

# This Here...

“...saying what most people will find obvious anyway.” (R Jackson)

## EGOTORIAL

### TIME DILATION DELUSION

The Sainted **M Strummer** (locs) says it felt like a mere seventeen minutes had elapsed between issues #28 and #29 of this fishwrap - admitting that it was, apparently, 23 days that *felt* like 17 minutes. I can empathize. Everyone's perception of time (and possibly also space and/or Stephen Baxter) is all over the place, summed up by **Jennifer L Farey** remarking on FBF “What time is it? What day is it? Where is the dog?”.

This was yesterday, after fairly cream-crackered me had adjourned to kip the previous evening before 7:30pm, waking around 4:30am (a lie-in!), noodling about with a few beers and a bit of fanac (locking *The Zine Dump* - inevitably about **Guy Lillian's** (rather good, if typically inaccurate in spots) FAAn award editorial piece, compiling an update of the *BEAM 16* loccol for **Ulrika's** perusal), having a bit of toast (with Marmite and peanut butter, as divisive a combination as you'll find) and, since the nosebag inevitably makes me sleepy, back down for a nap about 9am, not to arise again until 2 in the afternoon. That amounted to about 14 hours sleep out of the previous 19, which just seems fuckin' ridiculous.

I tend to be more productive at the hobby when I'm on a schedule, and the last three weeks of being back at work have certainly been that, but fatiguing, something always exacerbated by the hotter weather. Vegas began its official re-open on June 4th, and Lucky Cab has called back most of our drivers to regular work hours starting on the 5th, which for me amounts to being back on a five-day week starting Sunday the 7th. The early recall for a few of us gave complete flexibility on days and hours, as long as we worked 40, so I opted for four tens, Monday-Thursday, 5:30am - 3:30pm. My regular shift hours are Sunday-

Thursday 3-3, but we've been given a few options there. According to the Cab Manager, as long as we work (at least 8 hours on the shift, we're good, and also we can start up to 2 hours later, so I'm taking advantage of that by planning to start by 5 and working 8 or 10, depending on how busy or not the day is. That means bedtime will be 7pm instead of 8 (not too onerous a change), alarm set for 3am.

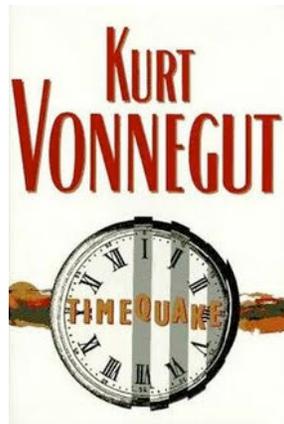
I woke up this morning (4:30am again) irrationally seized by the idea that I could get thish out today, even though it'll be absent **Dave Hodson's** 'Footy' column - given that the Premier League is back in a semblance of action on the 20th, that does give the lad a fair minute to get his loins properly girded, an image for the readers perhaps right up there with the acquisition and display of the **Noel Collyer** tattoo...

For the mathematical **Mark**, this is 20 days since #29, or possibly a mere 12 minutes as calculated on the Civil Service abacus.

The Fifth Saturday Zoom went quite well, I thought, whether despite or due to the preponderance of Brit readers of *This Here...* (I'm having a larf, it was definitely “due to”). If I mention names I'll probably forget someone or someones, but I'll single out **Uncle Johnny Nielsen Hall** just because it'll get a weary rise out of him and he mentioned our little bash in

reasonably favorable terms in *Vita Transplantare*, a title likely to easily surpass *This Here...* (and come close to *The Drink Tank*) in number of issues in approx seven weeks.

I did have a whole commentary column planned on the current situations and news from both these shores and Borisville, but with the time constraint I've put on myself for thish it's not going to happen. I'm rather relieved to the extent that the further I got into it, the more angry and/or depressing it got, and the daily headlines over here have chucked “just when you think he can't get any worse” as far down in the bin as it will go. There's plenty of people well cudgelled-up on the topic anyway - that, and I suspect it'd



be preaching to the choir anyway, except for some minutiae of detail and approach, although that is often interesting. Maybe nextish, due in six minutes...

Here's a lovely thing, though: my first ride Thursday was a slightly scruffy-looking middle-aged lady in from Austin, TX with her middle son (sorry for the description, lady!). I'm directed to go first to the Planet 13 dispensary so the lad can get his ganja, then to the Denny's on the strip across from New York New York so they can have a bit of scan while they wait for the hotel to open at 11am. Planet 13 turns out to be shut (it's 8:30 and they were opening at 9) so we nip over to the 24-hour Reef dispensary just down the street. Austin Lady (who is a frequent Vegas visitor and has been pleasantly and massively chatty) says "I'll step out for a cigarette while we're waiting", "And so will I!". We continue to chit-chat, and smokes done we get back in the cab. "How much will the fare be?", she asks. "Well", sez I, "Depends how long he's in there, probably about \$35" (spot-on, as it turned out). As I'm relating this she hands me \$100 in 20s - "This is for you. I do really appreciate you guys." I've barely got out stunned thanks before she hands me *another* \$100, "And this is to pay it forward." You can guess that I'm wide-eyed and gibbering now, as she forks over \$60 more, "And *this* will cover the fare."

Ride of a lifetime...

It's all good.

Nic Farey, June 6 2020

## RADIO WINSTON

### SHITS & BITS

Because of outbreaks of insanity (ie getting the ish done today), planned columns (The Ethiopians -v- the Melodians and possibly also -v- The Pioneers; The Kursaal Flyers; Link Wray; **Andy Hooper** on Rocksteady) are held over (polite way to say unwritten) and, absent the "break glass in case of complete lack of inspiration" use of the shameless filler column, this RW will be more what you'd expect to see as 'Indulge Me' items...

- Bowie's second most-covered song is, apparently 'Heroes'. (I was only really familiar with Motörhead's version, which I adore.) The first is 'Rebel Rebel'.
- RIP Steve Priest, arguably the member of Sweet with the most personality and



L-R : Susanne Freytag, Claudia Brücken, 2018

who gave every indication of enjoying himself immensely in a thoroughly unserious way. Not generally mentioned for his musicianship, and let's face it of the glam-era bands no-one could hold a candle to Jim Lea of Slade (unless you include Overend Watts from Mott the Hoople in "glam"), but to me Priest was the focus of the group more than frontman Brian Connolly...

- All right, I'll mention my premise for a combined piece on The Pioneers, The Ethiopians and The Melodians, who were 1960s contemporaries during a time when vocal trios were particularly popular in Jamaica. Each took a bit of a different approach, with the Pioneers going for the patois full-on, the Ethiopians a little less so and the Melodians being at the more poppy generic end of things. There may be graphs...
- I'm still only on disc 1 of the approx 17 billion 80s albums cut to DVD and sent by **Chuck Connor**. Most of it is very listenable, nothing so far that's actually horrible. There's a 1986 set, 'White Noise' by an Australian band called Avion which I liked very much indeed...
- Just having got into the B's (alphabetically), conversely now playing 1981's 'Music for Teenage Sex' by Baby Buddha which is pretty rubbish...
- The last Squeeze album I listened to in its entirety was 'East Side Story' (1981). That seems a sad omission. They were due to play a tour gig at the Paris, which I wouldn't have minded having at - at least they're still Difford & Tilbrook i/c...
- If there's one little set that cleanses my ear'oles and restores my fighting spirit it would be the 'Do Well' maxi-cassette single (20 minutes!) from Propaganda. It's a compilation of the versions of 'Duel/Jewel' from their 'A Secret Wish' set and should be played *very* loud indeed. The summit of their achievements, perhaps, and still done in concert by original vocalists Claudia Brücken and Susanne Freytag (touring as "D:uel"). The original lineup fragmented in the late 80s, in part because their contract with Trevor Horn's ZTT records had them making records forever without getting a fuckin' penny, and Paul Morley's malevolent influence on Claudia (as I interpreted it, anyway - **Kev McVeigh** might have an opinion, I've a vague memory that he's pontificated on Morley previously). Because **Leigh Edmonds** likes links, here's 'Do Well', which might drive him mad(der)...  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kifwPDFgkt0>

# A FAAN, A PLAAN

## A STUDY IN INCOMPLEATNESS

Having now settled the broad question of whether genzine and perzine awards will be given separately (they will indeed), I'd now like to go into more detail about what we expect the 2021 ballot to look like (as millions flee in terror), subject to any final tweaks.

First, let me explain why *The Incompleat Register* is going to look a little different to its previous incarnation. *TIR* won't be a vehicle for award-related discussion this time, since all that is happening here (and more frequently). My plan is to produce the "annual" listing, ballot form and instructions at the beginning of January and a "results" issue which will be available for distribution at Corflu Concorde immediately after the awards are handed out., as was done for Corflu 35.

The big difference you're going to see is that the individual categories (Fanwriter, Fanartist, Harry Warner awards) will **not** list citations for appearance or any quantitative metric. It follows, therefore, that votes for anyone not listed **won't** be asked to provide any such citation. This request had created a (very) little confusion and consternation previously, and although I only had to ask for a number countable on the fingers of less than one hand it seems simpler and more sensible to consider that all votes are submitted in good faith, even if they might reflexively appear questionable. For example, a vote for Bill Rotsler as Best Fanartist would be considered dodgy on its face, but for all I know there may have been a previously unpublished cartoon of his (as unlikely as that may seem) in a 2020 zine which would be qualifying. Additionally, an extensive list of citations can be perceived as attributing extra weight to simple quantity of work, which, while not an insignificant consideration for voting is not the only one. I am minded here of a previous Nova award for Fanwriter which was apparently voted for on the basis of a single obviously excellent article.

