

This Here...

"...rising to a fever pitch." (D Miller)

EGOTORIAL

DOGGY DEMENTIA

Canine cognitive dysfunction syndrome is a thing, and we're a bit worried that our Lulu has got a dose of it.

She is, of course, knocking on a bit. I've never known *exactly* how old she is since I got her as a rescue off a bartender at Aces & Ales down the road when her and her husband lost their house and couldn't take Lulu with them to an apartment. I was ready to get a new four-legged friend, my adored Bosstone having joined the choir invisible in distressing circumstances on the day we arrived in Vegas, and this was several months later. Adopting Lulu was fifteen years ago, just about, so we reckon she'd be 16 now (if not a little older) since she was full-grown at the time. (Mutts, like what she is and as was Bosstone, do tend to be longer-lived.)

Lulu started acting up a treat a few weeks ago, her main thing being nosing her way into tight spaces and at not entirely nailed down items like floor fans and standard lamps and knocking them over, as well as getting into bookshelves and cd/dvd racks to scatter the contents on the floor. That and being up some nights all night, going outside and being barky to the detriment of Jen's sleep. Last week, while I was trying to Do Fanac (in the early hours of the am as usual) she was at it for four hours straight, curtailing my ability to get any progress not only on this here "opinionated and populist" effort (per **C Lake** who knows whereof she speaks) but also the approx 94 other items on the list of Stuff To Do.



We did a bit of Googling, as you do, and find that this is extremely common stuff among aging companions. It's actually been a tad reassuring to clock the rather massive list of symptoms of the condition and note that the Lulu checkmark only appears on three or four of them. CBD is supposed to help, but she already gets treats of that, and apparently doggies can have Xanax in a suitable dosage (verified by my long-time friend **Allison Douglass** who is a veterinary pharmacist, thanks Alli!). A vet visit (\$\$\$ ah fuck) should be on the cards.

A couple days ago, though, she got back to more like her old self (Lulu, not Allison who is often as new self as that can be, the goth geekgirl darling that she is) and we naturally wondered why that might be.

We've noticed all along that Lulu isn't big on changes to things, although once she's got over the stress and things have settled down (like the two times we've moved with her, three if you count her initial adoption) she's adapted pretty quickly. So our initial thoughts on her behavior, after a fair amount of concern that we

might not want to put the Xmas tree up this year, turned to "what's different around here?", the answer to which is usually "fuck all".

Through the good offices of **Alan White** I acquired seven or so boxes of ~~that~~ fanzines, ostensibly for the COR41U auction, formerly the property of Arnie Katz, and which still need to be perused (via Zoom, most likely) by those with a lot more nous than me about what value any of them might have (ie **Andy Hooper** and **S&ra Bond**). Meanwhile, the boxes have sat conspicuously in the living room while we try to set up the show and tell. It occurred to us that the presence of those previously unseen

containers would have been a definite change to Lulu's view of the environs and might even have suggested another change of dwelling was imminent, to her undoubted distress.

The boxes were stacked up in front of the fireplace, in no small part to prevent the doggo from trying to get in it, an effort which had resulted in a previous partial success and a half-sooty Lulu head which **Jen** had been obliged to clean off (I was at work) to avoid any of it getting traipsed around the place. Given that we had people coming over for Thanksgiving lunch, we did want to get those boxes shifted in case we might want to actually have the fire on, as November nippy as it's getting - a risible note in that what's referred to as "November nippy" round here is known in other readers' climes as "summer", but ey...

With two birds and one stone in mind, we shifted the lot behind the love seat next to where the printer sits, preventing Lulu from getting into *that* little space and knocking out various cables and that.

Since then she's been mostly back to her normal routine of sleeping a lot and being only somewhat barky (usually when **Jen's** in the kitchen making dinner) and generally not wrecking the place.

We may put up the Xmas tree after all, but, as with many travails that life chucks at us, we have been reassured that Fanzines Are To Blame...

It's all good.

November 2023

CORFLUX

41 ROLL CALL

PR3 is still on track for next month, in which you'll get to recheck the bits and bobs I've put in here so far.

Very important asks are: (1) who will be physically present on Thursday evening for the welcome/anniversary/shanghaied into stuffing con packages party because we'll be getting food in for that and DoBFO need to know how much, and (2) for attending members to confirm that they're actually planning to attend. That second one may seem odd, but I do already know of two who won't be there. We'll have to give the hotel final numbers for the Sunday banquet about a week upfront, and since that's the biggest cost to the event it would be nice to get it right and not over-order.

Now I know some of you have already revealed their travel arrangements and arrival days/times, but, perhaps unsurprisingly, I lazily haven't made any notes of these up to this point, so confirmations will be well useful, please!

In programming news, **Mark Plummer** has been added to the coterie of recent retirees for the Friday night panel and pissup...

Inquiries/comments (*not* payments) to vegas41@corflu.org



42 NEWS

BY DAVID HODSON

Okay, time to have a discussion...

I had spoken to Nic, and a few select others, about having another Corflu in the UK in 2025. The reasons for this were to have an event a week or so before the Belfast Eastercon, which I feel is going to be a highlight for UK fandom with its intention to reintroduce a fanroom and to follow on from the feelgood factor of the Belfast Corflu. I have also discussed elsewhere that it's fairly obvious to me that, given the demographics at play, Corflu will probably cease to exist in the next five years unless something radical occurs. Failing an SFnal intervention where we are all treated with a new medical procedure that resets our personal clocks to 25 years old and wipes out any other genetic or health defects, that radical intervention is most likely finding a corps of willing and able sweet young things to continue the Corflu tradition; something that doesn't seem likely at the moment.

I have also discussed that there seems to be a bunch of "younger than us" fans sitting on the other side of the English Channel and maybe we (UK and US fans) should be doing more to draw them more extensively into our web. I know there are fans like Lucy H and Ron Gemmell, amongst others, who have made many a journey to Scandinavia especially, but the trip I made to Berlin earlier this year made it clear to me that there are goodly numbers of other fans we might want to make overtures to as well.

I had started looking around for hotels that might want to take us a week before Easter 2025, especially ones that might be willing to offer an extended room deal into the middle of the week following the convention for overseas visitors to

have a base of operations whilst waiting for the Belfast Eastercon. Rob Hansen did some investigating of hotels in his neighbourhood, Alun Harries has offered to accompany me around his neck of the woods in Sarf London checking out facilities, I'm just up the train line from Stevenage, where I intended to check out the hotel used for the last Mexican and maybe poke around a few other London orbital venues. I was willing to look further afield, but, again, I had a reason for wanting to be London orbital; John Harvey has just returned to the UK from France, but has been stricken with Parkinson's disease, Avedon Carol is pretty much housebound, and Rob is effectively her carer now, Graham and Pat Charnock have said they can't really see themselves getting to another Corflu and I'm guessing the caveat to that statement is unless it was very local. Why can't money from the Corflu 50 be used not just to fly people across oceans or continents, but also to Uber people that we might not otherwise ever see face-to-face again around a motorway and provide facilities to make sure they are comfortable?

I am still happy to pursue this option, although I'm having some issues persuading a couple of people to provide the contribution I'd like from them (I am actually still working on it, this statement counts as part of the continuing emotional blackmail effort...). I haven't been doing much with the idea lately because a) I've been busy with personal shit and b) someone pissed me off on the subject of Corflu in an admittedly mild fashion.

The following may sound petty, but fuck it, I'm old enough now to not really give a shit what most people think of me. In another fannish venue, a senior British fan unilaterally declared that it was surely the turn of the East Coast of the US to run the 2025 Corflu. Okay, there's nothing wrong with someone declaring a preference of where they'd like their next fannish holiday to be, but this individual seemed and still seems completely oblivious to the fact that no one on the East Coast of the US is remotely fucking offering to run a convention. The words "beggars" and "choosers" come to mind!

It just pissed me off a little bit.

To be honest, I don't really feel like I have the energy to run a convention. I'd much rather be a passive consumer these days as well, but...and I'll say this clearly as well because I know Nic thought I was wishing him into his box for a little while...I nearly died in 2016, I've read the obits of lots of people I've met over the years and wished I'd had the chance to meet them again before they met their end, we are all getting older and, inevitably, frailer in many cases, so, given the option of not seeing a large group of people I've come to like ever again and running a convention just once more, I'll run the bastard convention.

So, there you go, if the feedback to this is positive I'll try and find a hotel for 2025, but if other people want to hold the

2025 Corflu elsewhere they may want to speak up quickly. Oh, and if the consensus is to come back to the UK in 2025 then some of you may need to help me shank's pony it around hotels between now and next February...

HEALTH DIARY...

NOVEMBER

The main event this month was the visit by the actual palliative care nurse (the typically very nice Mary) during which we learn that I don't get any info off her on how my numbers are doing, so we'll be resting on the assumption that if the white blood cell count and lymphocyte numbers are taking an unwelcome swerve in the wrong direction then we'd have heard pretty swiftly from the oncology people.

I've got an actual office visit scheduled for December 15th, so that'll inform us.

The other useful addition has been a referral from Mary to their social worker who will be over next Thursday to give us info about how I need to navigate Medicare upon my packing up work and losing the company health insurance, as well as hopefully giving **Jen** some pointers on getting the insurance she needs, although with typical diligence she's already along the road there...

FAANWANK

RESPONSES...

...to the column lastish. You'd better sit down...

Leigh Edmonds : No, I didn't go to sleep while reading 'FaanWank', but I did wonder what all the fuss was about. I suppose that if people are getting steamed up about those awards it means that they find the matter something worth taking seriously. So, if they don't like the way it's all happening now they should perhaps stage a coup and take over the awards to run them they way they think would be better. Is that actually going to happen? It's much easier to complain and carry on endlessly, another to actually do something constructive.

[[Complaints from the cheap seats without offering solutions was what caused me to take the gig in the first place. See also Perry Middlemiss' comment later....]]

In the meantime, if I get letters published in one of the 'cool' fanzines that must mean I'm 'cool' too. Well, that would be a first, so here's hoping.

I was off doing something creative - it has been known - when I remembered that I wanted to say something about **Eric Mayer's** comment that you quote "... fandom is

primarily [...] a social group rather than a creative group". It may be true that fandom is a social group but it is also a creative group, by mundane standards. It also assumes that being social is not a creative process and that being creative is somehow superior to being social. And leaving all that aside, the FAAn Awards aren't given for being social, they are given for being creative in the midst of a social group. I suppose what **Eric** is saying is something like that the FAAn Awards aren't any judge of creative value because they are awarded on a popular vote. Like democracy I would have thought. Come up with a better system, Pal!

William Breiding : I was delighted to see you engage with **Taral's** *Dark Toys*. My beef with him on the fanzine/awards topic is simply put. He far too frequently dismisses and ignores all fanzines in his own fanzine. Yet he flails and curses that no one acknowledges his fanzines. Is this a case of reaping what you deserve, or is it just mere hypocrisy? (He has a nice bulky letter column so what's the gripe, anyway?)

