

This Here...

"...I like the theme tune..." (M Nelson)

EGOTORIAL

BLAH

Well, we achieved re-entry (ahem) and made it safely if wearily home, suffering from the inevitable post-convention/holiday crud and blahs.

Yesterday (April 28th) I realized, when helping **Jen** unload her car from a Costco trip and pickup of lots from McManus auction house that this was the first time in five days that I'd actually gone outside at all, having spent that time with a well fucked sleep/wake schedule and being mopey in front of the telly, although a fair bit of that was amenably spent catching up on our "regular" shows and clocking some new stuff (see 'TV Guide') but, as is sometimes the case, doing sod-all writing and thus feeling guilty about doing sod-all writing despite there being stuff lined up apart from this here candle of anteaters, such as the promised bit for the Corflu 42 Memory Book, getting started on the Trip Report and no doubt a soon-come reminder from **Ulrika O'Brien** that we really ought to put some proper effort into getting *BEAM* #19 out this year...

Now then...

I bung out the usual reminder to my esteemed columnist **Dave Hodson** that I'd like to get thish out toot sweet-ish and am initially slightly startled by his topic, but then again, not



so much. It turns out that a certain Ms. East Ham* decided to slag off both Corflu (and Eastercon, so I'm told) on her FBF platform. Ignorable by some, apparently, but the **Hod-meson** isn't inclined to let the lies lie. I write this without having seen his column yet, but he has forwarded a couple of screenshots of the diatribe in question and I can well see why he's narked, and so will you.

"History resumed", to quote Stephen Baxter, in that we're getting back to what passes for "normal" after The Trip, so we had our First Thursday dinner outing this week with our usual crowd, games night follows on Saturday (and Games Day on Sunday as well for **Jen**), Writers' Group the

following weekend and all that, although the effects of **Jen's** upcoming surgery (see 'Health Diary') are as yet unknown, if predictable to an extent. *Her* sleep/wake schedule has shifted significantly - rather than beavering away at stuff (usually eBay reselling) until the small hours, she's off to kip much earlier and thus rising earlier as well. I'm still a bit kiboshed, waking up earlier than I might like and despite daytime napping,

going to bed early an'all. Blah.

Speaking of, a few of you may be curious as to the relevance of thish's page one photo. It came up in the third row of a Google Image search for "Blah".

Don't ask me, guv...

It's all good.

April 2025

* It turns out I am required to explain this nomenclature, since **Dave** doesn't make the connection. East Ham, I point out, is the station on the Hammersmith & City and District lines which is just one stop short of Barking...

TAFFNESSABOUNDS

WINNER ANNOUNCED

Initial vote totals from <https://taff.org.uk/news/Taffluorescence8.pdf>, this year's delegate will be **Mikołaj Kowalewski** who has (the brave soul) confirmed his intent to embark on the trip, including attendance at the Seattle WorldThing. Itinerary details will be reported here as they become known. DoBFO congrats!

This fanzine supported **Zi Graves**, who made a strong showing but may be relieved at not having to make the decision on whether to travel to the USA under present circumstances, and whom we hope will have another go in the future.

CORFLUX

43 NEWS

Rich Coad and his top team's bid for Corflu 43 was accepted by acclamation at the 42 business meeting, and so for 2026 we shall go to Santa Rosa, CA, despite misgivings from overseas about travel to the US. There were some legitimate concerns from the team that attendance would be reduced, which it will but not to a seriously significant extent, as I pointed out that the "typical" number of UK attendees at previous American Corflus has been 3 or 4 plus 2 from Canada. The understandable lack of these doesn't impact the attendance numbers or indeed the finances that much, since I'd expect that in the latter case those confirmed non-attendees might well be expected to at least take out supporting memberships.

The main loss (at least in my opinion) will be **S&ra Bond** in terms of the decade-plus unbroken run of 'Just A Minac', but I'm equally sure that an able temporary substitute host can be found for our Corflu staple panel game.

By the time you receive thish, both the website and FBF group should have been updated, courtesy of **Magister Burns...**

<https://corflu.org/>

FAANWANK

THAT'S THAT FOR ANOTHER YEAR

The winners list, for anyone who might not have seen it:

BEST GENZINE: *Banana Wings* (Brialey & Plummer)

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

BEST SPECIAL PUBLICATION: *SF Fandom - Its Part in Our Downfall* (Brialey & Plummer)

BEST LETTERHACK: Leigh Edmonds

BEST FANARTIST: Teddy Harvia

BEST FANWRITER: Nic Farey

BEST FANZINE COVER: *SF Commentary 118* (Elaine Cochrane)

Other awards:

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT: Mark Olson

PAST PRESIDENT, fwa: Leigh Edmonds

Congratulations to all, even me! The full breakdown of this year's voting is here: <https://efanzines.com/TIR/Incompleteat2025results.pdf>

The number of ballots received this year (62) continued the upward trend, and to that extent is gratifying, but the turnout of Corflu members dropped to 35.7% from the previous year's mark of 38.5%, although I should point out that both these numbers are an improvement on 2023's weedy turnout of 22.4%. In my acceptance remarks for "Best Fanwriter" (and serious coo er gosh!) I made a point to thank the two thirds of Corflu members who couldn't be arsed to vote, since if they had the result would shurely have been different. As admin (and again next year, having been asked to stay in the gig by **Rich Coad**) I must admit the seemingly constant haranguing required to get ballots on, often on an individual basis, does get a bit fuckin' wearing. I doubt, though, that I'll carry out my grumbling plan to not punt reminders *at all* just to see what happens. Because I think I know what would happen (sigh).

Worth noting, perhaps, that with this year's slate of winners, **Mark Plummer** has become the GOAT FAAn Award recipient (with something like two dozen, can't be arsed to check properly), putting him in the stratospheric company of Babe Ruth and Alan Shearer, unlikely to be surpassed. Embarrassed, perhaps, but definitely unsurpassed, perhaps even unsurpassable at this point...

RADIO WINSTON

STING FAVORITES

I am being a bit lazy here (just a bit, Nic? [chair plummeting ensues]) but I do occasionally think about that Gordon Sumner bloke and his career, not least because I MC'd for his pre-Police outfit Last Exit at the LSE twice in 1976 (or possibly early 1977 - I would need recourse to old mate **Colin Anderson's** gig diary to be sure), and on the second occasion the lad a bit wickedly started their opening song while I was in mid-intro and stuck his head over my shoulder with a wink and a grin to the audience.

The band formed in Newcastle in 1974, the members having a jazz (or jazz-rock, if you like) background in common. They gigged steadily in the North East and were quite popular, got signed by Virgin who financed a demo tape although no actual record deal emerged since the A&R lot couldn't figure out how to market them. A move to London in 1977 pretty swiftly sundered the band who, as I was told, were held together only by mutual dislike of drummer

Ronnie Pearson. Some of their material got reused by Sting with the Police, like this slice, "Savage Beast" which is an early version of "We Work the Black Seam" off 'The Dream of the Blue Turtles'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jy0PRsQqbVU>

Moving on to the Police, although everyone remembers "Roxanne" (originally banned by the BBC) with its then defining 37 chord/key changes in the chorus and reggae-ish stylings, but off their first set I liked "So Lonely" best, since it doesn't really have all them gimmicky key changes. Interpreted by most fans as being ironic, despite Sting saying "No it ain't".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MX6MvV8cbh8>

Of their later efforts, I'd immediately pick "Synchronicity II" for not only the banging riff, but also the sheer venom of the lyrics, in which the ought-to-be-cringey "We have to shout above the din of our Rice Krispies" becomes a searing meeting of the mundane and inherent desperation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5FPPoLqkCk>

Now as to the lad's extensive post-Police output, it would seem utterly fuckin' daft to reduce all that to one slice, so of course that's exactly what I'm going to do. This'un is *close* to being that elusive "perfect slice", but isn't since it's probably about 45 seconds too long. I do, however, absolutely love the switching between Arabic and western chord structures which are done seamlessly and to fine effect. DoBFO, it has to be "Desert Rose" don't it?...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3IWwBslWqg>



MOVIE NIGHT

CONCLAVE

How serendipitous that yer actual Pope Francis drops off the twig, catapulting this'un into the top ten on Amazon Prime. What you get is a study of a ton of top-notch actors at the top of their game, an exercise in politicking and a series of episodes of "I've Got A Secret" (leading to a final twist), none of which I'm going to spoil for you. I wouldn't have called it "riveting" as at least one reviewer did, but there's enough to

sustain the viewer's interest, anchored by Ralph Fiennes who's in almost every scene and with excellent support from the likes of Stanley Tucci (is he *ever* less than brilliant?), John Lithgow, Lucian Msamati, Carlos Diehz and Sergio Castellitto. Isabella Rossellini's turn as Sister Agnes, while universally praised, is really not much more than a few cameos, but she does well with her screen time. At two hours, the movie just about avoids being overlong for what it is, and I was happy enough to have clocked it.