There will be eight categories in which awards will be given, as follows:

**FANZINE CATEGORIES:** Best Genzine, Best Perzine, Best Special Publication. My belief is that any given zine should be considered in (only) one category, to do otherwise is unfair to faneds. My personal definition of the separation of genzine and perzine is based on the 80/20 principle. I'm saying that a genzine will have 80% or so of its content provided by multiple contributors other than the editor(s) whereas with a perzine the reverse would be observable. This metric excludes the loccol. Despite that perhaps nebulous separation, faneds' self-definition of the category in which they prefer their publication to be represented will override any opinion of mine. It's my belief that any zine, whichever perceived "subcategory" it might belong to (listzine, newszine, clubzine, APAzine etc..) should fit into

one or the other category. 'Special Publication' can be usefully if simplistically defined as an ish clearly *not* part of a (numbered?) and ongoing publication, typically a one-off such as a TAFF trip report or anthology. It is arguable that *Science Fiction Commentary #100* was a particular commemorative and therefore would have qualified as both 'Special Publication' and genzine and thus could legitimately have been voted upon in both categories. Don't do that again, **Bruce!** In the case of a Fanthology, I'd remind voters that reprint material does not qualify for an individual award, although editorials and introductions written especially for those pieces would.

**INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES:** Fanwriter, Fanartist, Harry Warner Jr Letterhack award. These are straightforward, but I should mention that 'Fanartist' can encompass photography and Photoshop manipulation as well as what we might consider "traditional" fanart.

**OTHER CATEGORIES:** Best Fanzine Cover, Best Website. I did have an internal debate as to whether 'Best Fanzine Cover' should be considered an individual award or not, but I'm cognizant that photography (for example) and design are also considerations here - the award is *not* named 'Best Individual Artwork', even though that's an impression that could be taken. 'Best Website' is a whole other sack of ferrets. Having previously advocated the wishy-washy 'Online Activity' as an attempt to broaden the reach (in no small part inspired by **Bill Burns'** oft-stated wish that websites other than efanzines should be considered), I now believe that, if we're going to continue this category, 'Best Website' is what it needs to be. That is, *something* that has a specific URL and is ideally different from a given fanzine that it may in whole or in part represent. I analyze this with three examples on a scale of how different they are from being what I've defined as a "fanzine" for award purposes. *Lulzine* (edited by **John Coxon** and **Espana Sheriff**) is a zine disseminated by website, that website containing little or o that isn't its actual ishes. I'd thus consider this as belonging in the genzine category, although if someone wanted to vote *Lulzine* as a website, there's no doubt that's legit. What I wouldn't want to see in their case is people voting for one or the other. If you like the zine, vote for it as a zine, and if you like the website, likewise - even though they're basically equivalent, it's rather unfair to categorize as one or the other, and one does not preclude the other. *Journey Planet's* website (**James Bacon**, **Chris Garcia** and a cast of thousands) has a bit more in it than just the ishes, linking to blogs and such, so again, a vote for the zine shouldn't preclude a vote for the website, as they are demonstrably different things. The clearest distinction is between **Dave Langford's** *Ansible* website and zine. The zine itself is but a small component of the website which has much more content and many links to a host of other stuff. Once again, voters should consider whether they're voting for *Ansible* the fanzine or *Ansible* the website (or both) and fill out their ballots accordingly. Requesting a

specific URL in this category will, I hope, sort out previous problems.

The **ballot form** itself is going to have four slots in each category, *mostly* unranked. What we (for values of “we” amounting to me and **Rob Jackson**) plan to do is to give voters’ first choice a “bonus point” toward their total, so the distribution of ‘boo quantifies as 2/1/1/1. This is a bit of a compromise between voters who may like to sequence their choices and others who would rather not have to sweat over a full ranking of their selections. Given that ballots are not required to be completed in full, this gives voters the added option of voting only slots 2, 3, and 4 for equal distribution of joy, although admittedly they would have one less voting slot available by doing this. Frankly, I don’t see too many people taking that option, since there’s usually an easier choice for top dog than there might be having to rank all choices.

Nextish (as more millions flee) I’ll discuss possibilities for the **#1 Fan Face** award, and suggestions for voter considerations.

## LOCO CITATO

From: robjackson60@gmail.com

May 17

**Rob Jackson** writes:

Huge thanks, as ever! I definitely want to Zoom into your house party on the fifth Saturday, and am happy to be a guinea-pig if you do indeed have a trial run before then. As I don’t do the dreaded FB-whatever-the-F-stands-for, I look forward to being sent the link. I have had a certain amount of work-related experience with Zoom, so am not a complete newbie at it.

FAAn categories – the discussion has been very sensible, including from yourself. We haven’t quite settled the hash of whether to stay with the really simple one-vote-one-point plan, or to move to a 2/1/1/1 tallying system, but whatever we go for, it seems people don’t want it too complicated.

*[[Now settled, at least between us, unless we get universally excoriated in nextish’s loccol...]]*

Both the Dobson multiplicity, and the Purcell whatchamacallit category, left people with their heads in a bit of a tizz, so they are definitely worth abandoning if we want people not to be put off by unnecessary complexity. Needless to say, the more votes the merrier. All of

which is, I think just saying what most people will find obvious anyway.

But – sticking with FAAn Award voting, but jumping forward to **Paul Skelton**’s loc – I beg to differ with him on his suggestion which implies there should only be one person or zine worth voting for in any one category. I’d be happy with “Vote for up to four choices, any of whom you think are good enough to receive the award.” I’m with you in your comments about “Best Website” requiring content other than just an online fanzine to be classed separately as a website. Ansible, now, that **does** have stuff other than the monthly zine. Lots and lots of it.

*[[I don’t personally agree with Skel’s approach either, but if that’s how he wants to do his ballot then fair enough. The fact is that, going back years, very few voters have submitted a fully completed ballot, whether not filling out all the available slots or indeed not voting at all in some categories...]]*

If **Ulrika** wants to be let into The Bar she’d definitely get a Yes from this quarter! ITB is a bit quiet in a stop-start kind of way just now, but every now and then the embers splutter to life. New entrants are generally greeted with a blaze of activity (he says, maintaining the metaphor).

Re CBD and curcumin capsules: though the focus may be on whether the CBD has a therapeutic effect, don’t ignore the curcumin part of that partnership. The stuff is utterly brilliant at reducing vulnerability to arthritic-type inflammation. Generally, I keep my knee pain at bay with Coral’s patent mix of turmeric, black pepper and yogurt. The black pepper has an ingredient which makes the turmeric/curcumin more active, and the yogurt is required as a fat-soluble diluent to help it be absorbed. She knows all this stuff as she reads *New Scientist* a lot.

But when I went to Dublin for the Worldcon last August, I had to walk miles and miles most days as my hotel was a serious hike from the convention centre, and even the trams towards the CCD were a bit of a walk from the hotel. My knees started, unsurprisingly, to hurt. So I went to a chemist and bought some Solgar curcumin capsules which claimed good bioavailability, and though they were expensive they were absolutely excellent. The next day I did a record 23,000 steps according to my watch, and my knees didn’t hurt a bit. I now use the capsules as well as Coral’s mix. There. That should have been an extra Serendipity section in my Dublin trip report in *Inca* 17.



*[[I'm continuing to experience positive results with the stuff meself, though still more like 23 steps without pains than a croggling 23,000. I'm trying to walk up and down a bit while marooned on the cab stands, but not overdoing it...]]*

Glad you can get COVID tests on a drive-thru basis over there just by asking. Over here they are still like gold-dust and guarded very jealously, even though the Govt is crowing about ramping up the number of tests. In any case, when the mooted reliable antibody test becomes generally available, that will be much more important – you need to know whether you have already been exposed to it. Then you can worry a bit less.

But that's enough about the Plague. The focus should be on having fun if possible despite everything.

*[[We're very lucky compared to most other jurisdictions in having those tests available more or less on demand (although an appointment is required). University Medical Center (UMC) has done a fuckin-A job with this...]]*

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From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

May 18

**Leigh Edmonds** writes:

Thanks for *This Here ... 29* but you've gone and done it again. Stuff on your front page that goes without any explanation. I mean, I can look up Google to find the explanation to some esoteric phrase you use but not to find out who all those remarkably photogenic and cheerful people are. Names, give us their names! Please. Or did you make a montage of photos of good looking people and paste them on a piece of black cardboard, which is what it looks like.

*[[Once in a while I feel the need to include something immediately recognizable to the USian readers, in this case the cast of Saturday Night Live doing a Zoom skit (remarked upon by 'Killer' Kaufman). Your comment led me to an aside (cul-de-sac?) of thought, something which has been remarked upon by others, on whether This Here... is more a "British" zine despite emanating from Las Vegas. It's certainly the case that I play up to, indeed perhaps revel in my "Englishness" in here, but then again I wouldn't call it an "act" in the sense that I'm not really pretending to be something I'm not. That's enough Psych 101, innit? It's certainly observable that there's a lot of response from the UK, plus yerself from Antipodean parts, so arguably this is a "non-American" zine then? Do not confuse with "UnAmerican" (since I highly value my American friends) despite my oft-stated fond wish for the collapse of ultra-capitalism...]]*

Like many places in the western world governments seem to be lifting their restrictions on the populace to help slow the spread of the plague. I usually check to see what the count is

in Ballarat and it's gone up by one to 11, probably the result of intensive testing these past couple of weeks. (Curiosity led me to the ABC's (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) website about the plague that must have been put together by mathematics geniuses because it has some of the table there in logarithmic scale. (About the only thing I remember from years of struggling with maths at school.) You guys in the UK and the US are certainly doing a good job of exterminating some of your population. Not as good as in 1919-20, but you're giving it a good nudge.) Sorry about the diversion, what I was going to say is that stay-at-home restrictions have been reduced a bit here too but, being one of the 'at risk' population, all that means is that Valma and I have to stay out of the way for another few weeks while the young and reckless bring on the second wave of this thing and get it over and done with.

