

# This Here...

*"...a list of grievances..." (D Agarwal)*

## EGOTORIAL

### WHAT WE DID WHEN THERE WAS A WORLDTHING

A convo during, I think, the Third Thursday Zoom touched upon the effect of a WorldThing on local conventions *[[koff - £35,331.27 - koff]]* and I mentioned that this didn't necessarily apply to the *Star Trek* cons I was involved with since it was considered that (at that time) there wasn't significant overlap in attendance demographics. I later remembered some other relevant stuff from the time and went off in search of actual supporting information.

Back in the day, there used to be two "official" UK Trek cons on Bank Holiday weekends, a larger one in Spring (600+ attendees, one of them did crack 1,000) and a typically smaller one on the August Bank Holiday weekend with an attendance of around 400. These were subject to a bidding system based on that for Eastercons.

I discover a wiki, [fanlore.org](http://fanlore.org), which, having had a shufti at some relevant entries, is as inaccurate as some of the guff which cropped up on the Fancyclopedia until the **Sainted Strummer** made it his retirement project to correct, for example, stuff like Bernie Evans having been the wife of **Martin Tudor**.

Anyway, *fanlore* confirms that the 1987 August Trek con didn't happen, since no-one, sensibly, wanted to attempt to put on an event a mere few weeks after Conspiracy '87 in Brighton, although it's well worth noting that the SOL III '87 con held three months prior (at the egregious Adelphi) did quite all right.

The bidding cycle was at two-year intervals (ie a bid for that August '87 slot would have been presented at the 'Enterprise One' con in August 1985). For whatever reason, no bid emerged for August of 1988 either - a last-minute team under the moniker of 'Confetti' (a lot of bits thrown together at the last minute) was not ratified until the Spring of that year, so it earned its title. I ought to know, I chaired it.

The two-year go-round would often mean that a team would be bidding for its *next* convention at the one they were currently running, and indeed at (or really, prior to) Confetti I assembled "Team Holodeck", a group which would go on to run several smaller events as well as August Trek cons in 1990 and 1993.

The 1990 event was dated a week after ConFiction in The Hague, Netherlands, and we did get rumblings that we must be mad ect, but I contended then (and was proved correct) that any loss of attendance to that WorldThing would be minimal. We also turned what some saw as a downside to our advantage. ConFiction's GoH was Joe Haldeman, who had in fact written the *Star Trek* novels 'Planet of Judgement' (1977) and 'World Without End' (1979), so I wrote to ask

whether he would like to extend his European visit, and we'd be happy to provide return flights to the Netherlands as well as the usual accommodations. In other words, we got Joe, as well as Gay Haldeman and Rusty Hevelin on the cheap! (Our headline GoH was costume designer William Ware Theiss.)

That year's Holodeck had some other anxious-making issues, though. *Fanlore* incorrectly states the venue as the Stakis Norfolk Gardens in Bradford, which was our

original choice - until we found out at not a lot of notice that they'd double booked us. To what was undoubtedly more their relief than ours we therefore broke the contract and had to find somewhere else within a scant month or two.

"Somewhere else" turned out to be Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, giving us pops for holding the first (and only?) one of the "official" UK Trek cons in Bonnie Scotland. There were grumbles about having to stay in student accommodation, of course ("The showers are at the end of the hallway") but the price was definitely right, and the building contained a super-nice raked seating auditorium.

Some of this got recalled with **Amanda Epstein** when we visited during The Trip, mentioning another Trek con



habitué, name of David Simons aka SuperTwat. With the change of location, we'd quickly offered a full membership refund to anyone who wanted one, but only one person (D Simons, for it was he) took us up on that. Imagine our crogglements when he turns up in Edinburgh to purchase an on-the-day membership. "Why did you ask for a refund when you were still planning to attend?" "I just wanted to see if you meant it"...