FUTURE '38

Another offering from Amazon Prime, this 2017 bit of fluff certainly flew under my radar until now. Introduced by Neil deGrasse Tyson (as himself) it purports to be a "rediscovered" 1938 time travel caper in which a World War II era scientist travels to 2018 to retrieve a particular isotope (er - Formica!?) which is needed to finish making a conflict-ending bomb. DoBFO, this is a spoof and a lovely excuse for some retro-futuristic silliness. Genre fans will not the presence of Ethan Phillips as a chain-smoking scientist and Sean Young (clearly having fun) as the future phone operator. 75 minutes of daft fun, recommended...



HEALTH DIARY

NOT SO MUCH ABOUT ME

The Trip knackered the both of us in ways we really should have expected - we definitely overestimated our capacity to Do Stuff, since neither of us can walk very much or very far. My mobility's got worse, **Jen's** isn't that much better, and I for one was well grateful for the mobility scooter provided by Reconnect.

The big upcoming event, though is her hip replacement surgery on May 8th, assuming it's going to be affordable, which we won't know for sure until a couple of days prior, although the co-pays we've been notified of so far are quite manageable. I will have to man up and be considerably less whiny about my own condition because I'll DoBFO have to be doing a fair bit of not only driving **Jen** around to various appointments but also doing basic fetch-and-carry while she's not able to.

The major arse at the moment is that she's required to refrain from several meds for the 10 days leading up to the surgery, so her pain levels are at a point where even she's having a grumble, despite having dealt with the rheumatoid arthritis for most of a lifetime.

The good prognosis is that hip replacement is the "easy" one to recover from, relatively speaking I'm sure. If we proceed to the knee replacement (other side), likely next year, that's apparently much more of a bugger.

So it goes...

TV GUIDE

THE END IS NIGH...

Not having clocked any telly at all on The Trip, we return home to the prospect of much ketchup, but also the realization that there were shows on our list that were going to fall by the wayside since we decided we're not that goshwow into them after all (notably 'Watson').

We absolutely *had* to, mind, binge the unseen eps and season finales of both 'Elsbeth' and 'Matlock'. Therein lies a bit of a conundrum for the reviewer, since you don't want to give too much (if anything) away while encouraging the possibly casual viewer, yet you're likely preaching to the choir of existing fans who've already seen what you're about to pontificate on.

Both shows have been renewed for another season, so we can assume that any dangly bits will be sorted. 'Elsbeth' sets up a *sort of* moral dilemma, but does conclude the story arc vs the nemesis that is the murderous Judge Milton Crawford, played with understated menace and DoBFO relish by lead Carrie Preston's real-life spouse Michael Emerson. The

episode "I Know What You Did Thirty-three Summers Ago" gives you the backstory for Crawford, whose younger self is played by Ethan Dubin ("Scavenger Tom" in 'Fallout'), channeling Emerson incredibly well. All I'd better say is a reiteration that the arc in which Elsbeth attempts to prove the judge guilty of murder before he is elevated to the federal bench *is* concluded - for those who haven't seen it, I won't say how, and for the rest, if you know, you know. Or then again, if you don't care, you've probably skipped this paragraph anyway. Two more eps until the finale...

'Matlock' delivers two cliffhangers: we do find out the culprit(s) who suppressed the opioid findings at the Jacobson Moore law firm, but we're left hanging at that point while Madeline gets a last-minute unrelated shocker to have to deal with. Kathy Bates is walking a tightrope with this'un, since successive episodes have revealed that she's not at all as "nice" as her alter ego "Madeline Matlock" has pretended to be. So far Bates hasn't lost her balance, but it's starting to look a bit perilous if you ask me...

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

Season 3 of 'Leverage: Redemption' (Amazon Prime) started up on April 17th with three episodes dropping, so we've clocked that with relish - I've mentioned enough times how much I like a heist story and 'Leverage' has all that as well as structural parallels with the old 'Mission: Impossible' TV series. The excellent cast is still *in situ*, although the great Aldis Hodge is limited to a few guest appearances, as is Noah Wyle. Gina Bellman, Beth Riesgraf and Christian Kane (now all listed as executive producers) slip effortlessly back into their characters. This'un is absolutely a "don't miss" round here...



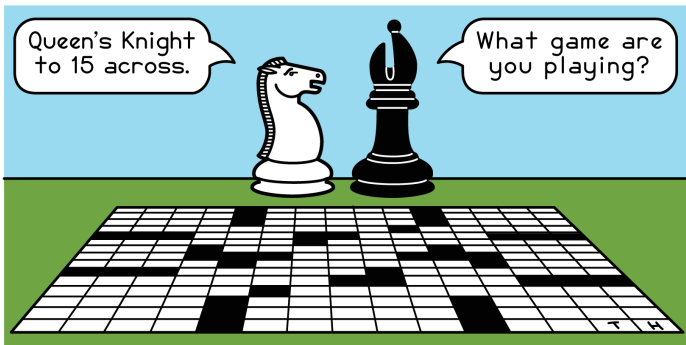
WHO AND WHAT ELSE?

Yes, it's Ncuti Gatwa's second season as the titular timelord, but I'll leave most of my comments until it's all over, so nextish, except for a couple of notes now: (1) Varada Sethu (as companion Belinda Chandra) is drop-dead gorgeous. (2) Is the Doctor ever going to save the day himself or will it always be someone else? (3) Is "Mrs. Flood" a typical RTD pisstake where we're all going to feel massively let down when the reveal arrives? She's certainly given rise to much

fan theorizing, but the one I like best at the moment harks back to “the Master” (no, not that one) and the Land of Fiction from the 1968 second Doctor serial “The Mind Robber”...

Then there’s season 7 of ‘Black Mirror’, the six episodes of which dropped on Netflix on April 10th. As is typical from Charlie Brooker they’re almost all bleak as all fuck. I’ll just echo the reviewer who remarked that you *shouldn’t* watch the episodes in the order Netflix presents them, since that first one, “Common People” is the bleakest of all and you really need to work up to it...

GIVE US A CLUE



Lastish’s clues either bamboozled everybody (including **Eli Cohen**, locs) or they were too busy having Desperate Fun at Corflu and/or Reconnect to be arsed. That, and there’s a Srs Rudeword in there, which I previewed to **Joseph Nicholas** at a dinner on The Trip, getting a wry smile or possibly grimace in return:

“Poorly received cricket team a man short. You’re nicked!? (3-6)”

Definition: “You’re nicked” (in the sense of stolen)

Wordplay: “Poorly” = ILL (also a misdirection since it could have been an anagram indicator) + “received” = GOT + “cricket team a man short” = TEN, yielding ILL-GOTTEN

“Mood. Nothing changes a classic Irish table game (11)”

The actual anagram clue:

Definition: “a classic Irish table game”

Wordplay: “changes” is the anagram indicator. Rearrange “mood nothing” to get GHOODMINTON

“Empty vagina, down for this? (5)”

Apologies in advance.

Definition: “down for this?” (Something you might be down for)

Wordplay: “vagina” = CUNT which is “empty” (ie contains O) yielding COUNT

“Having prevented what some Knights say backwards, JK Rowling enters initial stop light (10)”

Definition: “Having prevented”

Wordplay: “What some Knights say” = NI, backwards becomes IN + “JK Rowling” = TERF + “enters initial” = E + “stop light” = RED yielding INTERFERED

Thish’s efforts:

“Twin faring badly, you’ll read it in *This Here...* (10)”

“Some group pedantry increased (5)”

“Passes Morlock’s prey, left for fuel (6,3)”

ANORAK

BOSTON, SLEAFORD AND MIDLAND COUNTIES (WITH PETER HONEY)

One of the stops on The Trip was a visit to my brother **Peter Honey** in Sleaford which of course we got to by train. I couldn’t help noticing the number of level crossings on the Grantham-Sleaford leg, as well as disused and overgrown tracks at the far sides of the route.

The Boston, Sleaford and Midland Counties Railway Act of 1853 approved the line, the first stage of which (Barkstone - Sleaford) opened on June 16th 1857 as a single line with a terminus turntable at Sleaford. After absorption by GNR, effective on January 1st 1865 by Act of Parliament (as all railway development was required to be back in them days), the line was gradually doubled up, a process completed by 1881.

The line itself is still in use (DoBFO), and I read elsewhere that Sleaford is the only remaining market town in Lincolnshire served by both east-west and north-south lines, and also, sez **Peter**, the last to have signal boxes at every compass point, two of which (east and west) remain in use. And how, you might inquire, does he know all this ey? Because, my dear anoraks, he’s the signaller at Sleaford West, of course! And it’s an old-school box an’ all, lever operated with a wheel to close the crossing gates (the only one left anywhere in the UK other than maybe a heritage line here and there). Here’s a little bit of video from 2014 showing his place of work:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ff5nYL_HVbs

The layout has changed from the eastward looking view photo taken in 1973 by M. A. King. **Pete** says: “SE4 is now SE3477 and only a single line exists now beyond where those signals are where 2 lines become one. My end the only changes are the signals, they are now colour light signals except in the sidings - wired signals in and out of the sidings, everything else is colour light, still levers though. Also has electrical and mechanical interlocking. Sleaford East

basically does as it's told now, most of the working and regulating comes from the Sleaford West end."



