazz from Europe and various of those avant-garde CDs, but even the Japanese-only pressing of Paul Butterfield's *Better Days Live at Winterland*, which I'd been wanting to get for years but never found (heard only a cut or two on CKUA). It is a great live concert, and a reminder of what a great group it was.

Among the recent SF I've read, I find a lot of what I guess is called the new space opera highly entertaining. In some ways Iain M. Banks is the fountainhead of this, and other British writers have been among the best of those, following in his footsteps. So the two series by Ken MacLeod and the sequence by Alastair Reynolds both work the putative science with intriguing social/political possibilities. Canadian Karl Schroeder also writes truly interesting far futures. For sheer fun, though, I must say that Neal Asher writes far-future thrillers that really grab this reader: *Skinmer* is a kind of *Zelazny* with teeth; high adrenalin indeed.

The other thing I seem to be more into is graphic fiction, perhaps because my final PhD supervision is of a dissertation on Neil Gaiman, Alan Moore, and Warren Ellis. Okay, Gaiman is mostly fantasy, so probably not of interest to you, although I feel *Sandman* is a great work. Moore, however, works a kind of 'alternate history' for many of his works in a really interesting manner (the opening 'shot' of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* sets all the differences so thoroughly well). Ellis actually writes a lot of stuff set in various well-thought-out futures. And also does a great thing with hidden alternate history in the wonderful *Planetary*. I've loved all these guys' works.

I wish you some upturns in your work, and all of us a better world (although, sadly, so long as 'we' all continue to have the leaders we do (now in Canada, we too have a PM who kisses Bush's ass, alas) that doesn't seem too possible).

6 September 2006

I meant to add, Bruce, a query as to whether or not you knew the Australian band, Fruit. Their CD (FR10, so there must be at least 9 earlier ones?) *Burn* is very good, and they have a live one too, again, on their own label, which I found (only) in the library here. Three women, all singer-songwriters, and an intriguing sound.

\*brg\* I'd never heard of Fruit until you mentioned the name in your letter. A few weeks later, somebody in (I think) ANZAPA mentioned Fruit as a personal favourite. I've never heard the group on radio, or seen their CDs in shops.\*

I apparently have not lost some of my delight in a fairly wide range of reading. So I continue to read a fairly wide range of SF and fantasy, as well as too many novels in manuscript that may never see publication, so I have these stories in my head that no one else (or only a couple of other readers at NeWest Press) knows about. Among writers of really deep anthropological fantasy (I mean creating fully realised worlds with lots of cultures), two Canadian writers stand out for me: Stephen Erikson and R. Scott Bakker; and I think I've mentioned Australian poet Alison Croggan's series, the first two of which (in which poets are the seers) are *The Gift* and *The Riddle*. I am reading a fair amount of poetry, it's true. And, after so enjoying the eight-hour miniseries, I took out Dickens's *Bleak House* to read. It was a wonderful book in

some ways, but Esther as narrator is a little hard to take today, although probably a fave with Victorian readers. The series was terrific, not least because every actor was perfect for the part, including Gillian Anderson set in ice as Lady Dedlock. I tend not to collect DVDs, but that's one I might want to own.

As for music, as I said, I do get a lot of touches from CKUA, but don't follow them all up. I have certainly heard of Sufjan Stevens' *Illinoise*, but haven't heard it. Will check it out. I suspect that all the jazz I continue to listen to most remains a minor interest for you. There are even some really fine local (Edmonton) artists with good CDs out.

We are fairly busy — and now we have an Edmonton Poet Laureate, she has put together a poetry festival in a few weeks, where I'll be doing a few things, including getting together with Stephen for one performance by *Re:Sounding* — it will be good to sound off again.

7 September 2006

MURRAY MacLACHLAN

35 Laird Drive, Altona Meadows, VIC 3028

I wasn't articulate when you asked what good recent music I'd been listening to lately. Because not much has grabbed me. The Editors have strong Joy Division influences but are not as good as the real thing. Tim Booth's solo album is not as good as his former band James.

The volume has crept up on only two items recently: a Bob Dylan concert, and the Rolling Stones' *Let It Bleed*, where even the silly 'I'm a Monkey' can be forgiven for the sheer quality of the musicianship, arrangements and emotion. It is just a magnificent album. I never rate 'Gimme Shelter' as a great Stones song, but whenever I hear it, it just knocks me backwards.