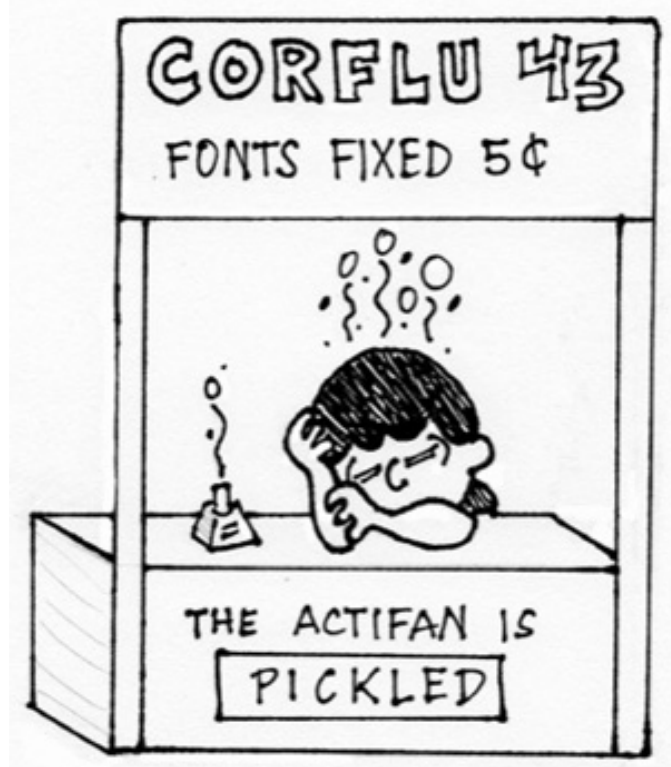
**Amanda** notes that he's apparently less of an arsehole these days. Not that she seeks his company, mind...

It's all good.

May 2025

## CORFLUX

LOGO AND CHATTER



**Lucy Huntzinger** (Founding Mother ect) has provided a highly suitable logo for "Corflu Pickled", as above. Those unaware of the *Peanuts* connection might like to know that the local airport is "Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport", since he lived in Santa Rosa for more than 30 years. I must remember to get a photo with signage, like I failed to do for George Best City Airport in Belfast.

Meanwhile on the FBF Corflu group, **Jerry Kaufman** raises the question of whether future Corflus should refund the membership of the randomly drawn Guest of Honor, to perhaps encourage people not to cough up a hat bribe to be removed from consideration. Apparently (per **Lucy**) the

Founders specifically decided not to do this, although some occasions were noted when it was done. **Andy Hooper**, in his usual contrarian way where you can't tell if he's being satirical or not, suggests the GoH should have the opportunity to pay twice rather than have a refund, as a gesture of support, a scheme likely to encourage more people to pay a \$20 hat bribe rather than risk having to punt double bubble on a \$100 or so membership, shurely? I remark that there may have been occasions with a GoH where everyone *else's* membership should have been refunded, but ey, I could be Exhibit A there...

Corflu "traditions" may occasionally be honored in the breach, but I think as long as the "Fanzine of Honor" is *Energumen* every time, it's shurely all good?...

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/corflu>

<https://corflu.org/>

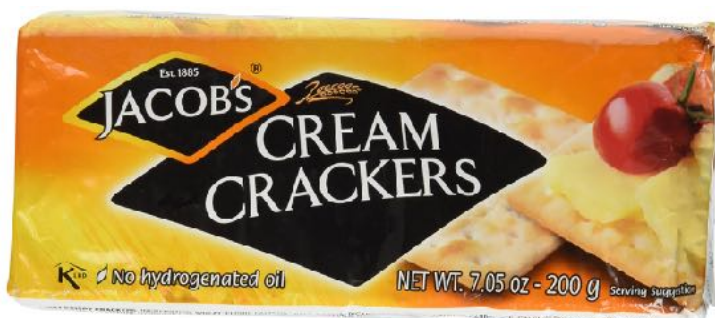
## HEALTH DIARY

### MORE OF THE JACOBS

*[[Trigger warning: contains rhyming slang...]]*

Briefly, from this month's oncology visit, Dr Gollard is well pleased with how I'm doing, and while still not quite at more optimal levels, my relevant numbers (White Cell count ect) are consistently just about all right. Bit of an iron deficiency, so a supplement has been added to my vitamin regime.

