

This Here...

"...no longer a world-leading industrial powerhouse..." (D Redd)

EGOTORIAL

BLOWING THE GAF(IA)

I've had a couple of mostly GAFIA weekends, and almost made it three in a row except for various promises and statements of RSN nature, otherwise the combination of the all-day headache (exacerbated today, no doubt, by excessive consumption of cheap store-brand whiskey and insufficient kip) *and* the tinnitus being worse than ever could easily have again resulted in values of fanac adjacent to fuck-all.

There always seems to be a maintenance minimum, though, maybe firing off a quick loc, or at the very least dispatching noodges at contributors to the upcoming *BEAM #15* and, habitually, what passes for editorial conferencing, during which I typically admire my co-editor's usual terseness and instant perspicacity, which would lead the proverbial alien observer to conclude that *she's* the one with no fuckin' time.

It would have made *so* much more sense to get thish mostly together last week, since Famous Author™ J L Farey is at the Hempworx conference at the Mirage this weekend (coming home of a night, though) and thus I'm tasked with stuff like a minimal grocery run (ie cheap beer and not much else) as well as feeding myself something that isn't liquid, which has so far amounted to some leftover cheese and crackers and a P F Chang spicy Korean pork and noodle bowl, 5 minutes in the microwave and actually quite good, if hewing to the definition of "single serving" which is less than I feed the dog. Tonight's 5 minutes in the zapper feast is a "Nashville hot chicken" bowl with gravy and a what I expect to be a teaspoonful of mash on "homestyle" bread. It remains to be seen whose home this was styled in (I'm guessing not Martha Stewart), and although otherwise

branded anyway, this isn't so much "Hungry Man" as "Fuckin' Lazy Man" nosebag, innit?

Jen is massively tolerant of me doing fuck-all (except drink) on my days off, even though I reckon she works more hours than I do at her various endeavors, so I'm happy to have crossed a couple of items off the honey-do list such as replacing a couple of burned-out lightbulbs, putting a new battery in the wall clock and such, utterly trivial and quick tasks in actual execution which take me weeks to get around to.

It might be a valid assumption that I've waited on finishing thish until Watford get a win, so there might be some scant joy in the 'Footy' column, but as G Charnock will undoubtedly and snarkily point out, I'm still waiting after today's 0-0 draw with Sheffield United, a game in which we had three good chances but still couldn't lodge the onion in the bag, Andre Gray's early sky over the bar from about a half inch out being most egregious. Still get to take the piss out of Spurs, I suppose, and derive a little pleasure from another Everton loss.

In ear'ole news, I should be getting my shiny slimline black and silver rechargeable hearing aids this Wednesday (the 9th), also receiving instruction in their Bluetooth capabilities and iPhone compatability. Yes, really. Very gee-whiz teck that can be set up so that when the phone rings, the audio will switch directly to the hearing aids. It's a shame that all I seem to get is fuckin' spam calls.

Now I got to nip off for a sec to grab another can of "cheap pish" (C U O'Brien) and check on the laundry. Yeah, I'm doing that too...

It's all good.

Nic Farey, early October 2019



IS THIS JUST FAANTASY?

(6)

Yes, Ulrika, I *know* I said you'd be undoubtedly relieved to hear that this column had possibly run its course, but I yet feel the need for a little summary and clarification, following the publication of John Purcell's Corflu Heatwave PR2 (<http://corflu.org/Corflu37/Corflu-37-PR2.pdf>).

Beyond the waffle, I'm in general agreement with both the desire to get voter numbers back up, and with Jerry Kaufman's eminent suggestion that all votes recorded should be non-ranked.

John also writes this:

So if Steve Stiles says "don't vote for me," then PR's and the FAAn ballot should plainly state that any votes for him will not be counted; better yet, the actual wording should state that "votes for a candidate who withdraws his/her name from consideration shall not be counted."

To make this clear (again), I have **no problem** with Steve or anyone else shouting from the rooftops that they don't want FAAn award votes. What I *do* strenuously object to is having the awards admin do their dirty work for them. "Steve Stiles says..." isn't an instrument of award policy *unless* he's administrating the awards himself - and there's a thought, since there's a precedent (which I also disagreed with) for administrator(s) to reject votes for their own work.

John quotes my previous thoughts about an "official" mechanism for withdrawal, but doesn't mention that I subsequently thought better of it, persuaded more toward Hooper's "all votes will count" philosophy.

Steve, who, I believe, feels genuinely about having had enough FAAn awards is quite at liberty to refuse the accolade if he gets it.

We had an exchange on FBF, which I asked if I could publish, but Steve objected. For anyone interested, the convo (in a public post) is here:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=Nic%20Farey%20This%20Here...%20%2316&epa=FILTERS&filters=eyJycF9hdXRob3IiOiJ7XCJuYW1lXCI6XCJhdXRob3JfbWVclixcImFyZ3NcljpcllwifSJ9>

Finally, I nod with approval at John referring to the *Fanzine* Activity Achievement awards, which is as I prefer to think of them...

RADIO WINSTON

OFF THE TWIG

The rate they're checking out these days, I could probably just lazily make this column an *Ansible*-style list of RIPs from the previous however-many-weeks since the lastish.

I was naturally devastated over Xmas 2002 dealing with the untimely loss of Joe Strummer at the bonkers age of only 50. Talking about music (as we do) with J M Kerns a few weeks back, he was astonished to learn how much older Joe was than me (5 years 5 months), given how fuckin' old I am and, I guess, how Joe maintained his "angry young man" image. It was sort of ok that I had time to grieve, being off for the holiday, and I remember thinking at the time that, as bad as it was having that hero gone, I was going to need so much longer to deal when Pete Townshend dropped off the twig that I was hoping he'd outlive me, which might not be that likely (he's 13 years my senior) although he's got a much healthier lifestyle than I do these days.

