

Transcendental Basenji Sermons & Enlightenment

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For ANZAPA issue No. 226

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Editorial

Changes to life #1 and Winter Solstice Greetings!

As you may read at the end of this Zine, I have 'retired' from doing a Saturday market stall, and so for the first time since 1986 I have 'free' weekends every weekend. While long in anticipation, it all happened rather suddenly. I just paid up, said my goodbyes and left.

I had planned for an orderly withdrawal from doing Glebe Market. If I couldn't last to the Summer Solstice season gift buying frenzy, possibly I could stay until the Winter Solstice, so I could symbolically end one phase of my life on the shortest day, before rebirth as but then I got a letter from Macquarie University, inviting me to turn up and sell stuff at their May 21 Astronomy Open Night.

Even if it rains that night, a Macquarie University open night is a guaranteed earner, no stall fees, customers lined up to buy stuff after the guest speaker's talk, just get there, display the stock, pack up and go home, count the money in the morning. But without access to a car, it would be two hours there and two hours back by public transport (getting home after midnight or 1 am!), carrying twice as much stuff as I take to a Glebe Market. As I could not justify this effort, for a guaranteed pay day, how could I justify giving up weekends until Christmas, hoping for fine days and possible good selling market days, every second or third Saturday?

So on the 21st of May, 2005, I turned up to Glebe Market, paid up some outstanding stall fees and that was that.

At the moment I'm still working on striking the right balance between leisure and activity. Life is pretty good.

Garry P. Dalrymple - 07 July 2005

Mailing comments on ANZAPA issue # 225 for ANZAPA issue # 226, August 2005

1 -- OBO 225 – Bruce Gillespie –

Re the Subscription dues. \$20 is not a problem to me for a 'domestic' subscription. I would bear without comment paying five dollars more to subsidize the overseas contributors, as their cost of participation is far greater than my own. Perhaps there should be debate on the desirable level of overseas participation in our ANZ APA? A voice from Japan or Mainland Europe might be a welcome addition to our US, Canada and UK correspondents. Are there newsletter writing fans

beyond 'Anglo-Saxony'? Dare we try to adopt as a mission statement the bringing of civilization and newsletter discipline to the Blogger generation?

2 - *BRG*42 – Bruce Gillespie

Philip K Dick indeed! Works like his are why I read SF, inversions of the familiar that are self contained and credible other ways that things could be. The Sydney Futurians once looked into it and in the 'Movies out of books' stakes the top three were the estates of the late Philip K Dick, HG Wells and (the living) Michael Crichton. There is indeed something about Philip K Dick stories, the fact that they are so 'movieable' suggests that his fame will increase over time as he becomes an (out of copyright) brand name standing for SF and adventure, like Jules Verne and HG Wells have become. Read the rest of your contribution with interest.

3 - Estelle's E-Mag #2 – Estelle Newall

I would encourage you to keep picking up a pen and expressing yourself through your zine, however you are not too young to benefit from correction. The questions on your quiz page need adjusting, I asked Mystique Pukkanut, the Basenji that lives at my house and her answers would describe her as a cat! And she isn't. Basenjies are rather cat like in many ways And I am told that some Siamese Cats are very dog like in their behaviour, complicated world isn't it?

4 - From the Lair of the Lynx #31 – LynC

The lone page was to correct the oversight of several issues back, two page sevens or something like that. The backyard laundry was 'modern' in 1945/46 when it was built in that the subdivisions of that era no longer accommodated a 'dunny lane' at the rear of the block and 'two peas in a pod' outdoor toilets for adjoining households. The Bath room was indoors and we had the bath halved to allow an indoor toilet in the 1970s. Re Buggers, in the news of late, but I still feel that they are a problem of consistently humid parts. You can do a lot to discourage all manner of creepy crawlies by upening up the house and cupboards etc on days of lowest humidity. In Summer lots of bugs come indoors not so much for food and the cool, but to escape desiccation from the dry heat outside. For Northern Hemisphere folk, the dryness of extreme cold also kills bugs efficiently.

5 - GNU Vol. 1 No. 3 – Derrick Ashby

Re Goodby Pippin - Sorry to hear about the loss of livestock, non-pet people find it hard to appreciate the investment of emotion that people put into their pets. When my Ben had to be put to sleep, I was furious for

weeks, it just wasn't what I had planned at all. Mystique just turned 13, so within 5 years I will have to think about a replacement – or No replacement and to be dogless again for only a second time in forty years! The Democrats is... not just a Senate balance holding party. We have had State and local government representation before and there may be State / Local issues that the party can address more easily than the one size fits all approach of Senate/National politics. No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

6 - Hold that Tiger! – Terry Morris, June 2005

Re Your Comments – It would have been nice to know what the Chinese swearing was about, via subtitles? As each time they did in Firefly I was worried at what plot nuances I was missing. The Hand Maiden's Tale still disappoints me, as I try to boost Sydney SF fandom (Futurians and Freecons) I'm concerned about the public image of SF coz I run into negativities associated with it's public image. Point an intelligent person at 'The Handmaiden's Tale' and you bore them rigid, point them at A Brave new World, The War of the Worlds or 1984 and their minds will start on a journey that never stops, yet in the Meja we are supposed to be grateful that this Ghod of 'Real Literature' briefly descended to our SFnal level to deliver a 'Classic' of modern SF, when it is at best a retread of an already well passed by point in SFnal writing. In one of the Honor Harrington Universe there was an 'Escape from the Patriarchy' story, a much better read, gave you Space Pirates, Adventure, two well developed political systems and three different planetary cultures, all in about a third of the pages of Attwood's drivel.

Have read and enjoyed the Falco books. The truth about the origins of Christianity will probably never be fully understood, the period AD 33 to AD 322 is so glossed over, but this is where 'Church' and Christianity were assembled, not AD 30 to AD 33.

No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

7 - Interstellar Ramjet Scoop – Bill Wright, June 2005

Re Your Comments –

Gosh what an active life you MSFC people lead, Investitures, Holograms etc. On April 15 we in Sydney simply declared Bruce Gillespie (our beloved OBE) as an 'honorary Sydney Futurian' (proposed GD, Seconded JF, carried Nem. Con.) without all the fuss. Of the clerihews, I was never certain if the point of the Stylites was to emphasise extreme disconnection from the distractions of the world or whether it was just a semi practical thing, in raising a higher pulpit from which to

preach and be heard by larger crowds. I recall that there were Stylite communities rather than individuals, I'm not sure whether these were hermits of 'desert father' type monestaries.

Re Your Comments – thank you for your kind words about my notes on Eric and Jean's dinner, the sad fact of it is that those attending were not 'Sydney Fandom' but were instead only that subsection of 'old Sydney Fandom' that could be called Eric and Jean's friends in Sydney Fandom. The 'Real Sydney Fandom' (I have been told) will be those people who pay up and show up for the October 2006 'Con Syder'. I anticipate that this group are more likely to be would be Speculative Fiction writers (even more so than was the case at Conflux) rather than SF readers or fanzine writing fans. I do wish Barnes and Baxter well, but I really would have expected to have heard more about their plans.

As for the Bass Strait/Peninsular real estate, there will indeed be killings to be made, carbon sequestration or not, buy now ahead of the rush for the lush tropical Bass estates! Read the rest of your contribution with interest.

8 - Kingdom of the Bland – Eric Lindsay, April 2005

Sadly the '150 years' seem to be at the limit of City rail's imagination. Previously when blank on the back you could always write down some inspired thought or the address of some chance met acquaintance, later there were puzzles and advertising. This week's ticket advises on 'travelling with a pram'. Read your other comments with interest.

9 - Land of 10,000 Loons (for 225) – Jeanne Mealy

I'm glad the pre-employment drug testing is largely a North American thing, there was something in the Sydney papers about the high and ignorantly interpreted false positive readings and the Myth buster program that showed that by eating only a couple of poppy seed cakes and restricted urine flow rate and you can show up as an unemployable Smack addict for days!

Cinema noise affects me as well. I usually attend with a set of 20 decibel reducing head phones. Complexes pump up the sound to suit the sound deadening effects of a full house but these days with low staffed multiplexes, can afford to run a film for a handful of paying customers.

Puzzling thing that, Dr. Who – Back, Battlestar Galactica – Back, Star Warz Movie – Back, Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy – Back, Star Trek – Gone, never to return?

Re Your Comments – Yes I was very surprised that I could keep churning out stories one after the other. I can only assume that a mixture of rage at the events of the previous year and 'just right' balance between hypertension medication and dog walking exercise did

the trick. One day a story occurred to me on leaving work, leading to notes being jotted down in the train and then another occurred as I was riding the bus home from the station. Truly an interesting experience over a few weeks. Since then I have been achieving a story every few weeks, often conceived on a quiet morning / afternoon at work and filled out on a Saturday or Sunday, now that I no longer work Saturdays.

Yup! Saw a few balloons from my black mountain facing hotel room, not as good a view as from the cheaper Citywalk hotel I stayed at previously.

I'm glad the pre-employment drug testing is largely a North American thing, there was something in the Sydney papers about the high and ignorantly interpreted false positive readings and the Myth buster program that showed that a couple of poppy seed cakes and restricted urine flow rate and you are an unemployable Smack addict!

No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

10 - Les Chattes Parties 77 – Sally Yeoland

Re Your Comments on Micardis, what symptoms did you suffer? I was on a full tablet and an early morning 2 km walk over a hill to the railway station made me feel a bit woozy. Consulted doctor and now take a half tablet instead. If I lose some weight (currently 120 plus kg) I would like to think I could go off medication, sometimes I wake up after a few nights of dog walking and feel clear headed enough that I could imagine that more of the same could take care of the hypertension. Read the rests of your contribution with interest but no further comments at this time.

11 - Megatheriums for Breakfast #44 – David R Grigg

Dickens as a voice of social conscience, his works serialized in the publications of the day lead to parliamentary enquiries that in part lead to such inner city poverty and wretchedness being legislated out of existence by Industrial Relations policy and public works / sanitation initiatives. Unless I am mistaken, at least the spirit of your, Dr H. H. Holmes lives on in the 'Run Rabbit Run' Tourist Advisory Warning issued by Victorian tourist authorities – i.e. Don't come to Victoria unless you want to end up as 'rabbit pie'. I was puzzled at this promotion even though it followed the 'sad girl' promotion, of a big eyed woman having such a terrible time wandering around in Melbourne until it was time to leave. I find it no great coincidence that the ex-Premier of Victoria now heads 'Beyond Blue' an organization for fighting depression, that Mr Kennett does this by touring Australia to spread the word, that is,

by his staying out of Victoria. No additional comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

12 - MOZ 5 – Murray Moore

Not really much I can respond to in this issue, other than to wish you a bob voyage as you head to Glasgow. Read your comments with interest.

