

Transcendental Basenjis Sermons and Enlightenment

Vol. 1 No. 22, December 2006
*Immediate Post-Sydney
Freecon 2006 Issue*

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Editorial

This newsletter is a short version of my usual ANZAPA contribution newsletter. You are receiving it as a Christmas Card for having attended the 2006 Sydney Freecon. A longer version, containing all the in-Freecon handouts is going to the members of the ANZAPA collective and those supporters of the 2006 Sydney Freecon who were unable to attend (and who explained why). Given the reception to a Science Fiction Freecon this year I intend to hold a 2007 SF Freecon AND I am going to try to get up an All Science Freecon for the 2007 Science Week as well. I'll let you know about both Freecons as more details are known.

To my mind the 2006 Sydney Freecon was a damn fine SF con. It could of course been better, more people would have attended if we had had an event listing in any of the Friday / Weekend papers etc.

By the standards of most SF cons held interstate, it wasn't much, seven hours of programming, three Authors, Some Science, Some coverage of local Speculative Fiction publishing, Some coverage of local SF&F meetings & events, A short SF competition, a Captions competition and slightly more than thirty people. But in Sydney things are well, different. Getting anything SF up in Sydney is, well a lot like herding cats, whatever that means. I finished up the day of the Freecon sitting on a railway station platform (it took me all of two hours to get home!) thinking of all the minor tweaks that could be tried for next year's Freecon. That is acting like the next Freecon was next month rather than the best part of a year away!

This was a great change and improvement from the last one I held in 2003, where I left the Freecon feeling tired, and unappreciated. This time I was so up-beat after the event that I even managed to avoid coming down with the previously inevitable post-Freecon Stress cold!

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Yellow Pages Science Fiction

Garry's notes of Sydney SF&F meetings attended during October, November and December 2006

The 2006 Sydney Freecon, Saturday November 25, 2006 at Bankstown Public Library

Saturday October 28, The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts Institute Science Fiction and Fantasy book group meeting

The Infinitas Book shop SF&F discussion meeting of Thursday November 02, 2006

Tuesday December 12, 2006 The Civic Hotel (CBD) Fans at the pub gathering

Garry's Report on the November 25, 2006 Sydney Freecon

For me the day of the Freecon started the night before, I was up till 1 am doing up the membership badges and cutting Cheese and Salmon Sandwiches. I was up again at ~6.30 am with some packing still to do.

Breakfast included two codeine tablets as I had been 'out of sorts for the preceding two days. I was out of the house by 7.30 am, and off to the bus stop and on a train by about 8.15 am. This was later than I would have preferred, but it did get me to Bankstown some minutes before 9 am.

Sitting on the train to Bankstown (in the vestibule of course!) I engaged a fellow traveler with, 'you look like you would enjoy going to a Science Fiction convention'. A direct hit! As it was **Lynne Green**, a friend of **Gillian Polack's** from Queensland who was indeed travelling to the Freecon. Thus at 8.30 I had a Convenor and a panelist, so all I needed was an audience member and we were on the way to another successful Freecon.

Rounding the corner of the library we were met by a scrum of people outside the Library, most already doing introductions and talking animatedly. There was **Ted Scribner**, **Ann Rankins**, **Ron Clarke**, **Robert Bee** and **Joanne Nickl**. Ted and Ann are well known to us from **Sydney Futurian** meetings and past Freecons, Robert had sent in a story and an application form, but I failed to reach the PO box in time to get it. Joanne was a little reticent, I hope I introduced her to the growing Freecon crowd.

Leaving Ted and Ann to handle the giving out of badges and general reception stuff I fled across the street to my office to retrieve the Technology and the Milk for the Freecon. I was also able to phone **my mum** as I realized that I had left home with the sandwiches, for the Kevin Dillon lunch-time symposium still in the Freezer at home.

On my return Dr **Ragbir Bhathal** (SETI speaker) and **Richard Harland** (writer GOH), so with ever increasing numbers we stampeded in at about 9.05, did some final setting up and were in business by about 9.15. I did introductions and orientation, mainly about food places and toilets were. I called in one of the Librarians to literally unveil the People's Choice entries (On Friday night I had taped them to the glass windows / wall behind the room's curtains). We then had a first break for tea and coffee etc. Many people admired the colourful artwork of the two posters advertising **Convergence 2** that **Rose Mitchell** had sent up to us from Melbourne. We have to thank **Tim** and **Danielle** at the **Infinitas bookshop** for the many colourful book marks and sample chapter booklets which made up most of the items on the Freebies table

Re-starting the Freecon the first panel was a discussion of the year's SF / Sci-Fi TV, Movies and live theatre. On this panel were **Lynne Green**, **Elizabeth Pastor** and **Brian Walls**. We made some use of **Wendy Wildermoth's** list of George street release SF / Sci-Fi TV Movies and my list of recent SF / Sci-Fi TV programs. After a break the second was a writers read and discuss their work. **Gillian Polack** read a short piece from both her current and future books. **Richard Harland** also gave two spirited readings. **Bill Congreve** declined to read, instead giving us a tour of the field of Australian Small Press and Speculative Fiction publishing. Bill had to leave early, to return to the Blue Mountains, but before he left he gave as a gift to the Freecon a copy of the First and Second 'The year's

Best Australian SF and Fantasy Anthologies. The sale of which greatly contributed to the People's Choice Competition Prize Pool.

During the break **my Mother** arrived with the sandwiches. She was pleased to see that I had friends that were imaginative rather than being imaginary. She was able to put faces to some people that she had previously known only as voices on the phone.

The next item was our Science presentation for the day, a talk on SETI delivered by **Dr Ragbir Bhathal**. Dr Bhathal traced the often Science Fictional progress of the development of the concept of Searching for Extra Terrestrial intelligence as well as our progress to date. He then went on to explain why SETI using Lasers made more sense than the traditional approach of using Radio waves. Simply put, by using light waves rather than Radio waves you can send much more message further and cheaper than by other methods. Technology is within reach that would allow for a message of laser pulses to be seen at a distance that would appear brighter than the Sun!

WE had another break, then re-convened (with sandwiches!) for the Kevin Dillon Lunchtime Symposium.

Three loaves of bread made into Cheese and Salmon Sandwiches were a 'Free Lunch' while we had a relaxed discussion about the life and works of our main 'Ghost of Honour' A. Bertram Chandler. I interviewed **David Kelleher**, (appearing on a panel at his first ever SF convention!) who presented a selection of his Encyclopaedic knowledge of A. Bert Chandler which had grown out of his 'Liberty Hall' A. Bert Chandler website. Copies of my eight-page set of A. Bert Chandler book reviews were distributed to encourage reflection and possibly later readership of some A. Bert Chandler titles? I found that reading up on a deceased author to be an interesting

experience, you get a deeper understanding of what was in the mind of the writer by reading in bulk. The idea behind the Kevin Dillon Lunchtime Symposium is to recognise **Kevin Dillon**, a late Sydney SF fan who it could fairly be said would probably have preferred to talk SF rather than to eat well. After his death, and in discussing his life in this newsletter I was told by one Sydney Fan how good it had been, attending a first SF convention and subsisting for the weekend on cheese sandwiches. The Kevin Dillon Symposium / free lunch turned out to be a very good idea indeed, as well over two thirds of those present at the time stayed to listen and eat. We all had enough of a lunch, and managed to squeeze in an extra hour of programming, but without the scattering and loss of Freecon focus that usually occurs before and after a declared lunch break in programming. More usually, when people dawdle back from lunch the first after lunch panel is poorly attended and interrupted. For the cost of three loaves of bread, a half kilo tin of Red Salmon and a pack of 24 cheese slices we saved one and a half program hours. Loaves and fishes indeed!

After a break the next item was **Richard Harland's** presentation on 'Vile Watch' a phenomena with implications so disturbing that even Tabloid Television programs fear to cover it (are they part of the conspiracy). Delicacy prevents me from fully describing what transpired, but if you look up the Vile Watch website or by a copy of the books 'The Vicar of Morbing Vile' or 'The Black Crusade', each of these may prepare you for the disturbing truth.

