

# This Here...

*"...particularly brainless..." (D Redd)*

## EGOTORIAL

### SMALL VICTORIES, ANNOYING DEFEATS

And here I am again, in a state teetering on blind panic with an icing of self-loathing after having farted away my nice Christmas break (not quite true, but it's what I'm telling myself) and thus only now, December 30<sup>th</sup>, getting this here glaring pile of Romanian pizza boxes finished up.

As I said, it's not really the case that I've wasted all my down time. I spent three or four days prepping and cooking for Xmas and Boxing Day (and dishing up the nosebag), and in between all that lot trying to get a few things sorted that need sorting ahead of January, and therein lies a series of annoying defeats.

Some of these, while possibly trivial in the Grand Span of the Sevagram, end up being non-trivial in what's left of my own mind to the point that I end up in "Arg! What's the fuckin' point?" mode and go off to sulk, or sleep some more, or both. I tried to renew my drivers license online - it expires on my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday on January 29<sup>th</sup> - getting through the process to the point where it tells you in what should be a Hal (not **O'Brien**) voice "Sorry, I can't do that." Turns out I have to actually brave a DMV visit. Also in January I'll have to have my DoT medical for work (which comes up every two years). That includes a hearing test, and once again the high-dollar (though fortunately having been covered by health insurance) hearing aids have packed up. **Jennifer** has been, with her usual wifely concern, insistent about me contacting the audiologist to find out if three years have passed since I got them, in which case I'll be eligible for

some new ones, but my ingrained reluctance to talk to any stripe of "officialdom" (especially medical) leads to fingers in the ears and "la la la", which she'll tell you gets right up her nose. I had a look at some purchase options (since hearing aids are now available over the counter), and thus became inundated with adverts on FBF. I've forked out for a \$150-ish pair which came yesterday and they seem adequate so far.

I fucked up again (for, I think, the third time in a row) by forgetting Lulu's groomer appointment on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, despite them reminding me the day before *and* phoning again 15 minutes after I was supposed to show up, and again after half an hour. I was asleep and didn't clock the calls since I leave my phone on charge in the FanCave at the other side of the house. I'll be off round there today, oozing contrition and bearing Money to get a reschedule. This again all made me well annoyed with meself to the point of paralysis.

The Xmas dinner brought further Pvt. Frazer-style lamentation as I deem myself to have fucked up the goose, but am genuinely assured by the family present (Jen, of course, and her son and daughter-in-

law) then and later that it's all delicious, and indeed in the post-nosebag photo here we are all smiling, aren't we?

The small victories? Well, that and getting thish out I suppose. And a typically jolly Waifs & Strays Boxing Day party (see pics on p5).

It's all good.

**December 2022**



L-R: J L Farey, Nic Farey, William Allee, Megan Allee

# TAFFNESSABOUTS

The two candidates for the 2023 Westbound race are Sandra Bond and Mikolaj Kowalewski and you should have clocked already that this here non chicken-owning outpost supports the former. Voting is open until April 11, which I'm only guessing (since it's a typical timeframe) is the day after next year's Eastercon. Seems like a long time, but then again we have a couple months voting period for the FAAns as well, and I do wonder why since most of the ballots turn up in the 27 minutes before the window slams shut.

The ballot, platforms, donation instructions and all that are found at the usual venue: <https://taff.org.uk>

Having had a bit of a moan about late voting, I can't really say shit because that's what I've typically done in the past, but not this go. My vote is already in (as is my donation, of course), and I encourage you to get yours sorted an'all - not that you won't be getting continual reminders off me in here. Whoever you vote for, it all supports the Fund.

Hereby, however, is a plug...



I believe I first met **Sandra** (then going by another name) at a Novacon in the late 1980s, and immediately found common interest in fanzines. And probably scurrilous gossip I shouldn't wonder. We did also have convo (that she at least recalls) at the Wellington in Waterloo, then the location of London fandom's First Thursday meets - we also traded zines and promises to write, which mostly then as now ends up being a one-sided bargain with me on the failing end.

When I bugged off to the USA in 1993 I almost inevitably lost contact with most of the Britfen I knew and liked, although zines were still what kept us as having at least some sense of community, and I did visit back (mostly for Novacon) for a few years.

I can't be certain whether or how our perception of time is flexible, but when getting back in touch with old friends, any interregnum, be it months or even years, just seems to vanish. Because I'm crap and old ect, I can't properly recall when we spent time in the same room, but I'm thinking

either the 2008 Corflu (Las Vegas), 2009 (Seattle), and I'm sure that was followed by convo at Las Vegas again in 2012. We'd talked about adapting the BBC's 'Just A Minute' as a fannish panel game - Sandra later confirms an unbroken run of Corflus from 2008 on - and she came up with 'Just A Minac' as the moniker. This now enduring silly game *could* have debuted in Vegas in 2012, but someone who'd comprehensively fallen out with me wouldn't program it, having had a whiff of my involvement, so its actual first episode occurred in Richmond, 2014.

In a tortuously roundabout way, this points to how we immediately fell back into fine conversations about fanzines, fanzine history, Corflus and general hilarity. And gossip. As if there'd been no hiatus at all.

So yes, we've been fast friends for a tad over 30 years, but that of itself isn't a given TAFF candidate quality, as much as I might like it to be. So let's reiterate that she has the rare combination of being knowledgeable *and* interesting, whereas so many are just one or the other. Not to mention *funny*. Sandra's a quite brilliant writer with what's lately been a more overt talent for satire and humorous poetry in particular. The expected trip report is likely to incorporate all her skills. That doesn't even mention her latest endeavor as conrunner (co-chair of the Las Vegas 2024 Corflu bid).

I therefore commend **Sandra Bond**, writer, poet, fanzine editor and publisher, game show host, guitarist and much else for your consideration in the 2023 TAFF race.

There is no bushel capacious enough to hide this light.

## SEASONAL INTERLUDE

BY S&RA BOND (with Nic Farey)

(All together, now...)

On the twelfth day of WorldCon, a trufan sent to me:

12 smoffers smoffing  
11 oldpharts grouching  
10 Farahs flouncing  
9 Isaacs groping  
8 Yalow bowties  
7 rules amendments  
6 Plokta in-jokes  
FIVE SHOTS OF RYE  
4 sad puppies  
3 podcasts  
2 banana wings  
And a rant in File seven seven teeeee...



# RADIO WINSTON

## REVULSION

Last year I punted a load of seasonal slices, several of which were typically in a range of “oo, that’s a bit rude” to “about as NSFW as it gets”. This year I’m up for excoriating the rottenest Xmas songs ever, and to this end I fired up the Google-fu to unsurprisingly discover there were several lists addressing this topic, and what became interesting about them were the slices that repeatedly cropped up.

In deference to the sensitive ear’oles of the readership of this here bear pit, I won’t be linking any - you can search the YoobToob if you like, and in any case some of these are quite well known. In no particular order:

‘Do They Know It’s Christmas’ (Band Aid) : on just about every list. Geldof himself called it “one of the two worst songs ever written”, the other apparently being ‘We Are the World’. Lisa Tozzi in *Rolling Stone* describes it better than anyone: “... a group of mostly white, mostly rich celebrities belting out a smug mess of colonialism, racist stereotypes, and geographic ineptitude ...”.

‘Happy Xmas (War is Over)’ (Maroon 5) : They didn’t, did they? God, yes, they fuckin’ did...

‘Wonderful Christmas Time’ (Paul McCartney and Wings) : If you listen carefully you can hear John muttering “granny song” and throwing up. Luke O’Neil sums it up for *Esquire* magazine : “It’s a love song between a middle-aged man and the new Casio keyboard he got in his stocking.” ...

‘Please Daddy (Don’t Get Drunk This Christmas)’ (John Denver) : Yeah, a country “classic” that manages to be worse than ‘Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer’ since it’s not only humorless (how could it be otherwise) but also creepy as fuck when you realize Denver is singing from the point of view of an 8-year-old.

‘I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus’ (The Jackson 5) : That having been said, the creepiness factor of a 5-year-old Michael Jackson warbling this cannot be understated.

Good gawd, as if I wasn’t depressed enough already, there’s so many others I could list, but as a truly vile *coup de grace*, a seemingly required inclusion on any list follows.

‘Dominick the Donkey’ (Lou Monte) : A 1960 novelty record, described frequently as the Xmas carol ‘Shaddup You Face’. I know I said you could look these up on the YoobToob if you didn’t already know them, but I can’t in all conscience advise that for this slice. In *Rolling Stone* again, Maria Fontura writes: “... an affront to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. A spiritual cousin to the “Chicken Dance” song...”.

Enuf!!!!

# FAANWANK

## IT’S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

Yes, well, that’s highly arguable innit, but *The Incomplete Register 2022*, being the voters’ guide for the 2023 FAAn awards will be hitting the virtual racks around January 6, signaling the start of voting for fanzine fandom’s only dedicated honors.

There aren’t any changes in format from this year (hence the lack of a ‘Tinker’ editorial describing and justifying them), although I do now require actual names and contact details off voters, having had occasional though not massively prevalent issues with anonymous ballots previously.

As the awards admin, I’m DoBFO constrained from advocacy for any particular titles or persons (although if anyone wants to ask me *privately* what’s on my ballot, I’ll happily DNQ you that). I’ve stated before (with no takers) that I will equally happily print pitches from others with no editorial blather attached (unless you’re trying to make a case for Jeffrey Redmond - nah, I wouldn’t print that anyway).

It’s gratifying that in previous goes my own probity in the management of the awards has rarely been questioned, although subject to mockery from Gen-F(iler). Hence any attempted definition of “fanzine” for award purposes has now been booted in favor of “we know one when we see one”, and I suppose dictatorially giving myself the last word on “is it or isn’t it?” and of course in categorization. I’m as always prepared to engage in discussion with (almost) anyone, in public or in private, on the topic.