The BFD round here has (DoBFO) been **Jen's** hip replacement surgery which occurred without incident on May 8<sup>th</sup>. As she hobbles very slowly from bed to chair to lav with the provided walking frame, I am thus on support duty, fixing her meals, moving various things like approx 417 pill bottles, phone, laptop ect to where she happens to be sitting (or lying down) at the time, general housework and all that. I am trying not to moan too much about all this, since she's actually in a worse state than me at the moment which is quite the turnabout, innit? So far I'm managing - this first few days of the recovery is the most demanding - and I really am attempting to be helpful.



Signs of improvement are currently thin on the ground (but not nonexistent), but we expect it all to get going when she

starts physical therapy on May 16<sup>th</sup>. I shall be adding paragraphs as the month goes on...

Our sleep/wake schedules are now in a consistent place, but different from what they used to be. **Jen** naps a fair bit in her recliner during the day, but now goes to bed around 9pm, with me following at 10-ish. I'm back to getting my 6 hours of kip, getting up usually at 4:30 or 5am. Rather than her previous wake-up time of 10am or so (having headed for bed at more like 2am), she's up by 7am now, so I remain awake long enough to fix her breakfast before I lay back down for another couple of hours. Seems to be working out so far, but it is a bit of a change innit?

Not that this was previously absent, but it all fosters a great appreciation for all the *hausfrau* duties that **Jen** typically essays which are now getting done by me, and at the occasional lucid moment in between chores I am bound to guiltily reflect upon what a lazy fuckin' sod I must have been for the previous decade as I am now required to be instructed upon such minutiae as preferred washer and dryer settings as I concurrently marvel at how many pairs of knickers inhabit the premises.

What's really driving the Jacobs is that **Jen** eats up to 6 times a day (small amounts, DoBFO), what with pill schedules both existing and new, so that's a load of to-ing and fro-ing for my put-upon legs, but as we're now three weeks plus since the op, she's getting around quite a bit better, which is a relief for both of us.

And indeed, after yesterday's PT session (May 28<sup>th</sup>), having already graduated to the W<sup>3</sup> (Walker With Wheels) **Jen** is now advised to merely walk with the cane, which frees up one hand for doing stuff like, this morning, making her own breakfast. This is both helpful and timely, since yesterday morning my lower back decided to have one of its days of going "doink", putting me into more serious raspberry territory. It's a bit less evil at the moment, just as well since I am still required to do stuff requiring both hands (yes, yes, write your own tiresome wanking joke here) like carrying the laundry basket and moving her laptop from its overnight resting place on the coffee table to her work chair...

## WHITE SMOKE

### HOW LONG, O LORD, HOW LONG?

Once again, it seems, we're on to the teeth-grinding (or denture-grinding in my case, I suppose) topic of the imminent death of Corflu, currently being confidently predicted by not only those outside the tent and pissing in but also from tribal leaders within, as shielded as they may be from urinal streams by a ring of however many remaining devotees there may be who don't have enough sense to get out of the way of incoming piss attacks. Like me, probably...

It's one thing when expected established critics as well as cheap-shot merchants like Ms. East Ham engage in what might be wish-fulfillment about Corflu (and by implication fanzine fandom itself) going away for good, but quite another when, albeit perhaps with an air of resignation, the likes of **Joseph Nicholas** and **Mark Plummer** are saying much the same, as they do in *Banana Wings* 82.

It is with a heavy heart that I feel I have to get into this topic in these pages, but let's approach it with some realism, if we can...