The fourth advertised panel didn't really take place, as most of the ground had already been well enough covered by Bill Congreve's excellent pre-lunch presentation, so onto a brief discussion of SF&F Clubs and events. Contributing to this panel were **Gillian Polack** (reporting on Canberra's vivid Fannish, Speculative Fiction Publishing and Convention running groups) including a

special limited time offer for Freecon attendees to join the 2007 Natcon at a very reduced rate. **Kathleen Tanswell** from **Spocksoc** discussed what the range of activities and groups active as SF&F / Pop culture clubs at the University of NSW. **Brian Walls** spoke about the **MU MESON ARCHIVE** and their occasionally SF nal Friday night events. I introduced the 2007 edition of 'Where's the Science Fiction in Sydney?' and discussed the current travails of the **Sydney Futurians** and the brief life of the **Mechanics Institute, School of Arts SF&F book reader's discussion group**. Towards the end of this panel I was able to give **Chris Barnes** a few minutes to talk about the next Sydney SF&F event, the **2007 Magic Casements Festival of Speculative Fiction**, which will take place on a Saturday in March and will probably cost \$10 to \$20 for the day.

Effectively the final panel was a discussion of our 'Ghosts of Honour'. I gave out a single page sheet of three reviews on **Octavia E. Butler**, although **Gillian Polack** provided the most detail about Butler's 'Life and Times'. **David Kelleher** was able to reprise his lunch-time contribution on **A. Bert Chandler**. **John Brosnan** and **Kurt Von Trojan** got little more than a mention in passing (which was a shame), but **John Karp**, speaking from the audience was able to give a concise treatment of the life and works of **Stanilus Lem**.

NB time did not allow for **Lewis Morley** to give a talk on his graphic novel project. I do appreciate both his being available to provide an element to the Freecon as well as his not insisting on his entitlement as it became evident that we were running short of time. Those who stand and wait also serve?

The final part of the program was to tally up the results for the People's Choice competition and for **Helen Fischer** to hand out prizes for the 'Clever Captions'. I

believe that Robert Bee was awarded one prize and I won the other!

The final frames of the program finally ran through the sprockets with the usual frenzied clear up and exit from the venue, at a speed that frankly amazed the Library people who were watching. We left a quantity of fruitcake for the library staff to enjoy on Sunday and Monday. In company I then had to walk the borrowed technology and left over food and books etc back to my office for safe keeping over the weekend.

The day did not end with the final program item. Six of us, **Garry Dalrymple Elizabeth Pastor, Ann Rankins, Sue Smith, Paolo Rech and Brian Walls** shuffled off across the street to Mimis Café for a pre-movie drink and chat. We talked as fans do, extending some of the topics discussed during the day et al. Until it was time to go into the Hoyts and watch a 5.30 session of 'Borat'. Sue Smith announced that she has heard the call of the Swancon, the employment opportunities of the Booming Western Australia mean that she will be shortly re-locating interstate to Perth (or thereabouts).

As for **Borat** – very brave movie indeed – and occasionally both cringe worthy and funny. I was stunned by the volume of pre-movie ads which were even openly spruiking advertise you product here for only two dollars to a captive audience, shamelessly shown to that very captive audience. For \$15 a seat I really didn't expect to have to sit through 20 minutes of overly loud advertising (even though I was rather deaf in one ear all weekend!). We left the theatre after 7 pm, it was still daylight, so after farewells etc I headed back to my office to re-sort the leftovers from the Freecon into what I could carry home that night and what could wait until Monday. I ended up giving the last of the opened chocolate biscuits to the Civic Tower's security staff and the unopened packets of chocolate biscuits (mostly Tim Tams) to my colleagues at work on Monday, as a small

investment against future good will and tolerance?

I left the Civic tower at Eight-ish. It was getting dark, a very Orange sunset to be seen from up in the Civic Tower. I was very pleased with how the day had gone and full of ideas of how to make the next one better, as if it were a few weeks away rather than the best part of a year and several interstate SF cons away. Ideas such as 'Should I try for a two-day one next year' or 'Would another Museum Freecon on a Saturday or a Sunday be more accessible to some of the fans who wouldn't or couldn't get to Bankstown on a Saturday'? Then I goofed. I caught a train that went back a station to Yagoona instead of forward to Punchbowl then Campsie, so I ended up adding an hour to my transit time on a warm and sticky summer evening. Clearly earlier in the year would be better if a Movie and a Dinner were to be on the cards for next year. I eventually got home after 9.30 pm put things away, had a shower etc. and that was the end of the Freecon day for me.

On the following day, Sunday November 26, I went into town for the Sydney Dr Who 'Introduction to Torchwood Day'. It was advertised as a 12 noon to 8 pm day, 'Adult after 4 pm'. I arrived after 1 pm, had a drink and some lunch and discovered that the program was to be Dr Who episodes and the Telemovie until 4 pm and then Torchwood until after 8 pm. I really could not face six or seven hours sitting upright on a bar stool and then the prospect of a bustrip home that would see me at home probably by 10 pm, so I left. On the way out, while crossing Martin Place, I met Paolo Rech coming the other way, so I gave exchanged greetings with him and gave him my entry / raffle ticket and headed on to a bus stop home. It was just after I had sat down on the 423 bus that was taking me home that it occurred to me that I had left my weather beaten and 'holy' hat behind on the bus seat. This forced a decision. The hat just wasn't worth getting off the bus,

walking back, waiting another 30 minutes for the next bus and paying a new bus fare home. Tired little hatless fan me!

Results of the People's Choice Short SF Story writing Competition

Describing it as being a 'Science Fiction' Short Story competition kept the number of entries manageable. I.e. there were no school class entries regurgitating Harry Potter or Artemous Fowl etc. All that were received in time were able to be displayed (14 ea), photocopied up onto 20 A3 sheets. Freecon members took the competition and their responsibilities seriously, they were standing up and reading the stories between program items AND they did vote.

They voted as if they understood the implications of the competition's prize Pool / Quasi-preferential system, i.e. All stories got some votes, but there was a clear Winner (or 'People's Choice') in 'Rejected Stories' and several stories were fairly equally placed as runners up. With no small pride I am able to relate that my story 'Superman's Sunglasses' came second, to Garfield Barnard's First 'Rejected Stories' and Third with 'Dear Buzz' (I also scored 'last!' with Invasion Plan 10!).

Place	Story Title	Votes In \$B
1st	Rejected Stories	\$B180
2nd	Superman's Sunglasses	\$B140
3rd	Dear Buzz	\$B105
3rd	Outside	\$B105
5th	Thirteen Green Swans	\$B100
5th	Safety Features	\$B100
5th	Behind the Blue Door	\$B100
8th	A Twist of Lemon Please	\$B90
9th	Day of Deliverance	\$B90
10th	Black Peter	\$B85
11th	No ID	\$B50
12th	An Enchanting Book	\$B40
13th	Vibrations of Sympathy	\$B30
14th	Invasion plan 10	\$B5

A more detailed report on the results will be sent to the writers who entered the contest.

So, who was there at the 2006 Sydney Freecon?

- * Indicates their first ever Freecon
- Chris Barnes
- * Robert Bee
- * Dr Ragbir Bhathal
- * Lyndon Brown - Pink form handed in
- Ron Clarke
- David Clancy
- Bill Congreve
- Garry Dalrymple
- * Mrs L.B. Dalrymple (me Mum!)
- Helen Fischer
- Diane and John Fox – Blue Mtns
- * Lynne Green – QLD Voyager Sci.
- Richard Harland - Wollongong
- * John Karp – Lem Talk - Pink form in
- Victor Kay
- * David Kelleher – A. Bert Chandler
- Lewis Morley – Blue Mtns
- * Joanne Nickl - Pink form handed in
- Elizabeth Pastor
- Gillian Polack - ACT
- Anne Rankins
- Paolo Rech
- Ted Scribner – Blue Mtns
- Susan Smith
- * Kathleen Tanswell, from Spocksoc
- Brian Walls
- * Chris Wellford - Pink form handed in
- * Simon Yates - Pink form handed in
- * Gillian's Whovian Friend and 2 or 3 badgeless lurkers who left no trace

Apologies Received

- Garfield Barnard
- Susan Batho
- Gerry Williamson

That's a highly creditably 34 people present, about 14 of them being 'new faces' to the Freecon, and possibly to organized Sydney SF fandom?

