

This Here...

"...still not finished..." (B Gillespie)

EGOTORIAL

A BAD CASE OF THE JACOBS

What's the fanzine equivalent of "vaguebooking"? It feels like it should be something much ruder, and I open the floor to suggestions...

If you've clocked that I'm about to be intentionally vague and quite unforthcoming, then, unsurprisingly, you're fuckin' spot on, you clever lot.

I briefly mentioned in the #61 'Egotorial' that I was having a bit of a health issue, which I'm *still* not going to talk about in any detail for a couple of reasons. One is that the actual cause is still essentially undetermined (although, yes, there are a couple of prime suspects), and the other is a personal aversion to truckloads of "thoughts and prayers" (even though I know that the intent behind them is golden) arriving at 2657 Rungsted Street and blocking the fuckin' driveway.

What I am going to gob off about, though, is the primary effect of being massively tired all the time - that and the state of my legs rendering me unable to walk more than a few steps (beer fridge and back), not to mention, oh good Gawd not to mention, the state of my feet getting even more horrible, which was a relatively high bar to clear already.

I'm lucky, if that's the word, to have a reserve of learned behavior from the years of working construction in which, by concentrating on the job in hand, I can ignore the aches and pains and everything else and just get on with it. The same seems to apply to the taxi driving, a job which requires more mental than physical effort (except for hoiking some ridiculously heavy baggage in and out of the cab) and thus I can get through the long workday (mostly) without much incident.



The same discipline seems to apply (to an extent) to the fanac. When I've got the bit between my teeth I'm pretty good at churning out the wordage when I have the idea for what I'll be pontificating on, and before you all pile on with the DoBFO "and also when you have no fuckin' idea at all" I agree with you. I'll be cream-crackered after it all though, and as the title says, it's a bad case of the Jacobs indeed. I might liken this to the comedown after a cocaine rush, albeit fueled by alcohol and nicotine rather than any exotic pharmaceuticals such as what **David Hodson**, in a typically memorable turn of phrase, called "Colombian marching powder".

Although I've said that I do little else on my days off apart from accing the fan, the lie has been given to that by mention of RL stuff, which has recently included setting up various medical appointments, checking on my Social Security (and Medicare) applications and contacting the guardians of my Scholl(UK) pension with a more polite version of Oscar Beuselinck's pointed query to potential buyers of *Private Eye* who had approached Peter Cook long, long ago (Oscar was Cook's lawyer): "What about the fucking ackers, then?". The other thing has been the setting up of an online checking account for receiving direct deposits - I haven't had a bank account in years, being blacklisted by most of the major names, but Capital One apparently don't care, so that's sorted.

Fanac, though: there's writing thish, recording FAAn award ballots (get yours in, slackers!) and doing Cor41u stuff (see 'Corflux' below), as well as punting a little stuff to **Tommy Ferguson** for Corflu Craic, which will be quite the corker despite (and without) me, I'm sure...

It's all good.

February 2023

TAFFNESSABOUTS

Vote for **S&ra!**

That is all...

All the gubbins you need is here: <https://taff.org.uk>

CORFLUX

41 NEWS

I'm currently working on the hotel - my original first pick of the Orleans, which we had mentioned at the very previous pre-bid "presentation" at Pangloss (for values of "presentation" amounting to **S&ra Bond** amiably front and center and me interjecting from the cheap seats) is ruled out because *all* their function space is fully booked that weekend for another convention. We hope (and rather expect) to have a confirmed venue by the time of the actual bid which will be done at Corflu Craic, and a 'Progress Report Zero' handout.



If this *doesn't* annoy Leigh, I will of course be rather disappointed, but then again it's going to be a brief column because there's not too much you can say about a new artist, and I don't want to punt links to all the 13 slices on the album; I'd much rather encourage you to go buy it.

Graham Clarke ('Blues Bytes') says this:

Dyer Davis gets the New Year off to a rousing start with *Dog Bites Back*, a blistering set that mixes blues, rock and soul from one of the most exciting new voices in all three genres!

One of the most salient words in that is "voices", and Davis' singing is certainly arresting and right at yer. Not that they're at all comparable by genre, there's a gospelly shine on the delivery which put me in mind of Toots Hibbert who also had that (church upbringing, y'know...).

The title track '*Dog Bites Back*' serves as a fair example, and *Blues Blast* magazine had a [gushing review](#) of the set.

Davis' father (also a musician) introduced him to the genre, focussing on early Jeff Beck (can't go wrong there ey?) and this influence is noted in the album opener, the Beck/Stewart slice 'Let Me Love You'. The songwriting chops are there an'all: here's Davis' own '*Water into Wine*'.

The lad is blessed with some top-notch collaborators and supporters, and has enough confidence to share the vocal and frontman duties with blues/boogie woogie legend Victor Wainwright (piano) on the joyfully rousing slice '*Long Way to Go*'.

This lad's a real keeper, I reckon...

<http://dyerdavismusic.com/>



RADIO WINSTON

DYER DAVIS

I'm taking a slight risk here, rather than sticking to Jamaica, by punting something that miserable old git **Leigh Edmonds** might actually be able to tolerate. It's worth it, though, to highlight an artist new to me, or indeed to just about everybody as he's about to turn 23 years old in June and has just dropped his debut album.

FAANWANK

SMELLS LIKE FAAN SPIRIT

John L. Coker III writes in the January issue of *The National Fantasy Fan*:

Voting for the FAAn Awards for 2022 is closing soon.

The 'First Fandom Annual 2022: First Fanthology' has been nominated for a FAAn Award in the One-Shot/Special Category.

I hope that you will support the publishing efforts of First Fandom by voting for our publication.

Please send an e-mail message to [Nic Farey] casting your vote for 'First Fanthology' (edited by John L. Coker III and Jon D. Swartz).

Thank you for your support.

Let me say right up front that I have no problem at all with people promoting work in respect of FAAn votes, even though doing so for oneself might be considered a bit distasteful, as is self-voting, which people also do anyway. I've mentioned many times previously that imposing strictures on voting (as the Novas used to, rejecting self-votes entirely) is something I had considered but ultimately kicked off the cliff in favor of **Andy Hooper's** laissez-faire injunction that "all votes count, however silly" (to which I added "also, however possibly egregious").

Let's get the "factual" errors in **John Coker's** plea out of the way: voting is "closing soon" - well, for certain fannish values of "soon" which, as **George Phillies** replied to my correcting loc to *TNFF*, are effectively undefined. Secondly, and I'm as usual engaging in sadistic necrophiliac bestiality here, work is not currently "nominated" as such since the FAAns are a free vote on work published in the prior calendar year. As with the term "eligible" which I detest for its inherent sense of superiority and cliquishness and much prefer "qualifying", I must simply sigh and move along.

The "problem" here, if we can call it such, is that those moved by Coker's entreaty did *exactly* what he asked them to, sent me an email consisting of minor variations of "I vote for 'First Fanthology' in the One Shot/Special category", and that's fuckin' all!

These are, under my terms, legit votes which are of course counted, but hardly in the *spirit* of the awards.

It would have been much more preferable (and **John**, you can fix this in the next *TNFF* since voting is open until March 10) if there'd been a link or reference to *The Incomplete Register* voters' guide, and perhaps a remark along the lines of "when filling out your ballot, please consider 'First Fanthology' in the One-Shot/Special category as *one* of your votes".

It's worth reiterating, though, that's it's not a requirement to vote all the available ballot slots or even in all the categories, and it's notable that some ballots received so far have included notes on why the voter(s) have declined to vote in some of them - which, though unnecessary, is nice to know and demonstrates a good level of engagement with the process.

Again something that I've banged on about interminably is the annoying notion that "I can't vote because I haven't seen everything". Nobody has. The fuckin' point is to vote for what *you* saw and liked, and the greater the participation, the broader the representation of what's out there and the greater the likelihood that fanzine fans might see something unfamiliar and go check it out.

I was going to bung in a bit here about how I interpret the admin's job, but since next month's ish will be out when I (and select Craic confederates) will know the results but you won't until April 2nd, I'll save it for then.

