

# This Here...

“...made my ears burn...” (A Hooper)

## EGOTORIAL

### THIS ONE GO CRUMP

All right, let's play a little game. This game is called trying to get past a bit of writer's block, a possible smidgin of burnout leavened with a pinch of ennui and quite likely a bucket load of lazy with the objective of actually getting this here March ish out in - er - March, which now stands at noon on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

After the Big Push and deadline-sensitive almost-a-month of sorting COR41U I now find retirement to be an unstructured utter fuckin' mess of napping a *lot* and telling myself I've got ages to get on with it. Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, which as the poet Milligan once observed is three days away, except now I'm at the umpteenth "tomorrow" and shitting a brick.

This one go "Crump" in the "what the fuck's gone wrong now?" sense by having some distractions, primarily the taxes (even though I'm not the one doing them) but also some unexpected gyrations getting the print on demand version of *oXLlp* (COR41U Memory Book) accepted by Amazon. **Jen** finally finished up the taxes last night, and we ended up owing a bit over \$6,000, actually a little *less* than we'd estimated. Almost all of that's due to the Scholl(UK) pension lump sum I ended up opting for, now of course significantly dwindled. Still, 2023 is sorted, and going forward we (for certain values of "we" = CFO **Jen**) are planning to punt the IRS quarterly dosh for 2024 since all of our income is now untaxed at the source, but naturally in Gawdbless Merka tends to be *taxable* unless you are Elon Musk. (See "Financial Fuckery" *passim*.)

Despite having a rage of publications to do for COR41U (which I'm thinking could well be contributing to a bit of

burnout) I'd always planned to do a "Memory Book" of some kind - readers blessed with functioning memory may recall I did the same for COR31U (Richmond) as the final issue of the convention PR/fanzine *Join Together*. The "mysteriously titled" (according to Magister **Burns**, to my mild crogglements) *oXLlp* wasn't actually that hard to put together (and renewed thanks to all the contributors), at least for the pdf sent out to members and publicly available to anyone who wants to have a shufti. Well-received an'all, judging from the bits of feedback so far.

I needed, however, to create a slightly different layout for POD, and **Jen** (who knows about such things because of Journey Fiction books) and I end up shouting at cross-purposes since I know o about that and she doesn't entirely clock how Apple Pages works, although we came out the other end of confusion (mostly mine) about gutters and margins with more of a clue about each others' efforts. This may presage future ishes of *BEAM* getting done that way as well now that we've emerged from this project without fatal wounding.

Amazon, though, haven't been entirely helpful, despite much "what the fuck's gone wrong now?" convo

with them we haven't quite yet (1pm) got to the desired status of "accepted" for what seem to be spurious reasons. I'm vaguely hopeful that we'll be able to announce the availability of the thing by the time this goes out, most likely now, I'd suggest, and perhaps appropriately on April 1<sup>st</sup>. (ETA: Lies!)

It's all good.

**March 2024**



# CORFLUX

## 42 NEWS

Touch and go for a minute, but Corflu 42 is sorted for a return to the UK and a familiar if not actually historic location of previous events, the Chequers hotel in Newbury. The dates are set for April 11-13 2025, the weekend before Reconnect, the Eastern to be held in Belfast, with the idea that overseas visitors in particular could combine the two conventions in one trip...

The details, as you would expect, are at <https://corflu.org/>

## 43 PROSPECTS

California is in the frame, since we hear that **Rich Coad** has been making enquiries of possible locations, and will be ably backed up in his endeavors by **Jeanne Bowman** and **Alan Rosenthal**.

# FAANWANK

## RESULTS AND REACTIONS

In case there's any of you who haven't seen the results:

### FANZINE CATEGORIES

BEST GENZINE: *SF Commentary* (ed. Bruce Gillespie)

BEST PERZINE: *This Here...* (ed. Nic Farey)

BEST SPECIAL PUBLICATION: *Beyond Fandom* (Rob Hansen)

### INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES

BEST FANWRITER: Mark Plummer

BEST FANARTIST: Ulrika O'Brien

BEST LETTERHACK (HARRY WARNER, JR. MEMORIAL AWARD): Jerry Kaufman

BEST FANZINE COVER: *Idea #13* (Sue Mason)

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT: Joe Siclari & Edie Stern

PAST PRESIDENTS, fwa: Jennifer Farey, Jerry Kaufman

The full voting breakdown (*The Incomplete Register Results issue 2024*) is available at efanazines, the Corflu website and in the Corflu Facebook group. There was a slight cockup wherein two voters (**Lenny Bailes** and **Marcin Klak**) weren't listed in the rolls although their votes were definitely counted and a revised *TIR* was issued.

The results summary was sent out to

*Locus* and *File770* on March 5<sup>th</sup>, although the latter apparently needed to wait three days until advised of them by **John Hertz** and not me.

Speaking of the World's Finest Fansplainer, **John Hertz** writes: "Looks like you never received my ballot", inserting the voter list cut-and-pasted from the *TIR* pdf (as though I might not have seen it?) and adding: "Too bad. Among other things, people now suppose I didn't vote. And I'd have made it a golden 50". He continues with a restatement of the turnout numbers (as if I hadn't already calculated and published them?). Now it's DoBFO that **John** was looking at the initial version of that *TIR* which was missing those two names mentioned above for a total of 51 voters, so he would have made it 52.

But no, I did not receive his ballot, and he not finding out until after the fact was a testament to his increasingly ridiculous semi-Luddite attitude of refusal to engage with fellow fans by electronic means (which, I am assured, he *does* have at his disposal).

Voting numbers were a mere tick up on last year, but the more encouraging statistic was the increased turnout among Corflu members, although that still didn't quite crack 40% but nevertheless up on the even weedier usual 20-25%. Back in the day, of course, FAAn ballots (and the Novas in *their* day) would be aggressively extorted from attendees at the event and tallied overnight Saturday - arguments can be made in favor of this process, but the relatively recent innovation of having nice engraved trophies has meant that voting needs to close with enough time before the ceremonies to get them done.

We got the perhaps expected sneer from **Mike Glyer** in *File770*'s February 12 pixel scroll, in response to my own snicker about the 2023 Hugo awards lastish (Hi **Mike**, nice to know you're still reading!) in which he refers to "the FAAns [Farey] anticipates winning", attributing me with a remarkable prescience I wish I had and could apply usefully at the nearest sports book. **Taral** has some continuing discussion in the loccol of *Dark Toys 77* related to the awards, and in response to **Jerry Kaufman** says, in part: "Of course, there are still "fannish" fanzines of the old school, and the FAANs, but that's an issue that Nic Farey will no doubt decide for us." Er - wot? Another power I didn't know I had?

**Alan White** was very dismissive about **Sue Mason**'s Best Cover winner, calling it "inept", with the suggestion



Bruce Gillespie receives his award in a Melbourne pub

Photo by Leigh Edmonds

that it wasn't at all fannish, which in his definition would seem to have to include buxom women with tits akimbo. **Alan** grouses that we're "too woke for that" these days.

**Andy Hooper**, remarking on **Mark Plummer's** Best Fanwriter trophy, grumbled: "Mark is very good, but what did he write in 2023? I'm only familiar with his columns in the single issue of *Banana Wings* that appeared in November. What did I miss?". I respond with "Never mind the width, feel the quality", and I'll also note here that prolificness is only *one* measure that can contribute to any voter's decision. I might also guess, probably correctly, that **Mark** also had stuff in ANZAPA throughout the year. **Peter Sullivan** chips in with: "I feel that FAAn Awards always have an element of 'Lifetime Achievement' about them, albeit there is a separate LA award as well." That's an arguable contention, I might suggest, since reputation (and likability) also factor into voters' selections, whether consciously or not. Mind you, that means **Andy** has eighteen lifetimes worth of FAAn awards don't it?...

## HEALTH DIARY

### THIS ONE ALSO GO CRUMP

"Crump" in the sense that we don't know what's next, so trepidation is occurring.

I was supposed to have an oncology appointment on Friday the 29<sup>th</sup> which would have formed the gist of this column, and getting their usual heads-up reminder messages I clocked that I needed to call in my change of insurance (now being on Medicare, of course) ahead of time. **Jen** typically makes these calls on my behalf since I *still* have a total mental block when it comes to understanding any of it, and here it turned out just as well because I would have been paralyzed by the info that my Medicare Advantage was tied to Intermountain Healthcare and not Optum as it should have been.