The night before the Freecon I had a list of 27 names of people who had indicated that they were going to attend. Many of these did not show up on the day, but fortuitously were replaced by new faces. If I can take

the time to promote the 2007 Freecon more consistently, i.e. through the full 'season' of Aust book SF&F events, starting with Magic Casements; rather than as in this year's last minute scramble, then I should be able to have firmer and more reliable 'membership' lists and be better able to plan for panels and presentations.

So how did it go?

I think it went very well indeed. Over thirty servings of a Day of SF in Sydney, and a good time was had by all.

Under the circumstances the numbers were good, about as good as for any of the previous single day Bankstown Freecons, but most importantly there were lots of new faces, who mostly stayed for the full day, the true indicator of possession of a fannish temperament? 'Old fans' are starting to be a minority at Freecons? With annual Freecons and Magic Casements events are we seeing the start of a new Sydney SF fandom?

If there had been less worry about bush fires in the Blue Mountains, I expect there would have been a few more people present, possibly stretching us to nearly forty. The other issue with the time of year is that on any Saturday between late September to early December you are likely to hit exams at some of Sydney's Universities.

I found it interesting to observe how little crossover of interest there is between the Freecon list of attendees (and applicants) and the names on the lists of attendees of Sydney's monthly SF&F discussion meetings. Freecons and monthly SF&F discussion meetings really are appealing to different sorts of people I guess. The indications on the bottom of the Freecon Application form support this impression.

Some of the new faces at this Freecon seem to have come from internet contacts, email group postings and such 'inner city'

promotional sources such as Radio FBI, The Marrickville Reverse Garbage Truck etc.

There is also a 'phantom donut suburb' effect with addresses of the new faces. A bunch of them came from the inner city and the rest came from far suburbia or even further out, relatively few new faces came from nearby suburbs, which is a pity.

While the room was never as full as 'standing room only', with over thirty people present at times, it would take only an incremental increase in attendance to approach the venue's maximum capacity. I.e. if a 2007 Freecon holds and improves on attendee numbers, then the 2008 Freecon might have to move to a larger venue or have a more formal membership and booking procedure to 'control' numbers?

Promotional successes, things that happened this time

Lots of email sent out to SF ish lists - Listing on the front page of the October and November Infinitas bookshop newsletter, also on their web page?

A listing of the Freecon and the 'People's choice' in the NSW Writer's Centre Journal.

A five minute interview on Radio FBI (the voice of youth), that was heard all over Sydney the week before the Freecon.

Lots of Freecon paper out at SF Bookshops and Public Libraries. Freecon paper on display at the Marrickville 'Reverse Garbage Truck', a hang out for free thinking environmentally aware cheapskates.

Notes for next year

The 2007 'People's Choice' will have to be a 'one or two page' SF story competition, as several stories were submitted in an editor friendly, double spaced format over three pages that required re-typing to fit onto a single displayable page. About 20 ea A3 pages went up to display fourteen stories,

next year a maximum of 15 ea A3 pages to hang.

May have to get serious about 'residency' i.e. as only four of the seven people who entered stories in the People's Choice Competition attended the Freecon. One point of holding the competition is that the competition is intended as a Freecon member's writing competition and as a general encouragement to write Short Science Fiction.

Perhaps next year any one can enter and be judged, but you have to attend the Freecon to be eligible for the award of any cash prize?

I may have to think about limits to the volume of stories that can be displayed. It was possible to read all of the displayed stories during the breaks but it was not easy. Limiting writers to a total of two or three pages, or one story per writer etc. might be necessary so that the amount to be displayed from all 2007 entrants would be a maximum of 15ea A3 pages. Having established that a 'People's Choice' competition format has worked for a SF writing competition, it might be easier to promote it next year and hopefully attract some promises of non-cash prizes? Should we try a 'People's Choice' format SF Art competition? I.e. to display up to 10ea A4 BW or colour Photo copies of original artwork? Limited to two or three art works per person?

In an attempt to send a message to people who enjoy SF but who are not yet 'SF fans', I might consider offering, five to ten 2007 Sydney Freecon seats on Ebay. Any cash proceeds would boost the 'People's Choice' prize pools.

Notes from The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts Institute Science Fiction and Fantasy book group meeting of Saturday October 28, 2006

Present were; Winsome Allen, Christine Campbell, Belinda Coombs, Garry Dalrymple and Brian Walls

Big news of the meeting

There will be no more Saturday SF&F book discussion meetings, effective immediately. The lack of regular attendance was cited as the reason, the Crime / Detective book group will continue to hold meetings into 2007.

I found this very disappointing, but not unpredictable. The SF&F meeting was effectively a subset of the Crime / Detective group meeting and usually it was just me and one other additional people turning up to the recent run of things was that I would join about half of the people left appear a. Would it have been much different if the meetings were run in the reverse order, i.e. for a library user's group the end / start of the new meeting at 11.30 and library closure meant a choice of 1 meeting and library use Vs two meetings and no library use. Incidentally, the Crime / Detective borrowings statistics were ~35% of MSA monthly borrowings, the 'Sci-Fi' (your guess as to how much SF and how much Fantasy) borrowings were under 3% of MSA monthly borrowings, i.e. proportionally there should have been 40 to 50 people showing up for the Crime / Detective book meetings based on the SF&F figures!

Other things discussed – The consequences of the end of the Sydney Futurian's affiliation to the UTS Student's Association

The Infinitas Book shop SF&F discussion meeting of Thursday November 02, 2006

Present were; Darryl Addams, Henry Chatroop, Garry Dalrymple, Kurt Frank, Jo Kay, Mick Ousley, Charmain Spears, Tim (infinitas owner) and Brian Walls.

SF&F News for November

- **Some famous cartoon guy has died.**
- **Nigel Neale**, the writer of **Quatermass** has died.
- There have been mass sightings in Sydney of Japanese schoolgirls in uniform, apparently unconnected with any Anime or Manga events!
- The 'Supanova' Sci-Fi event was reviewed by **Brian Walls** and several others, apparently there were lots of costumes seen.
- Battlestar Galactica (next season) proceeds via peanuts / nuggets, internet released footage of a few minutes running time.
- DA – Episodes of Torchwood screened in the UK (and by YouTube), sort of 'X Files' meets 'This Life'. Dr Who references and screened at 10 pm coz of 'Adult themes'.
- In the US Battlestar Galactica season 4 is now showing. The survivor count is now down to 30,000 from 50,000!
- **Paul McGann**, the telemovie Dr Who, is now doing some Dr Who Audios.
- HC – Universal Studios is not supporting the 'Halo' movie, Microsoft also defers.
- A 'The War of the Worlds' movie, set in 1901 is being made / released, to be truer to the original story?
- KF – The **Hubble Space Telescope** is to be repaired some time soon.
- MO – In Japan they are bringing out dolls for the over fifties, baby dolls just like grandchildren only less inconvenient
- BW – A Japanese Scientist has copied himself as an android shaped robot, to attend to some more mundane professorial duties.
- Teleportation, or more correctly Quantum Teleportation of 'information' is in the news again.
- 'Children of Men' is a SF movie by **PD James** (noted crime writer) about a world gone infertile, reminiscent of On the Beach and ZPG?

- The movie version of **Philip K Dick's** 'A Scanner Darkly' is released locally on November 30, 2006.
- The movie 'Who killed the Electric Car' (more conspiracy than SF) is out now at Arthouse cinemas.
- GD – The travails of the MSA SF&F discussion group and the Sydney Futurians.
- The list of shows due for the Sci-Fi channel was discussed.