26 November 2006

IAN COVELL

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Middlesbrough TS3 7BP, England

Saw your excellent essay on Keith Roberts on efanazines: <http://www.efanazines.com/SFC/ScratchPad/scrat014.pdf>. A couple of brief comments:

The Boat of Fate was not 'mid 60s'; it was 1971, *after Pavane*.

The Boat of Fate's first expanded edition was 1968 in the US (same year as the UK original); that took many years to achieve UK print. I actually thought it was his best novel, and Robert Holdstock also thought highly of it: <http://news.ansible.co.uk/a160.html>.

Kerosina books was indeed half-Keith Roberts: precisely half: Ke(ith)-Ro(berts)-Sina (Simon Nash?).

You were spot on about his male and female characters (the main reason I stopped reading him): his 'PH' (Primitive Heroine), who became a subject of a pamphlet from Kerosina, and the impotent ineffectual males who flutter and die around them, are awesomely repetitive. Anita the witch seems to have been the template, although she is (as I remember) quite sexual in the early stories.

I seem to recall some controversy around *The Chalk Giants*. His work does tend to be repetitive, but I believe that book told exactly the same story three or four times one after the other? I can't recall the details, I am afraid, but I do remember likening it to the earlier parliamentary questions about New Worlds publishing 'dirty stories' when it was funded by the Arts Council.

Anyway, a good essay. I wish Roberts had somehow

turned his talents to other stories, but he was what he was.

26 November 2006

I think Roberts was a limited author, and I think publishers came to see that. Maybe nowadays, in a world of books indistinguishable from each other even when written by the same author, he would do better, but he was (a) samey, and (b) downbeat. You could usually reckon on most of the cast getting slaughtered at least once during a book, and when it was a fix-up (or collection) it tended to happen on an even more frequent basis.

(Fix-ups reminds me that in some ways, Keith Roberts was very like James Gunn; both were best at novella-length works, and on writing a series of connected novellas: *The Listeners*, *The Immortals*, *The Joy Makers*, *The Dreamers*, etc for Gunn; *Pavane*, *The Chalk Giants*, *Molly Zero*, *Anita*, *Kaeti*, *Kiteworld*, and probably others, by Roberts.)

I still think there was some public debate about *Chalk Giants*; I have been cudgelling my brains for a few days on the matter, and all I can think is that something about its bloodiness, and the repetition of the events in the stories made *somebody* annoyed! (The US edition removed the first two stories; and I recall reading 'Monkey and Pru and Sal' in *New Worlds Quarterly*, and thinking after the end, 'What the bloody hell . . . ?' but then I thought that about a lot of NW stuff.)

I suppose we all view him differently; I had a friend who compared him to Wyndham, and took ages tracking down some of his books, only to throw them away because they were nothing like the one he *had* read — *The Furies* — which of course is like Wyndham, and is about as unlike Roberts as anything he ever wrote!

I could certainly read *The Boat of Fate*, some of *Anita*, and a few short stories . . . but almost anything else by Roberts is now unreadable to me.

27 November 2006

\*brg\* It's very satisfying to receive letters of comment on old fanzines — in this case, on material first published in December 1994, available only on efanazines.com as an issue of *Scratch Pad*, and never reprinted in *SF Commentary* or *Steam Engine Time*. I didn't give the article wide distribution in Roberts's lifetime because, well, he didn't much like people saying unkind things about his writing or (by implication) himself. Much as I admire Roberts's writing, my article had to pinpoint the weaknesses as well. Also, I hadn't read then, and still haven't read, Roberts's novels and books of collected short fiction published late in his career by Kerosina Books. It's thirteen years since I wrote my Roberts essay; maybe it's time to write a longer essay. (Paul Kincaid planned a whole book about Roberts. The two chapters I've read are brilliant. If he still wants to do the book, best wishes to him, but I haven't heard any more about it.)\*

CHRIS GARCIA

1401 North Shoreline Boulevard,  
Mountain View CA 94043, USA

Re *In Midair*: 2006: I love lists that groups put out and I debate them endlessly in *The Drink Tank*, so I figured I'd drop a line about the Top 100 albums.

First off, *Dark Side of the Moon* is Pink Floyd, and I've got a thing against Floyd. I just don't like 'em, though I must admit that *Dark Side* is their most listenable album. I must admit that Floyd's not a bad choice [for No 1] because they did influence music for a couple of

decades and are, along with KISS, one of the reasons that rock concerts changed during the 1970s–80s.