Barrie Masters of Eddie and the Hot Rods has left the building, and he's a contemporary (not that any of the bands I was in got on Top of the Pops, although we did share a studio with Hazel O'Connor once). I've clocked some reminiscences of their live shows, invariably commenting on Masters' stage presence and athleticism. I never had the pleasure, but the mentions of his acrobatics, leaping off speaker stacks and such, reminded me of Radio Stars vocalist Andy Ellison, who wore protective kneepads (and other padding) for good reason. The reformed Radio Stars played a 34th anniversary gig in 2010 at the legendary 100 Club, supporting - er - Eddie and the Hot Rods.

I *did* possess the Rods' set "Life on the Line", which I liked well, though my favorite slice off that (sorry Barrie) was the instrumental 'We Sing... The Cross'.

The Rods were occasionally described as "punk" though they weren't, and didn't try to be, coming much more out of the Essex pub rock tradition and just wanting to play loud and fast and not worry about changing the world, although former members did end up in various punk ensembles. Having a relisten (as I write) to 'Quit This Town' it conjures thoughts of a speeded-up Flamin' Groovies.

The pub rockers, while often unashamedly basic in their approach and influences, didn't eschew musicianship in the ways that *some* of the punks did in their reaction against the prevalent excess of the proggers, although let's also note that the best of the late 70s upstarts turned into thoughtful, experimental and boundary-pushing outfits (most notably Siouxsie and the Banshees, but let's never forget the Clash's embracing of a wide variety of styles).

There's a lot to be said for radical push, but there's also virtue in consistency.

DEAUVILLE THE DAMNED

The *Festival du cinéma américain de Deauville* is something I may have been peripherally aware of (as it's been going since 1975), but haven't exactly ever waited agog for its annual occurrence.

On my way back from collecting the derisory paycheck today, typically having NPR on the radio (it's either that or the Clash singles CD), I happened to clock a report from the film festival on *Morning Edition*, in part commenting on the exhibition of films which don't have American distribution deals (and yet were well-received) from pariahs Woody Allen and Roman Polanski.

The interviewer asked a French critic about this, and given recent developments in the sf community driven by what Andy Hooper calls "resentful young revisionists", the response was startling, if out of the Department of the Blindingly Fuckin' Obvious. To quasiquote, the critic simply stated that the French have no difficulty in separating the value of a person's art from the personal lives of that creator, flawed though they may be by actions therein, the clear implication being that art should be judged of its own merits, rather than filtered through faults of its creator. The *reductio* here is to provocatively ask whether Hitler's paintings were actually any good (the critical consensus is "not really"), but we're left with the vexing consideration of what we're actually honoring by the naming of awards after so-called "giants" whom revisionism (or later acquired knowledge) has subsequently placed in a different light.

Off the skiffy topic for a sec, and as a general example, there's been mutterings about the naming of our Las Vegas airport ("McCarran" since 1948) due to the somewhat dodgy views of Sen. Pat McCarran after whom it's named, because he was a champion of aviation, not because of his rabid anti-Communism which caused him to cosy up to various fascist leaders. So does Pat McCarran deserve to be honored by an airport in his name for his dedication to aviation progress (not least a large part in the establishment of the USAF as a separate branch of the military) or do we consign him to the revisionist scrapheap because of other views he held with which the presumably more enlightened present might not agree?

Similarly, then, we've begun the process of airbrushing a seminal SF editor from the books, arguably one who

advanced the field a fuck of a lot more than the cheap-arse hack Gernsback (whose name remains on the mightiest of awards, but for how long?) because he had some loony ideas, and was, agreed, demonstrably right-wing even for his own time. Although many if not most of those whom Campbell championed into the "Golden Age" distanced themselves from him in later years as he got progressively mad, let's surely have a go at serial groper Isaac Asimov, himself a minority (who, to his credit though, resisted Campbell's wish to change his name to something more Anglo-Saxon) and yet hewed to the alleged Campbellian hegemonic ethos.

Digressing again, as I do, I've admitted to a great fondness for Van Vogt (without whom, as PKD himself observed, the latter's observations of the human condition would not exist, and is defended by the likes of Paul di Filippo). Van

surpassed any of the other "Golden Age" scribblers in my early readings, and yet is held in contempt by many for his seeming advocacy of monarchical or absolute rule in political systems. I'd suggest, however, that Van's characters, so often minimally described other than as being "super-competent" are racially neutral, which is actually subversive in of itself. For example, were I to have an opportunity to film 'The World of Null-A', I could think of no-one better to portray Gosseyn than Forrest Whittaker, although he might be a bit long in the tooth for it these days. John Boyega?

Eventually, I get to the revisionism which disturbs me the most, the removal of 'Tiptree' from the formerly-known-as Tiptree award. I'll most definitely cite the French attitude about honoring the work rather than the person, and in this case the difference is stark. "Tiptree" is honored for ground-

breaking approaches and topics in SF, and rightly so, irrelevant to the fact that Alice Sheldon, herself possibly mentally ill, made an end-of-life decision for her spouse which has been questioned.

I'll conclude by quoting Alfred Bester, after a meeting with Campbell: "It reinforced my private opinion that the majority of the science fiction crowd, despite their brilliance, were missing their marbles".

So who deserves having shit named after them? Pretty much nobody, then...