There seems to be as many opinions on whether or not to wear masks as there are people to wear them. I take your point that they are worn to protect other people, not the wearer, but that fine distinction seems to be lost on at least half the population. I don't happen to have that kind of mask so I gave some vague thought to wearing the respirator mask I wear when airbrushing models with lacquer paints. It's big and black with two big yellow cylinders stuck on the front. I've never seen myself in it so I don't know what the general reaction would be, not anyhow until I saw somebody wandering around the local supermarket in something similar and attracting a great deal of public amazement. Not for me, I think.

*[[I'd pay a dollar to see that...]]*

Have I developed something of a reputation with my comments on 'Radio Winston'? I'd like to think that my views are better than yours because ... well, I couldn't think of a good reason when I put my mind to it. What I wanted to say is that I had actually heard of Lee Konitz and may well have heard some of his playing, but that would have been many years since. Once again your hypertext link proved useful because it took me right to some of his playing which, I assume, you think is pretty good. Okay, I'll give you that the guy had technique in spades, but what his playing reminded me of was the state of 'classical' music in the same time period when the Second Viennese School, Boulez and all those other guys still had their grip on western art music and before modern composers discovered tonality again. Listening to this reminded me that I still have a couple of albums that **John Foyster** loaned me back in the 1960s, or was it the 1970s, of Charlie Parker and Be Bop, which didn't take for me (along with a couple of Jefferson Starship records that I found equally unimpressive). Okay, I listened to what you suggested, and then a couple of other things that You Tube suggested and it's all quite similar and bemusing. I admit it, this music is too sophisticated for me.

After twenty or so minutes of this stuff I decided my ears needed some more gentle treatment and just typed 'K488' into the search engine. Blessed relief, an enrapturing performance by Maruizio Pollini who played the slow movement so slowly that time seemed to disappear into the silence between the notes. Somehow You Tube has suddenly decided that I like Mozart piano concertos and that's all it's been playing me for the past hour. Not that I'm complaining.

*[[There's no such thing as an objectively "better" view when it comes to appreciation of any of the arts. There are views that may be better informed, or better expressed, but to each their own, as it should be. I was chatting with Harry Bell on Messenger (as we occasionally do) and happened to mention Lee Konitz as the subject of that column, and the Great Aitch came back with that memory which amused me greatly, and so I asked if I could quote him, hence his presence in 'Radio Winston', and the softball opportunity to tease you, of course...]]*

I might agree with your point (in the letter column) about the influence of bands like The Beatles and the Sex Pistols. I still recall the first time I heard 'Please Please Me', their first release in Australia, the single not the LP, which was like a bolt of lightning after the dross that was being played as popular music. Similarly, popular music had fallen into a state of decrepitude again and I recall the first time I heard 'Anarchy in the UK', which had a similar electrifying effect on my brain. Talking about my brain, your comment on my letter about Airfix kits and the effect of good old Humbrol Tube Glue on one's brain reminded me of the good old days. These days Tamiya Extra Thin has a similar smell but the side effects are, sadly, negligible. Not that I'm admitting anything, but there might be a reason why model makers of the older generation have a distant and unfocussed look in their eyes at the best of times.

I'm wondering if you couldn't solve some of the problems of what categories to put fanzines into by doing what the Hugos do for fiction and separating them simply by size. You could have three categories; 'little fanzines', 'middle sized fanzines' and 'big fat fanzines. Simple, everyone could understand that rather than a lengthy discussion about the difference between a perzine and a genzine. Just a suggestion. I make it because all this detailed discussion of categories, well, I'm starting to blank out the way I used to in maths classes at school.

*[[That is an interesting idea which future awards might consider, although contrary to your "simple" claim, I'd foresee a fuck of a lot of argument over where the lines would be drawn. The extreme ends of the scale would be clear enough, but what would be the page count range for the "middle"? Most fanzines don't have a consistent page count, so how do you end up classifying a "little fanzine" which may have an ish or more stray into the "middle" size,*

*or a "middle" which might have a given ish cross the line into "BFF"? Not as simple as you make out, is it?...]]*

I passed over the 'Footy' section this time. I hear that the AFL is going to start playing again in four or so weeks time which will, no doubt, lead to more crushing defeats for the Melbourne Football Club. I don't think I'm ready for that kind of mental anguish yet. You're right, of course, there's always something to talk about when it comes to footy and the beginning of the Bundesliga has become world wide news if it is being discussed widely in Australia. Of course, there is also all the speculation about the crazy steps being taken to get AFL and Rugby League going here again, which is filling up hours of air time to the general diversion of the populace.

Your long explanation to **Ulrika** about why you didn't include explanations of those two terms in your previous editorial was a disappointment and an explanation of the obvious. A joke that needs an explanation isn't terribly funny and I thought you carried off the joke rather nicely and cleverly then, but this spoils it a bit.

*[[Yet in your first paragraph you complain about lack of explanation. How many ways do you want it?...]]*

I'm not usually somebody who remembers my dreams, weird of otherwise, but I had one recently that does remain, and I'm moved to mention it on reading **John Purcell's** letter. Not that my dream has anything to do with his letter. The dream went that, for some unexplained reason, Valma and I had to make an urgent visit to the United States. When we arrived we went and stayed in the home of a well known fan in the mid-west, and for some reason John comes to mind here but you'll have to tell me whether Texas is considered the mid-west or not. Anyhow, if it was John and Valerie's place they live in a magnificent mansion. We were settling in, being made to feel right at home and having a good time that involved, as I recall, glasses of brownish beverage. All is going along very nicely when suddenly the thought came to mind, 'Oh my god, we forgot the cats' and I imagines little Tristan and Isolde sitting all alone in our place here. I was so startled that I woke up which was, frankly, a disappointment because we were having such a fine time.

*[[I can succinctly observe that "mid-west" and "mansion" are about as wrong as it gets...]]*

**John** asks how it is that **Bruce Gillespie** keeps on turning out issue after issue of *SF Commentary*. I can give you the good oil on this because I've asked him. The answer is because Bruce hasn't found anything else that he likes doing better than he's good at. I wouldn't mind having that kind of single minded dedication as well.

*[[Bruce is one of those people it's impossible not to admire for his longevity and consistency of fanac. I'm a little sad that it's much of a given that he and I will never meet - I'm notably short on in-person interaction with Anzacs,*

**Damien Warman** *being the pleasurable exception that comes to mind. I'll also count the formidably amazing Lee Wood, now a resident of NZ...]]*

Your Egotorial Extra about something called the Paycheck Protection Plan sounds particularly American to me, in the capitalist way that Americans do things. Good luck with it and I guess that it's better than nothing. The Australian government's response to the same problem was quite socialistic for a conservative government with two schemes called Job Seeker and Job Keeper (who thinks up these names, are they completely devoid of imagination?). The Job Seeker payment is basically the renamed dole while the Job Keeper is something that the government pays to businesses so that they can retain their staff while this plague is going around. The government pays the business \$1,500 a fortnight for each employee on the scheme that the business then pays on to the staff member. Being an old age pensioner (and proud but annoyed about it too) I didn't think much about this until our accountant (of our little history business) rang up and suggested that we might be eligible for it too. The accountant sent us a pdf of the form and at first I thought there were pages missing because it was, unlike any other government form you've ever seen, only a page long. We await developments.

*[[Job Keeper' sounds equivalent to our PPP...]]*

And who is Nancy Kress? Oh no, I looked her up on Google and now I'm showing my ignorance of great stf writers. Doc Smith, now, I would have recognized him.

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From: [mark.fishlifter@googlemail.com](mailto:mark.fishlifter@googlemail.com)

May 18

**Mark Plummer** writes:

Firstly, thank you for thinking of us regarding your Fifth Saturday Zoom. I think some people view FBF in the same way as they viewed LiveJournal in the early years of the twentieth century, that anything posted there will come to the attention of everybody and pretty much immediately. My limited understanding of FBF is that even if you have an account and check regularly there's still a possibility that it will decide not to show you something. So yes, please do send us an invitation and we'll endeavour to drop by. I think we have a 'theatre date' in the earlier part of the evening but should be free later.

*[[You're dead right about FBF. Most users suspect the existence of a roomful of Dilberts dedicated to making finding anything you want as fuckin' awkward as possible and changing the content of the feed seemingly randomly just because they can. I had similar issues with LJ back in the day because what you really needed to do was set up sub-lists (eg fan friends, personals ect) depending on what you wanted to catch up on at the time, and if you were as*

*lazy as me about that kind of thing, well. I'm planning to email the Zoom link for Fifth Saturday as perhaps a primary notification, though it will be on FBF an'all...]]*

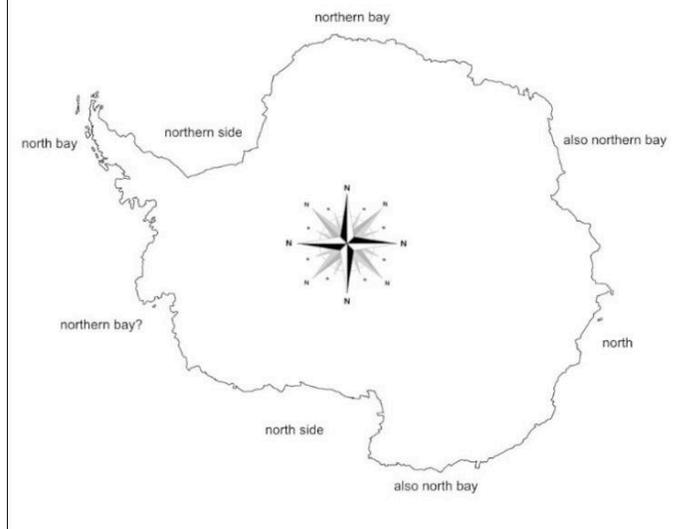
Yes, it's quite the virtual social whirl these days, and it's proving far more effective than I would ever have thought. I did assume it'd just be a bit of a novelty in the first few days, an obviously wholly inadequate substitute for the Real Deal, but instead I now wonder why it took a pandemic for us to realise this is an option for our geographically dispersed community. We haven't seen the **Pickersgills** in person for eighteen months now what with one thing and another. Just this Saturday we were on a Zoom call with them for over four hours.