I’ve also had no takers on previous offers to make my own ballot public after voting is concluded, on the basis that some arsehole might think that I fixed my vote to get an allegedly desired result. What I’ll be doing, as in prior years, is recording my own ballot by emailing to myself *before* voting officially opens and it’s thus date and time-stamped. Dedicated conspiracy theorists could cite Dominion Voting Machines *et al* and the idea that I could have faked it all, highly overestimating my computer expertise (such as it is). In some ways it might be gratifying that anyone thought the FAAns might be worthy of such attention, so I’ll just expect the usual contumely from the usual sources, ey?

Mind you, if people want to accuse me of having incredible super-powers (like the ability to “hand-pick” voters) then it’s all ‘boo, innit, albeit of a rather less than realistic nature. I’m minded to quote the Poet Milligan, who, in his war memoirs, footnoted the statement “Was there no limit to this man’s abilities?” with the observation “Yes, there was”...

# TV GUIDE

## YEAR'S BEST

Call it shameless filler, call it laziness, call it what you fuckin' like, but I decided to tap some of my mates from this wobbly and probably dazed community to weigh in on this topic (and movies, later). I vaguely recalled last year doing similar in getting a raft (or is that a plethora?) of additional contributors, only to discover that it was in fact January of *this* year when I did that. It all seems a very long time ago...

First up is **Marc Ortlieb**:

Nic kindly invited me to submit my list of five top movies for 2022 and I had to admit that the last time I saw a movie in the year it was released, the year had a "19" in front of it. Nic then asked me about television shows. This is going to be even more embarrassing.

So what television shows have I watched this year? For a start, very few of them are actually first run, so here we go, in order of frequency of viewing:

- 1) 'Pointless'. Okay, so it's not exactly rocket science, but I have a love of trivia, and it doesn't get much more trivial than Pointless.
- 2) 'The Chase'. Oops. It does get more trivial than Pointless. Still, it's silly, mindless entertainment.
- 3) '8 out of 10 Cats does Countdown'. I'll admit that I only watch it for Jimmy Carr's rude put-downs of the contestants and for Rachel Riley. I can get about one in every three teasers.
- 4) Cricket - any format. The Women's 20/20 matches have been fun and I enjoyed watching Australia crunching a very underprepared West Indies. Wallpaper for the mind. Ideal for watching when I'm doing the washing up. But then, that applies to 'Pointless' and 'The Chase' as well.
- 5) 'Judge John Deed'. I know they are repeats, but they're good repeats - well up there with 'Foyle's War' and 'George Gently'. Also, it doesn't matter if I miss the first half of the show, having been with my Scout Troop for the first part of the evening.

Not particularly inspiring, I know, but you did ask about television...

Now it's **Cuddles'** turn:

**"Let's see what's on the telly!"  
(The Bottle Job, Leverage)**

There was a lot to watch in 2022, whether it was the latest series of our favourites or something new and exciting to look forward to.

High on the list was 'Andor' (Disney+), a superbly crafted & scripted source story about Cassian Andor, the

hero from Rebel One. I have to say first off, binge watch it because the first couple of episodes are a bit slow but once the 'big job' starts, it becomes a rollercoaster! There is a true insight about the insidious oppression by the Empire, especially out in the colony worlds, where every day is a struggle even when there is only minor Imperial bureaucracy. Top rate performances by the lead, Diego Luna, Andy Serkis, Adria Arjona and the superb Fiona Shaw.

'House of the Dragon' (HBO) is filled with all the plotting, murderous, backstabbing you would expect from GRRM and carried well on the shoulders of Emma D'Arcy's young Targaryen queen. Technically, it was a disaster: poor sound editing & lighting made me struggle and in fact, one whole episode was rendered unwatchable! However, the climatic finale promises a new season of fire & fury.

If you thought Peter Jackson's Hobbit/LOTR movies were breath-taking eye candy, well, 'The Rings of Power' (Netflix) takes that one step beyond. Truly mythical but honestly, the story is weak and long winded, made almost unbearable by Galadriel. Perhaps it's Morfydd Clark's portrayal: she comes across as a moody teenager looking for something that isn't lost (you'll get my meaning when you watch it). For me, the enduring friendship of Elrond and Prince Durin produced some of the finest scenes in the entire series and yes, yes, purists will say that Dwarven women had beards but honestly, I don't care! Disa (played to perfection by Sophia Nomvete) shines in every moment. Best of all, I got through the entire 8 episodes and was taken totally by surprise by the climatic plot reveal!

Tim Burton's 'Wednesday' (Netflix) was a breath of fresh air and certainly macabre. More faithful to the original comic strip, this is a coming-of-age drama which is a bit Hogwarts meets Monster Squad. Jenna Ortega is remarkable and embraces her role with the kind of simmering sexuality & grim you'd expect from a daughter of Morticia & Gomez. Thing has so much more character & 'soul' than his movie counterpart, giving leverage to a lot of the dark humour that is par for the course in any Burton venture.

Finally, we watched 'The Bones of St. Nicholas' (Inside No.9, BBC): a festive tale set in a haunted church where a secret treasure is rumoured to be hidden but there is a mysterious figure lurking in the shadows. We've been fans of this show since the beginning, created and written by Steve Pemberton & Reece Shearsmith, which features clever, crafty, funny, sometimes gruesome vignettes of the dark side of humanity.

Just so I'm not abnegating all responsibility for 'TV Guide', here's my own off-the-cuff list:

'Strange New Worlds' : I love a good ensemble cast, and I also love that this is such a throwback to the original episodic *Star Trek*.

'The Rings of Power' : Seems like nobody can agree on this. Getting past the wacky accents (*please* let's get past them for sanity's sake), I've seen one reviewer saying how rotten and dull it all is, especially Morfydd Clark (Galadriel), and another saying how rotten and dull it all is except for her. Fuck 'em all, I liked it a lot.

'Slow Horses' : I'm a sucker for spy stuff, and with Gary Oldman, what's not to adore?

'The Flight Attendant' : Spy stuff again, to a fair extent. In this comedy/drama. Kaley Cuoco stars as the awful

but oddly likable main character who inevitably makes the worst decision possible in any given circumstance.

'Leverage: Redemption' : Another fine ensemble. I do miss Timothy Hutton from the original - Noah Wyle isn't as good, but fair enough that he's a very different character and not an attempted like-for-like parachuting in. Or worse, a recast. More Aldis Hodge (Hardison) would have been nice too, since (other than occasional guesting) we miss his character interaction with Christian Kane (Spencer).

On the bubble, 'Andor' : As reviewed lastish. Spy stuff!!

## WAIFS & STRAYS 2022

Selected pics from our annual Boxing Day bash. Missing is late arrival Don Miller.



L-R : Pensive Ken Vaden, Smiley Gene E. Kelly, John W Hardin and prime rib, Alan White loads up, Chris Clay in mid *bon mot*



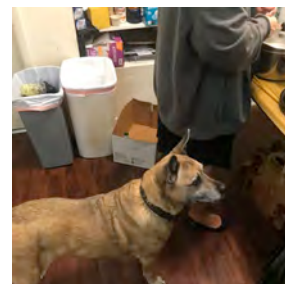
Clockwise: J L Farey, John Hardin, Jacq Monahan, Alan White, Gene E. Kelly, Lori Forbes, Stephanie Zachar, Deb Deckert, Chris Clay



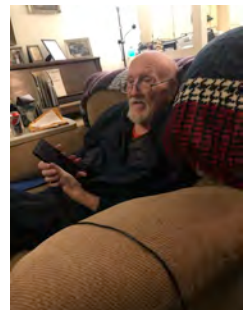
Lori Forbes



J L Farey



Lulu



Ross Chamberlain

# MOVIE NIGHT

## SHAMELESSNESS CONTINUED...

Here's **Perry Middlemiss**:

2022 was the year I returned to the cinema, sort of. My attendance wasn't back to pre-pandemic levels but my once-a-month visits were certainly an improvement on the previous two years. And I for one find it interesting to note that the top four of my films of the year were all watched on the big, silver screen.

It's great to be able to go back.

### 5. **The Stranger**

Australian rural noir, streaming on Netflix, involving a large and complex police sting set up to catch a child killer. It's slow and creepy, dark and disturbing, well-written and well-acted. The best Australian movie I've seen in quite some time.

### 4. **Maigret**

I'm guessing it's a role every major French actor wishes to play and for Gerard Depardieu it's a role he's grown into. As a person he may be odious in ways too many to mention, but as an actor he's sublime.

### 3. **Harvest Time**

A documentary about the recording of Neil Young's album **Harvest** in 1971. No commentary, no recent fixes, just straight filming of the performances. I'm guessing if you don't like Neil Young, or this album, then you'll find this tedious. I didn't.

### 2. **Everything Everywhere All At Once**

A science fiction movie that doesn't take itself too seriously, which pokes fun at the genre, and at the concepts of the multiverse and the "chosen one". And it has talking rocks! What's not to like? The most fun I had in a movie all year. Blows MCU films out of the water.

### 1. **Drive My Car**

I find it strange that I've chosen a three-hour Japanese/Korean film as my best of the year, but there we are. A drama about family, loss, regret, redemption and about trying to find your place in the world. I'm sure there are a lot of cultural references in this film that I completely missed; it doesn't matter. The closest thing to a full-rounded novel I saw on screen all year.

Professional reviewer **Jacq Monahan** weighs in:

### 2022 Top 5 (really 10)

**She Said** – NY Times reporters gather evidence to break the story of Hollywood mogul and sexual predator, Harvey Weinstein. (Ensemble cast)

**Everything, Everywhere, All At Once** – The title nails this mind-bending tale of alternate universes and one lady entrepreneur. (Ensemble cast)

**Tár** – Cate Blanchett is intensity personified as an impossibly accomplished conductor who falls from the pinnacle of her craft via sexual indiscretions, professional missteps, and the relentless eye of social media.

**The Banshees of Inisherin** – Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson (remember them in *In Bruges*?) are lifelong friends on the outs, with extreme consequences for both.

