

# This Here...

*"...perhaps only second place..." (S Johnson)*

## EGOTORIAL

### PLANS AFOOT...

This would seem to be the ish where columns are invading other columns, to an extent anyway...

Thus 'Anorak' hosts a bit of 'Movie Night', and this here 'Egotorial' is going to go on about FFS trip planning and what's occurring in that arena.

Much ta here, of course, to the Doc, **Rob Jackson**, who is holding the dosh from the Corflu Fifty and other sources to cover the hotel bills at both the Chequers in Newbury for Corflu 42 and the Hilton Lanyard for Reconnect. Especial thanks to **Claire Brialey**, unsurprisingly, who is acting as our UK trip manager and fundholder for the rest of it, despite having her usual 47 other plates spinning, several of which would apparently like to crash to the floor when she's not looking. Any suggestions that she loves it all really may result in a substantial clip around the ear'ole or worse...

The itinerary is all pretty much nailed down at this point, and detailed in the FBF group I've set up to keep people informed about it all: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/648334767678272>. Despite the fact that this is a three-week trip we're *still* not going to get everything in that we might have liked to with the constraints of time (and money) involved, but we're trying to get in as much as we can, including the London First Thursday and (between Corflu 42 and Reconnect) pub nights in Birmingham and Leeds for locals that we might not otherwise see.

The required train journeys have all been booked, so we're proceeding with what seems like military fuckin' precision, a planned precision which more pessimistic observers might suggest must shurely sunder into tiny pieces at some point. Nah, **Claire** and **Jen** between them will make sure *that* doesn't happen, this much I know.



It's customary for the Corflu Fifty delegate(s) to sing for their supper, and to that end we'll be getting "interviewed" by chair **Dave Hodson**, a procedure which will undoubtedly be more interesting for **Jen** fans - perhaps as it should be, since I have my doubts about whether either me or **Dave** can remember much about what we did at Novacons in the late '80s and early '90s largely due to the copious amount of drink taken at the time. I'd expect the piercing inquiry to go along the lines of: "Ey, do you remember such-and-such at the 1990 Novacon?". "Er... no". "Fuck. Me neither"...

An additional Saturday evening "treat" (and I do use that term advisedly) will be what I'll call 'The Vry UnSrs Music Quiz', a panel game based on (oh all right, largely stolen from) 'Never Mind the Buzzcocks' which I've been conscripted to present. Contestants **Ian Sorensen** and **Nigel Rowe** will face off against **Alison Scott** and **Jeanne Bowman** in this item, which we expect will be consigned to history as being "not as good as 'Just A Minac', but they tried". I'm reasonably confident in the assumption that drink will have been taken beforehand which may serve to enliven proceedings...

Almost immediately after we'd been announced as the Corflu Fifty delegates, Reconnect honchos **James Bacon** and **Tommy Ferguson**, both apparently in the grip of either temporary or perhaps permanent madness, determined that they would like us to attend their Eastercon as well and set about fundraising for that - this became the start of the overall trip fund, in fact. Whether we'll be on any programme items there I do not yet know (February 4<sup>th</sup>, as I write) but I have filled out the participant form suggesting I'd be willing to join a panel on the theory and practice of fanzining (DoBFO) if there is one, and at the prompting of a couple of other people also offered to do a DJ set if that will fit in anywhere. If the latter comes to fruition I would hope that I get asked in time to properly

put that together, and not while I'm in midair over the Atlantic - hint, hint...

Later developments: I finally get the email asking me to register on "PlanZ", a supposed scheduling tool by which the programme will be determined. It's possibly not *quite* as horribly unfriendly as the Hilton hotel website, by oo mah good gawd it's well fuckin' close...

Just over five weeks until we get on the plane coo er gosh...

It's all good.

February 2025

## TAFFNESSABOUNDS

### VOTE!!! AND VOTE AGAIN!!!

Once again...

The online ballot form for the 2025 Westbound race is up : <https://taff.org.uk/vote.php> and contains all the info you need, candidate platforms ect. PayPal addresses are::

North America : [sarahmiyoko@gmail.com](mailto:sarahmiyoko@gmail.com)

Europe : [EUTAFF@gmail.com](mailto:EUTAFF@gmail.com)

All votes must reach the administrators by 11.59 pm British/Irish time (UTC+1; 3.59 pm Pacific Daylight Time, UTC-7) on **Wednesday 23 April 2025**. (It says here)

### THIS FANZINE SUPPORTS ZI GRAVES for TAFF!

## CORFLUX

### 43 NEWS

The bidding team for Corflu 43 in 2026 have released their 'PR Zero' confirming their intent to hold the event at the Courtyard hotel in Santa Rosa, CA on the last weekend in February 2026 with the provisional moniker of "Corflu Pickled" or "Fans in Ferment 2". **Rich Coad** writes:

Back in 1985 Corflu 2 used the slogan "Fans in Ferment" to promote the convention in Napa, an upstart city in the California wine country. Now, after 41 years of fermentation, enough to get us all thoroughly pickled, we think it's time to bring the convention back to the real, original California wine country of Sonoma County, where a Hungarian "count", Agoston Haraszthy, founded the Buena Vista Winery back in 1857.

### 42 LATEST

PR4 is now available at the website, with several bits of info including the result of the "Fanzine of Honour" vote which is *Energumen* (same as it was in Vancouver!)...

<https://corflu.org/>

## FAANWANK

### CATEGORIZATION AGAIN

**Perry Middlemiss** writes: "Interesting question of **Joseph's** about the delineation between perzine and genzine. I shall have to ponder on that for a while. I'm up in the north of Victoria today (all weekend actually) and will be getting stuck into a wine tasting in the King Valley in a couple of hours so I will take some time to mull it over with a cold glass of sparkling in hand.

"For the record I do still consider what I produce a perzine, though I have seen **Bruce Gillespie** refer to it as a "review-zine". Labels are a problem; useful but sometimes a tad limiting. With a perzine I feel I can do whatever I want, and I can write about whatever I want. But with a genzine I have the feeling that I'd be a bit more beholden to the readers to cover more topics and have more different views from a wider variety of people. Maybe I'm just reading too much into it.

"I need that drink."

**Nic** : I reply to **Perry**, noting that no small part of my decisions on categorization are based on the faned's self-identification of their ish, and (DoBFO) I agree with him that what he does is a perzine. The **Archbishop's** "review-zine" categorization is just a different subset of fanzines overall - and in your case I'd say an inaccurate one. *Perryscope* is part reviewzine, sure, and to a greater extent than this here posse of turkeys which could also be described thus in part. Just about any given fanzine can be placed in more than one subset eg **Fred Lerner's** *Lofgeornost* is a perzine and an apazine, **Guy Lillian's** *The Zine Dump* is a perzine and a "listzine" - anyone could bang on with loads of examples, even making up categories as you go.

The point of having any separation at all is to have categories that don't overlap. Another way to do this might be a separation of "sercon" and "fannish" ishes, which could proliferate the awards (something I'm not at all in favor of) so eg "Best genzine (sercon)" and so on down the line. Then, though, you're going to get endless fuckin' arguments about a zine that has both sercon and fannish content as to where it might be placed. (Zzzzzz).

It's perhaps worth recalling that the splitting of the "Best Fanzine" FAAn award into subcategories is a recent-ish thing, occurring first in 2012 under the administration of **Andy Hooper**. It's surmised, accurately I would suggest, that this was done because of the observation that "marquee" genzines had an advantage over perzines and others which also deserved to get some 'boo. The definitions were tinkered with in the following years, but the set we have now was established by **Claire Brialey** who administered in 2016, and with the exceptions of 2019 and 2020 has remained the same since, although I have tinkered a bit with what's considered a "Special Publication".

## EXHORTATION

When you receive this there will only be just over a month until the voting deadline of **March 29<sup>th</sup>**. While there are those who mourn the old Saturday night tabulation of ballots in an increasingly smoke-filled room, having cajoled (or threatened) Corflu attendees into voting - reminiscent of the BSFG Novas back in the day - the solid reason for an earlier deadline is to allow the incumbent Corflu to personalize whatever certificates or trophies may be given out. The *other* determinant this year is that the Administrator will be fucking off to the UK a couple of days later, and let's be real, since (on past performance) more than half of the ballots arrive in what seems like the last ten minutes before the deadline, I'm not about to attempt to sort that lot out while I'm on me travels.

I'm sorely tempted to have a *very* short voting window of maybe a couple of weeks for next year (since I have been asked to continue as awards admin by the 2026 bid and have accepted), but we shall see. Consider discussion on that point open...

**GET YER BALLOTS DONE NOW, FOR A CHANGE!**

## FFS

### FUNDRAISING NEWS

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/the-farflung-farey-safari>

Groveling gratitude to the following since lastish: **Kevin Williams, Gail Kolthoff, Dave Langford, Chris Murphy, Jonathan Baddeley, Karen Schaffer, Keith Freeman, Leigh Edmonds, Eli Cohen, Bridget Bradshaw,**

Also much ta to Dublin 2019 for adding to the pot.

Thanks to private donations, the GoFundMe target is now down to \$1500. A reminder that if you prefer to donate privately, contact **Jen** for details for Zelle or PayPal.

[fareyjen@gmail.com](mailto:fareyjen@gmail.com)

I've set up a Facebook Group for the trip itself which, if you haven't clocked it, is at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/648334767678272>. This will update you on fundraising activities and individual bits of the itinerary...

Also, *Old Farey's All-Fanac 2025* is now available in a print edition for \$10.99 - we actually make \$3 a copy off that, proceeds to the Fund:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DVT2456S>

## HEALTH DIARY

### IT'S NOT GOUT

Ahead of next week's oncology visit I got the ultrasound done on me right leg, which the just in result describes as "unremarkable", so as usual, nothing serious but no real clue as to why there's pain and swelling.

All the other aches & pains and general malaise continue, including more tiredness and variable appetite as well as the usual litany, so what can I tell yer?

I've had a dentist visit which I probably should have essayed earlier to see if I could get me old Ted Heaths to fit ahead of The Trip. Predictably, I'm only just too late to get a new set (at a mere \$1600 or so with insurance) before we fly off, so after a quick think I'm going to risk a mere few hundred on having the old'uns re-lined to see if they'll work so as not to frighten the horses too much. I'm told my the inevitably nice people at Dentists on Nellis that there's no guarantee they'll be 100% fit for purpose, but I'll gamble on it, and the turnaround for getting the re-line is less than a week. Out of curiosity for the future I did ask about implants which I knew wouldn't be covered by insurance or Medicare since they're considered "cosmetic", and got the answer \$12,000, not unexpected, and actually lower than we might have guessed, but still, a DoBFO no-go innit?