I do find the smaller groups a lot more effective, but there's something to be said by the bigger meetings like the London First Thursday, I think because you're never quite sure who'll turn up. Could be somebody you'd see there anyway, or a visitor from Falmouth, Seattle, Adelaide or indeed a swearsy black box from Las Vegas. I do hope this doesn't entirely dissipate once the bars open again.

*[[I'm very much inclined to agree. As debilitating as it is to my already ragged liver, I'm personally finding it both fun and rather charming to be able to interact with friends old and new in what we might call a midway environment between email/messaging and physical proximity. It was certainly fuckin-A to see youse two...]]*

It does bode well for the idea of a virtual GUFF trip. Like **Johan**, I think it's entirely **Alison's** idea to do this and she's clearly the perfect candidate for the approach. If we were to dig through the *Plokta* back issues we'd probably find one of them wrote about it in 2002. I also think time is on her side here, whereas **Mike Lowrey** had the prospect of a trip pulled from under him at close to the last minute so I imagine he's

## Map of Antarctica's Bays



had to spend a fair bit of time disentangling a trip that could no longer happen. For some reason I've just had a flashback to something I saw at work thirty years ago, the expression on the face of a carpet-fitter as he wielded a Stanley knife on his newly-laid carpet after it became apparent that somebody had slightly mis-sequenced the carpet-fitting and underfloor-cable-installation.

You and your readers now seem to be slowing down on the FAAn debate, but I will just pick up on one thing from my letter in #28 and your comment to it. I said I "don't think it should be a requirement" that an administrator reverts to those voters who vote for ineligible things to invite them to change their otherwise wasted votes. I still do think that, while respecting that you disagree, but should perhaps have made clear that that's very much with the assumption that categories are clearly defined such that at least most reasonable people who are paying attention would come to the same conclusion about a particular work or individual eligibility.

*[[Yeah, category definition is key. It could be said that with a resource such as TIR the requirement to question voters' intent (and help them correct possible fuck-ups) ends up being minimal, and that was definitely the case in my last go at this. The FAAn debate isn't "slowing down" as such (cf this's column) because there's undoubtedly more comment on more detail to be had (as millions flee in terror). What I did was take a more piecemeal approach, intending to get the more controversial proposal of combining the genzine and perzine categories out of the way before delving into the minutiae of the rest...]]*

Clearly I should have put that in a letter to #28 were I not wrong-footed by you producing #29 a mere seventeen minutes after #28 appeared. Well, yes, I know it was really 23 days but it felt like seventeen minutes.

*[[Felt like at least 47 minutes over here, 36 of which were spent waiting for Dave Hodson's column to arrive (worth the wait, as always)...]]*

(Also on #28, I don't know who is misreading who about the Cockney annual summit but the version of the 'Miley Cyrus' story I was thinking of appeared on a website along reports that 'Government news briefings to spell words out "in case virus is listening"' and 'Government maths on all this is bollocks, says Rachel Riley off Countdown'.)

*[[Ah, ok then. We have a lot of similar issues over here with people quoting satire sites as though they're actual news and I obviously missed totally what you were punting. As a self-described sort-of-expert in Cockney rhyming slang, it's one of those topics where I inevitably (and usually smugly) parse any mention so I can 'splain how You've Got It All Wrong (paradoxically in Foghorn Leghorn's voice). See also Chuck Connor's loc...]]*

I've already expressed sympathy that you're having to go back out into the world, but I'll do it again. As you may have seen, things are easing up over here too although middle-class office workers like me seem set to stay at home for the foreseeable. Not sure whether the tattoo parlours have reopened yet so too early to start looking for who's standing up with a pained expression at UK fannish Zooms.

*[[No doubt Nolly (or is it 'Nolley'? I forget) is keeping tabs. As crap as work is it's more focusing to be back on a schedule rather than indulging in the formless farting around that was characteristic of the previous two months...]]*

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From: jakaufman@aol.com

May 18

**Jerry Kaufman** writes:

I assume you included the shot of the SNL cast in Zoom-mode because you like the show, or at least what it's done with the cast in isolation. Not all the gags or skits have worked for me, but on the whole I'd say they've done quite a good job. Another one we watch, *All Rise*, also rose to the challenge. Pretty hard for a scripted show - let's see if *McGyver* can match it. *The Blacklist* had to stop filming on their finale, both because of the pandemic and because one of their featured players, Brian Dennehy, passed away. So they animated the scenes that hadn't been shot.

*[[SNL is inevitably hit-and-miss, but their "at home" shows have been generally pretty good, I think. My fav Dennehy movie is probably 'Best Seller' (with James Woods)...]]*

I must have some albums that include Lee Konitz, as my small collection of jazz includes mostly 50s and 60s stuff by Monk, Davis, Coltrane, Dexter Gordon, and other cool jazz folks (plus earlier material). Will have to paw through the vinyl (cds are packed away in expectation of a room redo).

I know that I tried to assemble at least one airplane kit but it was probably Revell rather than Airfix. In any case, I was terrible at getting pieces to stay together - I am not good at fine hand-eye coordination tasks. I don't remember what kind of plane it was, and didn't try a second kit.

**Skel's** point about equal value to "what you think is best, second best, etc." when voting in the FAAN Awards is a valid point if that's what you think you're doing. But I guess that with the "one point per item" system, a voter wouldn't be doing that. She'd be selecting up to X number of zines or people worthy of being thought best. If there's only one she wants to recognize because it's far and away the best, no need to fill in all the empty slots on the voting form. It goes to show you that no voting system will answer all objections.

*[[Voter intention and voting method isn't zero-sum. If Skel wants to submit his ballot according to his method of preference, then that's perfectly fine, and contrary to what*

*you suggest, the voting system proposed does accommodate him. Saying "I'm going to vote with this method" is quite all right, and doesn't imply that everyone else has to follow an identical approach...]]*

I have Joe Hill's novel NOS4A2 on my Books2BeRead shelf, and missed the first season of the tv show, now only available if I pay for it. Can **Dave Cockfield** tell us what he thought of it? We did watch *Locke and Key*, and liked it quite a bit, guessing what each new key would do, and the young actors in it.

*[[To avoid a slew of outraged letters, probably worth pointing out that the novel was titled 'NOS4R2' in the UK...]]*

LULzine strikes me as somewhat different than your usual fanzine in that it's not only not available on paper but it's not even designed as though it could be printed. You have to click on each individual item. To me this is a website with articles and stories, more like the websites and blogs that are being nominated in the Best Fan Publication slot in the Hugoes than zines you and I have published.

*[[Now there, Killer, you raise a very interesting point (one I've attempted to address in this's FAAn column, but you've given me further reason for thought). If I'm correctly interpreting you here, it could be suggested that Lulzine blurs the lines between what we might consider as a 'fanzine' or a 'website'. Even though, as you correctly observe, the ishes aren't printable in the way that a pdf is, they are presented as discrete numbered volumes. To me, it's a fanzine, but in a different format than perhaps any other. We'll end up categorizing it as whatever John and Espana prefer, no doubt...]]*

I've been reading *BEAM* a little at a time - some of that, then some chapters from *Abaddon's Gate*, then a bit of television, then other things. I'm already seeing a long letter of comment in your future.

Stay well and I hope you get more than four fares on your shift.

*[[Monday: 2, Tuesday: 1, Thursday and Friday 5 each...]]*

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From: daverabban@gmail.com

May 20

**David Cockfield** writes:

That really cheered me up. You did well with my picture because it shows what I can go outside to see. Unfortunately the view from the balcony is now covered up. I have also had a disastrous time with the flat above because I had water dripping from above in the kitchen for over a week. Mainly by the kitchen sink, the windows, and then through the light fittings. Not what you would want during Lockdown. I'm praying that it has now stopped and drying out but there is

nothing I can do about repairs yet. Damaged electrics, tiles fallen from the walls and god knows what else. To say that I was feeling down is an understatement but talking to friends and getting *This Here...* has helped bring me round and back to semblance of normality.

*[[Naturally I'm well pleased that a mere ish of This Here... would give you a bit of a chirrup. I'm always willing to include pictures & that which my valued correspondents may care to share with their locs. Obviously the lake view was a bit nicer than a boarded-up phoot...]]*

**David Hodson** was great again. I have a copy of 'The World Cup, A Captain's Tale' which is wonderful and I look forward to his next instalment. Perhaps my favourite football film though was 'Eleven men Against Eleven' from 1995 that was written by Andy Hamilton..

It starred James Bolam as the hapless ex-footballing hero taxed with saving his team although his chairman, Timothy West, wants them to go bust so he can capitalise on the real estate value and avoid a tax investigation. If I remember rightly the referee and goalkeeper are bribed to ensure defeat in the last match and get upset at criticism because the opposition have been awarded something like 17 penalties and missed the goal completely with every one. It's very, very funny.

I see that Premiership footballers are due to resume training and maybe even games behind closed doors. However Watford hero Troy Deeney says that he will not go back because of the risk to his family. He lives about 75 miles away in Warwickshire.