I'm an American, and that means I like explosions in my movies and ketchup with my fries, and I don't get Jeff Buckley. Seriously, he drives me nuts. His work just annoys me much in the same way that Carole King annoys me. In the same vein as King is Jim Croce, and I love his stuff.

OK Computer is one of the important albums of the 1990s. It's an acquired taste, no question, but Radiohead is an important part of what led to the change in British music over the last decade. It's a damn listenable album too. I'm not a fan of Nirvana, but *Nevermind* also changed music, as it was played on the radio. Still, the Velvet Underground and Sonic Youth should both be higher than Nirvana when it comes to influence. Hell, Iggy Pop should be up there too!

Bloodsugarsexmagick is the most important album in the top ten. The commercial success coupled with the influence over young bands mixed with the flat-out quality of the funk- influenced hard rock just makes it an amazing album.

\*brg\* Really? The only albums that seemed important — had a long-term influence on a whole range of later performers — in the ABC listeners' Top 10 were *Abbey Road*, *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, *Nevermind*, and *Led Zeppelin 4*.\*

No question that black acts are missing, most notably Ray Charles, but let us not forget *Live at the Apollo* by James Brown.

It's kind of shocking that the highest Australian album is 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. Personally, my fave Australian act are the Oils, and the album *Diesel and Dust*, followed closely by *Earth & Sun & Moon*.

I love Fleetwood Mac, not only because Lindsey Buckingham is local and the uncle of a friend of mine, but because they were just a wonderful band for a long time. On the other hand, the fact that no Stones album topped *Rumors* is a crime. The Stones were massively important, and I don't understand how any list could ignore them to the level that the ABC list did. It just doesn't make sense. *Sticky Fingers* is probably their best album, and it's amazingly listenable to this day.

For me, there's *In Dreams*, *Graceland*, *Abbey Road*, *Cosmic Thing* by the B52s (the last party in the mode of the Kingsman and the Gentreys) and *Kind of Blue*.

My best book of the year: *The Incomplete History of the Art of Funerary Violin*. A brilliant book that's just a lot of fun and very strange.

Continuum sounds like a good ol' time. I've gotta make an Australian con at some point in my life. I've often tried to get myself to Oz, but the money's never there. Someday, mayhaps. Someday . . .

27 December 2006

GARY DALKIN

5 Lydford Road, Bournemouth,  
Dorset BH11 8SN, England

The sudden end, without word, of Acnestis, was sad. Fortunately I am still able to see some of the people involved, but I do miss reading the monthly mailings. It would be nice if someone could reconstitute Acnestis as an email .pdf group. Right now, just getting over a long stint of editing *Film Music* on the Web, I don't have the drive, time or energy to do it, but I'd imagine it would be a lot less demanding and time consuming than compil-

ing, printing and mailing the physical Acnestis. If there's someone you can think of who might like to take it on perhaps we should suggest it to him or her?

I've just had a look at efanazines.com and subscribed to the automatic notifications service, so hopefully that will keep me up to date. I had no idea there was such a site, so I appreciate you letting me know about it. I will download *Steam Engine Time* and look forward to reading it.

27 December 2006

\*brg\* <http://efanazines.com> has been the centre of the world of the oldtime fanzine editor ever since it became too expensive to print and post large fanzines. Bill Burns' offer of unlimited web space to a huge range of fanzine editors has led to a revival of the form without the need for everybody to go broke. Of course, I would still prefer to read paper fanzines . . . \*

DICK JENSSEN,  
Carnegie VIC 3163

In Midair: 2006 turned up today — and was a wonderful read over afternoon tea (a couple of small cakes from the local Brumby's).

I was especially taken with the *superb* cover photo of Harry — and I must congratulate you, Elaine, on a great portrait! I now realise that some cats, at least, can strike a 'noble dog' pose with the best of canines. Not that I'm saying Harry is a copy cat or is trying to be top dog, just that he showed a marvellous sense of the dramatic. Has he seen, I wonder, Landseer's *Stag at Bay*?

The interior photos also showed off a great collection — well, mainly black masses with glowing eyes, but that's what you expect from a household of sable moggies.

My only comment re *Midair* was the suddenness of the last page. Why didn't you add two extra pages so that you could have incorporated a longer (and necessary) discussion of Books, Films and Music? (Personal opinion: Judith Lucy is one of those 'entertainers' who consistently make me want to upchuck.)