FOOTY

Something I wanted to at least mention a column ago, but it got shelved, was the use of an all-female officiating crew for the UEFA Super Cup final in Istanbul in August in which Liverpool beat Chelsea on penalties (2-2 AET). I got the



impression you'd be hard-pressed to hear much about that unless you were reading the European papers, although the uncut bicycle service of the BBC did carry a brief piece, mostly quoting - er - the European papers.

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/football/49359517>

On the basis of these glowing reviews, I think I'd rather like to have Stephanie Frappart reffing some EPL instead of, for one horrible example, that bumsucking arsehole One-Eye Jon Moss.



"Ah yes", snickers Charnock (G), "Anything to avoid mentioning Watford's rotten start, eh?"

Well, no, since the opening paragraph of lastish's column had a rather British understatement of "not the best of starts", and Javi Gracia was fired shortly thereafter to make way for the return of Quique Sanchez Flores for a second go.

I'm having a bit of a break from the FBF Hornets group, certainly from posting. Eternally optimistic and looking for positives, and looking at the match stats (as I geekily do), I opined that despite the 2-0 loss to Wolves I didn't think we played at all badly, and predictably, while getting a modicum of "likes" and a (very) few people willing to actually discuss and make fair points, the majority of the response was matches and petrol, with the only inarguable flames being that high percentage possession isn't worth spit unless you actually *do* something with it like, oh, say score a fuckin' goal once in a while. (This is a concept Spurs fans are becoming increasingly familiar with, by the way. More below.)

We've got a bit of the injury woes already (Troy Deeney won't be back until the end of the month most likely, and Will Hughes is on the bench, not used today since he's also recovering from a knock), though admittedly we're not as bad off as Norwich City who must be missing half the first team and going from the surprise win over Man City to a home drubbing by Villa today. This is reality for most teams

who aren't swimming in Arab money and don't have the squad depth that the so-called "top six" enjoy. I'll point out again that one of Man City's *substitutes* in our Cup Final shellack cost more than our entire team.

It was a bit mixed out there today, with Craig Cathcart having a good'un except for a near own-goal (saved by Foster), Pereyra playing a blinder (he was everywhere), but Doucoure on a 'mare. In general there did seem to be a bit more urgency, though in what can be seen as a rebuke to my

numbers geekery, the stats at half time showed us with only 31% possession despite the fact that I had the impression we were challenging more effectively for the ball in midfield *and* winning most of the aerial battles. Possession stats evened up by the end of the game. Sheffield United were pretty mediocre, and maybe it was better defending from us (about fuckin' time!) but they didn't seem to have anything like a clear chance, whereas we had three. As mentioned in the Egotorial, Gray hoofed it over from close in early on, then later when Danny Welbeck had a clear run with Gray open on his left he chose to have a go which

the goalie was in good position to block, rather than trying to nip around or, more obviously, pass to Gray who exhibited a bit of displeasure. Welbeck undoubtedly gave that a shrug and a "look what happened last time". Late on, sub Deulofeu put in a gorgeous ball to other sub Craig Dawson's bonce which tested goalie Henderson. The large cadre of Dawson-haters will be moaning away, but I think this shows his value as a target man, because he was spot-on right place right time and it was a well good effort.

Laura, one of the moderators on our Hornets group, must be suffering a miserable home life at the moment, since her husband is a Spurs man. While we all pretty much expected (with accompanying yawns) that Man City and Liverpool would dominate again this year (the Reds' "second-place curse" notwithstanding), I opined to my Spurs fan friends Amanda Epstein and Dave Hod-me-son that I reckoned their lot would be in for a go this season, and I wasn't just being polite (because, knowing me as long as they both have, they'd have smelled tincture of pure bollocks from across the ocean). 8th place and 11 points and some very rotten results has the pundits baffled and wondering whether Pochettino will get the hook, although looking up from bottom and three points gives me the eye-rolls and, to quote from a classic sketch, a pain in the neck. Only the Arse of the other usual suspects are top six right now, although both stuttering Man U and the transfer-banned Chavskis could be back there

after their games, but still a street or several off Liverpool's 100% record so far.

Pochettino says he isn't worried about the sack, and he may well be right, although my record at prognostication is rough to middling. We're all going to have a bloody good larf when Marco "Snake" Silva gets the boot from Everton, mind...

LOCO CITATO

[[Readers will recall that #20 was sent out with the accompanying email text: "If I'm not pissing somebody off, I'm not doing it right."]]

Specific comments on that statement head up this loccol. Sort of a 'WAHF in advance'...]]

Mike Glycer : "You can be confident that you're doing it right"; **Bill Burns** : "Good point!"; **Steve Stiles** : "Score"; **Jerry Kaufman** : "You're always doing it right, mate!"; **David Redd** : "You must be doing something right"; **Robert Lichtman** : "You didn't piss me off, but you did get my attention"

From: mikeglyer@cs.com

August 24

Mike Glycer writes:

Tommy Ferguson is still around? There's a welcome blast from the past.

[[Even more welcome that Tommy is resuming fanac, and is the Corflu 50 delegate for 2020...]]

Not sure why you wanted to "correct" my engraving title, which was simply a description, when you had a wide open target in the description itself. Though I suppose that since a tiger is up on the apex eating somebody my point is still served.

After your repeated recommendations I had to study 'The Raft of the Medusa' more closely. So I delved into that most authoritative source, the Wikipedia *coff**coff*.