*[[Our Troy isn't the only one. The boss, Nigel Pearson, has also expressed reservations about the suggested restart...]]*

**Harry Bell** mentioned his disappointment seeing Lee Konitz in concert. The worst one for me was Lou Reed at the Newcastle City Hall. He was promoting "Transformer" so probably 1973. It was released in November 1972. The opening for the concert was a brilliant a cappella group called Street Corner Symphony. Then Lou came on and spent more time playing up to his female fans than actually caring about singing the songs. I actually fell asleep.

*[[I don't think I've ever fell asleep at a concert (though I did at a theater performance of 'The Secret Garden'), but I've walked out on one or two, probably most notably Dylan. I wouldn't have gone to see him, except I got comped front-row tickets which I traded with a couple of ladies outside for their general admission ones. Two minutes or so into the first song ("Lay Lady Lay") I was off...]]*

I almost forgot to say that although Boris in the UK and Trump in the US are buffoons they continually keep repeating how well they are doing in their respective positions. Just like all fake news there will always be people who believe this. They are larger than life. People like Biden

and Obama unfortunately come over as too serious and boring. The Democrats need a good slogan. Ditch Trump! Save the World!

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From: chuck.connor@gmx.co.uk

May 23

**Chuck Connor** writes:

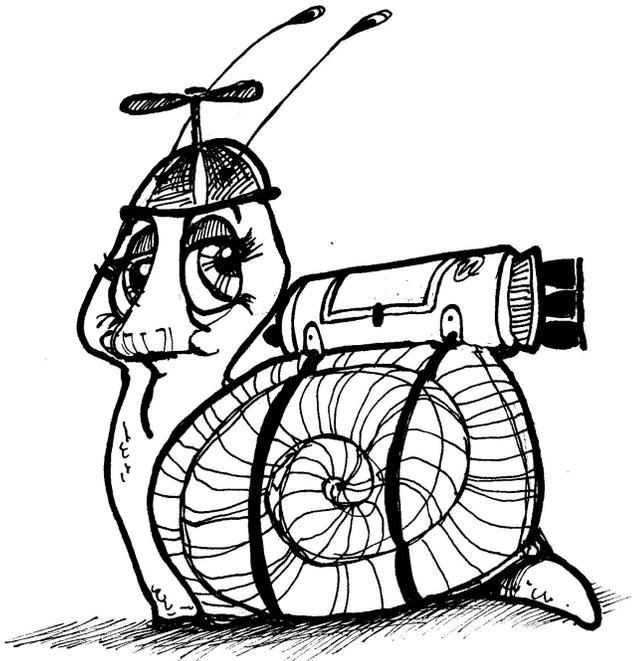
Consider this ketchup

**TH26**

In regard to the 'wanker' comment. As I explained to La Belle Hom **Charnox** some time back, my tribe have an oral tradition that stretches back to time immoral – so what's the point of having a dog and barking yourself?

However, back to the Egotorial. Boots – loooong time since I had to consider that kind of thing – used to have an all leather set issued by Messrs RN (even leather soles) and what were known as DMS (steel caps and anti-slip soles). So when you say you're a size 13, do you mean US, UK or International? (<https://www.famousfootwear.com/c/shoe-size-chart>) Interested after looking at the US site <https://www.usarmynavystore.com/tactical-boots> which has a Force Entry Deployment Boot range, apparently they're the boot that feels like a training shoe – probably for those times when some sergeant says "If you don't I'll stick my boot up your arse."

*[[Size 13 US. Believe it or not, back in ye olde grammar school days I also wore Navy issue footwear with the*



*leather soles - our then next-door neighbor residing at 3 Royal Oak Lane was RN, and for whatever reason my dad got a pair off him for me to wear to school. I thus acquired the temporary nickname of "Bludge" (shortened from "bludgeon boots")...]]*

They also do 9" 18 lacer steel toecap bovver boots – perfect for all the post-lockdown skinheads – the sort probably preferred by the Millwall Bushwackers or West Ham Irons\* supporters. (\*Apparently *not* a cock-er-knee slang reference. Allegedly.) As an aside, I'm now searching through the music hard drives to find the copy of Mungo Jerry's album *Boot Power*. I have always had a soft spot for their version of Willie Dixon's *I Just Wanna Make Love to You* (find the vinyl version from *Electronically Tested*, there is a CD version that's edited down and lacks the chaos).

*[[I've rarely heard the Hammers referred to as the 'Irons', and only in a derogatory way if I remember it right, as an epithet bestowed by supporters of other teams. For the untutored in the vernacular, "iron hoof" = "poof" (meaning homosexual). Alf Garnett would be horrified. Ray Dorset (Mungo Jerry) is still going at age 74, blessim...]]*

Regarding *Doctor Who*, like yourself, I have fond memories of watching it from behind the sofa when it first appeared back in 1963 – on a black and white rental TV – just as well, as the BBC only transmitted in monochrome back then. However, over the span of time, and in connection with *Blake's Seven*, I found the wonderful use of ex-gravel pits and stone quarries more than off-putting. Then the writers decided that the Daleks could now climb stairs – by which time I'd lost interest.

*[[Going back to primary school now, good gawd, we had little notebooks in which to record the spelling of any word we wanted to know. The class was given five minutes at the start of the day to ask the teacher for this. The Monday after the broadcast of part 1 of 'The Web Planet' (1965) Mrs Holiday was mobbed by almost the entire class who, in the spirit of "collect the set" wanted to get 'Zarbi' in their books. She asked me how to spell it...]]*

Not even the Paul McGann incarnation regenerated interest, or when the BBC jump-started the cash cow for US & cable TV. But there has since been such things as *Warehouse 13*, *Altered Carbon*, the new, longer, reboot of *The Twilight Zone*, *Room 104*, *Lucifer* (Tom Ellis, good comedy lines:- "Oh God, a tiny human!" when referring to her daughter), and a wealth of others not necessarily connected to the DC/Marvel comic universes (universii?). Yes it has a massive fan base, and I'd not take away their pleasure. But I have now moved in other directions, and to be honest, Bradley Walsh is not on my 'Must See' list. Plus, I suspect, that a lot of its popularity is based on Crumbies nostalgia – those who, like thee and me, remember when it really was a television phenomenon, and are still prepared to forgive it its sins regardless.

*[[I don't know about forgiveness - I'm stubbornly watching the Sturgeon's Law version out of an ingrained and most likely misplaced sense of duty which might just be based on having been there from the off. I wasn't at all taken with the seemingly endless arc that just made it the "Clara Show" for way too long. That, and some fuckin' execrable writing hasn't done most of the actors any favors, although all of them (except Jodie so far, though she has the potential) have risen above the material on occasion...]]*

To my comment regarding my diminished interaction with fanac, you say "what's this then." – Well, it's not the same as it once was. Social media is the new fanground (has been for years, not just as a result of lockdown) and there are days when I couldn't be anything other than totally arsed and not turn the computer on. I'm always thankful for any and every fanzine I receive either through email or the post, but the days of knocking 8 – 10 LoCs out per month are long gone. Even my own EAYOR has failed the defibrillator – though I have put together an EAYOR compilation as an eBook on Smashwords as part of the eAPA membership drive. Not sure how long it will be there priced at zero / for free, but there you go.

*[[What you wrote was "I don't have much real interaction with fanzines these days", which in context implied values close to 0, which is not quite the interpretation I'd take from "diminished", as you say here. I'd argue that you're still interacting with the fanzines by receiving and reading them, so maybe we should say "engaging" with our end of the Faniverse is a better descriptor of, well, stuff like loccing (or indeed doing the Enter At Your Own Risk compilation which I'm going to have to look up...]]*

Watford 3 Liverpool 0? Maybe that helps explain Liverpool / Fenway Sports applying for the 'loss of earnings' benefit due to lockdown?

As for the de-genderising? Ron Perlman – now 70 this year. Great in *Name of the Rose*, and worth it for the first 2 / original *Hellboys* – The remake just sucks. Worse than a hard vacuum.

Or Tommy Lee Jones during his *Men In Black* phase. *Men In Black International*? See *Hellboy* remake. It failed on so many levels – humour and style being two of the most basic – as well as replacing WS and TLJ with newer actors, and a fairly close to the original MIB-I plotline.

## TH27

Egotorial. Den and I are at the stage where most of the people we know are now below, rather than above ground. I still have some contact with the likes of Geoff Boswell, Cathy Easthope, Dorothy Davies, Shep Kirkbride, John D. Owen, Mat Coward – plus fannish oiks and whelps (such as yourself, naturally) – and while I can still type, I can still LoC. The world is not as bad as it's made out via the BBC news channels – or Piss Morgan on ITV.

*[[“Oiks and Whelps” would be a great name for... something...]]*

TAFFnessabeys. I've tossed some pennies into the pot – though via PayPal as opposed to bitcoin. Still can't see the point of me voting, but there you go.

*[[My understanding is that back in ancient times the voting fee was pretty much the sole source of fan fund revenue, though I'm also sure that there would have been generous worthies not averse to bunging in an extra ten bob. These days I'd suspect that income from auctions and the like would typically exceed that, but the tradition remains. And no, I'm not suggesting that the voting fee be abolished, since it's a solid statement of commitment from interested parties. It might be interesting to an admittedly small number of people to see source of income detailed in the accounts...]]*

Burn It Down. Den and I both received NHS letters, which surprised me. I was expecting one for him (COPD – GOLD-III level), but if I really wanted proof that I'm now considered a silly old fucker, then the NHS letter has certainly done it for me. Why me? Mind you, the NHS caller had no sense of humour. We had a nice chat, I explained that I still go out shopping once a week – it adds a touch of inventiveness when you're never too sure as to what might still be on the shelves. But when he asked if we were both washing our hands regularly, I pointed out that I was ex-Navy, so NBCD Decontamination routines were second nature – back garden with a hose and a yard brush scrubdown. Michael asked if I was joking, so I thought it best to say Yes, just in case they decided to send welfare around.