Regardless, I'm not the best one to go on about FAAnWanking, having ignored them most of their existence. The stance being I ain't here for an award but to pub and be pubbed.

Jerry Kaufman : I read *Dark Toys* #76 after reading 'FaanWank', and sent comments to **Taral** before responding to you. First, I was a bit embarrassed about not having read it when **Taral** posted it. Next, I was surprised to see anything from **Eric Mayer**, who I thought was entirely gaffiated. He and I had very different views of fandom back in the 1980s or thereabouts, and probably still do. As for his contention that the FAAN Awards are for "contributions to fandom," I can take that as one possible way of determining one's votes in the FAANs or any other awards.

[[Leigh Edmonds (above) nails it down pretty well. Mayer's argument that "contributions to fandom" and creativity are different things is DoBFO nonsense...]]

Taral wonders why some people vote when others don't. I tend to wonder why some people don't vote when others do. But neither **Taral** nor I am about to conduct a poll to get answers to either question. That would involve actual work to create the poll, disseminate it, record the results, analyze the results, and develop a plan. In fact, we'd need a goal that would justify the whole process, wouldn't we? I can think of two goals: increase participation or end the awards altogether.

[[The brick wall you'd come up against there, I suggest, is that people who don't vote in the FAAn are also unlikely to respond to a survey about them, so all we have is observations of our own. As Bob Jennings points out below, I've put a lot of effort into trying to get more interested voters, with very mixed results. I'll pick out (if not pick on) a couple of examples. Let's consider Alexiad as a fine

example of a genzine with both consistency and longevity to its credit, a zine which consistently appears on my own ballot and that of others, yet (as with W^m Breiding above) has never been much for even mentioning the awards, although Joe does now report the results. The lack of interest there is defensible enough, even though some of us more involved in the process would like to see the names appearing frequently in their always solid loccol to also crop up in the FAAn voter list. Developing that argument, then, what would be the effect of the likes of Taras Wolansky or Rodford Edmiston, for example, returning a FAAn ballot? The "people only vote for their friends" argument would simplistically suggest more votes for Alexiad, but perhaps we'd also get some insight into which other zines (if any) Joe and Lisa's readership might be clocking. My opinion is that those readers are likely a more thoughtful constituency than that of John Thiel (of attempted ballot-stuffing notoriety), but then again there's always that risk. It's accurate enough to say that Alexiad is indifferent to the FAAn rather than antagonistic (cf William Breiding above). Which brings us to File770. Rather than encourage participation when their star player Camestros Felapton (a name which still sounds like someone wanking in the lav to me) was listed in The Incomplete Register for a special publication the response was mockery, derision and dismissal. It could be inferred that this had much to do with Mike Glycer getting the major arse over perceived criticism of the Hugos, but ey...]]

Bob Jennings : On your comments about the comments made in the letter column of *Dark Toys* #76 about other comments and articles about (wait for it...) the FAAn awards, let me just say that, yes, many fen do automatically read the fanzines they get from their friends and from people who turn out material they are most interested in, BUT... most faneds generally broadcast widely, trying to snare in new readers and cheerfully sending out copies to people whose names/emails/addresses they encounter in other letter columns, or thru franking services such as the one the N3F provides, plus posting it on the efanzines.com web site. I personally still get a bunch of fanzines from people I never heard of before (or, maybe, barely heard of before). I read those zines and either comment or don't. On rare occasions I write and tell someone not to send me their stuff any more because I have absolutely no interest in the subject matter. For example, poetry fanzines. I don't get poetry, never have, never will, and do not want to waste my time reading a fanzine devoted to the stuff. Or most fanzines devoted to examining the FX of gory horror movies. I'm not interested, really I'm not. But as a general rule I'm willing to give most fanzines a read-thru, and often come back for future issues. These days future issues are sometimes few and very far between, but what the hell.

The same goes for stuff posted on **Bill Burns'** excellent efanzines.com site. I try to check out a newly posted zine at least once a week. Some are good, some aren't. A lot are random ramblings that offer me no room for comments, but I do try out new stuff all the time. Doubtless this shows that I am a creaky relic of fandoms past, a bygone age when there were a ton of zines around and fanzines were the heart of the hobby, but having said that, I still think that most of the people who vote in the FAAn awards vote for their friends. That's their privilege. The goal, as you keep saying, is to get more people to vote in the awards, to broaden the voter base.

[[I fervently wish that the Faniverse and the FAAn voter rolls had even a modest couple dozen more like you...]]

How to do that? Hey, you got me. You've been doing champion work exploring all kinds of new angles, and altho there has been some improvement in voting numbers, it is still way below what it ought to be. Maybe the hard reality is that nobody gives a damn any more.

Also duly noted: it's "vote" for an item, not "nominate". I'll try to remember the distinction in any future discussions.

[[I've had to grudgingly accept that people use "nominate" and "vote" interchangeably, but I still cringe every time I see the former incorrectly used, and thus I thank you for your consideration...]]

Perry Middlemiss : I do find the arguments about the authenticity of the FAAn awards to be rather self-defeating. The one that seems to say that it would be better for someone other than you to be administrating the award (supposedly to remove the "stain" of dodgy vote-counting) sounds great until the answer is, "well, are you going to take it on then?" Answer: "crickets"... It's easy to be sitting on the outside looking in, complaining but then not being willing to do anything about it. If you don't like something then change it. Simple really.

[[Indeed. See my response to Leigh Edmonds earlier. The argument of wanting to avoid the appearance of possible dodginess in vote counting is a valid one, but I reckon I've well earned the trust of voters by now. Hooper never suggested that the votes were actually rigged (as Mike Glycer did), just that the optics were questionable...]]

THE FRIENDS DILEMMA

Bob Jennings above reasserts that "I still think that most of the people who vote in the FAAn awards vote for their friends.", and while that's certainly an arguable point of view, I believe it's much less clear cut and requires a typical Farey ramble (as millions flee in terror).

People become friends because they have at least a modicum of shared values and attitudes, or perhaps they find each other interesting or amusing in some measure, or at the very least the shared frame of reference of being part of the sf community. In this bit of the Faniverse that translates to also

consuming the output of those friends, fanzines in this context, which they may well be predisposed to like.

There are inevitable subsets which you could uncharitably call "in-groups", and that's a perception which clearly has plagued the FAAn awards and continues to do so. *But* there is a subset of fanzine fans who, while perhaps reflexively favoring their mates are still widely reading what's out there and put a lot of thought into their votes. Thus we have a hypothetical possibility that while one group might favor *December Doggo* and another is devoted to *Bijou Batgirls*, they both may also enjoy *Onion-Sellers' Quarterly* which would thus shuffle to the top of the pile.

As **Bob** and I tirelessly (and tiresomely, no doubt) point out, a broadening of the voter base makes such an outcome more likely, assuming the voters both (a) have an interest in voting in the first place and (b) read *other* fanzines to some degree. To continue with the usual sadistic necrophiliac bestiality, no-one reads everything, and not reading everything isn't an excuse not to vote. Mathematically, a larger number of voters would at least in theory cover a larger number of titles (and individuals). The diversity of votes of even the rather small voter roll we've had the last couple of years shows this.

Nevertheless, the perception of the FAAns as a closed shop of sorts tends to persist in ways that lead to discouragement of involvement, yet that's not really the point.

Even a top practitioner such as **Claire Brialey** can be pleased with a mere (!) top ten finish for *Weekend Weetabix* (as mentioned in the final issue #5 just out), and any kind of decent showing demonstrates recognition of good work - it's all about getting *some* 'boo, not just the ranking.

There's inevitable complaints about seeing the same winners year after year (although I'd contend this goes in phases), but my point there has always been that the best zines and individuals don't turn to shit overnight and thus will always be contenders.

I'm reluctant to develop that argument in personal terms, but the mastodon in the room is that *This Here...* is on a roll of three wins, and that's led to criticism of having a contender administering the awards (as noted lastish).

I had occasion to rewatch the 2021 award ceremonies (done on Zoom because Covid and most ably presented by **Jerry Kaufman** who as far as I'm concerned has that gig as long as he wants it) and was startled anew by **Andy Hooper's** strong suggestion that I should be prevented from administering ever again, having just "given [myself] an award". First off, the *voters* gave me that award (and I don't self-vote so I wasn't one of them there), and if you want to be pedantic, the incumbent Corflu "gives" the awards, not the administrator who is fundamentally just the clerk for the process.

I'm sure you can imagine how much I both reject and utterly fuckin' resent that argument. **Andy's** opinion may have

changed, since he has complimented aspects of my admin, including but not limited to the publication of *The Incomplete Register* voters' guide, something I hope any future admin with continue to do since in it's present form it's not a massively onerous undertaking.

Simply put: if the voters determine that *This Here...* is the best perzine of the given year, then so it is. And thank you!

That's all the more significant since I scrupulously don't solicit votes for myself (which as admin would be DoBFO unseemly), while nevertheless encouraging others to do so for themselves or indeed others *as part of* promotion of the awards in general. Nor do I engage in any level of recommendation publicly, but if anyone asks me privately what's on my ballot I'm happy to discuss that, to the point of having considered publishing my own ballot after the fact.

Let me quickly address something else that rankled. **Andy** sarcastically commented (and I undoubtedly quasiquote) "It's amazing that the fanzine which discussed the FAAn Awards a lot ended up winning one". Well isn't it conceivable that people liked the fact that these discussions were out in the open (for once) and rewarded that? there's absolutely fuckin' *nothing* to stop any other fanzine from engaging in the debate (and thereby equally helping to promote the awards), even *Dark Toys* where **Taral** is generally (and sadly to me, typically) negative and whiny.

Returning to the ostensible "friends dilemma" topic, perhaps it's just the case that a Billy No-Mates can't expect to be well-liked, whatever their actual and genuine ability.

I'll leave it there, then...

RADIO WINSTON

BY ROY HESSINGER

THE TRINITY SESSION

The second album by the Cowboy Junkies was a masterpiece of original and cover songs that was released in late 1988. With the top of the charts in '89 including Milli Vanilli, Roxette, Warrant, Poison, et al., it was a breath of fresh air in a pop sludge.

The siblings of Margo and Michael Timmins, vocals and guitar, are the heart of Cowboy Junkies.

Formed in Toronto Canada with Alan Anton, bassist, who worked with Michael in other bands.

Their first album "Whites Off Earth Now!!" was blues influenced and they carried that on a tour of the southern US and mixed it with the country they heard on tour. This led to "The Trinity Session".



Recorded in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Toronto, it was recorded with minimal audio enhancement in a day - plus an A Capella vocal later. Using the acoustics of the church, which had a reverb affect, gave the songs a very atmospheric quality. They were unable to rehearse with the other musicians, but as a fan, they sounded like long-time members of the band.

The cover songs got the most chart and critical success, and for good reason, but let's start with an original song first.