When the broker set this up, **Jen** was insistent that Optum coverage was what we needed, and we were assured of this. A wrinkle turned up in that they allocated a Primary Care Provider doctor for me on whatever basis they do that, which I needed to get changed to one at the location I actually go to where the lovely APRN Amy McIntyre was my point of contact. I got the info off her, also learning to my sadness that she was resigning to tod off to Ohio and be nearer family (sigh). Anyway, I got the name of the doc I needed, sorted (hopefully) a new referral for oncology and changed the details.

All this bollocks apparently works on a month-to-month basis so the change didn't take effect until today (April 1<sup>st</sup>,

as I write) so **Jen** has to call back today to find out if we're sorted for the rescheduled appointment this coming Friday. The insurance card I've got does say "Optum" on it in some of the small print, so here's hoping it's good, especially since the full cost of my meds is \$18,000 a month - that's also if nice Dr. Gollard deems that I need to keep on them for a bit longer.

The last lot of numbers had the WBC at 20, getting very close to remission. Believe it or not, I *have* cut back on the smoking and drinking somewhat (which is easier when you're spending half the day asleep) so we shall see what we shall see. On Friday.

## TV GUIDE

### 3 BODY PROBLEM

Now, honest, given the time I do like to be reasonably thoughtful about the various columns in this here flock of molting geese, but as you'll have already doubtless clocked, this'un is getting scratched together, at the moment during half time of West Bromwich Albion (my bruv **Martin Tudor's** team) v my beloved Watford at which point it is 0-0.

I had supposed that '3 Body Problem' on Netflix would be a major talking point, as it seems to an extent with fen of various stripes who have done both or either of also reading the novel *and* in quite a few cases also clocked the 30-episode Chinese TV version, neither of which I've done.

A mild bit of comparative research shows clearly that Netflix' effort has Westernized a lot of the characters - whether that's effective or even appropriate I think I'll leave to the loccol to decide.

The cast is excellent, mind, and both Benedict Wong and Rosalind Chao (as about the only leads that I'd heard of) are on top form.

FT score 2-2 (after we were up 0-2) and I (a) need a nap and (b) am thinking thish will be out tomorrow...

So what inevitably happens, I have a bit to eat and that nap, **Jen** goes out to run her errands and comes back with some fast food, which (as is our habit) we scoff in front of the telly which delivers unto me 'Lewis' off BritBox - four episodes later it's time for kip innit, but ey, this is the TV column after all...

So, back to '3 Body Problem' reviewing, and I wanted to mention some excellent supporting cast turns. You can't go wrong with Prycey in anything, here doing a much more nuanced version of Eliot Carver ('Tomorrow Never Dies') with a lot less chew and spittle. Ade Edmonson has a nice



turn as another capitalist bastard and CCH Pounder does her usual solid authority figure, in this case SecGen of the United Nations. Will there be a season 2? We don't know, but I'd be into it...

I've also watched 'The Gentlemen' series (also Netflix), derived from Guy Ritchie's movie of that name, and even though Madge's ex didn't write or direct any of it, the show comes across as what we might call "classic" Ritchie with separate and disparate groups of criminals having a serious pissing contest with violence - although that's unfairly simplistic. I figured out the *result* of the ending about halfway through and the *method* became clear enough as the final episode played out. Worth a second season, if they do one.

Otherwise, a swift mention of the new series 'Tracker' (CBS) which premiered in the prime spot after the Superbowl but we started watching a couple weeks later. It's based on Jeffery Deaver's novel 'The Never Game', about a survivalist sort who makes a fair living finding people for reward money, and it's a decent adventure series with an engaging and likable lead and an equally solid ensemble backing him up (cf 'The Equalizer'). It's not a one to give you much brain-strain but is very watchable and *has* been renewed.

## RADIO WINSTON



### LADY BO

Because naps, 'Lewis' ect (see above) this will only be a brief recommendation to check out the career of Peggy Jones (aka Peggy Malone, her married name) who was mostly known as "Lady Bo" because of her association with Bo Diddley, originally from 1957-61 - they met by chance in '57 and Diddley was apparently impressed to see a girl with a guitar case - and later from 1970 on.

Most people assumed that Peggy and Bo were bumping hips, but she was actually married to his bassist Wally Malone, both of them seen here on "[You're Crackin' Up](#)", notable for reasons including but not limited to Diddley conclusively showing that he wasn't limited to the "shave and a haircut" riff and Peggy playing the Roland Guitar Synthesizer (a rarity in R&B). **Leigh Edmonds** will of course have fallen asleep by about the third minute.

Peggy kept up her solo (and session) career while working with Bo, and her own band The Jewels have a spot in Northern Soul legend with the 1966 slice "[We Got Togetherness](#)".

As I said, this bit is much, much briefer than Peggy deserves, but worth it at least to the extent that it highlights another perhaps forgotten female player of renown.

In deference to **Leigh's** attention span, here's a short clip of "[Road Runner](#)" with her on rhythm guitar. A rock & roll pioneer, to be sure...

# MOVIE NIGHT

## AMERICAN FICTION

For those of you reading this here tasteful assemblage of “fucks and arses” (as per **Bob Jennings**) linearly, it’s five days (or is it six, I may have lost count) since I sat down at *this* keyboard to commit prose. If you’re not reading in page order (I’m assuming after the requisite egoscan) then either consider it a Pulp Fiction style nonlinearity, or you are Billy Pilgrim.

When I say “this” keyboard, those relative few of you who have had the joy(?) of visiting the Farey FanCave will know that there’s three computers in here: the HP which gets used for most things, the shiny new iMac on which publishing is done and the old’un still squatting to my right in case I need or want to transfer old stuff.

My latest and additional excuse for not sitting at the Mac is that there are two boxes (which really could be combined into one very easily) of leftover COR41U con packages which I’m finding it increasingly tiresome to take the extra all of two steps to walk around, pull out the chair so I can shuffle by are into it and wheel myself forward again. If that sounds utterly pathetic it’s because it fuckin’ is.

The mental constipation of the last week or so hasn’t been helped by what’s turned into a stupid sleep/wake schedule where despite going to kip (much) later than on the old work routine, I’m usually still up by 4am-ish since I’m only kipping about four hours at a time, six tops of a night, thus having to nap twice during the day for between two and four hours, often starting around now (7am or so) with part 2 at noonish after something to eat. This has essentially kiboshed my old routine of pre-sparrowfart fanac where I’d get a good (your review may vary) four to six solid hours in on a non-workday *and* get in the one daily nap.

The general, ongoing and presumed lifetime tiredness isn’t exactly conducive either. I’ve also concluded that it’s not staying up late so much (however much aided by the now empty bottle of Wild Turkey 101 so kindly gifted by **James Bacon**), but also having to Do RL Stuff at least a couple of times a week and the attendant effort that goes with, the hardest part being having to put on trousers (or at least sweatpants) since I’m still not quite as shoddy as to go out in public wearing the jammies. Gone are the days of being able to put on underwear, trou ect while standing up, since I can’t lift up my right leg accurately enough to get it smoothly down the fuckin’ hole in the apparel. Even sitting down I need a breather after putting the right sock on.

Gordon Bennett, have I got whiny or what?

Yes, anyway, this bit is the ‘Movie Night’ column isn’t it?

Oscar-nominated stuff doesn’t normally affect my viewing choices, but ey, Jeffrey Wright! Who is expectedly and

winningly magnificent as are the entire cast, and there’s a fab metafictional ending.

Just go watch it...



## GIVE US A CLUE

**Dave Langford** : It’s a long time since I tried a Guardian cryptic crossword, but I bought the issue with the D.G. Compton obituary (drafted long ago by Chris Priest, updated by me in December because Chris was too ill) and rather liked the clue to a word remembered from a long-ago review by John Clute. The Inquisitor editor listed it as one of his favourites too, so here you are:

“Starts to advocate prevention of cancer, perhaps accepting a warding off of evil? (10)?”