We had a complaint about the actual station, though, which **Pete** echoed. There's little stations on the line which just about all have lifts to get up and down to the footbridge between platforms, but Sleaford, with a greater amount of traffic, doesn't! (Thanks for the help getting across with luggage on our way out for travel to Leeds.)

DoBFO massive thanks to **Pete** for his contribution to this column which naturally garners him an authorship co-credit. There's a lot more we could add to this and we might well do that for a future ish.

Anyway, here's a photo of us having a bit of dinner at the Jolly Scotchman pub to wrap up for now...



THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

£35,331.27

And so, Corflu 42 is consigned to memory.

It would be fair to say it wasn't an onerous task, especially with Claire, and Mark, and Tommy taking up so much of the slack, but, as I said at the closing bit, it was for me quite stressful to be putting on an event for what, to a relative outsider, are perceived to be the elite, the *crème de la crème*, the illuminati, of fanzine and fannish fandom. (I exaggerate for dramatic effect, but not by much really.)

It's fair to say I achieved my main objectives. I got Nic and Jen over to the UK; put on a good, solid programme with very little fluff; and made sure everyone got fed a reasonable meal on the Sunday. The hotel staff bent over backwards to make sure every little problem, there weren't many really, was resolved, despite the facts that every time I went to visit the hotel (three times since just after February last year) there was a new bar manager and new reception staff as other hotels head hunted their staff, and the hotel was taken over by new owners half way through 2024. If anyone has any significant complaints about the convention or the venue, I've yet to hear about them first hand.

But...

12:53

Farah Mendlesohn

✕

Q

🗨️

Last weekend I travelled to Corflu, in Newberry, a convention I have always wanted to go to but never managed (I think I've joined more than once). I heard some lovely talks on the past of fanzine life, but very little discussion of the current state of things. And while I think a certain person is a complete oaf, and bloody rude, his concern that interest in current fanzines is poor is spot on. Fanzines were once key to fan culture, and now they are just not. Once you took me, the Fishlifters, the Scott-Cains, and Zi Graves and Rowan out of the picture, the entire convention was 70+ years. I had an idle thought of bidding for the convention in five years time, but I suspect it won't exist.

12:53

Farah Mendlesohn

✕

Q

🗨️

I had a lovely time with some of the attendees: Roman and Ed, both Australian fans, were just lovely. I had breakfast with Roman and dinner with Leigh and hope to repeat this at the Brisbane worldcon.

The hotel in Newbury is not accessible. The main room is, the hotel is not. Had I realised that every single bedroom is up a flight of stairs I'd have checked in to the Travelodge. In a bit of a theme for this week: CONVENTION COMMITTEES PLEASE BE HONEST!!!! Tell us what the barriers are, stop with the "oh, its all sorted, we've checked it".

This also feeds into how we find venues: increasingly we may need to separate accommodation from venue in order to secure what we need.

[Vouchsafed verbatim by the editor]

Let's address each of Farah's concerns in order...

"Once you took me, the Fishlifters, the Scott-Cains, and Zi Graves and Rowan out of the picture, the entire convention was 70+ years."

Hmmm, well, that seems a little unfair on me, Tommy Ferguson, Noel Collyer, Tony Berry, Sandra Bond, Peter Crump, Nic and Jen Farey, Alun Harries, Dave Hicks, Cat Coast, Stephen Higgins, Christina Lake, Nigel Rowe, Sue Mason, Laura Wheatly, and Doug Bell at least. I know a few

of us have probably let our moisturising routines go a little in recent years, but the majority of us don't look (or smell) that bad (yet).

The point Farah is trying to make, albeit rather backhandedly, is generally correct. Fanzine fandom is greying and it's not a point that's lost on it. I've been to three Corflus now, and all of them have had a hefty dose of "where do we go from here, if, indeed, we go anywhere?" Rich Coad has said to me that all he really wants to see is Corflu get to number 50 at least, and I agree with him that that would be significant; fanzine and fannish fandom has been of the foremost importance in establishing the broader science fiction fandom that is now manifest in wider, worldwide culture along with a great many other fandoms in popular western culture.

Farah could have made the same point by saying that, with minor exceptions, the entire convention was 60+ years, which would have been completely accurate. The problem with that statement though would have been that it would have then either included her in the greying age group contingent or bought her very close to it and that, in turn, would have undermined her next, unwritten but intimated, point:

"I had an idle thought of bidding for the convention in five years time, but I suspect it won't exist."

Because, of course, fanzine and fannish fandom is barely surviving off the ventilator and zimmer frame manufacturers are struggling to keep up with the demand we are putting on them, whilst Farah is still young, vibrant, and full of beans. Look, she's even running a one-day sercon convention in Perth, Scotland, on November 8th – PictCon 1 ([PictCon1 Tickets, Sat, Nov 8, 2025 at 10:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)) - AND a Frances Hardinge conference in the hallowed halls of Aston University, Birmingham, on Saturday, July 11th ([Frances Hardinge Conference Tickets, Sat 11 Jul 2026 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](#)).

The cynic in me has noted that PictCon 1 is slap, bang, in the middle of Novacon weekend, and, because I know Farah has had to change the weekend she intended to run the convention at least once, I will resist the temptation to suggest that this is an excellent way of deterring any of us old, grey, smelly science fiction fans from attending her bright, vibrant examination of Scottish science fiction and fantasy books, games, and art.

What's next? Oh...

"The hotel in Newbury is not accessible. The main room is, the hotel is not. Had I realised that every single bedroom is up a flight of stairs I'd have checked into the Travelodge. In a bit of a theme for this week: CONVENTION COMMITTEES PLEASE BE HONEST!!!! Tell us what the barriers are, stop with the "oh, it's all sorted, we've checked it"."

Now, I've not checked with Claire, or Mark, or Tommy if they approve of what I'm about to do, but here is the email exchange between myself and Farah when she booked for the convention (in fact, I've not checked with any of Claire, Mark, or Tommy if they even approve of me writing a column in response to Farah full stop, so any accusations of pettiness, etc, rest entirely on me):

[Note: emails transcribed for readability of very small print, vouchsafed verbatim by the editor]

From: Farah Mendelsohn
Sent: Friday April 26, 2024
Subject: hotel rooms access

Hi Corflu
What are the stairs/lifts like?

I am not top need, but too many stairs and I start limping badly

David Hodson
Friday April 26, 2024

Hi Farah
There isn't a lift at all, which surprised us (the hotel applied for permission but were told their listed status trumped access requirements. We hope that the level access option in the annexe will support members who can't use stairs at all.

There are bedrooms on the first and second floors; our intention is for anyone who can manage stairs but needs to minimise them to be offered the rooms on the first floor nearest the staircase (a flight split with a landing) to at least cut down the additional distance.

We'll be advising the hotel on allocation of the ground floor rooms nearer the convention, once we know how many people may need easier access, so ;please keep us advised on any changes to your situation.

Farah:

OK, I'll request a first floor room, but if you have a ground one floor spare after high level needs are dealt with, please consider me.

I'm not sure I could have described the hotel's situation any more honestly. If anyone wishes to support Farah's assertion that I've been dishonest, please let me know, but, truth be told, I suspect Farah is being more than a little disingenuous because, of course, Farah is the consummate expert at running conventions, isn't she?

Isn't she?

Oh!

Levitation was the Eastercon that Farah chaired just last year and, without a £35,331.27 top-up from other Eastercons past, it would have gone bankrupt.

[Levitation 2024 Final Accounts as printed in the Reconnect Souvenir Book]

Income	
Membership	£ 54,459.00
At con (art show, dealers' room)	£ 1,845.95
Pass along	£ 35,331.27
Advertising	£ 190.00
Access Donations	£ 3,726.70
Total Income	£ 95,552.92
Expenditure	
Facilities	£ 44,502.00
Guests (Travel, subsistence)	£ 6,816.42
Publications (printing, posting)	£ 834.64
Promotions	£ 1,342.85
Tech	£ 18,736.13
Green Room	£ 1,617.83
Volunteers	£ 2,697.41
Ops	£ 233.51
Registration	£ 143.68
Art Shows & Logistics	£ 1,694.52
Programme	£ 196.30
Creche	£ 2,448.90
Newsletter	£ 36.44
Committee	£ 6,500.14
Finance inc Insurance	£ 2,198.50
Accessibility	£ 1,785.60
Inclusion	£ 3,533.84
Virtual	£ 45.99
Total Expenditure	£ 95,364.70
Nett surplus	£ 188.22

Now, Farah has pointed to various factors that undermined the financial performance of her Eastercon: Cost of living crisis, inflation, costs of tech, a Worldcon, and she's right, they did have an effect on her estimated numbers, but the biggest issue with Levitation, the 2024 Eastercon, was the lack of foresight from Farah herself. As far back as 1987, the first year I was involved in fandom that had a UK Worldcon, there was an understanding that potential attendees of that year's conventions would be tightening their belts a bit in order to get to the events they really wanted to attend. In 1987, Becon ran a pared back Eastercon precisely because they understood that the numbers of people wanting to go to Conspiracy in Brighton later that year would have a negative impact on the numbers attending Eastercon and these were arguably the peak years for British fannish fandom and it's convention attendance. Instead of working on an estimate of 770 or thereabouts attendees for Levitation, Farah should have been thinking more along the lines of 450-500, especially given the cost of living crisis she cites, but that would have meant that Farah wouldn't have been able to run the convention she wanted to run and that seems to carry more weight than any potential damage a bankrupt Eastercon might cause to the institution as a whole; that was Farah's Trump card one might say.