But as I may have mentioned in emails before, all the media Doom & Gloom sensationalism is the most depressing thing about the whole business. The BBC have been ardent in supplying the Daily Death Figures on a – well, daily basis – to the point where I've been thinking of running a book *a la* the Harlem numbers rackets, where people would bet on the following days' stock market closing figures. And if I've thought about it, then you can bet your life (or death) that others are actually doing it.

Corflux(2) – I didn't know there was a second [twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv) channel, but there you go. Again, most of this talk is RAEBNC – though a lot also reads like some business meeting minutes – especially your line of "This idea met with approval." Do I smell SMOFs?

*[[Nothing wrong with your olfactory sense - though I've never particularly thought of myself as a SMOF type (an assertion some people may find risible) I have organized and participated in various fannish discussions some people might unkindly describe as clandestine. There's certainly (at least in my mind) a proper use for such things, and I'd cite the TAFF Admins group as one example, a deliberative panel for the not-exactly-a-FAAn Lifetime Achievement Award for another, and perhaps in a milder sense the Corflu 50 group as*

*a third. Conversely, there's certainly a perception that it's only a matter of time before smoffing gets the unwelcome attention of QAnon and that apart from the occasional explosions of often ill-informed outrage certain topics aren't considered polite conversation. Obviously I reject that latter contention by encouraging free debate in these pages on at least my personal topics of interest...]]*

Radio Winston – You mention that you can't remember why you picked up *Sun Explosion*. Not sure if you were listening to John Peel at the time, but he used to feature various African musics on a regular basis. Dibango was popular for a while, but I think the influx of World Music in general became 'swamped' by high priced imports and some dubious European reissues (see comments re Charley and their treatment of Nina Simone in previous Loc.) Mind you, I have a few from the Africa Collection series (put together by various collectors) that seems to have a massive spectrum of styles and musics – and the wonderful Lucky Dube doing *Ding Ding Licky Licky Licky Bong* – not forgetting Ebenezer Calendar and His Maringer Band. There's collaborations and cross-overs, but I can run up some of it on a disk or 3 if you want? In regards to the Chile? I have some 1960s Psych albums – though they can be a bit of an acquired taste.

*[[Given that I've got approx a million hours of listening off the DVDs you sent (playing as I fanatic, still on volume 1 and not out of the 'A's yet) Lucky Dube will have to wait...]]*

## TH28

Ergonomics. No, wrong title. Ergotorial. Don't know what 'the **Sorensen** joke' is all about – though I do remember seeing him in a Glasgow pub one evening during Albacon '84 (the one held in the railway hotel up there.) He was doing his cabaret act with his organ – portable electric, naturally - entertaining the locals who seemed to want him to keep on playing Charlie Pride's *Crystal Chandeliers*. I'm also not au fey with 'the **Michael Ashley** joke' either (with or without the use of the word – which always reminds me of a Museum of Everything gag – “Now children, do you know what the C word is? That's right: it's Ocean.”) – **Pickersgill** proclaimed him to be the biggest arsehole in fandom, which was about the time when Michael was put forward for TAFF. I'd been sent a clipping from one of the National newspapers about male body enhancements, and sent him up good naturedly. Of course, the one fanzine I can't immediately lay my hands on is that one, but there you go. To make up for it, have the PDF attachment that helped ensure Bobby never sent me a single issue of *Trap Door*, why Derek Pickles pissed off Chuck Harris (he advised me that Harris was on the war path regarding my send-up of 50s fans) and one of the fun 'Dear Postperson...' back cover mailing fold-overs. Not forgetting sending myself up (the thing was duplicated on foolscap rather than A4 – in those days people were getting rid of that size filthy cheap.)

*[[The “Sorensen joke” is more or less retired on the not-entirely-true basis that everyone knows it now, but I will repeat it privately if asked by a genuine unbeliever. The “Michael Ashley joke” is more printable: Q: “Why do people take an instant dislike to Michael Ashley?” (A: “It saves time.”)...]]*

The quality of the stencil cuts was down to an old Roneo scanner I salvaged – 4 colour filters on a wheel gave you the ability to create colour duplication masters – and you could switch from around 150 lines per inch to something like 300 or 600. I used to source spares from Exchange & Mart for both myself and Vinç Clarke (bulbs would sometimes blow mid production, hence the need for spares.)

It was silly fun, and that's what I was talking about in regard to not being as involved with Fandom as much these days.

Radio Winston – commented on that elsewhere – still like Bongo Brain though.

Of the LoCs, I'm not sure about Frinton – perhaps Bridlington? Or Scunthorpe? “If Typhoo put the T in Britain, who put the “ – Ah, no, we're back to that word again, aren't we – thus proving that all LoCcols are cyclic. Mind you I have to agree with you in regard to Cock-er-knee rhyming slang being evolved rather than spontaneous. My father, a dyed-in-the-wool Bow Bells man, would always get annoyed at the media whenever they would trot out something or other as being slang – commenting that it was a load of cobblers (as in Cobblers awls – aka Orchestra stalls – aka Balls). Sadly he only made his Three Score & Ten. And as any ful kno, it's a Richard the III – and not a much later Douglas Hurd (ask Ivor Biggun.)

*[[Although the classics remain, the lingo does evolve and contemporary references fade in and out. You mentioning “Douglas Hurd” for “turd” reminded me that the classic “Hampstead Heath” (= “teeth”) was for a while supplanted by “Edward Heath” but is now back. I always knew “Richard the Third” as “bird” (ie a female, for our linguistically challenged cousins) - I never used a “turd” rhymers, even though “Dickie Bird” and “Thora Hird” were available, in my manor it was always “tom tit”. Perhaps a good example of an old-school phrase which is all but lost is “pigs” (“pigs ear” = “beer”). I understand these days that the Rob Roys are more likely to be off up the rubber for a few Britneys. I noticed tendencies of some to be unaware of the actual history, especially when the Essex boys and girls got in, and rather than admiring the Richards for their typical qualities, they adopted “brasses” as a general term for women, I'm deducing on the basis that the girls were “brassy”, which I suppose is an observation of style which might even bear some relation to the ‘proper’ interpretation of the original “brass nail” = “tail” (a prostitute)...]]*

And now I realise why I have images of Alastair Sim buzzing around my head – but that was Fritton and not Frinton.

## TH29

Radio Winston – Konitz was never one of my go-tos for Sax appeal. Sidney Bechet’s soprano sax could really hit the HighNote time after time (and you thought the Blue Note reference was cool? On yer bike.)

FAAN Furore. So the only winning fanzines are going to be those which are multi-edited? You have two problems:-

One – on any multi-input venture you have to have compromise, otherwise you end up with a lead, and a bunch of compliance – “Because if we don’t agree then it ain’t gonna get out the startin’ gate.”

And two – at the moment it seems to be all Sercon and no Fundom to a great degree. Witness the almost analytically retentive discussions. If you want to divide fanzines into categories – then just work out what you want to call Genzine and Perzine when you issue the eligibility list. That way such things as *Death By Sercon* and *Eat My Beanie* would fall into two columns, and voters would just vote for the content. Or is it not about the content, but the fan behind the masthead? If it’s self-written and self-produced then why does that make it an inferior product – as opposed to self-same fan writing the zine as individual pieces, and then submitting it to other fanzines? I use the Oxford comma, and according to Mickey\$oft Word that is a criminal offence these days. But what difference does it make? Any reviewing is subjective, not objective, when you have a ranking system – which is what you’re doing by voting one over the other.

*[[You’re very much drawing an incorrect conclusion by stating that the perzine is seen as an inferior product. What we’ve seen in the discussion is that there’s a very broad agreement that genzines and perzines are beasts of a different stripe, but exactly how the differences are perceived and described (or even quantified by whatever metric) turns out to be massively subjective, and it seems you agree with that. I’m coming to the conclusion that although the Pareto principle is a decent enough separator, subjective values of intent and content are equally valid. As I’ve explicitly stated, where there’s any doubt the faneds’ own definition will take precedence over any opinion of mine...]]*

I doubt many reading this will actually remember Mae Strelkov when she was alive, or her fanzine, *Tink*. Ned Brooks pissed me off when he died. Not the fact that he died, but he had a volume of Mae’s autobiography that he was forever going to publish RSN. A lot of people during the 1980s & 1990s decried her fanzine – jelly hecto production, and printed on tobacco leaf wrapping paper, always of indeterminate quality. That was because she couldn’t get hold of anything else in order to Pub Her Ish. Oh, and some of it was handwritten rather than impeccably typed. Did that make *Tink* total and utter shit? Not to me it didn’t. Perhaps because I was also pubbing my ish I could appreciate what Mae had to overcome in order to print (any hector has a limited run before you have to wipe and relay the master

image down to the jelly again) and then to post them out in what was a very politically unstable environment.

*[[I very pleasurably got a loc or two off Mae for Arrows of Desire back in the day, and found her to be a pleasant and thoughtful correspondent, perhaps in part due to her noting that ‘Strelkov’ is translatable as “arrow”. I never got to see any of her zines (although I have a very vague memory of something she did for an APA, which I expect you’d know about)...]]*

But, what you’re laying down here is that anything that is individually produced is a sub-par and inferior product, by its very nature.

*[[See comment above. No. I can see how you might have drawn that inference, but let me re-assert that “different” in certain values does not imply “inferior”...]]*

Skipping down to the LoCs (don’t get snarky, I can still Double Dutch, which is skipping, and not a threesome in Amsterdam) and the h/t thing. Shouldn’t that be ATOTH? As in *A Tip Of The Hat*? However, if you JFGI NAAFI you don’t get *No Ambition And Fuckall Interest* – so JFGI is not really the perfect answer. Or MUPPET – *Most Useless Person People Ever Trained*. And that was long before Only Fools And Terrible Comedy started using it. The assumption that ‘everyone knows what it’s all about but me’ is fair, but I CGAFF in regard to whether you want to FBF, FBT – though Instagram does give you FBI – which, if people email that around too much could well get you a visit from your friendly Homeland Security representative. And FTF is *First To Find* and not *Fuck The Feds*.