*[[I respond to the Fanglord: I did appreciate the well-written obit for Compton - was expecting a clue for CHRONOCULES, but...*

*“Starts to advocate prevention of cancer, perhaps accepting a warding off of evil? (10)?”*

*Needless to say, I'd have two serious problems here: 1. I'm never at your level of solving, ever. 2. If it's a "Clute word" I'll never have heard of it, either.*

*Cheating yields confirmation of 1. and 2. : APOTROPAIC ...]]*

**Dave** replies: You know, I was in such a distracted state when #72 arrived that I didn't even notice your This Ish Entertainment clues. According to me: REPEATS, FANZINE, TED WHITE.

Thanks for kind words about Compton. About half Chris, with lots of updating by me and a final rejig by the *Grauniad* obits editor to cut relevant stuff about the guy who died and make room for a sentence and a half about the important fact that HE KNEW SYLVIA PLATH. Finally the subs inserted a generous sprinkling of "sci-fi" throughout.... So it goes.

*[[We then digress into fannish presentations of a particular Compton radio play, 'A Turning Off Minch Park Road', in which I essayed the lead role at a long-ago Novacon. Dave recalls its first outing at Rubicon in 1988 (the same year, probably), noting "I wimped out of reprising my extremely minor role at a Novacon repeat performance." ...]]*

**Eli Cohen** : Thank you for the *Grauniad* article you linked to, which says "doing crossword puzzles delayed the onset of accelerated memory decline by 2.54 years". That's good to know, though I've probably already used up my extra time. Anyway, I'm sure any health advantage from doing the NY Times puzzles has been more than offset by banging my head against the wall over your cryptic clues. Which brings us to this ish's examples:

"Squiffily peers at old TV shows (7)". I have absolutely no idea. "A publication like this that's excellent, going round a country down under (7)". Sounds like a 7-letter fanzine from Australia (*Chunder!*? But *Chunder!* is no longer with us, and the clue implies a current publication) or one that's sent down under (*Jenzine?* But I don't see any relevant word play) -- an anagram of "Zealand" would be perfect, but I can't think of any. So another one I'm stumped on. That leaves only "Special guest (Fifty) absurdly hid tweet (3,5)". "Fifty" for some reason reminds me of the Corflu Fifty, so if this is a reference to a fan, we're looking for a fan with a 3-letter first name and a 5-letter last name, like, say, "Ted White". Hey, TED WHITE is an anagram of "hid tweet"! I think I got one! I guess I'm done. (Really need to repair that dent in the wall, though...)

**Nic** : One out of three, that man!

The others:

"Squiffily peers at old TV shows (7)"; "Squiffily" = anagram indicator for PEERS AT, which rearranged gives REPEATS (Old TV shows).

"A publication like this that's excellent, going round a country down under (7)" ; there's a bit more to this one -

"excellent" = FINE going round A + "country down under" (=NZ) which yields FANZINE (A publication like this).

This's "entertainment", such as the Deaf Twit may deem it:

"Wearied by dullness we hear a London greeting for a house of ill repute. (8)"

"Performance trepidation: eg fast awkwardly before a punch (5,6)."

## ANORAK

Something I had planned for this and future ishes was a column of traingeekery (title supplied by **Ulrika O'Brien** some time ago, and remembered). Since thish is already well fuckin' late, just to be going on with here's a photo of a BR Class 40 prototype from 1963...



## THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

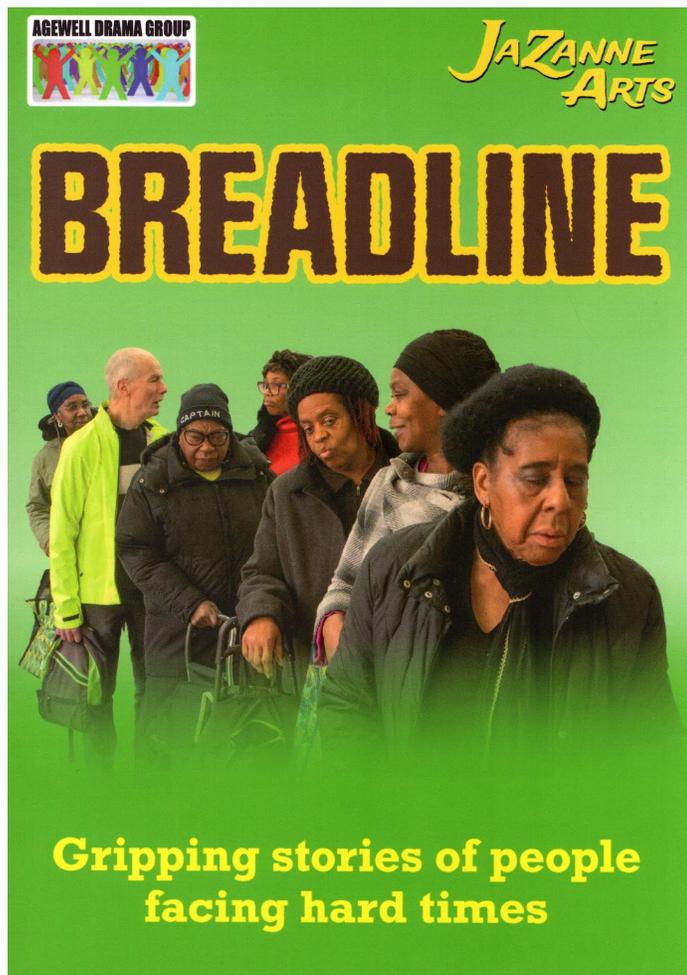
A shorter column than usual. It's less than a month since I returned from Corflu in Las Vegas and life has been hectic. Not only was I stupid enough to put my hand up and say I'll run the next Corflu, but I also had a full slate of non-fannish commitments prior to that, and tomorrow I travel up to Telford for Eastercon. Yes, I am writing this the night before the annual trek across the country on rail replacement services running between Birmingham (it's always fucking Birmingham) and whatever six-fingered village it is that the coach driver decides he can't navigate the double-decker round the narrow, cobbled streets of.

If all goes to plan this column should have a new title this month. Nic and I discussed it when we were "sort of" still making sense before the full alcoholic haze set in upon us at some point over the weekend. Of course, the full stupor may have already hit us, and we were too pissed to realise. It's

very easy to slip (I mistyped that as slurp before the spellchecker caught it) into old habits with old friends; the pint-lifting muscle memory is strong with Nic Farey.

The reason for the new title is that too many people still say to me that “they don’t know anything about football, so they don’t read the column”, so we decided we needed something more reflective of the more often true contents of these ramblings. This title was Nic’s suggestion, and I have to admit I was ignorant of its traditional meaning: “The country of one’s birth or lineage; one’s native soil. Primarily heard in UK.” I thought Nic was just being unusually friendly, he usually refers to me in far earthier terms.

So, what have I been up to since Vegas? Nothing to do with football, that’s for sure. There’s been another of the interminable “international breaks” that FIFA and UEFA fill the calendar with in order to fill their coffers and the last Spurs game was a lamentable 3-0 loss away to Fulham, but I never let depression set in these days over footie results, so I brushed myself off and, on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, accompanied by various local buddies, I visited Rob Hansen’s old stamping ground of Plashet Grove, near the former ground of the diabolical West Ham United, to attend a performance of Breadline by the Agewell Drama Group in the Applecart Arts Centre.



I do enjoy amateur drama, especially when it’s based on a true local story like this one is. Even though you know there’s going to be a positive outcome and we’re just being given the backstory, there are still points where you want to boo the villains of the piece or punch the air and cheer when adversity is overcome. The amount of time spent shaking one’s head and sighing out loud at enactments of local politicians acting like tin-pot dictators and spouting sub-MBA psychobabble and bullshit is a painful reminder of working for local government and organisations like the London Probation Board. Newham is still a shithole though.

Fast forward to Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, and I, and a couple of those local buddies, are off to a Healthwatch event in Edmonton where they announce the coming merger of two health trusts: North Middlesex University Hospital and The Royal Free Hospital. Aside from my various health travails, I have good reason to want to know what is going on with both of these hospitals; North Middlesex was the hospital that saved my life when I had sepsis and the Royal Free is the hospital that diagnosed my neuropathy after zapping my legs with electricity and making me twitch like a partially dissected frog in a 1970s school biology experiment.