The Faniverse in general, and I believe the fanzine bit of it in particular, does have a common *spirit* which is shared at some level, as much as individual expressions of it may differ wildly. The spirit of the FAAns smells like, what, inky fingers? Weed? Strong Drink ((c) **L Huntzinger**)? Snark? Desperation? Perhaps all of the above, yet I contend that it behooves the disparate members to have at it and participate in what's *still* fanzine fandom's only dedicated awards...

GET YER BALLOTS IN! DEADLINE MARCH 10 (TWO WEEKS!!)

TV GUIDE

THEY'RE BAAAAACK!

Given that we've got a boatload of titles starting back up this month, I thought I'd better just write shits and bits as we go along and get into them, so any semblance of coherence (if there ever was any) in this column is well out of the window.

First restart up in February is the not-exactly-lauded 'La Brea', which remains the show without a single likeable character in it, especially, it sadly has to be said, Eve Harris (Natalie Zea) who is frankly a nasty piece of work in what ought to be the outdated shrewish tradition. Co-lead, her estranged husband Gavin (Eoin Macken) isn't much better, in many ways is the central idiot of the idiot plot. Paradoxically, perhaps, while I can't care about any of the raft of arseholes caught up in the story, the story itself does imbue the quality of wanting to know what's going to happen next. I can only ascribe my continued watching to a liking for time paradox bollocks in general, but I have a horrible feeling that the resolution (if we ever get to one) will be lame to the extent that I wouldn't be surprised if it was written by Chris Chibnall. A further episode leads me to ponder that this could be considered (sort of) a rather low-

rent 'Saga of the Exiles', without the mental abilities, but with profound apologies to Julian May.

Despite the caustic derision I've seen directed at it, I thought to give 'The Ark' (Peacock) a go, and three episodes in I deem it not really that terrible. Formulaic, oh yes indeed, following the good old "disaster of the week" schedule, as well as just about everybody having some dark secret or another and lying their arses off (cf 'La Brea'). The show is nevertheless a cut above anything produced by legendary "series killer" Fred Freiberger, (passing similarities to 'Space: 1999' notwithstanding, which made me think of him) and the largely unknown (to me, anyway) actors aren't that bad.



'The Equalizer' returned from its looong mid-season break on February 19 with a family-centric episode, something that tends to play well in this reboot because all the characters are so well-conveyed. My favorite of the "supporting" cast is still Aunt Vi (Lorraine Toussaint) who has charm and depth enough to make you forget that she's the Designated Gay Character, not that it's in-her-face, merely a facet of the role, and this is something I approve of, *not especially important* to the portrayal, other than, well she is, so what? So far, the mix of action and family life is spot-on, but I am intrigued to read of a possible (but not, I judge, likely) crossover between this and Denzel Washington's movie version of McCall...

'Poker Face' continues to impress, with welcome news that it's been renewed for a second season. Accusations of "all the plots are the same" are getting disabused with every episode, and in any case no-one ever said that about 'Columbo', to which this series is often compared because of the "howcatchem" rather than "whodunnit" formula the latter of which creator Rian Johnson deployed in the 'Knives Out' series...

'Picard' season 3, aka 'Star Trek: The Geritol Generation' has clocked in, and it's certainly unfair to judge it off the first episode, which is after all mostly set-up, and notable for wide-eyed astonishment at how much cosmetic surgery Gates McFadden must have had in the intervening years, presumably covered by a generous Starfleet medical insurance program. One hopes it's not just going to be a load of fanwank - the jury deliberates...

A new button-pushing ABC series just started up, 'The Company You Keep', based on the South Korean series 'My Fellow Citizens!' and starring the always-engaging Milo Ventimiglia ('Heroes', etc...) as a con man (ding!) and Catherine Haena Kim as the CIA agent with whom he gets involved. Again, the pilot episode is a *lot* of set-up, but looks to be not at all simple and we're keen to see where it goes...

Upcoming: 'The Consultant' starring Christoph Waltz at his typically creepiest on February 24, and season 2 of 'Perry Mason' in March. Comment nextish, no doubt...

MOVIE NIGHT

KALEIDOSCOPE

All right, this Netflix offering isn't exactly a "movie", but I'm minded of someone's description of binge-watching which posited that you've just been suckered into clocking an eight-hour movie, when an expected reaction to the suggestion "Let's watch an eight-hour movie" would be a wailing and a gnashing of teeth (for those who still have them) accompanied by cries of "Are you fuckin' mental?"

I admit having pegged it as a regular movie offering before getting drawn in, and had a gander because I saw the word "heist" in the description, which pushed the button, so, yep, binged it in one afternoon and night.

The main conceit here is that supposedly you can choose to watch the episodes in any order (each taking place in a specific timeframe ranging from 24 years before the heist to six months after), other than the short intro 'Black' episode which explains this, and the final 'White' episode which is the heist itself. If you're like us, though, you'll not be arsed to pick your own viewing order and just take the suggested one, which works well enough - unless of course you're a stickler for having a linear narrative without flashbacks, but then you'd contend with having two episodes after the heist ('The Morning After...' and 'Six months after...') which *might* work I suppose, and without spoilers, might even ameliorate the somewhat telegraphed end-of-heist resolution.



A fair question is: “Would this have worked as a (presumably much shorter) movie?”. That’s worthy of thinks. There’s a *lot* of backstory revealing the characters’ history and motivation, and while at times this plays a little too leisurely (a polite way of saying it drags here and there) I can’t really imagine it all being shoehorned into what would be a massively frantic two-and-a-bit hours either.

It was a bit off-putting in the ‘24 Years Before...’ episode that, rather than having been digitally de-aged (which I’m guessing wasn’t cost-effective) the main character (played very well by Giancarlo Esposito) is fitted with some too obvious and distracting prosthetics. Overall, though, that’s a minor quibble.

“Never mind all that!”, cries the readership, “*Was it worth it???*”, and the answer is yes, certainly for like-minded fans of the heist/con job genre, since we get the reason(s) for it all in depth, not simply “We must take down bad person” (eg *Leverage*) or simply “Dosh!” (eg *The Italian Job* - original of course), which is not to denigrate either of those excellent offerings...

FOOTY

BY DAVID HODSON

A week ago, Nic gave me his customary heads-up, there’s a deadline approaching kick in the shins. I like to get started early on most columns, but I’ll admit that in the last few months everything has been a little last minute; I’ve been struggling to find a story worth focusing on. Not so this month, I knew the story was coming; I knew that come Thursday morning (23rd February) I’d have my hook. I was so confident that I even went to the cinema this afternoon (Wednesday 22nd) to watch *Ant-man and The Wasp: Quantamania*, wasting a couple of hours of prep time (It was “meh!”; not bad, not good, just a set-up for the big tent Avengers movies to come that all the individual character movies and shows have become. I really didn’t like the actress playing Scott Lang’s daughter though, she just didn’t convince me). Then, at 10pm this evening, the first (football) boot dropped.

Following the “fan led” review, called for by the British government in the wake of the collapse of Bury Football Club in 2019, chaired by former sports minister Tracey Crouch during 2021/2, which recommended an independent regulator for the sport be appointed by the government, the government has decided to indeed appoint an independent regulator ([Football regulator: UK government confirms new independent body - BBC Sport](#)).

Now the fun starts...

It’s long been a part of the affiliation rules for joining F.I.F.A., the world governing body of the sport, that national

associations should have no connections or affiliations to their national governments; that local associations must be completely independent of and allow no participation by national governments in their decision making processes. At one fell swoop, this “principal” has gone completely out the window in English professional football.

Now, it’s relatively straightforward to see why F.I.F.A. doesn’t want those messy, democratically elected (if only in the broadest sense of the term) national governments poking around in their affairs. I’ve bored for England in many of these columns about the corrupt nature of F.I.F.A., to the point where I’ve even bored my fucking self absolutely stupid with it, but I never expected this. A non-“tin pot” (ie: South American), non-third world, traditional footballing superpower from a nation that can’t be quelled by a watery, withering stare from a geriatric old windbag or a threat to never let them host a World Cup at any time in the future is now being forced into rebellion against the sport’s world governing body. This one could run and run...