I am thus resigned to the distinct possibility that in my increasing dotage I shall be condemned to being, as **Dave Hodson** described it, "...a terrifying apparition sans teef..."

Update: I have them Edwards! They did a lovely job with the re-line and spent 40 minutes or so sorting out a proper fit (with a couple of months of follow-up included for any final adjustments required). Now I've got to be suitably diligent about getting used to the fuckers, since eating is now a whole new adventure, innit?...

## TV GUIDE

### ATSASS (NOT)

Oo let's add a new (and *very* pronounceable) acronym to the canon, shall we? Along the lines of 'AKICIF', we might also lazily suppose that All TV Shows Are Streaming Somewhere, which of course isn't true at all. We subscribe to what you might call the "major" streaming services with the Prime Video package (including Paramount+, Britbox ect), the Disney+ package (incl Hulu) and Apple TV (all the good skiffy shows) and no doubt other stuff I've forgot that **Jen** assiduously keeps track of. From time to time, probably prompted by rabbit-holing (which isn't at all as sexually perverse as it sounds, honest guv) I search for the next old show binge-watch, only to be disappointed.

The latest shortlist turned up the info that two of the three shows I was after were only available for extra dosh (fuck that!) and the third not at all. Returning to this a mere few days later I have of course forgot what one of the rent or buy shows was (sigh, dotage), but the other available only for extra money is '7 Days' (1998-2001), not to be confused with either the 2010 or 2021 movies of the same name. This' un originally aired on UPN and had a decent enough premise, that the US has time travel technology (retro-fitted from alien tech at Roswell, natch), but limitations mean that one person can "backstep" only seven days to avert disasters which have occurred eg a terrorist attack on the White House in the pilot episode. General slagging off from reviewers, low ratings and supposed friction among the cast led to its cancellation.



I always liked the show meself, since it had a pretty fuckin' good ensemble cast, including but not limited to lead Jonathan LaPaglia, ageless beauty Justina Vail (who copped the show's only Saturn Award in 2000 for Best Genre TV Supporting Actress) and in particular Nick Searcy as the project's politically incorrect chief of security and foil/nemesis to LaPaglia's "chrononaut". Them and genre regular Alan Scarfe turning in his usual solid effort.

That, and the early advertising tagline which I strongly suspect got whacked with a cease and desist since I can't find an image that features it: "Just Undo It" ...

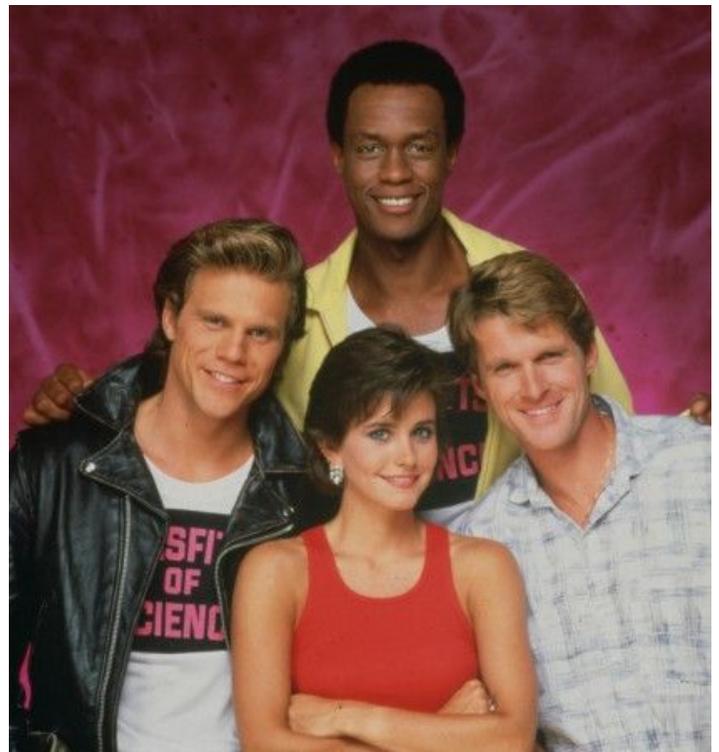
Still not apparently available anywhere at all is the October 1985 - February 1986 single season 'Misfits of Science' which took a gently pistaking view of superpowers. I'll argue that this lot demonstrate credible weaknesses or inconveniences to their abilities. Rocker "Johnny B" Bukowski (Mark Thomas Miller) gains his powers after being electrocuted on stage and can chuck lightning bolts as well as having superspeed. The problem is that he drains the charge on any electrical device he's near (like a vehicle battery) and his own fully charged state doesn't last that long. Water short-circuits him - DoBFO. Gloria Dinallo (Courteney Cox in her first significant TV role) has telekinesis, but only ("only?") affecting something she can see, so a blindfold will render her useless. Dr. Elvin Lincoln (Kevin Peter Hall) can shrink from 7ft 4 to eleven inches tall via a hormone he developed

because he was sick of being asked to play basketball which he's actually totally shit at. His running gag is that he has to carry a tiny change of clothes for whenever he transforms.

Leading this motley lot is the non-powered Dr. Billy Hayes (Dean Paul Martin) whose naive enthusiasm is quite fetching.

The pilot included a character called Arnold Beifneiter ("Beef" / "Ice Man") who can freeze anything he touches (having put himself in cryogenic storage in 1937 because of massive grief over the disappearance of Amelia Earhart - it takes all sorts), but got dropped right away after the legals at Marvel Comics got to work. The team gets around in an ice-cream van since Beef will die if he warms up. Despite his swift exit, the ice-cream van stayed.

It's well arguable that 'Misfits' paved the way for later live-action superhero shows, lighthearted or otherwise. Low ratings of this hidden treasure were only a smaller part of the reason it ended too soon, the real nail being the death of avid pilot Dean Paul Martin in 1987 when he crashed during an Air National Guard training mission.



## NEW AND RETURNING

Finally, after the really longer than it needed to be Xmas/ New Year hiatus, the regular shows we clock (all on CBS/ Paramount+) are back on telly, along with a couple of new ones. 'Elsbeth' and 'Matlock' continue to be well worth it, with the underlying plot arcs of each advancing subtly (if you're paying attention, which you should be). 'The Equalizer' moves the relationship statuses of the McCall family along in significant ways, and the Big Bad for the rest

of the season is established. What's still so good about this'un is the mostly seamless integration of the familial relationships & that with the action stuff. I've heard talk (probably just fanwank) about a purported crossover with Queen Latifah's and Denzel Washington's versions, which might well be dead good if it ever happens.

We've been *very* engaged with 'Paradise' (Hulu), which I'm reluctant to say too much about if you haven't watched at least the first episode with it's surprising reveal of the setting of the show. The much-lauded Sterling K. Brown excels with a turn that's stoic on the face of it but boiling with undercurrent, and the equally notable Julianne Nicholson makes a terrific adversary complete with physical nervous tics which reminded me a bit of Robert Lindsay in Alan Bleasdale's 'G.B.H.' (1991) although they're not the same, nor as DoBFO manic. Basic scenario: the President (James Marsden) is assassinated and Secret Service detail member Xavier Collins (Brown) seeks the truth. Series creator Dan Fogelman ('This Is Us', 'Only Murders in the Building' and more) makes a lot of use of flashbacks, and since they're not announced by fuckin' great on-screen captions, you do need to pay attention to this'un an'all.

Brand spankin' new is 'Watson' (CBS/Paramount+), another modern-day setting for Conan Doyle's characters, beginning in the year after Reichenbach falls with John Watson (Morris Chestnut) coming to from a traumatic brain injury suffered in that fall (which he also took) to learn that Holmes funded a private clinic in his will so Watson would have something to do. Watson does do. We're in medical/detective/diagnostic territory (shades of 'House?'), and the jury is still out, with mixed reviews so far although just about everybody agrees that you aren't going horribly wrong at all with Chestnut playing the lead character. Jury's still out here an'all - we're promised appearances of Lestrade and Irene Adler coming up, as well as the Count hisself *and* a hallucinatory Holmes...

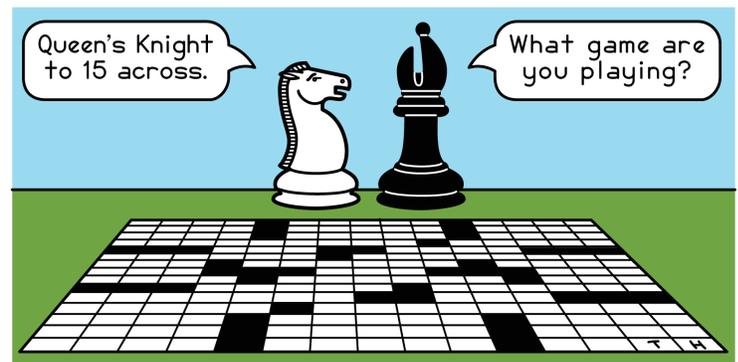
## ZERO DAY

A quick riff, I suppose, on Netflix's latest which dropped all 6 episodes of this political thriller on February 20<sup>th</sup> and was duly binged round here. Highly touted, not least because Robert De Niro is the leading man, reviews haven't been stellar. *The Hollywood Reporter* sez it's "the *New York Times* Opinion section brought to life in its barely left-tilting centrism." *Variety* wasn't any nicer: "Tech oligarchs, the



gerontocracy, podcasters spouting misinformation and the erosion of civil liberties all blur into a muddy soup that's adjacent to relevancy without ever achieving it." It's watchable in my opinion, certainly not mired at, say, Jeffrey Archer levels of tripe, but yeah, it's also somewhat predictable, if disjointed in places. Devotees of whatever passes as a "political thriller" will find it a serviceable enough example of the genre but likely of more interest because of the assembled star power. Clark Gregg *is* pretty good as a billionaire baddie, mind...

## GIVE US A CLUE



Lastish (apparently not as easy as I thought they were):

"Loadsamoney in support of music (7)"

**Eli Cohen:** I have no idea, unless this has something to do with Harry ENFIELD? Probably some obscure British joke...

[[Definition: "Loadsamoney". Wordplay: "in support of" = FOR + "music" = TUNE, yielding FORTUNE...]]

"Lofty Hogan gets strange collection at a Corflu? (10)"

**Eli Cohen:** Again, no idea what this obscure fannish reference means.

[[Definition: "collection at a Corflu". Wordplay: "gets strange" (anagram indicator), rearrange "Lofty Hogan" = FANTHOLOGY...]]

"Seeker on shoddy fannish index topic (8)"

**Eli Cohen:** ...makes me think of the KEROSENE papers, but there'd have to be more evidence, like "kerosene" being an anagram of "seeker on" or something... How's that for a coincidence?