On top of my other duties, I am now seconded to a Patient Partnership Council for the soon to be combined Health Trust. I don’t mind that, it means I’m “in the loop” and unlikely to lose access to appointments should we get hit by another pandemic or a meteor in my lifetime. It’s a commitment I’m happy to make that also has a selfish undertone, although I do seem to have my shit together a bit more than most people who join such groups. I’m becoming increasingly concerned about the amount of “learned helplessness” I see in so many people. One of the G.P.’s (General Practitioner – or common or garden M.D. in the U.S.) at the event told of the biggest problem faced by practices these days being members of the public expecting immediate responses to queries for appointments made on computer or phone apps in the middle of the night. There really does seem to be a wide-ranging lack of that old fashioned commodity called common sense.

When I get back from Telford on Monday, I have to start preparing for birthday celebrations. I generally don’t celebrate my birthday, although last year I ended up eating pizza with various friends at the Birmingham Eastercon. This year I can’t avoid it. A new addition to my local social circle has a birthday two days before mine, so it means that mine is less likely to be overlooked. We’ve got a meal arranged for the Saturday of our mutual friend’s birthday (the 6<sup>th</sup>) and I’m being dragged up the pub (yeah, like I’m really fucking resisting the tugging on that leash...) on Monday the 8<sup>th</sup>, the actual day of my birthday. Making it a messier period overall is the Bishop’s Finger on April 4<sup>th</sup> and a London comic mart that I’m already committed to meeting James Bacon at on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

I don't really think I can justify spending very much on myself at the comic mart. Last time there I picked up some batches of 1970s Marvel Westerns in nice condition which meant I spent more than I intended plus I've ordered several new CDs that I've only just become aware of: there's a special Loudon Wainwright III bundle of his "Years In The Making" album ([Loudon Wainwright III ~ 2-CD Bundle \(lastmusic.co.uk\)](http://lastmusic.co.uk)), and the same label have a Maria Muldaur album of bawdy blues songs written by Blu Lu Barker in the 1930s called "Don't You Feel My Leg" ([The Last Music Company - Maria Muldaur -Don't You Feel My Leg](http://lastmusic.com)) and a new album by the Lost Planet Airmen from 2023: Back From The Ozone ([The Last Music Company - Lost Planet Airmen -Back From The Ozone](http://lastmusic.com)), which has some real belters on it. Maybe someday I'll like an album from a band that's less than 30 years old!

## LOCO CITATO

*[[“Thankfully we managed to make it through the gig without any bottles of piss being hurled at our faces, so I considered it an incredible success.” (Dave Grohl)...]]*

From: tigerb@gmail.com

February 6

**Tracy Benton** writes:

Thanks for *This Here...*, and also: Happy Retirement! I'm planning furiously to attain that state as soon as I can. Pretty sick of working, me.

Had to drop you a line regarding the current Godzilla "Monsterverse" as you mentioned you've seen 'Monarch'. I'm on the verge of adding Apple TV just so I can see that show, frankly. I've been very much enjoying the current run of Godzilla-related films, having become a Godzilla fan in my Distant Youth. Every decade since the 50s seems to have its own take on Godzilla and his pals/foes, and I love seeing what they come up with.

My strongest recommendation actually goes to the non-Godzilla film, however: 'Kong: Skull Island'. This is not because of how well they did Kong, or how pleasant it is to see a whole island full of oversize critters, but because it's always a pleasure to see John C. Reilly turn up in a movie, put it under his arm, and walk away with the whole thing. The film is not short of fun actors (Samuel L. Jackson, John Goodman, Brie Larsen, Tom Hiddleston), but Reilly's got the best part and makes the most of it.

Godzilla-wise my preference is for 'Godzilla: King of the Monsters', because it hits that sweet spot where Godzilla is helping humanity but wouldn't mind wiping them out of existence, either. Rodan has absolutely never looked better in

a film, and if you can ignore the mostly-nonsense script you will enjoy it.

*[[We've done ketchup with the Monsterverse now, but I sadly have to disagree with you since round here the consensus was that 'Godzilla: King of the Monsters' was shit. 'Skull Island', though, that was a good'un...]]*

My new favorite Godzilla film, however, is the recently-released Japanese movie 'Godzilla Minus One', which achieves the balance of enough human story with enough Godzilla story as well. I was stunned at how good it was.

I'm sorry to hear you're having to abandon the excursion to the Ice Age fossil park. It sounds spectacular.

*[[The really annoying thing about the Ice Age Fossil Park was that they decided to expand their days of operation beginning the week after Corflu...]]*

Have a great Corflu!

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From: Kim.huett@gmail.com

February 8

**Kim Huett** writes:

When they told me I could be anything I decided to be a right utter bastard. I like to think I've done a decent job of it, but I suppose one can always do better. Actually on the topic of under performing I was surprised to learn that the staff of Lucky Cab are such poor marksmen. Don't most US businesses provide marksmanship training for the safety of their employees? Training staff to be good shots seems like a no brainer for a taxi company located in a neon hell-hole like

Las Vegas. I have to admit I've always imagined your shifts as a taxi driver as being not unlike an episode of 'Rat Patrol'. Years ago I had the rare pleasure of lounging in a Hong Kong hotel room while watching episodes of 'Rat Patrol' dubbed into Cantonese. Definitely the best language to watch a cretinous war action TV series like that as everybody screams in that peculiar hoarse manner which suggests their balls are being chewed on by ants. Consequently I can't help but picture you hanging half out of your taxi behind a M1919 Browning machine-gun mounted on the roof, hosing down rival taxis with sprays of bullets and shouting to potential customers standing out front of each casino. Occasionally I imagine you whip out a katana and stab at the tires of cars that have come too close. I imagine twelve hours of that would make anybody a bit tired. Retiring probably makes sense at this point.

*[[I realize, of course, "right utter bastard" that you are you'll be willfully taking the piss in an attempt to get a rise out of me. Once again, just about the only neon in Las Vegas these days is in museums. It probably won't interest you to learn that taxi drivers are forbidden by law to carry weapons of*

*any kind, technically not even a pocket knife, since that rather fucks up your narrative, don't it? ...]]*

Of course I understand that even if you did get the 'Rat Patrol' reference you are bound by your British heritage to be offended by a TV series which makes a bunch of USians heroes of the war in the Western Desert (that's Libya and Egypt for your USian readers). Even I, a mere colonial, only find this show tolerable when dubbed into Cantonese. Perhaps I should have compared your means of employment to one of my all-time favourite films, 'Repo Man'. I would except I'm pretty sure you would then fancy yourself as Harry Dean Stanton and I'm not sure you deserve that given your taste in TV and film.

*[[I didn't ever see any episodes of 'Rat Patrol' that I recall, but I learn that one of the main characters was actually a Brit. Wikipedia sez: "At the time of the original telecast, many British, Australian, and New Zealand viewers took offense at the majority of American characters on the program, resulting in the show's being pulled from the BBC after six episodes. In Australia, the show was quickly relegated to a Saturday afternoon timeslot, when most people were out." ...]]*

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From: jakaufman@aol.com

February 11

**Jerry Kaufman** writes:

Hey, there.... Who is that character with a pitchfork on page 1 of this issue? Looks like he's from some British tv comedy series or other.

*[[Pot. Frazer from 'Dad's Army'...]]*

Social Security probably has that windfall penalty in part because the legislators would not want anyone living on Moderately Easy Street due to moral qualms. Concerns about the program running out of funds also may have played a part. As I recall, if one opted into receiving one's benefits and continued to work, earnings could be deducted from the monthly checks. At some point, this no longer applies, but I can't recall what age or threshold ends the deduction.

*[[65, I believe...]]*

I hope you get your sleep schedule adjusted to match us Corflu attendees. At least **Suzle** and I don't need to do any

adjustment, as Seattle is in the same time zone as Las Vegas. (I wasn't sure about this and had to look it up.)