"Misguided Angel" was a beautiful song that I feel was overlooked by many. It highlights the minimalist recording style and Margo's voice. If I were a sound engineer, I might like the style of recording more, but as a music fan... Margo's beautiful voice is all over every song on this album and especially "Misguided Angel".

As for the covers... where to begin? I suppose with "Sweet Jane". According to Lou Reed, it was his favorite cover. Beyond that praise there is my seriously biased opinion about covers... The best covers are slower versions of songs.

Gary Jules - "Mad World"

Johnny Cash - "Hurt"

You add the acoustics of the church and Margo's voice... perfection.

This is the same for the songs "Working on A Building", "Walking After Midnight", and Hank Williams "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry". Add to this a song not on the original vinyl, but released on later album versions, "Blue Moon Revisited (Song For Elvis)" and you can hear the power of all the songs. From the vocals to the brushes on drums - I know many drummers object to them, but this is an excellent example of when to use them - to the acoustics and basic recording that was not over engineered and you have an album that hit the right note at the right time.

Full album playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQsh-YrP3560sTl-qyJp6Yrs4xBfUggBj>

TV GUIDE

BODIES

This'un turned up highly recommended from several reviews, and at a mere 8 episodes we clocked it over two nights. Adapted for Netflix from the Si Spencer graphic novel originally published by DC/Vertigo in 2014-15, it's one of those shows which sucks you in and gets even better as it goes along.

The trouble is the impossibility of writing about the series without spoilers - **Jen's** frequent complaint round here is that, due to my terrible habit of looking up a show on Wikipedia and reading ahead, I often do spoilers while we're watching. This time, though, I deliberately avoided my usual look-ahead but *still* managed a spoiler. It's a skill, I tell you...

For those unfamiliar with the premise: the same (naked) body, shot through the left eye and with an odd tattoo on the wrist is found in four different years (1890, 1941, 2023 and 2053) by four different police officers in the exact same location (the fictional Longharvest Lane in Whitechapel), and from there the plot unfolds with the thread of a clandestine cultish organization pulling the strings (or trying to, anyway) in every era.

It's likely not that much of a spoiler to note that time travel (and potential paradoxes) plays a role, but the skiffiness aspects could be said to be downplayed in favor of the procedural and conspiracy stuff.

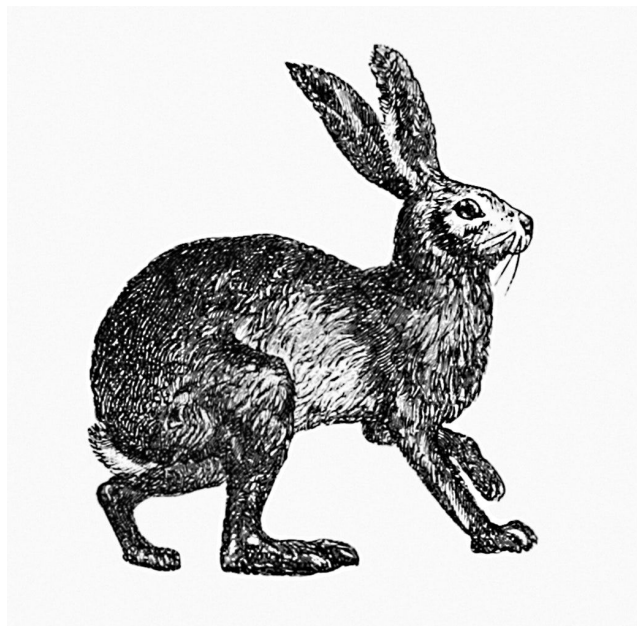
Every review I've seen seems to single out actor Stephen Graham for particular praise, which isn't undeserved at all but is a bit unfair to the rest of the outstanding cast, although it takes you a minute to get past Israeli actress Shira Haas (DC Iris Maplewood from 2053) who looks fourteen years old, except for her haircut which makes her look twelve.

Highly recommended.

Mind you, it took me more than a minute to realize, looking at Stephen Graham, "Fuck me, that's Tommy from 'Snatch' innit?"...



PROPER RABBIT



BROWN BREAD

A recent study from the University of Essex (of all places, ironically or appropriately, who can tell?) recorded the voices of around 200 people aged 18-39 from the London area and used some sort of AI to analyze their accents. The broad conclusions were that the extreme opposite ends of the spectrum, Cockney and Received Pronunciation (aka "The Queen's English" or "BBC English") were going away in favor of more middle-ground versions.

[Here's an article from 'The Conversation'](#) about that study.

What it turns out that we have now are moderations (or you could say "blanding") of Cockney into "Estuary English" - think Adele, or David Tennant's Doctor Who accent and RP into "standard Southern British English", less posh and less clipped and apparently exemplified by Ellie Goulding (whoshe?). The article usefully provides examples of these people talking.

But there's another linguistic trend on the go, "multicultural London English", which, if it wasn't for the horrendous inaccuracy of the term might be labelled "New Cockney" since most uninformed people equate "Cockney" simply with London rather than its specific East End origins. MLE has a strong immigrant influence which you can hear well in the given example, footballer Bukayo Saka.

"Accentism" remains a thing, as class-based as anything else in Britain, and there's even a hierarchy among regional accents and dialects with people as fiercely protective of their own as they might be derisive of others. Me, for

example, I find Scouse accents incredibly grating, which is why I had to wince through Jodie Whittaker's *Doctor Who* episodes with John Bishop as a companion (while also wincing for other reasons usually named "Chibnall").

The evolution of *Doctor Who* accents might of itself be instructive: Hartnell through Colin Baker were all RP (more or less), but Sylvester McCoy retained his soft Scots burr at least a bit. Paul McGann (a Scouser) is also RP, even in real life - that's what acting school will do for yer ey? On to the revival, Christopher Eccleston speaks with his own Lancastrian accent, leading Rose Tyler (Billie Piper) to remark that he sounds like he's from "the North", getting the beautifully indignant reply: "So wha! Lots of planets have a North!". Tennant, as noted, went with EE - there's a fan theory (isn't there always?) that he was "imprinted" by Rose Tyler into speaking like her, even though she's a bit more on the Barbara Windsor end of the spectrum. Matt Smith is back to RP-ish, or SSBE really, being from what's been half-jokingly described as "the posh part of the Midlands" (Nottingham). Capaldi kept his Scots accent for the role, and Whittaker kept hers (Huddersfield). We'll find out what Tennant does as 14 (only a few words to go on so far), also Ncuti Gatwa - another Scot!

It seems another paradox of sorts that back in the day everyone in the BBC was expected to sound like John Snagge (unless they were Fyfe Robertson), and when regional accents were allowed in, that day's version of Nigel Farage went into snit central about it all. So on the face of it, while Auntie went with diversification, the rest of the island has been losing that diversity to approach mediocrity. Mind you, the broadest of accents haven't got much in the way of national attention, and when they have it's usually been for the purposes of mockery. Readers of a certain age will undoubtedly remember the oft-repeated Ulster News interview with the legendary "Strabane Man".



But what of our fannish compatriots? With Fishlifters always on my mind, **Claire** is shurely more RP than SSBE, and **Mark** is somewhere between EE and Barbara Windsor. (Although

his tits may not be bigger, they are certainly further from the ground.)

My mother was quite horrified when I returned from living in Peckham (Sarf Lun'n) with the accent acquired. Her contention and admonition was that to achieve greatness I must "SPEAK NICELY!" - not convincing given that this exhortation was always delivered in a Monty Python Terry Jones Pepperpot screech...

GIVE US A CLUE

Eli Cohen : Oh no, another crossword clue: "Ongoing conflict reversal in overdue fanzine (4)". I wasted too much time looking for 4-letter overdue fanzines -- but *BEAM*, for example, is useless for anagrams. Then I paid more attention, and noticed, buried and reversed within "overdue fanzine" is "FEUD"! Ta-da! I know, larffably obvious...

[[Well done! I'm now wondering whether you considered 'YHOS', and then whether "HOSY" is an actual word? Would you like some shoy shauce on that? See also Steve Jeffery's loc...]]

David Langford : I was suffering some kind of non-Covid lurgi for much of October and early November, and haven't been very responsive.

Another *i* crossword editor's Clue of the Week, not difficult but it made me smile: "Fun for eg young Boris, having surprisingly low mental age (4,4,4)"

[["Not difficult for you", I respond, and resort to cheating. I cluelessly (ahem) failed to clock that "surprisingly" was an anagram indicator to rearrange "low mental age" into ETON WALL GAME. A smile there from me an'all Dave, but highly parochial innit?...]]

Nic : I've also had a look at some favorite clues of others, which, since they're online, **Eli** will be able to Googlecheat them. Here's three I particularly liked:

Hillary's challenge as first lady: to do nothing (7)

Shitfaced from a drink that's drug-free (5)

And because I like to shoehorn in the occasional fannish reference:

Possible John D. Berry design backfires (5)

Have fun!

FOOTY

BY DAVID HODSON

November's highlight has undoubtedly been Novacon52. At a little over three-and-a-half hours on the trains, Buxton's not too onerous to get to from London, and the Palace Hotel, despite being a bit down at heel, is really quite pleasant, although the small but steep hill up to it from the station gets the lungs burning on late Autumn days. One of the reasons Novacon was such a treat was the unexpected appearance of John Harvey, accompanied by his very patient carer, on the Saturday and Sunday. The only part of the programme I attended was the quiz, where, despite being teamed up with Sandra Bond, Nigel Rowe, and Tommy Ferguson, we came dead last (I suspect our "joker" round wasn't counted), and this year I finally wandered round part of the town centre whilst trying to find a pub with Sky Sports.

Alas, I came up fruitless in the hostelry search, but I did manage to score a relatively decent cup of coffee in Caffè Nero (I did say "relatively" there) and confirm that Greggs had launched it's Christmas take-out menu by watching the never decreasing queue of people buying Christmas dinner slices (Turkey, sage and onion stuffing, and cranberry sauce all covered in pastry; to be fair I am a fan of Greggs fast food and their frozen snacks range available in Iceland, one of our down-market UK supermarkets. I have never claimed to have a refined palate). My curiosity at the length of queue outside this branch of the "restaurant" chain was more annoyance at being unlikely to ever get to the front of the damned thing.

The reason for my quest was the 12.30 kick-off of Tottenham Hotspur's visit to Wolverhampton Wanderers, a team supported by one Lord Kettle of this parish. All my memories of past encounters with Wolves are good. We beat them over two games in the 1971-72 U.E.F.A. Cup Final, and I saw them get absolutely thumped 3-0 by Spurs at Arsenal's old Highbury ground in an F.A. Cup semi-final replay in 1981, but I knew this one was going to be difficult. The previous weekend, Spurs had suffered their first defeat of the season, losing 1-4 at home to Chelsea, after having two men sent off for dangerous tackles (only one of which I was convinced was actually dangerous) and losing two crucial players – Dutch centre-back Micky Van de Ven and England midfielder James Maddison – to what look like long-term injuries.

