

iOTA 03

February 2017

iOTA is the little efanzone put together by Leigh Edmonds who can be contacted electronically, and in almost no other way, at hhandc@hemsleypark.com.au.

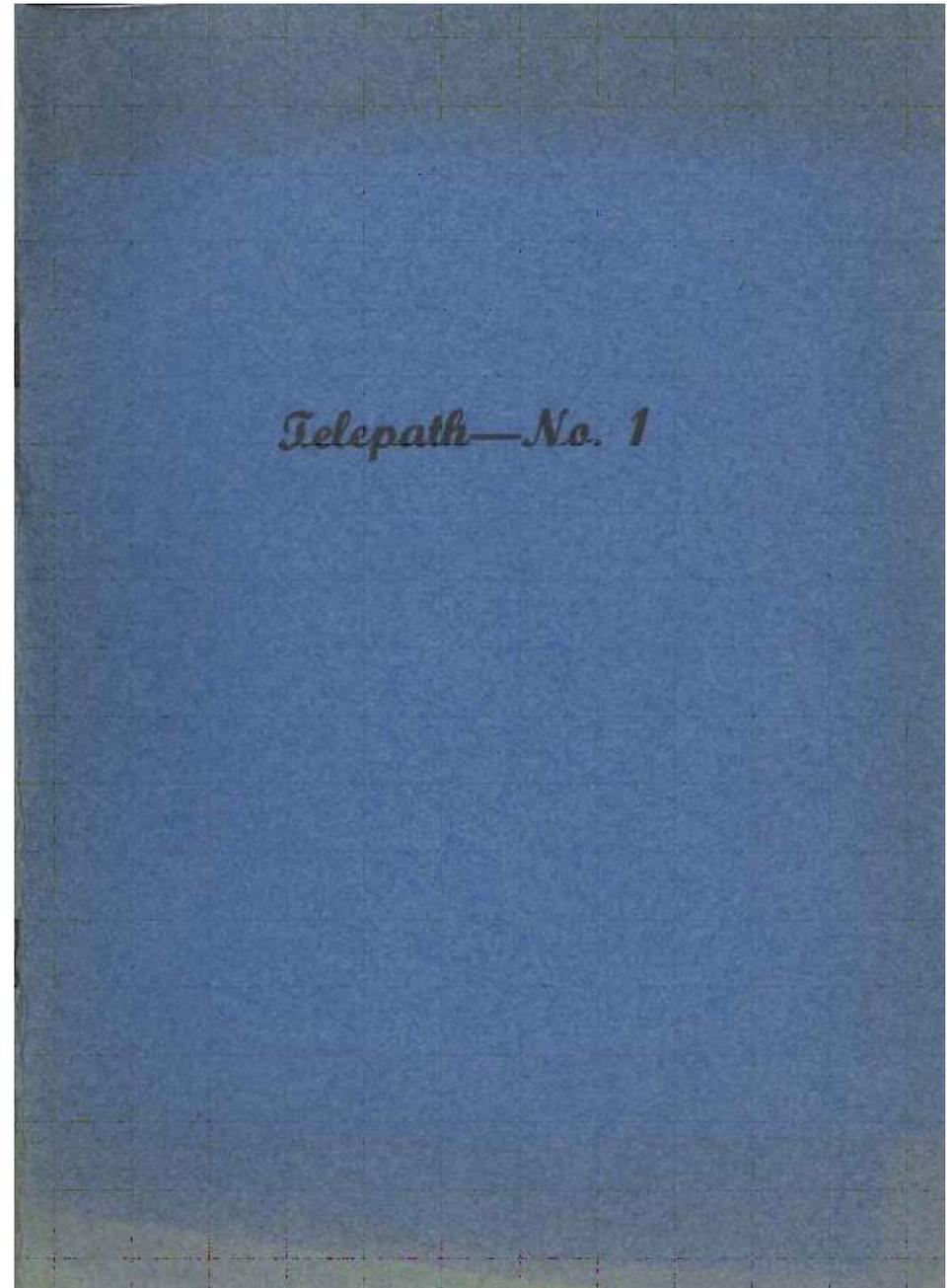
The purpose of this little efanzone is to serve as a progress report on my current history project which is to research and write a history of Australian fandom, focusing on the period between 1956 and 1975. It is also a place where I can publish little bits and pieces of the writing and art of Australia's fan past to help introduce you to the rich vein of material that previous generations of fans have left us.

If you want more details about this history project you'll find them in the first issue of iOTA.

iOTA is kind of available for 'the usual' but, since it's costing me almost nothing to produce and send it, all you have to do is ask me to send it to you and I'll probably put you on my emailing list. Alternatively, issues of this emfz - and previous issues - can be found on efanzone.com.

Thisish's Cover

One of the things that some Sydney fans were very keen to achieve was to make stf and fandom look professional. One example of this ideal was Arthur Haddon's *Telepath*. The first issue was published in December 1951 but it seems there were only two issue with the second one being published in 1954. The simplicity of the cover might have as something to do with the lack of suitably high quality art work to go with Haddon's ideals but it might also have to do with the use of letterpress printing



through the entire issue, which must have been either expensive or time consuming, or both, at the beginning of the 1950s. (This image comes from efanzone where it was probably put by Kim Huett.)