Back in April 2022, when the idea of an independent regulator was first mooted by Crouch, the Premier League was said to be “wary” of any such proposals and a majority of Premier League clubs collectively wrote to the government to warn against any “unintended consequences” of appointing a regulator, so maybe it’s worth looking at the areas to be regulated. Firstly, any regulator would have the power to stop English teams from joining “closed shop” competitions that threaten to damage the domestic game, be they domestic or international. Well, there’s a clear dig at the idea of a European Super-League; an idea that has recently raised its ugly head again. The irony is the idea is now being touted as only for continental European sides as a way of combating the increasing financial hegemony of the English Premier League clubs, most especially Manchester’s United and City, Liverpool, Chelsea, Tottenham, and Arsenal (soon to be joined by Newcastle United most likely).

Next on the list of responsibilities to be given to the new regulator: Preventing repeats of financial failings seen previously at numerous clubs, including those that caused the demises of Bury and Macclesfield. It’s difficult to see how any regulator could entirely achieve this aim; even relatively healthy businesses can go under when economies are undergoing drastic change and there’s absolutely no doubt that we’re experiencing drastic and, even more importantly, rapid change in nearly all western economies. Maybe this is just a clause being introduced to justify the next concrete expectation of the new regulator: introduce a new, more stringent owners and directors test, in other words a “fit and proper person” test, to protect clubs and their fans. Time for another...

“Now”

I'm becoming very aware that using "now" at the start of a sentence is my way of putting one of those sharp intakes of breath between gritted teeth on the page. A lot of this regulator stuff, despite my intrinsically agreeing with the idea, is causing a grimace followed by pursed lips. Anyway...

Now, this is where I expect the most shit to hit the football fan in the shortest term. Despite the demise of Roman Abramovic at Chelsea in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there are still controversial middle eastern regimes at Manchester City and Newcastle United, so financial doping and sportswashing are still vibrantly alive and kicking in the Premier League. Manchester United's current owners, the American Glazier Brothers, are looking for buyers of the club, whilst Tottenham have attracted the attention of an Iranian-American billionaire (\$ variety I'm assuming), which has caused owners Joe Lewis and Daniel Levy to begin discussing whether to sell the club in its entirety or sell a stake in order to fund further investment in both the team and infrastructural projects (the club has purchased several more parcels of land along Tottenham High Road and has applied for planning permission to build blocks of flats and become a private and social landlord). Liverpool's owners, FSG, who also own the Boston Red Sox, have recently stated that they have no plans or intentions to sell the club, but this is only after failing to attract offers in the region that they would find acceptable.

It wouldn't be unlikely to find at least one of these clubs either changing or looking to change hands before any regulator has had time to put their executive toys on their shiny new desk, and more likely all three. The problems really start when the next bunch of clubs start to become available, because they wouldn't represent the pinnacle of the sport in England and wouldn't attract the level of investor that would have the liquid assets to be able to truly compete with the big six or seven clubs, and some of these potential owners and their business practices would also fall foul of the regulator in all likelihood. It's entirely possible that the mere announcement of a plan to put a regulator in place has increased the need for the regulator to be in place in the here and now, because the bigger clubs might look to steal a march and open an even wider resources gap between them and anyone looking to challenge them by getting these take-overs over and done with. Gawd only knows where that would leave those pesky continental Europeans and their new Super League.

Next on the list of responsibilities: giving fans power to stop club owners changing a team's name, badge, or traditional colours. Well, if ever there was bone being thrown just to keep an underdog happy, this is it.

Time out: Episode two of the third season of Picard has just dropped on Amazon Prime, and it's a matter of priorities. See you in forty-nine minutes...

Back: As much as I admire Michelle Hurd physically (and have since season one of Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, she's a long-term crush), she is a bloody awful actress; Gates McFadden now looks like Katherine Helmond in the movie Brazil after she's had her facial stretch once too often, botox has much to answer for; and I genuinely thought we'd moved beyond minutes of exposition in television shows just to fill in inconvenient gaps many years ago. Pocket review over, how topical is this column?

Where was I again? Giving fans power to stop club owners changing a team's name, badge, or traditional colours? Hmmm, how about giving them the power to stop their club issuing a fifth different shirt for the season at gawd only knows how much cost just because they got drawn away to the Moldovan second division champions in the Europa Conference League fifth qualifying round? That might help take the pressure off the purse strings a little. How about giving fans the power to force clubs to provide reasonably priced catering rather than over-priced designer pale ales and scotch quail eggs? How about giving fans the power to claim a free programme with their admittance ticket rather than getting fleeced for another five to eight quid a pop after they've already paid a fortune for the privilege of watching their team?

I can come up with how abouts that would give fans a better deal than they currently get all day long. Maybe I should apply for this regulators position when it's advertised.

Finally, the regulator must implement a system ensuring a fair distribution of money filtered down the English football pyramid from the Premier League, probably including the abolition and redistribution of the parachute payments made to relegated clubs. No wonder those Premier League clubs were so eager to ensure there were none of those "unintended consequences".

All-in-all, there's nothing wrong with the proposed package of measures other than some just don't go far enough. The issue will come when F.I.F.A. decide that only they have the power to either sanction the participation of a club or nation in any competition or not. This battle, added to the upcoming revised Super League, will be the biggest challenge to the hegemony of both F.I.F.A. and E.U.F.A. since their inception and could set a precedent that stretches beyond football into the governance of the Olympic Games, another organisation that seems to think they should hold the powers of a major nation state. None of this will happen quickly, but once someone, and it'll have to be a heavyweight someone in this arena, is in place expect all sorts of antics in courts all over Europe; billionaires aren't used to being told what they can and can't do and it'll show when the fur starts flying.

CLERIHEW CORNER

I meant to start this featurette along with the New Year in #61, but not atypically forgot.

Clerihews are one of my favorite things, and I've written several myself, repurposing some for a piece for Earl Kemp in *eI*, issue # (can't be arsed to look up). Our first contributor here is **S&ra Bond**, who posted this'un on FBF, making me hark back to *Private Eye* having printed several from readers under the same title, which I have shamelessly nicked, as usual. Unlike *PE*, I won't be offering a tenner for submissions, but readers are encouraged to submit their own skiffy and/or fannish offerings. I've included one of my own an'all...

James Blish
Made quite a bish
When he thought nobody could tell
He was William Atheling Jr. as well

S&ra Bond

Edward John Carnell
Edited 'New Writings in SF' very well
But may have said once, at least
"Who will rid me of this troublesome Priest?"

Nic Farey

LOCO CITATO

[[“When one has talent, everything contributes to its development.” (Peter Kropotkin)...]]

From: gandc001@bigpond.com

January 28

Archbishop Bruce Gillespie writes:

I've achieved little over January, also for health reasons, plus general lack of energy. Plus ... as described below.

I'm still puddling around with what was going to take two weeks -- the mailing comments for ANZAPA. Usually one would not expect it to take very long to write mailing comments for a modern apa. But ANZAPA became a super-modern apa very quickly for the March 2020 mailing, because within a few days of the first declared lockdown it became impossible to send bundles of paper fanzines overseas (and we've always had overseas members) and Australian internal mail slowed to pigeon-carrier speed. So **David Grigg** took over from my reign as OBE (Official Bloody Editor) after 16 years, and did all the tech stuff that enabled us to send in PDF files to Dropbox and receive our mailings the same way. Freed from the need to produce paper fanzines, current members began to produce super-contributions. Ancient members who had not been able to

bring themselves to produce paper fanzines since the 1980s or 1990s returned, e.g. **Leigh Edmonds** and Derrick Ashby after about 35 years, and **Perry Middlemiss** after about 30 years. This process has led to bimonthly mailings of 500-to-600 pages, and an increase of membership from 22 to 29. We might still be facing a Wait List.

The result for conscientious mailing commentators such as myself (and most other members) is that what was a painless writing job has been turning into a mini-War-and-Peace writing task every two months. I'm still not finished commenting on the December mailing, the February deadline is only two weeks away, and I haven't touched *SFC 112* for more than a month.

I've dropped out of ANZAPA before when life became too busy, but not since the 1980s. Also I've failed the mailing comments test some years; some years I've even written mailing comments to non-apa fanzines, although this doesn't happen often. My eyes do not like reading fanzines on screen, so I will just have to print your recent issues on the little home printer. Your editorial reveals what happens to a 65-year-old fanzine editor when Things Pile Up or Things Collapse. And I'm just about to turn 76.