I really could be nitpicky and ask why Farah thinks she might be selected to run a Corflu given her lack of participation in fanzine fandom, but she might pick a year with no competition. In which case, and bearing that

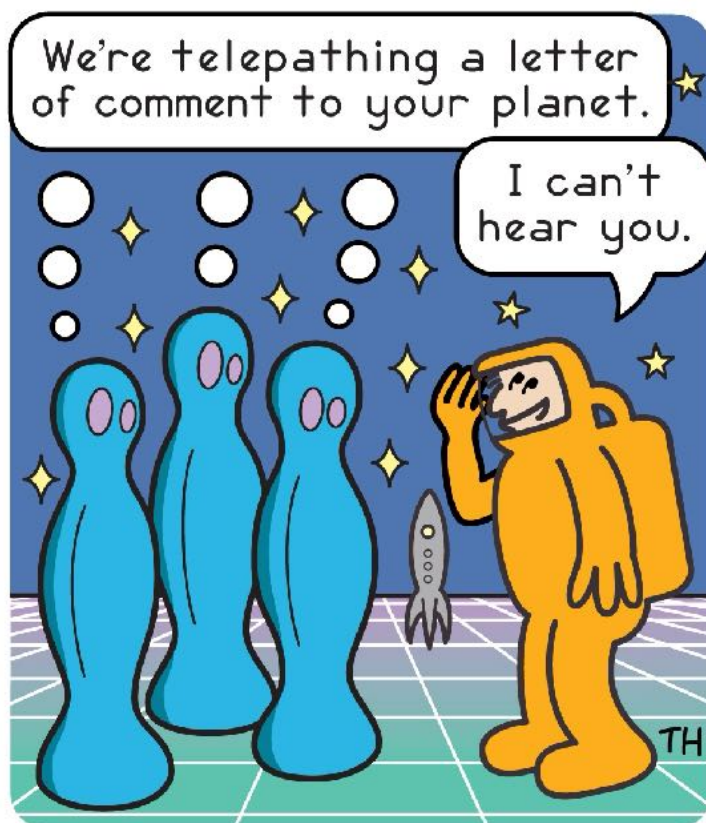
Pass along £ 35,331.27

in mind, I'd vote to pass on that year until another option was available.

Speaking of future Corflus, I finally met Johan Anglemark at Reconnect in Belfast and Johan expressed an interest in bidding to run a Corflu in Scandinavia, which I think is a belting good idea. Johan's only issue was he felt uncomfortable bidding for the convention when he'd never had the opportunity to attend one previously, but other than that he certainly has the credentials and background to put on an enticing con (I'd definitely go). Maybe this is a situation the Corflu 50 could address for 2027 in Canada?

LOCO CITATO

[[*"We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained"* (Marie Curie) ...]]



From: phillies@4liberty.net

March 29

George Phillies writes:

Bob Jennings discussed fiction zines and newszines. One of the amateur fiction zines is *Eldritch Science*, published by the N3F. There is another newszine besides *File 770*, namely the N3F *FanActivity Gazette*.

[[*File770 is, of course, a blog rather than a "newszine", and has been such for many years...*]]

For a while we were doing fanzine reviews, but the first and second fanzine review editors both died.

[[I'm happy to include again the suggestion that anyone who feels like doing a zine review column for FanActivity Gazette should contact editor Mindy Hunt at mindyhunt@scifi4me.com ...]]

The observation was made "..., should a nuclear exchange have occurred in the 1950s or even 1960s, most people would have been dead before they even received the warnings that the birds were flying and I'm not sure that the situation now, with a mobile phone in every pocket, and the ability to know that you're about to perish in mere minutes is any better."

The question has in a certain sense been tested experimentally, twice. Some years ago, the Hawaiian civil defense people were running an internal drill, and someone put the wrong disk (or something like that) into the computer. Instead of running the internal test, the message was sent out to everyone near iirc Honolulu that an actual missile attack was under way. Videos of people running in circles, diving into storm drains, and the like soon followed.

Around 1970, someone at NORAD put the wrong paper tape into the teletype, and a warning went out to every radio station that a nuclear attack was under way, and they should cease broadcasting in line with the CONELRAD plan. The message reached WTBS, which at the time was the MIT student radio station. I am told by a staff member that the cognizant engineer read the message, went to the safe, opened the envelope, confirmed that the "nuclear war now" codes in the message matched the ones in the envelope, made the appropriate legal announcement, and took the station off the air. Modestly later the very high power Boston AM station phoned to ask why WTBS was off the air, reported a phone call claiming that WTBS had announced that nuclear war was under way, and was curious as to what was happening. They were directed to look at their wire service teletype.

From: jabberwocky2000@hotmail.com

March 30

Brad Foster writes:

Ah, feels good to shake off the guilts of not contributing and seeing a couple of my little doodles in the newest issue. Guilt used to make me get out work more often, and although the affect seems to have slowed down a bit with age, it does still work.

More "fun times with aging" going on here. Seem to have caught a cold/infection thing that has now been hanging on for over two weeks, some days irritating enough I cannot

even go to sleep in a horizontal position. Went to the doc since could not shake it, have been prescribed various pills to take at various times and, after a couple more days, it does seem to be getting better. Ah, but I recall the good old days of youth, where when I got sick like this, just collapsed into bed and was unconscious for 24 hours while my body sweated it all out, waking up refreshed and ready to go again!

What is that phrase? Youth is wasted on the young?

Yep, country is getting more and more screwed over, never know what to expect next. I just sent a few bucks of Sanders/AOC as they are working to rally folks. But what to do, what to do? Mentioned to Cindy that when the rest of the world finally invades to overthrow this fascist idiot, I will be glad to house a few of the invading troops as they make their way onward for freedom.

Loved **Teddy's** 'toon on page 6!

From: chuck.connor@gmx.co.uk

March 30

Chuck Connor writes:

It's been a while since I slapped fingers to keyboard in regard to a reply. In part due to the old Cherry DW5100 finally going TTU – and the original backup (Cherry DW5100) being one of the newer, sub-par manufacture (poor key switches, and latency) and in part due to failing health (both mine & Den's). Still, as I need to put out a new MIP newsletter, I thought I'd put that off while I did this. Hey, one lollygagging at a time...

"AGELESS BEAUTY (1) : Jerry Kaufman"

Hmmmm, if you say so (Yes, I know, far too easy, but I've not been myself of late. Some days I've been Mrs. Ethel Cobblethwaite, but I put that down to the change in the medications... And a

Yorkshire accent...)

Totally amazed at the whole MAGA thing—a lot of Trans & SS couples we know are getting exceedingly stressed. What is it they say about the insane taking over the asylum?

FAANwanks – alas I 'defected' a while back, and now 'chase' Derringers, Shamuses (Shamusii?), CWA daggers, Agathas, Year's Best, etc. Sort of like Greg Pickersgill, in some respects, though I don't think it all 'died' for me in 2005. It was a bit later, courtesy of **Langford** and **Hansen**, but they certainly killed it stone dead.

I can always send you a couple of hard copy anthologies if you like? Will have to be through Amazon as Ingrams are still playing Fortress America when it comes to Direct Sales

(US only, last time I checked.) Can drop you a copy of the latest newsletter if you want?

[[That would be cool...]]

Healthwise: Still discovering the longterm 'joys' of Hemochromatosis (screwed liver, bugged kidneys, Type II diabetes due to it kicking the shit out of the natural insulin – and apparently I'm down for a variation on arthritis.) If I eat a bag of spinach I end up sticking to the side of the fridge. I dropped the Adam Stark/Iron Man stand-in gag, but Strict Nurse Wendy didn't have a clue what I was on about. No change there then (before you say it).

Den has now gone from portable oxygen to one of those mains powered 'concentrators' when we're home. Still needs to use the cylinders when we're out and about, but he's now been 'downgraded' to extreme Emphysema. Always amazed when we're out and about, people stopping and staring. One Peterborough Prick even asked "Are you ill then?" Sometimes I really wonder when the Mothership will appear and take us back home...