Discussion of the topic, mostly instances

Rogue Computers and Artificial Intelligences in SF

- In the book and movie Demon Seed by **Dean Koontz**, a computer wants to become a daddy
- The 1950s movie 'Colossus' where a Missile Defence computer takes over the world. The movie is the first part of three books, Colossus takes over, the humans talk to the Martians about software to take colossus off line, the humans have to put Colossus back on line to fight off the Martian invasion threat.
- Zardoz, the computer / AI that 'lives' between the facets of a large diamond. The people (topless and dressed like Egyptians) want an end to eternal life.
- Hal 9000 in **A. C. Clarke's** 2001
- Not in 'Forbidden Planet' coz the 'monster' was a product of a thought amplifier rather than a computer or AI.
- The Cylons in Battlestar Galactica, made by men, then rebelled etc.
- Similarly in several episodes of 'Space Above and Beyond', AI androids are made who rebel and run amok!
- The Classic Star Trek episode 'No Man'.
- The Smart bombs in Dark Star, they have feelings and must be reasoned with.
- The movie 'Short Circuit'.
- The original computer / animation / game movie 'Tron' where the game user gets sucked into the game. -

- Logans Run, (as opposed to Drovers run) where everyone dies at the age of thirty (just like Women presenters on Commercial TV), turn out the whole show is run by a computer gone wrong.
- The Berserker series of books by **Fred Saberhagen**, great big war machines left over from a forgotten interstellar war hate all life. This series explores all sorts of human / berserker interaction and even features an 'evolution' of machine consciousness.
- War Games, a rogue AI has to be taught that a nuclear exchange is unwinnable.

A distinction was made between incorrectly programmed machines (the Sorcerer's Apprentice story re-told?) and machines that learn stuff and start to follow paths not allowed for by their creators.

- In the **Piers Anthony** book 'Xanth' a computer tries to take over.
 - In **S. M. Stirling's** 'The General' series of books a computer that has been dormant for hundreds of years tries to re-boot' civilization . The world that this takes place on is based on the post Roman, Byzantine era Mediterranean.
 - 'True Names' by **Vernor Vinge** and the character 'Don.Mac'.
 - The 'Terminator' series of movies.
- The Deep Space Nine episode where a Cardassian Dreadnaught had to be talked down.
- In **John Sladek's** 'The Reproductive System' where a toy factory inadvertently creates a Von Neuman machine, near a gas mantle factory – and a plague of tungsten robots results?

Other things that were discussed (somehow relevant to the topic) included: Computers in toasters, Predator missile diversions, definitions of AI & programming intelligence, things that are and are not 'A.I.'

Friday November 03, 2006

Before this meeting I took the opportunity to visit the Gaelic Club in Devonshire Street. There is indeed a smallish bar and large-ish meeting space in addition to the Nightclub next door (hint, remember to look out for the lift behind the stairs, coz it's a long way up).

There may well be smaller meeting rooms off to one side as well. While I was passing through there was a meeting of 'Politics in the Pub' being taped for Channel 31 Community TV? There was display material for several other meetings on show, so a Sydney Futurians or Science Fiction at the Club would not seem to be out of the question. Also checked out Regent Street, the building that used to house the Transport Club is 'for lease', eliminating that possibility.

The Dr Who Tavern meeting at the Lansdowne Hotel, Friday November 03, 2006

Present were: **Dr Tony Cooke, Garry Dalrymple** and **Dallas Jones**

I arrived at the Lansdowne at ~7.15 pm. Discussed with Dallas mutual friends from the old MAASAA (a 'children's Astronomy Club). Many of us have gone on to greatly return the MAAS's small investment. Dallas and Tony discussed friends from their common (Sydney Uni SF club?) past. Dallas has been reading through several of the Hugo nominated books of late and he was working on a draft of the survey form for the Dr Who Club's Torchwood event in November. Tony Cooke arrived shortly after and standing in the meal ordering queue we discussed the recent Hugo voting success of Dr Who episodes (1st, 2nd and 3rd!) and the consequences of the 2007 Worldcon being in Japan next year. Melbourne seems likely to be the unopposed 2010 Worldcon venue. Much amusement was had at the prospect of the US specific Worldcon rules which would seem to allow an infinite succession of

contested in Australia, awarded to Australia Worlcon ballots.

The rules were set up to prevent two or more successive too close East coast or West Coast Worldcons, but as most of the Australian Capital cities are separated by greater than these distances, so these rules would in fact allow for a repeating loop of Australian hosting and contesting Worlcons. I.e. Melbourne hosting and giving the next to Worldcon to Sydney, Sydney to Brisbane, Brisbane to Canberra, Canberra to Perth, Perth to Melbourne etc. is technically possible. An oddity for Worldcon rule Wunks for now, but if China or India ever wanted to crown their economic emergence by hosting a succession of Worldcons, how would the Americans ever be able to stop them under present rules? I left at about 8.30 pm. I expect that other night-owl Whovians would have turned up later.

Tuesday December 12, 2006

At the Kinokuniya Bookshop

Prior to this meeting I had an opportunity to visit the vast Kinokuniya bookshop, a shop that for its range of SF, Fantasy and Anime/Manga, deserves to be considered as Sydney's 'other' SF&F bookshop.

I went intending to speak to someone about the possibilities for the Sydney Futurians meeting 'moving in' and using this shop's Café area as a venue for our SF discussion meetings. The Kinokuniya shop is very well situated. It is much nearer to Townhall Station than the UTS Tower building is to central. My original line of thought was that if the café was closed earlier than the shop on some nights then the space, tables and chairs might be available for a discussion group to use.

Unfortunately the shop's Café is open while the shop is open, and the larger Café in front of Kinokuniya keeps much the same hours. Something might still be possible, but this would not be a first choice.

I was very fortunate to meet Helene Byfield whose title at Kinokuniya is 'Department Manager English Book'. Helene was very open to the idea of inviting several Genre based book club groups to form at Kinokuniya. She mentioned that currently the only space on the shop floor is the area in the children's section, but as the disturbing vision of well nourished SF fans gathering to sit and talk among the child sized (and strength!) furniture passed before my eyes I chose not to pursue that issue. I was able to discuss with her the experience of the book discussion groups at the Sydney Mechanics Institute, that a 'book of the month' club is hard to sustain; if the book choices are wrong no-one reads the book and that even popular book choices do not guarantee that people will return week after week if there are even occasional 'dud' choices of book or author. The general survives longer than the particular, i.e. the Romance Book meeting died first in spite of its massive (40% of borrowings) readership after it was described as a 'Mills and Boon book' discussion group, while the Mystery / Detective book group survives, they commit to discussing a different type of Mystery / Detective book each meeting, your choice of Author. After the Christmas rush the Magazine section at Kinokuniya is likely to be reduced and the departments of the shop re-organized, so a 'talking area' is a possibility in the new-year.

Helene also told me that January is apparently Science Fiction month at Kinokuniya. I expect that this will mean a repeat of the impressive in-store display and colour catalogue of past years. It will be worth a trip into town just to have a look and pick up a copy of the catalogue. Helene offered to get in touch with me in January and perhaps there will be space for a book interest groups and events notice board?

On leaving Kinokuniya I realized that the area currently used for an Art Display, an

oddly shaped triangular area that is too difficult to use for bookshelves, could be used as a meeting area for a group the size of most Sydney SF discussion meetings. It could make for an interesting venue, as it has a glass back / front wall, so fans meeting there would be visible like fish in a bowl to people entering and leaving Kinokuniya or those using the escalators to reach higher levels of the shopping complex! Would this lead to a higher public profile for SF&F in Sydney?

I wandered off down George Street at a few minutes to 6 pm, trying to see if I could spot any of the Tuesday half price night movie set, but presumably they were already in the Cinema at that time. A few minutes past 6 pm I wandered the Civic Hotel 'lonely as a cloud' seeking signs of fannish life, the pub was full-ish but no one was there, so I went outside. Shortly I met Roland Sinn across the road and by about 6.30 Mark Philips had arrived.