13 - Necessity 64: Lose Yourself – Jack R. Herman

Re Your Comments –

OK I probably miss spoke but there was a period of English history that Australia shared, after the industrial revolution got going in England (Scotland and Wales) where 'Mechanics Institutes' and Sunday schools flourished for the improvement of the working classes and the new steam presses churned cheap books and magazines on the new acid bleached wood pulp papers. It is unfortunate that only with the latest instalment of your travels am I getting into your travelogue sections. With the Moors in Spain, the Mongols in Poland and the Turks at the gates of Vienna, the fragility of the concept of 'Europe' and Western Civilisation becomes apparent. Many of the opinions you express I find some agreement with, but I feel no need to repeat them in agreement.

14 - Oz SF Fan 34 – Lucy Schmeidler

Was HG Wells a Feminist by the standards of his time? A good question, but I doubt that much effort or thought would be needed to be regarded as a Feminist 'by the standards of his time'. He was a Fabian Socialist and he was keen on 'Free Love', liberation from matrimonial oppression of women as well as freer sex. Might be worth printing as part of your next ANZAPA, the more SF in ANZAPA the better? Sorry to hear of the unwellness in your family. No hits with your leading list, seems mostly Fantasy. Read the rest of your contribution with interest but no further comments at this time.

15 - Panopticon 30 – Dan McCarthy

Interesting cover and additional drawing as always. On short story writing, I did not find it all that hard to do the short short stories, I would start with a 'SF / Fantasy scene' and then just write the back story until the word count approached 600 then review, hack out redundancies, hack out secondary story lines and then you end up with 500 words sparsely describing the action or event that you had in mind. Similar to writing poetry, in that you set out what you want to say, express it in lines and then see what more you need to add for it all to make sense.

Ping! – John Newman

Mildly amused by the Award Winning Tree, as I am by the Kommunity Akshun to Save our Kids from Telecom Towers, as each Tower is designed to 'spray to the horizon' not to the ground, EMF is lowest at the foot of a tower, a minute fraction of that held to the ear when calling.

Re Your Comments – I will pass on to the party your comment 'The Democrats are about principles, and the ALP and Liberals are about Philosophies'. In the present political climate that is not a ringing endorsement although it is a valuable insight. One more thing though, when I saw your photo I thought 'Oh have we had another Australian hostage freed in Baghdad? No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

17 - TBS & Enlightenment Vol 1 No. 12 – GP Dalrymple
I hope everybody noticed that the **Sheep Sticker** on this issue **was a glow in the dark sheep!** A little ray of light to cheer people up during the Winter Solstice!

18 - QUOZ May 2005 – Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer
Found your contributions to be an interesting backgrounder to UK Fandom and your reasons for getting involved in APA based fandom. My own reasons for joining ANZAPA were mixed. I had thought that there were advantages to my Sydney Freecon running by joining an international cabal of SMOFs. No luck there but I am finding sufficient justification in being required to document the events of my life and as at least some are Science Fictional, I have found a sufficiently tolerant audience to wish to continue the process. As I'm just too lazy to be bothered being a jetsetting SMOF I do value the insight to the other cons and other fandoms that I am unlikely otherwise to be able to experience. A curious ambition I do have though is to 'break into' Irish Fandom, without ever setting foot on the Green Isle. One day I must do a 'World tour' of the UK, several cons over several weeks with touristy stuff in between. Hope you find my contribution of interest.

19 - Way South June 2005 – Michael O'Brien
No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

20 - You Really Know You're Home When You Find a Wombat in Your Bed #99 – Cath Ortlieb
Not much I can comment on, other than to say that I hope you had the year 9 children that were taken to town micro-chipped and well counted, so that they can be tracked down – if they don't come back and end up going feral!

Quark, Strangeness and Charm in Sydney?

The Curious Case of the missing Tegans?

Over the past few years there has been a long running saga about a little Australian girl called Tegan. Her mother was an international athlete and a teacher at one of Sydney's most expensive private schools, not exactly in the heat of the public spotlight, but it is hard for me to conceive of how she could have hoped to conceal being pregnant (maternity leave and medical testing) three times in a few years, having children and then passing them on. The Mother has had three children and has 'misplaced' two of them. One she kept, one has been located, and the other one is still missing! Truly weird stuff, with partners and families claiming to be unaware of pregnancies and 'adoptions' to untraceable alleged natural fathers. The Mother's explanation of what happened to baby Tegan constantly changing. Vast amounts of Police time and money spent establishing the falseness of each and every new explanation! Tegan would now be 11, if she is still alive. A key fact in the mystery is that the mother checked out of hospital – with baby – and two hours later she was photographed at a friend's wedding – without baby.

Confucious Say your lucky number is Forty Two

I have been having many 'Douglass Addams moments' (see the D page of 'The Meaning of Liff') of late. Having seen the American movie version of 'The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy', having received the BBC TV version as a subscription sign up gift for the new Australian Science magazine 'Cosmos' and while the 'old' Dr Who is running Monday to Thursday nights at 6.05 to 6.30 pm, credits Douglas Adams as the script editor. The last of these was to pick up on a train to work a plastic 'fortune cookie card', whose message was '*He who laughs last thinks slowest*' and it advised me that my lucky number is 42!

Train Encounters from the past

When I worked for OTEN near Burwood I would frequently stay back late and use my work PC to do up my ANZAPA contributions. With luck, of an evening it was possible to walk five minutes to the Bus Stop outside the Burwood Westfields shopping mall, and catch a 400 home, an almost non-stop 12 minute bus trip (a 90 minute walk home!). More frequently though, a minute too late and you wait 30 to 40 minute wait for the next bus. This used to give me a ringside seat to see some of the urban wildlife that is also there during daylight but which you tend not to notice among the shoppers, workers and private school children milling around in daylight. When the shoppers, workers and

private school children go home after 5 pm, the rest become more visible coz Burwood Road is their home. Near Burwood Railway Station there are several purpose built Housing Commission blocks of flats (long time Sydney fan Graham Stone lives in one of these) that accommodate those unable to afford to own their own home. Consequently Burwood has a few 'distressed' local inhabitants. Much of the rest of Burwood is high rise 'deluxe' apartments, frequently tenanted by aspirational, mostly recent Asian (Hong Kong and Korea) migrants or well to do University students. One person that I had noticed wandering about was a well nourished chap with no front teeth and tattoos, blue facial tattoos. If you recall **Alfred Bester's** 'Tiger Tiger' (the 'jaunting' book) you may have some sense of what I mean. When this guy smiles at you or even passes by, you feel a sense of threat, whether the guy is sober, mad or drunk. His recreation is to wander Burwood Road, drunk or sober, occasionally shouting at passers by. Due to the eye catching intricacy of his tattoos, it is very difficult to look this guy in the face, which may add to his sense of alienation.

Any way, on the train home, I step into the engine carriage (it stops just outside the lifts at Campsie station) and are stopped in my tracks first by the smell not of the usual second hand smokers breath and sneaked fags, but the ripe smell of someone having wet themselves! Then I caught sight of Mr 'Blue Tiger Tiger' who was drunk or asleep passed out on a seat in the rear of the carriage. I did take the time to notice that he was breathing slowly, but no one seemed interested in waking him up for a hygiene lecture. As luck would have it, it was an express to Campsie, so I had no choice but to travel with the smell pervading the carriage all the way to Campsie.

SU DO KU KO's our friend Bristow

The form of numerical puzzle called SUDOKU or alternatively, known to Mathematicians as Euler's Magic Squares, an array of nine boxes each with space for the numbers 1 to 9, have appeared simultaneously in both of Sydney's Daily papers. As we receive both papers at work I have been in the habit of running off a few enlarged copies for other people at work. I kept noticing that in spite of the stated difficulty ratings, Hard / easy etc. I was getting through the Daily Telegraph (Tele) ones much faster than the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) ones. Analysis revealed why, SMH ones gave you 27 or 28 of the numbers, the Tele, 30 or 31. I.e. pre-dumbed down puzzles in the Murdoch paper. The major casualty of the exercise has been that the Bristow cartoon strip (Bristow the hero and role model

for the under employed slacker office worker who had kindest regards for Mr Dalrymple's retirement) has been 'restructured' from the daily paper, appearing only in the weekend paper.

Happy Campers?

The climate of Sydney is fairly forgiving and it's architecture intended to facilitate 9 to 5 business life leaves quite a few out of sight nooks and crannies for those who live outdoors (out of choice or desperation). Underneath the overpasses that lead to the Harbour Bridge approaches are 'gardens' of *Monstera Deliciosa* (with cigarette butt mulch?) which are screened from the roadway and the eyes of the passing public by concrete crash barriers that are just over a metre high. Behind these are spaces where people can and do camp. They have a roof of sorts over their heads and some protection from the weather, some bring or improvise pup tent sized humpies to sleep under. During my May and June visits to the Observatory I noticed only four people/bedrolls, a population much down on the usual numbers or the November (warm weather) peaks of a dozen or more. I am of two minds about the decline in the number of 'campers'. It could be a response to the arrival of winter, some of the summer inhabitants may have 'moved up the coast'. Or if indeed, some of the 'campers' may have been just taking a cheaper option than 'backpacking' hostels. I understand that camping out in the city is a Northern European tradition.

The Telekinetic Wheely Bins of Sydney?

As you may know, most months I visit the Sydney Observatory for public and committee meetings of an Astronomy club. On the way two and from I usually walk through the adjacent park land and the subway that runs underneath the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Usually this is after dark, but following the ABC Science Natters Picnic (and unsuccessful attempts to see Jupiter during Daylight), I crossed the Park and entered the Subway. Part of the Subway gives a view into the Rocks Cut, a convict built roadway now underneath the Harbour Bridge. Looking down there is a two metre wide stretch of rubbish strewn grass and small trees five metres below the walk way and ten metres above the road level. This presumably was the top of the sandstone / ground level before the Harbour Bridge Subway was built. What took my interest as that there were about six Wheely bins sitting on this ledge. These 240 litre (50 Gallon?) capacity garbage bins with wheels were standing there half full of rubbish dropped from above and with more than a metre of rain water in spite of months of below average rainfall, in the middle of a pro-longed drought. I could see no way up or

down that could explain how the bins could have been placed there or how they could manage to retain so much water!

I take it by now that everybody has seen the new Dr. Who episode, with the levitating Dalek? A letter to the Sydney City Council seems in order!

Observations on the night of July four 2005

Walked to Sydney City Skywatchers meeting as usual, saw no under the bridge campers at all. Have the campers left of their own accord, moved indoors by the recent wet spell or have they been shifted by council action?

The Telekinetic Wheely bins are still in place as of last night.