**Leigh Edmonds** can join me at the back of the class when it comes to smartphones. I’ve a little experience with computers (around 35 – 40 years including mainframes, CP/M, UNIX, DOS, and windoze, including system design) so view a smartphone as an overpriced, underspec’d handheld with an exceedingly short lifespan (either by design or deliberate obsolesce – Apple and Samsung creating the equivalent of a Double 0 dress size via sealed battery). Now, what with the NSIT and BYOD, we’re back in Applesque country – where the user has no interest as to what’s ‘under the hood’ and whose usual cry is “It’s not working!”

*[[IDEKWTM...]]*

Personally, you might be able to convert the Mac to a Hackintosh (get Linux to run it). Den’s Frankenputer is running MINT (i7 4<sup>th</sup> Gen with 32Gb DDR3.) He uses it to buy things from eBay.

And, of course, every time Leigh mentions Ballarat I keep thinking about Dr Blake.

I can’t claim any credit for the 680-odd albums on those DVDs (including vols 8 to 14 yet to arrive) – I’m purely a digital packrat, and the music collection at present is coming close to 3Tb. I just plug the disk into a USB port and let it shuffle.

[[I'm still on vol 1!...]]

TH30

Ergotorial. While I'd admit that they don't easily fit the Fanzine Fan 'stereotype', I do think that 'pissing in the gene pool' is possibly a little too strong? There again I remember the 'conflicts' between the two factions back in the 1980s, so maybe it all just went underground. I await the mutually agreed outcome with interest all the same.

Was also sorry to hear about the Gordon Ramsay brand infringement problems re swearing and cooking at the same time. I suppose if Mickey\$oft can get the word Windows registered as a trademark, then anything is possible. Still, as they say, only in America.

The 7-page Footy from **Dave Hodson** this time round was, I feel, totally worth the effort. I've never really understood the modern football offside rule (what ex-natural blonde does?), but to see it laid out as Dave did – including the diagrams and historical references to the likes of Keiron Dyer, or the infamous 'law 14' which makes it impossible to be offside when a penalty is taken (the power of the Ref, rather than the video Ref?) was an enlightenment, to say the least. And it's good to know that you can be offside, but not contravening the law if the ball is in midfield and the Ref or linesmen haven't spotted it.

After that, the rest was RAEBNC'd.

[[Very prescient of you...]]

Whatever, looking forward to *This Ear... 31*

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From: penneys@bell.net

May 23

**Lloyd Penney** writes:

Here I am, behind in correspondence, in other responsibilities, and just about everything else, and it's a struggle between getting things done, and getting back onto the couch, and watch the tube. For once, getting things done had a rare victory, and as a result, here is a loc on *This Here... , issues 28 and 29.*

28... I don't know most of the computerish abbreviations I see online, they're just a bunch of TLAs (Three-Letter Acronyms). Not thick, but just inexperienced with expensive software. This weekend would have been one of the biggest anime conventions on the continent, just up the highway from us, and we would have had a sales table there, and we could have been raking it in, if not for the pandemic. That coronavirus owes me about \$300 so far. Windows 10 has also decided it doesn't like my old monitor-based webcam (wiped out the driver, so a new webcam is on backorder), and I got a newer microphone. I have a virtual con to attend soon, so that webcam had better show up soon.

The loccol... I saw recently photos of an empty Trafalgar Square, and given Yvonne and I were there close to a year ago, that did look scary. We do go out once a week for the groceries, and the number of maskless people does vary, as does the idiocy of some of the more right-wing old coots who laugh at those of us with masks. I promise, I won't come to their funerals. The governor of Nevada may have issued a stay-at-home order, but with Orange45's nonsense, those who finally will be released to go back to church/temple/synagogue might jump up the number who catch the virus and die from it.

We are definitely in those interesting times we were warned about. Yvonne and I are definitely in the most endangered range, so we do wear homemade masks each day, but only when we go out. I saw one of Trump's idiot advisors, saying something about how science couldn't get rid of the first 18 COVIDs, failing to remember that the only reason this virus was coded -19 is that it was identified last year. If the stupid amazes you, just wait for the news cycle the next day. My news feed today is starting to use the term Greater Depression, so I think we'd all better get prepared for the worst.

Looks like there will be no conventions this year, and I have heard of a convention announcing that its next version, in 2021, will be cancelled. We do have friends we miss, and should 2021 see the end of this self-isolation, the cons we return to should be epic. As you see on the map on page 20, I do live in Toronto in Ontario, but I have also lived in Victoria in British Columbia, where even Albertans were easterners.

My loc... traffic on the nearby Highway 427 has definitely increased, but it may become silent again should the predicted second wave of the coronavirus come about. I did apply to the government for the advertised cash, and I did receive it. Just hope I truly qualify for it.

29... Still need that new webcam. I have downloaded Zoom, because all the cool kids have it. Still need to learn how to use it. Our own pubnights are virtual these days, with Third Monday having a Zoom session we haven't been able to participate in.

I have talked to a couple of faneds about a fanzine collaboration over the past ten years or so...not much interest was shown. I might try a fanzine again, but I would need a focus, fandom, steampunk, something else. I hope **George Phillies** will have more luck the next time around distributing FAAn Awards information to the N3F membership.

*[[It's an interesting observation that a fanzine (or at least one by you) would need a "focus". I think the reflexive response to that would be from the Department of the Blindingly Fuckin' Obvious, but what you're implying is a requirement for what we might call coherence of topic, and I don't think that's necessarily the case. To pick the first couple of anti-examples that occurred to me, I wouldn't say that Inca or Askance are "focused" in the sense you suggest, but they do have a clear consistency wrought by the personalities of their respective editors, as does just about any other title you can think of. Challenger maintains the habit of themed ishes, and other zines have almost inadvertently themed themselves around a topic du jour. This Here... itself is perhaps an interesting study of your contention. Since issue #1 the overall format has changed relatively little, and that's sometimes used as a lazy substitute for consistency of intent, although I'm prone to change my views as persuasive arguments are made and/or more information becomes available. I revived this title primarily to provide commentary (and invite discussion) on the FAAn awards and other subjects of fannish interest to me, while retaining the original format of also including regular columns on music and, this time, football. There are readers such as Nikki Basar (a non-denizen of our particular Faniverse who nevertheless was happily persuaded to contribute to these pages), who will only read the 'Footy', and others who will read everything but that, although there's rather less direct Watford FC content since I've given over the column to the sublime pen of David Hodson...]]*

The Wrong Fanzine? There's ribbon material right there...

- > I publish The Wrong Fanzine <
- > I read The Wrong Fanzine <
- > Everyone tells me I publish The Wrong Fanzine <

... and so on. If there are no ribbons with these ideas on them, there's always someone there to tell us all about it, in excruciating detail.

There was mention of government assistance programmes... I have taken advantage of the money offered by our government, and it has helped. However, they have announced that if those who have accepted the money do not actually qualify for the assistance, the money must be returned, and there is a chance of prosecution for fraud. With that in mind, I plan to ask specifically if I do qualify for the cash; if not, I shall return it.

*[[Well that's bizarre. They handed out dosh without checking?...]]*

Hope people show up for AmazingCon on June 12-14. I have a panel on the 12th, and not much else, but there should be people there with lots to plug of their own writings, and **Steve Davidson** plugging the magazine. Should be an interesting weekend.

Anyway, must go, the temperatures are dropping. Big hugs to **Jennifer**, saw her a few times on Facebook Live, and thanks for these two issues. See you with issue 30.

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From: dave\_redd@hotmail.com

May 29

**David Redd** writes:

You're getting the full half-hour and more, I observe pasting this in. Must stop rising to the bait.

Many thanks for #29, transformed into dead-tree format quite smoothly for once. I read through the print-out happily scribbling on the margins, then left it to cool, then found most scribbles indecipherable, so ended up drafting this in longhand, rereading as I went. Now to type the result into the laptop, hoping the longhand didn't degenerate too much as I went along. For the next issue I'll probably try direct to screen again for legibility if not coherence.

*[[Now there's a hook to ask how other correspondents put their locs together. I do find it gratifying that some people do print out This Here..., which it is designed for. I know there's margin scribblers like yerself, others festoon post-it notes hither and thither. I don't loc very much meself, but I'll typically start a draft email and to-and-fro on the screen between that and the pdf, mainly because - er - I can't figure out how to work the printer...]]*

And thanks for the Zoom invite, but I'm not quite there yet. My first attempt at Zoom will be tomorrow, a church coffee morning – bit different from the Farey virtual social whirl, I'd guess, but enough for a first go. Lockdown has driven me to Skype and to on-line banking, which after waiting six weeks for a card reader (multiple re-orders were involved)

now does seem to be working. Wonder if Dastardly Foreign Agents will now crack financial encryption and empty all coffers; that's pessimism for you.

*[[Given that I'm back to regular work schedule on June 7 I expect the alleged "social whirl" to be back at close to o...]]*

Hot news today in Wales is permission to visit family and friends from Monday, at social distancing apart of course, within a travel radius of 5 miles. (R-value problems here make Wales more cautious than England.) Will not be rushing to the pub on release. These days when I do see other human beings in their vehicles, as my exercise walk reaches the main road, I growl at the traffic and turn back at once. Clearly I'm mutating from Hermit to Misanthrope, not a good omen for future interactions with the human race, whose representatives in these vehicles mostly impinge on my life as traffic noise, fumes and roadside litter. The empty Red Bull "energy drink" cans are inevitable I suppose, but did someone *have* to dump their HIV Self-Test debris on our verge?