Tuesday December 12, 2006 Civic Hotel FIT Pub gathering

Present were; **Garry Dalrymple, Mark Philips and Roland Sinn**

Apologies were received from
Chris Barnes and Ted Scribner

For people who intend to visit future Civic Hotel gatherings it is worth mentioning that we were able to sit and talk in a 'room' that faces out onto Pitt Street. As it is closed off from the main body of the pub it is very much quieter than the main area or the poker machine pit. When we have twenty fans showing up for an evening, this area will still suffice.

Chris Barnes had explained by email that he was unable to attend, being needed at home for a Plumbing and Landlord related issue.

Mark Philips nearly re-venued the meeting by announcing that he had just come from the Crown Hotel where they were serving free drinks!

There was a discussion of the Email lists that the serious Sydney SF fan should belong to, their recent history and uses. One point that was discussed was the recent Eidolist 'Time Warp' where Emails sent the month before re-appeared, including postings about this gathering.

I did not realize it at the time, but it is very likely that much of the information I was putting out for the Freecon was affected by this effect.

Chris Levinson's 'Sci-Fi Monthly' book of the month meeting was discussed. An effort that deserves more support as the books they read and discuss are splendid. They have been reading canonical SF books during 2006 and for their 2007 list they will be reading award winning books and Authors.

Being Sydney, it was inevitable that Real Estate would be discussed. Roland has bought what is may be the ultimate Sydney SF fan desirable residence, an inner city property built over a cake shop and having no neighbors! That's one more Sydney SF fan lost to the property owning classes. How long before Roland hears the siren call of the mountains?

Consider Phelebas? We did and two out of three said 'no thanks' to Ian (occasionally 'M') Hamilton / Banks and SF books written in a similar style (multiple Main Character viewpoints that take soooo long to interact).

The never ending quest for 'novel' Fantasy novels goes ever forward, Mark Philips was able to name a few out of the ordinary Fantasy books that went questing in a different path to the usual ten part trilogy cycle.

Fantasy Vs Science Fiction, the differences between these genres were discussed rather than a listing of better or worse. In a fairly recent issue of Auralis the Australian Fantasy writer Kate Forsythe / Humphries spent a good part of a book review in explaining what she found to be the differences between the writing styles of SF and Fantasy. Well worth reading for a perceptive opinion.

The state of State and Federal Politics were discussed. Departmental re-structures continue to haunt the public sector, The NSW opposition leader 'Deadman Walking' is promising to jail / Sack 29,000 public employees / Cronulla Rioters the day after he gets elected (or something). John Howard, the wizard of Australian Politics is Harry Potter, fifty years on, turned to the dark side. The Attorney General is The Emperor from Star Wars / Montgomery Burns, in a pre-Sith incarnation and Kevin Rudd is Charlie Brown with his own 'Red Haired Girl'?

In conclusion, just over an hour of quality conversation about SF and Fantasy books and other topics of interest to SF fans.

Garry's progressive list of all the Sydney SF fans that were during the year 2006

An A - Z of Sydney Fans?

Darryl Addams - INF
 Winsome Allen - Mech
 John August - Mech
 John August's Friend - Mech
 Chris Barnes - Civ
 Zara Baxter - Civ
 Robert Bee
 Dr Ragbir Bhathal
 David Bofinger – Mech – INF - Fut
 Lyndon Brown
 Jacqueline Cadwgan - INF

Christine Campbell - Mech
 Karen Carpenter (Ace) - Tav
 Henry Chatroop - INF
 David Clancy
 Ron Clarke
 Bill Congreve
 Belinda Coombes - Mech
 Garry Dalrymple - INF – Mech – Fut - Civ
 Ann Devrell - Mech
 Helen Fischer
 Kurt Frank - INF
 Diane Fox - Fut
 John Fox - Fut
 Lynne Green
 Richard Harland
 Edwina Harvey - Mech
 Brendan Jones - Tav
 John Karp
 Jo Kay - INF
 Victor Kay - INF
 David Kelleher
 Wil Kenedy - INF
 Christopher Levinson
 Mrs Levinson
 Eric Lindsay - Civ
 Ross Mitchell - Fut
 Lewis Morley
 Joanne Nickl
 Mick Ousley - INF
 Elizabeth Pastor
 Mark Philips - Civ
 Ann Pritchard - Mech
 Gillian Polack
 Ann Rankins - Fut
 Paolo Rech - Mech
 James Sellwood - Tav
 Roland Sinn - Civ
 Ted Scribner – Fut - Civ
 Susan Smith
 Charmain Spears - INF
 Graham Stone - Fut
 Stephen Szabo - Civ
 Kathleen Tanswell
 Brian Walls - INF – Mech - Fut
 Chris Wellford
 Simon Yates

The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts SF&F book discussion group, Pitt Street (12 ea)

Winsome Allen,
John August
John August's Friend
David Bofinger,
Christine Campbell
Belinda Coombes,
Garry Dalrymple,
Ann Devrell,
Edwina Harvey,
Ann Pritchard
Paolo Rech
Brian Walls

The Infinitas bookshop SF&F discussion group (12 ea)

Darryl Addams
Jacqueline Cadwgan
Henry Chatroop
Garry Dalrymple,
Kurt Frank
Gabriel
Jo Kay
Wil Kenedy
Mick Ousley
Charmain Spears
Tim (infinitas owner)
Brian Walls

Sydney Futurians @ UTS (8 ea)

Garry Dalrymple,
Diane and John Fox
Ross Mitchell
Ann Rankins
Graham Stone
Brian Walls
Trish Wilkins

Sydney Fans in the Pub at the Civic Hotel, Pitt Street, Sydney CBD (8 ea)

Chris Barnes

Zara Baxter
David Bofinger
Garry Dalrymple
Eric Lindsay
Mark Philips
Roland Sinn
Ted Scribner
Stephen Szabo

Sci-Fi World, book of the month at Bondi Junction (6 ea)

Christopher Levinson
Mrs Levinson
Mark Philips
And three others

From published and website membership lists etc.

Magic Casements – Sydney

Who did I meet, to speak to or just to nod to in passing in the corridor?

Chris Barnes – Organiser
Zara Baxter – Writer Guest
Leigh Blackmore and Partner
Various members of the Clarion South tribe
David B Coe – US Writer Guest
Bill Congreve – Writer Guest
Terry Dowling – Writer Guest
Grace Duggan – Writer Guest
Irina Dunne – Organiser
John & Diane Fox – Sydney Futurians
Donna-Marie Hanson – CSFG Writer Guest
Richard Harland – Writer Guest
Lea Henderson – Old Sydney Fan
Robert Hoge – QLD Writer Guest
Rob Hood – Writer Guest
Infinitas (Tim and Danielle)
Ian Irvine – Writer Guest
Margo Lanagan – Writer Guest
Maxine McArthur – ACT Writer Guest
Rod McLeod – Old Sydney Fan
Sean McMullen – VIC. Writer Guest
Catherine McMullen – VIC. Writer Guest
Nicole Murphy - CSFG

Sarah Murray-White – Old Sydney Fan
Mark Philips – a Past-urian
Gillian Polack – ACT Writer Guest
Ted Scribner– Organiser & Sydney Futurian
Stephanie Smith - Voyager
Cat Sparks – Writer Guest
Alinta Thornton – Writer Guest
Ian Triffit – Old Sydney Fan
Brian Walls – Sydney Futurian
Danielle Williams– Organiser

And the countless nameless others, whose lives are whole and real, but who pass our eyes and leave our sight unremarked and unrecognised as if they were but the drawing room wallpaper as we pass by self absorbed in our own schemes and adventures.