\*brg\* I was going to produce a long list of Favourite thises and thats, not only for 2006 but for the last thirty years — until suddenly I realised that this issue of \*brg\* is heading towards 40 pages.\*

You say: '2006 is proving to be a real shit of a year', but since it's almost over, then it is as bad as it could get, eh? Besides, I have recollections that you say that about every year . . . still, I shall continue to ask, in my prayers, that Crom favours you and Elaine . . . (He tends to listen more attentively than She does).

28 December 2006

\*brg\* 2007 has been an uninspiring year — turning sixty three weeks before my mother died; and lots of other people having a hard time as well — but it has had its inspiring moments. From now on, I'll count myself lucky to get to the end of each year.\*

MARK PLUMMER

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Surrey CR0 7ES, England

I was reading *In Midair: 2006* on Bill' Burns's efanazines site last night, and then a hard copy arrived in the post this morning. Yes, I know it costs a lot more, but it's so

much better to receive it in the paper form, so thanks for taking the time and trouble.

Always pleased to encounter another devotee of the Stones' *Let It Bleed*. I have a semi-regular debate about its merits with Greg Pickersgill, who champions *Exile on Main Street* as their best LP, although I've recently discovered that we share an unfashionable fondness for *Their Satanic Majesties Request* (which the *Rough Guide to Rock* describes as 'appalling').

\*brg\* *Satanic Majesties* would have been understood if anybody had followed its lead. The Stones headed off into an exciting jungle, and nobody noticed. Their next single was 'Jumping Jack Flash', with the rawest rock and roll opening riff in sixties pop. ∴ Greg named his fanzine after 'Stop Breaking Down' (*Exile on Main Street*), so Greg and I must agree that that is the best Stones album track. But nothing can detract from the power of the rhythm structures of 'Let It Bleed' and 'Gimme Shelter'.\*

But *Let It Bleed* would have to be the best Stones album simply because it featured 'Gimme Shelter'. Never has a rock song managed to muster so much sheer malevolence. There's a nice line in Sean Egan's book about the making of the album in which he describes the way that Keith Richards' guitar opening 'tiptoe[s] into the song, like a man gingerly entering a dark and forbidding zone holding unknown terrors'. I'm entirely with Griel Marcus when he says that 'while you're listening to it [it's] the greatest single rock and roll recording imaginable'.

It also strikes me that *Let it Bleed* is an incredibly well-structured album, with absolutely the right tracks book-ending its sides, something that's been partially lost with the CD (which doesn't have the concept of sides), and that will probably vanish entirely for the iPod generation, which has scant regard for the notion that songs might be deliberately grouped together and arranged in a particular sequence. But now I'm sounding Old.

(This reminds me tangentially that I was recently listening to the live recording of Patti Smith's *Horses*. This was a show recorded in London in 2005 where she performed the complete album, end to end and with the tracks in the correct order. After 'Free Money' Smith announced 'Side 2', it suddenly struck me that this was an album I knew only on CD and so I had no idea of where the side break occurred.)

You refer to Charlie Stross, in your Continuum report, as 'a Scot who now lives in England', but it's the other way around. Not sure where he's from originally — I've known him to be living in London and Leeds — but I'm pretty sure he's English and he's definitely now resident in Scotland, Edinburgh in fact.

31 December 2006

YVONNE ROUSSEAU

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Vida's visit is keeping me busy. Do you remember the audiocassette you and I recorded in the 1980s from your record collection, to demonstrate that there were more musical possibilities than she had yet realised? The occasion was Vida's first purchase of a record, when we didn't have a record player, so you kindly agreed to record 'Break My Stride' on an audio cassette. We've been enlivening our New Year's Eve by listening to it again. Lest you don't remember, the complete list runs as follows:

Side A:

- 'Break My Stride': Matthew Wilder.
- 'Time after Time': Cyndi Lauper.
- 'Girls Just Want to Have Fun': Cyndi Lauper.
- 'Save the Last Dance for Me': Dolly Parton.
- 'Save the Last Dance for Me': The Drifters.
- 'Who Put the Bomp in the Bomp, Bomp, Bomp': Barry Mann.
- 'Seven Little Girls in the Back Seat': Paul Evans.
- 'On Top of Spaghetti': Tom Glazer and the Children's Chorus.
- 'Does Your Chewing Gum Lose its Flavour?': Lonnie Donnegan.
- 'My Old Man's a Dustman': Lonnie Donnegan.
- 'Monster Mash': Bobby (Boris) Pickett and the Crypt-Kickers.
- 'Witch Doctor': David Seville.
- 'Look What They Done to My Song Ma': Melanie.
- 'The Stripper': David Rose and his Orchestra.
- 'Silver Threads and Golden Needles': the Springfields.