**Blonde** – Ana de Armas stuns as Marilyn Monroe in this adaptation of the Joyce Carol Oates novel. Despite a talking fetus or two and a cervix POV, de Armas is incandescent.

### Honorable Mentions:

**Empire of Light** – Olivia Colman enters a mismatched, though transformative relationship with a young co-worker.

**Women Talking** – Rape and response in a religious sect.

**Glass Onion** – A mystery wrapped in...oh, you know! See Daniel Craig in striped seersucker and mourn the Mona Lisa.

**Till** – heartbreaking re-enactment of the Emmett Till tragedy and his mother's efforts to find justice in a Jim Crow world.

**Good Night Oppy** – Documentary – The little Mars rover that could...and did.

Now sadly for me (and being in a rush), I'll just mention a couple of movies I've got around to seeing this year (and can half remember, excluding the raft of DCAU offerings dating back to - er - a long-ago date). Not all of the following are from 2022.

I can only concur with others' opinions of the quite brilliant 'Everything, Everywhere, All at Once' - stellar performances, although I have to admit some of the scenes from the hotdog fingers universe were a bit queasy weren't they? I'll endorse (again) 'Good Night, Oppy' as mentioned by **Jacq** above, and 'Glass Onion' which was well fab. Seems like actors are having fun all over the place playing batshit messiah-complex fraud tech squillionaires, and Edward Norton is no exception here, but it'll take a lot to exceed Mark Rylance's turn in 'Don't Look Up'.

'Wrath of Man' (2021): Directed by Guy Ritchie, starring Jason Statham. I'm well up for a Ritchie movie (usually), especially if Statham is in it an'all. This was interesting for its defined four-act structure. As violent as you'd expect, and a lovely turn by Andy Garcia.

'Last Night in Soho' (2021): Directed by Edgar Wright. And what a fuckin' cast! Thomasin McKenzie excels in the lead,

and you've got Anya Taylor-Joy as her sort-of alter ego, Matt Smith as a right bastard, not to mention Rita Tushingham, Terence Stamp and Diana Rigg (in her last film). I'll admit it took me probably half an hour to get into this properly, and it might be thus for you an'all, but once I had it was fuckin' riveting.

'Bullet Train' (2022): Directed by David Leitch. Ignore the inevitable "incorrectness" moans about adapting a Japanese story with a largely non-Asian cast. Kinetic and hilarious, and could be Brad Pitt's best turn since Mickey in 'Snatch'. Great line: Lemon (Brian Tyree Henry) to Ladybug (Pitt): "You look like every homeless white guy I've ever seen". Brilliant ending an'all...

## FOOTY

BY DAVID HODSON

Following on from the disappointment\* of Luton Town's home Championship match against Millwall being postponed due to a frozen pitch on December 18<sup>th</sup>, the footballing world had to make do with the most blatantly scripted climax to an international tournament of all time.

Argentina against France allowed the undisputed (okay, some will dispute this, but I don't and it's my opinion that counts around here) greatest player of all-time, Lionel Andrés Messi, to face off against his most likely successor as the current best player in the world, Kylian Mbappé Lottin. In an advertising executives most perfect fever dream of hyperbole, it was inevitable that newspapers and sports websites would revise the 3-3 extra-time draw into the greatest game of football ever played and the greatest world cup final ever. Truth be told, Argentina was coasting at 2-0 up in the 80<sup>th</sup> minute of normal time when they gave away a complete brain-fart of a penalty to allow France to draw the game back to 2-1, and then nearly shat the entire bed to allow Mbappé to score an 81<sup>st</sup> minute equaliser. Prior to this France had been woeful and Mbappé looked like a Sunday pub player, just with swankier boots than his hungover teammates. Both sides scored again in extra-time and Argentina went on to lift the trophy after a 4-2 penalty shot-out victory. All very dramatic, but best game ever? It would take a lot to beat the 1970 World Cup final between Brazil and Italy, where Pele became the only player to collect three World Cup winner's medals in a 4-1 Brazilian victory, but then again, that game isn't available in 8k ultra high definition with high wire Spidercam views from every possible angle, so probably doesn't count with modern pundits.

To be fair to the tournament organisers, it didn't take a great deal of engineering to ensure the final that the Qatari hosts needed in order to confirm the legitimacy of the tournament

and television companies all around the world wanted to boost their viewing figures. Morocco had threatened to be dark horses after beating Spain 3-0 in the last 16 and Portugal 1-0 in the quarter-finals before being seen off by the French in the semi-finals, but the tournament generally reeked of bang average teams elevated by the presence, or not, of an exceptional individual in some cases (Modric still managing to carry Croatia to third place in the tournament at the age of thirty-seven; Harry Kane missing a crucial penalty in the quarter-finals against France).

The closest potential upset to the apple cart was France coming up against England in the quarter-finals and that missed penalty, although France definitely had more than a little help with another stonewall penalty not being awarded against them in the first half by Brazilian referee Wilton Sampaio and an obvious foul against England's Bukayo Saka in the build-up to their first goal not being given. Even the second penalty that was given after a clear and obvious barge on Mason Mount needed intervention from V.A.R. to tell the referee he'd made a clear and obvious mistake in waving play on.

It would be easy to dismiss these objections as sour grapes and that's what F.I.F.A. essentially relies upon, but then along comes former Dutch international captain and ex-Chelsea manager [Ruud Gullit with an explanation](#) that, although he dismissed it afterwards as a joke, had a horrifying ring of truth: in an exchange with Daily Mail journalist (a combination of words from the original story, not one you'd ever see from me) Martin Samuel, Gullit asked how Samuel was enjoying the football. Samuel replied that the football was great, but he still had qualms about Qatar as a venue, to which Gullit replied "You guys, you're always moaning, you never learn, that's why you end up with a referee from South America."

Samuel went on to add when he wrote up the article for the Mail: "...and he meant it as a joke, but really? That's the deal? England get Wilton Sampaio because its media reports on migrant worker deaths. I can't believe that, not even of FIFA — but if it's even a quarter true, it's worse than we thought."

Richard Keys, once of Sky Sports, felt compelled to reply to the article by tweeting: "This was a joke, I was with Ruud two minutes after he'd seen Sammy [Martin Samuel]. But it does make you wonder.

"I've spoken of English arrogance for years. Drop the daft song and stop lecturing the world. It might help."

I don't know if these responses by Samuel and Keys count as smoke screening, non-denial denials, or anything else, but neither strike me as convincing and this is the problem. F.I.F.A. is now regarded as such a corrupt organisation that none of its decisions can ever be considered wholly clean. I don't think Qatar was picked solely on the basis of brown

\* *Sarcasm (Ed.)*

envelopes stuffed full of fifty Euro notes, but, if other recent news stories are to be believed - [Belgian police arrested four people, among them European Parliament Vice-President Eva Kaili](#), in early December on charges of corruption and money laundering for the middle eastern state – then it's likely to have played a part along with opening up a northern hemisphere winter slot in the international footballing calendar for F.I.F.A. to insert a new club competition with which to fill its coffers.

This column has been a struggle, mostly because I came down with the most horrendous head cold just before Christmas – the type of head cold that feels like you have 5 gallons of snot congealing in your sinuses and puts such weight on the front of your face that leaning forwards feels like it's going to tear everything between your upper lip and forehead away from the bone into a bloody heap on the floor and that's before having to wear sunglasses to type at a screen.

Then along comes a news story, mid-column, that blows every other footballing story out of the water. Not only was it the second football related story of the year to make the front pages of every British newspaper, including the Financial Times, but also the front pages of just about every newspaper anywhere in the world, with the possible exception of Russia.

Edson Arantes do Nascimento, known around the world as Pele, died aged 82 of complications of colon cancer and respiratory and heart problems in a São Paulo hospital yesterday (December 29<sup>th</sup>).

Up until this World Cup, I would have called Pele the undoubted best footballer to have ever graced a pitch, but he never had to steer a bunch of mediocrities like the current Argentina team to a final, let alone a tournament victory. Pele is the only player with three World Cup winners' medals, although he barely featured in 1962 due to injury. He would have denied England victory in 1966 had not Portugal and Bulgaria kicked absolute lumps out of him in the group stage games. He actually retired from international football in the wake of the physical abuse he took in '66, but returned in 1970 after receiving assurances about the expected standards of refereeing to star in the finest side to ever play the game. The 1970 World Cup in Mexico was one of two formative television

experiences to a child at the end of the 60s: the Apollo 11 moon landing in 1969 promised a wonderful technological future that, despite the internet and phenomenal advances in just about every field of human endeavour, never seems to have been fulfilled; Mexico 1970 seemed to offer a future of optimistic sunshine where mass, worldwide, and democratic communications would enhance all societies which all too soon collapsed into a decade of nihilism.

Pele was a black man on a par with Cassius Clay / Muhammad Ali, Sidney Poitier, and Martin Luther King, who could be admired by white people openly and on what was at least perceived to be a level playing field. Whereas the other three could be perceived as dangerous on some level or another to white society, Pele was felt to be safer whilst not slipping into "Uncle Tom" territory like a few others were accused of doing.

There's also a perception that Pele was perfect in all he did, but he was nearly declared bankrupt twice after showing some poor judgements investing for his and his family's future through the 1960s and he only returned from retirement to play for the New York Cosmos in the mid-1970s due to destitution. Later still he was accused of using charity monies he had raised for his own businesses, but this was subsequently disproved. Whilst certainly not perfect, Pele was never involved in scandals like some of those to dog future "superstars".

Anyone wanting to know more about Pele and his life should look at The Guardian's [A Life in Pictures](#) feature. It tells so much more than I can with some beautiful photography.



As I finish this column, the UK New Year's Honours List has just been announced: ex-Tottenham, Arsenal, and Northern Ireland goalkeeper Pat Jennings has been made a CBE for services to sport and charity and four members of the England women's Euro winning squad have been honoured - captain Leah Williamson is made an OBE, whilst teammates Lucy Bronze, Beth Mead and Ellen White become MBEs. A summary of the honours awarded, and a brief explanation of what the honours represent, can be found on the [Beeb website](#).