Fans We Have Known

Some people who come into fandom leave little trace through their fan activity but are memorable for their personalities. Here's one who played a part in shaping the ethos of The Magic Puddin Club slant shack in Melbourne in the mid 1970s.

HAM HAMMS IT UP: John Ham provided his own idea of theatrical entertainment at Degraives Tavern last Wednesday. As people arrived they were greeted with the sight of John frozen as if in mid movement. Behind him was a sign warning people to be sure that their Stasis Field Neutralizers were switched on, and John himself was in the process of making an entry in a log book when (obviously) his neutralizer had stopped working. Many attempts were made to make him move by telling funny stories but all to no avail. Finally, after having been static for an hour and a half John moved again and, as spectators applauded, declared that he needed a drink

(*Fanew Sletter* 20, 21 January 1975)

JOHN HAM'S ADVENTURE: Wishing to bask himself in the warm, health giving rays of the evening sun, John Ham one recent evening took himself for a stroll down Drummond Street, Carlton. His wanderings took him a distance and he fell into conversation with a gentleman who, it eventuated, is the proprietor of the local House of Ill Repute. John was invited inside to partake a cup of coffee and whilst there he noticed a

particularly striking marble chess board which was serving in a task well below its station as the top of a small table. After considerable negotiation John bought the board for the sum of a mere \$15. Only somebody like John Ham could enter a brothel and emerge having spent his money on something so concrete.

(*Fanew Sletter* 22, 4 February 1975)

From the Historiography Shelf

In this issue we're returning to the thoughts of G R Elton who, according to the blurb on my copy of his book, was 'a Cambridge historian of formidable erudition and emphatic views' whose work on Tudor England was 'well known'. This book, *The Practice of History*, was published in 1967 and his continual use of 'he' locates his thinking in a period even before that. (I bought this copy second hand at Elizabeth's Second Hand Bookshop in the late 1980s, probably in Fremantle, for \$3.50. The name of the original owner has been whited-out (is that an approved verb?))

The idea to consider in this selection from Elton's book is the question of who is to be master, the historian or the evidence? I'm one of those folk who believed that a historian has to take in as much of the evidence as possible, then use some guiding principle to work out what it all means and then find a way of telling an interesting story from that evidence. Elton might put it a bit differently, but I think we're both on the same page when it comes to how a historian should be guided to the story by the evidence, not by the need to construct a readable story. So far in my experience of writing history from the evidence it has never let me down and always given me stories far richer than my imagination could ever have given me. (Which might tell you something about my imagination.)

A more serious problem arises as soon as the historian proceeds from the establishment of a fact to the asking of complex questions. This is the notorious problem of the selection of evidence. The process of historical enquiry and reconstruction must work by means of selection. The mass of extant history cannot be remembered or even recorded without a deliberate choice by the historian, preserving this and discarding that. This is true of even the simplest forms of history. A medieval city chronicler will record outstanding events, such as deaths or floods or celebrations. Hundreds of men will have died that year within his knowledge, but he will commemorate a mere dozen. In so doing he applies a principle of selection, he answers the historically valid, if not very high-powered, question - who of importance died this year? Yet no two people may agree on the answer to this question. I may well wish to include my uncle and see no point in your second cousin, even if he did hold office as town scavenger. The very discovery of evidence depends on a selection of facts upon some principle of choice implicit in the question one asks, and there are therefore two variables involved at once: the question asked, and the arbitrarily determined choice. It is for this reason that some would deny the possibility of objective history at all and would claim that there is no history, only historians. In actual practice, however, the problem is not quite so devastating as it may appear in theory. We are often told by the very act of asking a question the historian artificially limits his choice of material - that he finds in the evidence that for which he looks. Out of this limited

range come further questions, themselves predetermined by the first question asked. The evidence is allegedly never in a position to play freely upon the enquiring mind, to suggest questions which are forced upon the historian, not forced by him on the material. This sounds a convincing indictment, and there possibly are historians who proceed from this unsatisfactory way. One can only speak from personal experience, and I must say that things do not happen quite like this.

The proper - and, as I believe, the common - way is different. The historian must certainly make one initial choice, of main area of study or line or approach. But after that (if he is worth considering at all) he becomes the servant of his evidence of which he will, or should, ask no specific questions until he has absorbed what it says. At least, his questions remain general, varied, flexible: he opens his mind to the evidence both passively (listening) and actively (asking). The mind will indeed soon react with questions, but these are questions suggested by the evidence, and though different men may find different questions arising from the same evidence the differences are only to a very limited extent dictated by themselves.

(Elton, *The Practice of History*, pp. 82-83.)

Fabulous Fannish Fotos

Sooner or later I was going to start publishing photographs from the fannish past in iOTA. I was waiting until I had the opportunity to see and scan the photographic collections of fans for use in the published history and also for publication here.

Then I remembered that Valma and I had our own small collection of photographs, so that is where we will begin.

In addition to that, looking at photos of fans in the past, often ourselves, is a very odd experience. Did I look like that back then? What on earth did I think I was doing? Who is that I'm with? All strange and embarrassing questions. So, before putting others through the experience, I thought I'd best start with myself.