Side B:

- 'The Girl from Ipanema': Astrud Gilberto.
- 'Alley Oop': Hollywood Argyles.
- 'Mule Skinner Blues': Fendermen.
- 'Wake Up Little Susie': Everly Brothers.
- 'You Talk Too Much': Joe Jones.
- 'Alexander Beetle': Melanie.
- 'Yakety Yak': The Coasters.
- 'Splish Splash': Bobby Darin.
- 'Charlie Brown': The Coasters.
- 'Poison Ivy': The Coasters.
- 'Mocking Bird': Charlie and Inez Foxx.
- 'You Never Can Tell': Chuck Berry.
- 'Tom Dooley': Kingston Trio.
- 'Tijuana Jail': Kingston Trio.
- 'M. T. A.': Kingston Trio.
- 'Where Have All the Flowers Gone?': Kingston Trio.
- 'She Taught Me How to Yodel': Frank Ifield.
- 'I Remember You': Frank Ifield.

31 December 2006

\*brg\* It's a good list, isn't it? It's a pity I didn't record a copy of that particular set for myself. ∴ I should explain that I have known Vida since she was seven, and she is now over thirty. When she was in her early teens, she discovered pop music, as many of us do. I of course tried to show her what *real* pop music was all about. Vida actually liked quite a few of the 1960s singles I played for her, then recorded on cassette from compilation LPs and later from CDs. In turn, when Vida discovered the Australian group Mental As Anything, she recorded most of their LPs on tape for me, plus a lot of other interesting material.\*

JOHN PURCELL

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College Station TX 77845, USA

How well I know what it's like to have little or no income, even for a short period of time. It is quite scary. Relying on freelance work has got to be frustrating. I don't think I can handle that. Teaching is not really a guaranteed income generator either, especially when you're an adjunct instructor like me and not hired full-time by a school. Fortunately, there is always a need (it seems) and one must always keep their name on the market for full-time openings. In the meantime, I'm gaining valuable experience and building up my professional re-

sumé. The longer I teach with the more class-room variety, the more valuable I become.

Your cat collection rivals ours, even if your brood seems to be in monochrome. We have one black cat — Waldo — who has a white chest and white knee-high boots. He's our outdoor cat; just a couple days ago I watched him snag a mouse underneath the bushes that line our front walkway.

Our other cats are quite colourful: Marmalade is orange and white; his sister, Cucumber, is mostly white with patches of orange and black; Toulouse is a sandy-coloured medium length-haired cat; Riley is a Maine Coon with really gorgeous black-brown-white-red long fur; Allie is simply a scruffy-looking black and brown; Diphthong is a Siamese kitten with soft grey fur and sort-of tiger striped with black and white; and our newest addition, Sissie Armadillo, is a very strangely shaped calico. It is an interesting collection, and your cat pictures give me an idea: I should run pics of our petting zoo some issue, complete with a quick paragraph accompanying each photo. That's gonna make for a long zine, too!

Continuum 4 sounds like it was a lot of fun despite being the Fan Guest of Honour. Writing a con report from the point of view of the FGoH is a neat little idea. There are a lot of familiar names in your report, too. I remember meeting Eric Lindsay ages ago when he was up over here back in the 80s, most likely; I distinctly remember meeting him at a Minicon. Problem is, after this length of time, all of those Minicons tend to blur together. They were grand fun, that's for sure.

31 December 2006

STEVE JEFFERY

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I'm beginning to suspect that, apart from the annual Novacon, I've lost touch with British fandom. In past, and more energetic years, that used to be a three- or four-way involvement: through the BSFA (not really fandom, I know, but a lot of the BSFA officers and editors were active as fans, so there was a fair crossover); through a range of fanzines varying from the serious (*Attitude*, *BW*, *SET*) to the silly (*Plokta*, *A Child's Garden of Olaf*) and various apas.