The event fascinated him, and before he began work on the final painting, he undertook extensive research and produced many preparatory sketches. He interviewed two of the survivors and constructed a detailed scale model of the raft. He visited hospitals and morgues where he could view, first-hand, the colour and texture of the flesh of the dying and dead. As he had anticipated, the painting proved highly controversial at its first appearance in the 1819 [Paris Salon](#), attracting passionate praise and condemnation in equal measure.

Oh baby! Now I know why you thought of this painting right away. It's exactly the way FAAn Awards reform is done!

[[It's tempting (and amusing) to simply agree with that, Mike, but the fact is that there aren't that many people with an interest in the actual process and minutiae of the FAAns themselves, although they'll tend to be more than willing to carp from the sidelines and grumble about recipients. If I were less disinterested in the Hugos I'd likely get much more response on that topic (and the not-Campbell-anymore award, and the not-Tiptree-anymore award, though see 'Deauville the Damned' above), but having been thoroughly flamed by Gen-F for pointing out Hugo/FAAn recipient disparities, I suspect my ennui over all that will remain and I must rely on others to take up the cudgels, which I am willing to allow them to do in these very pages if they wish...]]

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

August 24

Leigh Edmonds writes:

I was just talking to young Tristan (the cat) and we were discussing what we would do next, it being Sunday and my brain taking the day off from writing. 'What shall we do next?' I asked and just at that moment the latest *This Here...* dropped into my inbox. 'There you go', he said and trundled off for his morning nap.

The nice thing about getting fanzines as pdfs is that I don't feel guilty about defacing them when I print them out to read, and this one has quite a few notations on it, some of which I might comment on. Strangely there are no comments in the Footy or Radio Winston bits.

[[I'm pleased that you take the trouble to print the zine out (which it's intended for), and actually I'd also have no problem with you annotating a print copy sent, either, although with BEAM I'd prefer that you use post-its...]]

Perhaps I should start at the back with Graham's letter about what Jeanette Ng said in Dublin. From the vast amounts of steam I've been seeing on the interweb about it, I got the impression that she must have said something really nasty. (I could, of course, go off and find a clip of what she said on YouTube or something, but that would be too easy and I'm not that interested). If what Graham said is more or less accurate, I don't see what all the fuss is about, except that almost all the words she used have a lot of baggage attached to them, as he pointed out. For example, the word 'fascist' has a technical meaning, which is not the same meaning as what I have in mind when I yell 'fat fascist bastard' when an image of our current Prime Minister appears on our tv, or 'ignorant fat fascist bastard' when the image of Trump appears. (Maybe 'malevolent' would be a better word than 'ignorant', but it doesn't come to mind so readily.) So really I'm as guilty as she is, except that what I say is in the privacy of my lounge room.

All this stuff about the FAAn Awards is beginning to disappear down a rabbit hole in the style of Alice in Wonderland. I liked Mike Glycer's comments in relation to all this. Whenever I happen to glance at File 770 I'm awestruck at how he manages to keep track of it all, the little field we knew of as fandom a few decades ago has blossomed into a vast variety of things and it is good, perhaps, to be reminded of this. However, while Mike has grown as fandom has grown, a lot of us haven't. I feel a bit like a shrub we have in the back yard which has pink and white blossoms at this time of year. The reason is that the root stock has taken over from the grafted on bit on top and so while the root stock is flourishing the top bit is gradually being smothered and dying away. That's life for you.

I can't say that I followed the dialogue between you and Comrade Purcell about the shape of FAAN Awards to come, but having finally realized that the chump running Corflu gets to set the rules, I thought I'd let you know what the rules will be if I ever run Corflu (which is even less likely than the Melbourne Football Club winning a premiership in the foreseeable future). First, there will be nominations. There or two or three reasons for this. They help promote the award, they give people a list of nominations and I've been amazed at the number of people who've gone off and read the Hugo nominations before voting, and the third reason is because I like nomination lists. The awards themselves will be 'Best Big Fanzine', 'Best Not So Big Fanzine', 'Best Fan Writer', 'Best Fan Artist', 'Best Letter Writer', 'Best On-line Contribution' and an 'Egoboo Award'. The latter is one in which people vote for the person they'd most like to send a good dollop of egoboo to. The fourth reason for a nomination list is that then people could say they didn't want to be on the voting list when it came to voting, saving all the debate about Steve Stiles and Bill Burns. The fifth reason for a nomination list is then the voting could be done using the preferential system, which is a very good way of getting the right result but too complex for non-Australians to understand (and most of them too).

[[See 'FAAntasy' column for the majority view on nominations...]]

Yes, the ground that Irwin and his father took Jerry to would have been the MCG. It's been there since the 1850s and all they do is knock down the existing structures and put up new ones so that the only part of the ground remaining from when Jerry was there would be the playing surface itself while the grandstands have been replaced by newer, bigger and more comfortable arrangements. It's called the Melbourne Cricket Ground because it's first use was for playing cricket and 'footy' came along later, a sport specially devised in Melbourne in the 1850s with rules to prevent it from being played as your 'footy' or Graham James' 'footy', or even real Rugby and as a way of keeping cricket players fit and engaged in the off season. These days, in southern

Australia at least, the tail wags the dog. Am I correct in assuming that Graham is going to write a description of Australian Rules too, if he does I might understand it. There are some distinguishing features between it and other footies. You can't run very far with the ball and you can't throw the ball (which leads to the kicking and jumping game) and there is no stupid off-side rule (though with the defensive game some teams play these days you wouldn't think so). Scoring is simple, if you kick the ball between the sticks at your end of the ground you get a point, if you kick the ball between the big sticks that are inside the smaller sticks you get six points. What could be simpler?