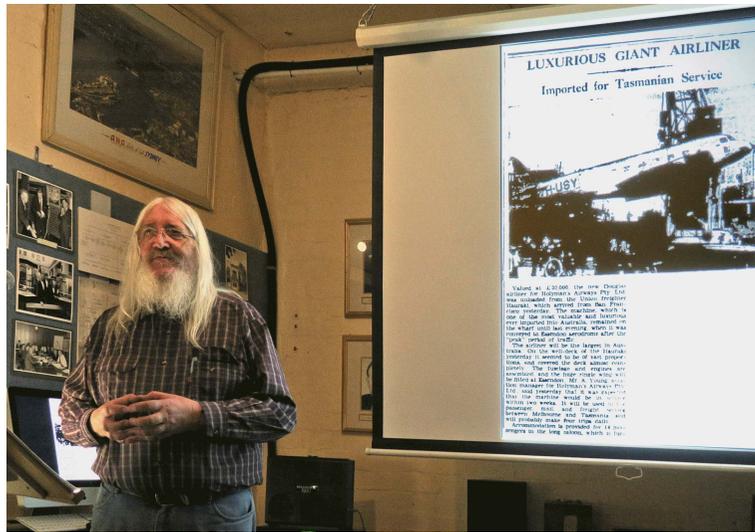
Here's Leigh Edmonds, a photo taken before the Easter conference in 1968, no doubt by Lee Harding. Note the short hair and the acne. The person out of focus in the background is almost certainly John Breden.

Next is a photo taken of Leigh Edmonds at the masquerade of the 1973 Easter convention, probably at the Victoria Hotel. Why am I (slipping back into first person for a moment) dressed in this ridiculous costume. I had no idea until I showed this photo

to Robin Johnson who recalled that a group of us had gone to the masquerade dressed as characters from 'The Wizard of Id'. Fairly obviously, I'm dressed as Sir Rodney. The only thing I remember about this is that although the chain mail was made out of string painted silver, it was still bloody heavy.



Finally, and I only intend to do this once and only for me, just so you will know what I look like these days should you happen to see me in the street, here is a picture of me giving a talk to a bunch of civil aviation enthusiasts this past December. (Not so photogenic, eh? That's why I'm so small in this photo.)



Futurian Society News - 1940

If you ever wondered what happened at meetings of the Futurian Society of Sydney before the war here's your chance to find out. In the seventh issue of *Futurian Observer*, published by Bert F Castellari & William D Veney in April 1940, and transcribed for efanzine by Kim Huett, is a report of the seventh meeting of the society, which seems to have become quite stropy at times. The Futurian's reputation for organization and not getting along seems to have been established early on.

The seventh meeting of the Futurian Society of Sydney was held on 17th March, at 2.45 pm. Present at the opening

were - Miss Roma Castellari, Ronald B Levy, Neville Freedlander, Vol Molesworth, WDV [William Veney] & BFC [Bert Castellari]. The Russell brothers arrived a quarter of an hour late, while Ralph A Smith managed to be present for half-an-hour only owing to other business ... Discussion was upon the best 5 stories of 1939, but owing to the unrestiveness of certain parties, had to be postponed ... Elections were held and resulted in William Veney as Director, and Bert Castellari as Secretary. Ralph A Smith announced his prospective member was away on a vacation and would not be back until next meeting ... Eric Russell displayed 'The New Adam' just arrived ... Ted Russell's quiz was most bothersome and provided a keen contest between the rival teams ... Eric Russell's team eventually triumphed over that of the Director ... Miss Roam Castellari and Ralph Smith held a serious discussion on various aspects of illustrating ... Molesworth's proposal that a Club Library should be established was hotly debated and eventually carried by 5 votes to 3 ... Levy became librarian ... The round-robin story proved interesting despite side-tracking by certain parties ... Meeting adjourned at 5-30 after the most strained and unsettled ever held ... After the meeting, members broke company. Director stated that future outbursts would be stamped out ... Secretary endorsed statement.

We Heard From

Darren Maxwell writes:

More than anything I would dearly love to see a chronological timeline of those early years relating to the clubs

and conventions. For example there is mention of FSS existing in the late 1940s, but when did it start and when did it end? I know a lot this information may not be available - as you mention in your text - but gee it would be great to know just to satisfy personal curiosity.

You're right, Darren, a chronology would be excellent, and I'm working on one. The trouble is, already it's 25 pages long but there is so much minute detail, on the one hand, and so few of the important events, on the other, that it's not yet in a state fit to publish. One thing the chronology does tell me is that the Futurian Society of Sydney was created at a meeting on 5 November 1939. Before that there was almost certainly a chapter of the Science Fiction League in Sydney from around June 1935, but details are more than a little vague, at the moment at least, and it seems to have expired by the time the Futurians started. As to when the Futurians finally called it a day, if they have? Somebody out there might know.)

Also I just need to ask, what does STF stand for as I noted it was referenced on a few occasions?

A fair question Darren since I sometimes use terms that are probably old fashioned in today's world.

'Stf' is short for 'Scientifiction', the term invented by Hugo Gernsback back in the mists of time to describe what we now call 'sf' or 'science fiction'. The old term passed out of common usage around 1930 (so Fancyclopedia II tells me) but won't die and still keeps popping up around the place. In my case it is mainly a matter of muscle memory (not that I have muscles that remember before 1930) because I started using 'stf' some time in the 1960s and even when I try to type 'sf' these days it comes out

as 'stf'. So, I guess it's become a bit of an indulgence and I'm sorry but you're just going to have to bear with me on this quirk when it pops up.