I know that this list is incomplete as I handed out about twice as many Magic Casements / Futurians bookmarks

NSW Conflux Membership – Canberra

81 people – 40 M, 39 F and 2 not known
(source – the final (?) pre-con report)

Kylie Ahern (Cosmos)
Craig Anderson
Joanne Armstrong
Carissa Avenhouse
Mark Barnes
Chris Barnes (Magic Casements/Con Syder)
Graeme & Susan Batho
Doug Bayne
Zara Baxter – Con Syder
Deborah Biancotti - W
Leigh Blackmore - Raven Books
Greg Bridges
Chris Broadribb
Michael Byrne
Michael Calnan
Matthew Carter
Queenie Chan - Comics
Eleanor Clarke
David Coe
Bill Congreve - W
Cassian Cox
Gillian Coyle
Margi Curtis
Wilson da Silva – Cosmos

Wei Fang
Matthew Farrer
Kate Forsyth - W
Jackie French - W
Ray and Justine Gleeson
Laura Goodin
Deborah Green
Donna Hanson - W
Richard Harland - W
Beric Henderson
Lea Henderson
Andrea Heriseanu
Margaret Hilliard
David Hislop
Robert Hood - W
Jess Irwin
Patty Jansen
Richard Kerlake
Alison Kubbos
Robby MacLaurin
Karen Mandeville
Karen & Lazar Maric
Michelle Marquardt – W
Robert McEwan
Andrew McKiernan – Aurealis Art Director
Dave Minutello
Anne Mok – Writer?
Andrew Moores
Lewis Morley - Artist
Rose Moxon
Bryan Moses
Wendy Munro
Nicole Murphy – W (Nowra?)
Sarah Murray-White
John Nemesh
Jason Paulos
Marilyn Pride - Artist
Kyle Rowling
Colleen Schultz
Nicola Scott
Gerald Smith - ANZAPAN
Catriona Sparks – AGOG!
Nick Stathopoulos - Artist
Kaaren Sutcliffe – W
Aaron Syris
Anna Tambour
Wayne Turner
Tony Walters
Wendy Wildermoth
Richard Womack – W

Marty Young

Daniel Zachariou – Comics

Brian Walls (as Garry Dalrymple)

NB these lists are made up of the people that I recall seeing at these meetings or are assumptions made up from hearsay overheard at other SF meetings. It is almost inevitable that more than these people have attended one or more Sydney SF meetings but I have not been there to get their names.

Video Review

‘Johnny Mnemonic’ – 01 Dec 2006

I found this video at the Bower, for \$1, at second hand place that is near the Reverse Garbage Truck. I had intended watching it then adding it to the trove of prizes and gifts for the Freecon, but time did not permit.

There was a lot less to the movie than I had expected. You were shown and told that the world had gone corporate rather than explaining why and what. The movie may have been ‘true to’ the short story as claimed but as I have said it was very disappointing.

As a filmic excursion into ‘Cyber Punk’ SF it offered little more than had already been offered by Stanley Kubrick’s treatment of ‘A Clockwork Orange’ in that there were ‘gangs’ of a particular sub-culture, there were ‘straights’ and there were people living on the streets. For all the use that the implied ‘High Tech’ ness of carrying data in a living person’s head was put to in this movie, the secret message could just as well been tattooed in code on Johnny’s back, as in ancient China (I believe) or as a 1940s or 1950s film noir movie.

Movie Review

‘A Scanner Darkly’ (2006)

On the night of December 5, 2006, I went into the city to see a movie with the ‘half price Tuesday’ movie group. On this

occasion the people present were myself, Sarah Murray-White, Gerald Smith and Wendy Wildermoth. As all four of us are SF fans I believe it is appropriate to claim this as a ‘Sydney SF meeting’ as well. I have attended less well attended Sydney SF meetings recently. The movie was Philip K. Dick’s Drug and paranoia classic ‘A Scanner Darkly’ (ASD). For me it was quite an experience, as just a few days before I had watched Keanu Reeves in Johnny Mnemonic. The popular press keeps referring to ASD as ‘futuristic’, but I did not find it so. The camouflage suits that Police operatives have to wear is only a single development generation away from the much in the news ‘invisibility cloak’, a wearable poncho that gives the illusion of invisibility by projecting ahead of the wearer an image of what is visible behind the wearer. Also, I keep noticing the casualties of the ‘War on Drugs’ as depicted on the screen around and about. I saw them years ago from behind my stall at Glebe market and I see them most days as I commute to and from work. The drug in Sydney these days is Methamphetamine rather than the ‘futuristic’ ‘D’. The presentation of this ‘film’ as an animation was initially very distracting, but I feel that it would have been far more distracting if only the anonymity suits were animated in and the rest was on film.

If you have read any Philip K. Dick you know that to understand the story you need to approach it with a heavy duty ‘can of worms’ opener. I did so but was surprised to find the story more layered with deception, conspiracy and illusion. Simply put the story is about an undercover policeman attempting to infiltrate the ‘D’ trade, through his drug dealing girlfriend. One layer of deception is that he is addicted to ‘D’. Another is that following a tip off from an anonymous informant, he is soon asked to spy on an individual who is his undercover alter ego. The final deception is that he was the object of a long term conspiracy, to find the source of the drug he

needed to become a broken down addict to be able to infiltrate the drug growing corporation as a burnt out shell of a human.

Book Review

December 01 to 08, Guernica Night

By **Barry N. Malzburg**, 118 pages © 1974

Guernica Night by **Barry N. Malzberg** was a disturbing read, especially as I was reading it before and after seeing 'A Scanner Darkly'. All is not right in the World. The young are intent on self destruction through the oblivion of drugs, there is an epidemic of youth suicide abroad with up to 90% of under 25 year olds topping themselves in some parts of England. They refer to it as the 'Final Trip' This book seems to be the tail end of the British SF trend of dystopia stories (John Wyndham to Edmund Cooper) trend, with the world coming to an end through ennui. There are Star Trek (or Tiger Tiger) like transporters available to jaunt around the world but these only seem to spread the gloom. The story switches viewpoint character several times, in a manner that makes it hard sometimes to keep track of who is saying / feeling what. Some people are killed, some people commit suicide, some survive. This seems to be intentional as the 'message' of the piece is how narrow is the membrane between those who will self destruct and those who under the same stimulus will not. This I understand because the book helpfully contains a seven page after word that explains exactly what Malzberg is on about. The book's after word to my mind sums the book up pretty neatly, could have saved time by reading the postscript instead of the book, even at 120 ish pages it was a slow and difficult read.

Video Review - Fiend Without a Face (BW 1957)

A Very 1950s Schlock SF movie, made when the 'Science' in Science Fiction was made to be swallowed without any explanation. To me, some of the stock

footage of 1950s aircraft was a highlight. The Story goes that at a joint US / Canadian Airforce base they are launching radar equipped B52s in an attempt to get over the poles radar coverage and advance notice of any incoming Russian Nuclear Missiles. On base, to power all this they have a Nuclear Reactor and some crazy Radar dishes, but something keeps sucking away their radar signal power. Around the base people start dying of strangulation and having their brain and spinal cord sucked out (wot no cattle mutilation?). The locals are upset by this, being simple farming folk naturally they blame the Airforce Base. Turns out that their fears are slightly misplaced, as a local Scientist has been doing 'mind power' experiments in his lab late at night and he found out dturing a thunderstorm storm that lots of power was needed to make things work. Inadvertadly he had created a 'Mind Vampire' thing, a beast first detectable only by puzzlingly loud footstep noises. Things get 'better' later on, apparently all that nuclear power 'juice' the beasts have been sucking up (and breeding with?) has finally makes them visible and they look like? Well they look like brains with a spinal column and a few spindly legs / tentacles. Pretty lame huh?

The movie could have been advertised as an opportunity to, 'See Brains and Spinal cords Fly', as these things can fly and crawl and stuff. The ever well informed Scientist advises (before running out of the house to 'reason' with the brain things) that to kill the beasts all you have to do is to turn off the nuclear reactor, but the monsters (ghod knows how?) have destroyed the reactor controls and killed all the reactor workers! So relax everybody, its off to the dynamite shed to get enough stuff to BLOW UP THE NUCLEAR REACTOR! The Shed is locked, and the brains are approaching, so what good luck it is that next to the locked and secured shed full of high explosives an iron bar has been left lying around to allow the hero to pry off the locks!

The reactor is dynamited and the brain and spine monsters all just die off and melt into disgusting slime and all live happily ever after.

But down wind of the dynamited reactor the cows are restless Not a movie to lose much sleep over, unless of course you suspect a neighbour of conducting mind power experiments late at night!