*[[There used to be a vagueish title of "Fandom's Resident Curmudgeon" (actually nicer than some of the posited alternatives) which was claimed by E B Frohvet for a while. The grumpy old sods are still in evidence (and I can definitely be one at times), but I do despair a bit that the polarization of everything has led to a load of relentless negativity (not you) rather than wittier versions of "Get Off My Lawn" that might have been considered satirical...]]*

Radio Winston: all Covid-19 losses are sad, and in my er, wide-ranging musical world the departures to be regretted include Tim Brooke-Taylor ("Do the Funky Gibbon") and the great John Prine ("Paradise", "Blow Up Your TV", "Angel from Montgomery" and other country masterpieces.) Sympathy, thanks and farewell for all whatever the music was like.

On FAAn matters, glad the genzine/perzine split will continue.

Thanks [to **Dave Hodson**] for the enlightening review of "The English Game". You will have seen UK plans to resume professional football in a few weeks. While we wait, BBC Wales will reshew all the matches in Wales' progress to the Euro 2106 semi-finals, manager Chris Coleman's finest hour. (One local paper, "Cambrian News", had *no sports pages at all* last week. Sign of the times all right.)

Didn't know the meanings of FBF etc of course, but what else would you expect of me? Years ago **Joseph Nicholas**, no less, had to educate me about "po-mo" – the term hadn't yet migrated from the *Grauniad* to our local press. On my time-scale terminology such as TERF can wait uninvestigated until I actually need it, if ever.

*[[ 'FBF' is just something I've used to avoid typing "Fuckin' Bloody Facebook" every time. You don't have to guess it exactly right to get the intent...]]*

**Dale Speirs** mentions face masks in Calgary. A while back I heard from friends who'd moved to Alberta that to their surprise, patients in the doctors' reception area were offered face masks to wear while they waited. How strange, they thought. Also, they noticed that Canadian medical staff all looked young, fit, and can-do, quite a contrast to the Old Country.

Now then, roll up sleeves, should we compare the Beatles' oeuvre to what went before (e.g. Perry Como) or to what came after (e.g. Bruce Springsteen)? Leigh Edmonds is raising a point about Western cultural evolution important to my generation. The Beatles certainly have a pivotal place somewhere, possibly in globalisation even more than in music. Before, during and after their career, our pop music was neither all awful nor all great – I liked "Magic Moments" and can summon up a good word for *Nebraska* despite enjoying other work of those times more, but nothing is ever absolutely perfect. Nobody *ever* was "consistently that great" even on *Sgt Pepper*, although it really would have been the truly immortal masterpiece everyone claimed if only Fate and George Martin had permitted "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "Penny Lane" before the reprise. Among other cultural trailblazers, even Shakespeare and Dickens weren't so hot at times, and neither was P G Wodehouse (the Master), but they certainly set standards and opened up territories. Dept. of the bleedin' obvious, you'll say. Hindsight depends on knowledge of context. We shouldn't think less of "A Day in the Life" because its descendant "Bohemian Rhapsody" is more fun. (Ditto say *Childhood's End*, both its creaky parts and its glories now overshadowed by its more highly evolved successors, but still a classic of its time.) In fanzines, you wouldn't criticise Ron Bennett's TAFF report for looking less glamorous than J Monahan's, would you?

*Nope, sure wouldn't, any more than I'd criticize anyone for merely looking less glamorous than Jacq...]]*

More Beatles thoughts – you'd better look away now – as I recall discovering that Acker Bilk in a minor way had carved out a surprisingly close career path to that of the Beatles, some years before them. Jazz clarinetist Bilk, as I must term him for you youngsters, found success by appropriating a American musical form (Dixieland), reached the US Top 30 initially as a composer (Summer Set), then himself hit No. 1 with an atypical solo-and-strings record (Stranger on the Shore). Bilk also used distinctive band uniforms including bowler hats (legend says he presented sample hats to the Fabs during a Mersey gig together) long before the Beatles adopted matching weird-collar suits with the tonsorial equivalent of bowlers, and he had in his "Bilk Marketing Board" the most relentless publicity machine of any pre-Beatles act. An odd set of parallels. Must have been steam-engine time. And similarly, didn't Kate Bush simply step into a template created by Clifford T Ward? (Exquisite

musical craft, literary influences, single-minded ownfurrowness, long hair, willowy figure...)

*[[You're making good arguments, though I might expect some fuming remarks from Kate Bush fans. Q: Were Clifford T Ward's breasts larger than Kate Bush's? (A: No, just further from the ground)...*

Stepping aside from all that, not sure if my old plastic model kit of the cruise liner "Southern Cross" was from Airfix or not, but my young self certainly enjoyed putting it together. Would be worth a fortune now if I hadn't built it.

Time to wind up. We here need a family conference about resuming travel when permitted. This is serious. Going out again will seem unreal. The whole pandemic is in some ways only a wake-up call compared to a theoretical real disaster (think sneezing Ebola), but I find myself having difficulty seeing clear ways forward. Not out of the woods yet. But a lot of good people are seeking the right next steps. There's hope.

[...]

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#### WAHF

**Doug Bell** : "...Ambush Bug obscure? I guess I better not mention Spaceopoly Lad, then." Doug also sends *Unreliable Narrator 4* in which he cycles up and down hills a lot, making me very tired; **Bill Burns** : "I'm not allowed to argue unless you've paid" ; **Chuck Connor**, separately to his loc and almost garrulous gregarious; **Ron Gemmell** ; **Dave Langford** ; **Ian Millsted** sends a much-delayed *Griff 9*, see 'Indulge Me' for a great pullquote; **John Nielsen Hall** continues his lockdown diaries in *Vita Transplantare 4* and *5*, as welcome as ever ; **Ulrika O'Brien** : "You obviously need more art" ; **John Purcell** sends *Askance #48* (twice!), and one continues to wish that he'd use "Bcc" in the email rather than the "cc" to avoid "reply all" practitioners ; **Alan White** : "...the tea leaves inform me I will enjoy I will enjoy this issue very much. Just ask my co-conspirator."



## INDULGE ME

✓ **COCK-ER-KNEE** : Inspired by **Chuck Connor** (see locs) let me repeat the explanation of why "Aris" (not "Harris" as often misspoken) is Cockney slang for "arse" - this is something I've gobsmacked a few cab rides with. The key to most rhyming slang terms is that they're phrases which are then abbreviated to conceal the rhyme itself. Thus "frog and toad" (= "road") is usually just expressed as "frog", though more recently it's become "Kermit" - an example of the kind of extension of the derivation and abbreviation which informs "Aris". The standard rhymer for "arse" is "bottle and glass", which is shortened to "bottle" which rhymes with "Aristotle" which is curtailed to "Aris". It's really very simple...

✓ **FANZINES** : **Ian Millsted's Griff 9** includes some great stuff (including but not limited to a prehistoric **Claire Brialey** piece), but I was most taken by a line from his interview with artist **Joe Staton**, who answered a question about comics adaptations of Philip K Dick stories with the memorable observation: "... I always visualize Dick stories as drawn by Steve Ditko."...

✓ **ALIVE AND KICKING** : Noted from several sources that **Bob Madle** turned 100 on June 2. **George Phillis** notes that Bob is the last surviving founder of N3F..

✓ **COCK-ER-KNEE (2)** : Not actual rhyming slang, but one I've always liked and occasionally used: in an episode of 'The Sweeney' George Carter (Dennis Waterman) is describing the attributes of a certain female member of staff by cupping his hands in front of his chest (at some distance) and saying "You know, the one with the *arthritis*". I could take cynical joy in ruining this by explaining it in full to **Leigh Edmonds**, of course. My own most-used expression for such cantilevered magnificence is the more prosaic "shelf"...

✓ **CALENDAR GIRL** : **Tracy Benton** advises: "Just a note to say that today is probably Wednesday". Which I think it was when she said so...

✓ **LETTER FROM PRAGUE** : After nicking the Antarctica map off old mate **Liam Proven** (a moniker indubitably conveyed by having crashed on his couch once), it transpired that the last fanzine-related email he got from me was *BEAM #4*, probably because he was in it...

✓ **TIMING** : **Keith Freeman**, while conveying thanks for the Fifth Saturday, nevertheless suggested a bit of a later start so he'd have had his dinner. (Sniggers from at least **Bill Burns** who will *immediately* clock that reference; all others JFGI) ...

- ✓ **GORDON FUCKIN' BENNETT RAMSAY** : Still no resumption of the cooking show here, although Ramsay hasn't sent me a "cease and desist" yet. Maybe next month...
- ✓ **LANGERED GEOGRAPHY** : As cartoonist Steve Bell noted many years ago, there is an actual Avenue Gordon Bennett in Paris, named after James Gordon Bennett Sr., and likely at the instigation of his son James Gordon Bennet Jr, known as "Gordon Bennett" to distinguish him from his sire. Junior had a bit of a reputation for showing up well ratted, and allegedly his engagement to socialite Caroline May was called off after he rolled in late and pissed in the fireplace (by some accounts, the grand piano), giving rise to the expression of amazement which has endured...
- ✓ **RUSH** : Apologies if the prufrede ends up shoddy, as it might...
- ✓ **AGELESS BEAUTY** : One that might get those on multiple continents scratching their heads, a singer still gigging at age 77 and looking well on it, **Eve Graham**...



## MIRANDA

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Art credits: **Ulrika O'Brien** (pp4, 10, 14); **Liam Proven** supplied the 'Map of Antarctica's Bays', credited to "a random Reddit user" (p7); **Alan White**, photo (p17)

**"Some fast food fanatic was burning down the burger van"**