Let's hope 2023 improves, but 2022 never did.

[[Keep on keeping on, your holiness. Glad to be honored with a rare non-apa comment...]]

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

January 29

Kim Huett writes:

You know, it hadn't occurred to me that I should explain why a bar but clearly I should. In fact the bar isn't the critical part of the equation in regards to introducing The Tick to Wolverine. Why a bar is mostly because I expect The Tick to annoy Wolverine to the point that the latter feels the need to drastically reshape the former and if this happens in the right sort of bar then management won't be too upset about a fight breaking out. Well, they might be a little upset but will already have in place a system for efficiently dealing with the aftermath. All I would need to do is hand over a pile of \$\$\$ to the biggest, meanest looking bloke and nothing more will be said.

[[I wouldn't have thought the venue needed elucidating upon either. DoBFO, innit?...]]

Are other locations possible? Yes, but most of them have the disadvantage that I can't buy a beer while I'm watching the rumble.

Also, most such locations aren't clued in as to how such a fight should be managed and will do something silly, like call the police.

Of course I could take them to a soccer match as two blokes punching on wouldn't even raise an eyebrow there. Trouble is the rest of the crowd will be so bored by the game that out would come the knives, clubs, and Kalashnikovs to make sure it was on for young and old. As this would obscure my view of whatever The Tick and Wolverine are up to, I don't want that. I know this would happen because as Chopper recently explained, soccer fans actually hate soccer but are too thick to realise it:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cO6VS7-c6_0

I know this is a fact due to the number of times I've heard some idiot arsemonkey explain that other forms of football can't be called that because only soccer is played with the feet. Oh, sez I, then why isn't the goalie penalised every time he picks up the ball? Why isn't heading the ball a sending-off offence? Why aren't there snipers positioned on either side of the field to head-shot any players who touch the sacred ball with anything but their feet? But of course soccer fans never have any answer to such reasonable questions because thinking is harder than singing badly in unison.

[[That's a lame-ish attempt at being provocative. I'll not waste any space on it (other than this)...]]

And on the topic of that I see you keep referencing one of the more pathetic wee-poo-bum humourists when discussing Christmas songs.

Personally I find the output of that individual to be entirely devoid of any wit or cleverness and if I had my way he'd be skinned, gutted, and ground up for dog food because that's all he's good for.

If I'm going to listen to some genuine Christmas cheer then my choices are the Bob Rivers parody of Black Sabbath's 'Iron Man':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRW2poUfj34>

And Psychostick's parody of Rob Zombie's 'Dragula':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=gJztkDaURjY>

Much more fun.

P.S. No **Jerry**, Deadpool isn't an option for me because he's a smug bastard that I find annoying rather than funny. My reason for choosing The Tick is that he's an idiot but not self-aware enough to realise he's an idiot.

P.P.S. If anyone was ever destined to dress like Charlton Heston in 'Zardoz' it's you Nic. That's certainly how I intend to imagine you from now on.

[[You must have formidable eyesight (or double vision?) to have spotted Charlton Heston in 'Zardoz'. Informal poll, here: has Kim become Australia's Rodney Leighton or has he always been this way?...]]

From: johnsila32@gmail.com

January 31

John Nielsen Hall writes:

Your appreciation of Rico Rodriguez didn't say much about his twilight years in Jools Holland's Rhythm and Blues Orchestra. I say "twilight years", but they were years in which, if he wasn't perhaps as busy as he once was, when the spotlight came his way, nothing was lacking in his dynamism and brilliance. Jools Holland came to Marlborough three times, as part of the town's 'Jazz Festival', and I saw each of those gigs. There was always a solo spot for Rico and each time he was brilliant. One time, he led the orchestra in a version of 'Guns of Navarone', (Chris Holland attempting the -ahem!- vocal) and the sedate audience in the Marlborough College Theatre were completely galvanised. Trombone is not the most rock and roll of instruments, but honestly, Rico could play anything and seemed happy to. He gave an impression of modesty, humility even. I thought he was brilliant.

[[Rico was indeed a legend. Vocals for 'Guns of Navarone', though? The Skatalites version (and others I know of) have "vocals" which consist solely of whoever's up front occasionally shouting "Bang!"...]]

My Driving Licence has to be renewed this year. I have now reached the age when poor old codgers are subject to random driving

tests. I would say I haven't a hope in hell of passing such a test nowadays. I passed my test originally at a tender age, driving an Austin "box" A40 (basically a hatchback with no hatch!) on those roads we used to have, you know - country lanes and suburban avenues, when traffic was only about a quarter of what it is now. I didn't have to go near any motorways or dual carriageways. The worst bit was the old A20 road near Swanley in Kent, which was one of those old three lane death traps. I had negotiated that on a motorbike so that was okay for me. But here in the 21st century, even a place like Morecambe can be traffic hell, particularly in summer. If I get chosen, I'm sunk. I think. I'm going to apply for a bus pass anyway, just in case.



[[For our young reader (J Coxon), here's an Austin A40, which John confirms was indeed the model mentioned, but his was blue...]]



[[I don't know if it's changed now, but back in the day as a learner you weren't allowed on motorways. My old driving instructor, assuming you passed the test (which everyone I know who took lessons off him did, first time) gave you a free half-hour or so afterwards on the A1(M) to give you an idea about it. His lessons usually included, for me anyway, the instruction: "Indicate, pull over and park by Ladbrokes" so he could nip in and put his dog bets on...]]

From: jakaufman@aol.com

January 31

Jerry Kaufman writes:

Who is that grumpy old man in your page 1 photo? He looks familiar. Samuel Beckett on a bad day?

[[Albert Steptoe, as portrayed by Wilfred Brambell from the comedy series 'Steptoe and Son' which was nicked by America and became 'Sanford and Son' on these shores...]]

We got a few things done in January, ourselves. We made more arrangements for our trip to the UK for Corflu and Eastercon. We sketched out priorities for needed household purchases. We joined a gym in our neighborhood (membership covered by our Medicare Advantage plan). And I'm trying to remember what I can about New York fandom in the 1970s for an upcoming Fanac.org Zoom presentation. (I lived there from the summer of 1971 to the fall of 1977.)

[[Was that the start of Arnie Katz's feuding?...]]

One step I took toward the latter was to re-read the editorials from *The Spanish Inquisition*, the fanzine Suzle and I published during that period. Neither Suzle nor I said much about New York fans, clubs, or conventions, so the exercise wasn't useful, but it did show me how cringeworthy my

writing was. I tried too hard to be flavorful, slangy, and heartfelt. I think I've improved since then, but I'll have to wait another decade or so, and reread things from the 2020s to be sure.

[[I had a similar reaction to fanzine review columns I wrote for BSEA 100 years ago, when M Strummer pointed me to them, pretty much "Gordon Bennett, did I really write like that?" (Yes, I did)...]]

I've got to thank **Gary Mattingly** for mentioning several television series. We knew, for instance, that the fourth series of *Manifest* was supposed to appear on Netflix, but until I read *This Here...*, we had no idea that the new season was already up. Likewise with *Leverage: Redemption*. I'd also like to thank **Cuddles** for the details on *Lockwood & Co*. We saw that it was available on Netflix but didn't know anything about it. It sounds like something we'd enjoy, and we'll try it out.

Bob Jennings talks about selling and donating LPs. We had several boxes of those we wanted to get rid of, and took what we thought were the choicest items to an all-vinyl shop here (Bop Street). The owner took a whiff of the albums and declared them all mildewed. (We took our own whiffs, and agreed.) These were records that Suzle's mother had sent her, and which may have become damp in her mom's basement. (Although Mrs. Tompkins lived on a hill above downtown Johnstown, PA, during the 1977 flood even houses well above the river were affected.) So no sale. And then, only a few months later, Bop Street went out of business.

Steve Jeffery continues the discussion of female instrumentalists, so I add Lora Logic from X-ray Spex and her own band, Essential Logic. I also add the Billy Tipton Memorial Sax Quartet, all women, named after a Washington State sax player who presented as male but was biologically female.