Where's it all gone? Into the sprawl of the electronic aether, largely, which I really don't have the time or inclination to go hunting it for several hours every night. And although I'm still technically a company director of the BSFA, I don't have any active involvement apart from the occasional book review. (They've stopped the *Matrix* crossword competitions, which I always used to enter.)

So yeah, I can imagine you feeling even more out of touch. It does seem extraordinarily fragmented and thin on the ground, at least from the perspective of us old pharts still wedded to the archaic notion of paper as a prime means of communication.

I sort of miss Acnestis (although not the deadlines) and I have to admit I had mixed feelings when it folded.

How would this electronic/PDF apa thingy work? Would it be like a paper apa, with deadlines and minac and collected/archived 'mailings', or more like a group blog thingy (see — I'm slowly getting the hang of this electronic newspeak) that you post into as and when? Or does that get horribly complicated to keep track of? I quite like the idea of building an apa contribution 'live' as it were, or at least in small chunks up to deadline, rather than all in one go, and then, perhaps, 'freezing'

what's written into an archive and starting again. It has the advantage of an traditional apa, in that there is a defined 'mailing' (the monthly archive), and also needed immediacy that the bimonthly Acnestis lacked. It could be four months from the time you wrote something to answering a comment on it. Too long — and one of things I disliked about the change was that Acnestis started to turn into set of highly polished and posted essays rather than an ongoing conversation. Fine in its way, but it was more like an issue of *Foundation* than a fannish publication.

31 December 2006

JAE LESLIE ADAMS

621 Spruce Street, Madison WI 53715, USA

I too have missed Acnestis. There are notes around here, somewhere, for another issue of *Fugitive Particulate Matter*, or something. Or I could work something up. Seems to me I have several other spare titles waiting for: whatever.

In other news, I got some neat calligraphy of poems by John Hertz published by Geri Sullivan in *SF Five Yearly*. I emailed them off, and next thing I know, there it is in the mail, inkjet on twilltone. What could be easier?

We know how to do this zine thing. The possibilities grow ever wider. Meanwhile one of the other print apas I am still in is languishing, and growing ever slimmer. There is LiveJournal, there are various blogsites, there is a whole world of noble causes. Somehow time grows ever less; figure that one out.

But that is why Roscoe has given us email.

Perhaps Ghu and Foo (who wish all things done in the time- honoured traditional ways of our people) are not pleased with us. But what are they gonna do about it? huh?

1 January 2007

DAVID LANGFORD

94 London Road, Reading,  
Berks RG1 5AU, England

New Year celebrations at 94 London Road were discreet, but revellers elsewhere in Reading deployed a plethora of loud fireworks. Today we pick up the pieces, some of which have landed in our garden — specifically, the huge capstone from a pillar in a wall between this house and the next, apparently prised off in order to nick the neighbour's bike that was chained to it. Seasonal high jinks.

1 January 2007

ERIC LINDSAY

PO Box 640, Airlie Beach QLD 4802

In *In Midair: 2006*, Elaine managed some great portraits of your various cats. I was particularly impressed by Harry on the front cover.

I am sorry that work continues to be scarce in your field. Keeping contacts within any field is so hard as people move along. The trend to home working and contracting must make it even harder. I hardly see anyone from day to day, and I am very slow about remaining in contact with people. Glad to hear that you at least keep in contact with a few fans in social situations.

\*brg\* Eric is married to powerhouse Jean Weber, who was once very active in Australian fanzine fandom. Her fanzines do not appear very often these days, but she is still a powerhouse. She saw my comment about lack of paying work, and sent me a book to edit because she did not have the time. I count this very helpful gesture as the kick-start to what, so far, has been a very different year from 2006. Always treasure a fannish contact, say I. Thanks again, Jean.\*

My sympathy to Elaine about her Aunt Vaisey. I am glad to hear that a good new home was found.

I have cut back on watering the balcony plants, so a number have died. We moved some cuttings from the ones that survive low rainfall and lack of care, since they obviously have the best long-term chance. However, we have belatedly entered our rainy season. Had 70 mm just after Xmas. Naturally, virtually none fell into Peter Faust dam, inland from Proserpine, which is now down to around 11 per cent of capacity. This is not as bad as it sounds, as the storage capacity is enormous relative to the population. Also most people here do not seem to realise this is not our primary water storage (that is in underground aquifers). Peter Faust is a flood mitigation dam, built after fourteen-metre floods wiped out much of Proserpine. It filled only once, just after being built, when the remains of a cyclone left a low dumping metres of water over the area.