Found a big dead Rat. Rattus Rattus or R. Norvegicus? Thoughts of Camus' The Plague, first the rats start to die and then the homeless go missing and then the comfortable start to fall ill? Pardon me, I've got an itch, must scratch it! - GPD

Blue pages, Science & Astronomy

Observations

As a soft introduction to the Blue Pages I thought I would share with you what I have been seeing in the skies of late.

Moon Occultation – at this time of year (approaching the Winter Solstice) the early sunset and frequently cold clear skies lend themselves to the prospect of Planet spotting in Daylight (or twilight). Jupiter is high in the sky and I have spent several 'smokers breaks' after 3 pm and before 5 pm in trying to spot it. The trick to it is to calculate the rough position of the planet and then to find a spot where you can stand and look with the edge of a fairly distant building or tower in view. The purpose of the building is that it gives your eyes something to focus on. Using the building or tower as a reference point, you can move yourself around, 'quartering' the sky until you notice that very small pinpoint of brightness that is a daytime visible planet (usually Venus or Jupiter, but very occasionally Mercury, Saturn and Mars). Without a point to focus on, you can often look straight at a planet and not see it, as your eyes are focussed too short and fuzz it out into a just imperceptibly brighter patch of blue sky. A moment later with tired eyes it can then seem to pop out of the sky. I.e. unexpectedly see a daylight planet, turn to a companion to say wow! mill around for a bit, have a second look and the 'UFO' has appeared, moved and disappeared across the sky at super dooper speed!

Back to the Occultation – June 15, 2005, at work at 4.10 at ground level with a broken pair of binoculars, I was able to resolve that Jupiter was just at the edge of the half-ish, less than a tenth of a moon diameter. As the day was predicted to be cloudy I had not brought in better equipment. After spotting with the binoculars I was able to discern it with the naked eye. I went back inside and up to level 9 and was able to show the event to several co-workers through the office windows until the moon was at too high an angle to be seen from the windows. A minor disappointment was that with the brightness of the moon and the poor equipment I was using, I was unable to notice any of the four Galilean moons. If I had thought of it, even with Seymour 1 and some adequate preparation it should have been possible to observe some of these emerging from behind the Moon. On getting home my brother phoned on another matter, I convinced him to show my niece the event with decent Binoculars. I had intended just to use the position of the Moon as a handy pointer to help with a daylight sighting of Jupiter, so what I was able to observe on the day was a bit of a bonus!

To the West at Sunset – at the time of writing (June 25, 2005) the sunset shows close alignment of Saturn, Venus and Mercury. Of these Venus is the brightest an under very clean skies a potentially daylight visible object and Mercury is the rarer sight. I have been watching these over the lighting of Campsie at just after 5 pm while waiting for the 412 bus and if the current spell of rain in Sydney lifts shortly I will take Seymour II into work and show the Sundowners the sight as it should be possible to see them all in one telescopic field of view!

Green Flash observed – No not yet another Comic book super hero into a SFX movie for the teen demographic. On Monday July 04, the first cloud free / clear horizon sunset I have seen this month, from the western facing side of level 9 Civic Tower Bankstown, I was able to observed a Green Flash phenomena. Green flash occurs as the last bit of light from the Sun at sunset can be seen to be Green, a result of diffraction and selective filtration of the Sun's light as it passes through the atmosphere.

Sydney City Skywatchers (SCS) Committee Meeting of 18 May, 2005

Informal Chat revolved around:

- Discussion of The Binocular and Telescope shop's newsletter getting our meeting details right.
- The Chewing gum season at Observatory Hill, bat and Fig Tree interaction.

- Our meeting precedes that of the return of Dr Who and the New Star Wars movie release.
- The Space shuttle lifts off again in May OR in November.

General Business

A quick run through of things done and not done since last meeting.

- Club Dinner options discussed, Vegetarian alternative to banquet menus a complicating consideration.
- An Observatory intern has offered to organise the Association's Library after finishing the Observatory's library – moved to accept offer.
- Wine Label Printing, 'No Label' discount wine opportunities to be looked into.
- Maquarie University Open night this weekend, need for a Moon for our club open night and Harry Robert's Talk on observing the Moon.

Sydney City Skywatchers Committee Meeting of 15 June, 2005

A short but productive committee meeting

Present were;

Elizabeth Budek, Mike Chapman, Elizabeth Cocking, Garry Dalrymple and Janette West – Apologies from Nick Lomb, who was required elsewhere at short notice.

Enough for a quorum so meeting started at 6.30 pm.

Informal Chat revolved around:

- Discussion of 'Blank Label' Wines, with a view to fundraising or as gifts to Guest Speakers. 'Antares / Aldebran Red' and 'Sirius Observing White' suggested by GPD
- Discussion of success of press coverage of meetings as a result of faxing off notices to Radio Stations, indication of some new members and new faces at meetings.
- Discussion of venues and menus for a club dinner, much of this has involved finding menus that accommodate vegetarian members.
- Our next Guest Speaker was seen selling Astronomy books prior to a re-location?

General Business

A quick run through of things done and not done since last meeting.

Decision on a Dinner venue, a nearby Italian restaurant, Saturday 23 July, 7 for 7.30 pm, cost expected to be some change from \$40 per head.

Hopes to convert the Astronomer's Bulletin to some form of electronic version, option to opt in for an electronic version while still retaining mailed paper version for most members. Discussion of revising distribution of exchange copies of the Astronomer's Bulletin.

Participation in this weekend's 'Festival of the Stars'. Harbour Bridge and some nearby city lighting to be turned off to allow for a clearer view of the Stars.

Sydney City Skywatchers (SCS)

Public Meeting of 04 July, 2005

Guest Speaker; **Dr Wayne Orchiston** AAO and (recently appointed) Centre for Astronomy James Cook University Townsville, Northern Queensland

Topic: History of the Catts Telescope: A forgotten nineteenth Century 50 cm (20 inch) Grubb reflector

Present: about 20 members and guests (one of whom had been a member since 1945!)

Members observations

As I arrived late I may have missed some members observations. Pictures of that afternoon's Comet impact were handed round.

As I arrived, **Harry Roberts** was describing some of his latest meticulously detailed moon drawings. My attempts to liven up the meeting with news of alarming Martian landings were ignored.

Alan Plummer described some of his recent Variable Star observations and distributed a sheet of paper about BV Centauri, a dwarf Nova star. About BV Centauri there is considerable conjecture, as the mechanism causing it's outbursts of greatly increased brightness have yet to be fully explained. It is known to be an eclipsing Variable (I,e sometimes you see the light from two objects and sometimes the darker obscures the brighter) ranging from 14th. to 11th. Magnitudes, the lower limit being fainter than Alan can see. BV Centauri is also believed to involve an accretion disc, which complicates theories and predictions about its light curve. Recently Alan was fortunate enough to be able to observe a rare maximum event for this star. Observing through occasional breaks in cloud cover during late June, Alan was able to observe BV Centauri

at its peak brightness. This event is rarely observed as it is short in duration and hard to know in advance when to look for. Its maximum dates are only roughly predictable as there are several conflicting 'periods' quoted. Alan's hand out sheet summarised his and others observations of BV Centauri.

My own observation report for the month was very brief, that of seeing a **Green Flash** event that afternoon. This very trivial observation resulted in a fairly worthwhile discussion of the phenomena, it used to be observed frequently from the Observatory residence's balcony, it had been captured on film and from our guest speaker, that the classic book on the topic had been written by a long time BAA Branch member and Director of the (St Josephs) Riverview College Observatory.

Topic: History of the Catts Telescope:
A forgotten nineteenth Century 50 cm
(20 inch) Grubb reflector

As a member of the Astronomical Union's C41 committee Wayne Orchiston has been looking into the history of Australia's significant Historical Astronomical instruments. He presented a Table 1. listing the names and custodians of Australia's significant 19th century Astronomical instruments, mostly telescopes, of these the Catts instrument was least documented. By today's standards a 50 cm telescope is not such a big deal, many Australian Amateurs own or have build bigger instruments, but when the Catts was built (1890) it was a very large instrument. What is most significant about it though was it's career, over 100 years it was first an amateur's telescope and then later in life a professionally used instrument. I.S Glass lists the 50 cm Grubb built telescopes of the 19th century, he could listed only three such instruments!

The Catts was built for Henry Ellis (FRAS 1898) a London BAA committee member who used it for Astrophotography of Comets and Nemulae but made no publications. On his death in 1927 it was sold to Walter Gale (1865 to 1945) during 1928 or 1929, the first of several BAANSW members to own it. Walter Gale was a Sydney Amateur Astronomer second in reputation only to John Tebbutt, and a great many instruments passed through his hands. He discovered Comets and did a great deal to popularize Astronomy in NSW. However, having several other instruments, he did not make a great deal of use of the Catts. By 1945 it passed to Howard Pinnock (an employee of Sydney Observatory) who set it up a Peakhurst and then in 1947 to Constantine Tenukest the BAA NSW's Planetary

Section leader who set it up near the current site of Greenwich Hospital. J. H. Catts bought it in 1951, set up a home observatory and died before he could make use of it. This event occurred at much the same time as an important transition in Australian Astronomy. Previous to this the leading researchers in many parts of Astronomy were well set up Amateurs, after this, the leadership of Astronomy in most areas fell to the professional Astronomers of Academia or Government institutions (remember that it was not always so). The Catts then left BAA NSW Branch member / Amateur hands, being bought by Mount Stromlo (near Canberra) Observatory, to be their second largest instrument (this is a sixty year old instrument!) This acquisition was part of Mt Stromlo's transition from being the Commonwealth Solar Observatory to being the Physics teaching unit of the Australian National University. It was well used, by Observatory staff and international visitors, mostly for photometry work. By 1952 Mt Stomlo had big plans, for a large 'World Class' sized instrument (eventually the AAT at Siding Springs). The Catts was sent to Mt Bingar near Griffith, initially to evaluate it as a dark sky site. Subsequently, when not needed for dark sky evaluation, it was used for some spectroscopy and photometric work, professional level stuff and Ph. d work. It was equal to many Northern Hemisphere facilities doing the same sort of Astronomical work. In 1963, after the decision for the AAT to be sited at Coonabarrabran, and not for a two site observatory (against the wine loving Bart Bok's insistence) the Catts was declared 'surplus'.

It went to Perth's University of WA physics department in 1969, with a smaller 40 cm mirror and it was used for variable star work and Halley's comet 1985/86. Further plans for its use were 'trumped', as the Arizona University donated a 60 cm instrument. In 1998 the Catts was placed in storage.