Chris Nelson wrote with a couple of comments on iOTA 02:

Re "Phil Glick" on page 8. No, it was Phineas, nicknamed 'Bluey' in true Aussie fashion because of his red hair.

"How important was this magazine trading..." on page 9. Graham Stone and others commented on this, noting that it was a major draw due to the scarcity of overseas magazines during the war and for some time afterwards. Later, as magazines became easier to obtain (from those, including Vol Molesworth and Dave Cohen, with the initiative to contact US fans for them) the draw diminished.

Thanks for the correction on Bluey Glick, Chris. I'm always happy to be corrected on details like this.

Your comments on magazine trading makes me think that I must give some more consideration to the effect that the embargo on importing US magazines in the 1940s and 1950s had on Australian fandom and science fiction. I recall that pulp magazines did well at conventions here in the late 1960s and I picked up quite a few issues of *Thrilling Wonder Stories* which I later, and sadly, sold.

We Also Heard From

Helena Binns, Martin Dunne, Bruce Gillespie, David Grigg, Gary Mason, Sean McMullen, Roman Orszanski and Robin Johnson

A Big Dollop of Fannish History

Occasionally I come across items in old fanzines that are themselves articles on the history of Australian fandom. Two that come to mind are Vol Molesworth's 'A History of Australian Fandom 1935-1963' that was reprinted in several issues of Ron Clarke's *The Mentor* and Lee Harding's 'I remember AFPA' that was printed in *Boys Own Fanzine* and more recently in John Foyster's *eFNAC* which you can find online at efanzine.com.

This article was first published in *Etherline* 46, a special issue produced for the 1955 convention held in Sydney, 18-20 March 1955. I had the feeling that this has since been reprinted somewhere and I find that it was reprinted in *Amphipoxi* 8, an American fanzine produced by Bill Pettit in 1968, pages 5-12. There is a copy in the National Library of Australia in the John Ryan (of happy memory) Comic Collection.

PREWAR FANZINES IN AUSTRALIA

W D Veney

Every now and again you will read an article by one of the deep thinkers in our ranks on the subject of amateur publishing. One such writer will say fanzines are a fine thing and help fandom a lot. Immediately some equally deep thinker will jump to the nearest typewriter and say fanzines are a bad thing, and cause no end of trouble. I'm not going to buy in on that fight. I do know, however, that a large percentage of the Australian fan population read and enjoy fanzines. I also know that fanzine editors get a lot of enjoyment out of producing their brainchildren. I think you'll agree fandom would be a very dull place without them.

Perhaps the first Australian attempt at producing an amateur publication devoted to science fiction took place at Randwick School, Sydney in 1937. Several of the students were caught up in the first flush of discovering the US professional magazines. Two, Bert Castellari and I, had been on the staff of the regular class magazines and decided to try a private one of our own. It wasn't intended to be anything more than an outlet for our writing and illustrating efforts. But that didn't quite work out.

SPACEHOUNDS, as we called our magazine, was a hand printed weekly journal with a circulation of one. Bert Castellari was editor, and I was associate editor. It was intended to be handed around for general reading under the watchful eye of one or other of the editors. We didn't think more than a handful of other students would be interested.

Within a couple of weeks it had a following far beyond anything visualized by either of us. As soon as each issue appeared, it started on a round of readers that often took three or four days to complete before getting back into our anxious hands. By the seventh or eighth issue, it received official recognition by going into the staff room. (The opportunity, by the way, took the form of congratulation to Bert for his energy, and severe criticism to me for my spelling.)

SPACEHOUNDS lasted 10 weekly issues, and a 'quarterly' before falling victim to examinations. However, it had a profound effect on the thinking of the science fiction circle and made us realize quite a lot of people could be reached by medium of even a small periodical. We were agreed that this

wasn't the end of our publishing efforts.

1938 was final examination year for the Randwick readers so there wasn't time for any more experimenting. There was much talk about magazines, particularly after Eric Russell and his brother, Ted, became known to us as fans. I had known both of them for many years, but only introduced them to science fiction about this time. It wasn't exactly my fault. Both contributed many good ideas and entered into the spirit of fandom. We laid plans for 1939 and letters sent to AMAZING so as to appear on the Australian market when we were over the examination hurdle.

In January 1939, we had our first contact with US fandom. Harry Warner Jnr, prominent fan at the time and editor of SPACEWAYS, noticed Bert's name in the reader's column of one of the professional magazines and dropped him a letter. Shortly afterwards he sent a copy of SPACEWAYS. The impression it created when it arrived was terrific. We'd never imagined an amateur publication had such possibilities and our thoughts turned to how we could emulate it.

Our opportunity came when Frank Flaherty, a non-fan, offered to do our typing and duplicating. The three most active readers, Bert, Eric and I, were to do the collecting of material and general editorial work. For juniors on junior pay, it was a big job, but we went about it as efficiently as we could under the circumstances. We didn't have a clear idea what we wanted other than a name - AUSTRALIAN FAN NEWS.