[[I suspect Jamesy and indeed meself would defer to your expertise when it comes to 'Aussie Rules'...]]

In the next paragraph you and Jerry point out that I'm wrong in my use of the term 'fake fan'. It turns out that I'm one, having two stf novels on the go at the moment and not having got more than thirty pages into either of them.

There might be more to this LoC but young Tristan has emerged from his rest to tell me that what we're doing next is feeding him. If I don't he will throw himself down on this keyboard and then there will really be trouble.

From: jakaufman@aol.com

September 2

Jerry Kaufman writes:

There aren't a lot of topics I have comments on, this time around.

I can add two additional reasons for changing the FAAN award voting from a weighted count to a one-point per item listed count. One of them is just my own reaction that it makes no sense to me to weigh my first choice out of three at five times the value of my third choice (5 points for the first placement against 1 point for the third, with 3 points for second placement).

The second reason is that the current system is much more susceptible to a small group of enthusiastic voters all selecting as their first place choice a zine or creator that's not widely read (or appreciated) by the general voting group. (With only 19 voters this past cycle, this was not an issue.) But just nine or ten voters out of almost 80 in the previous cycle were able to put a few items very high in the rankings, even though they were nearly the only voters to choose those particular zines, writers, or artists because every vote was worth 5 points.

[[As you're by now aware, Killer, I've been persuaded by your unweighted approach, as, it seems, has John Purcell...]]

Thanks to George Phillis for writing about all the zines that the N3F currently publishes, many of which I had not heard of. I see that *Tightbeam* and *Ionisphere* are available at eFanzines, but if I want to read other titles like *Origin* or *Films Fantastic* (they each cover areas of particular interest to me), I'll have to become a member. And I haven't been a member since about 1968!

Wait, maybe there's more in this issue than I thought. I want to expand a bit on what Joseph Major mentioned about the Pong Awards. My recollection is that Ted White and the other members of the 1967 Worldcon committee for NyCon III were introducing the Best Fan Artist and Best Fan Writer categories. Up to then, only Best Fanzine existed. They wanted to name all three the Pong Awards, in honor of Bob Tucker's character Hoy Ping Pong. (Imagine how a mock-Chinese name would play today.) But too many fans hoping to win the award felt the name was neither dignified enough nor would carry the prestige of a Hugo. Maybe we took ourselves too seriously?

Speaking of Childe Ballads as I was, I want to mention seeing Ellen Kushner at Worldcon. She did a talk with singing about her book *Thomas the Rhymer*. She not only sang the song from which she drew her plot, she also sang portions of a number of other Scots ballads and recommended an album by Anais Mitchell called *Child Ballads*. I looked for it on Spotify, but couldn't find it, so I may have to buy it on amazon if my favorite Seattle record shops don't have it.

From: dave_redd@hotmail.com

September 8

David Redd writes:

Your first and last pictures make the proverbial interesting contrast: page 1 centre Mr Kerns, last 16 right a Catwoman off-duty. These are members of the same species?

I suppose I should mention that FAANTASY (5) is getting perilously close to a common-sense resolution with some careful clear thinking from John Purcell not to mention others. From this distance it looks like:

See 6+ fanzines in year to vote.

Simpler categories, keep under review.

Voting paper for 4-5 unplaced write-ins.

Distribute to get more voters.

Count straight votes per name.

Winner: Taral/Brad W. Foster (tie). [Award declined: Steve Stiles.]

[[My conception of that scenario is winner: Steve Stiles (award declined). Therefore the award is not given...]]

At least, that seems a coherent credible pattern to me.

Footy, no comment, except that you may have noticed the financial meltdowns at Bury and Bolton lately. I still have a postcard showing the last fixture at Bolton Wanderers' old home - only a couple of decades later, the big-money game in the triffic new out-of-town stadium had them on their knees. Nathan Blake (ex-Wanderers) suggested "You have to go back to living within your means." But that's not the British way any more. As for rugby, and League being a "full contact sport", Union is a "collision sport". And it's so ironic that Rugby Union, as a game for public-school toffs, replaced singing miners as the identifier of modern Welsh culture. Meanwhile my son was at the latest Welsh independence rally in Merthyr yesterday - numbers were down a bit; interestingly, so many people wanted to catch the train up from Cardiff that the carriages were jammed too full to get them on. (Complaints about yet another Transport for Wales failure ensued. Privatising our State railways has merely transferred accountability to more distant owners, e.g. foreign State railways.)

[[Watford's former owner Lawrence Bassini (who got rode out of town on a rail by us, the fuckin' crook) got involved with Bolton, at which point we knew they were doomed...]]

"Wales the Damned" in Brexit days, you ask? Your web image of the "Cofiwch Dryweryn" slogan (before it was simplified by repainting after vandalism) gives a good taste of the reasons for independence protests then and now. At Dryweryn, a Welsh-speaking village was drowned for a reservoir to give an English city (Liverpool) cheap water. At Aberfan, a horrifying number of children and adults were killed when a coal-waste tip collapsed on them, being a relic of previous industrial exploitation left insufficiently safe for business reasons. Finally, that little symbol upper left, like a cross between the CND and a double-eagle, was the mark of the former Free Wales Army, currently dead but always liable to be resurrected if the times squeeze Welsh Wales. This brings us to Brexit, and your "salient point" to me about the working class being bamboozled into aligning against easy targets not the true causes of current woes.

My fellow citizens of Cymru, who since 2000 have received over £4 billion in EU structural funds redistributed from wealthier regions elsewhere, voted by a clear majority in June 2016 to leave the EU - except for some farming areas which clearly suspected that whatever Brexiteers promised then, the UK government would never replace our EU agricultural subsidies. (The farmers were proved right as early as July 2016, thank you Westminster's Alan Cairns for clarifying that.)