It had been a Catts with three lives, going from a 50 cm to a 66 cm and finally a 40 cm mirror. The talk concluded with a discussion of 'how many handles/axe heads' before it is a different axe, and discussion of all the people linked to its over 100 year long career. - GPD

What was that again?

On entering the meeting I miss heard the tail end of a conversation, to the effect of 'confirmation of observations of left over emotion from the Big Bang!' My, the things that Cosmologists get up to thinking about!

avaafter the meeting hlate Note. Present: about 20 members and guests Informal Chat revolved around: Note.

MORE TO FOLLOW

Green Pages – Environmental and Political

Petty act of subversion

In their infinite wisdom Canterbury City Council has seen fit to issue Number 1 Eulabah Avenue with a third Wheely bin! This one has a green lid and a 240 litre capacity. It now sits next to the Yellow 240 litre 'recyclables' and the 120 litre red lidded rubbish bin. The red bin goes out each week and the yellow and green bins will go out every second week so that each week there will be a two bin collection. Of course our bins are virtuously clean, tidy and light, our stuff correctly sorted etc. The green bin is embargoed until 25 July, so taking advantage of the rain falling during June 24 to July, I filled it up with rainwater in a morning. This volume or stored water represents the water collectable after about ten millimetre's worth of rain on the garage roofs. As temporary water storage, the 240 litre Wheely bin is fairly good value, I have seen them on the Reflex catalogue for ~ \$100 and as four of them are needed to store 1,000 litres, this storage capacity is about equal to a \$500 PVC tank. The Wheely bins can also be disassembled and stacked if necessary.

The Australian Democrats new directions

As one of our Anzapans has so correctly put it, 'it's hard to be a effective 'Third Party' in the absence of an effective Second party'.

To summarise from the newsletter of the NSW Division of the Australian Democrats following the national conference (a Canberra Natcon would you believe isn't that fannish?), there are people who still appreciate the need for the Democrats in the Senate and recall more than just the GST and the leadership circus, for these people we continue. The four remaining Senators are going to abandon the constraints of 'Shadowing' i.e. each Senator taking on an oppositional spokes person's role to the public issues raised by up to a dozen Government ministries.

The new approach is that;

Senator Allison (Vic) will be our spokesperson for Public Good, **Senator Stott Despoja (SA)** will be spokesperson for Social Justice and Freedom, **Senator Bartlet (QLD)** will be spokesman for a Sustainable Australia and **Senator Murray (WA)** will be spokesman for Accountability and Truth in Government.

The National Executive of the Australian Democrats formulated the following statement about what the Australian Democrats stand for, after a survey and consultation of members (ever think you will see the ALP or Libs doing that?);

The Australian Democrats stand for a fair society that values justice, democracy, individual freedom and diversity. We work for a prosperous, environmentally sustainable and equitable economy; and responsible, peaceful engagement in the global community. We are honest, compassionate, beholden to no interest group and we provide a voice for the voiceless.

What can be done without a balance of power in the Senate?

An indicator of what is possible can be seen in the recent successes of the sole NSW parliamentarian, Dr. Arthur Chesterfield Evans He has established Parliamentary enquiries into Funerals (high cost, pressure selling, limited number of providers) and Dental Health Services (hard to find for the poor or rural dwellers). Each of these enquiries will do more good to people in need than the 'Industrial Reform' debate taking place in the main ring of Australia's political circuses (and caucuses).

A Farewell and thank you Dinner for Senator Aden Ridgeway

– June 30, 2005, Town Hall Hotel, Balmain

Mood setting weather – Sydney's Skies open with a downpour of rain as if in sympathy at Aden's leaving office. I left Bankstown before 5 pm and got to the Town Hall Hotel at Balmain at about 7 pm, after a Train, a Bus and a lot of standing around in the rain. The whole experience of darkness, rain and low skies put me very much in mind of the **Peter Weir** movie 'The Last Wave'. Sydney's weather is acting up, and from a previous existence, a man knows that this world is about to end, but he is unable to speak before the waters rise to cover Sydney. Aden Ridgeway as a '*Mulkurul?*'

A bit put off at first. First thing I saw on entering the Hotel was a squadron of skinny girls dressed in funereal black for the occasion, or were they in just the usual hospitality industry uniform? Apparently being near to the Sydney docks, the Hotel management is able to take delivery of a container load of new skinny girls each week. A reliance on a purely skinny girls serving team allows management to jam in more tables! It was a surprisingly full house, with eight to ten tables and about Sixty or Seventy people turning up. There were the familiar Democrat faces and many others,

representatives of groups that Aden had come into contact with as part of his several policy portfolios or life as an activist. I.e. the opening speech by the MC was on a 'Rabbitos', South Sydney football club theme, the Rabbitos from Redfern oval are a football team with a strong Aboriginal history and identity.

Senator Lyn Allison (Democrat Party Leader, continuing Senator from Victoria) - Described the new conditions of the post July Senate and the reduced Democrat representation, four Senators, four themes, four staffers. The future direction for Democrat Senators is to be active proponents of Values rather than to shadow all government portfolios as an alternate opposition.

Nina Burrage – made reference to the weeping sky outside and that without Aden the NSW division of the party will have to investigate a Non-Senate Focus. She concluded by hoping that over the next few months public will come to appreciate the Democrats previous legislative role as a review and gate keeper mechanism. At about this time, between the speeches, as the first courses were being delivered I started handing round a pair of 'Geordie' Diffraction glasses, Senators first, to remind people of how things will look when we get back the balance of power.

Ken Boundy from Australian Tourism – stated that when first encountered, the Democrats policy was found to be better than the Industry White paper and that Aden would remain to work as an Indigenous Tourism Director. Tourism employs about 1,000,000 Australians and tourism featuring indigenous participation is expected to be a unique growth area that no other country can offer.

Jan Robinson from the Professional Midwives – said that the support from Aden on the pursuit of professional indemnity insurance for inspired her to join the Democrats. She cited that Aden's allowing their group to use Parliament house meeting rooms greatly aided their access and credibility among power brokers.

Tamara Windscroft of ARTS – invoked the Recent Archibald prize (portraiture) winning entry which drew on the theme of Janus the forward and backward looking Roman God to describe her feelings at this time and the end of Aden's Senate role. There was a slightly off colour anecdote about a matchmaker. Aden had worked the Arts portfolio, having a lot of interaction with planet turtleneck Arts people. From my work at OTEN I was aware of some of Aden's involvement in 'Native Title

copyright', the protection of traditional people's intellectual property and sacred cultural images. Tributes were made about Aden's Diligence and conduct in being able to be a cross cultural link and Reconciliator

Bill (Janus?) a Woromai man from Karua River and a Director of a school for indigenous health (have seen this guy in OTEN material I have listed, but this is what I jotted down as his name). Among indigenous people and those who wish them well, Aden's election has focussed attention to what may be possible, in addition to his actual achievements. Bill stated that it is not only an indigenous view that Indigenous Rights are Human Rights, an important point to note in a climate that says that attention to indigenous Human Rights should be abandoned for 'Advancement' at some later time.

A Bloke from the ANTA (Copyright) Indigenous Reference group - Aden is lost to the Senate, but not lost to the cause and the party. Tomorrow he starts as an Adjunct professor at Macquarie University. He should be remembered for being a proponent of 'Compassion for people is not weakness' and that in fighting for Social Justice, he has found time to represent the interest of a place for first and last Australians, Creative folk, midwives, lovers of human dignity.

Aden Speaks – A bit embarrassed – Acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, On how he has conducted himself in Parliament he says – I started with a (traditional Aboriginal) smoking ceremony on entering Parliament and brought with me a First people's cultural eyes view of Australia. I tried to change the view of how people see themselves, as First and Second Australians, towards a new realer view, a sustainable view.

Early Senate experience of naming a bigot, received a caution for using 'unparliamentary' language. This letter was laminated and displayed on the toilet wall.

Tried not 'a Politician' in his own self-view, was disinterested in the 'strike a pose' show pony aspects as there was too much stuff to do. An earlier cynical view of 'showbiz' Politics was corrected by experiences. Would like Truth and Universality to be more of a feature of political life i.e. Baby birth choice for mothers, **why not?** Doctors are protected from liability, but why not midwives? Parliament needs more women, less repeats of the restrictive WASP male view.

Will be working in Tourism in future, as it is important that other people see us as we really are and it is important to continue the Olympic opening feeling and to extend this generous image to other parts of Australian life. Concluding Aden put on record his thanks to all

the people that allow you to be a public figure – Family – people – Staff and Party. You should all stand up to be applauded. He expects that he will fit in well at University, as to his experience Politics is a learning experience, 10 portfolios to speak on intelligently means lots of ideas to process. He will also be serving on the NSW reparation and stolen wages board, and these appointments are recognition by both sides of politics, Federal and State governments

Then followed some gift giving, (Aden Show Bags?) of appreciation from Aden to his staff members.

Liz Willis - Staff tributes followed, mostly listing the many trials of being a minion for a minor party Senator and the 'love' of needing to master and advise Aden on multiple portfolio legislative. Several people listed their career highlights over Aden's Six years, often 'obscure' legislation or campaigns that meant prosperity or adversity to some Australians. The Staff made a great deal about thanking the Senators, Party members, Volunteers and Candidates whose unpaid work made it possible for them to be employed.

Julie – Much to say about working with Aden and with other staffers, concluded with 'Liz Willis Rocks'. Then spoke **Linda Burney, the Local Member for Canterbury** (my NSW MP!). Comment overheard about Linda Burney on the night - *'I wanted to speak to her, is she gone?', 'No, but from her speech a few minutes ago I think she is definitely affected', then 'Oh there she is sitting behind us.'* Linda Burney spoke at length and with some emotion about she and Aden being a 'Blackfella' in Parliament. She had known Aden for many years, as they had each served in the NSW public service before each entered the political sphere. She concluded by saying that Aden entered the Senate carrying for all Australians for decency and that on leaving, he 'will be deadly' (very good) in whatever he does. As a constituent does on these occasions, I had a chat to Linda during the dinner about OTEN and the KFC pilgrimage protest idea.

Literary Highlight of the evening

At the end of the speakers, **my short form Literary Achievement was recognised!**

There had been a caption writing competition during the dinner, a photo of Aden Ridgeway and John Howard with thought/speech bubbles had been placed at each table setting. The resulting entries were divided into five categories and prizes awarded after reading out a second best and then the best in that category. My winning entry was judged the best in the 'Rude' category, so I won a 'Four Senators' T-Shirt! Afterwards I asked the judges 'What was wrong about

my other two entries? They said that it wouldn't have been right to give one person three of the five prizes! (but the count apparently went to preferences, which is more than can be said of my last 1.33% candidacy!).