Hey, **Gary Mattingly**, I watch movies too. Yesterday was *Heathers*, with Christian Slater and Wynona Ryder. I thought, before watching, that it was about killing girls named Heather, but that was only the first murder. Slater plays a high school rebel with a voice much like Jack Nicholson's, and Ryder plays Veronica, a reluctant friend of 3 Heathers, the high school's leading clique. One surprise in the opening credits was that one-time Seattle fan Norm Hollyn was the film's editor.

Caroline Coon? The name's familiar, but I had to look her up. (CarolineCoon.com) She's certainly had an interesting life.

[[Indeed. Most of us would have first noticed her as a journalist for 'Melody Maker' in the late 1970s...]]

From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

February 2

Gary Mattingly writes:

Egotorial: Well, it has been getting down to 25F here at night for the last two nights. It has felt chilly here. It has only gotten up to the 50s in the daytime.

My driver's license does expire this year in March. I have to take a vision test and the written test. Seems every five years since I'm 70 when my license renewal comes up I always have to take the vision test. I can't do anything to prepare for the vision test although I did make an appointment at 8AM on this coming Friday (aka tomorrow) since my vision is better in the morning. However I really must go over the driver's handbook. What a pain.

Took the dogs in today for vaccinations and to check to see if Pip has an ear infection . . . again. He does.

[...]

Congratulations on turning 65. I'll turn 71 this coming month. I guess we're both still kicking.

TAFFnessabounds: With respect to <https://taff.org.uk/> nothing on the front page about the nomination process The second link related to nomination on this page, <https://taff.org.uk/news/ann2210-StandForTAFF.pdf>, related to nominations says: "Assuming you have the time, the wish to go, and the nominators to back you up, any European science fiction fan can volunteer to become a TAFF candidate. For this race, you need two North American nominators, and three European nominators, who will then proceed to contact the current TAFF administrators (details below) by December 4th 2022, informing us of whom they nominate for this honour. You will also need to send an official statement of standing for TAFF to the administrators listing your nominators, plus a 101-word platform statement, and a £10/€12 bond fee sent via PayPal to EUTAFF@gmail.com."

You should send them your nomination explanation so they could actually have a complete explanation of the nomination process. The number and origin country for this TAFF is shown but not the general explanation.

[[I don't know who "them" is in your "you should send them...". The description of the process I punted for you was a very simplified version - what you quote above is from the news release from current admins Fia Karlsson (Yoorp) and

Orange Mike Lowrey (Merka) specific to the 2023 Westbound race. I don't need to tell the admins anything at all, nor do I need to presume to correct the godlike Dave Langford who maintains the "unofficial" TAFF website as a longstanding labor of love, faithfully (yet "merely") reporting all the latest. Habitual TAFF devotees such as meself are well aware of how it all happens, so perhaps I should apologize to those such as (apparently) yourself who aren't, but stuff in this here bag o' boo on such topics is, at least in theory, geared toward those who are already into it, and thus doesn't pitch at primer level...]]

Radio Winston: Very interesting information on ska and Rico. Most enjoyable, especially the music.

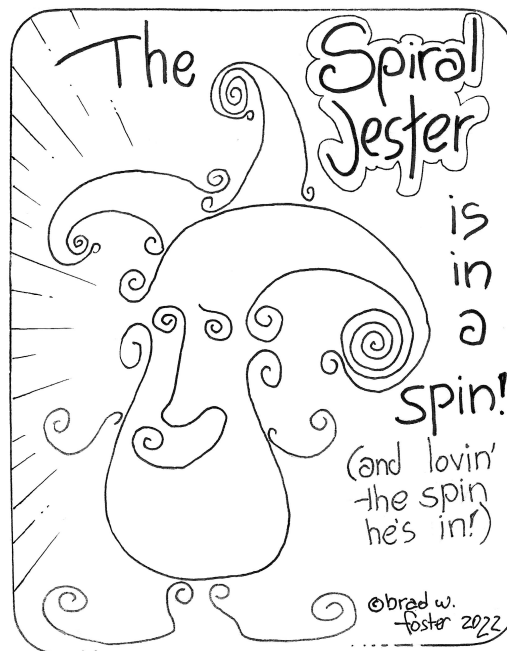
FaanWank: I probably need several years. Meanwhile the talk of ducks and such just reminds me of some of the bikram yoga teachers telling people not to have their butts sticking out like ducks during certain asanas/poses. Of course, that's not related at all, other than it is about ducks.

TV Guide: I know Picard's next and final season starts this month, aka February. I have no idea when 'ST: Discovery' or 'ST: Strange New Worlds' will return, other than sometime in this year, 2023. I have been watching the new 'Quantum Leap' but I don't think I'm as enamored of it as you are. I have only watched a few episodes of 'Leverage: Redemption' up to this point. I haven't watched any episodes of 'Suspicion'. I have enjoyed the first four episodes of 'Poker Face' but am worried that it is going to get a bit repetitive.

[['Quantum Leap' is all right, and the January 30 episode "Leap. Die. Repeat." was very good indeed, no doubt assisted by a typically lovely guest slot from Robert Picardo, not to mention a cliffhanger (in terms of story arc) ending...]]

I like 'The Last of Us' above all other current new shows, at least at the moment. Extraordinary, a comedy that's moderately entertaining. 'Will Trent' has proved entertaining and I like Betty, his dog. I've also been watching 'National Treasure: Edge of History' although I don't know that I would recommend it unless you just happen to have spare time. 'Carnival Row' also returns for its last season this month (again February). I've watched all the PBS episodes of 'Vienna Blood', 'Astrid' and I've watched all the current season episodes of 'All Creatures Great and Small'.

[[Haven't seen any of those, so no comment, for which you could possibly be grateful...]]



On regular TV I've watched 'The Good Doctor', 'Young Sheldon' and 'Ghosts'.

Movie Night: I have not watched 'The Nice Guys' but I've watched a fair number of other movies.

[[I have watched 'The Nice Guys' but have not watched a fair number of other movies...]]

Footy (**David Hodson**): Sorry about the health issues and the government issues. All the other stuff, library and such, was quite interesting. Anna sounds like a nice and helpful person. All that volunteer work sounds quite commendable. I probably should do that but all I really volunteer to do is hike in local parks and report trail issues or call in if someone needs help. I've called in a lot more trail issues since I really try to hike during the week in the middle of the day when no one else is on the trail. I suppose that's why I don't do much other volunteer stuff. For the most part I'm just not that good at being social. Even at conventions I have to walk off with some frequency simply because I need to be by myself more than most people. Long conversations aren't really my forte either.

Loco Citato:

Bob Jennings: California driver license renewal is every five years. I sang "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" in public when I was around 6 years old which was 1958.

Leigh Edmonds: Yes, interacting with nature is high on my list of priorities. I do have that problem with working in my back yard that everything just keeps on growing. I weed, time passes, I have to weed again. However I do have a high degree of satisfaction after I do actually complete weeding, pruning and cleaning up the back yard and see how nice it can look. It is unfortunate that more often than not it requires a lot of work and time. With respect to smoke I cannot say that I dislike tobacco smoke worse than marijuana smoke or vice versa. Too much of either on a continuing basis isn't my favorite thing, since I don't really smoke either. I did smoke marijuana in the past (like 3 or 4 decades ago) but just don't like losing the time from doing that any more.

[[It is getting more and more reviled to be a tobacco smoker, although most convention program rooms have been non-smoking for ages - including the diktat by - er - me, actually, that the main room at the first 'Holodeck' Star Trek con I chaired would be so, admittedly at the express request of GoH William Ware Theiss. At dear old Novacons passim when I was running the teck, the program room was designated non-smoking apart from the immediate area around the sound desk, so apart from me creating clouds I got to see a lot of Bernie Evans who memorably once marched up to the desk with an enjoinder to "turn that fookin' roobish off!" (in her refined Midlands accent) in response to the music being played between items, which at that moment was Philip Glass...]]

Jerry Kaufman: I haven't watched 'Flight Attendant', 'Three Pines' or 'Inside Man'. Ah, Annie Potts. I like her on 'Young Sheldon' although I've probably seen her in various and sundry other things in the past.