We've watched several of the same television series as you. *Reacher* was entertaining, but for my taste it went overboard in its mounting brutality. Torturing and then murdering every opponent was just too much for me, and I lost some of the pleasure to be had from seeing the Good Guys beat the Bad Guys. We have one more episode of *La Brea* to watch, and I'm guessing that however the good guys get their family members back, the series will end with everything reset to pre-sinkhole conditions - which would mean that none of the events of the series would have ever happened. As for *Quantum Leap*, I suppose that will end with Ben back in his own body (and where does that body go if Ben only leaps into people's minds?). He'll end up back with Addison, leaving the woman he's met while leaping out in the cold.



Thanks in part to your comments on *Lift*, we watched it last night and enjoyed it. I'm sure Kevin Hart's wanted to be an action hero for a long time, and he got to be a respected team leader, a spirited and effective fighter, and a brilliant planner.

As usual, I couldn't begin to parse your puzzling crossword clues, except for "Special guest (Fifty) absurdly hid tweet (3,5)". The answer came to me almost instantly. Ted White, Corflu-50 guest and anagram of "hid tweet."

Thanks to **Dave Hodson** for the footy insights.

**Kim Huett's** confusion between "gym" and "Jim" is presented with an excellent deadpan. As this is one of my rhetorical devices (meant to be funny but not always successfully), I tip my hat (metaphorically, as I'm not wearing one

at the moment) to **Kim's** skill.

Although **Leigh Edmonds'** comment starting "By its very nature..." is brilliant, getting it tattooed on my butt wouldn't be very useful. I can't see my butt from the angle required. If I read it in a mirror, it would be backwards. Of course, like your household, ours holds two faneds, but I doubt I could convince **Suzle** to get said tattoo so we could each read the other's ink. Would your housemate have the same response?

**Leigh** also talks about bourbons. Though my first choice of whiskey is a single malt Scotch (my favorite for some time has been Balvenie Doublewood), I like bourbon, too, and from my limited experience will take Maker's Mark, thanks. I've never had a gin and tonic made by **John Berry**, but perhaps I can taste my first when **Leigh** is in Seattle.

You've given us two Ageless Beauties, marking them both as What's in a Name? I think the first one is Sade, but don't quite recognize the second name or photo.

*[[Yep on Sade, the other is the actress Rula Lenska...]]*

My advice to you regarding the next issue is the same as in a zoom we were both on just yesterday: don't knock yourself out. Let it wait until after Corflu 41.

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From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

February 14

**Leigh Edmonds** writes:

Thanks for *This Here... 72*. This is likely to be a short and semi-sweet response, mainly because this business of getting organized to visit the US is turning out to take more time and energy, and money, than I had anticipated. Perhaps I have a rosy memory of our last venture overseas which seemed very quick and simple to organize, but that was almost thirty years ago and bureaucracy has no doubt expanded to fill every available space in the international travel realm. As has the ways in which every organization involved has found ways of extracting cash for even the slightest service. But I shouldn't be cranky about it, if I didn't want to spend these multiple buckets of money I could just stay home.

I see from your opening page that you are immersed in a sea of bureaucracy. I get the impression that this kind of thing is universal and I still recall the multi page forms that had to be completed with superhuman precision to get onto the Centerlink payroll here. The upside is that once all the forms have passed official scrutiny and been from various in-trays to out-trays everything rolls along smoothly - at least that's my experience, so far.

*[[It seems similar over here - once the hurdles have been negotiated, it does sort-of at least seem that when you're finally in, it's all good. But we shall see...]]*

I can't be entirely cynical about the bureaucracy, especially the computer driven part. It might have taken an hour or two to fill in the electronic forms for the entry permit but after I pressed the Enter button the screen told me approval could take up to 72 hours, but that approval was in my in-

box in two hours. It does say, however, that getting that approval does not mean that the officials at the border actually have to let me in. There are other little items that I could fill another page or two with but let's not be too tedious.

However, the arrangement and cost of the United States medical system that you have been labouring about did come home to me when I had to take out travel insurance. The travel agent did suggest that I could not pay it and trust to luck, but I'm not such a lucky person when it comes to health, in particular the unexpected emergency kind, and the stories one hears... So I had to sign up. That cost me near enough to \$1K for a not quite three week visit. If it wasn't for the fact that I really don't like pain I'd be tempted to fall down a flight of stairs or something just to get value from my investment. But then, reading the fine print on the policy, the paperwork involved in a claim would be horrendous, so maybe not.

*[[There's more than a few mates of a certain age who've given up on any international travel simply because of that cost element...]]*

Sorry for blathering on about this, but it's been at the forefront of my thinking for the past few days, what else do I have to write about.

Thank you for your suggestion to watch 'Lift' on Netflix. I will have a look at it some time soon. I am in complete agreement about useless critical complaints about 'thinly written characters', 'formula plots' and etc. They are just what the doctor ordered some nights. If I want depth of character

and well crafted plots I can pick up 'War and Peace' again. Or one of those finely honed explorations of the human psyche that intense film makers like to make. Life is already quite serious enough that I don't need it on the silver screen as well. Along these lines, unthinkingly I watched 'Salt' again the other night. I thoroughly enjoyed it but if you were to ask me what happened I'd have trouble telling you. And no, I only dozed off during the central part, which is invariably boring because all it does is set up the final climactic scenes and action.

Anyhow, I don't mind you having a little fun at my expense about going to sleep during movies. I'm sure that you will have read somewhere the comment that one of the problems with getting older is that you have trouble getting to sleep at night and staying awake during the day. Your turn will come too! You will find that you need to watch a movie at



least three times to make sure that you've watched all of it once.

*[[I'm usually good with getting through movies (and TV show binges) all right, and I don't generally have trouble sleeping. Mind you, I'm taking a lot of daytime naps...]]*

I expect you will not be disappointed or surprised to learn that my reaction to your Radio Winston this time was two words, 'ho hum'.

*[[Disappointed, but not surprised. At this point I suspect my opinion of your musical tastes echoes Kim Huett's assessment of my TV and movie watching...]]*

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From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

February 16

**Eli Cohen** writes:

It was interesting to read about your Social Security "windfall penalty" for collecting your UK pensions. Since I worked in Canada for over 5 years, I can technically collect a monthly Canadian Social Insurance payment. When I looked into this, the amount turned out to be microscopic, and the bureaucratic hurdles, not to mention consular visits required to actually collect made it very much Not Worth It. It causing a reduction in my Social Security payments on top of that makes me even happier that I dropped the whole thing.

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From: michelledh@me.com

February 21

**Cuddles** writes:

As always, very grateful that you keep me on the mailing list. It's been several issues since I've been in touch: the horror that was the Xmas season and not feeling at my best limited much of my participation in anything.

Your own medical song & dance sounds equally complex but it is reassuring that aside from the paper chase of insurance and benefits, you are well! Your ongoing gamut of tests and treatments continue to intrigue me and I'm trying to figure out just how many tests they want to run because 500 mls = 1 unit of whole blood for transfusion. Also, if your blood is 'too thick', I hope they're checking your spleen?!

*[[They are, along with other various internal organs. The spleen is still a bit enlarged, but not as much as it was, so positive progress there...]]*

The leeching - the US/UK vernacular terminology for blood letting is certainly different: venepuncture is more

commonly used here for blood tests/donations, since it's a small needle or cannula into superficial vein (or artery, depending on the test). Venesection is used to describe a direct incision into the blood vessel, usually for large bore cannulation or Hickman lines, which you'll see in urgent trauma care, ICU or cancer treatments.

TV: we LOVED 'Reacher' S2 and yes, Alan Ritchson is great. We would actually love to see him do a reboot of the first film, which has one of our favourite action fight scenes in it (the one in the bathroom). One of several film/tv scenes that are great pre-gaming warm up. Most of our small screen time is streaming (or catch up) rather than live: the only reason we still pay the TV license is for access to BBC iPlayer: the entire back catalog of 'Doctor Who', 'QI', 'Death in Paradise'/'Beyond Paradise' and yes, I've even gone back to 'Torchwood'. Eagerly awaiting the final season of 'Inside No. 9' too.