I noticed most of the food serving staff out of black and leaving at around ten pm, so I guess their shift was from 6 or 7 to 10 pm. A significant chunk of your 'day' but I wonder if 3 or 4 hours work on some nights is really enough to live on, on minimum award rates, which are soon to be made 'more flexible' with post July 1 'Howard Mandate powered' award extermination?

Aden was also good enough to sign a place card for me. I was able to give several unsigned ones to Sister Margaret Scroope OAM Order of Australia member (sort of equivalent to a non-monarchical knighthood) to pass on to the other sisters of her order who taught or knew Aden when he was much younger.

Incidental Conversation – Lots of young people were present, lead to an interesting observation. People have usually joined the Democrats from an established professional or recreational interest group that has a need for a parliamentary 'remedy' to their grievances, and they then serve the Democrats as volunteers – **with day jobs as well.** With the Greens, ALP and Liberals it is more usual that you join, you get your University degree (Environmental Science / Political Science / Merchant Banking etc.) get employment in the Environment/Trade Union or political 'Industry' and then as a paid employee of interests associated with that party, start to seek a place in the party that can lead to elected office. The Australian Democrats over their 20 plus years are the party that has been least able to find 'jobs for the boys' for it's own supporters. Curious, but what to do about it?

Discoveries – A Bic ball point pen Will write on butter soaked paper!

- It is possible to get from Railway Square (city) to Clemton Park (home) by a 423 bus in 20 minutes (11.32 pm to 11.52 pm)!

- It was still raining at Midnight, and I noticed that it was about 2 degrees warmer OUTSIDE than inside (19.4 compared to 17.7).

Listen to the falling rain,
Listen to it pour,
With every drop of rain you know I love
you moreJose Feliciano

November 2004 to July 2005 Rainfall recorded by Garry Dalrymple at 1 Eulabah Avenue, Earlwood NSW 2206

02 November 1.55 mm
03 November 0.22 mm
08 November 2.74 mm
09 November 0.71 mm
10 November 2.61 mm
12 November 9.29 mm
24 November 0.35 mm

**November Total 17.47 mm – Nov. Average 82 mm
Difference -65 mm, or 21.6 % of usual.**

02 December 0.88 mm
03 December 0.80 mm
04 December 0.10 mm
09 December 0.22 mm
11 December 15.92 mm
12 December 0.1mm
13 December 13.54 mm
24 December 0.1mm
25 December 3.1mm
27 December 4.64 mm

**December Total 39.18 mm – Dec. Average 78 mm
Difference -39 mm, or 50.2 % of usual.**

04 January 1.548 mm
17 January 3.98 mm
21 January 10.17 mm
23 January 2.787 mm
24 January 2.92 mm
25 January 8.935 mm
26 January 0.62 mm
28 January 0.1 mm
29 January 0.1 mm
30 January 0.1 mm
31 January 0.1 mm

**January Total 31.36 mm – Jan. Average 104 mm
Difference -73 mm, or 30.2 % of usual.**

02 February 13.71 mm
03 February 23.44 mm
10 February 0.354 mm
20 February 9.95 mm
21 February 26.54 mm

**February Total 73.994 mm – Feb. Average 117 mm
Difference -42 mm, or 63.2 % of usual.**

03 March 0.885 mm
04 March 2.48 mm
05 March 0.71 mm

17 March 2.04 mm
18 March 4.87 mm
22 March 0.1 mm
23 March 25.65 mm
24 March 4.2 mm
25 March 0.10 mm
29 March 0.13 mm
30 March 0.66 mm
31 March 6.32 mm

**March Total 48.14 mm – Mar. Average 135 mm
Difference -87 mm, or 35.7 % of usual.**

04 April 1.86 mm
12 April 1.55 mm
13 April 1.86 mm
21 April 1.77 mm

**April Total 7.04 mm – Apr. Average 129 mm
Difference -122 mm, or 5.8 % of usual.**

02 May 0.26 mm
14 May 0.13 mm
16 May 0.79 mm
17 May 9.73 mm
18 May 6.73 mm
19 May 0.71 mm

**May Total 17.56 mm – May Average 121 mm
Difference -103 mm, or 14.5 % of usual.**

12 June 0.53 mm
13 June 0.22 mm
23 June 0.10 mm
24 June 1.77 mm
25 June 5.53 mm
26 June 7.96 mm
27 June 3.76 mm
28 June 0.84 mm
29 June 2.57 mm
30 June 10.84 mm

**June Total 34.12 mm – June Average 131 mm
Difference -97 mm, or 26% of usual**

01 July 35.39 mm (104% of June's total rainfall!)

**Nov 2004 to June 2005 Total 270 mm Av. 897 mm
Difference -627 mm, or 30.1 % of usual**

Source of data; taken from <http://www.aboutaustralia.com/nswweat.htm>

Golden Pages – Science Fiction

Notes from the Thursday night, Infinitas
Bookshop SF&F discussion group
meeting of June 02, 2005.

Present were;

**Daryl Adams, Henry Chatroop, Garry P Dalrymple
Kurt Frank, Will Kennedy, Charmain Spears and
Brian Walls**

News Items (mostly from Brian Walls)

- Coverage of Conflux2 in a 'real' writer's newsletter.
- Again the Sydney Writers Festival took place without a Science Fiction Writer being invited, some Science writers / Scientists though (**Jared Diamond** and **Singh**).
- An observation of 'Literary Christians' given leave to enjoy using swear words during a presentation of the Festival, gave rise to speculation about the unexplored possibilities of 'Christian Manga and Anime'.
- The widely advertised '**Dr. Who Live**' events are expected to be expensive to attend.
- **Voyager** has finally reached the edge of the Sun's envelope of influence (Magneto pause?)
- There are reports of Koreans dropping dead on the internet, a result of Net heads giving Internet connectivity precedence over food, sleep (and hygiene?)
- Garry read several items previously announced at the previous Sydney Futurians meeting, including that **DUFF** guy, **Joe Siclari** will be in Sydney for a few days.
- The porn industry is yet again driving internet innovation; 'feel-the-chicken' being available shortly.
- There are several movie versions of 'The War of the Worlds' coming out, Tom Cruise version (no Martians!), a set in 1900 version and one with CGI visuals based on the artwork of the 'War of the Worlds' concept (LP) album. One will feature the two types of Martian, blood donor and War machine operator.
- The most expensive movie ever made? 'Kronenburg?' by **Joseph Goebels** during WW2 or 'Gone With the Wind' hard to appropriately factor costs for inflation.
- 'Battle Star Galactica' is cool and was appreciated for allowing the story to be revealed as the episodes progress, it owes a fair bit to **Phillip K. Dick** and is worthy of being described as SF rather than Sci-Fi.
- Polarized views on 'Lost'. Crap, crap, and crap, with too many shark-jumping moments. I.e. the passenger sucking Jumbo Jet engines that ran for 30 minutes without fuel, Hawaiian 'Sydney' locations and the Polar Bear being a final straw for some. If it was SF, it was SF of a lesser sort, like some X Files?

Starwarz related news and observations

- Sith happens, it sucked bigtime!
- Australian Actors in the movie were poorly done by, receiving only very limited dialogue entitlements.
- George Lucas characterization described; Hood over face – Bad Jedi, Hood clear of face – Good Jedi.

- Discussion of Yoda's hair loss and personal vermin infestation issues.
- Best ever Jar Jar Binks performance (has he a much married sister zja zja Binks?)
- Fears of a Phantom Menace sequel emerging
- The George Lucas cameo role was noticed as were several 'Easter Eggs', suggesting that it might be better to wait for the DVD to come out so you can see ALL the action, foreground and background. I.e. these Special effects are contributing to the death of the Cinema experience.

The new Dr. Who

- Some disappointment at there being no nude Billie scenes, hoax Billie pictures advertised in a UK skin mag.
- Lots of good Dr. Who websites are now about. 'Who is the Doctor' and 'Unit.org.uk' were both favourably mentioned.
- The new Doctor is less of an upper class twat than all previous incarnations?
- A less confident Doctor as a result of the destruction of Gallifrey and all the other Time lords
- 'Gallifrey no longer exists' and all the other Time lords gone, sparked debate, is this the case only at 5 Billion AD? Other Time lords (Drax, The Master, Romana and Omega) are known to be still be unaccounted for. All Gallifreyans destroyed or just all the current Time lords? The possibility of gathering all the past Doctors lead to discussion of the parlous state of the past doctors, even ex-timelords are not immune to the passing of time, they have all gone to seed!
- The Cricketmen, a Douglass Adams Dr Who Script had a fearsome murderous intergalactic warrior race whose battle armour inspired English Cricket kit.

Next month's Infinitas Bookshop Topic will be;
'Movie Bastardizations of Science Fiction'
on Thursday July 07, 2005

Notes of the Friday 17 June, 2005 Sydney Futurians meeting

Topic: Hats and Head gear in SF Stories

Present were;

David Bofinger, Garry P Dalrymple, Diane Fox
John Fox, Ross Mitchell and Ann Rankins

Apologies were received from

Ted Scribner and Ian Woolf

Contributions were received from

Baska Bartsch, David Cake, Felix Jenkins, Stephen Thompson and Ian Woolf

June 2005 NEWS ITEMS

DB – saw the movie 2046 with Sydney fans **Peter Eisler & Ian Triffit**, verdict –

- The movie was Excrement!

Ann Rankins also saw this movie & concurs!

– **Greg Egan** is out of SF ideas, most efforts into freeing refugee detainees

- Only cool Sfnal idea was shoes with light pads, light up as you step. Set in 1960s Hong Kong, the MC is writing SF, unclear plot, pointless, Arty shooting (or defective print) Sucks Big Time!

– Also attended a SF play at Enmore Theatre, 'Drowning Something (possibly?)' Sfnal premise being that in this world it was attractive people that were discriminated against and oppressed – Metaphor for Anti-Semitism and Genocide? OK but not great.

– Centenary of Einstein's Relativity, Photo electric effect and Brownian Motion papers, can't make a good cup of tea without Brownian motion!

– Reading a Biography about a chap called Bell, an old PNG hand, real experiences and adventures easily transposable to off earth SF stories

GD – Single Volume 'Dreaming down Under' available nearby for \$6, a **Marianne De Peirres** 'Parrish's Patch' (Recent Natcon GOH) book available for \$5

- There will be Some SF and Fantasy panels / writers at **Selwa Anthony's** 'Popular Fiction' festival which will take place at the National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour, Sydney on the weekend of July 2 and 3.

- Cosmos Magazine has appointed **Damien Broderick** as SF editor. A General Science magazine, it will feature a SF story each issue.

- I have subscribed to Cosmos, just received a DVD of the BBC TV version of The Hitch Hikers Guide to The Galaxy.