[[Definition: "fannish index topic". Wordplay: "shoddy" (anagram indicator), rearrange "seeker on" = KEROSENE...]]

Thish's efforts:

"Misshapen gonad tip is one way to become a parent (8)"

"Bumheads somehow waylaid (8)"

"Unusually, nude Fred got his money back (8)"

# ANORAK

## CRAZY EIGHTS

Do what, now? A 'Movie Night' column masquerading as an 'Anorak' segment? Well, sort of...

We rewatched 'Unstoppable' (2010) this month, which apart from the DoBFO attractions of Denzel Washington and Chris Pine has the loveliness of just about every frame having the train in it. The movie predictably ups the ante in terms of implied speed and overall danger (and the heroics required), as well as changing the location from Ohio to Pennsylvania, but ey, yer actual basic circumstances of it all remained in place from the May 15, 2001 runaway incident involving a freight consist hauled by CSX8888.



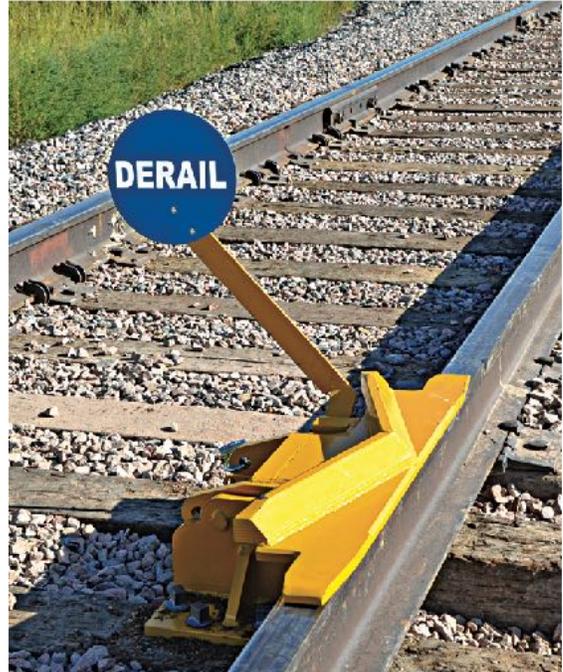
For the wholly or partially un-anoraked among you, braking on a train isn't quite like just stomping on a pedal. Dynamic braking, as employed on diesel and diesel-electric locos, uses the traction motor as a generator for the onboard brakes, but since these aren't enough to completely slow the engine, air brakes are used in concert, both those on the loco itself and the rest of the train.

The engineer had clocked a misaligned switch ahead and reckoned that because the track was wet he wouldn't be able to stop in time, so jumped out to correct the alignment. He engaged the independent air brake of the loco, but since the consist was still all in the yard, the train air brakes were disconnected (normal practice). He *thought* he'd engaged the dynamic brakes but hadn't, having "inadvertently failed to complete the selection process" according to the later incident report. In plain language, this meant that the loco was set to accelerate rather than brake, and there's not enough oomph in the air brake to prevent this without the train brakes in play.

As part of attempts to stop the train (and this was also in the movie), police marksmen were deployed to try and hit the fuel cutoff button on the side of the loco, a dodgy proposition at best since the slightly easier to hit fuel cap is

right next to it. This was also a spectacularly fuckin' useless ploy since the button has to be pressed *and held* for three seconds, not something bullets are notably good at.

The actual 8888 consist was 47 cars, although half of them were empty. Two, however, contained very toxic molten phenol. This was changed for the movie to fewer cars and more phenol. Another true bit, though, was the attempt to derail, which fails miserably since the train just smashed through the equipment.



'Unstoppable' does up the ante with the addition of having to navigate the "Stanton curve" at speed in excess of safe levels with a refinery next to it which would not react well to having loads of molten phenol ejected on it. The section of track is real (albeit between Bellaire OH and Kenwood WV rather than in Pennsylvania) but the refinery doesn't exist. The resolution of the movie is close to the actual result, with a chase locomotive attaching itself to the rear of the 8888 consist and braking until the whole shebang was slowed down enough (12mph) for an engineer to run alongside, climb on and shut down the engine. In the movie, Chris Pine's character is required to board from the bed of a speeding truck, much more dramatically of course.

Unlike the "where are they now" at the end of the movie, the engineer who caused the runaway in the first place was never named by CSX, nor was it ever revealed whether any disciplinary action was taken.

In May of 2008, CSX8888 did it *again*, with a "crewman error" resulting in a very short runaway situation, but only at 3mph, enabling an employee to jump aboard and apply the brakes. In 2015 the loco was rebuilt and is still in service to this day, renumbered 4389...

# THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

I have a friend; let's call her Sylvia.

I met Sylvia through the voluntary work and social activities I do with Age UK Enfield. Everyone in the UK at least knows that Age UK is a national charity, but it's actually an umbrella organisation for lots of local Age UK branches. Enfield's Age UK is one of the best ones and is nationally accredited for the work it does; it goes and trains other branches in best practice.

Sylvia is what used to be called a game old bird, but without the negative connotations it used to carry; a good ol' gal in American parlance. She's in her eighties now and I first met her the Christmas before last at a festive meal in a local pub; it was the first Age UK event she'd attended and, once her table had cleared of diners, she came over and joined my friend Richard and I, a pair of confirmed drinkers with long histories in industries that actively encouraged such social imbibement, and a few others, introduced herself, and proceeded to chatter away.

Sylvia hasn't had the happiest of lives, but neither has she had an uncomfortable life. She married a bit of a wet sap, who proceeded to fuck off with another woman, but only after he'd made Sylvia pregnant. This all happening

in the early 1960s and single parenthood carrying the stigma it did at the time, Sylvia went off and procured an abortion, an illegal act at the time. Sylvia divorced, but never remarried, she kept working for her ex-husband in his business and was well paid, but then he committed suicide. Sylvia went off, got another job – another well-paid job at that – and bought her own house. Sylvia has been a survivor; she moved to London from Yorkshire when she married her useless ex-lump of a husband in the face of rejection from parents and siblings, and with very few true friends, but some close neighbours in a typical suburban London street, she just pottered along for several decades.

It was the deaths of several of those neighbours, who all looked in on each other, did bits of shopping for each other, watched each other age and become infirm, that forced Sylvia further out into the world. When the last old lady she used to sit at the bedside of died, Sylvia noticed a poster in the local library, rang the telephone number on it, got invited along to the Christmas meal, and suddenly her world exploded outwards in all directions.

Sylvia is due to appear in that play that Richard and I are in that I mentioned a few columns back. She also comes along to talk to student doctors every Thursday morning with Richard and I and a few others, following which we'll always go for a meal, be it pie and mash, or fish and chips, or a full English fry-up. She's become one of a close-knit little group that I belong to that does things in the local community: visiting schools to talk about how things were different when we were all kids their age; helping people with mobile phones, tablets, and computers; occasionally doing some art journaling in a local library; and sundry other enjoyable little activities.

But...

There was always bound to be a But...

Sylvia has dementia. She's had it since well before she met Richard and I in that pub, but it was slow progressing, and she'd spent a very long time putting some very clever coping strategies in place, including blaming her poor hearing for frequent misunderstandings. Sylvia was obviously a fiercely clever and, after seeing a few examples, a wickedly acid tongued woman when she needed to be in the past. I've been

on the receiving end of that tongue. She has a genial nature until she becomes riled and, like most Yorkshire people like to kid on but very few actually are, she doesn't suffer fools who try to make a fool of her.

Except...

Sylvia's dementia is now progressing at a fair clip. She's increasingly easily confused, and frustration obviously builds in her which causes her to become quite defensive. She has also been targeted by several scam artists. A few months after first meeting Sylvia she mentioned that she'd just ordered a new batch of special vitamin pills that helped her keep the dementia at bay. When questioned about these pills, it seems she had been recommended them by someone who had visited her home to fix her computer.

A quick look at her computer, which she complained was running so slow it was unusable, revealed that whoever had "fixed" her machine had installed anti-virus software which had slowed it down to a crawl and charged her several hundred pounds for the privilege. The company supplying the vitamins was an online quackery which also supplied herbal Viagra, herbal hair loss reversal pills, and other snake oil remedies. The "vitamins" looked like M&M sweets with no logo on them and different colours were claimed to be different vitamins and minerals. Sylvia had several shelves full of these packages, more than she could reasonably ever take, because every few months the company would ring her



up and claim that a new, Earth-shattering breakthrough had been made to the recipe and sell her a new batch at over £80.00 a pop on top of the monthly standing order she already had for hundreds of pounds worth of pills.

Other cons came to light the more Sylvia was questioned and the police were called to report them. A “workman” from “the council” had knocked on her door and asked to see the loft of her house. She needed foam insulation to comply with new council regulations about climate change. The workman could measure up, take payment details, and get his colleagues to come and do the work. Sylvia handed over several thousands of pounds in cash after walking to the local branch of her building society with the workman. The workman’s colleagues did turn up and they did spray foam insulation all over the inside of the roof between the rafters. Several months later Sylvia received a call from a company claiming to know she’d had foam insulation installed, but it was the wrong type, and the regulations had now changed in light of the climate worsening and she needed to pay for the old insulation to be removed and get the new insulation installed. It was this call that made several of us insist she call the police and the officer who came took all the details but explained that nothing much would likely come of it because the calls were all probably coming from the Indian subcontinent using voice over IP phones that could spoof local numbers. Even if they could identify the call centre, the Indian authorities wouldn’t act on the information because they have more important things (to them) to investigate, and the local workers doing the removal and reinstallation would have all been contacted via WhatsApp or some other encrypted messaging app and would be untraceable by the authorities in this country.

Things came to a head several weeks ago when Sylvia told us she’d been contacted by the fraud department of her building society about suspicious activity on her account. The person at the other end of the phone told Sylvia she needed to go to the local branch and withdraw £2500, she would need to post this cash to an address they supplied and they’d track the money through their systems as a new bank account was set up in her name and they studied which members of staff dealt with her money and caught the suspected fraudsters red-handed. She was told to destroy the receipt from the post office in case any of the suspected staff got access to it, probably via some daring Mission: Impossible stunt in the middle of a dark and stormy night, and the department’s investigation was uncovered. Sylvia resisted this for some amount of time, but the person on the other end of the phone just kept on and kept on and wore down what little resistance Sylvia has left. She said she was left shaking and exhausted as she walked to the building society to carry out her instructions and this isn’t the first time this has happened; a mutual friend had already intercepted Sylvia walking to a post box with a large brown

envelope in the past and, when Sylvia explained what she was doing, explained that she was being scammed and shouldn’t send the package.