After wandering back to the con hotel at around half-time knowing Spurs had gone into a very early 1-0 lead, getting a beer, and sitting to chat with various passersby, I slipped into the "check the BBC website every ten minutes" routine on my phone.

59 minutes in, still 1-0...

66 minutes in, still 1-0...

75 minutes in, still 1-0...

83 minutes in, still 1-0...

90 minutes in, still 1-0.....

92 minutes..... 1-fucking-1 ...Grrrrrrrrr!!!

Oh, well, at least it's not a loss...

97 minutes: Full-time: Wolves 2 Spurs 1...

WHAT THE ACTUAL FUCK?.....

At some point slightly after this, Tommy Ferguson reappeared. He'd gone in a different direction from me on leaving the hotel (I'd gone straight out the front doors and down the hill, he'd turned right out the front doors and gone up a hill. The hill may have been the deciding factor in my choice) and found several pubs with Sky Sports. At least he managed to stop himself from openly sniggering.

At time of writing (11.30am Saturday morning, November 25th ... We really do try to keep things as topical as possible), we've just come out of another bloody international break (the third this season already) and I'm listening to the build-up to Manchester City versus Liverpool on Sky Sports in the background. I absolutely detest Sky, they constantly try to sell a "these have been the dominant sides of the last decade" narrative, when the truth is Manchester City have been the dominant side of the last decade and Liverpool fluked a title in the covid destroyed season of 2019/20. Currently third placed Arsenal play Brentford away at 5.30 this evening, currently fourth placed Spurs play fifth placed Aston Villa tomorrow afternoon. It's a bit too early in the season to say things are beginning to shake themselves out, but I expect City to start the process of moving away from the rest of the league this weekend.

As upsetting as a couple of Spurs losses has been, it hasn't been the most depressing sporting event of the last few weeks. Those pesky bloody Australian cricketers!

It would be fair to say that Australia started the ICC one-day World Cup as badly as England, losing their first game to India by 6-wickets and their second to South Africa by 134 runs before turning things around with seven straight wins to finish third in the group table, behind favourites and hosts India and South Africa, and ahead of the last of the semi-finalists New Zealand. England finished a dismal seventh in the table and questions have to be asked about Jos Buttler's continuing captaincy of the limited overs sides; in football parlance it looks like he's "lost the dressing room".

I've been criticised by the Australians that frequent the lettercols here for my failure/refusal to see the tactical genius that is Pat Cummings and I still can't see it. Cummings is a mediocre cricketer and a mediocre captain, but he is a safe pair of hands who understands that he has players at his disposal that just never know when they are beaten and that's the quality that has been the backbone of Australia's success since the days of Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson in

the 1970s; the days when cricket caught my attention and turned me into a fan. You can have all the talent in the world, but without application it counts for nothing. India were a dynamic force for much of the tournament and went into the final as favourites due to their destructive batting and fanatical home support, but Australia's 6-wicket victory was all about strangling every Indian advantage as it threatened to manifest itself. This was a victory of sporting character over brittle talent. I absolutely hate all these Australian cricket sides that somehow always manage to wrestle victory from defeat, but they also have to be (very) grudgingly admired.

rule books; what it's actually doing is going after the clubs it deems to have a significant enough stature to make an example that also don't have a reputation for being litigious. Time will tell with this story, but it's likely just another shitshow created to cover-up other shortcomings at the Premier League, the Football Association, and PGMOL, the body responsible for match day officials.

December is going to be a busy month in more than one way. I've currently got five Christmas meals lined-up between December 4th and December 14th and three other buffet style events, and that's before arranging a journey up to Colchester to visit John Harvey and not one, but two liquid evenings at the Bishop's Finger in Farringdon. I'll probably end up shit-faced at another London comic mart on the 10th as well. I've been meaning to get along to GOSH comics to pick-up a copy of the well-reviewed SF graphic novel [The Hard Switch by Owen Pomery](#), but things have been a bit hectic plus I'm rapidly filling gaps in my runs of Twomorrows Publishing's Back Issue and Alter Ego magazines, so my attention has been elsewhere.

Manchester City have just finished 1-1 with Liverpool at the Etihad in a game that was equal parts frustrating and infuriating. City really should have had a goal allowed that was chalked off for a foul on the Liverpool goalkeeper, but it was a soft challenge and the relief on Alison's face said it all. I remain fully convinced that many referees walk onto Premier League pitches with more than an idea of the result that the media would prefer to see to allow dramatic narratives of close title races to be continued as deeply into the season as possible. The truth is City were head and shoulders above Liverpool, but an early kick-off after an international break that sees players flying back from all over the world always ends up with an underwhelming set of performances. It's not out and out corruption on the part of the officials, there's no brown envelopes full of £50 notes changing hands, but these geese know where the gold leaf comes from.

LOCO CITATO

["You can't always write a chord ugly enough to say what you want to say, so sometimes you have to rely on a giraffe filled with whipped cream." (Frank Zappa)...]

From: phillies@4liberty.net

October 28

George Phillies writes:

The notion that Neffers wanted fewer fanzines washed up on the rocks of reality. It turns out that almost no members want fewer zines. After repeated inquiries to the membership, in addition to the two members who had already departed, exactly one member expressed an interest



Southgate tells England to lift their game and claim No 1 spot

David Hytner

Gareth Southgate has told his England players they must target becoming the No 1 ranked team in world football as he addressed a remainder of the standards required after noticing a drop in the 2019 World Cup win against New Zealand last Friday. The manager is preparing for the final Euro 2024 qualifier against North Macedonia in Skopje and at a stadium where there are worries over the condition of the pitch. Southgate has been hit by further withdrawals from his squad, with Reece James absent because of a personal issue and Jarrod Bowen out with an unspecified injury. Nico Lopez could come in for his first cap to fill the problem position of left back. Southgate's principal concern was the mindset of his team and it was not his first time speaking in such forceful terms about the need for total focus from them. England had secured their place at the Euros next summer, before the Malta game and they are virtually certain of being among the top seeds for the group-phase draw on the month-long campaign against North Macedonia.

But Southgate, who has calculated that his team might have moved above Brazil and into the top of the Fifa rankings but admitted there had been too much talk from inside the camp about the final run to the halfway to Malta. He bristled when asked about the perception that North Macedonia was a low-stakes game – and where the marginal gains in motivational terms might be generated. Southgate has one more campaign March when England play France against Brazil and Belgium before he names his European Championship squad. "We've got to play better than we did against Malta," he said. "Qualification is done. With the games at the weekend, we might be ranked third in the world at the minute but we're two

▲ Australia's captain, Pat Cummins, lifts the trophy, surrounded by his teammates, after their six-wicket win in Ahmedabad. **Ali Martin** takes the game on, he just puts the pressure right back on to the opposition and he's great fun to be around." Head entered the tournament halfway through after recovering in Australia from a broken hand. The 29-year-old finished as player of the match in a World Cup final, the third Australian after Ricky Ponting (2003) and Adam Gilchrist (2007) to do so with a match-winning hundred. As Cummins was presented with the trophy by Narendra Modi, the Indian prime minister, the India captain could only look on. "We were not good enough," Rohit Sharma said. "We tried everything but it wasn't to be. I feel the pitch got slightly better to bat on under lights but I don't want to give that as an excuse. We didn't put enough runs on the board."

"That's the pinnacle" Cummins hails his cup kings after breaking a billion hearts

▲ Australia's captain, Pat Cummins, lifts the trophy, surrounded by his teammates, after their six-wicket win in Ahmedabad. **Ali Martin** takes the game on, he just puts the pressure right back on to the opposition and he's great fun to be around." Head entered the tournament halfway through after recovering in Australia from a broken hand. The 29-year-old finished as player of the match in a World Cup final, the third Australian after Ricky Ponting (2003) and Adam Gilchrist (2007) to do so with a match-winning hundred. As Cummins was presented with the trophy by Narendra Modi, the Indian prime minister, the India captain could only look on. "We were not good enough," Rohit Sharma said. "We tried everything but it wasn't to be. I feel the pitch got slightly better to bat on under lights but I don't want to give that as an excuse. We didn't put enough runs on the board."

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Back in the world of football, on the 17th of November Everton were hit with a 10-point deduction by the Premier League for financial irregularities and rule breaches, which put them into the bottom three of the league and threatens relegation, although there are more than 3 worse teams than Everton and I still expect them to survive comfortably. The following week the Premier League announced they were investigating transfer and player's agent rule breaches against Tottenham from the 2008 sale of Jermaine Defoe to Portsmouth. Everton and their fans feel, in my opinion rightfully, aggrieved at the points deduction and if Tottenham are sanctioned in any way for the Defoe transfer, I'll be feeling the same. There is a feeling that the Premier League is going after targets it feels can't fight back whilst allowing the modern "giants" of Chelsea, Liverpool, and Manchester City to drive trucks through the loopholes in the

in only receiving two of our magnificent range of fanzine titles. We will therefore continue to publish all of the zines for which we can find editors or editrices. *Mangaverse* and *Films Fantastic* are currently in stasis.

[[Glad to hear this, and equally pleased to be able to report it. Now if only we could get them to participate in award voting...]]

With respect to your quote [above], your genius is so incredible that the remark is totally beyond my feeble comprehension.

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

October 29

Leigh Edmonds writes:

This morning I'm trying to avoid "real" work by reading the latest issue of *This Here...* ("Real" in this context means paying bills, deleting annoying emails, getting myself organized sufficiently for a visit to **Archbishop Bruce**, that kind of thing.)

If nothing else, this issue makes me think that I must have been hiding under a rock for lo these past few decades. For example, in your Egotorial I discover that 'Del Taco' is a real thing. The only place I'd heard of it before was references in 'Grace and Frankie' and I'd sort of assumed that it was a made up name. Well, there's something new for me to look forward to when I get to Las Vegas, though I suppose there must be other branches of the franchise spread across the US.

I cannot help but notice that you have made a thing of my ability to nod off at sometimes inappropriate occasions. I have to admit that this is sometimes true, but not always. Last night I had to use the fast-forward button a couple of times to get through tedious but probably very expensive segments of a movie that I would happily have slept through. I would say more but I can't even remember the name of the movie and will probably watch it again by mistake because of this. If that happens I'm going to be doing a lot of sleeping.

I did remember the Tommy James, et al, song from a period in my life when I was both young and innocent. I don't know that I'd seen the video that went with it before which reminded me of those videos they made in the late 1960s when the technology of video production was not quite equal to the personal experience of acid or the like. I can't say that hearing the song again put me to sleep, mainly because it usually takes more than three minutes for that kind of thing to happen. On the other hand, looking up the song on Google informs me that it was voted the 57th best song of the 1960s on some popularity poll, which seems about right.

The Joan Jett version seemed a bit too laborious for my taste but the Prince version was something else. Prince is one of those artists that I've known about but never found the opportunity to delve into. This is a much better version than the original, enlivened by the great slabs lifted from 'Wild Thing' which might also be in my list of 'perfect' songs.