Twenty years ago I worked in Salford, so in 2016 noted with interest that its substantial Brexit decision was based largely on anti-immigration, ignoring the EU billions redistributed to the North. In Wales in 2019 immigrants are less of a consideration, especially at independence rallies where

speakers have supported taking in Syrian refugees and so on, but there are still Welsh people supporting Brexit “because of all the billions Boris said we were giving to Europe” (direct quote – had to look it up – one of several similar). Although one Radio Wales phone-in caller thought that people had voted Leave “with their little Imperial crowns on” and seemingly she suspected the Empire wasn’t here any more. It certainly isn’t. Once Boris had said out on October 31st deal or no deal, Ford (a USA company) swiftly announced a supposedly unrelated closure decision on its Bridgend car plant employing 4,000 people and supporting many more indirectly. Freedom to forge new trade relationships with America? Only freedom to sell them the NHS and allow ourselves to be sued for any restrictions on USA traders – America has floated both already. Wales doesn’t need that kind of freedom; Scotland has been pretty vocal about not needing it; and in Ireland some are advocating a north-south federal island outside the UK. Interesting times. Wales, I remind myself with gritted teeth, is no longer a world-leading industrial powerhouse of coal and steel, only a service economy struggling to support itself now that supermarket price wars have destroyed the profitability of the agriculture which feeds us.

[[Quite...]]

So all in all, Brexit is the perfect example of your “bamboozlement”, in Wales and outside. Our blaming austerity and social decay on greedy foreigners and saying Brexit “won’t affect us” because “the bankers won’t let London collapse”...well, this is exactly the kind of “voting to get rid of what little safety net they have” you mention. Unthinking shoot-from-the-hip reactions now rule us. I can’t comment on general political instability in Boris Johnson’s Britain because it and his utterances change daily. Following his role model across the Atlantic, no doubt. Broadcasts from Parliament currently sound like football crowds, and not the nice kind. I wish I could find Bill Bryson’s quote about him seeing the British character go downhill (not his actual phrase).

To redress the balance, here’s a *good* example of USA international influence on Wales. This September we should commemorate 100 years since the passing of Andrew Carnegie, who “donated money to build 23 libraries across Wales”. I’m glad to say flowers have been placed outside at least one library.

(September is also the anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre, but that takes us back to politics.)

And you, or rather Graham the Damner, highlighted Jeanette Ng’s words about John W Campbell too. Didn’t realise *This Here...* was going to come back so political. A parallel in the UK was the Royal Mint deciding not to issue a 50p coin which would have been seen to honour racist xenophobe Enid Blyton. Her writings have indeed required some



cleaning up, granted, but she did do an awful lot for reading, publishing, sick animals etc. Should we likewise throw say A P Herbert’s urbane and witty writings including the classic “Misleading Cases” into the dustbin because he also wrote a few 1930 “Negro Commercial” lyrics clearly offensive now? After all, Napoleon and Julius Caesar are still regarded as great men, despite killing thousands upon thousands to further their political careers, or is killing people more acceptable than being a contrarian editor whose magazine published an sf story about a multiracial space crew with a *black doctor* as early as 1941?

[[Dunno about “coming back political” as such, but I take your point. Given that part of the reason for resurrecting the title was to give me a venue for discussion of the FAAn awards, and knowing that I’ve no aversion to stirring it up a bit, then yeah, maybe “series 3” is going that direction. Then again, we might just end up arguing about (a) round and/or oval ball games in their various forms and (b) Nicky Thomas’ contribution to Jamaican music...]]

Gone on longer than I meant to, but you do work hard at stirring things up. I shall try to be more restrained next time.

From: robertlichtman@yahoo.com

September 10

Robert Lichtman writes:

You got my attention (as you no doubt suspected you would, but also a test of is-Robert-reading-this) in *This Here...* #20 with “I also idly wonder what the reaction might have been to suggesting that Robert Lichtman should be excluded

from future consideration for the Harry Warner, Jr. award, since he's had so many of them, a point I also made last year in discussion." Further on, you and Lloyd quantify how many. It's up to others whether or not repeatedly leading the vote *should* qualify me for exclusion, but I don't intend to withdraw – not least because it's a competitive field and the lead position seems to have been largely taken over by Paul Skelton. I think that having people excluded by consensus or withdrawing of their own accord skews the polling in any category to someone who isn't the-person-you-can't-vote-for – nothing wrong with that, though.

[[Obviously I was trying to tease a response from you, O Mighty Rob^t, and it's always, or at least often, been my contention that loc-whoring is generally successful when shamelessly creating egoscan results. My point in mentioning your multiple award wins was to draw the comparison that you had not had thoughts about withdrawing from contention (and, as you confirm here, were never likely to). I also agree that there's more competition in some categories than there is in others. This is where The Incomplete Register helped, I think, in providing a summary of contributions in the various categories for the calendar year under consideration (and undoubtedly resulted in the recognition of the late Milt Stevens with whom you shared the award). Given my belief that the incumbent Corflu chair(s) are the final authority on how the FAAns will be administered, it's a fair question to ask during the bid process (such as it is) what their policy might be, and whether they intend to take up the publication of TIR, which I offered to hand over to Curt Phillips partially compiled already for 2018. Curt declined on the basis of not having enough time for the task (fair enough), but ridiculously suggested that I should continue to pub that ish as a "loyal opposition", as he put it. Given that TIR was effectively an instrument of FAAn award policy, and as such a quasi-official Corflu publication, it's quite bonkers that it could continue with its previous structure which would be at odds with the current administration. How much at odds, I didn't know at that time.