Mark Plummer: I don't believe I've watched any of the top five shows Mark listed. With respect to Zoom, I'm not a big fan of it. I agree it can be nice to see others you may not have been able to see for some time but I'm not really that comfortable with it and with groups it usually takes more time than I really like.

Gary Mattingly: For reasons unknown, I'm very aware of the dates of expiration of my licenses/passports/similar. Usually I wind up checking the dates multiple times because I'm paranoid about it expiring early. This isn't true of food expiration. Sorry about your issues with walking for any long distance. I spend my time doing many things although I probably watch too many TV series. A lot of old people do very little to nothing. They sit. Admittedly my sitting watching TV series is sedentary but I do a lot more. I would not personally recommend a total sedentary lifestyle. Now it works for some people with a genetic or hereditary disposition to live longer, despite anything they do. However for many (most?) people doing that shortens their lives and makes it increasingly difficult to actually move at all. I wish to continue moving. My eyes rarely glaze over from watching films. I like watching films and TV series. My eyes get tired at night but they do that no matter what I'm doing, watching things, reading things, being awake . . .

[[I'm always more debilitated when I'm not working, having got the habit from construction days of concentrating on the work and ignoring everything else. The same is largely true for the taxi driving (See 'Egotorial')...]]

NAE WEANS? No children?

[[Correct...]]

Cuddles: I agree 'ST: Strange New Worlds' is pretty good. Hm, I don't think I have watched 'Lockwood & Co'. (Now on episode 3, or is it 4), I'm obviously checking it out.

And on to you: The only fmz I've received that is in your list is VT28. However I could probably find them on efanazines.

And now I'll also have to go look for 'The Documentary', exploring animal sentience...

[[You don't have to look far. The direct link is in the pdf, as were the links for 'The Climate Question'...]]

John Hertz sent you a shovel?

[[Yes...]]

Hmm . . . searching around I find a Caroline Coon who is an artist and she was also in the film 'Rude Boy'. This the Caroline Coon who's photo appears?

[[Yes again...]]

Scented candles. I used to make candles. Actually I have all the supplies in the garage for making candles but it has been a few years. I also have scents that can be added. Patty doesn't like scents, and doesn't really seem to appreciate candles either. My father used to burn incense and I like incense. Patty doesn't like incense either. She doesn't like loud volumes on tvs and loud music. Sort of limiting . . .

[[You make her sound like a right fuckin' misery! Mind you, Jen has to tolerate high volume on the tv as well, at least until I get some new hearing aids...]]

More enjoyable artwork from **Ulrika** and nice photos in this issue also.

My hair has gone from brown to a brown/gray/white mixture that is definitely thinning and/or missing in various places where it was in the past. I still comb what I have.

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

February 3

Eli Cohen writes:

My sympathies for your "cold" weather. I'm currently living in a tropical climate -- that is, New York -- where the temperature has been above normal every day this January (mostly in the 40's and 50's, Fahrenheit), and we've had no snow at all! Of course, I spent almost 3 years in a place where typical winter temperatures were 40 below zero (Regina, Saskatchewan), a temperature so cold that it's the same in Fahrenheit and Celsius! (Update: it's now Feb. 3, the temperature is 23F, a balmy 6F with windchill, and we had some snow flurries 2 nights ago. Also, according to the news, Antarctica has apparently moved to New England... I guess this is all the groundhog's fault.)

So now you're 65? You kids... Why, you're not even 3 score and 10 (not that I'm keeping score). Meanwhile, I'm approaching three quarters of a century, which I really can't get my head around. (And we recently celebrated my brother-in-law's 80th birthday, during which his granddaughter informed him that he was 10 times her age!). When I think back to the days when we thought 30 was old... Just remember, ten years from now you won't believe you were ever this young!

[[I recall having a mock funeral (in which we paraded a coffin nicked from the theatre club around the Aldwych, adjacent to LSE where we were allegedly studying) containing a mate who turned 20 and was thus no longer a spry teenager. He did of course keep popping the lid to swig his pint. Whatever happened to George Digby (for it was he), I wonder, now no longer that ex-teenager by far?...]]

I should mention that 'The Long Kiss Goodnight' is also one of my favorite movies -- Geena Davis is wonderful in it, as is Samuel L. Jackson. Ooh indeed!

[[Did you ever think to check how Yvonne Zima (who plays the daughter) turned out? Ooh indeed, indeed!...]]



And, of course, here's another one of your crossword clues: "Horribly violated, perfect fit. (8)". Assuming this is going to be some terrible anagram of one of the first two 8-letter words, and unable to come up with any anagrams for "horribly", I'm going to guess "dovetail", which seems to fit (see what I did there?).

[[And so it is! I think you might find this's effort more challenging, and the bonus clue from Dave Langford (see WAHF) even more so...]]

Stay warm!

From: daverabban@gmail.com

February 7

Dave Cockfield writes:

This Here fanzine is increasing my guilt levels to epic proportions. Not only did I not loc the last issue but you name check me twice in this issue.

I am not worthy. Unfortunately I only got to the Stadium of Light once last year and didn't partake of food or refreshment. Years ago however there was a local Bakery that used to sell incredible Chicken Balti pies there.

[[Don't stress on daft notions of "worthiness" mate! The namechecks were somewhat coincidental, but they serve to represent the notion that I do actually think about my mates when whatever prompt turns up...]]

I like the term memory jog. My mind is a dustbin full of a lifetime of trivia. I even remember an event that happened while still in a pram.

Some people say it is a cesspool because I can also name every actor and actress who have appeared in a nude scene and where.

[[I'm with you as a trivia dustbin. Nude scenes, I'll bow to your superiority, though we could also gob on endlessly about about wicked side-boob appearances, and the non-nude but highly (ahem) titillating Jenny Agutter in 'Logan's Run', assuredly a classic...]]



Not being an active Fan I get a lot out of your tv guide. My viewing habits are varied and rather simplistic. Superhero, SF, and Fantasy. I watched 'Willow' last week and found it to be a fun load of tosh that reminded me fondly of the 1980 film 'Hawk the Slayer'. Full of standard tropes. The hero on a quest aided by a wizard, a giant, a dwarf, and an elf.

I also like Crime series such as 'Blacklist', 'Blue Bloods', and 'The Rookie'. Recent pleasures have been '1883' and 'Yellowstone' with '1923' to come.

[[As I mentioned, we're waiting on certain series to start (or restart) - 'Perry Mason' is coming soon, and we've added 'The Consultant' (starring Christoph Waltz) to the list...]]

However the most impressive series I have watched is 'Echo 3'. Written by the writer of 'The Hurt Locker' it is amazing. A story of kidnapping and rescue set in Venezuela and Columbia. Very slow paced at times but totally hypnotic with brutal, realistic, suspenseful action sequences that ramp tension levels to almost unbearable peaks.

I never rated Luke Evans as an actor until I saw this.

Great stuff about Talisker from Skel. A favourite whisky of mine that I am unlikely to taste for a long time. I have just recovered from a ten day bout of gout in my knee. I could barely get around my flat and the pain was so bad that if I had an axe in the house I would no longer have a left leg.

I have fond memories of visiting the Isle of Skye and going to the Distillery around 1980. Bugger! When we got there it was closed to the public for repairs.

Undeterred, I phoned and asked to speak to the Customs & Excise Officer. I explained my predicament as a fellow Officer and managed to wangle an impromptu tour with a few drinks at the end of it. My mate Frank and I were also allowed to buy half a dozen bottles at a 45% discount.

Result.

[[Nice one!!...]]

From: michelledh@me.com

February 7

Cuddles writes:

Colour me impressed! The day after I submitted my (very late) LOC for TH60, the latest issue pops up in my email and you managed to squeeze it into Loco Citato!

Most of January was less like a "month long hangover" and more like an extended episode of inebriation (Ralph's birthday celebration) followed by several days of clean & sober! After that, my vertigo flared up so badly I was dry until the end of the month.

Mark Plummer is correct: 'A Quiet Night In' (inside No.9) is pure genius! The series is a very specialised show of dark satire, twisted plots and comic timing. Yes, there are a few duds but check out 'The Trial of Elizabeth Gadge' (S2) with the late, great David Warner. A wickedly funny poke at Witchfinder General; 'The Bill' (S3) starring Phil Glenister, who was awesome in 'Life on Mars' and finally, 'Zanzibar' (S4), which is performed in beautiful rhyme & meter that it's almost like Twelfth Night but funnier.