Fuck, this is getting depressive.

[[Dave Hicks possibly spoke for us all when he suggested a Corflu programme item where we all compare what pills we're on...]]

Change of subject: Despite living near Spalding, I have nothing to do with the cat shaving (<https://www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk/news/local-news/police-tell-people-stop-shaving-9932044>)

"Welcome to Lincolnshire. Please turn your clocks and watches back 50 years..."

I think Northern Soul and 'very silly money' were always hand in hand. I remember a couple of record dealers trying to offload some US 7" imports, all with drilled labels and generic white covers. These days, what with the Japanese re-issuing whole back catalogues on CD format, complete with the 12" gatefold covers being reduced to gatefold CD covers, and the 'revival' of vinyl (I love the Juno sales) it seems the 'collecting bug' also looks like getting a revival as well.

'The Electric State'. Saw it recently, and felt that it owed something to 'Mrs Davies' (Peacock channel mini-series, I think) – though must admit after the slow start, it seemed to trundle along as a fair to middling afternoon movie. A bit like 'Borderlands' (Cate Blanchett, Kevin Hart.) It's not as bad as some we've sat through of late. Terrible Star Wars R2D2 spoof scene, but it was done with obvious sympathy to the original, and tongue firmly in cheek. A touch gung ho with the violence (rather

Zombie Mob style) and there are obvious game tie-in scenes - but all in all, it was amusing and interesting - and I never guessed Jack Black had a role in it until the closing credits.

Health – talked about that enough methinks. Best of luck to you both, whatever happens.

And there I'll call it a day. I've some things to write, edit and generally get ready for launch dates. And I need to knuckle down and learn Wordpress, mainly as the copy of Muse I've been using is finally falling apart.

So, despite the lack of interaction, I will try harder next time. Or the time after that. Or the time after the time after...

[[Always good to hear from you mate, anytime...]]

From: daverabban@gmail.com

March 30/April 1

Dave Cockfield writes:

I enjoyed your ish as always but my brain is struggling to form anything that would be worth even considering to print this time around.

Off to meet the Old Sod at a comic Mart.

I'm really looking forward to meeting yourself and **Leigh Edmonds**.

So much so that I plan to attend my first ever First Thursday. I have always avoided because of the stairs.

I will probably need a Bishop's Finger up the bum to help me up them.

[[We did make it there, nice to see people but I do think it's a horrible venue...]]

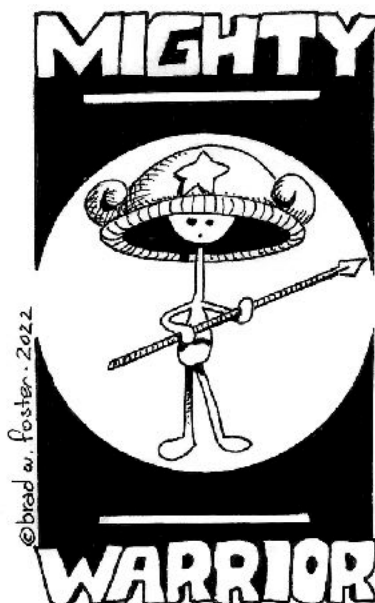
I have remembered a couple of "eating out" stories.

My experience of a "Gordon Ramsey's" was about 30+ years ago in his restaurant outside Glasgow. My friends in Bellshill booked 6 months in advance. £50 for a three course meal with wine.

I remember that it was very good. For me Guinea Fowl, Creme Brûlée, and best of all a wonderful black pudding starter. It was a 4 inch tower with layered mash, neeps, and black pudding with a thick beef and red wine sauce.

Many years ago **Kev Williams** lived in Cincinnati. I visited along with **Harry Bell** and his wife. At the end of our holiday we decided to take Kev and Sue to the Omni for a meal.

Without thinking we picked the best restaurant in the hotel. There was a ballroom with mirrored walls and Crystal chandeliers. The restaurant was all Art



Deco if I remember correctly. You were totally transported to a bygone era. Food was served by a team of Penguin suited waiters who lifted the lids off our plates in unison. We all had a taste of a \$110 bottle of wine drinking about half of it. We thought it iffy, said so, and they changed it without blinking an eye. The lads had steak which was fantastic but I went with lamb chops. The best I have ever eaten even if I would have liked a larger portion.

When the bill came I had to borrow about \$130 from **Kev** to be able to pay my share. Still the most expensive meal I have ever had. But it was worth it for the whole experience.

From: nelsonmark07@gmail.com

April 8

Mark Nelson writes:

I was born in 1968. Watching 'Are You Being Served' with my family is one of my strong memories of the 1970s. Only a few days after receiving *This Here...* 85 I was flicking through the channels late one night. (That's not a regular occurrence.) What did I spot? In a couple of minutes one channel was showing 'Are You Being Served'. I didn't watch it for too long, it was late. The format of the episode seemed to be to have a small amount of dialogue leading to a gag. Repeat until the end of the episode.

At the age of 56 I didn't find any of the gags funny. Perhaps that hasn't changed since I first watched the show. Not because I found the jokes predictable in the 1970s, but because when I first watched it I wouldn't have understood the humour.

If I didn't find the show itself thrilling, there was one thing that did thrill me.

Kaching.
Bass Player Comes in

Ground floor: perfumery
Stationery and leather goods
Wigs and haberdashery
Kitchenware and food
Going up

First floor: telephones
Gents' ready-made suits
Shirts, socks, ties, hats
Underwear and shoes
Going up

Second floor: carpets
Travel goods and beddings
Materials and soft furnishing

THE EXISTENCE of the
PRAYING MANTIS
IMPLIES the EXISTENCE of
AN ATHEIST MANTIS.



Restaurant and teas
Going down

The theme song is a classic. I don't need to see the show to be reminded of the 1970s, I just need to hear Kaching and the bass line.

Having listened to the 'Are You Being Served' theme tune a number of others have percolated into my memory:

'The Flintstones', 'It Ain't Half Hot Mum', 'Play Away', 'Parkinson' and 'Dad's Army'. Add to that the John Pertwee Dr Who Theme (my first Doctor).

Not a great theme song, but 'Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads' brings plenty of memories as it was a particular favourite of my parents. I see that there were only two seasons, broadcast between 9th January 1973 and 9th April 1974. Yet that's another strong memory. (Was it continually repeated?) I haven't seen many episodes of the original series, broadcast before I was born, which ran between 16th December 1964 and 23rd July 1966. Wikipedia says that only eleven of the twenty-one episodes have survived.

[[There was a well-reported rift between lead actors James Bolam and Rodney Bewes, which Bewes confirmed in his autobiography but Bolam consistently denied, yet was always reluctant to even mention the show and always vetoed any possible return of his character...]]

A show that I never watched, but I like the theme tune is 'When the Boat Comes In'. My dad plays that on the guitar. I'm not sure if I remember it because I heard it on the TV or because I remember him playing it. I remember James Bolam, who appeared both in 'When the Boat Comes in' and 'Whatever Happened to The Likely Lads', more from 'The Beiderbecke Trilogy', shown between 1984 and 1988.

[[Bolam had an extensive career after 'Likely Lads', Bewes not so much...]]

Returning to 'Are You Being Served'. One of the delights of moving to Australia in 2000 was the discovery that there was a department store, mostly across New South Wales and the ACT, called "Grace Brothers". Founded in 1885 they were sadly rebranded in 2004 under the name Myer (who bought them in 1983).

You mentioned Trump one more time in issue 85 than in issue 84. Very poor.

[[I try to avoid mentioning the Orange Wankbucket (I refuse to say his name meself) but sometimes you can't help it...]]

You said that you're not worried about re-entering the USA, but more than likely the authorities have added *This Here...* to the list of publications that need to be vetted. You seem to feel secure because of your legal rights. If push came to shove do you think

Trumps' DoJ will respect them? Perhaps Trump will decide to use the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 to remove British publishers of seditious SF fanzines from the USA?

[[Er, no, I believe I expressed that I was anxious...]]

Kim Huett mentions Penelope Keith. I don't have strong memories of 'The Good Life'. However, I do have strong memories of 'To The Manor Born'. I didn't know until I looked it up a minute ago that there was a 2007 special. Was it any good? I also remember Keith from the Lurpak Advert featuring the trombone playing piece of Lurpak. When did those adverts appear?

[[No idea...]]

Returning again to both 'Are You Being Served' and following up on **Kim's** line point that a "great many British actors follow up their one time in the sun with long stints in one of the British soaps, 'Coronation Street', 'Eastenders', or 'Emmerdale'." The young Wendy Richard, one of the mainstays in 'Are You Being Served', became one of the mainstays of 'East Enders'. I wonder what she did in between? Perhaps **Kim** can enlighten me? Only kidding, I looked her up on Wikipedia. I had not realised that 'Are You Being Served' ran all the way to 1st April 1985. I've only ever thought of it as being that 70s show.