Before we could get started, John Gregor of Adelaide brought out his SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. The first information

we had about John was the announcement appearing in the Science Fiction League section of TWS [Thrilling Wonder Stories]. This also carried information that John was the editor of Australia's first fan magazine. Eric Russell made contact with him and John later entered into a short but furious correspondence with several Sydney fans.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW eventually arrived in Sydney. It was a sixteen page octavo effort done by hand and produced on a hektograph. It didn't impress us very much at all. We lost touch with John after this as he joined the Army. To add to the confusion and make locating him even more difficult, he had used the pen-name 'John Deverne'. Years later, when I was in Adelaide, I spent many fruitless hours going through the South Australian electoral roll looking for the name 'Deverne'. I thought that he probably had some relations who could help me.

After a lot of trouble AUSTRALIAN FAN NEWS finally appeared. The first issue was dated May, but it didn't get in the mails until August. It was to have been a twelve page foolscap bi-monthly. The problems involved made us realize we had attempted too much, so our further activities were to be much more limited. This didn't apply only to AFN. We were trying to organize a national club and a local club, as well as maintaining contact with America and bringing out the magazine. A mighty effort when you remember our oldest fan was only 16.

Even before AFN posted, we decided on our next step. Eric, Ted, Bert and I, had a serious discussion on fandom generally. Eric wanted to try a small magazine that wouldn't

cost too much or be too much trouble to produce. I wanted to get started on organizing a local club. We weighed everything and agreed that the best thing to do would be to try one thing at a time. Eric had the clearest idea of what was wanted so we marshaled our efforts behind him.

Eric and Ted went to work and in October the first issue of ULTRA appeared. It was a carbon copied twelve page typed magazine featuring articles, fiction and general news. Circulation was about thirty. The whole thing was produced on a shoestring and looked it. We were very proud of it, mainly because we had kept faith with our overseas friends. Also, the cheapness of production ensured that we - or rather the Russell brothers - could produce a second issue.

Vol Molesworth had become known to us in the early part of that year and gradually gravitated into our circle. He was a ball of energy and couldn't quite see the reason for our slowness in many matters. To his credit, he swung into line with the rest of us and helped with our various projects, particularly the very pressing problem of keeping contact with America. However, when ULTRA appeared and the local club had been established, he started making plans of his own.

His LUNA appeared in December. It was almost a second issue of AFN in many ways and had the same format. There were improvements in layout and a more fannish approach to the subject of science fiction. Also, Vol was able to display his natural journalistic ability giving LUNA a sense of continuity no other fan publication had achieved until that time.

December also saw the second issue of ULTRA. It

appeared in much the same form as number one, but vastly improved in layout. Eric had already made plans for the third issue to be duplicated so this was the last of the carbon copied issues. He announced that a new fan, Ralph Smith, had joined the staff as art editor and we could expect illustrations as soon as duplicating details were finalized.

Bert Castellari had watched the developments during this period without taking a leading part. He had helped Eric Russell with ULTRA, Vol Molesworth with LUNA and had been a tower of strength to me in getting the club going. Even before the end of 1939 he started making plans for his own. Without telling anybody what he had in mind, he studied the US fan publishing field, and discussed the subject with several American fans. Late in December, he took me aside and outlined his plan for FUTURIAN OBSERVER. It was to be a single foolscap sheet duplicated on both sides and appearing every two weeks. Bert thought that the most important thing about a magazine of this type was that it appeared on time. Eric Russell was aiming for perfection with ULTRA and Bert would aim for regularity with OBS. I suggested to Bert that it would be almost impossible to keep up a regular fortnightly schedule because of non-fan matters, but he was determined to go ahead. After a great deal of discussion I agreed to join him as co-editor. We told Eric Russell and Vol Molesworth what we had in mind and both said they would help us all they could.

The first issue of FUTURIAN OBSERVER appeared during January 1940. From then on until February, 1941, we never missed an issue. There was much criticism on bad duplicating,

typing errors, grammatical errors, spelling errors, and general untidiness, but it didn't worry either of us. We made regularity the watchword and if it was the difference between a deadline and a dictionary, the deadline always won. We brought out OBS for our own satisfaction and it was more by good luck than good management that other fans liked it. Eric and Vol stood by us in the teething stage, both with material and know-how.

So the first quarter saw the fan publishers of Sydney setting out on their respective tracks. LUNA went through some startling changes and numbers two and three appeared in a quarto format with only eight pages. ULTRA appeared in February in a nice new quarto format complete with illustrations. FUTURIAN OBSERVER, presenting its version of the news and preaching the cause of the local club, rounded off the picture. We were all justifiably proud with our mags.

In the second quarter of 1940, there were some more startling changes. Vol dropped LUNA and brought out a new one, COSMOS. Now, in looking for copy, he stumbled on one of the periodic storms-in-a-teacup that have continuously dotted fan progress and dressed it up into a full scale feud between Eric and me. He reported it as the event of the year. This was moonshine. We certainly had spat words at each other, but both regarded the whole thing as a private disagreement. Castellari was still on the best of terms with Eric, and I still managed to get along with Ted Russell. No word of the disagreement appeared in either ULTRA or OBS. Both Eric and I wrote to Vol to deny the report.