I appreciate your frustrations about hearing aids. I got one a few years back, specially attuned to treat my tinnitus, so I only used it if I wasn't listening to music with my ear buds. It's a standard NHS one, bulky & annoying because I wear glasses all the time. Eventually, when I do need hearing assistance, I would love to get the earbud ones but they are very expensive.

[[The good news here is that I got a letter from the audiologist suggesting that the insurance would now cover some new hearing aids (I'm going to make sure that's ferreal - although full coverage, it's limited to once every three years) so I might be able to get my constant tinnitus back under control. We shall see...]]

David Hodson's Footy Column was so varied it was almost like a Peter Greenaway film - 'The Footy, The Fans, Some Dosh and Other Sundries' - although he nearly lost me with cricket. However, I definitely approve his recommendation for 'Dark', although I confess I haven't caught up with S3 yet. It's a very complex plot, so I don't recommend a binge: your ears will bleed, it's so cerebral! '1899' is very similar and has a cliffhanger ending that took me completely by surprise although I was gutted when I heard it was being cancelled. Still worth a look.

As always, **Ulrika's** colourful splashes throughout the zine are a joy.

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

February 11

Kim Huett writes again:

While looking for something else I discovered the following statement by Christopher Priest in *Wrinkled Shrew #1* (published by **Graham & Pat Charnock** in July 1974). Given your own writings about music I thought you might be interested to see it (assuming you haven't already):

I have a conventional outlook on rock music. The convention, briefly described, is that a band is an entity which is identical with the musicians whom it comprises. Ideally, such a band will consist of four people (preferably male) who have played together for many years, and whose personal identities are subordinated to the entity of the band. Such the was the Beatles (at least in the early days), which was the first rock band I latched on to in a big way. Perhaps it was the Beatles who actually created the convention for me; certainly my prejudice in favour of bands who have just three guitars and drums goes back to them.

This quote is lifted from an article in which 1974 Priest rambles a bit before focussing on his love for Status Quo, which just goes to show an individual's taste in music can surprise me, though not as much when I discovered an article by Charles Platt about his love for the early Rod Stewart.

[[Back in the days when I did teck for the BSG Novacons we'd play music in between program(me)



items, which at one point included the Wallflowers (ie Jakob Dylan), and that year's GoH C Priest toddled over and we had a quite interesting natter about Dylan pere...]]

From: dave_redd@hotmail.com

February 12

David Redd writes:

Ulrika's new shape seems to have inspired a new creative spark in her decorations - I thought the first would be best-in-show until I saw the rest, and now can't decide because they're all lovely. How nice. Re your Grumpy Old Man writings, I hope all the Life Stuff works out all right for you. **Dave Hodson's** "whole heap of other stuff" was all good to know; more power to his elbow in all his activities. In the letters, I particularly enjoyed **Bob Jennings** including his capsule memoir re disposing of old vinyl. And hello and thanks to everyone else.

From: srjeffery@aol.com

February 12

Steve Jeffery writes:

I do wonder about the relevance of my own FAAN Award voting pattern as being in any way representative. Because I am far more on the FIJAGH side of things, while Life involves major distractions like work, deaths, bills, ailments and taxes, my fannish catchment area, as it were, is fairly limited and contains the same handful of titles that I tend to see - for which read "get sent" - regularly (and loc rather less regularly).

Based on the last half dozen years you could easily set a bot to predict and submit my own votes in any recent year and you'd not be far off, and probably even I wouldn't quibble too much with the return.

With one thing and another, I have engaged very little this year, to the point I wonder if my vote should even count or even influence the overall result, but I also realise that if everyone does this - or sufficient people - then we are back to the situation of the awards being decided on less votes than there are fingers to count them on.

[[Quite so. The notion that any individual ballot is "representative" in any way is

tincture of pure bollocks. As I tediously do bang on, any individual's ballot is "representative" of what they saw and liked. A broad participation of voters from the various bits of the fanzine Faniverse is what makes the awards "representative" as a whole...]]

Deep sympathies for **Dave Hodson's** health and digestive problems. I'm not sure I could survive without onions, mushrooms and garlic. I certainly wouldn't be able to cook.

Jeff Beck, then Tom Verlaine. Some years start like they mean to go on. I hope this isn't one of them. (That goes for the severely sub zero weather at the end of January too.)

As ever, plaudits to **Ulrika**. I especially like the illo on page 11.

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

February 12

Leigh Edmonds writes:

This Here ... 61 has been lurking in my email in-box for the past couple of weeks and occasionally mugging me, but I've not been paying it the proper respect it demands until now. Perhaps it was the grumpy picture on the front page putting me off. Perhaps if you'd put one of **Ulrika's** lovely illos on the front I would have felt more welcomed.

Turning 65 eh? Poor puppy! If you think that turning 65 is bonkers I can assure you that turning 75 is insane. This happens to me later on this year and I really don't know what to think about it. Perhaps I should be thankful to have lasted this long. On the other hand, some of the problems of old age that are emerging do not make me the happiest of people at times, but I guess I'll live with it for now. Visits to the doctor are fairly infrequent and I don't have to take too many pills to keep everything on an even keel. Right now I look out my window and see our cats sunning themselves and looking very pleased with themselves, so I guess I'm on the positive side of the ledger.

[[Indeed, and I'll again refer to the croggling assertion that I am regarded by some as fandom's Keith Richards, but purely in the sense that I'm inexplicably not dead yet, something for which I am also rather grateful...]]

Your tale of woe with drivers licenses, etc, also reminded me of my advancing years, but also the optimism of VicRoads, the mob who take care of driver's licenses here. So far as I can recall the last time I went into the office was not long after we got to Ballarat from Western Australia, which is now more than 20 years ago. Since then all the renewals have been done over the interweb, so no visits have been necessary to check things such as whether I'm still capable of driving a car safely. The last eye test I had was when we arrived in Western Australia in 1988 and I had to get one of their licenses, and I just scraped through that. Here in Victoria they issue licenses for up to ten years so mine now is

due to expire in October 2031. I find this about as insane as the notion that I will be in my 80s by then. Hopefully cars will be driving themselves by then, I think I'd prefer that to me doing it.

The disappointment about being this age is that I had somehow thought, when I was much younger, that I would be older and wiser by now and know everything that was worth knowing. Well, older certainly. Wiser, that seems unlikely. As for knowing everything there is to know... The older I get the more I know that I don't know very much. Not in terms of what there is to know about the world anyhow. This applies to knowing anything about the subject of this issue's 'Radio Winston'. Until I read your comments I was happily unaware that Rico Rodriguez even existed and, now that I've listened to the links, I would be quite happy to return to that blissful state. Not that his music was unendurable, just uninteresting and annoying. After listening to the samples you provided I had to go and wash my ears out with some of Papa Haydn's string quartets. I seem to recall having to do this more than once after reading an issue of *This Here ...* and maybe I should learn from my mistakes in future.

[[I'll reiterate what's turned into a perhaps unintended founding philosophy of the 'Radio Winston' columns, which is to annoy you (and probably also Kim Huett) as much as possible. I'm also minded to paraphrase a riposte from the legendary F E Smith, here responding to a statement such as "I have read your fanzine but I am none the wiser" with "No, but you are better informed" ...]]

Friend **Hodson's** column this time did not start well with a long paragraph about footy and then another about cricket. After a summer of the Australian cricket team handing out embarrassing defeats to the visiting teams I managed to avoid any of the Indian team handing out an equally humiliating thrashing to the Australian team, and the footy season is still a month and a half away so sport is not high on my list of preoccupations at the moment. Like David says, "Maybe I should give up this sports stuff ...", but there is the Ashes series and the real footy to look forward to since the Melbourne Football Club can't be as bad again as it was last year.

[[I think we're all looking forward to the Ashes mate...]]

After that the 'Footy' column got a lot more interesting. Friend **Hodson** really does seem to lead a full and interesting life. I really enjoyed reading about it so if he gets sick of writing about footy I'll still keep reading what he writes.