- **Stephen Thompson** (ex-Vision magazine) has just started 'Specusphere' as a venue for discussing issues/themes in SF. Future editions of Specusphere are likely to include some version of the Sydney Futurian meeting notes.

- Received from 'past-urian' **Felix N. Jenkins** of Kingscliff (near Port Macquarie) two (10,000 and 12,000 word, on windows 95) SF stories on disc.

- The Ditmar awards were handed out at Thylacon, per **David Cake** – They are; The **Peter MacNamara** (lifetime) Achievement Award was won by **Jonathon**

Strahan. Best Short Fiction: Singing My Sister Down, **Margo Lanagan**. Best Novella: **Paul Haines** for Last Day of Kali Yuga. Best Collected Work: Black Juice, **Margo Lanagan**. Best Novel: Crooked Letter, **Sean Williams**. Best Artwork: **Kerri Valkova** for the cover of The Black Crusade. Best Professional Achievement: **Clarion South**. Fan Achievement:

Conflux. Fan Artist: **Sarah Xu**. Fanzine: The Australian SF Bullshead. Fan Writer: **Bruce Gillespie**.

Atheling: joint winners **Rob Hood** and **Jason Nahrung**. Best New Talent: **Paul Haines**.

- The next Aust. SF convention is Continuum, at Melbourne July 15 to 17, 2005

- Currently reading 'Worlds of Honor 4, Service of the Sword' an Honor Harrington universe share cropping Anthology of five stories.

- No SF seen on commercial TV this week, only on ABC TV (both Dr Whos and Silver Sun), is TV SF Football phobic? The return of late night showings of The Twilight Zone soon?

- 2046 is a Hong Kong Art House movie from **Wong Kai Wa**? Is showing, said to be a time travelling romance, not sure if it counts as a SF movie though?

- Several Science Fictional deaths, Per **Edwina Harvey's** posting to Eidolist The two lead actors in Gerry Anderson's 1969 series UFO have both died this week within days of each other. **Michael Billington**, who played man-of-action Colonel Paul Foster in the series, passed away on Monday, June 6th. He was 63. The circumstances of his death have not been released.

Ed Bishop, who starred as the tough, dedicated SHADO Commander Ed Straker in UFO and also provided the voice for Captain Blue in Captain Scarlet and The Mysterons, died on the morning of Wednesday, June 8th, just three days shy of his 73rd birthday. He is believed to have contracted a fatal virus while undergoing hospital treatment, but the exact cause of death is currently under investigation. Source <http://www.fanderson.org.uk/news.html#EdandMike>

JF – The Katoomba Winter magic Festival is on this weekend, of the mountain people's three tribes, only the Religious boycott it –

DF – told us of her recent reading about Prions, all bad news, just after we all shared gelatin based Kumagi Gumi Bears. All animal product factory farm food is suspect, there's a mad cow disease in your future! So live in fear or go Vego, until they start looking for vego Prions (Mad Broccoli disease any one?)

RM – 's Blood is now not worth bottling as he lived and ate in the UK during a summer of Mad Cow terror.

- **The Heinlien trust** is bringing out a commemorative issue of 46 volumes, all Heinlien's body of work, copyright implications under US (as opposed to world) copyright law?

- **The Planetary Society** funded solar sailing mission is Go! for 21 June, 2005. To be launched from a Russian sub using an ex-soviet missile, will be slowly accelerating off into space, day by day per **Baska Bartsch**.

AR - went to a showing at the State Theatre, video of interviews with **Michael Moorcock**, **Emily Rhodda** and **Isobel Carmody** - Excellent, but curious and unfriendly session times.

IW - Looking into locating the tape/transcript of a 1954 talk to the Sydney Futurians by **Robert Heinlien**. By chance Ian met **David Ritchie** and he was there when it happened. Further research is proposed.

Discussion of the Topic: **Hats and Head gear in Science Fiction Stories**

Possible sub topics include;

Masks

Helmets, Hats and other functional gear

Glasses / vision equipment

Magical or legendary head wear

Headwear to enhance intelligence or other senses

Decoration for the head or its parts, ears/noses etc.

Other

Masks

- putting one on helps you transform who you are i.e. from Anekin Skywalker to Darth Vader

- The Health risk associated with attending Masque Balls (Mask? What Mask, I always look like this, Now Die Earthling)

- In 'The Moon Moth' by **Jack Vance**, the mask you wear is your wealth and social status. To be maskless in public is the greatest social disgrace, as the mask you present to the world is your social standing. Persuade a mask maker that you deserve a 'high rank' mask and you become a 'high rank' person, slaves wear a cloth mask, mask makers are a respected and essential service

- In the movie The Mask - Bloke goes crazy, turns into a loony toon cartoon coz of 'Ancient Aztec' mask (bull dust)

- In **Fred Saberhagen's** 'The Mask of the Sun', a story about a 'real' 'Ancient Aztec jade scrying mask', probably of far future manufacture, misplaced by time travelling historians that allows Cortez to see the near future, and hence his success.

- In **Kim Stanley Robinson's** Red-Blue-Green Mars series, the masks that filter out CO2 allow a cross country exodus that saves the lives of tens of thousands of the Martian settlers.

- In Star Wars the Bobba Fet Helmet/Mask, the Storm Troopers etc are all defined as their mask/helmets, far cheaper to put a mask on a minor Sci-Fi character than to go to the bother of convincing make up, special effects or Acting.

- In Dr Who, Omega's mask is all that holds him together!

- Instances of horror stories where skin masks (of victims) are worn by the killer.

- Stinger proof face Masks important in **John Wyndham's** 'The Day of the Triffids'

- **Edgar Allan Poe's** - The Mask of the Red Death - possibly?

- In Blakes Seven fourth series; a robot wears a human head so that no one (on closed circuit TV) can tell that he is a robot.

Helmets, Hats & other functional gear

- In 'Tripods' (a book and Children's TV series) large aliens with trilateral symmetry (imagine a three legged hat stand), very similar to those in **Brian Aldiss's** 'Bow Down to Null A', rule the Earth and have imposed a pseudo medieval society and technology on Earth people. Control of all humans is maintained by fitting them at the age of 12 with a wire cap which sinks through the skull to make contact with the brain making them docile and obedient to the Tripods' rule. The brains of some rare individuals are able to reject Tripod control and some are driven mad by incomplete control. These people wander as pitied but tolerated itinerant mad men, farm workers or beggars. The Resistance consists of these very rare immunes, and evaders from capping, but mostly they survive detection by wearing the inactivated caps of dead people.

- In **Larry Niven's** two linked books The Integral trees and The Smoke Ring, the surviving technological power

elite descended from a splintered set of subcultures from a colonization ship, maintain control by the use of ancient weapon equipped space armour. Helmets are most important as status pieces as they retain the ability for radio communication.

- In **Brian Aldiss'** 'Enemy of the System' the High Priest of the surviving Capitalists has a space suit (one million years old!) as official regalia.

- The 1950s 'Earth invaded' movie, taken off a dead alien, it is discovered that the aliens wear helmets that can see all and translate all speech.

- In **JK Rowling's** Harry Potter series the 'Sorting Hat' is not worn, but it is an item of head gear that plays a part in the story.

- A famous Short Story by **Philip Jose Farmer** – The Paley man, a trailer trash American family, of whom one is the last surviving possible Neanderthal descendent (a one armed giant / strongman who is none too bright. Strongly believes in a family story, to the effect that the Homo Sapiens took over the world coz they were more devious, having tricked the 'Paley King' out of his magic hat that gave the 'Paley' people control of the world. Find where the hat has been hidden and the Paley people will rule again! Based on the one armed guy's frequently repeated description of the hat, another bloke makes up a copy for the one armed guy to find, causing him to go berserk imagining himself to be invulnerable and 'king of the world'.

- Magneto's Helmet, X-men character's powers are magnified by it, protects his mind from being read.

- Instrument of humour? In **Ian (M) Banks** 'Use of Weapons' an assassin on a mission has his head cut off but is saved and revived as a head his guard robot gives him a get well gift – A hat!

Glasses / vision equipment

- **Joseph Smith's** (Mormon Founder) special glasses that allowed him to translate 'revised Egyptian' into American English (without a single error! err.... except for the Mammoths).

- Night Vision goggles for suspenseful creepy horror effects and 'look out he's behind you' moments of tension.

– In **Bob Shaw's** 'Night Walk' a blinded POW builds a headpiece that transmits what others are seeing to the blind's damaged optic nerves – great hard SF hardware story, great Escape story

Magical or legendary head wear

- In **JK Rowling's** Harry Potter series the 'Sorting Hat' is not worn, but it is an item of head gear that plays a part in the story.

- The Matrix in Dr Who, connects the wearer to the Time lord's computer system.

- Sometimes objects of value that are the object of a pursuit story.

- Magical Crowns, coronets etc. bound to be some thing like this by Terry Pratchett, but what would I know, this is mostly all Fantasy stuff.

Headwear to enhance intelligence or other senses

- The Matrix in Dr Who, connects the wearer to the Time lord's computer system

- The Babel fish of **Douglas Addams'** Hitch hikers Guide to the Galaxy, it sits in the ear and provides continuous translation.

- The Hoppers in a Poul Anderson novel (I think), Earth is invaded by a dumb deer like insect like species. They aren't very bright naturally, but an anti ADD head piece allows them to concentrate their minds and take over planets

Decoration for the head or its parts, ears/noses etc.

- The Bajorans characteristic ear pieces, droopy ear ring chains etc serve as 'dog tags', sometime holding DNA traces necessary to identify the deceased.

- References to Body piercing (face furniture?) and bio-augmentation in some 'Cyber Punk' stories?

- In **Alfred Bester's** 'Tiger Tiger' florid tattoos come out when a bloke loses emotional control, has to re-create his personality to avoid loss of emotional control or he becomes the mask!

Other

- Futurama characters end up with 'brain slugs' on their heads

- In the Old Testament, Sampson's hair (on his head) is his strength, cut he is weakened,

- Also his use of a 'head piece', the jawbone of an ass! To fight!

- The guy who used to advertise X-ray Specs in the back of comic books has just recently died.

- When a tree in a Schrodinger's forest falls and there's no one to hear it, when does it kill the cat?

Books Read, May to July, 2005

26 Apr to 7 May 'The Anarchistic Colossus' By A.E. Van Vogt, 248 pages © 1977

8/9 May, 'Light Speed', by David Frame, 148 pages © 1996 (A writer from New Zealand!)

9 to 16 May, 'The Black Crusade' by Richard Harland, 217 pages © 2004 (Australian)

17 to 22 May 'The Skeptics Guide to the Paranormal', by Lynne Kelly, 260 pages © 2004 (Australian)

26 to 30 May. 'Fortean Times - April 2005' By Various writers, 80 pages © 2005

30 May to 04 June In the Ocean of Night, by Gregory Benford, 321 pages © 1972.

05 to 16 June In the Service of the Sword, by David Webber and four others, five Novellas set in the Honor Harrington Universe 665 pages © 2004.