The outcome of it all was that COSMOS started out under

a cloud. Vol had intended it to be a letter mag in the tradition of the American IMAGINATION but never managed to dispel the suspicion that he had some deeper motive. There certainly was a need for a magazine of this type to let Australian fans get to know each other better. Vol's slick journalism and good natured digs made Eric and I overlook the earlier mistake, but we never quite relaxed when writing for him.

COSMOS started out as a six page tri-weekly, reduced itself to a two page bi-weekly and finally blossomed out into a 'LUNA-ised' version with anything up to sixteen or so pages. It didn't stick to any set editorial policy (in fact it even changed editors for a couple of weeks!) despite periodic statements by Vol. COSMOS had a rather unique reputation amongst the Sydney fans. It was the only fan publication that successfully managed to tread on the toes of everybody.

It was about the middle of the year we saw AUSTRALIAN FANTASY, the Melbourne fan magazine. Warwick Hockley, its editor, was unknown to any of us and we were very surprised when we first heard about it. The first issue, a small carbon copied one with an undisclosed circulation. Wog, as Warwick was then known to us, never did let on how many he distributed. It had the usual fan fiction, articles and news. We were very enthusiastic, mainly because it opened up a new field of fan activity. The fact that it was sloppy in comparison with the Sydney publications was discreetly overlooked. When the wheel turned and some Sydney mags were sloppy in comparison with his, Wog was equally discreet in overlooking our shortcomings. The enthusiasm of Wog's letters made us

realize we had located a fan of the most active type. Being outside the center of fan activity didn't affect AUSTRALIAN FANTASY very much. Wog suffered the usual difficulty any fan editor [has] in getting material at first, but gradually he managed to get a back log of both articles and fiction. Once he had this, he was in a position to demand a certain standard from his contributors. This in turn made the contributors spend more time in polishing their material and that whole magazine improved in quality.

AUSTRALIAN FANTASY will always be remembered for its climb to the top of the fan popularity ladder. The second issue appeared in September. It was hectographed. The third issue was dated December and was duplicated with the usual black and white. The fifth issue was blaze of color with four or five colored inks being used in the duplicating process. Even the most conservative fan could find little fault in the Melbourne magazine.

In August 1940, six Sydney fans combined their talents to produce ZEUS! This was to be the 'balanced' magazine, giving equal prominence to both fan and professional activities. The first issue was a sixteen page one, and immediately threw out a strong challenge to the leading magazine of the day, Eric Russell's ULTRA. However, the fact that it had six very interested fans on the editorial committee proved a hindrance rather than a help. ZEUS! had the unusual experience of having no less than two second issues! Two of the editors brought out an issue that was duplicated and immediately dubbed 'official', and another two came out with their version, which was

hectographed and dubbed 'pseudo'. This state of affairs existed until the fourth issue. The 'pseudo' folded up and its editors assisted with the official, although never actually coming on to the editorial staff.

The final publishing venture of the year was again from Melbourne when Wog Hockley produced his MELBOURNE BULLETIN. This was an 'all sorts' with no set policy or publishing date. When some fan in Sydney became frantic with worry over an impending collapse of something or other, then he generally dashed a short article or letter off to Wog to see if anyone else was losing sleep.

ULTRA continued to appear on a bi-monthly basis all through 1940 and was recognized as being Australia's No 1 fan publication. It was duplicated from February onwards. Many of the best known fans had their first published works in Eric's magazine. Chas Mustchin wrote an article that ran for three issues, Colin Roden submitted the first of his dry, humorous stories, Bruce Sawyer, under his pen name of L Vague De Damp, appeared as both artist and authors, and David Evans and Wog Hockley, and other, also contributed. In addition, the better known fans such as Vol Molesworth and Ralph Smith developed their talents under the watchful eye of Editor Russell and before the critical audience that constituted ULTRA's readers. The anniversary issue in October ran to thirty odd pages and presented material from just about every well known fan.

By the beginning of 1941, American and British fandom had realized that Australian fan publications were here to stay. The encouraging but condescending reviews that appeared in

overseas publications turned to unqualified praise as the tiny Australian fan community continued to expand and improve their magazines. The regular FUTURIAN OBSERVER showed we had stability, the controversial COSMOS showed we were much the same as fans in the rest of the world, whilst the bigger magazines, particularly ULTRA, but also AUSTRAL FANTASY and ZEUS! showed we aspired to greater and higher things. MELBOURNE BULLETIN hadn't made any impression, but it was later to fill the gap between FUTURIAN OBSERVER and COSMOS.

Time out for an explanation. As I said before, I don't want to buy into any fights, but it has always been my contention that the reason fans produce these magazines was for the satisfaction of sitting [on] the editorial board (if such existed) and having some say in production. I do not believe power was the prime motive. Rather I'd say a desire for recognition, an outlet for energy, but mainly a great big hunk of ego boo. It was the fun of being editor, rather than the lust for being dictator, that started these magazines going and the pride in the work turned out, that kept them going.