[[When taking on her role in 'Eastenders', she had it written into her contract that if there was a revival of 'Are You Being Served' they would have to release her, as happened when the sequel series 'Grace & Favour' was made...]]

A vague memory comes into sight. I watched the first couple of seasons of 'Grange Hill'. I no longer remember the theme tune, but remember that it had a comic-like title sequence. One of the actors to appear in these seasons was Susan Tully, later to appear in Eastenders as the daughter of Wendy Richard's character,

In *This Here...* 83 **Heath Row** wrote "I'm not sure I can commit to another amateur press association, but should my dance card open up, I'll give the invitation due consideration."

I can confirm that he gave serious consideration to joining APA-V and as a consequence of this he filled out his dance card to dally with ANZAPA.

[[And I can confirm that he's also joined APA-V, so there...]]

PS I've never understood cryptic crossword clues. There was a time when the local newspaper had a crossword with two types of clues, the standard type of clue and a cryptic clue. Having filled in as much as possible of the crossword using the standard clues it was interesting to try and work backwards from the answers to see how to obtain them from the cryptic clue.

I read your cryptic column in issues 83 and 84. The only effect of doing this was a troubled night's sleep, with my dreams dominated by cryptic crossword clues which made no sense.

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

April 10

Leigh Edmonds writes:

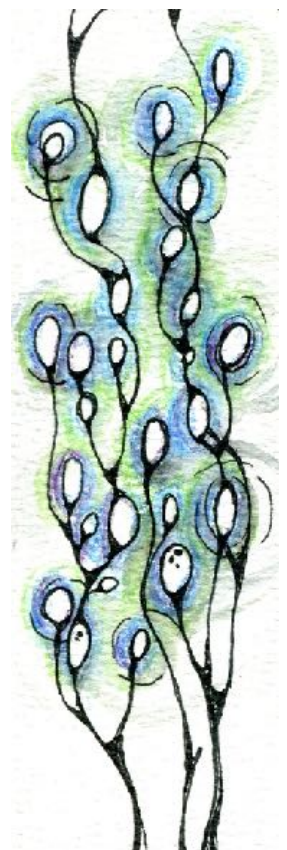
I shared your feelings of excitement and trepidation about making the pilgrimage to Newbury but here I sit in the waiting "lounge" with a lot of people waiting to get onto the big and gorgeous 777 to fly to Singapore. It's too late now to go home and relax in front of the telly instead. So not a long letter this time.

I was hopeful that the duty free shop would have a wider variety of bourbon on sale but it was all the stuff that I can buy in my local supermarket but a bit cheaper. Apart from that, because of the way the shuttle buses run from Ballarat, I've had plenty of time to walk around and take pictures of all the airliners parked around the terminal, as you do.

Valma knew that we had to be at an airport at least an hour earlier so I could look at all the beautiful airliners, now that she is sadly gone I can stretch that out to two hours without feeling guilty.

I appreciate **Spike's** suggestion that if you couldn't be safe on the West Coast you couldn't be safe anywhere in the US. I'll take her word on that and pass on next year's Corflu, and any other fannish event that is being held in the United States for the foreseeable future. The reasons are obvious to anybody who has seen what's coming up on my facebook feed. I'm sure that other peoples' feeds are telling a completely different story but it's not something that I'm prepared to test in person. I hope those who do go have a great time..

Amazingly, I have actually seen *The Electric State* that turned up here on Netflix last week. If I were to write a review it would probably be a lot like yours but shorter. It was, in a word, entertaining with the animation that worked in so well that it looks real – I'm assuming that was animation. There was nothing new or terribly exciting about the plot but that's to be expected. Also it was very colourful, which made it cheerful to



look at. There are many worse ways to spend an hour or two of harmless fun.

It's now two issue in a row that Big **Dave Hodson** has written an excellent piece touching on something most of us would not want to think about. Having experienced that kind of random violence over twenty years ago from a couple of kids who appeared to have nothing better to do, I am glad that this is a world that I don't know very much about these days. *Adolescent* came up on one of the streaming services I see but I'd already heard it being talked about on the radio as being rather realistic so I turned it off after a couple of minutes. Big **Dave** might be correct that it is a bit sanitized, but it looked like being too grim for me. As a result I watched *The Electric State* instead. Actually more violence and it too has a message of sorts, but it has a happy ending which is not to be found in *Adolescent*.

Bob Jennings comments about the absence of a wide variety of fanzines is probably right that modern social media had done for a lot of fanac that was previously published in fanzines. In Australia the trend is towards writing science fiction and fantasy which has been made possible by self publishing or very cheap publishing. Many years since it was very expensive to publish books so getting published was really something, these days writing and publishing are much easier and cheaper. The result is the growth of stf publishing in Australia from maybe one or two books a year to hundreds. (One year when people were keeping count there were over 300 stf books published in Australia.) It appears likely that the energy that once went into publishing fanzines, because that was all that was available, has now moved on to become published stf writers. The only conventions being held here are being run by writers' groups and are mainly for and by people who want to be writers. We old style fans just hang on the edges on these events. Which is better (easier anyhow) than organizing them ourselves.

Side note. Talk about stfnal. As I write this I'm ten kilometers in the air over Uluru on my way to Singapore. I've just been fed a pretty fancy meal, drunk several glasses of bubbly and watched a rather unremarkable movie in which Godzilla was the good guy. My, we may not yet have Mars colonies but some very amazing stuff is happening every day.

Alright, I might have made the word count categorization argument before, and I will no doubt make it again until you agree. Maybe it should just be a page count and if people want to puff up their fanzines with pictures and fancy layout that just puts them in the Fat Fanzine category. At least it's not subjective like the division between perzines and genzines. And if it's good enough for WorldCons and Hugos, well, it can be good enough for us.

[[And I'll continue to point out the substantial flaws in your argument, mate. Hugo category word counts are for the

fiction categories, not fanzines, whose definition therein has been debased so much they can effectively include anything John Scalzi might have written at some point on a lav wall. Also, please try to get it through your thick 'ead that the perzine/genzine "division" isn't purely "subjective" at all, since it's fundamentally based on the 80/20 rule...]]

I know that Australia is a long way from anywhere else but I would have hoped that some fans knew that I had published a history of fandom in Australia – up to 1960 anyhow. Look it up on the interwebs, *Proud and Lonely, A history of science fiction fandom in Australia*. **Gary Mattingly** is right that a great many histories of individual fan groups could be written and you are right in your comment that there are doubtless many sources of historical evidence in the fanzines and clubzines of cities and regions. But do I have to remind you that, as they say, journalists only write the first draft. What is needed, I think, is some decent histories of fandom written by people who know what to do with the first draft material. This problem is in confusing the difference between the sources and history because the sources are only the historical evidence from which histories can be written. This is something I could become very tedious about, so I will leave that to the *AJFR*.

It's nice to see **Brad Foster** and his art in your fnz. I'm sure we all sympathise with him in being distracted by other things and writing less letters. If only I could be so tardy when it comes to *This Here...* which usually has such juicy comment hooks.

We are now approaching the coast of the continent so I will close and sit back to watch another less than brilliant movie before getting to Singapore.

PS. This Loc was started in Australia and completed in the air on the way to Singapore, tinkered with in Singapore and Paris and sent from Newbury. Can I claim some sort of record please?

From: jim.mowatt@gmail.com

April 18

Jim Mowatt writes:

Millie Bobbie Brown committed the heinous sin of growing up. How very dare she; what was she thinking? Some people have no self control.

By the time you receive this LoC you'll be approaching the end of your trip and all the trip preparation and worrisome notions will be far behind you. Hopefully none of these possibilities (including your assassination) will come to pass. It was good to meet up again (albeit fleetingly) at Corflu 42).

Hello **Dave Hodson**

'Adolescence' was a truly remarkable piece of television. I felt that I couldn't look away from the screen for the first

three episodes. The story was being extracted piece by piece and all those little psychological nudges that create the setting for a horrific crime, bubble up to the surface.

The boy seems young and vulnerable and yet by the last episode I no longer wanted to watch. I had written him off as beyond redemption. Of course you can't really do that. He does need to be reintegrated somehow and lessons learned from what happened.

The programme was a startling reminder of just how big the generation gap has suddenly become. There have been many shockwaves throughout the 20th century but I wonder if the online culture here in the 21st may be an even bigger culture shock than all of those which have gone before. The pressure on children is immense and at ages when they are trying to form personalities and learn how to interact with everyone they are being bombarded with all manner of pressures and manipulations that care nothing for the child. I am reminded of one of the revelations from *Careless People* (a memoir from Sarah Wynn-Williams who was a director at Facebook) about serving up beauty ads to teen girls at vulnerable moments, which were linked to times when they deleted selfies.