Enough of this frippery, I'm off to have a well-earned cough, wheeze, and sneeze!

# LOCO CITATO

[[“We must never be afraid to go too far, for truth lies beyond.” (Marcel Proust)...]]

From: orangemike@gmail.com

November 26

**Mike Lowrey** writes:

Two quick notes: 1. I am delighted that the Orange Arsehole referred to is not me. I bitterly resent that my favorite color has been tainted by association with That Guy, rather than with freedom movements in Ukraine and the NDP in Canada. 2. There are no officially announced candidacies for TAFF yet, so you’re kinda jumping the gun. I expect that by deadline there will be at least two, both known to you; but that’s about all I am willing (or permitted) to say right now.

*[[I did, of course fess to the naughtiness of the early mention, but I had cleared this with S&ra beforehand (as you’d expect). You’re wrong about both candidates being known to me, though. I have no idea who Kowalewski is, and indeed only recognized the name of one of his nominators. Conversely, having been sworn to silence, I had to congratulate the 2022 Rotsler Award winner (‘Indulge Me’ lastish) without naming her...]]*

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From: phillies@4liberty.net

November 26

**George Phillies** writes:

You think the N3F has a lot of bureaus? NESFA calls them committees, but take a look at this:

*[[What follows is several copy/pasted pages listing all NESFA’s committees and office-holders (if they use that term, even), and I’m DoBFO not printing that fuckin’ lot. This is another typical George “Yes, but look over there” response, the usual apples and oranges. NESFA (unlike N3F) runs a major regional convention, a couple of other smaller ones, maintains a clubhouse and has a publishing arm among sundry and many other activities - it also has, as far as I can tell, four times the dues-paying membership (which is worldwide) of the supposedly national N3F. I wickedly point out that, conversely, George has John Thiel wasting pages in ‘Origin’ bleating about what a fine fellow the plagiarist Jeffrey Redmond is because here are pictures of him with cats. Thiel declines to mention the rank plagiarism that got Redmond suspended from contributing to N3F zines for six months (I think), leading to puzzlement in his ‘Origin’ review from Guy Lillian in the latest ish of ‘The Zine Dump’ along the lines of “WTF was that even about?”. George replies to me a few days later with the admission*

*that NESFA does indeed do more stuff, but notes “We actually have more voting members than they do”, implying an equivalence which may or may not exist. Speaking of voting, it’s election time over at N3F, and John Thiel is a directorate candidate. Perhaps those “more voting members” might wish to consider whether, after sadly losing the uplift which had been provided by Justin Busch, they really want to elect someone seemingly intent on dragging it all into the mire. George’s brief plaint should have been WAHFed, really, but the length of my response places it up here. Fandom’s Finest Soap Opera continues to coggle - it might even be worth an actual continuing column at this rate [mass chair plummeting ensues]...]]*

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From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

November 26

**Gary Mattingly** writes:

*This Here... #58*

Egotorial: My goodness, such scatological memories of Corflu Pangloss. Fortunately I did not have such memories. I also didn’t have any Guinness. I also wouldn’t say that I ate huge amounts of food so there is that. (Whereas today, Thanksgiving Day, I may eat a bit more than I should but maybe tomorrow I will eat next to nothing if I decide to go be in a parade in the Niles district of Fremont as part of the East Bay Regional Parks volunteers. The silly thing is that the organizer of the EBRP entry into the parade indicates we should get there by 3PM to get parking and might not leave until 9 PM. The sillier thing is that the parade itself may only last 30 minutes to an hour max. Now the question arises in my brain, do I take the dogs or not? It is a tad chilly and very boring just sitting around waiting. Decisions, decisions. Also I normally only eat between the hours of around 3:30 to 6:30 so thus the hours noted above would cause me to not eat very much at all. I suppose I could bring some nuts and stuff. However that period of time is also when I feed the dogs. Problems. (Sorry for the digression.)

Ah, I also didn’t miss much of the programs, due to both, as previously noted, lack of Guinness, and also never having gotten into the habit of smoking.

Strangely enough, I don’t remember anyone’s accent. Guess it just wasn’t notable enough to shove into some memory hole in my brain.

I never got to the Bayside Lounge, pity I guess. The whole weekend the only alcohol I had was two margaritas at a restaurant near the water, I think it was/is called the Cactus Club Cafe. It is right next to the water. They had good french fries which is the only thing I ate there.

I too enjoyed the convention and I am sorry you won’t be in Belfast. I wasn’t sure I would go to Belfast or not but I really want to see a number of people who will be there and who

weren't at Pangloss, such as John Hall, Roy Kettle, Harry and Pat Bell, the Mearas, and more.

**[[Tell 'em all I said 'ello...]]**

Radio Winston: Very interesting article about Viola Smith. She sounds fascinating. She had quite a life.

Omphaloskepsis: Obviously plagiarism is not good. I don't think I've ever checked for such instances in fanzines I read but I know how easy it is to copy and paste things. I also try to show quotes and sources if I copy something.

Movie Night: I have not seen 'Control' I don't recall hearing about it either. You cite IMDb often and I use it too when talking about movies on facebook. I have noted that occasionally whoever writes the short blurbs at the top may not have always watched the movie and/or not watched it very closely. They occasionally make statements which are just totally wrong and if one actually watched the movie would realize it. Sorry, off on a tangent.

Anyway, 'Control' seems to have received relatively low ratings but if I get a chance to watch it, I'll give it a try. The most recent movie I watched was last night on Peacock streaming. It was 'Brian and Charles'. It did get higher ratings than 'Control'. It is just a fairly light 90 minute comedy, again IMDb, "After a particularly harsh winter Brian goes into a deep depression; completely isolated and with no one to talk to, Brian does what any sane person would do when faced with such a melancholic situation. He builds a robot.". They don't mention that Brian is sort of a wacky inventor and has invented any number of odd things, many of which do not work. Anyway, it is a nice, light, sort of dopey movie about a man and his robot. I

started watching 'Slumberland' but stopped. Don't know if I will go back and watch the rest. Ah, I also watched 'Vampire Negro' which isn't about a vampire. It is a remake of 'M' and has female main characters and far more of a "feminist" view. It is an Argentinean film released in 1953.

***[[I didn't think I quoted IMDb that much, but if you say so Gary. 'Control' did indeed get low ratings, but as we often do, it was enjoyed round here despite what others might think about it. Similarly, we just clocked 'Jurassic World: Dominion' which also got pretty well slagged off (it was a tad overlong), but I was good with the "getting the band back together" partial premise, and to be quite honest I'd pay actual money to watch Laura Dern read the fuckin' phone book...]]***

I keep ordering films and I have no idea when I'm going to have time to watch them all. A new 4k release of 'Ip Man 2'

showed up today. I'm still waiting for 'Ip Man' and 'Ip Man 3' in new 4k releases to show up. Also received a new 4k release of 'The Polar Express'.

TV Guide: I liked that episode of 'Dr. Who' and yeah, there were dodgy parts but I sort of expect them in most of the episodes. I actually have a fairly complete set of discs on the shelves of 'Dr. Who' but haven't watched a lot of them yet. I couldn't possibly follow the numbering of the Doctors. I think it would be entertaining to go back and watch episodes from the past with some of the former companions and then rewatch this episode again. I have my doubts I'll ever get around to that but it sounds like a good idea. As for me, mainly I've been watching 'The English' which is a pretty good series, IMO. I finished watching it and still enjoyed the whole thing. It is actually a mini-series and as far as I can tell, won't have another season. I previously watched all the episodes of 'Peripheral' up to the latest episodes. I've

watched all of the current episodes of 'Andor' which I find entertaining including its recent season finale and also 'Quantum Leap'. 'Andor' is better than 'Quantum Leap' though, IMO. I've also starting watching 'Wednesday' (the character from the Addams family), a new serial on Netflix. I enjoy it. There are 8 episodes in the first season, all of which have been released but I haven't watched them all yet. Four episodes are directed by Tim Burton. I have also watched all the current episodes of 'Warrior Nun' which I find entertaining. Why, I even bought a plastic figure of Warrior Nun on EBay (the cheap current one, not the expensive older one). Not sure exactly where I will put it. I don't normally buy such things but I felt some strange urge come over me to get this



one. Now while perusing EBAY I noted that there were Zulu and British figures from the Zulu war with the British. I don't buy small military figures but I thought they were cool. In high school in an independent study course I studied South African history from the time the Portuguese first landed up to and including the Boer War. I've also watched the 2 or 3 movies made about the Zulu war. One of these days I really want to go to South Africa and wander around. I also plan to watch 'Willow' which I believe starts next week. Watched one episode of '1899' and I may return to that. Hm, can't immediately what else I've watched recently but there have been a number of things. I do also watch 'The Good Doctor' with which I occasionally get annoyed but continue to watch it season after season. Hm, I also watch 'Last Week Tonight with John Oliver' and 'Rick and Morty'.

*[[You watch a fuck of a lot more than we do - I simply don't have the time. I think 'Peripheral' may be on the list, though...]]*

Taffnessabounds: Good luck, if you're nominated for TAFF. I've seen the recent requests for nominees but haven't put forward any names.

*[[I'm quite shocked, at [falls off chair] levels, that you appear to have zero fuckin' clue about how TAFF actually works. I won't be standing now or ever. It took several years of forceful stating of that before the Big Eejit James Bacon stopped asking me if I'd have a go...]]*

Footy: Well Not much to comment on for me relative to footy and cricket. I wouldn't go to Qatar for soccer though. I never had any Meccano. I did make some models. My primary problem was that I was usually in too much of a rush. This resulted in some of the paint not being fully dry when I started gluing things which resulted in a mess frequently. Sometime I was patient but usually I was not. My gluing was okay and I didn't usually get anything intractably stuck together that shouldn't have been stuck together.