God alone knows how many times in the past Sylvia has been duped by these parasites and no one was around to intercept her. She appears to have lost tens of thousands of pounds.

Things have taken a more serious turn in the last few weeks, with the scammers now telling Sylvia that there’s a problem with her house purchase from decades ago and she may not really own her home. Of course, she needs to send them the original documentation and deeds for examination, and, of course, there’s a sizable fee involved as well. Luckily, Richard and I and several other friends and acquaintances from Age UK Enfield have been in touch with Sylvia’s extended family and one of her youngest siblings is taking on power of attorney on her behalf. We’ll all probably find a reasonable care home for her to move into and sell the house to cover fees, but, at least, the cash will be spent on her and not end up in the pockets of scumbags. She doesn’t want to move back to Yorkshire after all these decades and has told her brother her only friends are in London. Her only friends are the people she’s met since Christmas 2023: Me, Richard, Gordon, Joan, Chrissie, and the staff at Age UK.

I dread to think what might have happened had Sylvia not seen that poster in that library on that particular day. Sliding doors, indeed.

## LOCO CITATO

*[[“You don’t have to always write about big stuff. Writing is about expressing yourself, you know? It can be about small stuff, too.” (Mick Jones) ...]]*

From: klepsydra@gmail.com

January 25

**S&ra Bond** writes:

Great ish old boy. Proper loc may follow (and may not) but in response to **Wm Breiding** :

Q. How would Superman and his horse credit themselves if they edited a fanzine?

A. Clark and Mare.

Giddyup go...

Modified rapture -- who forgot to paste in the “[SCREENSHOT]” before mailing it out, eh, eh?

Ego te absolvo, sinner man.

*[[As S&ra and Jen both pointed out, the first item for thish’s ‘Indulge Me’ is thus determined...]]*

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From: daverabban@gmail.com

January 25

**Dave Cockfield** writes:

Pandemic weight increased to 325lbs. Medication for severe Vertigo attacks precluded alcohol lowering weight to 270lbs. Drinking again for 18 months. Weight now 281lbs. Waist 50 inches. So you are still a lightweight.

Even when the EU Eurostar advised arriving an hour early. I visited a friend in Le Rochport, Burgundy every September. With the queues at St.Pancras it usually took at least 30+ minutes to clear the various checks.

The worst ever was a flight back from Lyon where French Customs turned us over for well over an hour. Probably because we were English.

Since Brexit visits to France, and Prague have actually been fairly seamless however I gather that new French Passport checks also require she and fingerprint verification.

February 1

The Gaiman controversy is interesting.

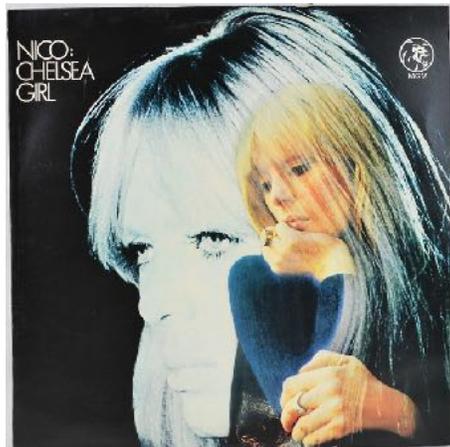
I believe some of the things that are being said but he does not appear to have broken the law, let alone been prosecuted. He is obviously just a sick perverted individual if the stories are true.

*[[Er, if the credible allegations are at all true he's broken the law quite a bit. Whether he'll get prosecuted or not remains to be seen, but he is now being sued...]]*

I have always thought of him as an arrogant dominating prick.

God knows how many years ago Ian Williams, the Gannetfather, submitted a short story to Gaiman for an anthology. He never heard anything but a year later an idea from that story was used by Gaiman with no acknowledgement.

More recently there was controversy because he used a black actress in the part of Death in the Sandman tv series. She was very good but that is not what should have been controversial.



In the comics Death has always been conveyed as a pretty Goth girl. Not as Gaiman originally envisioned her, as Nico on the cover of Chelsea girl. He was won over with this version created by the artist Mike Dringenberg inspired

by his friendship with a famous Goth lady who gave her permission to use her image.

She died in 2018 of cancer. Gaiman said this online as a tribute: "Rest in Peace, or head off to your next adventure, Cinamon Hadley. You gave Death of the Endless her face and her smile"



I can't help but wonder if Dringenberg would have been entitled to royalties if his version had been used in the tv show.

*[[If Mike ever got a co-creator credit, then yes he possibly would, but shurely NG would have studiously avoided that?...]]*

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From: kevinwilliams48@googlemail.com

January 26

**Kev Williams** writes:

No sooner do I contemplate commenting on an issue – when another arrives. But I shall not be deterred by your fecundity on this occasion, because a couple of items stirred my interest.

**Football:** I'm not really a fannish fan, I don't do the perzine/prozine/genzine thingie, but it's rare and good to see footie discussed in a fanzine. I don't get to see many live matches these days, but my son and I recently trailed to the south coast to see our team Swansea City play Portsmouth. It was raining, cold and the football was dismal, and despite the exhortations of we 2000 travelling fans, we lost 4-0! This is the lot of the trufan – pain and lots of reasons to complain. A few pints and a burger in the local pub were some compensation before the train home.

*[[I noted the other week the over 800-mile round trip essayed by Plymouth Argyle fans when they played Dave Cockfield's Sunderland away. 14 hours on the road there and back...]]*

This is a million miles away from the 'fair-weather' fans who flock to games where 'their' team is most likely to win. In recent years of course this is most likely to be Man City –

whereas 10 years ago they'd have been across town at Old Trafford supporting Man Utd.

**Heath Row** writes that if he were to support a team it would be FC St Pauli in Germany because of its leftist, anarchistic politics. Good! There a '7<sup>th</sup> tier' semi-professional team in Brighton (near where my son lives), called Whitehawk, who are famous for their "anti-homophobic, anti-sexist, anti-racist stance." They promote local charitable causes, non-league football and togetherness, as an antidote to the Premier League. All around the ground, signs make the point:



And they have their own rituals; Waving their keys in the air whenever their team earn a corner (this apparently signifies a 'key moment'), "Meat Pie, Sausage Roll, come on Whitehawk, give us a goal!" If there is disagreement with an official's decision: "The referee's a Tory", is exclaimed! The

fact that the bar serves Harvey's Best Bitter – one of THE great pints, and decent Balti pies, are bonuses. Tickets are £10, and they are never sold out!

What a grip footie has on the world. A few years ago, I read Melvin Bragg's book: *'The 12 Books that changed the world'*. There, amongst Darwin, Newton, Shakespeare, Mary Woolstonecraft's *'Rights of Woman'*, Arkwright's *'Spinning loom'*, the Tyndale bible, Faraday's *'Researches in Electricity'*, *'Married Love'* by Marie Stopes... is the 1863 pamphlet "The Rule Book of Association Football"!! This was written by 'A Group of Former English Public-School Men'. Bragg justifies this by a few simple facts:

In 2006 (the time of writing), 8 out of 10 people in the world are expecting to watch something of the impending World Cup in Germany, it is played by 1.5m teams and 300m professional and semi-pro clubs, not counting hundreds of thousands of school and youth clubs. It is part of the national consciousness of almost every country in the world, attracts tribal followings, produces icons, provokes passions and a devotion bordering on the religious.

The game goes back probably 2000 years where inflatable animal bladders (occasionally the heads of defeated enemies) were kicked around. But the rules weren't codified until a meeting in a pub (The Freemason's Tavern in Lincoln's Inn Fields in London (still there) in 1863 when The Football Association was born.

**Silo:** I have only just caught up with this series. I was initially a bit reluctant to commit to it since it was evidently another post-apocalyptic story, a hoary old SF idea of the 'pocket universe' – an artificial environment set up to have its mysteries revealed and subsequently torn down: 'Why are we here? What's outside?' Ideas that have been well trod by golden age SF writers Heinlein, Aldiss, Harrison, Goulaye and more. I can't remember. But this Apple TV production is brilliantly realised with outstanding production values and great performances by Rebecca Ferguson and Tim Robbins and others. I enjoyed Season 1 and at the end the basic idea is revealed. I watched S2 eagerly but have to say that it lost its momentum and really dragged. How many more obstacles did Nichols (Ferguson) have to overcome? I've read the source novels but have to say that the end of S2 was confusing and disappointing. When I realised that there were to be 2 more series, my spirit wilted. Would any of you lot out there, who have read the books say it's worth the effort? If not, I'll wait until the final episode of S3 in a year or so's time and be happy with that, and then S4 a year later.

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From: fabficbks@aol.com

January 26

**Bob Jennings** writes:

Received the new *This Here... #83* yesterday and that I would jump in and read it right away instead of holding off till a less busy day. Hey, I'm a creature of ever changing whims, so why not?

Your write-up about your memories of cycling the neighborhood as a lad was interesting. The picture of the Klingon water tower was even more interesting. That seems like a pretty unusual design for a water tower, at least so far as those of us in the New World are concerned, but maybe that was the standard for the UK. When was the thing built anyway? Are those wires and mini-antenna on the top to contact the flying saucer mother ship, or just to relay local TV signals? Also it seems to be leaning, and that doesn't seem to be from a mis-aligned camera shot either.

*[[There's a great deal of variation in the design of UK water towers to the extent that most of them are unique. Some have even been converted into homes. The Meppershall tower was constructed in 1949-50. Pictures from certain angles make it appear to be leaning, which it isn't...]]*

When I was a child, back when dinosaurs roamed the earth, there was no problem getting cigarettes. There used to be cigarette machines everywhere. Anybody with the correct purchase price in coins could feed the machine and pull a lever to get whatever brand of coffin nails they wanted. As I recall, there were signs that said you had to be an adult to purchase, but nobody paid any attention to that, and most stores also didn't pay attention to age either. If anybody had the money, they could get the smokes.

*[[We had the same thing, but not in the villages - I remember vending machines on Hermitage Road in Hitchin outside of a tobacconists shop, I think there may have been one at the train station, and they were ubiquitous in the pubs. They were eventually made illegal in the UK in 2011...]]*

I am curious as to why you wanted to smoke cigarettes at such a young age. I have never had the slightest interest in smoking myself. Both my parents smoked, and being exposed to second hand smoke constantly did nothing to make the stuff seem attractive to either me or my brother. In addition all that second hand smoke aggravated my breathing and sinus problems considerably. Those problems subsided noticeably when I was old enuf to get out of the house and head off to college, which just intensified my decision never to take up smoking of any kind, and that extended to smoking pot too.