We are not on a water meter here. More accurately, we are on a shared meter for the entire building, so average water use is very low (the grounds are on a different line) being only kitchen and bathroom use mostly for tourists. We are unusually in having our own laundry facilities, rather than using the coin-in-the-slot machine in the room below the parking lot.

I am glad my few photos of Continuum were of some use to you. It was good to see you there. Thank you for the detailed report.

The Top100 music hits always seem to consist of material I have never heard, or, having heard, have no intention of deliberately hearing again.

4 January 2007

\*brg\* I must admit I'm rationing my use of the photos you sent me. I could have used more in this issue of \*brg\*, but I'm tempted to save most of them for ANZAPA OBO covers. Helena Binns has sent me some very useful photos of the guests of honour at Continuum.\*

ROBERT SABELLA

24 Cedar Manor Court,  
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I always enjoy the pictures of your bookshelves with all the books. Have you ever estimated the total number? Or how many of them are actually read?

\*brg\* I thought only mundane persons asked the question: 'How many of them have you read?' The last time Elaine and I counted, I had read about a quarter of them, and she had read about one-fifth, but the percentages must be lower now. I suppose we have 5000-7000, but it's twenty years since we stopped counting. :: Only one person, a non-fan, has ever asked the obvious question: 'What is your favourite book?' I've always said Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, but recently I tried rereading it for the first time since 1974. I must have changed a lot in thirty-three years; the words on the page are still the same, but they don't thrill me the way they used to. Now I have to wonder all

over again what my favourite book might be. :: Another sensible question came from an academic for whom Elaine was editing a book. After inspecting the shelves he said: 'Where did you get the wood?'

It is somewhat depressing to think of how many 'big name' fans have died in recent years. To name a few, Bob Tucker, Bill Bowers, Dick Eney, Howard DeVore, Harry Warner, Jr., John Foyster, John Brosnan, and others I've probably forgotten for the moment. I guess this is partly a natural consequence of the ageing of fandom, as there seem to be more and more old-timers in the field and fewer youngsters. That does not bode well for the future.

Being a cat lover, having two cats myself, I was saddened at the death of your cat Sophie. Hopefully she had a full, happy life. I enjoyed your quote, 'All I have to do is sit in my favourite chair, and Flicker will sit on my lap for an hour or two. It's always nice to be friends with a happy cat.' Amen to that.

I enjoyed reading the escapades of your cats in your 2006, although the incident in the tree with the rottweiler was scary indeed. We have a fox in our neighborhood, which enters our yard occasionally — we have about 1.3 acres, much of it woods. Jean does not believe a fox can climb a tree, so she thinks Tiger and Misty are relatively safe. But what if a fox can stalk as well as a cat? So it's a bit scary. There has been talk of coyotes entering the neighborhood too, which is even scarier!

Concerning your 'Favourite Album' Top Ten: I have never been a big fan of the Rolling Stones. Their songs always struck me as either a hook repeated endlessly or a cover version of an r&b song. I much prefer the Kinks. I consider Ray Davies one of rock & roll's finest, and most underrated, songwriters. I do agree with you on the merits of *RT: The Life and Music of Richard Thompson*. He is definitely my current favorite singer/songwriter.

14 January 2007

\*brg\* As you would see from my lists, I regard the Rolling Stones of the 1960s and early 1970s as my touchstone band, not for Mick Jagger's warblings, which I have never particularly liked, but for that perfect rhythm section of Charlie Watts on drums, Bill Wyman on bass guitar, and Ian Stuart or Nicky Hopkins on piano. Jagger's constant discounting of 'the back of the band' and spotlighting of himself and Keith Richards (who between them have hardly written a good song since 1976) stopped the band in mid stride thirty years ago. No wonder Bill Wyman left. :: I wouldn't discount the Kinks, though, especially as they lasted nearly as long as the Stones. Davies' writing always seemed a bit better than the band's playing, but they have put out some perfect tracks (including 'Lola', 'Dead End Street', 'Picture Book' and 'Ape Man').\*

DAN MCCARTHY

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Thank you for your Christmas newsletter; it came at a time I was feeling a bit isolated and it was nice to hear from someone.

Please pass on my sympathy to Elaine over her aunt. It all sounded very familiar to me, especially the business of her being packed and ready to go home every visit, so I have some idea what it has been like for her.

1 February 2007

— Best wishes, everybody. 22 July 2007\*