16 to 19 June The Ballad of Beta - 2, by Samuel R. Delany, 124 pages © 1965.

18 June, The Butterfly Kid, by Felix N. Jenkins, 24 Pages (10,000 words) © 2005? (Australian)

20 to 23 June Empire Star, by Samuel R. Delany, 114 pages © 1966.

23 to 25 June The Skeptic - Winter 2005, Edited by Barry Williams, 74 pages © 2005. (Australian)

23 to 28 June Cosmos Magazine, first issue 1, July 2005, Edited by Wilson da Silva, 112 pages © 2005. (Australian)

Started 23 June, 'Mind Players' By Pat Cadigan, 276 pages © 2005 (Australian) Not finished in June.

30 June to 04 July, The Atrocity Shop, by Kurt Von Trojan, 172 Pages © 1998

but written in 1970s? (Australian)

4 and 5 July, The Deadly Crystals, by Felix Jenkins, 37 Pages (11,843 words) © 2005, (Australian)

Short Book Reviews

In 'In the Ocean of Night' The main character deals with the death/eternal life? Of a partner and a career length involvement with SETI. First as a working Astronaut, he encounters an extinct giant alien space ship that has to be destroyed to prevent it falling to earth and secondly as a manager of the team charged with communicating with an alien probe. The probe is the emissary of the machine intelligences of the universe who take an interest in observing the rise of flesh and blood intelligences. There is a sub plot involving 'bigfoot' and the difficulty of exploring part of an alien

spacecraft crashed for millions of years on the Moon. The main thread however is an ongoing story of working Science having to live with those who feel that Science should only advance in service to 'higher' theocratic/cultic beliefs. Not Benford's best work, possibly a response to the Reagan years? I

Worlds of Honor #4, The Service of the Sword, is made up of six stories set in the HonoG Harrington Universe and answers the question of what is there left to write now that Midshipman Harrington has made it to the top of the Manticore Space Navy and the 'Peeps' Space war is at an end? It is the same problem faced by the author of the Flashman series of historical adventure stories, where the available history to interpolate a character has run out. Rather than a series of Star Trek books or Dr. Who New Adventures, this thick volume of almost novel sized stories is about what may have been happening in the shadows cast by the brilliant career of Lady and Stead holder Harrington.

Promised Land by Jane Lindskold (134 pages) is about an escape by the women of a Masadan underground that coincides with the visit by a Manticore ship on a diplomatic mission featuring the Crown Prince of Manticore on his first naval posting. The escape is lead by a Grayson girl who was captured during a Masadan pirate raid.

With One Stone by Timothy Zahn (135 pages)

A Ship named Francis by John Ringo and Victor Mitchell (25 pages) Is a story that could be set in any navy or armed forces, as in Catch 22 there has to be somewhere to put the losers stuff ups and failures that military hierarchy cannot admit to, better to concentrate them on one 'bad boat' than to spread the ill disciplined personel around the entire fleet.

Lets Go to Prague by John Ringo (66 pages) is a fun piece, two unconventional espionage operatives decide that it would be safer to have a holiday behind Peeps lines posing as Peeps security types than to rest and recreate behind their own lines. Mistaken adventures in pursuit of love and the inopportune defection of a Peeps Admiral make their holiday into an adventure.

Fanatic by Eric Flint (132 pages) is a 'resistance' story with the Fanatic in question applying his talents to subvert the system from within in a way that the decent people who have made accommodation with the system are unable to detect until nearly the final scene

The Service of the Sword by David Weber (169 pages) This story of a first Grayson woman serving as a midshipman on a Manticore ship is an indicator of where the Honor Harrington universe might go, non-ideological pirate forces prey on shipping as the Manticore fleet is

entering a post war decline, if you like, Space Opera business as usual.

In all the above six stories there is a pattern, basically decent people eventually win out against the bad guys, and good guys are where you find them. The Honor Harrington universe may be breaking free of its recycled Napoleonic drama basis to embrace the re-telling of the classic war and resistance stories of all time periods?

The Ballad of Beta - 2 A by now very dated story theme, in that a reluctant junior academic is given a research task, to find the factual basis of a cultural artefact, a traditional song. He gets deeply involved in uncovering more of the history than he could imagine.

In **The Butterfly Kid** is one of two stories sent to me on disc by Felix Jenkins. The text version that I have still requires editing but the story isn't that bad. It reads very much like a 1940s to 1960's pulp adventure tale, for which I do not think there is a ready market these days. There is loving detail (autobiographic?) of an adventure set in Tropical Australia the style is similar but less polished than in Ray Barrett's books.

Empire Star is possibly innovative and influential for it's time, a bog standard adolescent from a mundane background given a quest from the dying hands of a trio of exotic visitors; that he is to deliver an important message to the fabled Empire Star. Shortly after this a pattern commences, he begins to learn what the message should be as he travels and encounters characters who turn out to be have met / been his later selves, a possibility which is enabled by the peculiar characteristics of space around his destination, The Empire Star. A bit clunky to read, and more recent 'meeting future selves' stories have hung together better as adventures, but in all, not a bad read. The stories could have been better shorter or longer, as each of the worlds visited is sketched in very thin detail.

In **The Atrocity Shop**, we are invited to sit down and watch in the near present a stationary version of very similar experience to that of in mobile carnival of **Richard Harland's The Dark Crusade**. Originally written at about the time of the Thatcherite decay of political morality and Institutions, it was published in 1998 it hasn't really dated that much. The same venal characters can be identified on the public stage post 911 and post July 01 in an Australian context. Well worth getting a copy of, rolling yourself in a carpet, and reading on a dark winter's day. Readers of Joseph Smith might note – an even latter day testament!

In **The Deadly Chrysalis** The second longer of Felix's stories as with **The Butterfly Kid** it has butterflies present in the story line (some theme developing here!). It was a much better story than 'The Butterfly Kid', much closer to a novel than the effectively single scene short story of 'The Butterfly Kid', in that a World threat was diagnosed, detected, neutralized and the aftermath described, all in about only 2,000 words more than in 'The Butterfly kid' story.

It has been useful to me to have read both stories and to combine these with memories of the pre-Magic Casements Flash Fiction read & crit session at the February Sydney Futurians meeting. I have made considerable efforts up until now to avoid the Writers group lifestyle out of a strong sense of distaste for the emotional intensity over essentially trivial matters of style and mode of expression. That said, from the confrontation with someone else's writing style, I note the following; in writing well there are at least three things to keep in mind and to a degree battle against.

They are: **1. What are the ESSENTIALS** of the story, the bare facts that make this adventure / encounter different from other stories
2. What are the FACTS, scenery and circumstances that THE READER will want know as a result of 1.
3. What does the WRITER'S WISH (consciously or unconsciously) **to tell the reader**, description in detail of places, events or practices that are dear to the WRITER but probably only incidental colouring not essential to 1. or 2. To do writing well I have come to appreciate that you have to have a story to tell, the skill to write it and then the sense to be able to back off a bit, see what a Reader might want read about the story and then to comply in the re-write the reader's desires. How's that for a philosophy of SF&F writing?

The Deadly Chrysalis is not that bad a story, the story line engaged me and I was curious as to how it would end, but in characterizations and background scenery, I feel it could be made better or more 'saleable' by more attention to 2. and 3. On the down side, it was riddled with typos. On most pages, it seemed, I had to stop reading to try to guess what the intended word was, given that some words had missing or superfluous letters.

Original Fiction

The Scrying Claim –

In the bright afternoon sun I couldn't see if the scrying stone was glowing, but it felt cold and heavy in my hand, unearthly cold and unearthly heavy for its size. It had guided me all day as I crossed scrub and sandstone clad hills.

The Scrying stone had warmed and cooled in my hand, leading me safely through smoke, burnt brush and even around the fire fighters roadblocks. They would have seen it as their duty to rescue and return to safety a fourteen year old girl found wandering the desolation in her ash and soot stained skirt.

The scryer was no pretty jewel, just a dull green stone that filled my hand like a thumb hidden in a fist. On her Deathbed, Grandmother had pressed it into my hands saying it was all she still had from the old country and that one-day the stone might call on me.

Mostly it was my grandmother who raised me and her stories filled my mind. She told and re-told stories of life in the old country, awash with Princes, Counts, Castles and tales of talents that could skip generations. She always watched me as she spoke, as if waiting for some subtle sign. She said my long dead Grandfather had once been the Count's leigeman, in charge of dragons, but, overhearing this once to often, my Mother retorted, that if that were so, then our Grandfather must have been employed to look after their dragons' dung heap.

My mother was the last of their many war-scattered children, still a baby when my grandparents fled Europe, the camps and the war.

Like many children, as a child of survivors, my Mother found it hard to commit to a single right man, or perhaps she found it too easy to commit to too many wrong men. I never knew

my father. I knew I had brothers and sisters elsewhere. It was enough for us to be a trinity of daughter, Mother and Grandmother.

For all I knew, I might even have been a seventh child of a seventh child. In war sundered families and times when more are conceived than are ever born, who can say?

At last, I saw my destination, at the crest of the hill where blackened tree trunks stood sentinel, a dragon scrape and a clutch of eggs. They lay in the nest of fine white ash left by intense fire. Whole ones and dark spoiled ones their shards were fire polished to a thin translucent porcelain. As I arrived at the nest, ground and egg shards were slowly cooling with clink-clink-clink sounds.

Gathering up the first emerging hatchlings in my skirt and intending to carry them away to safety, I wondered which had been hatched with enough heat to grow into true Dragons?

Which would in their own time, return to nest and hatch their own eggs by causing such a sea of all consuming fire?

Perhaps in time the scrying stone would tell.
Rh. Rh.

Comments on the Scrying Claim ; This is one of several short short stories I wrote for the Magic casements 3 Flash fiction competition. I very nearly completed Three Horror, Three SF and Three Fantasy stories of 500 word length in about three weeks. I missed out on submitting the magic nine only because some stories that 'wrote themselves' refused to be cut down from 900 and 700 words to fit the 500 word limit and for one or two I got sidetracked before I could complete them. Compared to the SF stories, I found the Fantasy ones contemptuously easy to write, just choose a few stock standard elements of Fantasy and the stories wrote themselves. For the SF ones (or at least what I consider to be SF) I had to wait for inspiration to strike, I needed to encounter or synthesise a SF nal idea or scene. Mostly these came from brief Newspaper or Internet stories read

separately which somehow combined for the SF nal idea when my mind's critical faculties were at neutral.