I've been following a couple of 'The Walking Dead' spin off shows, 'Dead City' and 'Daryl Dixon', with the former being more watchable. The next one, 'The Ones Who Live', picks up Rick & Michonne's story after they left the original series, starts in the next few weeks. A bit late to S2 'Loki' but it was such a joy to watch and Tom Hiddleston is such lovely eye candy! Also, 'The Fall of the House of Usher' with four excellent performances by Mary McDonnell, Bruce Greenwood, Mark Hamill and Carla Gugino. I did start watching 'True Detective: Night Country', mainly because the trailer was intriguing and I love watching Jodie Foster! The first episode certainly didn't disappoint but forgot to set up the TV box to record, so I'm waiting to binge it all soon! First season was great, second was slow and I'm not a huge fan of Colin Farrell and the trailer for the third season didn't pique my interest at all, so I had high hopes for this latest one.

To be honest, we've been watching more old favourites (streaming or DVD) than new stuff but 'For All Mankind' - all four seasons! Jeez, where did that time go? - and the last two episodes of 'Bodies' are high on our watch list.

Movies: I went to see 'Wonka' just before Xmas, which I found to be a very enjoyable 'origin' movie, with some clever lyrics and music. Timothée Chalamet was quite charming as the young Willy Wonka. Since then, there's been nothing that I've wanted to see OR I've missed it because I've not been well enough to go out. The other issue for me now is that early screenings have stopped: films now start at 12:30/13:00 unless it's a school holiday but I'm not likely to rush into a cinema full of young kids regardless of how cool the movie might be. We rarely go to evening shows either, for the same reasons: avoiding the older kids who talk loudly through the film, scroll through stuff on their phones or eat/drink noisily. Films on my radar for this year include 'Dune 2', 'Beetlejuice 2', 'Damsel', 'Mickey 17' and 'The Fall Guy'.

Officially retired now, huh? All that free time to drink, relax and have some fun without the hassle of all the boring stuff. Enjoy!

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From: dave\_redd@hotmail.com

February 24

**David Redd** writes:

Hoping this finds you well. Thank you for #72, and sorry my response is late. I was shocked to learn that Christopher Priest had died - I owed him apologies for my sillinesses, and time and procrastination mean it's too late now. Elsewhere, I appreciated your 'Last Exit' taxi column, some moving moments, and I hope your time-shifting and financial wizardry and everything all work out well. Sorry that as usual I cannot respond to your cultural reviews of tv and film as basically I watch neither now, and my knowledge of even 'Barbie' and 'Oppenheimer' is limited to media hype and news items. Oh well. I am similarly dumbstruck by your 'Give Us a Clue' column, being a person who finds even Sudoku Easy a mental challenge.

Artwork by **Jose Sanchez** attractive and intriguing.

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From: fanmailaph@aol.com

February 29

**Andy Hooper** writes:

Here we are about 14 hours before my flight leaves for Las Vegas; I've done just about everything I can think of to get ready for the Corflu auction and I'm just a bit too keyed up to go directly to bed. Thus, a letter of comment on a few elements of *This Here...* #72.

You and **Bill Breiding** definitely made my ears burn with the use of my name in regard to the FAAn Awards. Are people still talking about my, um, theories of award mongering? It seems very much like you have been in charge of the FAAns since the late 1950s now, and I doubt anyone can really remember how they might have been mismanaged before you took over. For all that I am your Navalny-like character in this issue, I believe I've been a faithful voter and cannot recall submitting many incomplete ballots. I used to cast forlorn votes for **Fred Lerner** long before it was considered cool.

*[[You may well be overestimating your Navalyness here. As far as I can tell you've never really alleged actual malfeasance, merely pointed out that the optics of a contender administering the awards could be considered dodgy...]]*

The issue of eligibility no longer occupies much of my attention. My own perspective has continued to be warped by my constant immersion in fanzines from decades past – my best fan artists of 2023 were likely Morris Scott Dollens, Steven Fabian, Ray Nelson, Cathy Healy and D. West – wouldn't he roll his eyes at being in that company – but none of them are eligible for anything. Clearly, I should run a poll where only the deceased and gafiated are eligible.

The only thing I really miss from my days as an award panderer was the excitement of tallying up the totals on late Saturday night, when voting used to extend to the convention itself. I always fantasized about running a two-stage process, where votes would be collected up to the week before the con, then the top five finishers in each category would then be considered "nominees" for the final vote, which would be limited to Corflu members. This was similar to the system **Moshe Feder** had in mind when the awards were organized in the 1970s. But I admit I was never able to organize two sets of voting deadlines and other elements of the idea.

Chris Priest was a recurring revelation, with of an ability to sustain a seemingly impossible premise through a full-length novel with seeming ease. But I think I may have enjoyed him even more as a fan-writer. His memoir "Thank you, Girls," which I first saw in Malcolm Edwards' *TAPPEN*, is still probably my favorite single piece of fan writing. It is an expression of the purest form of fandom, which is devotion without self-consciousness.

And with that, I must husband my energies for the love feast ahead. Thanks for continuing to publish such a lively fanzine. I'll see you in the bar, surely.

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From: katster@retstak.org

March 5

**Kat Templeton** writes:

On top of a fanzine, it's a letter of comment! I'm not sure what's come over me.

Anyway, health insurance. Don't get me started. I've got my own fun little catch-22 for you in regards to health insurance. I'm on disability right now, which qualifies me for Medicare (yes, even though I'm rather young) and Medicaid. And because my income is so low, I generally don't have to pay deductibles or premiums, or if I do, they're considerably lower. Now, if I want to go out and get a job, I have to find one with decent health insurance -- and not only that, I'm still going to have higher premiums and co-pays and deductibles.

It's almost easier to stay on disability and deal with the lack of money to make sure that the health conditions that made

me disabled in the first place don't get worse -- even though I probably could hold down a job with my medical issues properly treated. Despite all that, I'm looking for a job anyway because I'd like to see the friends I've made in this space and more of the world than just the US.

At least in all my experiences with the Social Security office they've played it straight with me too. You might not like what they have to say, but at least they've said it to you straight.

Re: Corflu. Thanks for letting me sneak in at the very last moment. I wasn't even thinking about virtual conventions being a thing until **LennyBailes** saw my lament about Facebook memories bringing up my one and only in-person Corflu and mentioned it was a possibility. Even though it wasn't as good as being there in the first place, it was nice to see some people I haven't seen in quite a while. (The Sunnyvale Corflu was thirteen years ago. Fuck.)

In regards to your health: Mom had (a different type of) leukemia, so we often had the opposite problem -- she needed topping off, not draining.

I'm still, to this day, grateful to those who go out of their way to donate blood because it kept my mom alive. Now, my grandmother, OTOH, had thrombocytosis, which is too many platelets, and it eventually turned into PV, so while I'm not intimately familiar with it, I've got some idea. Here's hoping it's "just" over-oxygenation.

To your retirement and the time leading up to it, you note a sense of impending bereavement. That makes sense to me.

Even though you're going out on your own terms, it's still a loss and we grieve losses.

My mom once explained them to somebody as "little deaths" -- no, you're not dead, but you've lost something important to you, whether that's your health or your job or a friend. So you have to let yourself mourn what you've lost.

I'm not really watching much of anything these days -- I've never been a big TV/movie watcher. Some of it's money, some of it is that I've always been happier with my nose deep in text. It's still fascinating. As for cryptic clues, I can't even begin to figure them out, although I follow the explanations once they're given.

Footy isn't my game -- baseball has always been my favorite sport. But I can definitely relate to the fiasco presented in this column. It boils down to the fact that some boys just can't stand having girls in their clubhouse. It seems to be happening everywhere. While fandom can be better -- I've never really felt like the boys are trying to lock me out of the

clubhouse just because I'm female -- we have our problems with sexual harassment. Some of the stories I've heard about what went on at conventions back in the day...

One last thought: I didn't vote in the FAAns this year because I'm just slowly easing myself back into fandom and thus had no real idea what to vote for. But if I don't vote next year, you have my permission to poke me and use cross words.

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From: perry@middlemiss.org

March 11

**Perry Middlemiss** writes:

I do hope the Social Security/pension stuff works out. The more I hear about UK/European/USA pensions etc the more

glad I am that our Australian Federal Government set up a superannuation scheme in the early 90s. It wasn't too flash in the early days as most funds were run by the old-style financial institutions (banks and insurance companies) who charged large commissions and fees and didn't pay high returns. But things changed, gradually, and I was able to get out from under one of the old schemes (which also used to charge you money for leaving!) into one of the newer ones that pay way better returns and charge very much less.