Thus, unless John Purcell decides to generate some kind of "eligibility" listing (and I've never really been in favor of that "e-word" any more than Hooper has due to its negative connotations), voters in 2020 will be back to relying on memory, general impressions, a browse of efanazines or a study of Guy Lillian's The Zine Dump, a useful but occasionally error-prone ish...]]

Back in #16 you wrote, "Sure, Lichtman, print this out and fold it over and mail it to yourself. It'll be just like the old days." I've reached some sort of maximum capacity with printed fanzines, actually, and are more inclined to read them on screen. This does lead to more skimming than when a piece of paper is up in my face, but it also makes it easier to copy/paste when there's something on which I can

muster up a word. Increasingly, I'm more of an old-fan-and-tired and I confess to not having kept up with your breakneck publishing pace.

[[It was a quirky thing to include the "return address" box at the start of This Here... series 3, a little bit of nostalgia, if you will, for the days when I rather enjoyed the process of prepping the copies for mailing out. I did conceive of the possibility that this series would continue to have a print run, which I would have rather liked to do, but the usual constraints of time and money put the kibosh on that. The address box is now gone, but its initial presence was to signal the intent (specifically stated to you) that it's meant to be printed...]]

That alternate reality known as Real Life has been grabbing more of my attention this year, so my actual writing of LoCs has been minimal. Not that this has been much of a factor in my past wins in the letterhack category, though. I blame the Langford Effect.

From: grahamcjames@icloud.com

September 11

Graham James writes:

"Whoosh". This Here #20 arrives in the virtual mail box. We digest.

"Ah, you play chess.?" he said, carefully avoiding any reference in the more obvious loccable content which includes temperature, monsoons and the ability to strike friendships with political opposites. I'll also skip learned treatises in this issue relating to Corflu voting categories due largely to my inability to get too excited by a few old geysers raising their hands in support of the venerable institution of fanzine publishing which appears to be in a state of terminal decline. Best Con-rep in a Facebook posting might be a possibility although Mike Meara winning another gong based on endless puns may be a deterrent to such a category. This is not to say of course that Awards are not fun and certainly not to be sniffed at. I must confess to a warm fuzzy feeling when a cover from my own Rubber Crab was given a shout, especially since its artist was Graham West. Yes, that West.

[[I had to go look back at #20, honestly not recalling having mentioned chess, but yerpt, there it is. Me, Pat and our friend and neighbor Mel "Crabbo" Brennan (a waterman) spent many a happy night with beers, oyster shooters and the chessboard, playing winner stays on and more often than not talking politics, the latter of which would cause Dee Ann to leave the room, not because of anyone's particular opinions, it was just that she detested politics talk in general.

The perception of a “terminal decline” of fanzine publishing has been going on since at least the early-mid 80s when I pubbed my first ish. Coincidence? Yeah, I suppose all the cool kids (and ageing trendies) are blogging and tweeting, but even some of them are bright enough to realize all that is just ephemera, here today, and gone in 60 seconds. They’ll come around to the idea of leaving an actual record at some point...]]

Still we now have Pete Lyon’s cover for Simon Ounsley’s Peculiar Shop book winning a Best Cover award in the wider world of the interweb. Since one could vote, not just once, but every day and such a practice was duly promoted by said author every day on FB, I fail to see the egoboo. Still Everybody’s doing it, so why shouldn’t I? I will of course relate this view directly to said author and long time pal, Simon, when I see him this week for a light lunch and a mutual exchange of our respective maladies. Now ... there’s a thought ... How about a whole new series of awards categories specifically aimed at the ageing fan population?

Fan with the most aggressive and lethal disease

Best description of failing faculties

Best photo depicting terminal illness

The possibilities are engaging albeit finite. Largest waistline anyone?

Anyway, back to Chess. Chess, I like. And in umpteen conversations with your esteemed editor, I had not learned that he could play, let alone had an interest. A match beckons. Somehow, somewhere. I haven’t played competitively (subtle clue) in many years but I do still browse Chess puzzles in newspapers and follow the odd Chess Congress, especially when Carlsen is playing. Sicilian anyone?

[[It’d almost certainly be a walkover, Jamesy, especially given your sly hint up there. I do know how to play, though my abilities are rudimentary. We had a chess club at grammar school, membership of which, when we were in sixth form, was a legit out from games. Nobody checked in on us much, most of the teachers being out reffing or umpiring, so we’d set up a couple of boards as if there was a game in progress, put one lad on watch and spend the afternoon playing brag or poker. A not chess-related scheme we also had, clever little arseholes that we were, was figuring out that if you were in the school choir for the Founders’ Day afternoon services at St. Mary’s, you got to assemble directly at the church rather than have to be back at the school buildings for eagle-eyed scrutiny and the crocodile walk. This meant we could spend a couple of hours up the pub before reeling unsteadily to the annual veneration. We thought we’d got rumbled when one of the masters was also in the pub we favored, but since he wasn’t supposed to be there either, and we chipped in to buy him a pint, all was well...]]

I move on towards music, especially when there’s a reference to Ska. There may well be only 2 fans who have ever staggered across the wastelands of this lonely planet who admire, indeed understand Ska more than ye editor and my good self. Of course there’s many who groove to Reggae, Roy Hessinger, Frank Lunney, to name but two who know their drum and basslines. A Skatalites playlist sounds very cool although I still prefer to purchase my music, albeit in digital format and make my own playlists. The Skatalites do of course figure prominently in my Ska/Reggae lists and I saw the band live, albeit in their later years when I believe there was but one surviving original member. And, Nicky Thomas? Hey, I had, maybe still have, a poster of his single, Love of The Common People, which was *the* song of my first true love. Not that we were particularly common, albeit we were solidly working class.