So, what rock have I been living under that I don't know about Prince, well, as much as most other people apparently do. Then, flicking through to the letters I find a link to another artist I've heard mentioned, but don't think I've ever heard before, this Stevie Ray Vaughan. Goshwowboyohboy! Your fanzine is good for something after all!

[[I could delve into some extended mockery here, but I've been subject to similar from some people (not mentioning any names that start with 'U') who seem to have got the impression that I boast encyclopedic musical knowledge, which I really don't. On that occasion croglement was expressed that I had never heard of the band Boiled in Lead...]]

Back to this business of the 'perfect' song. I'm guessing that a lot of what makes a song perfect is the context in which it appears. By which I mean that 'Please Please Me' is far from a great song in retrospect but the musical context in which it appeared made it much better than just about anything else at the time. The same for 'Anarchy In the UK' and 'Smells Like Teen Spirit', I think. That's about as far as my knowledge of pop and rock goes before I lost interest. I was envious to read that Jerry and Suzle were going to hear Emanuel Ax playing Beethoven sonatas, which is where my musical interest became focused.

[[I like the inclusion of a contextual element in any "perfect song" designation. Good thought!...]]

Oddly, I was thinking about perfect songs a couple of days ago and did come up with what is my perfect pop/rock song, partly for the story it tells, partly because of its structure and partly because it is a great bit of rock and roll. I don't know if the [Divinyls](#) and '[Boys in Town](#)' ever made it big elsewhere, so there's the link.

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

October 29

Kim Huett writes:

And for the record I can't imagine Nic being pronounced in any way but how Flash did Zootopia, your thing is once more before me, like a deer frozen in truck headlights. Also for the record I prefer to use the term tobacco junkies because it seems to me to be a more honest description of the practice. I don't care if people smoke, so long as I can avoid the smoke, but I see no reason to pretend that putting a burning object between the lips and inhaling is somehow different to any other form of drug use.

Did you know that Sir Arbuthnot Lane pioneered the practice of removing a large section of the colon in order to make it better suited to the modern diet of highly processed food? According to Sir Arbuthnot (and who in their right mind would dream of doubting somebody with the moniker Sir Arbuthnot) a really long colon is not only redundant given the modern diet, but in fact is a disadvantage as it encourages the body to store decomposing waste internally far longer than is really necessary.

I only bring this up because it occurs to me that permanent residents of the neon turd that is Las Vegas must find it difficult to resist all the fast food on offer as part of the tourist skinning operation. In which case all such long-term residents might want to consider the advantages of a colon snip in order to make shitting more efficient and discourage the holding of decomposing waste. I have to wonder if such an operation would also have the useful side-effect of flattening the abdomen? That could be an unlooked for benefit and moreover, one that is far more practical than the Mick Jagger business we discussed earlier.

[[People have odd ideas about Las Vegas - you're not the only one. The "tourist skinning operation", limited to the Strip and Downtown is much more dependent on ludicrously expensive restaurants (with Gordon Ramsay, about to open this seventh Strip location, the worst offender for overpricing). Fast food is optional, and (particularly pizza or tacos) generally favored by young drunks after a night on the piss. Neon is also pretty much long gone, it's all massive LED screens now. "The Mick Jagger business", for the edification of other readers, is the story that (and I think I've got this right) is that he had a regime of getting bees to sting his todger for some unexplained but perhaps guessable benefit, and Kim suggested I might do the same on a potentially money-making YouTube channel. Don't hold your breath...]]

From: portablezine@gmail.com

October 30

William Breiding writes:

This Here. . .69 came in during our relocation and (partial) set up of the new digs in Albuquerque (COA below). Read it this morning. In regards to merely scanning zines, I never scan

yours. Only the footy column gets a cursory to see if it contains something besides footy (which it often does, and with great interest). I read you word for word otherwise, beginning to end. It's a basic truism that one will find only a few, or even just a couple, of fanzines that speaks to them. This can be problematic for someone like me who takes fan publishing seriously. One could be understandably hurt (or at least crestfallen) to know their zine is being skimmed or even entirely neglected. (With efanzine.com postings at least the sting is less when directly sending out a foundling to deep nonresponse.) But it happens. And then that dreaded topic of "gifting" arises. And the problem of what if one does not want to be gifted?

Probably before all of that I should have acknowledged your health situation. I was a bit perturbed when I read of your palliative care. I associate that with end-of-life. Further wiki dives informs me that palliative care is now considered a more holistic approach for chronic or terminal illnesses and not necessarily immediate. But it still startles. You apparently have huge amounts of energy and drive. Amazing.

"Perfect song" is certainly a matter of taste, even considering classic form. I am in agreement with both **Jerry Kaufman** and **Leigh Edmonds** that Traffic's "Low Spark" is enormously boring and druggy, and that the 'John Barleycorn' album is a beautiful union of druggy British folk inspired rock, and more importantly, *lean*. **Jerry** being distracted by an ear worm of "Steady As She Goes" by the Raconteurs while listening to Peter Gabriel's latest certainly must be telling of it's lack of hooks. While I've never been a big fan of Jack White (pompous and derivative in

my book) "Steady As She Goes" comes close to being a great (though perhaps not *perfect*) pop song. Mainly due to the fact that the Raconteurs is a collaboration between White and Brendan Benson, who has written a half dozen albums of near perfect pop songs. [Here's a song by Brendan Benson](#) that will give you an indication of what I'm talking about. Benson is from Royal Oak a suburb of Detroit, Patty Peters' home town.

I love Tommy James, but "Crimson and Clover" is least to my liking. "Mirage" and "Mony Mony" do the trick for me— "[Mirage](#)" is fey and dreamy, "[Mony Mony](#)", pseudo-punk (i.e., Billy Idol's cover, if you could call him "punk" at that stage):



I came to the Cult of Nic late and missed the Prison Years.
What were you doing time for?

*[[I thought you had asked and I answered this previously?
Short version: sentenced to 6 years for three offenses of
Driving While Revoked, half suspended, with good time
ended up serving 18 months...]]*

I'd better get back to putting the casita together.

The new address is: PO Box 10726, Albuquerque, NM 87184.
We got lucky and found a casita (in-law) by the Rio Grande
in a pretty neighborhood with gigantic cottonwoods. We got
lucky, but we are paying through the nose in rent.

Hopefully you have many good days to come, my friend.

From: daverabban@gmail.com

November 1

Dave Cockfield writes:

Beautiful art by **Ulrika**.

Last night I had my first ever "Trick or Treat" visitation: a skeleton mask wearing ghoul that judging from their height was about 10 years old. Not sure if it was a boy or a girl but found it worrying that they were on their own. I had nothing to give except 51 pence in change which they seemed happy with.

Barbara Flynn was a great choice to feature. I fell in love with her watching 'The Beiderbecke Affair'. Because she played a teacher I had fantasies of her spanking me. Too much Jimmy Edwards and 'Whacko!' (1956-1960) when I was a child.

I enjoy the fan stuff but I'm so far distanced from it these days I can't really comment. However I am always interested in fans' thoughts on Sport, books, tv and film.

BFI *Sight and Sound* magazine often has a 100 best film feature with a top ten from famous film individuals.

I much prefer favourite films. I managed a list of 26 that I was able to cut down to 14. Here they are in no particular order: 'The Omega Man', 'Made in Heaven', 'Silent Running', 'Somewhere in Time', 'The Apartment', 'The 7th Voyage of Sinbad', 'Portrait of Jennie', 'The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp', 'North West Frontier', 'Barbarella', 'Roxanne', '55 Days at Peking', 'To Kill A Mockingbird', 'Silver Linings Playbook'.

Maybe tv series next time.

[[Not a bad list. 'Silent Running' is a definite note for future rewatch - but I'm not so sure 'Barbarella' would hold up that well...]]

From: vegasmillerman@gmail.com

November 1

Don Miller writes:

There are 3 Wes Anderson movies I would heartily recommend.

The first, being my favorite, 'The Grand Budapest Hotel' (2014).

I've seen it many times. It's very deliberately paced. After character introductions, the film progresses with increasing pace, rising to a fever pitch. Watch when you can devote the time to see it, in one sitting.

<https://youtu.be/G1jG8HUY4zI>

2nd favorite is 'Isle of Dogs' (2018).

3rd fave, 'Fantastic Mr. Fox' (2009).

Cheers!

From: jakaufman@aol.com

November 3

Jerry Kaufman writes:

I'm a bit dodgy today - I get lightheaded and lose my balance a bit when I stand - so if this note is a bit incoherent at times, you'll excuse me. Unless you find it no more or less incoherent than usual, in which case, feh.

What could be more mundane than a description of your bathing needs? My response that I usually use Irish Spring bath bars myself. I've never noticed the 5 in One product you like; I use the bars, and Head and Shoulders for my hair. (Jen's zine is in my email this morning. What secrets will she reveal?)

As I mentioned in my previous note, we've booked our hotel room and flights, and will arrive [at Corflu] late afternoon on Wednesday, and leave on the following Tuesday. I hope this will give us time to do more sightseeing, visiting museums and new-to-us kitchy casinos.

Our Medicare Advantage provider has offered us home visits, but we haven't booked one despite being offered monetary bonuses if we do. I suspect a visit would be very similar to the one you received. Could it be that the visitor was being paid per visit, and therefore kept it very brief so as to fit more into a single day?

[[That was just a preliminary visit by someone I assume was an administrative functionary. As I write this, the actual nurse visit is next week, no doubt to be described in this's 'Health Diary'...]]

I'll give a shout-out to **Dave Hodson** just because. Although I like him and his writing, he's actually talking about footy this time around, and not so much about the cultural aspects of the game (or other matters entirely off-subject), so his column wasn't of so much interest.

I was in quite a “heart-to-heart” mood when I wrote my letter of October 4. I did think better of one paragraph for which I sent you a revision, but wish I had done so for more. I’ll try not to let this happen again.

[[I didn’t interpret anything you wrote in a bad way, but of course I was happy to make your requested edit. This here tray of expired tacos is, in part, and for good or ill, a forum for making remarks that any of us might later think better of, or be corrected upon (which very DoBFO goes for me as well), and I have no problem with that. The Faniverse never has been “we all get along” and is chocker with different opinions. I like to have that out in the open, meself...]]

Regarding “Jerrys” versus “Jerries”, I’m not as sure as I was. I believe that the British nickname for Germans was once (and may still be) “Jerry,” with the plural being rendered “Jerries.” Maybe this should apply to the personal name. I should look this up in my copy of the *Chicago Manual of Style*?

[[See Eli Cohen’s loc below...]]

You’ve made a true hit when you selected Evelyn Glennie as an “Ageless Beauty.” And I even have one of her albums.

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

November 4

Eli Cohen writes:

Thank you for sending me *This Here...* #69, the fanzine devoted to **Leigh Edmonds’** sleeping habits.