I asked my parents why in the world they ever wanted to start smoking cigarettes. My mother said it was considered a fashionable and chic things among college age women, so that's when she started. My father never wanted to discuss

it. Out of a farm family with six other brothers, only he and one other bro took up the habit. He died of lung cancer caused by smoking cigarettes, which intensified my resolution to never smoke or take any kind of tobacco product, ever.

*[[Both my parents also smoked, as did my paternal grandfather and my oldest uncle. I suppose looking stylish might have been one aspect, but also if you smoked that gave you a bit of cred for being "hard", although I can't say that applied to me. As to why I started, I don't have a clear answer for you...]]*

Getting beer or spirits of any kind was another matter entirely. Nobody would sell anything containing alcohol to anyone under the age of 21, period. Even while away in college, the town the university was located in was totally dry, but the county wasn't. But even in the lowest dive bars just outside the city limits they always checked IDs and wouldn't sell to anyone under age, which meant that the college students had to make the acquaintance of an older student attending college on the GI Bill, or a late entry who happened to be over the legal age if they wanted any kind of malted beverage, or anything else containing alcohol.

Enforcement was pretty strict, and guys who tried to smuggle hard liquor from distant places onto the campus were routinely stopped by the police, who had a pretty effective intelligence network, now that I think about it. How were they about to ferret out the info about those junior league bootleggers? Maybe they had psychic stoolies on the staff at the sheriff's office, but nobody got away with it.

*[[Very different in the UK (and Europe) where you're effectively trained in the consumption of alcohol from a young age. And of course legal drinking age is 18. Before 1995 the law stated that no-one under 14 was allowed on licensed premises, ages 14-15 were allowed in with someone over 18, 16-17 year-olds at any time. Prior to 1923 14 year-olds could go in a pub and buy beer, at 16 they were allowed to buy spirits. My experience in the early 1970s was that certain pubs would turn a blind eye to 16 year-olds (or younger, but not by much) coming in for a drink as long as you weren't rowdy or prone to get sick...]]*

Despite the small recent setbacks, your health seems to be mostly holding up. The winter weight gain may just be attributed to the winter environment. I don't know how cold it gets in Vegas, but around here just walking out to the mailbox and back in our typical six below zero weather can burn up a thousand calories or more no matter how well you are bundled up, so you may just be gaining seasonable adjusted weight. Probably nothing that cutting back on a few cans of beer couldn't solve. Not that I'm in a position to give any good advice on dieting right now. This winter I've picked up ten pounds I didn't want, and I can't seem to shed it either. The extra pounds went right to my middle. I hope

the situation will improve come spring (if warmer weather ever gets here), when I'll be able to do something besides huddling in the house most of the day.

*[[Winter temps in Las Vegas will get down to around freezing...]]*

It's good to see you are consistent in your viewing habits; boosting rotten movies that everybody else on the planet hates & despises. I'm with **Jen**; movies that have serious plot flaws bother me a lot. I have never seen "Guardians", but a friend did last year because he wanted to see how the Russians handled a super hero comic book style movie, and he reported it was one of the worst movies he had tried to watch in years. He never even made it to the end, and it as only an hour and a half long. Your affinity for this kind of stuff must be an acquired taste. Or maybe it's genetic. Surely there are plenty of good action films out there (including lots of older ones you have probably never seen yet), to occupy your leisure time. Why bother watching pics that all the fans and critics agree are absolutely dreadful. What's the attraction? Really, I'm curious. Life is short, why squander your time on the bad stuff when there are so many good films easily available?

*[[Maybe it's masochism? I am more tolerant of crappier movies than most, I'm sure, but what motivates me more, perhaps, is lazy reviewing from the cheap seats...]]*

I'm surprised **Leigh Edmonds** is enthusiastic about being very near the flight path way of an airport that is about to upgrade to light domestic aircraft including some jets. If you thot trains were loud, wait until you get to experience the long lasting roar of commercial and passenger aircraft passing near your domicile. I had that experience for a fair part of my childhood, and you never get used to the noise or the aircraft roaring thru the heavens, sometimes shaking the house you happen to be sitting in. All that air traffic also lowers property values, since most people don't want to put up with that aggravation.

*[[Leigh is an aviation geek, what can I tell you?...]]*

My family wasn't dirt poor, but we were hardly affluent either, so we had to put up with it until the airport built a whole new series of runways that crossed over woods and water and not over residential neighborhoods. That was a welcome relief for my parents. By then I was out and about on my own.

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From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

January 30

**Leigh Edmonds** writes:

Well, that's another issue of *This Here* ... read and enjoyed. Thanks for keeping me entertained and informed about stuff.

The last time I rode a bike was some time ago when John and Eve Harvey happened to be in Perth for a convention or something. Valma and I went with them over to Rottnest Island, rented some bikes and rode around the island for the day. It had probably been twenty years earlier since either of us had ridden bikes so we had not exercise those bike riding muscles for that many years and could hardly move the next day they hurt so badly. Haven't been on a bike since. As a youngster one of the main uses of bikes was to

ride to school but apparently that doesn't happen much, if at all these days. Instead, for the schools around here there are traffic jams at the school starting and closing time as the kids are picked up by parents in cars. What is the world coming to!

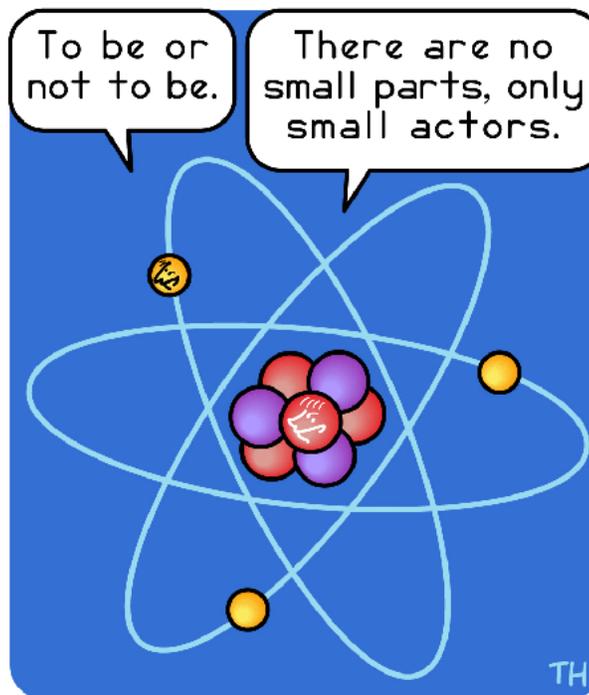
Regarding 'Radio Winston', no comment! I'd only sound like a bitter old curmudgeon who reckons that the music died in 1968, so I shan't say a thing.

*[[Mission accomplished again! You'll have to find your own soporific thish, though...]]*

On the other hand, 'Anorak' was interesting and slightly confusing. I'm still not sure what you mean by push-pull

even though I've read your article a couple of times. At first I thought you meant a rail motor which can be driven from drivers cabins at each end. In that case I travel in one every time I go down to Melbourne because they have cabins at either end of the train. When the train pulls into the end of the line at Wendouree, for example, the driver gets out of the cabin, walks down to the other end of the train, gets into the cabin there and then drives off in the direction the train just came from.

That is more or less the same as the little rail motor that used to run from Kaniva to Dimboola daily where passengers then transferred to the train down to Melbourne (steam powered in my youth). It too was driven from both ends. For some reason it was known locally as the 'Peanut'.



I thought that I had suddenly discovered the reason for that name when you mentioned the Victorian Railway's P-class push-pulls. Not so, I found when I went to check on Google. Those, and the T-class locomotives they were converted from, have cabins that probably allow the driver to drive in both directions. Those T-class's were also the ones that used to annoy my mother so much with their noise all weekend long.

So, is a push-pull simply a train that can go in both directions without using a turntable or a loop. In that case, there would only be one train in ten in Victoria that I see that isn't a push-pull. Or perhaps I'm missing some subtle point. You'll have to set me right over a grog some time soon.

*[[Well yes, just about every consist is now push-pull by one definition or another. The Wikipedia description is accurate: "A push-pull train has a locomotive at one end of the train, connected via some form of remote control, such as multiple-unit train control, to a vehicle equipped with a control cab at the other end of the train. This second vehicle may be another locomotive, or an unpowered control car." I think most Anoraks would suggest that it's the presence of an unpowered control car or cabin (or two, if the consist has the locomotive in the middle) is what defines old-school push-pull, rather than having powered locos at each end, but ey... If you can be arsed, here's a 19-minute video which purports to Explain It All: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ra82pLthIQ> ...]]*

If I was a particularly curious type I'd want to know more about this Neil Gaiman affair because it appears often enough on the Facebook posts I see. But since I'm not that curious, about the private lives of writers anyhow, I have little idea about what has happened, or been alleged to have happened. I saw Gaiman at a convention in Perth once where my only impression was that he was a very good self promoter and not somebody I needed to meet.

Having got over that I agree with **David Hodson's** summary at the end of his second paragraph, that "fandom is a wonderful addition to a full and richly textured life". For me, at least, it has never put food on the table or paid my medical bills, and I think that I wouldn't enjoy it as much as I do if it did. Because then it would be a job, which is a different thing entirely since jobs are often not much fun and not things you can take or leave.

Your response to **Heath Row** about following or supporting football clubs made a good point. Except that in Melbourne people who change between football clubs aren't called "plastics", they are called "traitors".

Clearly Melbourneites take their football seriously.

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From: portablezine@gmail.com

February 3

**W<sup>m</sup> Breiding** writes:

Wanted to respond to **Leigh's** irritation with my loc re: power pop. The reason I worded my loc as I did was because he wrote these exact words: "... it revealed to me something I had never known before, which is that I really don't like Power Pop." That quote was why I asked him to keep an open mind, and to give further consideration to the subgenre. Even as I was citing those band examples it occurred to me that some folks just don't like this type of pop music, while others, like myself, revel in it. My friend Jeff thought that my tastes in pop were cheesy, while I could never understand his deep fascination for Bruce Springsteen, who is as cheesy as they come, in my estimation. Anyway, sorry about that, **Leigh**. I am looking forward to exploring his classical links. **Leigh** well knows that I'm always looking for classical pieces to my taste (Power Pop Classical!). I used to have the complete Bartok quartets, so there's that.

**Dave Hodson's** piece on Gaiman was just dismal. The way he approached Gaiman just left me feeling sad. The description of his social interactions, and his cloying passive-aggressive behavior, and later the kink. I've only read one of his novels and didn't like it, and none of his comic work, so I wasn't a fan, but it's just another disappointment, in a seemingly unending line of disappointments.