I hope you enjoyed the Scrying Claim, there are a few more of my MC3 stories to go before next April, when I will be able to print 'Superman's Sunglasses, a story that untrimmed, fits in at well below 500 words and is my current choice for MC4's Flash Fiction competition - GPD.

The unsent Glebe Market Resignation Letter

Dear David and Family

Please make my Glebe Market space available to some other stall holder. I can no longer commit to being a Glebe market stall holder on Saturdays with any degree of regularity. In leaving at this time of year, I hope that the successor to my stall space can be well set to make the best of the pre-Christmas season.

For nearly twenty years I have enjoyed being a part of the Glebe Market community under your Grandfather, Mother and yourself but the time has come to leave.

When I started doing weekend and University markets in 1986 I was a student and stall holding was a large part of my income. Recently, following my father's death and after nearly fifteen years with a Monday to Friday Education Department job, I have come to value 'time off' as being worth more than what even the best Saturday market days can bring in.

Leaving Glebe Market behind is not an easy decision for me. It has been more than just a source of money to me and in leaving I leave behind a large part of my identity that has been a rare constant over much of my adult and working life.

In leaving the community of Glebe Market I hope to be able to take a more active role in several of my other interests. It will be for first time since leaving High School that I will have uncommitted weekends and I hope to be able to do many things that I have postponed, including educational courses or overseas and local trips.

I hope to gradually dispose of my shed full of remaining stock by attending occasional Sci-Fi or Astronomy meetings, so if anyone inquires after me or about the things I have sold, my home phone number is 02 9718

5827 and my postal address will be; P. O. Box 2, Bexley North NSW 2207

And my email – garry.dalrymple@det.nsw.edu.au

In conclusion I would like to thank you, your family and staff for the many opportunities that being a Glebe Market person has opened to me. Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 verses 1 and 2

Some Very Late News

My niece Janene (who is very clever, takes after her Uncle doesn't she) has been offered a first round place at St. George Girls High School, an academically selective High School, i.e. she will be an 'average' student among bright girls rather than a 'scholarship freak' among 'non-academic' girls from affluent and overly status conscious backgrounds at 'Danebank'. Attending St. George Girls will probably not guarantee her extra University entrance marks, but she will probably be able to do a broader and more useful range of subjects in her HSC than would be offered at 'Danebank', with or without a full or partial music scholarship. This is the school attended by her Mother and Grand Mother, so I've offered to pay for her School Blazer. A Very Much relieved Uncle!

Some Very Late Basenji News

Someone at work is considering getting a Basenji. This means I could be a 'Basenji Uncle' and more practically raises the possibility of arranging 'you mind mine and I'll mind yours' reciprocal holiday dog care!

Final Gray page

The rest of this page is provided for your notes toward Mailing Comment notes on Transcendental Basenji Sermons and Enlightenment Volume 1 number 13

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Notes from the Thursday night, Infinitas Bookshop SF&F discussion group meeting of Thursday July 07, 2005. Topic; **'Movie Bastardizations of SF'**

Present were;

Daryl Adams, Henry Chatroop, Garry P Dalrymple Kurt Frank, Will Kennedy, Charmain Spears and Brian Walls

News Items (mostly from Brian Walls)

- Coverage of Conflux2 in a 'real' writer's newsletter.
- Again the Sydney Writers Festival took place without a Science Fiction Writer being invited, some Science writers / Scientists though (**Jared Diamond and Singh**)

Garry Goes Bush

I may have referred to this in the past, but I take Micardis (telmisartan) to control hypertension. Storm damage distraction, routine break and missed medication

Sodium portals

Going Bush – loss of higher mental functioning i.e. standing at the bus stop that other people are at rather than the one next to it that I need to be at.

Swimming pool vision analogy, thought trains derail/peter out, i.e. It has been on my mind to 'do' Jules Verne for a 2005 Sydney Freecon Treatment, one day did Topic **'Best Books for / from 2004** (Published or read that year)'

Pink Pages – Rants

What do we need! and An Australian Head of State

What do we need!

A Rant about Science Fiction Writing Competitions

(paraphrasing and re-jigging text from Ted Scribner, a Sydney SF fan, Sydney Futurian meeting attendee and Creative Director of the first 2003, 'Magic Casements 1' Festival of Speculative Fiction)

This year the Flash Fiction contest (500 word limit short 'Speculative Fiction story) is being organised by the Writers' Centre, largely Irina Dunn and staff, although

Transcendental Basenji Sermons & Enlightenment
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Pages 9 to 10, Notes from the July 07, Infinitas Bookshop meeting, Topic;

'Movie Bastardizations of Science Fiction'

Pages 9 to 10, Notes from the July 01 Sydney Dr Who Social group Tavern meeting.

Pages 9 to 10, Notes from the July 15, Sydney Futurians at UTS meeting, Topic:

'Problems with Galaxy Spanning Civilisations and Empires in SF Stories'

Pages 10 and 11, Notes ahead of the Sydney Futurian meeting of May 20, 2005. Topic: 'SF Stories with different forms of Non-Human Intelligent life.'

Chris Barnes may have a hand in it. It is likely that the entries will be judged in advance to find several finalists who will read to the audience on the day and an ultimate winner selected on the night. Ion Newcombe (publisher of Antipodean SF) may be one of the judges and he above anyone I know of should be a fair judge of flash fiction.

Garry's opinion

It is old news that last year I entered the MC-2 Flash Fiction competition under the belief that it was a Science Fiction story writing competition, with stories to be of a maximum length that allowed reading by the writer in three or five minutes.

I wrote a story ('Scene from a Space Opera') and I took great pains to trim, hack and re-write (and the story suffered by it I'm sure) my entry to fit the criteria, only to notice at the reading session at the end of the day that many of the other entries seemed to take two or three times longer to read and that these came in as winners.

If I had been told that it was a Fantasy writing competition, I would have saved my five bucks and a few days effort. It was a lot harder to fit the SF story into the procrustean format, than it was to conceive the story. I reckon that a 'cut and paste' fantasy themed story would have taken far less time.

From what happened last year I am strongly tempted this year to make multiple entries, using multiple names, some SF, some Fantasy, some Horror, some stories under the word limit, some stories over the word limit, and then see what happens!

I have no doubt that the competition this year will be run with a greater degree of evident fairness than last year, but I still have a concern about a missing dimension to the conception of this competition, a potentially missed opportunity in what after all is the still the closest thing to Sydney's only local, free entry, open to all comers Science Fiction Writing competition.

In my view the 'pick a winner' format for what is an entry level 'Speculative Fiction' writing competition is unsatisfactory. Like 'Pornography' we have an individual view of what better 'Speculative Fiction' is and isn't. The collective viewpoint of 'Speculative Fiction' is at best an average of these views and so is unlikely to recognise think we know

I.e. if there should be thirty entries and they read only the three or four judged to be 'better' (by even the most objective judges) then the whole of the public impression is that there are only three or four people around Sydney who can write 'Speculative Fiction', irrespective of whether that formulation of 'Speculative Fiction' is to the hearers taste or not.

Also, what feedback is there for the writers?

If your story was judged by all to be a brilliant Science Fiction or Fantasy or Horror story, but it came fourth on total points as 'Speculative Fantasy'. I favour a 'Dog Show' approach, ranking of all entrants in a 'best of breed', 'best local', 'best interstate' and best overall for Science Fiction, Fantasy, Horror and any other categories that the judges feel to be justifiable.

If all (or most that are not complete crud) are read out then if some fraction/faction of those present like what they hear they can clap you on the back and say 'jolly good piece, pity you didn't win, have you considered sending stories like that to 'Single Genre Press'. I consider this to be a serious concern as Science Fiction fans, Fantasy fans and Horror fans are each likely to be only a small minority among all us 'Spec. Fiction' fans.

Otherwise what is lost is the opportunity to encourage the writer of the third or fourth best Science Fiction or Fantasy or Horror story writer in the competition to stop trying to write stories that straddle two genres and concentrate on the one that is their strength.

The organisers may protest that this is too much of a burden, but at the advertised length of the stories that they are calling for what length, 500 words being only a couple of minute read through, could be more suitable for this degree of scrutiny? If they can't commit to this degree of judging on the day of MC3, then why not award 1st., 2nd. and 3rd for 'Speculative Fiction' on the day and in the following week send off to all participants a 'how you went as a Science Fiction or Fantasy or Horror story writer' letter and an 'all placings' report showing who you beat and who you didn't.

From a perspective of the NSW Writers Centre, surely a set up like this of showing how close you came to making the grade this time as a writer of your chosen genre (or correcting that would be writer's misunderstanding that what they are writing is / might sell as say Horror, when they think they have been writing Fantasy) is more likely to encourage a 17 or 57 year old first attempt would-be writer sign up for the

courses, books and magazines etc. so that they can succeed elsewhere on subsequent attempts.

I know I would.

Mostly I am concerned that good talent can be wasted. There is the 'general public' there is 'SF Fandom', there are 'Speculative Fiction writers groups' and there are the members of the NSW Writers Centre. Would-be SF fandom SF&F writers are probably aware of all the convention, Spec Fiction publication and 'SF Institutional' SF writing prize opportunities, but the general public wouldn't know about many of them. Surely a Spec Fiction competition by the NSW Writers Centre should be more about opening these opportunities rather than just naming successes.

I do greatly appreciate what happens at Magic Casements and I do greatly appreciate that the organizer's 'constituency' is the membership of the NSW Writers Centre and not some abstraction of 'What is best for Sydney Science Fiction readers, writers and fans', but I am serious about this. My attending MC3 means that I will probably have to work on the Saturdays before and after it.

Wishing you well in all things.

Garry P Dalrymple

Thoughts on a Proposal

Having strong opinions and some abilities logic dictates that I say what I think is better.

With The Sydney Freecons I have shown that it is possible over a day or two to run a minimalist Free Entry SF&F event in Sydney, exhibit local SF&F writers, discuss SF topics, have fun doing it and still end up with surplus cash.

I consider doing something to encourage local SF writing to be worth spending have a day or two of

Grey end Page – ANZAPAN

LATE BREAKING NEWS

July Total 0.00 mm – July Average 100 mm
Difference -103 mm, or 0 % of usual

August Total 0.00 mm – August Average 81 mm

Difference -103 mm, or 0 % of usual

September Total 0.00 mm – Sept. Average 69mm
Difference -69 mm, or 0 % of usual

October Total 0.00 mm – October Average 79 mm
Difference -79 mm, or 0 % of usual

November Total 0.00 mm – Nov. Average 82 mm
Difference -82 mm, or 0 % of usual

December Total 0.00 mm – Dec. Average 78 mm
Difference -78 mm, or 0 % of usual