The first half of 1941 opened up very well. ULTRA developed a style that set the standard for the rest of Australia. ZEUS! came through its difficulties and under the capable editorship of Ron Levy and Bert Castellari started to concentrate on fan fiction. Noel Dwyer and David Evans contributed outstanding items of a serious nature, whilst Bruce Sawyer, under his tag of L Vague De Damp, gave us some good belly laughs besides keeping the egos of the would-be great in

a suitably deflated condition. FUTURIAN OBSERVER had a change when Ron Levy replaced me on the staff and it became 'irregular' instead of bi-monthly. Vol Molesworth seemed to be in doubt and after attempting a new venture called TELEFAN, abandoned the publishing field altogether. In Melbourne, Wog Hockley quietly but systematically improved AUSTRAL FANTASY besides turning out MELBOURNE BULLETIN.

Don Tuck of Hobart had been known to us all for some time, and had contributed to both Sydney and Melbourne magazines. We all knew Don was an enthusiastic collector, but nobody ever thought he had plans for entering the publishing side. Therefore, it was with very great surprise that it was learnt in Sydney that Don, with the assistance of several of the Hobart readers, had plans for a magazine. Within a week of the news reaching Sydney, Don's magazine PROFAN turned up. The speed and efficiency of the Tasmanians quite took our breath away even though we learned that Wog Hockley had been helping in an advisory capacity. The first issue was favorably received everywhere.

PROFAN - meaning 'pro' and 'fan', not 'for fan' - lasted three issues and featured the usual articles and fiction. Coming into the field at the time of so many other fan magazines, Don had much difficulty in getting good material. He kept at the mainlanders however, till he received his share of the quality efforts being turned out at the time. Each issue was an improvement on the last, so it is difficult to see just where PROFAN would have ended up if it hadn't been for the war cutting short its career. As it was, Don and his Hobart Helpers

did a great job under the circumstances.

The high water mark of fan publishing in Australia occurred during the second half of 1941. The necessary 'firm base' had been provided by the comparative newcomer, Colin Roden, who taught us older fans a thing or two with his SCIENCE AND FANTASY FAN REPORTER which appeared as a regular weekly for 34 weeks - and never missed an issue! He presented news and views on both fan and professional matters in such a way that even the most touchy couldn't take offence. He 'scooped' all the other magazines in such a gentlemanly way that the other editors actually enjoyed seeing the news appear first in Colin's magazine.

The second anniversary of ULTRA appeared in October with fifty pages, including printed inserts. As with the first anniversary issue, just about every fan in Australia was represented but the improvement in quality of the material made this the show-piece of Australian fandom. Everyone expected the effort would exhaust the Russell brothers but the December issue appeared, although late, and showed the dependable team would still set the standard.

AUSTRA FANTASY appeared on an irregular schedule, but roughly quarterly. Wog, practically alone in Melbourne, was doing a tremendous job and every issue was a blaze of color. His art work was undoubtedly the best in Australia. Artists Ralph Smith, Bruce Sawyer and Ted Russell all submitted their best work to Wog, and he certainly showed it to advantage. MELBOURNE BULLETIN was overshadowed by its bigger companion, but was still widely read and enjoyed.

ZEUS! aimed at the fan fiction market all through 1941. However, it did blot its copybook by printing the FSS minutes. Both editors had resigned from the FSS, and it was in particularly bad taste to dip into the muddled and murky past of that organization to find copy. (An odd aspect of this incident was that active Futurian Vol Molesworth called for action against Roy Levy and Bert Castellari, yet continued to support them with material. Ex-Futurian foundation Director myself, refused to contribute any material for ZEUS!, but maintained the most cordial relations with both editors). ZEUS! was at its best during the latter part of 1941.

FUTURIAN OBSERVER, after a long absence, came back to the fold. The editorial attitude also went through a dramatic change. Instead of being 'anti-fandom' in outlook, Ron Levy and Bert Castellari jumped on the band wagon of cooperation and supported the Third Sydney Science Fiction Conference which looked like being the best gathering ever attempted in the Southern Hemisphere. It was, however, still very anti-FSS. The Hobart magazine, PROFAN was finding its feet and a place for itself in the scheme of things.

Then came Pearl Harbor. The entry of Japan into the war destroyed Australian fandom and with it, fan publishing. There was a sense of anti-climax in the manner in which one fan publication [followed] the other in closing down its activities. Within a couple of months, ULTRA, FUTURIAN OBSERVER, AUSTRA FANTASY, ZEUS!, MELBOURNE BULLETIN, SCIENCE AND FANTASY FAN REPORTER and PROFAN were nothing more than pleasant memories. It was all so sudden. It just

didn't seem right.

In summing up, the efforts of the fan publications had a tremendous effect on the expansion of Australian fandom. They made mistakes and lost of them. However, they were brought out for personal enjoyment and the enthusiasm of all concerned should make even the most critical observers view them with tolerance. They contributed a vital part to that youthful period we now call pre-war fandom.

W D Veney

What's Going on in Sydney, 1954?

As you can tell from some of the contents of this issue, I've been going through old issue of *Etherline* over the past month. Hence another contribution from Ian Crozier. This one is of particular interest to me because it gives a first hand impression of what fans in Melbourne thought about what was going on between fans in Sydney and suggests some of the reasons that fandom in Sydney seems to have begun to finally disintegrate around this time. In the next issue of *iOTA* there will be a response, also from *Etherline*, to the event of that 1955 Sydney convention, if I remember.

VIEWPOINT

An interesting document arrived in the mail last night from Sydney. Titled THE STONE REPORT; NO SYDNEY CONVENTION IN 1955.