*[[My own impression of Gaiman, whom I have never met, was always that he was and is, as Leigh Edmonds puts it in his loc above, "a very good self promoter and not somebody I needed to meet". I was always reminded of F. Scott Fitzgerald's observation of Hemingway: "...always ready to lend a helping hand to the one on the rung above him." As Dave noted, Gaiman could quickly discard anyone he considered no longer useful to him. I always reacted badly to his seeming insertion of himself (ahem) into anything and everything, and a knee-jerk (and very ill-advised) comment on this when Sue Ellison died got me in a lot of trouble and resulted in me getting booted from a Facebook group. I wonder, though, what the people who at the time lauded Gaiman to the skies for having pissed me off are thinking now?...]]*

Hoping that your extracurricular fan-funding is getting you to a comfortable spot. You do realize that you are going to have to write a 40,000 word trip report, right? Good thing you are taking the iPad! The "Notes" app is a wonderful thing...

*[[I got the iPad specifically for the trip, and yes, we do plan to do a trip report, although how long that'll turn out in terms of wordage remains to be seen...]]*

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From: jakaufman@aol.com

February 6

**Jerry Kaufman** writes:

I too once owned and rode a bicycle. I was a bit of a late starter; my father tried to teach me to ride once I hit puberty, but I couldn't get the knack. In the end, I learned but only after he'd passed away. I rode all over Cleveland Heights and even down the big hill that led to Cleveland's Little Italy. I think, every now and then, about buying or renting a bike and getting back into practice, but then I think about how, even with special bike lanes in many parts of Seattle, how dangerous it can be.

What makes a "Never Mind the Buzzcocks style music quiz"? I'd love to be on a team, but would not do well if the team consisted of me and one other contestant (unless that contestant were **Andy Hooper**). In fact, I'd do best as part of a pub quiz team where we wouldn't have to buzz in with an answer.

*[[NMTB is a UK TV comedy panel game which has been going (for 32 seasons) since 1996, originally on the BBC but now revived on Sky Max...]]*

**Dave Hodson** writes about *The Traitors* (among other things). To my surprise, **Suzle** has expressed a desire to watch this show. We usually disdain reality shows (with a few exceptions, *Antiques Roadshow*). It must be, in part, because Alan Cummings is the host.

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From: 4622 Pavalof St., Anchorage AK 9907

November 5, 2024 and February 13

**Steve Johnson** writes:

A bad habit, here, of starting letters and not finishing or mailing same. Letters to Family or Letters of Comment. Sometimes I print something and don't finish it and wind up retyping it from the smudged and corrected print... So picking up from that old sheet of paper:

*[[Better late than never...]]*

*This Here... #80* moved me to respond on paper, for some reason, rather than in an email you would have received some days ago.

I tend to think of Facebook as Meta's version of an apa, with no membership limit, no minimum activity requirement, and many contributions not from one's friends or groups, but selected by the OE's algorithm based on a stereotype of one's likely interests. In my case, those stereotypical interests seem to be war, war planes, warships, submarines, the Vietnam war, and buxom young women wearing few clothes. Another category of the OE's contributions more closely hits

the mark in terms of my actual interests: science fiction, comics and comic strips, bicycles and beer. And fanzines.

No other tools seem quite as effective as Facebook for making contacts with such a variety of people from different times and places of one's life. Facebook also ranks high in occasions for breakdowns in communication, perhaps only second place to the feedback loops/flame wars in discussion lists and blogs. That's the reason I haven't installed Facebook on my phone or on my tablet and try not to access it more than four times a week on a desktop computer.

Decades ago, in apa45, I don't think I ever had a communication breakdown with Don D'Amassa. Perhaps we never exchanged mailing comments - I haven't checked those old mailings. My take on fanzines (and books) is that the ecosystem of fanzines has changed in more ways than production methods. The ecosystem changes include the sources of the creators of the fanzines and the audiences of those who read and contribute articles and comments (or silence).

Four years ago, my brother Dave and I published another issue of a paper fanzine, which we had not done together since the late sixties. This time the audience was not comprised of fans, but those attending our annual summer get-together on the Oregon coast. Rather than ditto, mimeo or even Xerox, we went offset. My brother had worked the intervening decades in the printing and desktop publishing trade. He handled selection of the contents: a mix of reprints from our old fanzines and some current writing.

My recent work was drawn from a beer brewers' club newsletter. Dave contributed a story positing a decades old network of underground bicycle trails modeled on Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll". A local business did the printing, collation and stapling. Oddly, Dave did not include a colophon or any other statement of the facts of publication. Perhaps that is why none of our relatives wrote letters of comment or even texts. Perhaps they did not know that comments were expected as part of the fanzine experience. Perhaps we should have published the pages in our private family group on Facebook. In any case, our 2021 issue of *Radiophone* does not really classify as a fanzine in the same category as *This Here...*

*[[I don't really agree with you there. Having clocked the ishes you sent (thanks!) I'd say it is, and it's most likely that your relatives would indeed be unfamiliar with the "fanzine experience" (nicely put, by the way) including the expectation of responses...]]*

I've thought about "what is a fanzine" on several recent occasions when I see a publication I identify as a fanzine in a new context. I classify *Amra* was a fanzine (from the sixties and seventies) even though Wildside Press, now the copyright holder, has licensed several issues on the Hoopla

Digital Service. (I access Hoopla via the Anchorage Public Library.) The contents have not been revised in any way. Digital *Amra* is still a fanzine to me, perhaps because, decades ago, they published something I wrote. I suppose if Wildside Press published new issues as well as *Black Cat Weekly* and *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*, I would regard the new incarnation as no longer a fanzine.

**[[Nowadays it's often the case that any resurgence of the "what is a fanzine" debate causes a cold hand to clutch my bowels, after previous attempts to fix that definition for the purposes of the FAAn awards (notably the "immutable object" terminology which you allude to above)...]]**

Though until recently I had never seen a copy of the *Baker Street Journal*. I knew of it and assumed it must be a fanzine comparable to *Amra*. Recently I learned that the *BSJ* is now published by the Fordham University Press. The annual subscription rate, \$46, is much lower than most academic journals. Sleuthing in the usual sources disclosed that *BSJ* began as a professional, typeset journal sold on newsstands and at bookstores. That venture failed and the format reverted to mimeographed copies collated and stapled by the editor. Some decades apparently passed before the journal again left the fanzine category.

**[[To some extent it can be a gray area where what we *might* term a fanzine is only available for money. Christian New Age Quarterly is perhaps the most notable current example. It's arguable, for example, whether the First Fandom Annual should be in the 'Special Publication' category for the FAAns, since it does indeed cost money, but my understanding is that it's either nonprofit or a fundraising endeavor...]]**

Last weekend, at a Friends of the Library sale in Anchorage, I saw a whole library cart stocked with Sherlockiana, including a shelf and a half of mostly unbound *Baker Street Journals* going back to the late 1940s and early 1950s. The first fifty years of that publication are now available on a DVD sold by the Baker Street Irregulars, one of whose invested members had accumulated the books and other publications on that library cart. I later learned, by searching Facebook, that a local used bookstore bought the really valuable Sherlockiana from the estate of Mark Levy, the late irregular. The more fannish stuff - well, it went to the biannual Friends of the Library book sale, rather than an endocarp at Title Wave Books: certainly an alternative preferable to the recycling bins to which so many collections are consigned.

Two bound volumes of the *Baker Street Journal* now reside in one of my bookcases. Though I am not a dedicated fan of Sherlock Holmes, I could not pass up a few items from the remains of a decidedly fanning collection.

Congratulations on publishing 80 83 issues of *This Here...*, undeniably a fanzine.

\* \* \*

From: garyhubbard969@gmail.com

February 15

**Gary Hubbard** writes:

Bicycle stories eh?

Thanks for your bicycle tour of your ancestral village.

I had a bike when I was about that age. It was a Goodyear something or other - a big sturdy beast compared to these spindly, anorexic things folks ride around in today. It was only as fast as sturdy, young legs could make it go, but that was as fast as I needed to explore the neighborhood, which was not a village, but a suburb of Detroit. All I've ever known about English villages comes from what I've seen in movies like 'Village of the Damned', 'Hot Fuzz' and those Quartermass flicks. They sound like pretty dicey places to me.

Lincoln Park, where I grew up, was kind of a mish-mosh of residential, commercial and light industrial. At the end of your block was a high berm which a railroad track sat on top of, and a few blocks away there was a spur coming off it that went into the yard of a big building that belonged to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission; a warehouse, I suppose. Must have been a tantalizing sight for the Old Man, who liked his booze. One time, an old Navy buddy of his who had a motorcycle was visiting us. Well, they got pretty drunk and the Old Man persuaded his friend to let him ride his hog. He'd never been on one before, but he thought he could handle anything. He was wrong, of course. He lost control as soon as he revved it up and the bike roared down the street, tried to jump the berm, flipped over and broke the Old Man's arm. Being my father's son, I also took stupid risks on my bike (but who hasn't?) and had my share of spills and scrapes. Fortunately, I avoided breaking anything and got worse injuries from roller skating.

Across the street from where I lived there was a lumber yard and behind that was one of those tall towers that hold up high tension lines, which had a sign on it warning people of the dangers of electrocution. Between the legs of the tower were these triangular open spaces on all four sides...spaces that might just be wide enough and high enough for a kid on a bike to sail through. It was widely believed among us kids that if you just touched the sides, you'd light up like the coyote in a Warner Bros cartoon, but if I rode through fast enough? Could I get through the legs without getting fried? I decided to give it a try. I circled around and around the tower, building up speed and courage before finally plunging through...

This would have been a better story if I'd been fried but unfortunately lived to tell the tale.

I read about that Russian Avengers movie a few years back but have never seen it. I saw Turkish Star Wars, however, and a Korean flick called 'Villainess', which enjoyed (I

suspect) higher production values than either of the former. It starts out with some pretty impressive action stuff but then drops down into a dull imitation of 'La Femme Nikita', but without Jean Reno. Now that I think of it, Nikita was also pretty dull before Reno showed up.

*[[Coincidentally, I recently read about the movie 'Leon: The Professional' starring Reno and with Gary Oldman as well as Natalie Portman's first outing. Sadly, only available for money...]]*

\*\*\*

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

February 17

Eli Cohen writes:

Speaking of coincidences, you said your younger child just turned 30 -- my younger son just turned 30 this past December! (Doesn't that make you feel old?) Of course we explained to him (as we had to his older brother when he turned 30) that now we couldn't trust him anymore. (Gee, the 60s were a really long time ago...)