I don’t know anything about your incarceration other than what you say here in your Egotorial; I just wanted to mention that I tell people I spent 3 years in and out of jail in Saskatchewan (see, I was working for the Dept. of Social Services as their Research Officer for Corrections, which involved studies of and visits to the province’s jails, probation offices, halfway houses, etc. -- I know, not the same thing at all). Nothing to do with Irish Spring, of course, though the Director of Corrections, Terry Thompson, might have had Irish ancestors...

Beautiful **Ulrika** illos on p. 9, right next to my loc praising her illos in #68 and commenting on their placement next to my loc praising her previous illos -- what an amazing coincidence! It almost makes me believe in some Cosmic Intelligence governing the universe! I mean, what are the odds??

[[Or a Cosmic Intelligence doing layout?...]]

Re you and Jerry on plurals, according to Merriam-Webster (via Google):

The plurals of last names are just like the plurals of most nouns. They typically get formed by adding -s. Except, that

is, if the name already ends in s or z. Then the plural is formed by adding -es.

The Smith clan → the Smiths

Jill and Sam Clarence → the Clarences

Mr. and Mrs. Jones → the Joneses

The Fernandez family → the Fernandezes

Unlike regular nouns that end in y, names that end in y are also made plural by adding -s:

The Kennedy clan → the Kennedys

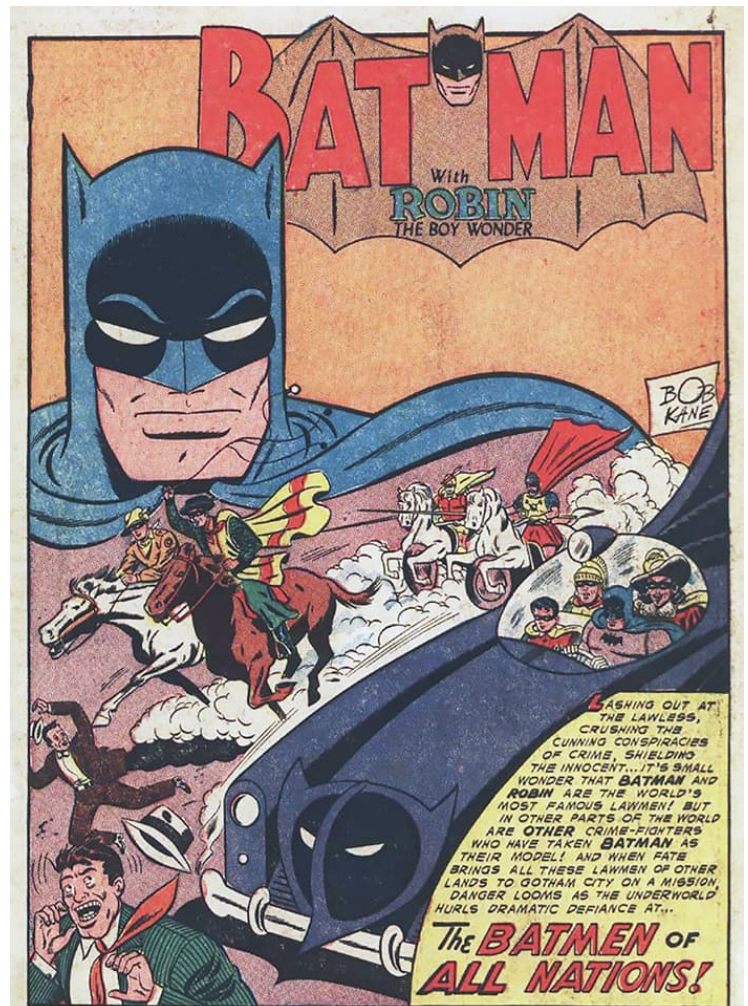
The Daley family → the Daleys

So I’d say it’s “Jerrys”. Unfortunately, I couldn’t find a definitive answer on “Batman”, though my favorite was:

Actually it’s more like mother-in-law. The correct plural is “batsmen”.

Only if he’s playing cricket.

[[“Batsmen” is quite correct when referring to cricketers, certainly, but for Bruce Wayne’s alter ego it’s canonically “Batmen” ...]]



From: dave_redd@hotmail.com

November 4

David Redd writes:

Many thanks again for *TH...*, #69 already - seems only yesterday was #50. Your dogged pursuit of monthly excellence continues to amaze me. (I have trouble stringing together a brief LoC let alone an entire magazine.) Thank you for the health issues update and I hope all goes well with you this month.

Among much else in **Dave Hodson's** fine column I enjoyed his note about Charlton and Beckenbauer neutralising each other in the World Cup. I heard another Bobby Charlton story on the radio: apparently he was in Scotland opening a supermarket or something when a football fan asked "Have you come to steal our manager then?" and Bobby thought he'd better take a look at this Alex Ferguson. Would be a lovely story if true.

[[And the rest is history...]]

p.9 **Ulrika** taken to a new level by putting four images together. Delightful!

[[Ulrika has done a few of those bookmark designs as a set of four, so I take no credit for putting them together - that's all her...]]

From: fabfcbks@aol.com

November 5

Bob Jennings writes:

Received *This There* #69 a few weeks back and scanned it, but have only gotten back to a through reading today, the result of it being a relatively warm and clear day, so I took my almost new Black & Decker hedge trimmer out and attacked the jungle in the rear part of my back yard. This mass of vegetation is overgrown with vampire plants and several types of noxious thorn bushes (flowering and otherwise). I tried to do something about the mess during the summer but the thorns and the humidity and the vegetation being in full leafy glory made it almost impossible. Now, in the deep fall, most of the leaves have fallen away leaving mostly the stems that I can attack. Which I did. And immediately regretted not wearing work gloves to go at this crap, but hey, just more proof that years of reading all that trashy science fiction crud along with millions of garishly colored comic books has completely rotted out the cognitive judgmental sections of my brain. I got some work done, but when the blood began to drip down on my shoes I knew it was time to quit and try something else. No need to dwell on how this malignant growth of destructive vegetation got established in the first place, I've got enuf guilt trying to deal with the mass of band-aids on my hands,.

Anyway, naturally, in my current masochistic state of mind, I decided to read your fanzine.

[[Thanks, I think...]]

I can sympathize with your irritation at companies that discontinue a product that you happen to enjoy and use regularly. There's a great quote from Mignon McLaughlin (1913-1983) - "If an article is attractive, or useful, or inexpensive, they'll stop making it tomorrow. If it's all three, they stopped making it yesterday."

Luckily for us we live in the internet age where hardly any products completely disappear. In addition to the sellers thru Amazon who seem to have plenty of almost all out of production products made in the last forty years, there is eBay, where untold layers of our commercial history are offered for sale every single day.

Some years back I ran out of staples for my trusty hand held Ace stapler, which uses a special crinkle staple. I've had this thing since the early 1970s and it's great for stapling fanzines, far easier to use than standard staplers, but the company stopped making both the machine and the staples sometime in the 1990s.

Luckily some Chinese company did a run of unauthorized knock-offs around the turn of the new century, which I ordered thru a friend at a wholesale office good house, and that I was set for life. Hahaha. Many fanzines and twenty some odd years later I ran out again. But an eBay seller had three boxes of the original staples from the 1970s for sale, plus a half box of some other oddball staples at a steep but still affordable price, so I bought them, and this will undoubtedly last me the rest of my life, because most of my fanzines these days are done in pixel format, with no staples needed at all.

The moral of this story is that if you are indeed enamored using the Irish Spring liquid cleanser, and you are running thru the stuff at the rate you imply, you really might want to order in another 5 or 10 bottles right away. They probably won't disappear forever, but the price will be considerably higher in the near future than you ever anticipated.

[[I tried to convey that I don't go through the 5-in-1 at the same rate as I did the bar soap, because less grime, so I'm fair set for a while...]]

I am glad to read that your health and cancer alert situation is steadily improving. Not so happy to learn that Arnie Katz is blind, bedridden and in a care facility. I hate to hear things like that, but at least you do say his mental facilities are still strong. I think losing my mental abilities would be the worse thing that could ever happen to me. I hope for a quick and peaceful death instead of being a bedridden vegetable unable to recognize anyone or anything.

I'm slightly surprised that **Jerry Kaufman** has so much free time in his retirement. Most of the people I know who have officially retired find they have as much or even more things to occupy their time than they did before the big event.

Except now, of course, they can set their own schedule, especially sleep and entertainment wise.

If **Jerry** and whoever partners with him ever gets around to producing a reprint volume of the RAW Lownders columns from *Outworlds* he can put me down for a copy. I'll even pay in advance. Really, this is an eminently worthwhile project and I hope **Jerry** will get on it very soon. Not to put a lot of pressure on him or anything, but I'm a *really* old guy myself (altho not retired. With a warehouse full of books/comics/video plus Other Stuff it is unlikely that I will ever be able to retire) and I would sure love to see this before I drop dead.

On the concept of a Zoom mass meeting to discuss fanzines, I echo your sentiments about needing a very strong moderator, maybe somebody armed with a cut-off switch of some kind. I think a better idea would be to have a panel of picked people selected in advance, let them discuss the subject, then take questions or comments from the audience.

Wait a sec, isn't this exactly the same format of all those fanzine panels at all those hundreds of conventions held over all those years? What would be the distinguishing factor? I might suggest actually getting a panel together of interesting and deeply interested panel members for one, since convention panels can only draw from fans who attends the con, and not all the interesting people attend all the cons. Still, I suspect this kind of Zoom escapade might be like the proverbial herding-of-cats. Plus, what new blinding bolds of wisdom might be expected from such a conclave? Is there anything about the world of fanzines that hasn't been already said dozens (probably hundreds) of times already? Just asking.

[[Very well put...]]

From: acmurdoch@gmail.com

November 10

Andrew Murdoch writes:

Many thanks for continuing to send me *This Here...* despite my constant failure to get a LoC out on time, but since I now find myself with a night in the pub, I am fixing this now.

I love **David Hodson's** column on football (of the actual ball-and-foot variety). All knowledge can still be found in fanzines. I have been pointedly trying not to talk football lately with anyone I knew who liked the topic, because I was afraid I would curse my beloved Spurs during their unbeaten run to start the season, but now they've had their first defeat to Chelsea I feel safe.

I'm so pleased at the new manager for bringing us this far, even after the seeming death blow of dealing Harry Kane to

Bayern, but it's hard to argue with results. (And now, Kane plays with Canada's own superstar Alphonso Davies, who got his start at my local club, Vancouver Whitecaps FC.) And, I and my Spanish friend have been celebrating the qualification of both Spain and Scotland for Euro.

A dear friend of mine also had leukemia a few years ago. He, sadly, did not pull through but his wife also was a fierce advocate for his health care journey while he concentrated on treatment. I see in **Jen** the same determination. You have the best possible person in your corner through this and your odds of a much-hoped for recovery are greater for her efforts.

[[Mine is, fortunately, the treatable kind...]]