Loco Citato:

**Brad Foster:** We have both DirecTV and streaming services and I spend far too much timing watching and/or sampling various series and movies.

Nic - with respect to getting rid of "tat" when retired, I seem to have been accumulating more. Must stop.

**John Hertz:** I agree that the US Democratic party are center right or possibly center but, for the most part, certainly not progressive.

**Bob Jennings:** "personal myths regarding the number . . ." The numbers that come into my mind are 23 which does seem to appear fairly frequently on hotel room doors in movies and also has been mentioned in a few books I've read in the past, so I sort of like the number. Of course there is 666 (or should it be 616?) which I find entertaining. 5 is another number I like. Do I immediately recall numbers which I think of unfavorably? Nothing immediately comes to mind.

With respect to buying supporting memberships in conventions, which I mainly only do for Corflu (if I'm not attending) and occasionally the Worldcon, primarily to vote, my mind wanders to buying subscriptions in newspapers and magazines. I personally do this because I think print media should not die even though I don't read each and every article in the various and sundry newspapers and magazines to which I subscribe. Obviously some (most?) people disagree with this since most fail to be able to read links to articles in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlantic*, *Business Insider* or various

and sundry media links on facebook that I post due to paywalls.

**Gary Mattingly:** Yes a number of people wear Hawaiian shirts but I don't. Actually I rarely see anyone wearing them in any stores I frequent or out in the general public. Mostly I see Hawaiian shirts on older fans. I suppose if I took more cruises or went to more touristy hotels I might see more Hawaiian shirts but that is just a guess on my part.

Justin E.A. Busch by **William Breiding:** Obviously I need to go investigate Justin E.A. Busch because I must admit absolutely no familiarity with what he has done but it sounds interesting and worthy. I am sorry for his passing even though I have no knowledge of his work or him personally.

With respect to your fanzines received, I only received *Portable Storage* and *Captain Flashback* (I think) but must profusely apologize that I have read neither up to this point.

Indulge Me: I haven't watched 'The Climate Question' so can't comment on that.

*[[I'm keen to discover how you might "watch" a radio program...]]*

Again, I always enjoy the artwork by **Brad W. Foster** and **Ulrika O'Brien** and I enjoy your included photos also.

This is a somewhat shorter missive than I would like but I keep working on the LoC, doing a little bit, stopping and a day passes. I do a bit more and another day passes. I must finish this before the next *TH...* . I must admit to going through the LoCs rather quickly. However I don't know that I can add much to the discussion of fanzines, editors and editing. Sometimes the editing style may be seen as "bad" but more often than not it shows the character and personality of the editor and that, in and of itself, can prove interesting, even entertaining. If one reads fanzines by this same editor one can become far more familiar with the editor, his or her likes or dislikes, and whether or not that person is a character you might like, even if their editing, um, sucks. Of course, you may learn this person is a lazy bore, not interesting in any way, and the reading of their fanzines is a complete and total waste of time. Just as in general society, there are a number of those. Who knows, some people might include me in their own category of bores and wastrels. Such is life.

Thought I would include the link to Areal, Warrior Nun <https://www.ebay.com/itm/324189380233>

Also thought I would include a link to the Zulu warrior figures:

[tinyurl.com/2p8p9ts6](http://tinyurl.com/2p8p9ts6)

Enough, the current episode of 'Wednesday' is almost over and I must walk the dogs.

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From: jabberwocky2000@hotmail.com

November 26

**Brad Foster** writes:

Bundled up and trying to just survive through a couple of days of a nasty cold and cough. Fortunately, do not have to be anywhere, and no looming deadlines just now, so I can be a coughing, sniffing lump for a while and wait for this to work its way through. Maybe do some stuff on the computer-- at least when I screw up here, always have the "undo" button on hand!

Took my first couple of boxes of old vinyl to the local "retro-expo" where I have been selling my old toy robots this past year, and they got a decent response. Moved several dozen lps, mostly the rock-n-roll variety, though that is also what I mainly took to see if there was any interest at all in old vinyl. Most of the collection is of the jazz and jazz-fusion style from the 70s and 80s. Not sure how much interest still out there for that. Still, it cleared another box out of the house, so one step at a time. Cindy started in bravely tackling one bookcase stuffed full of books last week, and we managed to pull three boxes worth out of that to sell off. Also found a few that neither one of us remember ever getting, and a couple more to re-read, so, hey, not bad.

*[[I think the interest in vinyl has gone up even more since I sold off a bunch 15 years ago or so. I recall unusual interest from Japan in relatively obscure disco 12" singles, as well as remembering the 12" 'Steel Leg vs The Electric Dread' being snapped up with alacrity - that was a one-off project by Jah Wobble, "Stratetime Keith" (Keith Levene), Don Letts and "Steel Leg" (Wobble's mate Vince Bracken) on vocals. It's since been described (on Discogs) as the "missing link between PiL's 'First Issue' and 'Metal Box' ". I was at the time attracted by the track title 'Haile Unlikely', followed on the four-track effort by a more dub version yclept 'Unlikely Pub'...]]*

For now though -cough cough-, just hoping to survive another rainy, cold, "autumn day" in Texas. Will be less grumpy when I stop coughing up pale yellow phlegm. Ah, life!

*[[Faneds may yearn for the "old days" when art arrived in the post with accompanying phlegm stains. Or not...]]*

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From: absarka\_prime@comcast.net

November 26

**Curt Phillips** writes:

That female band leader whose name you weren't able to recall may be Ina Ray Hutton, whose all-girl band was a small sensation in the mid 30's and early 40's. "Ina Ray Hutton and Her Mellowdears" gained their widest audience during the war as a frequent house band on the radio

program, 'The Coca-Cola Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands', where Coca-Cola paid for bands to play mini-concerts for war plant workers during their 30 minute lunch break as a morale booster.

*[[It was actually Bob Jennings who admitted the lack of recollection. Of course, I wholly defer to your extensive knowledge of the genre and the period here...]]*

I once worked with an Engineer named Ray Guilde who, back in the late 30's, was contracted by Hutton to design and build a body mic that could be glued to her chest just between her breasts. If you look closely at films of her performances from that period you can sometimes see the microphone cord at the bottom hem of her very tight fitting show dresses. Ray told me that he made sure that he needed as many fitting sessions with the stunningly attractive Hutton as he could get away with.

*[[And you can see why...]]*

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From: daverabban@gmail.com

November 28

**Dave Cockfield** writes:

Nice one!

Thankfully **Dave Hodson** featured Cricket in his column. The World Cup has been dire. Not only boring but very few of these super rich footballers seem to be able to make an accurate pass forward.

I thought that you were not a fan of the original 'Quantum Leap' but you gave a perfect explanation of what happens during the Leaping process. You must be a secret fanboy.

*[[I don't know where you got the idea that I wasn't keen on the original. Quite a fan, actually...]]*

Even more delightful was your mention of one of my heroes. Alf Tupper. I wanted to be him or The Flash, when I was young because I was never much of a runner unless necessitated to avoid bullies.

I have a great book from about 10 years ago collecting strips over his whole career. The reproduction on glossy paper unfortunately is not up to the standard of the wonderful newsprint paper of the comics.

*[[Interesting thought that the grubby newsprint would be in any way superior to a posh reprint, but I totally get it...]]*

Another great volume is 'Sporting Supermen' by Brendan Gallagher. It is a history of Roy of the Rovers, Alf Tupper, and his forerunner, Wilson the Wonder Athlete.

The latter featured in prose stories in 'The Wizard' then graduated to comic strips in 'The Horner' and 'The Hotspur'.

I shall leave you on that nostalgic note.

\*\*\*

From: jakaufman@aol.com

November 29

**Jerry Kaufman** writes:

I woke up to a thin layer of snow on the ground and the roofs in our neighborhood, but it's starting to melt now. We could have more later, so I'll be stuck in the house, reading and watching movies - not much different from my usual routine. And writing letters full of picky little details.

I figured out your new crossword clue quickly, but I feel too much of the answer to solve an entire puzzle composed of this sort of puzzle. I wonder how much patience the puzzle-writer would need to put one together.

*[[Not so much patience really - it's something you do (as a crossword compiler) only if you enjoy it...]]*

I keep thinking about taking on a project beyond the ways I waste time now, but find myself without the passion necessary to start and keep myself on track to complete any. I have considered and discarded such projects as collecting all of Robert AW Lowndes' *Outworlds* columns (Bill Bowers announced in a later issue that he planned to do so) or reissuing Serconia Press's *The Straits of Messina* by Delany (he says he can't find anyone willing).

You mention talking with Tom Feller at Corflu, but he wasn't a member, nor was he there. Do you mean Tom Becker, perhaps?

*[[Becker, of course. Apologies all round...]]*

Your note about TAFF says that you'll be supporting **Sandra Bond** (to attend Pemmi-con, I presume). Does Sandra know she's standing? Silly question, I suppose, but this is the first I've heard of it. You've probably jumped the gun in telling this to the fannish world.

*[[An exceptionally silly question. See also reply to Mike Lowrey at the top of the loccol...]]*

I'm listening to First Aid Kit's *Palomino* on Spotify, though I'd really like to hear their Leonard Cohen album *Who By Fire* (not on Spotify). Jennifer Warnes did an album of Cohen covers called *Famous Blue Raincoat*, which is one of my favorite albums. What's particularly weird about this is that I have exactly one Cohen album, his very first. This is my contribution to Radio Winston.

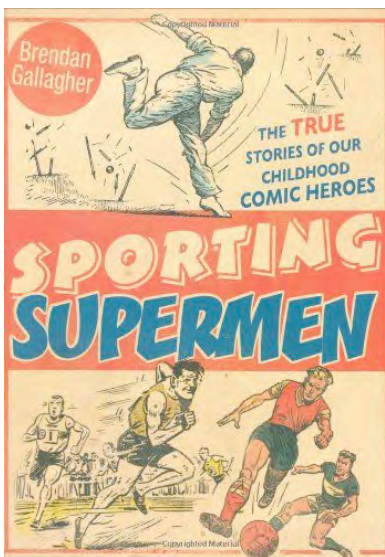
FX ran the first two episodes of *Andor*, which we enjoyed, though having little memory of *Rogue One*, I had no idea what made it a Star Wars series. None of the Star Wars movies that followed the original trilogy made much of an impression on me.