Standing face on to this onslaught of manipulation armed with only a few years experience of the world it is little wonder that we are seeing a massively increasing number of children with such a wide variety of special educational needs. In the school where I work we would prepare exam spaces where everyone would gather in a large hall to take their exams. We now need to set up vast numbers of smaller rooms where various different needs are met such as a darkened space or quieter space or a space where they won't disrupt other children. These children all have 'statements' that mean they require extra attention in some way. The main hall is less than half full now. This could mean many things - it could be over diagnoses, it could be better diagnoses, it could all be well meaning nonsense that serves no useful purpose or it could be society on the road to a better understanding of the individual needs of children. I think we are a long way from finding out but we are definitely in the middle of a large upheaval. The pressures on children are intense and those children will grow up into adults that have been manipulated by Russian and Chinese bots and trolls as well as the full weight of capitalism. It's a lot to deal with at the same time as you are perfecting your method for squeezing spots.



From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

April 27

Eli Cohen writes:

Hope you had a good trip, with no problems coming back across the border. It's a good thing the Orange One wasn't President in the 1960s, during the British Invasion -- he undoubtedly would have deported anyone with a British accent as being part of that terrorist Beatles Gang. I only remember one time having a (small) problem entering the U.S., when I was living in Canada. I was flying from Regina to New York, via Toronto, and going through the U.S. pre-check in Toronto. The Immigration guy asked "Where are you coming from?", and I answered "Regina." He did a double-take, and said "What? Where??" and I

said "Regina, Saskatchewan." He looked very relieved, and said "Oh. I thought you said Red China!" So no actual problem, you see....

Needless to say, I've made no headway with your crossword clues (unless you count the deepening dent in the wall from banging my head against it).

For a math/science joke, I'm going to steal again from my old fanzine -- from *Kratophany* #1 (Dec., 1971), which I note had an illo by George Barr, who, sadly, just passed away *sigh*. Anyway:

From 'A Dictionary for Statisticians':

infinitely:

1. According to an exhaustive statistical survey by Countem, Countem, and Fudge, the use of infinitely in such expressions as "infinitely better" means "at least 10%"
2. In poetry, infinite means about 3000 -- as in "infinite as the stars that light our night skies."

One more, also from *Krat* #1: "What do you call holy heavy water?" "Deuteronomy."

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

May 2

Kim Huett writes:

Once when I was not as old as I am today I worked for a time at a steak restaurant. The restaurant is long gone but memories of the most dubious rites practised therein remain with me to this day. For example in one of the refrigerators were two large plastic tubs filled with a secret solution into

which multiple sides of beef would be placed at close of business each night. The beef was always the cheapest and toughest available but after 18 hours in the secret solution those sides of beef would be broken down to a jelly-like consistency. As you can imagine only the most burnt-out dregs of the hospitality industry were willing to work there (I got better). In fact a lot of the staff seemed to spend the majority of their days there because they really didn't have anything better to do.

One fine day one of the line chefs went out back to have a smoke by the garbage hoppers. Apparently the milk crate he was perched on was extra-comfortable because I found him asleep out there when sent to look for him. Upon his return the head chef asked:

"Where have you been?"

"Went for a smoke 'n' fell asleep."

"Behind the hoppers?"

"Everybody has to be somewhere."

Ever since then my mantra has always been that everybody has to be somewhere. This is why I never ask myself whether I receive a due measure of fun in return for my fannish activity. Everybody has to be somewhere so if I was not here writing this email I would be somewhere else, doing something else to keep myself amused. In which case why worry about the degree of satisfaction to be had? It's not like I can stop myself from being somewhere, doing something. To quote from John Safran's "Not the Sunscreen Song", (the brilliant parody of a pretentious lecture farted out by some monkey too bland to have a name worth remembering):

If you're unsure about what you're going to do with your life

Try to remember some of the most interesting people didn't know

What they were going to do at age twenty-two or even at forty

And nearly all of them are unemployed drug addicts forced to live on cat food.

Quite.

So long as I'm entertained by what I do and not eating cat food surely that's enough?

[[I often used "Everybody's gotta be somewhere" as the answer to the oft-repeated question from passengers in the taxi: "What's a Brit doing here?" (in Las Vegas). I took it, though, from what's been described as "the quintessential Eccles quote" from 'The Last Goon Show of All' which

happened in October 1972. I'm therefore curious about whether your line chef anecdote post- or predates that...]]

Which brings me to the most disturbing photo I've ever seen you publish. It's the one of the Leprechaun shitting into a bag of gold in #85 of your thing. Do Leprechauns actually shit gold? I sorta hope so because that means anal sex with one would be a bit like playing one of those GuNToV slot machines. Especially as the best possible result requires a bit of reach around action (regardless of whether that means siphoning the python or flicking the bean). Anyway, I only ask because I don't recall ever encountering an explanation as to where Leprechaun gold comes from in the first place. Not that Leprechauns shitting gold makes much sense to me as the only things I've heard of Leprechauns eating are snakes. At least according to a rather GuNToV legend I've heard it was St. Patrick who brought the Leprechauns to Ireland with the express purpose of having them rid the island of snakes. Of course this leads us to the difficult

question of what the Leprechauns continued to subsist on once the snakes were all gone?

I'd guess lawyers but that's just a shot in the ol' ipso facto.

[[If that particular leprechaun (Ross Chamberlain) was shitting gold I expect he wouldn't be having to live as frugally as he does these days...]]

And while we're on the topic of my confusion I wonder if you could provide a small clarification in regards to the coming Corflu. I see one of the banquet options is a vegetarian nut roast and it isn't clear to me that the meal will consist of some nutty

vegetarians orb the nuts of a vegetarian? Admittedly either option does beg the question of are vegetarians an acceptable part of the vegetarian diet?

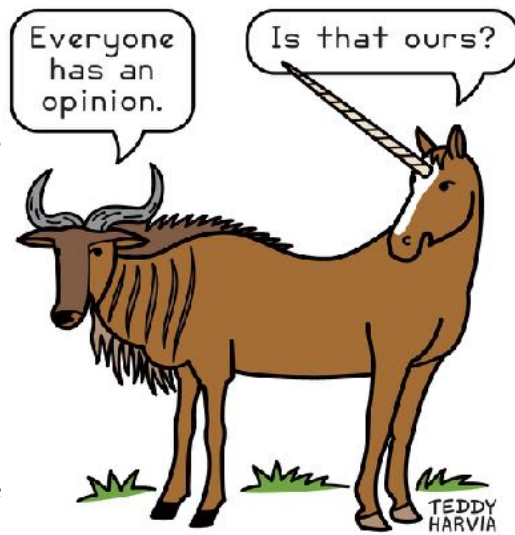
More importantly this is a matter which should be clarified since one meal is likely to be more substantive than the other. Enquiring minds want to know.

[[I took a pass on the banquet food meself, so I leave it to others to respond...]]

Now that it's been brought to my attention I've just realised I may well be permanently safe from scammers because the only one I currently have to deal with believe me to be Chinese or Vietnamese which makes the GuNToVs easy to see coming.

"Why bother watching pics that all the fans and critics agree are absolutely dreadful."

What a bizarre statement. Does your correspondent know how few movies genuinely fit the criterion he poses? As the



old saying goes, "There is nothing so dreadful that somebody somewhere won't admire it and nothing so sublime that somebody somewhere won't detest it." Because humanity is not a hive mind there are people who will at least try certain films because for them the broad consensus (a far more accurate descriptor than "all the fans and critics") isn't always accurate. Films like 'Clue', 'The Warriors' and 'The Blues Brothers' were panned by many when they came out but these three are among my very favourite films. If you want a more extreme example then I will reveal that I've watched 'Manos: The Hands of Fate' several times despite it being regarded by many as the worst film ever made because I love the character of Torgo. Also I find certain sequences amusingly ridiculous. Hiding behind broad consensus does little but limit one's experiences.

[[I tend to agree...]]

"Kolchak: The Night Stalker was fairly unique for its time but nowadays seems incredibly dated."

Does your correspondent not understand that if a statement like this isn't backed up by some justification as to why they think this then the comment is of no use? When somebody fails to justify a statement like this I can only assume it's either because they can't be arsed to present a valid argument, in which case why bother commenting at all, or they're unable to articulate why they think this, in which case best to write nothing in the first place. Without at least some context attached to opinions the whole discussion turns into a version of Monty Python's Argument sketch.

This is why I've offered no comment on the business with Neil Gaiman.

From my perspective an author who is little more than a name to me (I've read one short story by him) has been accused of specific reprehensible acts and being socially toxic by various people who have had contact with him. What can I contribute to the conversation without reading like a Frankie Goes To Hollywood teeshirt with WAR IS BAD printed on the front. This is why I find your complaint that "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" is singularly cretinous. What the fuck do you expect people who are not professionals in the field and have little or no connection with Gaiman to write other than WAR IS BAD? This has to be the most fuckwitted opinion

you have ever farted out. The Internet is already rife with situations where people without the requisite knowledge dogpile in with little more than WAR IS BAD type comments. And you want more of that pointless ugliness? And don't try and tell me you had specific people in mind or some such bullshit. You wrote fans and loccers, smearing everyone and I for one won't have it.