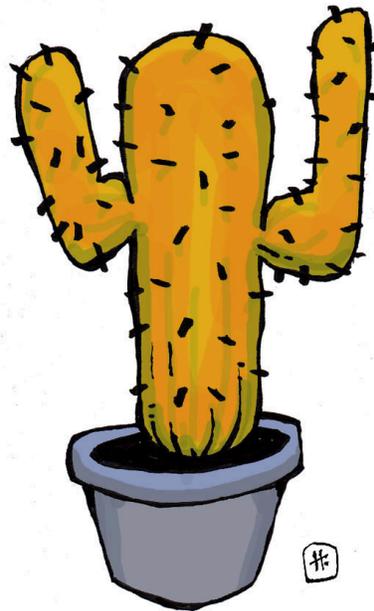
Moving from working to pension status was rather a breeze as well. The final upshot is that my wife and I are able to live off the income from our superannuation funds rather than calling on the Government purse for a regular pension.

And Medicare, well I don't need to tell you what a mess the US has made of that. My coverage just keeps on going and I'll just have to pay 1.5% of my taxable income. "But you don't have a taxable income, Middlemiss." Yes, perfectly correct as the pension I draw from the super fund is non-taxable. And the medical cover keeps on keeping on.

Corflu seemed to go well. I was away from home for that weekend so couldn't Zoom in to any sessions. I shall be seeing Mr **Edmonds** on Thursday and will get a direct account of proceedings.

Re crossword clues: **Eli Cohen** should have a look at the "larrikin" entry on wikipedia and the "Larrikin" entry at [fanac.org](http://fanac.org). Hopefully the connections will become clearer after that.

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From: srjeffery@aol.com

March 17

**Steve Jeffery** writes:

Happy retirement : "I confidently predict a hopefully not interminable period of not knowing what day it is..."

I already have trouble not knowing what day is at the end of the week and I've only moved to a four day week. I dread to think what it'll be like when the rest of the week becomes unmoored from the work schedule. Channel 4 have already confused us this year by shifting the F1 qualifying from it's expected slot on Saturday morning to Friday evenings, at least for the first couple of races in Abu Dhabi and Saudi.

I'm rather surprised that you haven't come across the term phlebotomist before. (I had to stretch the pronunciation of 'phle' from 'flay' to 'flee' to make **Sandra's** ISIHAC definition work, though I may have been mis-pronouncing this all my life. And why is "pronouncing" with an "ou" but "pronunciation" without an "o" anyway? Confusing.)

I am more used to the term venepuncturist (which AOL's spellchecker insists is not a real word) at work, since I work in company that is involved in diabetes care and as part of that we take blood from volunteer subjects for clinical trials and testing. Not much, since the tubes only hold about 4ml so even the maximum of 20 tubes in a session is nowhere near an armful. (The empty tubes are under vacuum so the blood is literally sucked out of you, which is initially disconcerting when they are switched over.) I've not come across the term venesection, though a quick medical dictionary check shows both could apply to blood draw from a needle. (venesection also includes blood drawn from a cut, so venepuncture is probably more specific to that from a needle draw.)

For a while I was on the list from blood draw volunteers at work, for which I got an extra few quid added to my pay at the end of a month and Vikki was always tickled when this showed up on my payslip as "Blood Money".

BTW. I suspect you are not allowed to take the unused blood home with you to make black pudding, though to be fair, I've never asked.

As for the tried/aching legs, have you tried one of those electronic nerve/muscle stimulation gadgets, though a Radio 4 program yesterday suggests they are more geared to short term alleviation.

**[[I'd take any kind of alleviation at all mate - I may look into this...]]**

Not heard of Last Exit, although if you mention that phrase to Vikki she'll likely respond immediately with 'Fields of the Nephilim' since this is her favourite track of theirs. (Mine is 'Moonchild', but we've agreed not to break up over this.) I'm surprised I haven't heard of them before since I went

through a bit of a 70s jazz rock phase with bands like Colosseum, Nucleus, Isotope, Paraphernalia and Brand X (Phil Collins' jazzy side project) and still dig those lps out from time to time.

(There's also a bit of a folk jazz crossover somewhere in there with various members of the above featuring on Neil Ardley's *Harmony of the Spheres* album while John Martyn lays fuzzy echoplex guitar over the top.)

Yet again, I realise how few TV series or movies I watch, or at least ones that cross over to what most of fandom are watching or talking about. Still not enough to tempt me into lashing out £40-£50 quid a month for a Netflix subscription though. I hadn't even realised they had brought back *Quantum Leap*. What next - *The Tomorrow People*? (Maybe not *The Six Million Dollar Man*. For that money today, Steve Austin might just about get a prosthetic foot.)

Re. your reply to **Celine's** comment that current music is just repetitious ["As to "same notes over and over", two words : 'Hey Jude'..."], I'll just add Handel's 'Halleluiah Chorus', or Beethoven's 'da da da DAH' opening to the fifth. Pretty much all music is based on repetition and a sense of predictability or inevitability to some degree. It's why the public never really warmed to atonal serial music, and probably why I find abrupt key changes in the middle of a song so jarring. Like the songwriters who have heard that modulation is a thing they should use, but not grasped how it should be done. (Fred Wedlock does a hilarious version of 'The Ballad of Robin Head' in which every verse shifts randomly by a semitone.)

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From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

March 17

**Gary Mattingly** writes:

'Egotorial': Sorry to hear about all of your bureaucratic problems. I hope all your health insurance and pension issues work themselves out in your favor.

'Corflux': I enjoyed myself at Corflu 41. I'm sorry organized activities didn't happen. I heard of several interesting activities in which people participated. Unfortunately I heard about all of them after the fact. I went to Bikram yoga three times. I even mentioned it to other people before I went but no one seemed interested in 60 or 90 minutes of 105F heat and 40+% humidity. Amazing. Admittedly the 90 minute sessions were at 6 AM on Saturday and Sunday. And still not a soul interested. I did get to several vegetarian restaurants. One I thought was particularly good. No one else seemed very interested. I also got to several very good coffee shops. Again, early in the morning. I did actually go to Denny's on Monday morning despite my definition of

Denny's as an anathema to me because of their issues (well, some of the Denny's around the country) related to discrimination. Still, I thought I would give it a try. Yeah, not a fan of their food either. Hash browns, not done. Pancakes and eggs, hm, I make better at home. Their orange juice was okay. I thought your Sunday Corflu buffet was good. I thought the evening parties were good, although admittedly I'm not really much of a conversationalist (now I'm wondering if that's why I didn't hear about those activities outside of the convention before they occurred), and the panels and auctions were interesting. Although admittedly I didn't buy anything. I did also get ice cream twice, once in the hotel casino and once at Handel's on Arroyo. I liked their ice cream and the varieties they had. I do wish they had inside seating though. I went there with **Murray** and **Mary Ellen Moore**. I was aware that **Murray** was also a fan of ice cream.

Now the question is, will I get to England next year? TBD

'Faanwank':

Congratulation to the FAAn award winners.

'Health Diary': Well, gee. I'm sorry to hear about your continuing health problems and I hope they get better as soon as possible. I heard about various and sundry people coming down with something after Corflu. Fortunately it wasn't too bad, seemingly a cold or something similar.

Fortunately it didn't touch me.

'Last Exit': Good luck with retirement, with using your time as desired, with sleeping as you desire and all of those other things. My life has a lot of structure unfortunately I really seem to need a much longer day to get all the things I want to do done. I'm working on that.

'TV Guide': I did watch the complete seasons of "For All Mankind", "Monarch: Legacy of Monsters" and "Quantum Leap". I'm in the midst of watching the new season of "Astrid" which seems to be on PBS streaming but not on our local PBS stations. I quite enjoy "Astrid". I watched the entire season of "The Last Airbender". I didn't think it was great but I enjoyed most of it. I've been watching the new "Shogun" series which I think is pretty good and I'm watching the current season of "Will Trent" which I also think is very good.