Regarding **Bob Jennings** on female brass players, I think that Sly and the Family Stone had a woman playing trumpet. There's a female trumpeter who plays classical music, Alison Balsom - I have several CDs by her.

*[[Also immediately leaping to mind would be Jude Abbott (Chumbawumba) and probably a goodly number of members of the Polyphonic Spree...]]*

**Leigh Edmonds** says he likes the word "curate" as used by **Wm. Breiding** to describe what faneds do. The word has become very popular in the past several years, after being used for a very long time (more than a century, perhaps) to describe what the people who manage museum collections do. Now shop owners curate the selection of stuff they sell, no matter what they specialize in.

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From: 236 S. Coronado St #409, Los Angeles CA 90057

December 2

**John Hertz** writes:

TH... is one of the better fanzines. Thanks.

I seldom agree with anything you say. But I don't read fanzines to be agreed with.

*[[Paradoxically, perhaps, that's something we agree on...]]*

You do exercise my sense of wonder.

I tell you your shoelace is untied. You say DoBFO. But you don't tie your shoelace. Then you fall. It gives me cause to wonder.

*[[This is such utter gibberish I can only compare it to the gibberish gold standard of W.B. Yeats...]]*

About the sad state of the fan-category Hugos, Justin Busch quoted from my fanzine *Vanamonde*: "I don't mind people nominating what they think best; I grieve over people's not nominating what they think best." I've said it was like having a spade in hand, looking at the ground, and crying "Why doesn't that hole get dug?" You said "first you have to buy the spade". Of course there are people for whom the price of a Supporting Membership in a Worldcon - average US\$50 - 5/7 the price of a bottle of Talisker - is prohibitive. But from what I read and hear that's not the main issue.

*[[And round and round we go. I might at this point be tempted to purchase an actual physical shovel for the sole purpose of fuckin' hitting you with it. It's worth noting that others (eg Alison Scott, Mark Plummer) have sought to persuade me that a WorldThing supporting membership is decent value for money, but every time they manage to move the dial a bit, you come along and piss me off so fuckin' royally that it returns to its less than zero default. I get told by WorldThing habitues of my (elsewhere) happy acquaintance that in person you're an engaging and interesting conversationalist, but most of your letters (especially on this well-worn topic) suggest that you could bore professionally, and I believe there is an informal fannish league table for that. Any further terminally tedious repetition of bollocks about shoelaces and shovels will be WAHFed with the Uncut Bicycle Service breakdown message: "Meanwhile, [here is some music](#)" ...]]*

Jeanne Mealy wrote of learning Busch lived across town. She talked to him on the phone and saw his apartment, naturally full of books and fanzines. She recruited him for Stipple-Apa. I approve.

\*\*\*

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

December 9

**Kim Huett** writes:

Admittedly my Jethro Tull (or Jethro Toe as they were once accidentally labelled) line wasn't hard to guess but at least guessing correctly made you feel smart.

*[[I was smart already, but thanks anyway...]]*

I suppose it's time we stopped dancing around the topic so I'll start and you come in whenever you feel ready. The fictional characters I most want to go to a bar with are The Tick and Wolverine. Yes, I can think of many vastly more interesting conversationalists than these two but bars are not for weighty conversation or high-flown theorising. Bars are for talking bollocks in and The Tick is a master of talking bollocks. Admittedly Wolverine is not any sort of conversationalist but that's okay as I'm inviting him along as an experiment. What I want to do is get The Tick going and then sit back to see how long it takes Wolverine to lose his temper and proceed to beat the living crap out of The Tick.

Of course I admit there is an obvious flaw in this plan. While I understand The Tick and Wolverine are both extremely difficult to damage, I'm not quite so invulnerable and I've yet to devise a way of observing all the shenanigans without ending up in hospital myself. Suggestions are always welcome.

I did consider replacing The Tick with Freakazoid but I suspect the latter is a little too situationally aware to achieve the desired result. I've no doubt Freakazoid would be willing to annoy Wolverine but he's clearly smart enough to defuse the situation every time it seems shit is about to get real.

*[[The first name that came to mind for me in this hypothetical was John Constantine. Later, in the spirit of your confrontational approach, I added Doctor Fate...]]*

On the topic of which, I don't understand why anybody would be more than mildly interested in watching rhythmic leg flopping. Admittedly you do mention that there's a creepy old pervert reason involving jiggling tits but really, if that's what somebody wants, then they should just be brave and watch some pornography instead. As a wise man once said, "Muffins are for people too embarrassed to admit to eating cake for breakfast!" Clearly the same can be said about those watching women do rhythmic leg flopping. Me, I'll watch Devo's video for '[I Can't Get No Satisfaction](#)' instead as it has superior acrobatics.

Oh, and I suppose it's almost that time of year when you have the Beachboys' 'Little



Saint Nick' on permanent repeat...

*[[Not me, pal. You're quite at liberty, though, to take the piss out of the fact that my choices are more likely to be Kevin Bloody Wilson's NSFW 'Hey Santa Claus' and Spiraling's 'Do You Hear What I Hear'...]]*

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From: dave\_redd@hotmail.com

December 9

**David Redd** writes:

Thanks for *TH...* #59 and sorry I'm feeling particularly brainless at the moment. My apologies for lack of witty engaged comments; I think I'm on the verge of gaffiation. Your mention of "Polly Filler" reminds me that it was a classic *Private Eye* concoction, managing to insult the lady's looks as well as her professional standing, clever but rather unfair. (But that's an old and trivial thought, only included as an example of me unable to offer anything new.) **Brad Foster** made me smile. Cold and frosty here, nothing crisp or deep or even so far. Anyway, wishing you and Jen a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

*[[Always nice to hear from you mate, however briefly...]]*

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From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

December 9

**Eli Cohen** writes:

Apologies for the delay in responding -- I think the last two issues of *This Here...* arrived while we were travelling (we spent a week in Seattle after Corflu, and went to New Orleans for the World Fantasy Convention), and got eaten by the Earthlink spam filter (which seems really hostile to you; or maybe they hired John Thiel to do the filtering) when I wasn't paying attention (I have to check it frequently as stuff gets automatically deleted after a few days). I just happened to notice the new issues while randomly browsing eFanzines.

#58:

Corflu, yes -- I too had a great time, especially meeting in person people I only knew from print (er, should that be "e-print"? Is a pdf still "print"?), such as you and **Jen** (though I didn't get to talk to you that much). It was also interesting to visit Vancouver (where I lived for three years) for the first time in over 40 years -- I found the city completely unrecognizable, especially the U.B.C. campus. But the view across English Bay is eternal, and always wonderful to see.

*[[Likewise on meeting, of course, though I was expecting a much broader accent off you after Jerry Kaufman had talked it up so much. As to whether a pdf is a "print" - I dunno,*

*why not? E-publishing has adopted quite a lot of the terminology we'd associate with paper, hasn't it?...]]*

**Leigh Edmonds**, in the letter column, calls me "distinguished looking"! Wow! It's amazing what getting old will do for you. Fortunately, at our Corflu panel, he showed a 1974 picture of me that undercuts that description.

Your offhand remark about spindizzies in a response to **David Redd's** loc leads me to think you are unaware that the spindizzies were added in 2018 (see "Year 2018!" by James Blish) -- I retired in that year because I didn't want to miss the takeoff while I was at work in Greenwich, Connecticut. Said takeoff appears to have been unaccountably delayed, though, I guess because of budget problems.

*[[I knew that!...]]*

#59 starts right off with one of your crossword clues -- I would tell you I solved it, but I see the answer is there at the end of your Egotorial. So you'd have to take my word for it (my word being, of course, "ennui").

I applaud your looking forward to all the projects you'll be doing after you retire. I, too, had a long list of stuff I was planning to do. I still have it. It's a total mystery to me where all the time goes, now that I don't have a job taking up all those hours! By the way, did you know that Netflix has a 9 hour version of 'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo'? It's really good. Where was I? Oh, yes, I have no idea where all my time goes. Can't be writing locs to fanzines. Anyway, best of luck on your post-retirement plans.

*[[I suspect my own list will resemble yours at least in terms of length. Rather than 'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo' I could reasonably suspect that I'd get waylaid by a view of the unedited version of Bertolucci's 'Novocento' and a re-reading of Gramsci's 'Prison Notebooks'. Tentative plans for Cor41u in Las Vegas in 2024 include a "retirement party" panel (followed naturally by an actual party) for me, Rich Coad and Lucy Huntzinger - perhaps you'd consent to participate as a venerable and of course distinguished looking advisor?...]]*

And yes, congratulations to **Ulrika** on the Rotsler award! Which reminds me, I need to loc the *Beam* I was given at Corflu, certainly before another issue of *This Here...* appears.

*[[And you have, for which thanks from me and on behalf of my esteemed (or often merely steamed) co-editor...]]*

\*\*\*

From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

December 9

**Gary Mattingly** writes again:

I worked very hard to get this to you before the deadline as opposed to after it and also to get the email address right this time.

Egotorial: I have all kinds of projects I'm interested in doing until it gets down to the actual work involved. I'm going to say that my problem isn't exactly laziness or ennui but rather I have a great quantity of projects and a limited amount of time even though I'm retired. So sometimes things that I really should get done like cleaning up and weeding the back yard don't get done because there's also hiking and watching classic movies which have a higher pleasure factor involved. Why, even writing LoCs has a higher pleasure factor than working in the back yard. Admittedly the pleasure levels or areas change. I used to do a lot of work in the back yard because I found greater pleasure in it. Possibly now it is just so overwhelming that the pleasure level is a bit low. The same can be said for any of the other projects I have in my brain or even occur on to do lists that I have created.