Fix yourself!

[[I acknowledge this as a fair point (which may surprise you?). I did, in fact, have some particular people in mind, loccers, for example, whose output is almost uniformly anodyne. But you're right, it is daft to expect everyone to have an opinion on any given topic, nontrivial or otherwise...]]

I'm rather less surprised by **Steve Jeffery's** admission that he sees Penelope Keith as having a defining role. My recollection of British TV from the 1980s and earlier (very sporadic ownership of a TV after that point) is that a great many performers were given very similar roles to fill. And now I think about it perhaps that's why certain faces kept appearing with such regularity. The role calls for posh and slightly autocratic? Call Penelope Keith. The character is a brash extrovert the audience should look down upon. What's Rik Mayall doing? We need a charming larrikin? Well if Sid James is busy ask Reg Varney.

Actually on the topic of Sid James there's a classic example of an actor in an out of character role. Years ago the ABC included among its late night movies one called 'Hell Drivers' from 1957. Sid James has a small role in it but what I found striking was the character wasn't the least bit sympathetic. It gave me a small case of whip-lash given James' later career. 'Hell Drivers' can be found on YouTube and is worth a watch for the secondary cast alone; Patrick McGoohan, William Hartnell, Sid James, David McCallum, and Sean Connery.

[['Hell Drivers' is considered an absolute classic British movie of its time and has been mentioned in these pages more than once. McGoohan's role isn't exactly "secondary" since he's the main antagonist, and his name appears below the title on the movie poster. Sid James did in fact have an extensive list of movie credits before his first "Carry On" (Constable) in 1960. One of his early ones was 1949's 'Once a Jolly Swagman' starring Dirk Bogarde which is not actually about Archbishop Gillespie, believe it or not...]]



WAHE

Graham Charnock ; Graham James ; Dave Langford ; Perry Middlemiss : "Skimmed and will read in depth later, but couldn't go past "Newbury, the throbbing heart of West Berkshire."?? The throbbing "what"? Your man **Hodson** threw that one in just to catch skimmers like me, amiright? ; **Ulrika O'Brien ; Jose Sanchez ; R-Laurraine Tutihasi** ;

FANZINES RECEIVED

Apologies to any I've forgot, missed or lost during the FFS hiatus...

PERRYScope 52 and 53 (Perry Middlemiss) - ...

THE TYPO KING #97 (Bob Jennings) - ...

THE STF AMATEUR #19 (Heath Row) - ...

CRM ENTERPRISES NEWSLETTER (Celine Mariotti) - ...

CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #77 (Andy Hooper) - ...

ALPHABET OBSESSION 218 (Jae Leslie Adams) - (for TurboAPA)...

SPARROWGRASS (Roman Orszanski) - ...

LITTLEBROOK 14 (Jerry Kaufman & Suzle) - ...

WAVE WITHOUT A SHORE #6 (Tom Becker) - ...

DANCING TO ARCHITECTURE (Doug Bell) - (Corflu 42 Fanthology)...

BANANA WINGS 82 (Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer) - ...

TWO CHAIRS IN PRINT episodes 2 & 3 (**David Grigg & Perry Middlemiss**) - (Podcast transcriptions)...

RECONNECT SOUVENIR BOOK (Rob Jackson) - ...

THE OBDURATE EYE #51 (Garth Spencer) - ...

INDULGE ME

✕ **A BIT THIN** : Not so much in this section for thish - I hope you understand...

✕ **CARDINAL SINS** : I hear from my dear old mate **Pete "Cardinal" Cox** who's writing a regular column for the monthly nostalgia magazine *Best of British*, sending some entertaining clippings which he describes as "fan writing adjacent", and he's not wrong...

✕ **THEMATIC: Mark Nelson** (locs) mentions a lot of TV themes, so for a bit of filler I'll link two which I consider among the best ever:

'The Equalizer' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAei6YFGIDQ>

'Justice League' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAsDL7f3veM> ...

✕ **REALLY TERRIBLE SCIENCE "JOKE" FOR ELI** :

Q: What is the name of the first electricity detective? A: Sherlock Ohms...

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY** : All right then **Killer**, how about **Julie Hagerty** (recently having guested on 'Matlock')?...



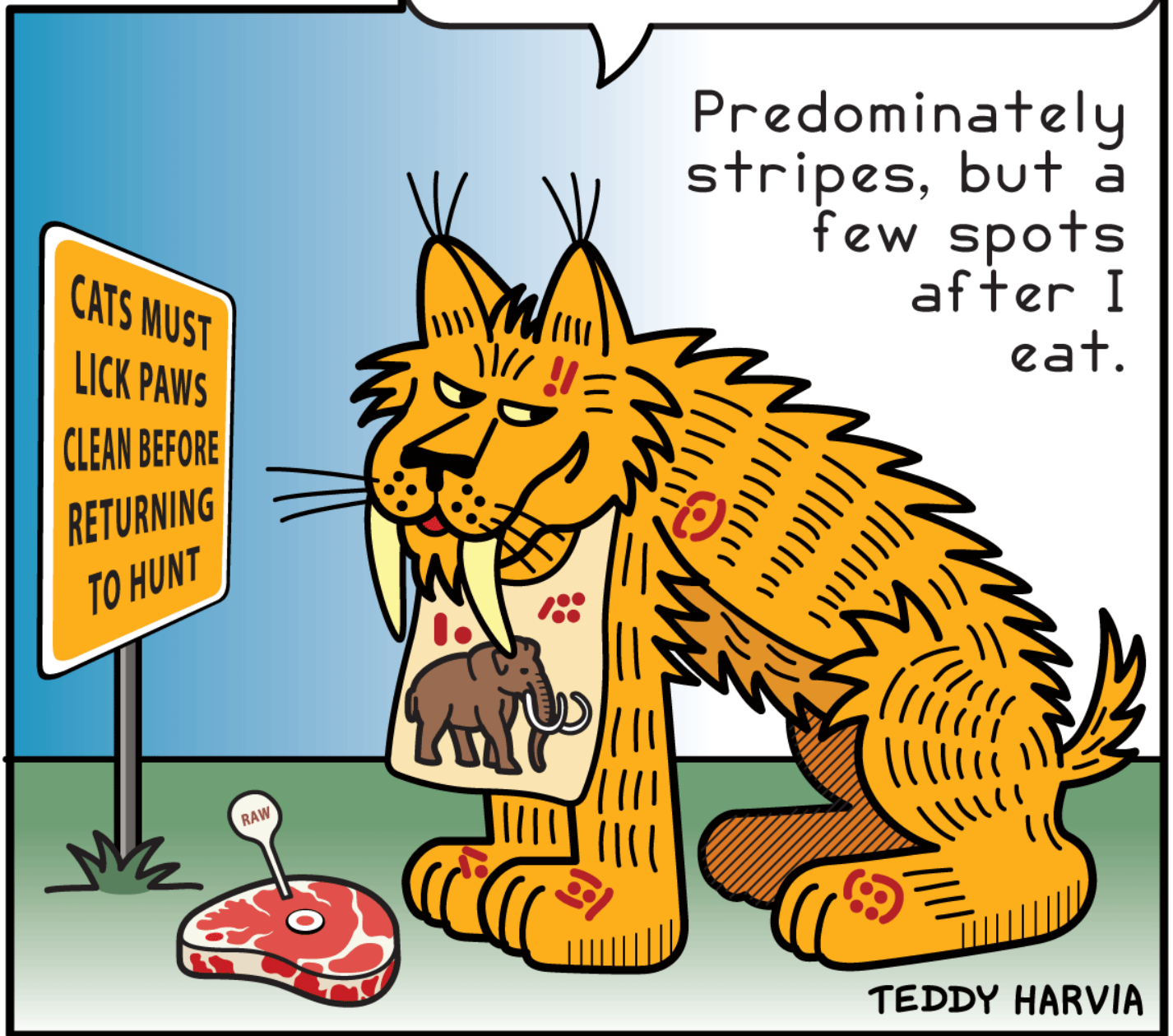
✕ **FOOTY** : My beloved Hornets' final match ended 1-1 at home to Sheffield Wednesday, a game we might have one if not for some poor decision-making in the final third, but ey, we improved on last season's position and points total, so there's that. Of more import to the Vicarage Road faithful was **Martin Tudor's** Baggies stuffing our hated rivals up the road (L*ton Town) and my brother **Peter Honey's** Portsmouth managing to not win against Hull City (FT 1-1) which condemned the Hatters to relegation for the second season in a row. Ha!...

✕ **NEXTISH** : Trying to get back on schedule, how about May 31st...

Chat

Does the sabertooth have stripes or spots?

Predominately stripes, but a few spots after I eat.



MIRANDA

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"And as she closed her eyes upon the world
And picked upon the bones of last week's news
She spoke his name out loud again"