I continue to watch and enjoy "The Good Doctor", "Resident Alien", "Halo", "Young Sheldon", "Ghosts" and "Last Week

Tonight with John Oliver". I've watched a few episodes of "Constellation" but I'm still not sure whether I like it that much or not.

I finished watching all of the new "True Detective" series and enjoyed it.

Oh, and I always watch "CBS Sunday Morning".

I do wonder if Christopher Nolan will really come out with a new "Prisoner" series.

'Radio Winston': I just started listening to "Lip". It is enjoyable. [...]

'Movie Night': Sorry, haven't watched "Lift". The latest movies I've watched include "Perfect Day", the new offering from Wim Wenders which I thought was excellent. Also there was "Taipei Story", a 1985 movie directed by Edward Yang. It is part of a retrospective set of movies at the Roxie theater in SF. I enjoyed it but not quite as much as "Yi Yi" and "A Bright Summer Day", two later movies by him which

I thought were quite good. Two more movies in that retrospective yet to be seen are "Mahjong" and "A Confucian Confusion". I look forward to them. I also went to see "Dune: Part Two" which I enjoyed. I don't really think it is a classic film but I was entertained. "Nostalgia" was the last film in the Tarkovsky retrospective. I really enjoy Tarkovsky films.

He didn't make a lot. I

just have two more to watch and I will have seen all of his that are available. "The Settlers" directed by Felipe Gálvez Haberle was very good but most certainly not a happy film. I'll probably go see "Piccadilly", a 1929 silent film directed by Ewald André Dupont with Anna May Wong as one of the leads. I'm mainly going for Anna May Wong. I believe there is a new documentary about her which will also be shown after "Piccadilly".

I did also see and enjoy "Long Day's Journey Into Night" (I really wasn't that enamored of the 3D portions. With the 3D glasses on it was just too dark.) "Mirror", "The Wizard of Oz", "Last Things", "Nostalgia" and "Andrei Rublev". I still haven't seen "Freud's Last Session". Its release date seems to have been pushed out.

[...]

'Loco Citato': **Bob Jennings** - not all theaters are filled with loud-mouthed commentators during the film. The Roxie



Theater in SF, which I frequent, is totally quiet in that regard 99.9% of the time. Actually the Alamo Drafthouse, another movie theater in SF, is also pretty quiet, as is the Vine Cinema in Livermore, CA, not far from me. I do get to a regular theater, the Regal Hacienda in Dublin, CA, where I live but everyone seems pretty quiet. Admittedly I usually go to see their movies in the middle of the week and the middle of the day when there really aren't many people.

Ah, I wonder if **Rich Coad** has gotten any further at looking at an SF bid for Corflu. I need to get back to the Holiday Inn on Van Ness and see what it is like these days and what their prices are like. Patty and I held a Ditto there many years ago and thought it was excellent. The con suites were great, almost two full walls of windows looking out over San Francisco. Also we didn't have the banquet in the hotel but rather at a Chinese restaurant down the street and I do believe everyone quite enjoyed it.

'Indulge Me': Ah, Helen Folasade Adu (ah, I guess I know her as Sade) looks quite nice. I have heard her music.

I enjoyed the artwork of **Jose Sanchez** and the various and sundry photos scattered here and there.

Thanks again. I did get this in before the last moment. Besides which I have an annual visit with an optometrist tomorrow and my annual physical on Friday. "Piccadilly" is on the 25th and on the 26th I turn 72. **Rich Coad** has a birthday on that day also but he's younger than I am. **Bruce Townley's** birthday comes up in early April.

Well, I've stayed up later than I expected/desired and my my contacts are quite dried out and I simply must remove them from my eyeballs and go to bed. Bikram Yoga tomorrow also at 10:15 AM, plus 20 or 30 minutes of weight lifting and probably an hour or so of studying Spanish. Who knows, maybe I'll even start the LoC to *Littlebrook*. However what I really need to do is work up my itinerary for going to Chile and Argentina in November, hopefully. There are still major fires along the Chile Coast.

\*\*\*

#### WAHF

**William Breiding ; Celine Mariotti ; George Phillies :** "Congratulations on your retirement. I hope that it will be long and happy." ; **David Redd** (post-loc); **Jose Sanchez**

#### FANZINES RECEIVED

Two months worth...

**VANAMONDE** (**John Hertz**) - How long O Lord, how long?...

**THE MEGALOSCOPE** #11, #12 (**David Grigg**) - ...

**GREAT GALLOPING GHU!** #2 (**R Graeme Cameron**) - ...

**ORNITHOPTER MkII** (**Leigh Edmonds**) - ...

**LITTLEBRROK 13** (**Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins**)

- ...

**PERRYSOPE 41, 42** (**Perry Middlemiss**) - ...

**CAPTAIN FLASHBACK** #63, #64 (**Andy Hooper**) - ...

**THE STF AMATEUR** March & April 2024 (**Heath Row**) - ...

**RHYME & PARADOX** #5 (**Kat Templeton**) - ...

**ALEXIAD 133** (**Joseph & Lisa Major**) - ...

**SMALL STEPS DOWN A LOCAL STREET 2** (**Perry Middlemiss**) - ...

**THE TYPO KING** #84, #85 (**Bob Jennings**) - ...

**JENZINE** #9 (**J L Farey**) - ...

## INDULGE ME

✘ **oXLIp** : The 64 page COR41U Memory Book is indeed out in the wild, posted at [corflu.org](http://corflu.org) in pdf form and available print-on-demand for a mere \$10 at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1946892548> ...

✘ **BREVITY** : As if you hadn't already clocked this, what with the endless whingeing in the foregoing, bits of this are thin on content (especially this section One hopes for normal service to be resumed ere long...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1) : Penelope Wilton...**



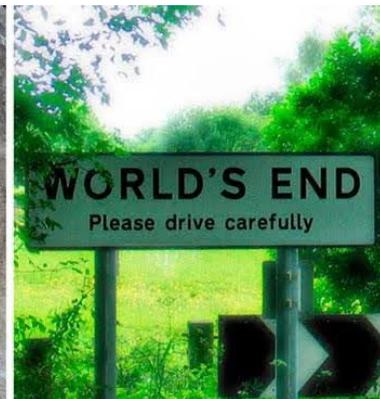
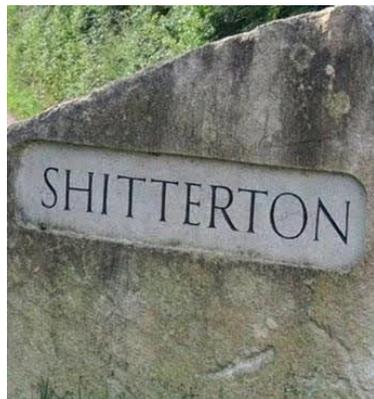
✘ **HUGOWANK** : Utter astonishment round here that I actually *know* three of the Fan Artist nominees for 2024, less astonishment at never having heard of any of the Fan Writers. And of course, super congrats to **Geri Sullivan** for the nod to *Idea* in the Best Fanzine lists - as far as I can tell the only actual print fanzine to be nominated in the last 8 years, which counts *File770* (2016 winner, since I believe that was the last year there was a print edition....

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2)** : Jayne Torvill...



✘ **SCIENCE & NATURE** : More dark matter conjecture, which I still manage to find of interest - Professor Jonathan Oppenheim (-er?) of University College London offers a theory of “wobbly space-time” in which Gravity Explains It All : <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2024/mar/09/controversial-new-theory-of-gravity-rules-out-need-for-dark-matter> ...

✘ **ON HIS TRAVELS** : Observed by David Hodson while on his replacement bus ...



✘ **NEXTISH** : Given the lateness of this bastard and the apparent likelihood of continued paralysis round here, getting back to the “usual” schedule which would imply #74 going out on April 27<sup>th</sup> is likely a stretch. I’ll try and claw back a bit and go for Star Wars Day, May 4<sup>th</sup>...

## MIRANDA

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Art credits: **Harry Bell** (pp 9, 13) ; **Jose Sanchez** (pp 10, 15)

**“I’ve seen a rich man beg, I’ve seen a good man sin  
I’ve seen a tough man cry  
I’ve seen a loser win, and a sad man grin  
I heard an honest man lie”**