Fortunately or unfortunately I don't have the whiskey (or any alcohol for that matter) issue to blame. I think for a lot of people who have retired there is that alcohol and/or marijuana and/or other "drug of choice" issue that winds up using up a lot of their time. That too is just a choice of levels of pleasure involved.

*[[As the old saying goes, it's possible that I won't drink any more when I retire. It's certain, however, that I won't drink any less...]]*

Corflux: Yes, the audio for many of the videos is either non-existent or, um, sucks. I've read numerous times from numerous persons that Mr. **Thomas Ferguson** has aid and support in this area and it will be much better in Belfast released videos. We shall see. I've actually looked up microphones but because of this assurance of great things to come for Belfast haven't actually purchased anything. Besides which, as others have noted, there is an issue with getting said microphones and/or other sound equipment from one Corflu committee to the next Corflu committee and the storage issue in between.

*[[In almost every case there's just about zero practicality in having a permanent store of teck equipment for a Corflu. It's always easier to rent...]]*

TAFFnessAbounds: I too support **Sandra Bond**. Now all I have to do is actually vote and send in money. Ha, did it today.

*[[I also voted atypically early this time...]]*

RadioWinston: I liked the video for Scooter - 'The Question Is What Is The Question?'. The dancing/shuffle was interesting but I personally believe there are more interesting

and entertaining dance styles out there. I don't think I've seen this style before, so thanks for that. The style in 'J'adore Hardcore' was more interesting to me. The Jumpstyle video was a bit more interesting. The Haddaway Shuffle Dance Music Video also seemed a bit more interesting. I think I saw this video or something very similar several years ago (2019? maybe) I still personally like bhangra more although there is Bhangra x Shuffle Dance: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\\_a30qVku40](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_a30qVku40)

[...]

*[[Gary here goes off into more bhangra links than a year's worth of 'Radio Winston' columns...]]*

Omphaloskepsis: Again, not sure what I can add here. My mind wanders off to music and punk music fanzines, many of which have a lot more energy but I haven't really kept track of those and not at all sure what the activity level in that genre is at this point in time.

TV Guide: I'm totally unaware of 'The Flight Attendant' series whereas I've watched every 'Big Bang Theory' episode. I quite enjoyed Season 1 of 'Andor' and definitely look forward to season 2. I could wander off into how

much I enjoyed 'Wednesday' and was quite entertained by 'Warrior Nun' and am definitely looking forward to the next season of that and 'The Witcher', and did I mention 'Bastard Son and the Devil Himself'? (Aargh, read this morning that they've been cancelled and there won't be a season 2, whereas there will be a season 5 of 'What We Do In the Shadows', which I rather abhor.) Plus I'm looking forward to December 15th and 'Kindred' and then December 25th and the mini-series 'The Witcher: Blood Origin'.

Of course 'His Dark Materials' returned and I watched and the first two episodes of that. Today December 9 I shall watch Guillermo del Toro's 'Pinocchio'.

Meanwhile my mind wanders into 'The Revolution Will Not Be Televised' and Gil Scott-Heron

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS3QOtbW4m0>

or the Kek'star version

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWNeDDimc7E>

Footy: I've been, to a limited extent, following the FIFA stupidity with respect to both alcohol and rainbow armbands. The attitude of Qatar, particularly with respect to the LGBTQ+ issues they have, is just wrong. FIFA playing along with those attitudes is just as wrong and I would think that this whole situation should be corrected but I have a feeling that it won't be, which is really sad.



I have vaguely been following the actual soccer side of it due to the US team being so much in the news here. Also I have heard that England is doing well but beyond that I'm moderately oblivious.

*[[England have been doing rather well in the cricket an'all...]]*

Loco Citato:

**Bob Jennings:** His note on the plethora of items on the ballots makes me think about a recent thought that came to me about the reviews and suggestions for movies and TV series. How can anyone actually watch all that is out there and thus how can they make suggestions as to the "best" of the week or the year? There are so many titles out there that I just don't think it is possible for any one person to even fast forward through them all. Of course on Netflix they now have titles not just from the US and the UK but also Turkey, Japan, China, India, and every place else in the world as far as I can tell. There is just no way one can see all these things and even if you tried I would think you would become this unmoving blob, no muscular development other than the hand reaching for food and the remote and the mouth moving to chew or swallow (and I suppose there's the rest of the digestive tract). That is not a pleasant thought for me.

I suppose I wonder about the people who write LoCs to every fanzine they get. How is that possible?

*[[For many loccers, I might suggest that this is their fanac, although the lines may be blurring, with faneds tending perhaps more to loc other faneds lately (examples abound, not least in this here concatenation of unlikely body parts). Despite the reverence accorded to Harry Warner, Jr., I thought his loccing reputation rested almost solely on his prolificness - a study of his correspondence might show that his locs were often very similar, and not always pertinent to the zines to which they were sent. As someone else (I forget who) commented, you knew that with Harry you were going to get your two pages no matter what...]]*

When I was in the N3F, many, many years ago (like the 1970s) one bureau that I liked was the tape bureau which had tapes of old radio programs and some convention speeches. If memory serves correctly these were all on those small reels for a reel to reel player. Joanne Burger at 55 Blue Bonnet Ct., Lake Jackson, TX ran it. I never met her but she was always incredibly nice to me and very helpful and ran that bureau for years, probably up to the year she died, which is also a number of years ago. However I obviously have her address engrained into my brain.

**Brad Foster:** I have too much stuff too. One thing that bothers me is that our local trash company doesn't take electronics and toxic stuff like paint on a weekly basis. They have a once a year collection at one point in the city and even then they don't take everything. I can drive to two cities, some distance from my home, to drop off hazardous waste

and electronics and I'm sure you can figure out how often that happens (maybe once every ten years). Considering the high volume of electronic items that everyone in the US has this makes absolutely no sense at all. You know people wind up just shoving their electronics into the normal trash (I don't).

*[[Vegas seems better served there. Once or twice a year the local public radio station KNPR organizes a drop-off for superfluous electronics of almost any kind...]]*

**Jeanne Mealy:** Her comments on long phone conversations with Justin Busch made me think of my almost total inability to stay on the phone for over five or ten minutes. The only time I ever stayed on the phone longer than that was when I was involved with my first wife, Denise Rehse, before I moved to Detroit and was till living in Iowa. We had many long conversations causing my phone bill to become totally unsupportable. I have absolutely no recollection what we talked about for those extended periods of time. I just cannot maintain long phone conversations, except for that one brief period of time. I can't maintain long conversations in person. Usually there are long periods of total silence, at least on my part. There are only a few people with whom I could sit in the room and not talk, like John Benson and Joe Wesson when I was living in Detroit.

**Steve Jeffery:** The comments on female musicians brought to mind Tal Wilkenfeld who plays bass and I think I saw her in concert with Jeff Beck at least once.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04W5CMZUHZs>

And then Björk comes to mind who does various and sundry electronics and keyboards in addition to singing. And then "The queen of quirky cool, Juana Molina is a staple of the Buenos Aires and Argentine music scene." who I quite like and plays numerous instruments in addition to singing.

Of course there are and have been numerous female rock and blues guitarists, Bonnie Raitt, Susan Tedeschi, Kaki King, Memphis Minnie, Elizabeth Cotten, Mother Maybelle Carter, Sister Rosetta Tharpe and the list goes on and on.

Female vocalists have always been there I think and my mind turns to Vera Lynn and 'We'll Meet Again' and 'The White Cliffs of Dover'.

Then I had to go look up female trumpet players. Why, my goodness, just listen to Alison Balsom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQE4c3MjjRg>

or Tine Thing Helseth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8cNnxLsvdk>

Okay if I'm talking tango must include Bandoneon. Here's Helena Rüegg.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yAf3\\_pOYrQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yAf3_pOYrQ)

Or we could go back to 1924 and Paquita Bernardo, one of the earliest well known female bandoneon players.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7N84X2p8HY>

I love tangos and milongas. Almost makes me want to learn to dance them but, no, probably not.(you know you're keeping me from hiking with the dogs by writing this LoC) (poor Cosmo and Pip, and me, who should exercise, exercise, exercise)

Yes, no doubt, female instrument players have not been so numerous but I think it is improving. I hope so.

Then I wander off mentally in my brain to the marvelous movie I watched last night with a female director and almost entirely female cast, 'Portrait of a Lady on Fire' directed by Céline Sciamma. What a marvelous, marvelous movie and just this year into the number 30 position in *Sight & Sound's* top 100 list from critics (the list is once a decade).

Hey I should throw in a saxophone player, Candi Duffer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNx4EbTu10w>

I do believe that some female musicians do much better in Japan through the ages. such as geishas who played shamisen and koto.

Here's Ki & Ki. They're modern and not geishas.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcqO0zkyQRO>

Or Michiyo Yagi on koto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juN6ZIOYnuo>

*[[I thought I'd leave all these links in, partially to let readers know what the massive list of bhangra was like. Female musicians are everywhere, but perhaps the same argument applies as in other endeavors that they have to be twice as good to get half the recognition. Bass players - I'm a bit croggled that we get through the entire loccol bits on the topic without anyone mentioning Tina Weymouth or Paz Lenchantin, and I'm duty-bound to chuck in the name of my crush Sage Chavis, formerly of The Regrettes (who haven't been as good since she left)...]]*

**Jerry Kaufman:** I watched that *Doctor Who* episode and am interested in the three episodes with Tennant. And of course **Sandra Bond** is running for TAFF!

*[[You heard it here first!...]]*

Indulge Me:

I actually have a subscription to *The Atlantic*. Some excellent writing and articles therein.

I have thought of watching 'Good Night Oppy' but haven't quite gotten around to it. Hm, more incentive appears from your corner.

*[[It's well worth it...]]*

Oh, I see my name about future aircraft. Please note, I did not put in the Titties part.