[[The Sainted M Strummer has remarked that Dave has joined the sterling company of Marina Hyde (columnist for the Grauniad) in being one of the few writing about the footy that he'll actually read...]]

I've nothing to comment on in your columns about tv or movie watching. I'm in the same boat as **Jerry Kaufman**

who watches a large amount of tv but can't remember much about it. Valma and I watch a few hours of screen stuff most days, all of it streamed. Part of the reason is that I tend to get in a good snooze most evenings unless the show is really good. My trouble is that I'm not good at remembering the names of things so I could tell you that last night we watched a beautiful movie about a Chinese woman who goes into the Emperor's army disguised as a man and ends up saving the Empire and being reunited with his family and invited to join the Imperial Guard. The plot was nothing special but the filming and framing was exquisite. However I now have no idea of what the movie was called. Then there was another movie a couple of nights ago which was fairly ordinary in its plot except that it was a young woman causing the mayhem rather than the usual young man. Title again forgotten.

Reflecting on this I wonder if others among us are similarly inclined. We don't watch movies to be uplifted and informed, we watch movies to be entertained and diverted. This means, I guess, that I don't put much thought into analyzing why, or why not, I like something I watch in the same way that I might look at a book. Consequently, I might have some thoughts that I'd like to write down about what I read but movies are not important enough for me to want to put the effort into understanding them more than I currently do. Perhaps for the same reason that I don't mind not thinking about Rico Rodriguez. Or am I just getting mentally lazy as I approach the big 75?

[[No comment...]]

Gary Mattingly's long story about his eyes was the kind of thing that needs a warning to 'look away now' if you don't like reading about eyes and what can go wrong with them. It reminds me of the time when oh, no, let's not think about that ... or *that*. It's only when I think back on it, which I don't like doing, that I realize how much time and effort my parents put into looking after me when I was little. My dislike of thinking about eyes comes from the number of waiting rooms and trips to waiting rooms that I spent as a child while my parents tried to find a way to make my vision better. Only now that they are gone have I realized what a burden it must have been for them to find doctors to see me and drag me to. It's a pity that nobody could then tell them what was going on and that there was really no solution to the problem. Part of this realization for me comes from the fact that I don't remember a time when I wasn't very short sighted and really only used one eye, so I didn't know what the fuss was all about or what I might be missing by only seeing the world as I do, rather than as most people see it. A matter of perspective I guess.

Mark Plummer's realization that he is in a backwater of today's fandom suggests to me a reason why we might all be in a cosmological backwater of fandom. Fandom has become so large and nebulous now that it's like the universe

and that we can only comprehend it for the distance we can see. That's in the way that this universe may be infinite but we can only see 13 billion light years of it because that's all the information that is available to us. Thus, we are all at the center of a fanish universe which is as big as what we can know about it, just as our galaxy is at the center of as much of the universe as we can see from our vantage point. What I'm working my way to saying is that Mark is not in a fanish backwater but at the center of the fanverse from his perspective, which is the result of what he can know about the multiverse of fandoms. There are probably hundreds, nay, thousands, of fans who do not even know that the Fishlifters and *This Here ...* exists, so it is they, not Mark, who live in a backwater.

So much for theorizing this time around. Keep them coming.

WAHF

Dave Langford, with, in part, a crossword clue that might baffle **Eli Cohen** even more that it did me: "Gaffe ultimately presages right answer divided by 100 – in short, a prime number? (4)". The quirky and variable rules of the compiler ('Inquisitor') indicate that in this instance the 'e' from "Gaffe" needs to be dropped to make it solvable. Good fuckin' luck! (Solution in 'Indulge Me' below)... ; **Tommy Ferguson**, responding to **Dave Hodson's** "It's been a miserable start to 2023 in North London" with: "I beg to differ - my part of Narf London *[[sic]]* is still flying...". For the possibly still bewildered, this is a footy reference, since Tommy's Arsenal and Dave's Spurs are north London rivals (putting it mildly). I must, however, strenuously correct the Oirish mangling of the lingo here: having lived in both bits of the capital, it's "Norf Larndun" above the river and "Sarflunn(un)" below. The poor lad is clearly deranged by the upcoming Corflu Craic. I await Outraged Letters which will dispute my enunciation... ; **John Hertz**: "You say you were tempted to get an actual physical shovel. So I sent you one. Evidently it arrived; you print a photo. But you get all amazed astounded about it *[[sic]]*. You keep crying DoBFO, but look what happens. Yours more in sorrow than in censure." *[[“What happens” is that I get more indecipherable bollocks off you...]]* ; **George Phillies** ; **Liam Proven**, from his new abode in the Isle of Man ; **Paul Skelton**: "I send a Loc this morning and get a fanzine back this afternoon with the LoC in it? Bloody Hell!". I point out to Skel that **Cuddles'** loc came in even later than his - I'm that good, apparently... ;

FANZINES RECEIVED

Gratefully acknowledged with a (very) little comment...

THE MEGALOSCOPE #5 (David Grigg) - I note in a thanking email that I had less aggro understanding the plot of season 2 of 'Slow Horses' than **David** apparently did - I claim familiarity with spy stories, he claims dotage ...

THE OBDURATE EYE #24 (Garth Spencer) - A scrapbookish ish, personal (of course) and newsy (fanzines, gatherings etc), and as such has similarities to **John Purcell's** *Askew*. But that background color - eurg!!...

LOFGEORNOST #150 (Fred Lerner) - Nothing screams "venerable" like the opening sentence: "Just over sixty years ago [...] I began my introduction into Fandom...". I think I might just about be able to claim 40, by comparison...

INDULGE ME

✘ **DOTAGE** : Can't remember if I mentioned this before, but with "advancing" age (also noting that many inhabitants of this here loccol have got me well beat), I do recall the sage comment by a construction co-worker in response to complaints about a rough'un: "You're above ground and working. That's a good day." I recently discovered the Scandiwegian equivalent: "Upright and not crying" ...

✘ **CROSSWORD CLUE FOR ELI** : The fact that **Dave Langford** and I are now sharing favorite cryptic clues (see WAHF) takes us into "be very afraid" territory, but it has shown me that I'm crap at the solving these days due to being massively out of practice. Here's one nicked from the *Grauniad* which I thought clever: "Rob Lowe gutted after fare goes up (6)" ...

✘ **FAANWANK EXTRA** : Two weeks to go in the voting window, he reiterated. **Get some in!!**...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : Have we been neglecting the Canadians? All right, here's one, Professor **Martha Ladly** from the Ontario School of Art and Design. Whoshe? you might ask - well, if you add the "and the Muffins" after "Martha"...



✘ **SCIENCE AND NATURE (1)** : Some left field and creatively skiffy solutions to climate problems are turning up, including this'un which relies upon [a fall of moondust](#)...

✘ **RATFUCKERY** : "Even though Democrats retained the Senate — and expanded their majority — in 2022, the results nonetheless marked the continuation of an unwelcome trend: Our new data shows that Senate Republicans last won more votes or represented more Americans than Democrats in 1998, but the GOP has controlled the upper chamber fully half the time since then nonetheless." (Daily Kos)...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2)** : Needing no introduction, shurely, **Sarah Douglas**...



✘ **THE LANGFORD SOLUTION** : This'un also held Dave up for a minute, apparently. "Gaffe ultimately" minus the 'e' yields 'F', which "presages" (comes before) "right answer divided by 100 - in short..." , which describes initializing "right answer" as 'RA' and dividing those letters by 100 (= 'C'), which when assembled yields 'FRCA' (Fellow of the Royal College of Anesthetists), a "prime number" indeed (groans and chair plummeting ensue). A much easier

one for The Deaf Twit (by me), I'm sure: "About the last word on a Fairport Convention album. That's better! (6)"...

✘ **SCIENCE AND NATURE (2)** : Not as we all were taught, the Answer isn't 42: [it's 1/137](#)...



✘ **YO, SEMITE!** : An interesting article which contends that Yosemite Sam (along with pretty much the entire 'Bugs Bunny' cast of characters) was [Jewish](#)...

✘ **NEXTISH** : 24th or 25th March, I think...

MIRANDA

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**"Well I was walking down the High Road
And this guy stops me
He'd just got in from New Zealand
And he was looking for mushy peas"**