DVD Review – Pterodactyl Woman from Beverly Hills

(AKA Pterodactyl Woman from Brentwood*)

This DVD starts with footage of a faux fossil dig on a piece of ground that is forever sacred to Star Trek fans everywhere and then goes down hill. In a very awkward set up scene a (blue eyed) Native American shaman type called Salvador Dali curses a paleontologist by turning his wife into a pterodactyl and turns his German digging chum into a lizard, or was it all just the effect of Sunstroke? The paleontologist returns home to his family (at Brentwood, where OJ Simpson used to live). A high point for me in this DVD was playing spot the moon, which was clearly visible in the day time sky. The amateur astronomer in me always makes me freeze frame skies and sunsets. With sunset shots you can usually see Sunspots if you know what to look for. Then follows some fairly forgettable adventures as the paleontologist gets used to living with a wife who is a 'Reptile by night'. What was outstanding about this movie was its economy of actors, the directors children have major roles, Barry Humphries gets at least three speaking roles. Other characters double up as well, you get the feeling that the whole thing was shot using a brother in law's money and a cousin's mansion. The wife's production of an egg provokes strong family bonding and a trip to the desert to find Salvador Dali to get the curse lifted. For this they need the help of another Native American, Pablo Picasso who leads them to a place where the family can meet Salvador Dali who is communing with cheap special effects

dinosaurs. The curse is lifted and everyone lives happily ever after! My only question is why do they bother to make movies like this?

**Brian Walls told me this, is there no end to what he knows about bad SF movies?*

Mailing comments. Forever behind and lost in time again. By the time you are reading this (mid February?) it will be well into the New Year. Too late then to wish you all a merry Summer Solstice or a Happy New year!

Mailing comments on ANZAPA issues # 233 of October 2006

1- OBO 229 – Bruce Gillespie

Heroic congratulations on keeping things together for one more year.

2 – ANZAPOLL Results – Bill Wright

Heroic congratulations on keeping things together for one more year.

3 – Quoz 5 – Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer

Libraries – In my childhood I had the relative good fortune to live between (and within walking distance of) three Municipal Libraries, Bexley North, Campsie and Earlwood. At that time they were relatively uninviting to me, all cold lino and stiff wooden chairs. The Adult Section was a foreign country to me, most of my in Library reading would have been off the unstructured paperback racks. I particularly remember picking up and reading most of the way **through H. Beam Piper's 'Little Fuzzies'**. I think that most of my SF reading came from the bargain bins at Campsie's Supermarkets. I would find books like 'The Twilight of the Vilp' and even Israeli printed **A. Bert Chandler** books! Oh the dilemma of which three or four books to pick out to fill out my whole dollar of hoarded pocket money. On holidays at Umina Library's were unavailable for the month. But on each street there were second hand shops full of interesting things.

In the 1960's and 1970's, the Gallipoli generation (the first generation of Australian SF fan?) had retired to their weekenders on the central coast and were 'passing on'. Their clothes, shoes and occasionally their books were being re-cycled through these 'junk shops', which were a cheap morning out for the holiday season crowds. When the weather was too hot or too wet I would read through a shoe-box of books (bought for ten or twenty cents each!) in a few weeks. If I ever have kids I would want to offer them the same opportunity of lazy summers, but I expect that isn't on offer these days.

5 – Che Guevara Rhubarb – John and Diane Fox

What a kerfuffle over yesterday's heroes! Imagine the stink if an ambiguous Bin Laden / Christ type figure were to appear, or perhaps if an example of particularly cheesy panel van Sci-Fi airbrush art were to appear in it's stead! Around where I live there are large numbers of 'Shrines' to pagan Idolatry / Catholic and Orthodox saints etc. They seem to spring up like those Christmas time decorations (equivalent level of taste) but they remain as a permanent feature of the streetscape and frequently attract pilgrims? Re your comments, will see you at Futurians and will discuss further.

6 – Bookmark 3 – Michael F. Green

A death in the family always strikes in unexpected ways you cannot predict in advance? Re your comments on pet choice and finding the right fit between animal and new home, you are right on, I fear for the pups and kittens in pet shop windows that are bought without regard for what their needs are. I read the US 'Basenji underground railroad / Pet Rescue websites and weep'. If I read the Australian ones I would have to fight the urge to put my hand up to re-house them at Eulabah Avenue.

7 – Necessity 72: Manhattan – Jack Herman – Dear Jack, I am indebted to you for reproducing the lyrics of that dark and moody **Leonard Cohen** song. Indeed, first

we must all take Manhattan then we take Berlin. This is ever on my mind as I plot future Freecons and other Fanac. I have been following the demolition job done on FOI of late. Passing strange defence of secrecy indeed. As for your Electric Dreams, when there are solar powered ferries tied up at circular quay and the **Tesla Roadster** (an electric sports car of extreme acceleration) we seem to be poorly served by legislation that keeps electric cars off the streets and out of the inner city. I will consider you 'Women's Roles' suggestions, along with the others offered by other ANZAPANS. At some point, for Freecons et al I must get up to speed on Websites and such. Although I'm proud to be a 'paper dinosaur' when it comes to ANZAPA newsletters, some sort of website based display, dissection and re-organization of the stuff I have put into newsletters is overdue. The reference about Ronald Reagan's movies is from Brian Walls.

8 - Kingdom of the Bland – Eric Lindsay - Read and enjoyed your comments but no reply at this time.

9 – From the lair of the Lynx 34 – LynC As I'm also of an age to have been brought up on TV I did some pay attention to the progress of the touring Countdown circus, although I was sceptical that they could bring it off, 32 acts, hundreds of by now geriatric performers. It seems I was wrong though from your report.

10 – Panopticon 38 – Dan McCarthy

A vivid and colourful cover, reminiscent of the cover art of an **A. Bert Chandler** book. Trendy Anglican Bishops in St Paul's Cathedral, saints preserve us! Fortunately in Evangelical and Pharisaical Sydney there is no truck with Women's ordination at all. Oddly though the consequences for the Cathedral choir are much the same. It seems the **Jensen** brothers feel that all that 'Bells and Smells' type high Church choir singing is too much of a distraction from pounding in the muscular Christian virtues they would prefer to instill. Tough on the

kiddies at the attached Cathedral choir school. Makes the whole idea of the school seem a bit redundant. Sometimes the choir has to leave the diocese to get a singing gig!

11 – Dining on Live Monkey Brains – Murray MacLachlan

Dear Murray, I set your newsletter aside to study and review at greater leisure as I feel that the effort you have put into it makes it deserve critical attention. As the Vikings would put it, it deserves to be studied to see if it makes sense while both sober and drunk. For what you have included it makes a good deal of sense, but I feel you have left out a major dimension. Civilization is what the Egyptians gave to the Greeks, what the Greeks gave to the Romans, what the Romans gave to the Britons, what the British gave to the Colonials, the justification of America in 'Saving' the world from communism etc. It is the self serving myth that allows the Imperialist to set aside an unpleasant truth, that we bring them the 'gift of Civilization' while we are robbing them blind and resetting their society to advantage the Colonizer's home economy. The Thing about **Brin's** Uplift Universe is that it is an interstellar multi species racket governed by the mutual consent of the existing winners. The older races play the uplift game for status. An understandable xenophobia is limited. They could just as easily exterminate 'emerging' intelligences rather than committing to playing the uplift game, but more client species counters are more status. I still think that the roots of **Brin's** take on uplift is to be found in pre and post independence Africa. The vestiges of British, French, Belgian, Spanish and Portuguese Colonial Empires were competing with the rising influences of Soviet and American power (and China these days) for 'clients' to gain status and influence at the UN and other treaty organizations. For genetic uplift read loans, University Scholarships and cultural exchange and I think you have the measure of 'Uplift' in our times.

12 – Land of 10,000 Loons – Jeanne Mealy

Good to see so many Anzapans reportedly in one spot given the multiple accounts of meetings at the Worldcon in this mailing. What will 2007 in Japan bring us?

Re your comments. Mysti is alive and well and giving us very little to worry about at this time of year (Southern Summer). She is getting on and will not last forever, but in high summer she is red, shiny and sleek and the coughs and misery of winter seem 'years' away.