[[I’d have thought that the “true love” tune from the oeuvre would be Max Romeo’s ‘Wet Dream’ <ahem>...]]

So, if I ever do make a Corflu, I would like to suggest a fannish Chess tournament. Any more fans of this venerable game? It wouldn’t need to be exclusive, rather it could be made very egalitarian with seasoned players competing equally with novices. Two teams only. Each person in a team makes one move in succession, a bit like a relay race or tag wrestling.

There could even be an award for the winning team although I wouldn’t favour an awards category for ‘best move’ - far too likely to be controversial.

[[Games and desperate entertainment are often a feature of Corflu consuites - Ken Forman’s setup of a slot car track for Corflu 31 (Cor31u) in Richmond being an excellent example. We did announce a “tournament”, but I honestly can’t remember if anything came of it. We never announced a winner, if there was one. TFL Rich Coad may have been involved, when not cadging cigarettes, but didn’t mention it in his conrep (in Join Together #4). Any kind of semi-organized contest, especially at a Corflu, immediately suggests the “herding cats” comparison, but then again there’s no reason why a couple of boards couldn’t be set up and challenges issued. Ad hoc is often what we do best...]]

From: penneys@bell.net

October 1

Lloyd Penney writes:

Corflu is anarchical enough to not have set rules about how things should be done, and each chairman who wants to run it can do as he sees fit. I guess Mike Dobson experimented, we see the results, and the next chairman can continue to tweak or untweak. Let’s see what John Purcell and Pablo Vasquez can do, or will do, or what they won’t do. As

always, I am interested in what the final product will be, and who wins the certificates.

I hear something sometimes about the Toronto Wolfpack winning almost all their games for this season, and they are on to a Grand Championship, but I haven't heard more. When the fuss is about the Raptors winning in basketball, and the Leafs getting their season ready to go, lesser leagues get forgotten.

My loc... The SF enthusiasts who don't call themselves fans...well, I don't think they call themselves anything like we might, but all they do is hang out, say hello on the odd occasion when we're about, and enjoy a convention or a movie or similar event. I would call them fans, but they choose not to. Up to them, I suppose.

Pure bollocks yourself. The [FAAn] awards have not been mine to change, and any suggestions I have made in the past have been put down or ignored.

[[You know what, let me apologize for being a bit harsh with you in that loccol, since here you have the important codicil of having made suggestions in the past which have been demeaned and/or disregarded, and that, Lloyd immediately calls to mind correspondence in a previous series of this here fine fanzine wherein you revealed that you'd been denigrated as not being "the right sort of person" to run for TAFF back then. It's therefore no surprise that suggestions you've made regarding the FAAns would have been treated equally dismissively, and thus you'd be rather weary (and wary) about offering what the fine mind of Lucy Van Pelt used to call "opinionation".

Evidently there's something about you which annoys the self-appointed "Guardians of Twue"...]]

Re America the Damned...looks like Trump is finally getting his comeuppance, as the impeachment procedures have started, and some Rethuglicans are abandoning the sinking ship. Keep the popcorn hot, this fall is going to be interesting to watch. Just remember, Donnie, you've only got two feet to shoot at.

Of course, we have our own election circus going on. Justin Trudeau caught in blackface in a picture taken nearly 20 years ago, but many are forgiving, seeing Trudeau also had some time as a teacher and actor. Meanwhile, opposition leader Andrew Scheer is being laughed at for lying about being an insurance agent before his public life (?!), and his math in his platform has been described as lies. We will vote, but will do so it as soon as the advance polls open. We've got a pubnight on election evening.

Shi'ite Baptists, says David Redd? The term I keep seeing to describe the holier than thou types trying to control what happens in everyday life is Christian Taliban. Either suits.

[[“Shi'ite Baptists” was the late, great Molly Ivins’ construction. “Christian Taliban” is a later arrival. I think of some of these loons as “the Ambassadors for Gilead”...]]

Every so often, we sit down with the whole run of *Babylon 5*, and remind ourselves of this great series, and the amazing story told within. We haven't done it in a few years, and I think we are overdue.

WAHF

See above

INDULGE ME

✓ Watching some TV with Jen the other night, we came up with a list of actors who are guaranteed to enhance just about anything they appear in: J.K. Simmons, Patton Oswalt, Margo Martindale, CCH Pounder and Saul Rubinek.

✓ Further thought from me a day or three later adds Mads Mikkelsen, David Morse and (because we apparently like initials) BD Wong to that list...

✓ Been a while since we had a movie night, but Jen clocked that 'Mission Impossible: Fallout' was up, so we had a look. Retro in many ways, referencing not only classic MI moments from the original show, but also the soundtrack. I agree with Jen's dismissal of Henry Cavill as a "one-note actor" - weakest bit of the whole movie...

✓ Ageless beauty, **Louise Jameson...**



MIRANDA

THIS HERE... is (mostly) written, edited and produced by: **Nic Farey**, published on efanzines.com by the Grace of Burns.

Locs & that to: 2657 Rungsted Street, Las Vegas NV 89142, or
Email fareynic@gmail.com

Art credits this issue: **Jeff Bartels** (p8); **J L Farey** (p3)

**"I hope them cigarettes are gonna make you cough.
I hope you hear this song and it pissed you off."**