For a physics joke, I thought I'd use something from the first issue of my fanzine *Kratophany* (1971!), written by David Emerson, who at that time was a graduate student in physics at Columbia (and one of my roommates at the Avocado Pit):

Excerpt from "TALKING PHYSICS BLUES"

by David L. Emerson

Now here's a particle in a box;  
At a certain time this box unlocks.  
If you weigh the box in a time that's long,  
Does this mean Heisenberg was wrong?  
Einstein thought so ...  
But he forget about ...  
His own general theory ...  
Seems he didn't realize ...  
The gravity of the situation.

\*\*\*

From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

February 19

Gary Mattingly writes:

Here I think I'm doing this early since the end of the month is ten days away. Then I scroll down and see the deadline is the 22nd. Jeez.

*[[And we're a few days late in any event...]]*

'Egotorial': I have a bike, a 10-speed, but I haven't ridden it in several years. It is maybe 20+ years old. It is a nice Schwinn but with skinny tires. I keep thinking about buying another bike with larger tires. I believe they make the ride

more comfortable, they're better for trails (well, not so good for quick turns), and better traction on wet roads, but they require more effort. Hm, I wonder if there's a medium tire in between the two. For a while I rode my bike to work, which was only 3 or 4 miles away. This was when I was in my 50s and early 60s. I remember back in junior high going on a long bike ride with a girl I liked. We went out of town on a two lane road. We didn't do anything, just rode bicycles. I never went off riding for beer and cigarettes. I don't even think the thought ever crossed my mind. I also am certainly not going to wear one of those brightly colored racing outfits although I do wear a helmet. I think it is the law here.

*[[That's what you've been missing all these years Gary: beer and cigarettes...]]*

'Taffnessabounds': I don't know either of the candidates. I probably should send some money in though. Am I too late?

*[[The voting deadline is just after Easter. I too seemingly often have little knowledge of TAFF candidates and thus will closely peruse their platforms as well as taking note of who their nominators are, some of which will convey the notion that the candidate is all right, others will rule them out for me. I have since "met" Zi Graves on Zoom get-togethers that I've also been in and can report that I'm very happy with my vote...]]*

'Corflux': I have a Discord account and have used it a little in the past. I'm not a fan of Zoom and I guess I'm not a big fan of Discord either. I'm not saying either are bad, just that I'm not particularly fond nor good at either. I suppose that may go hand in hand with my lack of conversational abilities. I can sometimes think of something to say a day or two later.

*[[I've also definitely struggled with Discord, but I am making another effort this year...]]*

Sometimes I don't think whoever is running the camera/mikes at the convention end may be constantly aware of what needs (my opinion) to be seen and heard. Now I certainly wouldn't want to be that person. That would take a lot of time and concentration. So I suppose I should give them thanks for making the effort. Also I think sometimes some of the equipment may not be quite as good as I would like. The mikes may not be picking up everything. The video may not have the capability of zooming in and out, as is appropriate. So how come the convention committee doesn't have Steadicams? I think you can buy one for \$1000 to \$2000, although a really good one is probably closer to \$25,000 to \$30,000 or more. You can probably buy a not-so-good gimbal stabilizer for a camera for \$300 to \$500. Aren't steadicams and high end microphones in every con's budget? Oh, and then there's the time needed to learn how to actually use it in a reasonable manner.

*[[Oh, what a [falls off chair] moment that was. Everybody who's ever been involved with conrunning would have done*

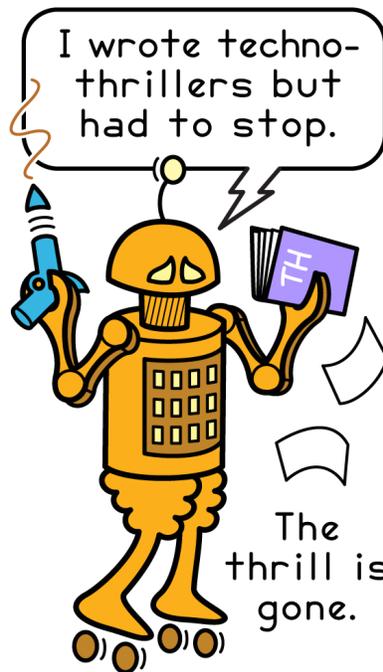
*the same at your blithe suggestion of purchasing Steadicams at a cost of ooh, I dunno, about 4 or 5 times a total Corflu budget. Then there's the question of who owns the equipment after the con is over. I'll also point out that Loncon 3 in 2014 just about managed to break even with a budget of a million pounds...]*

'FAANWank': No, I haven't yet voted for the Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards. RSN

*[[Glares at you...]]*

'Movie Night': 'Guardians' sounds rather uninspiring so I probably won't look for it. I'll probably take a pass on 'Carry On Up The Khyber' also.

Let's see, since your last issue, I've seen, 'Star Trek: Section 31' (not very good), 'Eastern Condors' (I was entertained. A Sammo Kam-Bo Hung action film), 'A Complete Unknown' (I liked the music and found it interesting and entertaining. I have no idea how accurate it was.), 'Ichi the Killer' (A rather strange film by Takashi Miike and definitely not for everyone.), 'I'm Still Here' (I thought this was a very good film about a very bad situation and a very bad government. Not a happy film.), 'I'm a Cyborg but That's Okay' (A film by Park Chan-wook who did 'Old Boy'. Very different from 'Old Boy' but still a bit strange. It primarily takes place in a psychiatric hospital and is sort of a rom-com, sort of.), 'Vermiglio' (An interesting movie with some lovely countryside scenes but a bit sad in the last half.), 'Companion' (A rather strange comedy science fiction. Not the greatest film ever but I laughed.), 'The Girl in the Spider's Web' (It was all right. Based on the Swedish book and series of films. It wasn't as good as them but kept my interest.), 'The Mother and the Whore' (I've wanted to watch this for a while. Criterion finally released it after some permissions were given by the relative of Eustache who had control over its release. It is a long film, mainly composed of conversation. Probably won't be appreciated by many people. I liked it.), 'Bound' (A film presented during SF IndieFest. I thought it was enjoyable. I liked Bandit, the pocket squirrel, although admittedly it had no lines.), 'Britney Lost Her Phone' (Another IndieFest film. I didn't like it very much.), 'Lost In Translation' (I liked it. I'd seen it before.), 'Paddington in Peru' (I liked it but I don't think it was as good as earlier Paddington films.), 'The Legend of the Vagabond Queen of Lagos' (Another IndieFest Film. It was interesting and enjoyable. It was based on true events in Lagos.), 'High Noon' (Great film.), 'Captain America: Brave



New World' (Not a great film.) Ah, today I watched 'Listen to Britain' which is on the DVD 'Listen to Britain and Other Films by Humphrey Jennings'. All the films on the dvd are documentaries (some might call them propaganda) or re-enactments. They are almost all about Britain during WWII. Here's a description of 'Listening to Britain' from a web page review of it: "Listen To Britain focusses not on the armed forces but the home front as the country goes quietly (or not) about its daily business. Starting at dusk, the film creates a symphony where everyday life (the breeze in the fields or the trees, birdsong, the sound of the sea, the pips before BBC radio news, snippets of overheard interactions) is interspersed with sounds of the nation at war (the rhythmic clank of the military hardware production lines, footsteps marching in unison, or tanks disturbing the peace as they rumble through a village). Sometimes the two coexist in

harmony, as in the sequence where women in a factory sing along to a song on the radio while they work." It is a short twenty minute film and you can find it on youtube. I think the only issue I had with the whole dvd was that the sound quality wasn't very good and it didn't have subtitles. Unfortunately due to the accents I couldn't quite make out all of the conversations. Nevertheless, I enjoyed it.

'Radio Winston': I hadn't heard of Propaganda either. The music was okay but I'm not surprised I hadn't heard of them. Interesting information and history, nevertheless.

'TV Guide': Yes, I do like 'Silo'. I haven't seen 'Creature Commandos'.

I'm still watching 'Will Trent', 'All Creatures Great and Small', and 'Miss Scarlet'. I watched 'High Potential' and 'Vienna Blood' through their entire seasons.

Of late I've been watching 'Prime Target', which has received relatively bad reviews but I have found it interesting, not great, but I have continued watching it. I cannot immediately think of any other series I'm currently watching.

'Anorak': Interesting and entertaining. Nice photos too.

'The Old Sod': I must admit not really following all the Neil Gaiman brouhaha. I am aware that it exists but decided to not really delve into it. I can offer no opinions one way or another since I don't know him, haven't read articles about the issues, and can only state that I have enjoyed his books, but that's about it.

*[[Not that I intend this to be an especial dig at you, Gary, but I'm always a little surprised at the number of fans (and loccers) who will put their fingers in their ears and go "LA LA LA" when almost any topic comes up that might lead to*

*uncomfortable discussion, or make the kind of non-comment remark you just did. I'm quite cognizant that a lot of reaction to something like this amounts to "Run away! Run away!" and the immediate deployment of the ten-foot bargepole. I can also understand deliberate avoidance of such dodgy topics in zines, only some of which could be dismissed as being generally anodyne...]]*

'Loco Citato':

**Heath Row** - I agree that 'We Are Lady Parts' is a good show. Well, I liked the first season but have only watched one episode of the second season. Another on the RSN list.

**Wm. Breiding** - Gee, I sort of liked 'Dune: Part One' and 'Dune: Part Two'. I didn't think they were great classics but I actually liked them more than 'Furiosa', which I didn't really like that much. And if you don't like movies that "drag, drag drag" you probably wouldn't like 'The Mother and the Whore'. Actually you probably wouldn't like a number of the movies I like. Ever see 'Sátántangó'? I really like movies by Bela Tarr. You and **Rich Coad** can get together and talk about how much you dislike Dune: Part One and Part Two.

**Cuddles** - and (Mr. Farey) -> Board games. For the most part, board games are one of my least favorite things. Patty likes them or she used to. I have no idea currently since I refuse to play any of them. More often than not, people are way too serious and competitive when they play them and that, most certainly, is not a good time for me.

*[[It takes all sorts...]]*

Gary Mattingly - I still haven't seen 'Red One'. I'm a fan of Lucy Liu but 'Red One' isn't really high on my list. Maybe one day . . . I find the conversation about 'Emila Pérez' interesting. It seems that many people are very critical of its portrayal of Mexico and of transgenders. I'm still pondering that.

I enjoyed the artwork by George Cruikshank, **Teddy Harvia**, and Dave Taylor. I also liked the photographs throughout the issue. Well, for reasons I probably can't fully explain I did not find the photo of the Christmas meal with pigs in a blanket very appetizing. Although I have gone looking for a vegetarian version of pigs in a blanket, having seen that a packaged version has been recently released. Maybe it is just the huge plate of food with thick gravy that overwhelms me. Sorry, wandering off here.