13 – Ping! – John Newman

Pylon racing? Surely by now it would be a matter of attaching a doover to the plane with an LED on board whose flashing pattern would record that said plane and doover had passed an electronically generated 'pylon' (and signal tone to pilot's ear piece?). My brother and father used to belong to MARS, but I do not recall such intensive manpower being available for contests such as these except at annual Radio controlled Flying Natcons? I appreciated the listing of your 'life and times' and trajectory through Fandom. The first experience that I recall of Sydney Fandom was (I think) walking from Artarmon railway station to a Syncon. I encountered **Graeme Batho** on the way. He was encumbered by quantities of piping and like the robot in the famous Russian SF movie, was attempting to assemble a robot costume as he walked. I also attended the (infamous) Kings Cross / **Harry Harrison** convention and wondered at the weather beaten old dude smoking a pipe at the back of the room (**A. Bert Chandler**). Best of luck with the new house.

14 – Further Adventures of an incurable Romantic 2 – Roman Orszanski

General agreement on your choice of DVD viewing. As for 'Press Gang' I recall heaps of swoonish postings on the **Sydney Dr Who email list** about this program. Part of my solution to the fannish dilemma, tottering stacks is an investigation of the SF

collection at the **Sydney Mechanics Institute School of Arts Library** (MSA). The MSA subscription library is seemingly a permanent collection, so I might be able to off load shelf space onto them and still expect to have lifetime visiting / borrowing opportunities. This is not an option open to all SF&F fans I guess, but long term collections do exist elsewhere.

15 - You Really Know You're Home When You Find a Wombat in Your Bed #107 – Cath Ortlieb

Teacher's Bingo has also been spotted at EMSAD, my workplace. The Federal government required 'A to E' reporting system is also causing some trouble with the Teachers Federation in NSW.

16 – Siyayilanda 11 – Nick Shears

Few things in life are more of a pain in the arse for all concerned than cancer in the head. Hope all goes well and full recovery / remission is soon.

17 – Anzapa 770 – Roger Sims

An unintentionally grim piece of cover art, I'm sure I saw something like this as the coding sequence in 'Johnny Mnemonic'. Enjoyed the very brief Worldcon report. Hope you health stabilizes soon.

18 – Life Goes On – Gerald Smith

I was very sceptical about the **Conflux** split venue approach, it was a reason why I did not go to Canberra this year (sent **Brian Walls** on my tickets instead). Re your comments about wills, I have half a mind to have a 'Collections' panel at a Freecon and present everyone present at the end of said panel with a will form and a Justice of the Peace and eliminate this problem for a generation?

19 Interstellar Ramjet Scoop - Bill Wright

So much stuff, so many sections, more like a magazine than a single voice newsletter like the other ANZAPA contributions.

Re your comments on #231

I do home brewing (only once so far) coz its easier and loads more convenient than

having to lug back home single or pairs of 800ml bottles of **Toohey's Sheaf Stout** (at \$5 plus a pop). It really is as simple as baking a cake, only over the three weeks you need to let it brew. It is also greatly cost effective and I could carry home with one hand the necessary makings for two dozen bottles worth (two whole crates worth!) with one hand. **Toohey's Sheaf Stout** is also getting harder to find in bottle shops. **Re your comments on #232**

I find little point in undertaking fannish activities that do not end up in print. We can't just stand still and keep saying the same things forever, documenting as I go I feel gives the best chance for the worthwhile things that we do to be picked up on and continued by others, the only form of immortality that existing technology allows our thoughts? Mystique is certainly old, but she is not yet ancient and frail, her predecessor went Blind (not too much of a problem) and lost her mind. The longevity of companion animals is usually entirely dependent on their owners' perception of 'Quality of life'. On this basis Mysti could have months or years, we will just have to see. If you have any enquiries about reporting on topics discussed at Futurian meetings like 'Women's Roles' direct them to me and I'll send off a copy of the text in question by email or by post as needed.

20 – Les Chattes Parties 85

– Sally Yeoland

I have lived through a sequence of restructures and the thing that always surprises me is that they always justify these 'Reforms' (never cut backs!) with an exact calculation of benefits years hence. These 'Savings' never arrive as the new system evolves over the years to something more approximating real world needs than 'The Plan's flow chart of tidy little boxes. They never bother to count the actual first year costs even in a financial sense. People with skills who can leave do leave, usually to more stable work environments taking with them many years of institutional knowledge. Hard to replace people nearing

retirement are encouraged to jump early, robbing the structure of exactly the sort of people needed to make sure that in the transition from the Old to the New, the best of the Old is retained within the New. And of course there are the deaths and the stress leave suffered by those trapped within the system who still give a damn about serving the public and looking after existing staff.

Re your / John's pigeon problem, have you tried rubber snakes? They are said to discourage avian vermin.

Re companion animals, see elsewhere in my mailing comments and particularly the Basenjis Tail piece, which may lead to some developments next year, perhaps?

NB. Basenjis Watch - As I type this (at 10.15 pm on Saturday December 02, 2006) Mysti has just moved station. While I was watching / ignoring the Countdown special, Mysti was with me in the lounge room, curled up in her carpet lined 'hole', which is a triangular gap between two lounge room chairs. While I had my shower she was 'door-matting' outside the bathroom. Now that my Mother is preparing for bed, Mysti is sitting in the dark on her day chair, where she can keep an eye on me as well as the back door

A Basenji Tail Piece

Mysti is well. At 14 plus years of age she is a lot lighter than she has been. Most of her day is spent asleep in one of several comfortable spots about the house or yard. Summer is kind to Basenjis. Winter is a trial to be endured! At some point she may have been almost 12kg (middle-aged spread even in Basenjis?). In fact the 8kg bags of food I bring home for her every few months probably outweighs her these days! Incidentally, as there has been some comment in mailing 233 on Dog Vs Cat feeding methods, I store Mysti's food in several empty 3 Litre plastic milk bottles. This keeps it fresher longer than if the sack was left in the Garage. It also avoids the mouse / rat feeding opportunity. As a rule of thumb you need about two litres of plastic

milk bottle to store one kg of Mysti's 'Supercoat Lite & Mature' (cost - \$18.98 for an 8 kg bag bought on 1/12/06). Mysti's most recent 'weird' behaviour is to stand watch outside the bathroom if you shower or go to the toilet, with bare feet you can feel the warm patch on the carpet where she has been standing guard. It is not really weird for a basenjis to do this, it is more a case of mysti relaxing in her old age to more usual basenjis standards of behavior. Based on previous experience with the other aging Basenjis I've lived with, I'm not too concerned about her weight at this time. However she is old and no matter how good she looks - still good muscle definition and no sign yet of cataract blindness or deafness - 14 going on 15 is old for a dog. It would be improbable for us to still have Mysti in four or five years.

This morning (December 2, 2006) mother confided to me that she would like to have a dog after Mysti, and that her choice would be for another Basenjis, coz they are quiet and so damned engaging as a companion animal. This is the most positive Mother has been about a successor for Mysti. The preferred way of managing this transition would be to get another mature Basenjis in a year or so and briefly have two during the final years of the 'twilight of Mystique'.

To get new basenjis (ideally a pair of pups) is not a project to be undertaken lightly. Direct purchase would leave very little change out of \$2000 (purchase price, incidentals and initial immunizations etc) and mother would be in her mid Nineties at the end of this new cycle of pet ownership. A cost I'm prepared to bear if necessary, but a ten or so year commitment for mature Basenjis, as was the case with Mystique is far easier to entertain. Given breeding schedules, I do not anticipate that a companion for Mysti is likely to appear for a year or longer. One by product of this episode of 'Basenjis Love' may be that I'm compelled to get a driver's license and a car (a Volvo Station Wagon run on Bio-Diesel? Or go Electric?), just to be able to

get around and see a few breeders, and where that may lead is uncharted territory. You will of course read about it here first.

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Transcendental B. S. and Enlightenment
Volume 1 No. 22(short) December 2006**