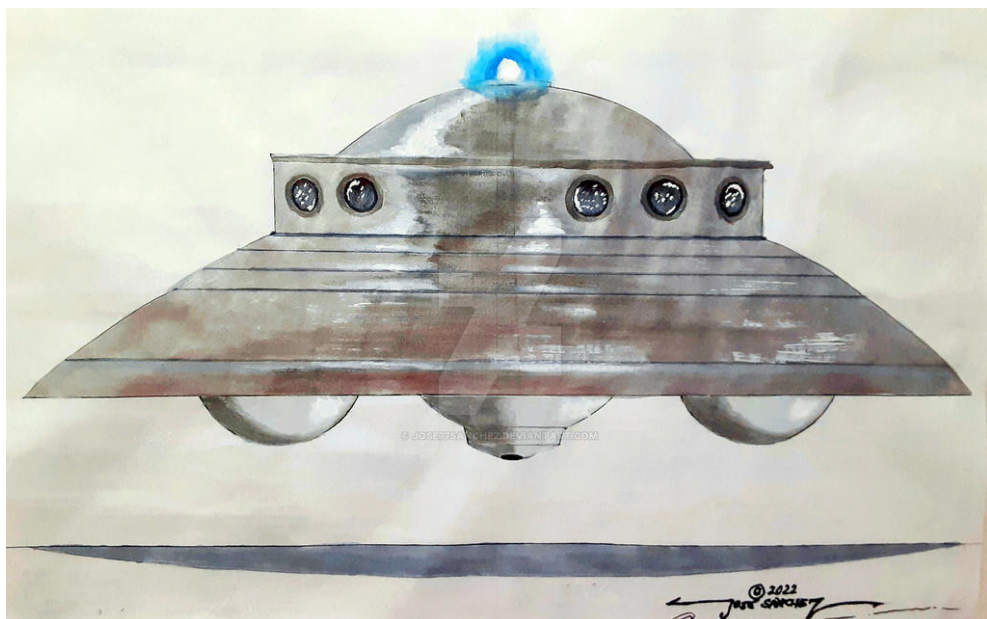
Re: the question of beauty in the eye of the beholder as pertains to TV stars, I'm in a bit of a different position. My daughter, who came out a couple years ago, shares my love of classic science-fiction shows. She agrees with me that Maren Jensen (Athena on the original 'Battlestar Galactica') is gorgeous.

Don D'Amassa is right. Every novel written is literature.

I suspect I will soon have to cave and get Disney+ if only to watch the MCU (and a lot of Star Wars) in order. I took my daughter to see 'Black Widow' at her request and while it stood on its own for the plot it took me a moment to realize it was set after 'Civil War', which I have not seen.

All the best for Corflu 41.

[[At which it would be fab to see you, of course...]]



November 12

Joseph Nicholas writes:

Reading your thoughts on your impending retirement from full-time work in issue 68, and the responses to same in issue 69, it's clear to me that the principal issue is not the reduced income that follows retirement (although that will be a factor) but finding things with which to fill the days. **Jerry Kaufman** touches on this in his letter in issue 69, itemising various possible projects that he's considering; this was never an issue for Judith and I, because of the various non-work interests we already had, and which rapidly expanded to take up the hours of extra time we gained. (As we used to joke, we were so busy in retirement that we wondered how we ever had time to go to work.) Indeed, the extra time we gained from retirement allowed room for the development of new interests for which we had no room when working, such as the lecture and course programmes offered by the various cultural institutions that we support; this we (rather pompously) described as our Continuing Adult Education. Not to mention lots more gardening, more visiting of historic properties in and around London, more museum and gallery exhibitions, more walking in the countryside around London in the warmer months, etc. etc. etc..

Data on retirement suggests, albeit anecdotally, that those who have not pursued any outside interests while still in full-time work are those who have the most difficulty adjusting to their new regime; additionally (again anecdotally), that those who have had such high-powered and time-consuming professional jobs that they have never been able to pursue any outside interests don't live very long after their retirement: a few years of wondering what to do with themselves until inactivity does for them. However, it would appear that this fate is unlikely to befall you....

[[It will be an adjustment, no doubt, but as you say I've got a few things on the go (fanac-wise), not to mention "The Novel™" (ahem). I'll be diving straight into COR41U stuff, though, planning to pack up work about three weeks before it, so I expect it'll be balls to the wall and knackered afterwards to the point of doing fuck all, with perhaps only the This Here... regimen to keep me on track. There's the distinct possibility that I'll be pissing days up the wall until I sort meself out...]]

The comments by **Mark Plummer** on the late Bernie Evans remind me that there is another person of the same name, resident in Liverpool, who often has letters in *The Guardian* newspaper. For many years, I thought they were one and the same; it was only when a recent letter from this other Bernie Evans was published, many weeks after the death of "our" Bernie, that I realised otherwise.

Mark states that he is "always curious about the way somebody can just drop fandom completely", although in

some cases the reason is quite clear: for example, the late Peter Weston, when diagnosed with cancer, abandoned all his fannish contacts in order to devote his remaining time to his family and other relatives. Admittedly, in his case he did state as much, which perhaps makes him an exception; the rest of us just seem to drift away, or drift off to the margins and are subsequently seen and heard from only rarely. I think that I (and Judith) fell into that latter category, in part because of the habit adult life has of filling up with other things, leaving little to no time over for fannish pursuits, or indeed fandom at all -- although, possibly connected with her death two years ago and the subsequent void in my social life, I do seem to be making more of an effort to get back into the swing of things. Why, I've even been known to go to a convention or two....

(FTR, I haven't been to a Novacon for many, many years. As I don't keep old programme books, I can't say when I (we) last attended one; I think it may have been the 25th anniversary Novacon in 1995, somewhere adjacent to Birmingham (I recall that the venue was a former hostel for the homeless(?), with single-glazed windows which meant that the rooms were very cold at night); memory also says that we went to one in Walsall and that the hotel was very run-down, which may have been in 2000 or thereabouts. I'm told that the current venue, in Buxton, is very stylish.)

(Before you ask: I won't be coming to Las Vegas for next year's Corflu. It clashes with other dates already in the diary for February and March.)

[[I won't take that personally Joseph, but I will observe that actually personally it would have been quite fab to see you...]]

Changing the subject completely, I remember Tommy James and The Shondells from what I think was their only UK hit single, "Mony Mony". (I may be wrong about it being their only UK hit -- they had another UK single release, "I'm Alive", but I think that failed to chart.) Following up your link, and the links on YouTube to other performances, I am struck less by the songs than by the clothes they were wearing: clothes which in the late 1960s seemed the absolute height of groovy fashion. How one longed to be an adult instead of a teenager, so that one too could wear tight striped trousers, flowery shirts with big 18th-century ruffs and gaudily-patterned waistcoats. Nowadays, of course, one wouldn't be seen dead in such schmutter -- and certainly not in the clothes which followed, in the early 1970s. Loon pants! Teardrop collars! Horizontally-striped tank-tops! In my view, punk was as much a revolt against these so-called fashions (does anyone remember the enormous cape that Rick Wakeman wore to play three keyboards at once on the live recording of *Journey to the Centre of the Earth?* I do, and I wish I couldn't) as against triple gatefold concept albums by the likes of Emerson Lake & Palmer, King Crimson, Yes and other prog-rock dinosaurs.

[[“Schmutter” is a lovely word, I’ve always thought, and I once had the idea (which like so many fell by the wayside) to do a song parody of Kiss’ ‘Strutter’ with that as the title. In the song parodies/impersonations which often concluded episodes of ‘The Two Ronnies’, Barker did “Gary Schmutter” - Corbett was “Elton Bog”...]]

Anyway, that’ll have to do for now. It’s Sunday afternoon and (for once) not raining. I must go to the allotment in the hour or so of daylight that remains, to check on things.

From: srjeffery@aol.com

November 17

Steve Jeffery writes:

Thanks for *This Here*... #69, and also #68 and #67 to which I may not have responded. Real Life has intervened somewhat in the last few months.

Plus, it has to be said, I have problems responding to several of the regular columns, such as ‘Movie Night’ and ‘TV Guide’, which discusses films and series I’ve not seen, often on channels I have no access to, and FAANWANK, which seems to be repeating the same “open vs clique”, “excellence vs popularity” and “nominating vs voting” arguments to increasingly diminishing returns, albeit with quite a lot of falling off chairs.

[[It’s almost a given that just about any column in this or any other fanzine reflects a minority interest to some degree, which is in part why I’ve rather held off on traingeekery, and FAAnWanking (however we all variously capitalize it) is perhaps the apotheosis of that. Having, as you correctly note, done all the arguments over and over, I still can’t help responding directly in this case to Taral’s remarks in his own pages, which would be a shining example of Claire Brialey’s ideal of “fanzines talking to each other” except that (we’re presuming) Taral isn’t reading this, and perhaps neither are his correspondents except for the always admirable Bob Jennings. I thought it was actually good to get some differing opinions on the topic in here, because indeed there isn’t any need for me to be solely banging on about the same old bollocks ad nauseam, even though I expect it seems as though I do...]]

‘Radio Winston’ continues to be entertaining, and often informative. I didn’t know of the Purple One’s cover of ‘Crimson and Clover’, but I’ll follow up that link sometime.

[[Neither did I, and you absolutely should - it’s really stellar...]]

I didn’t find “SF epic discovered leaderless country (10)” too hard to figure out, but I can’t claim to be able to tackle any cryptic crossword (not “septic crossword” as autocorrect has just tried to render it) more challenging than the one reprinted in the Metro free paper. I say reprinted because on

the occasions I’ve had to resort to an online solver the solutions appear to be cited against places like the *Irish Times*.

Not sure about the current one though. Ongoing conflict would suggest war, reversed as raw, but I’m struggling with the “in overdue fanzine” bit.

[[See ‘Give Us A Clue’ this. It’s of interest that you clocked FOUNDATION whereas Eli was at a loss, yet he derived FEUD whereas you didn’t. I’m sure it all Means Something...]]

Striking illo from **Ulrika** on page 13, but overall I think I prefer the quartet on page 9, although I’d be hard-pressed to choose between them.

[[I did briefly idly wonder whether there’s a word for “trptych plus one” but as usual couldn’t be arsed to find out what it might be. I’m sure someone will tell me...]]

Kim Huett to you: “You do go off into weird, incomprehensible tangents.”

Story of my life, darlings.

And listening to Mark Riley and Stuart Maconie rambling about the inventor of the “lickable telly” and the genesis of Rutland* at 8:30 in the morning on Radio 6 doesn’t help any. (*I must have missed that album. Was it before or after Peter Gabriel left the band?)

Various discussions (**Eli Cohen**, **Jerry Kaufman**, **Gary Mattingly**) on retirement and what happens (or more often doesn’t) after. I keep putting this off as I have for the last two years but there’ll presumably come a point where I can’t keep marking mental deadlines to Do Something in the calendar and then watch them go by, if only because if I keep doing it I’ll die on the job (ooer missus) and solve the whole problem of making a decision by default.