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#### RESPONSES TO "OLD FAREY'S ALL-FANAC"

**Curt Phillips** : "Oh hell; I missed Penguin Awareness Day..."

**Kim Huett** : "Enough to explain why the ancient Egyptians worshipped insects."

**Ulrika O'Brien** : "Very spiffy. I do wonder how transparent the OGHU authorship will be, given that it reads very much like Ulrika's Pet Peeves of the last 15 years?"

**Geri Sullivan** : "You and your collaborators are So. Fucking. Brilliant. Kudos on ANOTHER creative example of that. I will be ordering at least one POD copy. Probably more, especially if I can expect to receive them before I head to Boskone on Feb 12, which seems likely (esp. if you're using KDP). In awe and delight..."

**Gary Mattingly** : "Wow, you're a busy lad."

**Fred Lerner** : "When you do the next installment, please add under August an entry for Bennington Battle Day (August 16th). Bennington Battle Day is a state holiday unique to Vermont, commemorating the victory of American and Vermont forces over British forces at the Battle of Bennington during the American Revolutionary War in 1777. The battle itself was fought in New York state, and the victorious troops were mostly from New Hampshire, but after the battle the victors got roaring drunk at the Catamount Tavern in Bennington, Vermont. That sounds fannish enough to celebrate."

**Bob Jennings** : "Just received in the ole email inbox this afternoon, and promptly read, was your excellent *Old Farey's 2025 All-Fanac*, which I greatly enjoyed. It is hard sometimes to make adequate comments on humor. Most people can't get past "that was pretty funny stuff", but I want to try and pass on a few more comments because this was clearly a work of dedication and inspiration, and it hit the fan-humor target dead center. I wonder how many readers will realize that the special Holy Days and Observances are actual officially recognized government approved holidays and special occasion days, duly noted in government records. I have always been amazed at some of the ludicrous special official event days assorted special interest groups have managed to convince Congress were worth of an Official Declaration. I have encompassed them in my monthly calendar feature for the N3F zine *Fan Activity Gazette*.

"I especially wanted to note the excellence of the artwork for the front cover, and the ingenuity of the Johnson Smith ad page, along with the inane variety of many of the fake ads, which all added to the outré feel of the entire production.

"The horoscope and the month/day calendar to producing a fanzine were amusing and more spot-on than you might imagine for a lot of us.

"All in all, a very enjoyable zine. Everybody involved should be congratulated, because "that was pretty funny stuff"."

**Wm Breiding** : "You done did it! Very amusing and interesting."

**Jeanne Mealy** : "Wow. This is hilarious."

**Rob Jackson** : "Great fun!"

**Jay Kinney** : "Proof positive that we have indeed entered the Golden Age, as declared by fannish prankster POTUS47 at a recent relaxicon in the Capitol Rotunda.

"But seriously, I can't decide if this is just the most perfectly conceived fanzine of the 21st century OR best zine ever."

"My congratulations and gratitude to everyone involved. I literally LOL'd several times in reading it. What a treat."

**Steve Jeffery** : "Fabulous."

#### WAHF

**Bruce Gillespie** ; **Steve Green** ; **Teddy Harvia** : "Small stuff often amuses me" ;

**Kim Huett** : "You can rest easy now as I won't be visiting Vegas next month to watch my team kick off the NRL season. I did give some serious thought to going but eventually common sense prevailed." ; **David Langford** : "I love the idea of the Nic Farey Fan Fund, which so memorably resonates with deep fannish archetypes if only we call it the N3F. Damon Knight would surely have approved." ; **Garth Spencer** : "Thank you for the news! About fan funds! And the fanzine awards! And articles! And letters! And fillos! And photos! And, and, and ..." ; **Geri Sullivan** ;

#### FANZINES RECEIVED

With gratitude as always...

*PERRYSCOPE 50* (Perry Middlemiss) - ...

*THE TYPO KING #95* (Bob Jennings) - ...

*THE STF AMATEUR #17* (Heath Row) - ...

*CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #75* (Andy Hooper) - ...

## INDULGE ME

✘ **TYPO OF LAST MONTH** : Reported by **S&ra Bond**. Here it is at last...

For all the people who want to read something that scratches the same itch, but don't want to support him any more look to the work of Tanith Lee, and her flat earth books. There are some very well funded rumour gaiman based a lot of his works on hers.

✘ **GILEAD AHOY!** : Anent the attempted suspension of federal grant money, I hear from son-in-law Bill who works for UNLV doing accessibility software development. The administration over there has issued a memo advising a list of words which should now be avoided in grant applications, one of which is "women"...

✘ **TERRIBLE SCIENCE "JOKE" FOR ELI** : Did you hear about the guy who cooled himself to absolute zero? He's OK now...

✘ **ANCIENT HISTORY** : **Mark Plummer** sends a scan from the One Tun Visitors' Book for February 1983...

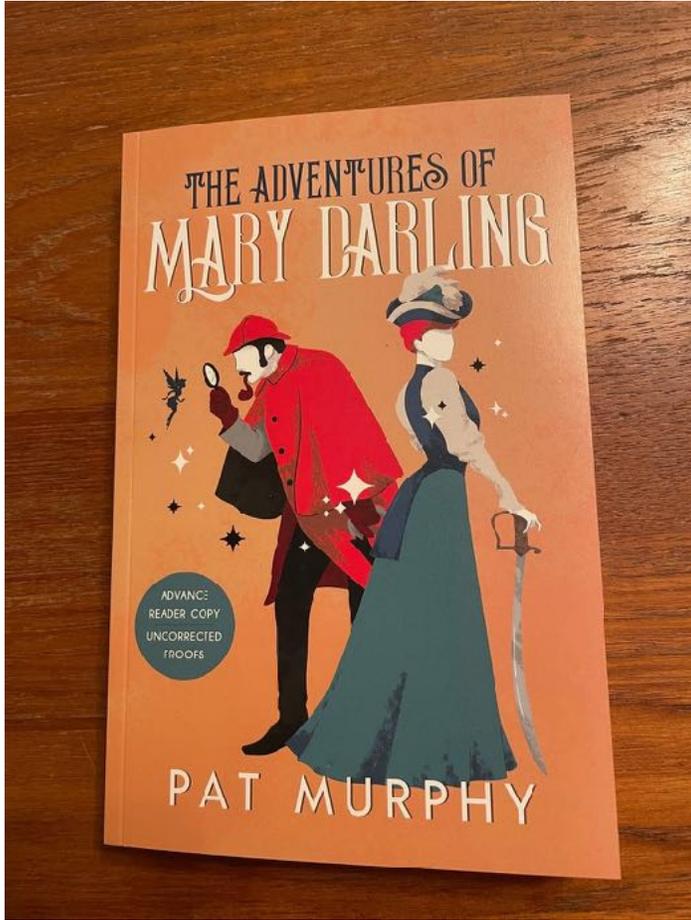
Date	Name	Address	Nationality
		1983	
		February	
3/2/83	Alison Fry	(CORRECTION) 60, BARNBURY SQUARE, N. KILMARNOCK	R
03/02/83	Nic Farey	In Transit	PRISONER

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : We continue to promote the fitness scheme of **Jerry Kaufman**, as his indifferent stroll past is now up around 135mph, no doubt encouraged by **Julie Peasgood**...



✘ **SHOW ME THE MONEY** : It seems many friends on FBF are posting, with relief, that their Social Security payments have in fact come through, what with worries that everything's been frozen. Still waiting on mine (due in a day or two as I write on February 19<sup>th</sup>) but we're much more interested to see if the elimination of the Windfall Provision will be reflected, both in the regular amount and when we might get the "back pay" element since it's supposedly effective from December 2023. **Jen** read an article suggesting it might take up to a year to get that, but equally some people might get theirs quickly. Nothing we can do to expedite that, so we merely live in hope...

✘ **SHAMELESS PLUG** : Our local friend and Famous Author™ **Pat Murphy** has a new novel out on May 6<sup>th</sup>, which you can pre-order from Tachyon here: <https://tachyonpublications.com/product/the-adventures-of-mary-darling/> Karen Joy Fowler sez: “Full of surprises and deeply satisfying” - this, **Pat** relates, is the endorsement she’s most proud of...



✘ **UFO HISTORY (SCOTLAND EDITION)** : A recent article in the *Grauniad* relates a supposed UFO encounter near Calvine in August 1990, photographs and what happened next (or didn’t)...

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/feb/11/what-really-happened-in-calvine-the-mystery-behind-the-best-ufo-picture-ever-seen>

✘ **MISSING** : You might have noticed there’s no ‘Movie Night’ or ‘Radio Winston’ column thish. The former because I really haven’t clocked *any* movies this last month and the latter because I hit a brick wall in terms of getting writing done over the last several days. I do have a topic lined up for ‘RW’, and she’ll be in nextish, so **Leigh** can arrange his bedding accordingly...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2)** : As we expect the **Killer** to have strapped on his jet-propelled skates and be 500 miles away by now, might as well feature the former Marie Lawrie, aka **Lulu Kennedy-Cairns**...



✘ **SOMETHING FISHY** : Rarely seen creatures of the ocean depths seem to be surprisingly surfacing recently. My theory is that they’re nipping up to have a shufti at what they’re going to inherit soon...

“Black Seadevil” anglerfish: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFqogOgliwE>

Oarfish, a doomsday omen in Japanese folklore: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2025/02/18/doomsday-oarfish-mexico-video/79120132007/>

✘ **TV GUIDE EXTRA** : Old show binge-watching has alighted upon ‘New Tricks’ (available here on Britbox), which I had not seen any of due to - er - not being in the UK when it originally aired. Enjoying it...

✘ **PHRASE OF THE MONTH** : Rex Huppke, in an opinion column in *USA Today*, refers to “pro-level tush-snogging”. I’m sure you can guess the topic...

✘ **ALSO WATERY SCIENCE** : CNN reports the discovery of a neutrino - er - floating around in the Mediterranean! I wonder if the fish are hauling them up?...

<https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/12/science/energetic-neutrino-particle-detection/>

This also leads me to wonder if “Neutrino” has ever been used as a fanzine title, which of course I can’t be arsed to look up...

✘ **NEXTISH** : How about March 29<sup>th</sup>?...

# Chat

Where does a 500-lb  
sabertooth sleep?

I'm not  
telling.  
No one's  
catching  
this cat  
napping.



## MIRANDA

*THIS HERE...* is (mostly) written, edited and produced by:  
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Art credits: Mike Dringenberg (Death of the Endless, p9) ;  
Sara Felix (Reconnect logo, p1) ; Teddy Harvia (pp 5, 12,  
17) ;

**"Many people tell you that they're your friend  
You believe them, you need them  
For what's round the river bend  
Make sure that you're receiving the signals they send  
'Cause brother, you've only got two hands to lend"**