Again, kudos to **Brad Foster** and **Ulrika O'Brien** for the excellent artwork and also for all the photos you add to *TH...*

(And yes, how can those LoCcers who LoC many fmz do that? It takes me hours to go through *TH...* . I guess I'm just slow.)

\*\*\*

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

December 18

**Leigh Edmonds** writes:

I have no idea how it got to be the week before Christmas and I have only just got around to reading and enjoying the most recent *This Here ....* In your response to my innocent little question you mention your grand plans for the things that you plan to do when you retire. Let me warn you that as soon as you don't have a job the powers that be seem to reduce the number of hours in the day to less than what you need to get done all the things you were planning to do. That is, I think, the reason why I almost didn't get around to responding at all to this issue. Having two big project going at the same time, as well as the usual round of daily chores and activities, is not conducive to a relaxed and easy-going fanac lifestyle.

*[[I'm half expecting that meself...]]*

Fortunately for me, I couldn't seem to work up any enthusiasm to even think about the N3F, so that meant I could slither across a lot of the letter column unimpeded. Which is just as well because even thinking about jumpstyle and shuffle left me feeling tired, and just watching the videos you linked to was exhausting. Even so, I thank you for keeping me in touch with what young people are into these days. I must have had as much energy as them when I was their age, but I don't recall it. I can imagine that being in a venue listening to that thumping music and hopped up on some kind of chemical would be a lot of serious fun, but these days my idea of fun is much more subdued and seems to involve dozing in front of the big flat screen in the tv room.

I was, however, very grateful for your link to the recent TISM performance that went with Young **Perry Middlemiss's** letter. Now, that's my kind of fun. It did put a big smile on my face while I read the rest of the issue.

*[[You have Perry to thank for supplying the link...]]*

After all that friend **Dave Hodson** wrote about the festering sore that was the World Cup this year would I be out of place to admit that I was relieved when Qatar beat Australia's bid to host the event this year. I mean, there was quite enough about it in the media here when the event was on the other side of the world so I can only imagine what it would have been like had the event been held here. When I woke this

morning the local news channel was all excited about the final that France lost, how much worse would it have been had the final been played at the MCG! Had the event been played here I imagine that all the major grounds (already built for the playing of cricket and real footy) would have been used, none of them having been built by slave labour and no lives lost in the process (that I am aware of). Is there some reason why I tend to think of the Olympic Committee and FIFA in the same breath?

I am pleased that Dave draws pleasure from the limited-over forms of cricket. I much prefer the long form of the game but this year has been very disappointing with the West Indies and South African teams falling over with little resistance. I had hoped to be listening to the broadcast of the third day's play from Brisbane right now but two days was all that South Africa offered. Just as well that Young Perry, Irwin, Carey and the rest are booked in to see the second day's play at the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne because there might not be a third.

Enough about sport. It might be a good thing that you are putting 'Omphaloskepsis' to bed. Trying to assemble even a working theory about fandom is challenging enough, but trying to successfully theorize about fanzines is a bit like that Greek chap pushing a rock up a hill or, perhaps, that other chap who got his liver pecked out every day. No earthly good could come from it, but it is always fun to try so I will miss your attempts. And how is your liver these days? No, I don't really need to know.

*[[But since you asked, it's dealing with the gallons of drink both gifted and left over from the Boxing Day bash...]]*

**Killer Kaufman** might not want to speculate about the reasons for lack of fan fund nominees but I don't mind doing it for him. Back in the dim dark past fannish communication in any form

between the continents was very costly and infrequent. These days it isn't. If it were not for other constraints I could - even as an old age pensioner - easily make it to Corflu Craic. Back in 1974 when I won DUFF (if you can think back that far) it cost a lot of money for Valma and I to get to Discon II (we took out a loan from the union credit union so

Valma could go too) and the only person we had met in person before, or knew anything about apart from their fan writing, was Lesleigh who had won DUFF in 1972. These days I could probably chat with any one here over the interweb, so there is not quite the same urgency in spending a lot of money to travel to meet people for the first time face to face. Is that what you were thinking, Jerry? Or do I spent too much time thinking about the effect of space adjusting technologies on our modern world.

*[[Fair points. I've idly mentioned (and had convo with Perry) about possibly standing for DUFF at some point post-retirement, but the money bit of that would be an issue, since DoBFO Jen would be along as well. I suppose we could stand as a couple, but I've always thought that was a bit cheeky. Although not as skint as has been typical round here, stumping up for half the costs would well swiftly put us back there. I also heard that Australia might be on the verge of becoming a non-smoking country (maybe whoever told me that was thinking of New Zealand) and that would rule me out anyway. Fund candidacy (well, winning one) seems to have become a bit of a tick of the fanac box for many, but as usual I'm willing to be argued with on that point, and the TAFF candidate favored round here is totally exempt from that scurrilous charge which in her case doesn't apply at all...]]*

Not much else can I think of to write about, and I imagine the N3F will roll on regardless of what I think.

\*\*\*



**WAHF**

**Wm Breiding** : "I find myself slipping into slow gafiation. I was happy to see Sue Mason and Pascal Thomas chosen for Corflu 50. I urged Rich to consider bringing a Swede to Belfast but he and his smofs made great choices with Sue and Pascal. Unbelievably beautiful autumn/ winter weather down here!" ; **Dave Cockfield** (again) with seasonal best wishes ; **Archbishop Gillespie** ; **John Nielsen Hall**, with the welcome news that a shiny new *Vita Transplantare* will likely emerge in January ; **Marc Ortlieb** ; **Nigel Rowe** with holiday wishes quoting Amanda Gorman: "For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it." ('The Hill We Climb') ; **Taral Wayne** : "You must never seek the truth for you will only find another lie. (Old pseudo-Soviet era proverb)" ; **Alan White** with the usual Xmas grafix explosion e-card

**FANZINES RECEIVED**

Since the lastish. Listing only again, I'm afraid...

**THE ZINE DUMP #56** (Guy Lillian) - ...

**KNOT A FANZINE 4** (Marc Ortlieb) - ...

**THE MEGALOSCOPE 4** (David Grigg) - ...

**THE OBDURATE EYE #22** (Garth Spencer) - ...

**ASKANCE #54** (John Purcell) - ...

**THE FINAL BALOOBIUS** (Taral Wayne) - ...

**PERRYSCOPE 29** (Perry Middlemiss) - ...

**JENZINE #3** (J L Farey) - ...

**SF COMMENTARY 111** (Bruce Gillespie) - ...

**INDULGE ME**

✕ **DOCUMENTARY** : More good stuff from 'The Climate Question', which might be of interest to **Gary Mattingly** in particular, (when he figures out that it's not - er - "watchable") on [whether meat substitutes are actually "green"](#)...

✕ **CROSSWORD CLUE FOR ELI** : "Conspicuous but also unfit for purpose (7)"...

✕ **BETTER THAN SOCKS** : Totally gobsmacking Xmas pressie from **Jen** : A "cameo" personal message from Jewel Staite, which I *think* I'll be allowed to share at some point - we're checking the extensive terms and conditions & that...

✕ **QUOTABLE** : Attached to the big spending bill that just went through here (which nicely hamstrings Fuckbag McCarthy's evil plans for shutdown threats for most of next year) was an amendment clarifying bits of the old Electoral Count Act which the Orange Wankbucket had tried to game, and who is now claiming that he was right all along, otherwise it wouldn't have needed amending, would it?

Attorney George Conway commented earlier this year: "The Twelfth Amendment and the Electoral Count Act of 1887 already make it entirely clear that the Vice President merely opens the envelopes. But sometimes we want to make laws even clearer so that even semiliterate psychopaths have a chance at understanding them."...

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : Another slight cheat, since she is younger than me, but by less than a year. Happy birthday on January 1 to **Rhoda Dakar**...



✕ **THE WEEK IN PESTRIARCHY** : Arwa Mahdawi (and the headline here is hers) reports in the *Grauniad*: "Police in India are blaming rats for eating 200kg of seized cannabis that had been stored in police stations. "Rats are tiny animals and they have no fear of the police. It's difficult to protect the drug from them," [court documents assert](#). Right. And I'm guessing the dog ate your homework too?"...

✕ **THE REAL ONE** : I get a friend request on FBF from Norman Spinrad, of which I am DoBFO suspicious since we already had been, but he posts that the platform had booted him off until he found a way back in, so it's legit (for anyone else who gets one). I may be wearing out the welcome of the oft-repeated anecdote of me being carried off to bed by Mexican GoH Norman (I suspect assisted by his then partner **Lee Wood**) as I was in a tequila coma. My fiancée Dee Ann swiped my cigarettes and lighter for fear that I might drunkenly set fire to the hotel room upon awakening and they all fucked off for pizza, leading me to end up staggering back to the bar in my socks (not *just* socks [glares at you]) and begging for a smoke. ...

✕ **BETTER THAN SOCKS (2)** : A lovely surprise gift from my dear bruv **Martin Tudor**, accompanied by a card illustrating the WWI Xmas Truce. It's a t-shirt bearing the legend "The Nicest Asshole Ever" which I wear with pride for visitors and say lots of nice things about the gift-giver. Without fail, everyone remarks "Obviously he knows you *very* well"...

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2)** : Because we think that all classic Doctor Who companions are eternally lovely (except, it sadly has to be said, Katy Manning), have some **Zoe** (**Wendy Padbury**)...

✕ **SCRATCH PAD** : An odd number of pages thish (mentally insert your own definition of "odd"), so if you print this out you'll have a blank bcover on which to draw willies. If they're Andrew Tate's I imagine you could fit quite a lot of them in...

✕ **NEXTISH** : 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> January, barring of course further defeats...



## MIRANDA

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

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**"Hello student body, Hello faculty  
Show of hands how many of you here have met me?  
Not too many, who am I?  
I'll try not to keep you guessin'  
I'm your fucked up dance instructor  
You're here for your lesson"**