Vikki and I remember Bernie Evans from our first Novacons (circa 1988 or 1989), although I can’t remember quite when she dropped out of active fandom, or whether Vikki and I dropped out of regularly attending Novacon and Eastercon conventions round about the same time. Perhaps she felt, like us, that Novacon in the 2000s was starting to become a tired old retreat of itself year after year.

Like you, I’ve had several fallow periods where I’ve dropped out of fan activity, including one longish period from around 2017 to 2019 when the kindness of the Corflu 50 hauled me back out of a period of depression. But then I’ve always been more of a FIJAGH rather than a FIAWOL person. Or maybe it’s just that I’m an unsociable bastard.

[[Two years off doesn’t seem “longish” to me mate. Having said that I sort-of seem to measure my own activity in terms of fanzine publishing, even though while not doing that I’ve never really withdrawn from fan interaction of other kinds. Right now the zine fanac column is overfilled: This Here... of course, but right now also BEAM 18 and a raft of

COR41U publications as well as the forthcoming 'Barty' anthology...]]

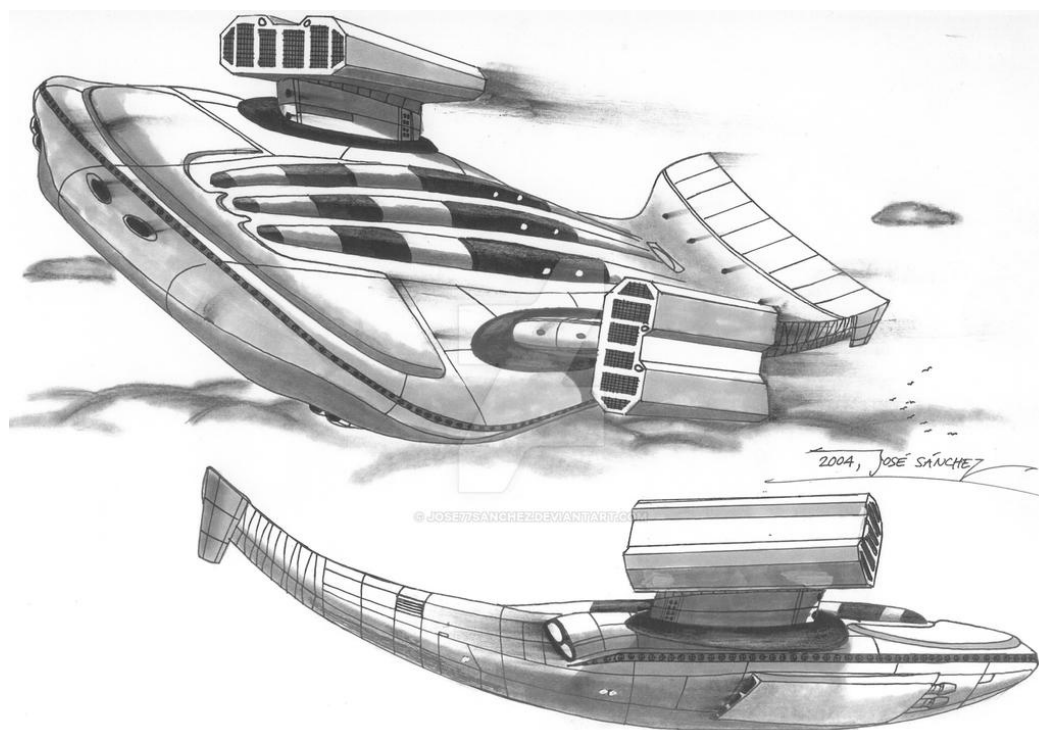
From: perry@middlemiss.org

November 19

Perry Middlemiss writes:

It has been quite some time since I've seen the 'Stop Making Sense' concert film. I seem to recall it was great so long as all the Heads were on stage at the same time. Not so enamoured with the Bongo Club, or whatever it was called, that seemed to completely mess up the second act. Luckily this was resolved by the appearance of the Big Suit. So my idea would be to watch the first and third acts and skip part two. I doubt you'll lose the thread.

Jerry Kaufman's idea of organising a Zoom session to



discuss the future of Corflu sounds like a nightmare exercise to me. You can pretty much guarantee that those who have the most to say also have the least interest in investing the old blood, sweat and tears to make it happen. They'll rant along about an idea of theirs and will then blame you for not implementing it. And they won't attend anyway. Oh, it does so remind me of organising a convention, or even a regular drinks session.

[[I don't think that's entirely true in Corflu's case. There are a number of known stalwarts who can be relied upon to Do Stuff in some capacity - the futility of Jerry's suggestion really lies in the observation that we already know what these people think anyway. Bob Jennings gets it right by noting, basically, "Oh wait, this is every panel about the future of the con (or any con) ever done already". Thanks, by

the way, for your supporting membership. I hope we can assume that Leigh can be prevailed upon to carry your convention package home...]]

Just by way of explanation for **Leigh Edmonds**, I really didn't want to give a Fan GoH speech at Conflux in October as I figured I would just start pontificating again, pointing out what people had been doing wrong, and channeling my inner John Foyster. No, too old for that nonsense. Better to have **Leigh** throw me some straight ones that I could at least latch on to. As to whether I can talk about chairing a Worldcon (or two) without psychiatric help I suspect my wife would tend to differ from **Leigh** on that score. The "rant" at Conflux, for want of a better word, was designed to scare off all but the most die-hard con running enthusiasts. Seems to have worked.

Leigh should also be aware that I've probably got only about another 10-15 years of drinking time left as well. The fact that this seems to coincide with my estimated lifespan of current fanzine fandom may indicate something, or it may not. I must have a drink with **Leigh** next time I see him and have a chat about that. He's the historian so he can figure this timeline stuff out. I just need a bar and a comfortable chair.

WAHF

Perry Middlemiss (pre-loc):
"Reading this while I'm in India. Not getting to any cricket matches unfortunately." ; **Jose Sanchez**

FANZINES RECEIVED

Gratefully acknowledged as ever and again without comment, as regretfully as ever...

ALEXIAD 131 (Joseph and Lisa Major) - ...

JENZINE #7 (J L Farey) - ...

WEEKEND WEETABIX 5 (Claire Brialey) - ...

LOFGEORNOST #153 (Fred Lerner) - ...

NOWHERE FAN 7 (Christina Lake) - ...

SPARTACUS #69 (Guy H Lillian III) - ...

WOOF 48 (Donald Eastlake) - ...

CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #60 (Andy Hooper)- ...

INDULGE ME

✘ **IDIOCRACY** : Via **Bob Jennings** : "An update for those who think people today are smarter than in previous generations---50 years ago the automobile owner's manual showed you how to adjust the valves. Today it warns you not to drink the fluid from the battery."...

✘ **ABOUT TIME AN'ALL!** : Congrats to **Jacq Monahan** and **John Wesley Hardin** who have committed matrimony. Our local writers' group was privileged to be the first recipients of the news. A more effusive account will appear in *JenZine* #8...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : Posh (ie titled) totty for **Uncle Johnny**, who does like that sort of thing: **Dame Lesley Lawson**, whom even **Jerry Kaufman** might recognize...



✘ **I'M A WANKER** : Chatting with **Mark Plummer** the other day, I was moved (as I often am) to compliment his writing (particularly when he's taken the piss out of me, an exercise informed by a looong and deep friendship), and noted that **Lucy Huntzinger's** "spurious biography" of me for the Corfu Pangloss program(me) book had "a very Plummerish cadence to it". "Er - That's because I wrote it!" Sez **Mark**, also reminding me that his efforts had in fact been at my own suggestion. Typically I blame the drink for this memory lapse...

✘ **R.I.P ROD SUMMERS** : I learn off FBF via old friend John Carrigan that one of my best *Star Trek* mates had dropped off the twig. Rod's name won't be known to most of you, but he was a bright leading light of Trek fandom, and we were great mates despite (ahem) working together on one of the *Holodeck* conventions in the early '90s as well as the hastily arranged *K-Con* to promote the movie 'Moontrap' starring Walter Koenig, from which the photo below derives.

Me and Rod had some lovely friendship moments and never a cross word that I can recall. We used to all get together for *Holodeck* staff meetings at my gaff in Hitchin, and having driven up from Bristol Rod would stay the night. Long after the rest of the team had buggedger off, we'd continue drinking and yakking until the small hours, and at one point realized that we were out of the sauce. But no! I found a bottle of champagne in the fridge, I think an unopened flat-warming pressie, so we had at it, subsequently discovering the transcendental experience of watching 'Thomas the Tank Engine' videos while as blitzed as it's possible to get and remain more or less conscious. Typically (for me, I'm afraid) we lost touch a long time ago (but not before him and a few other Bristolians) managed to visit us in Maryland for a few days. I made sporadic efforts to find the lad again to no avail. It's startling to consider that he and I were almost exactly the same age, and I miss him anew...



Photo: Back row L-R: Me (that hair!!!), Rod, Pam Clarke (UK runner of the Koenig fan club). Front L-R: Neale Mittenshaw-Hodge (also sadly no longer with us), Walter, Amanda Epstein

✘ **SCIENCE AND NATURE ROUNDUP** : Much stuff receiving eyetracks round here, some of it undoubtedly inspired by the return of *Doctor Who* for the 60th anniversary specials, something the dear old Uncut Bicycle Service can't help but mention in *any* science article, especially one involving theories of time (and dark matter, and entropy ect ect) like [this'un](#), for example...

From the *Grauniad* we get more dark matter conjecture courtesy of the [Euclid telescope](#) accompanied by some pretty super pictures...

Australia joins the dark matter hunting party with the completion of stage 1 of the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory ([news via the University of Melbourne](#)), giving me the DoBFO opportunity for the cheap shot that it'll either turn out to be Vegemite or something dodgy-looking out of **Archbishop Bruce's** basement...

Fab stuff from NASA from the Lucy spacecraft (doubtless named after our **Huntzinger**) of what's basically a double-binary arrangement with [the satellite of asteroid Dinkinesh](#) itself being a twofer...

Now here's a remarkable oddity from chemistry: There's been something called the S^{2-} ion, assumed to exist as the aqueous solution S^{2-} (aq) and an essential part of calculations involving sulfide solutions for decades. Turns out, though, it [never actually existed at all!](#)...

Also widely reported with much WTF on the science pages, a high-energy particle (which has been named "Amaterasu" after the sun goddess of Japanese mythology) heading for Earthfall has [come out of literally nowhere](#)...

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2)** : Because I simply *must* continue to wind up the Killer with Brits he's never heard of, here's **Debbie McGee**...



MIRANDA

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

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Art credits: **Bob Kane** (p14) ; **Ulrika O'Brien** (p12) ; **Jose Sanchez** (pp 16, 19)

✕ **SHAMELESS FILLER** : This'un via **Pete Young**...



✕ **NEXTISH** : December 30th I expect...

"But 15 minutes later we had our first taste of whiskey
There was uncles giving lectures on ancient Irish history
The men all started telling jokes and the women, they got frisky
By five o'clock in the evening every bastard there was piskey"