Now this fascinated me. As far as I can remember, it was moved and carried 22 votes to 14 that the North Shore Futurian Society was to be responsible for the organization of the 1955 Convention. Of course, I may be mistaken in this assumption,

so I checked with the other Melbourne fans who were present, and, strangely enough, they had the same feeling. According to this document, it was felt that too much time was being taken up in the Organization of Conventions, and the Futurian Society of Sydney would like to devote a year or so to the benefit of said Society. If my memory served me correct, it was stated by a member of the Convention committee that the organization of the 1954 Con took up no time of the FSS, it being on the shoulders of Mr Judd. Of course, again I might be wrong ...

The theme throughout this document seems to be against conventions. Why, it doesn't state ...

Then further on, it's all for Conventions, as long as they are not in Sydney. We interstate fans are flattered by the charming remarks made about us, but I'm sure we will all agree that at the moment, Sydney is the only center in Australia with the numbers and active fans enough to run a Convention. Of course, if they DON'T want to be sociable about it, then we'll leave them to their eternal bickering. It seems to me that the oldest center of fandom is suffering from senile decay.

In the last paragraph of this extremely interesting document, it was intimated that Melbourne did not want a Convention in 1955. This couldn't be further from the facts. Don't bring us into your quarrels. We like it peaceful.

Melbourne fandom, through the Chairman, Bob McCubbin, wished the NSFS [North Shore Futurian Society] all the best, and promised them all the support we could give them. It was stated that Melbourne did not want the

taken for a box of type and set in a form so that words, sentences, paragraphs and entire pages have to be built up letter by letter. If we all had to produce our fanzines that way I dare say there would be very few, if any, of them. The result of this effort, however, was considered worthwhile in a period where other forms of reproduction looked far inferior and, to use a word some fans were trying to avoid at the time, amateur. It seems that editor Haddon did not want to go through the same trial again so the second and final issue of *Telepath* was produced in the simpler mimeo method several years later.

This issue is a victory of form over substance in the way that it looks better than it reads. This is because *Telepath* might look good but it doesn't have much to say. There is a brief editorial, a short interview with the editor of the prozine *Thrills Incorporated* by Vol Molesworth, apparently reprinted from *Fantasy Times*, a couple of pages promoting the forthcoming first Australian SF Convention, a one page proposal about a book buying scheme, a reprint of a 1947 article about Heinlein's thoughts about the possibility of flight to the moon, and a page of trivia. The unfortunate thing is that the reproduction process made it necessary for the editor to have everything planned out well in advance so the whole issue seems static and lacking in the sense of energy which most of the good fanzines have.

If you like page design that includes a lot of white space you might enjoy looking at a *Telepath*, but it won't take you long to read it or get much enjoyment out of it. Which is a pity because I'm sure Haddon poured a lot of energy into it. The only reason for warming up the time machine to go back and get this one is to make Arthur Haddon feel appreciated for all his hard work.

Progress Report

Honest folks, it's been like a slat [sic] mine in here. Slave, slave, slave... Crack that whip, etc, etc. (I reckon I'm the hardest boss I ever worked for.) The trouble with history (and probably most brain work) is that there are long periods of work which doesn't seem to add up to much until the project starts coming together. It's called, 'getting on top of the evidence'. More excitement next month, however ...

To Be Done

The plan is that I'm going to be in Perth from 28 February to 3 March. The excuse for this trip is to take part in the event about fanzines at Murdoch University on Friday 3 March from 4 to 5 in the afternoon in the Hill lecture theater. Jessie Lynn (see iOTA 01) will be the guest speaker and then Grant Stone and I will join her for a panel discussion. Even if you don't mind missing Jessie and I, you know that you can't miss seeing the fabulous Grant Stone in person.

While in Perth I intend to spend as much time as I can in the bowels of the university library collecting as much as I can from the fanzines stored there. With any luck I'll start with those collected by Don Tuck before many of us were born. Of course, if some local fan should come to drag me away to the café for a coffee, that will be permissible under certain circumstances.

Fannish Get-Together

Eric Lindsay was approaching 70 so Jean Weber told him he had to organize a party to celebrate. He organized a small do where they live with sausage rolls and party pies but Jean said to him; 'Not good enough. Do better!' So, with some conspirators

in Melbourne, he organized a party for a large gathering of his old fannish friends. If you weren't there it's probably because you're under 50.

There were lots and lots of old fannish faces, I counted three founder members of the Melbourne SF Group and there were plenty of fans from the '60s, '70s and '80s'. In earlier times there would have been enough SMOFing to organize one Worldcon, two National conventions and three decent fan feuds but, these days, who's got the energy? The only formal program item was a singing of 'Happy Birthday' to those whose birthdays fell around this time of the year. For the rest of the time people chatted. It was like the best parts of a convention rolled up together and the boring parts left behind.



The birthday fans here are: Bruce Gillespie, Eric Lindsay, Gordon Lingard, Lee Harding and Robin Johnson. On the left is Jean Weber - who came from Queensland - and on the right is Erik Harding who flew from the West to be there.

The Back Cover

Roman Orszanski reminded me that fanzines have back, as well as front, covers. So here is the back cover from *Telepath 1*.