The white smoke emerged from the conclave of the Corflu 42 business meeting, the cardinals acclaiming **Rich Coad** as pontiff for 2026, slapping down any chatter (as reported by **Joseph**) that Newbury might be the last one. **Rich** has been quoted as saying he'd like to see Corflu reach at least #50 (which would occur in 2033, when I'd be 75 years old, assuming I stick around that long), and to single out a couple of others not entirely randomly (since we share a birthday), **Harry Bell** would be 85 and **M Strummer** 69 (*still* not "70+" for the latter in Ms. East Ham's metric - she herself would be 64).

**Mark** points out, mathematically reasonably accurately, that "the average age of the membership [is] rising by close to one year every year". He also notes (incidentally preceding and refuting "70+" that of the 78 attending members of 42, "I reckon at most 15 are younger than me, and I'm 61". A *very* ballpark calculation absent any ballsaching actual research suggests that the average age of this year's Corflu attendees was around 65-66. Now I don't know about you, but by actuarial tables I reckon that's not exactly drop off the twig next week territory, and although we know quite a few of the older generation who have some serious health problems, there's at least an equal or larger number, I might suggest, who remain active and chipper.

A further issue (raised by **Joseph**) is that not only is attendance falling (although as **Mark** responds, Corflu 42 had *more* attendees than the Newcastle Corflu ten years prior, perhaps an outlier as it could have been seen as a "last hurrah" of sorts) there are even fewer people willing to actually organize the event. **M Strummer** again points out, typically sensibly, that the pool of potential organizers has always been smaller, hasn't it? Fair point, though. Going back and counting from that 2015 Corflu in Newcastle, I do however note that 5 (maybe 6 at a pinch) of the con chairs or co-chairs in those 11 years could *possibly* be expected to take another turn. You can work those out for yourselves, but we could take note of the old "ten year rule" which said that it takes that amount of time to recover from running a Corflu before you're up for doing another one, which technically would have made 2026 **Nigel Rowe's** "turn", but there's no reason he couldn't consider a bid for 2027, whether in Chicago or not.



Another consideration, at least for the next three years, is the understandable reluctance of a lot of people to travel to the United States under present circumstances, or even within it. Propositions for Corflus elsewhere incur the opposite potential problem of whether you'd have problems getting back in after leaving the country, since there's a load of doom-laden prognostications that deportations are occurring without regard to status and absent due process. This may change, but right now no-one's really sure. Several options have been mooted: a return to Canada, perhaps (but who would organize it?), a suggestion of a location in Mexico, but perhaps most intriguingly, **Dave Hodson's** reported conversation with **John Anglemark** at Reconnect about the possibility of a Corflu bid for a Scandinavian location. Now as far as Canada or Mexico are concerned, I'd posit that you'd still only get the 3 or 4 non-US residents that you typically get, and assuming that travel *within* the US is of less concern (though probably not zero concern) these locations might incur a serious drop-off in attendance from all over. Again, without any modicum of research, it could well be the case that travel to Scandinavia from the UK might not even be as onerous as getting to, say, Newcastle, for perhaps equivalent or even less cost.

Rather than hiving this off into a 'FAAnWank' column, there's also the issue of, if Corflu ends up in demise, what happens to the FAAn Awards? Most people would likely assume that if Corflu goes away, so do the FAAns, which for good or ill are fairly inextricably linked to the convention. However, as I've attempted to make clear these last several years, my take is that the awards are "only" *sponsored* by the incumbent Corflu to the extent that the convention provides a venue for the award announcements and usually trophies and/or certificates of some kind to the winners. Thus, in theory at least, if there's no Corflu, the FAAns could find a different sponsor, or indeed have no sponsor at all. Whereupon would it fall to the administrator to fund physical awards, whatever form they may take? Or (re-)institute a voting fee? Or merely announce winners?

First, though, we'll have to see if any white smoke emerges from Santa Rosa...

## RADIO WINSTON

### ON THE FLY

Go to sleep now, **Leigh**...

As usual I'm not entirely sure what prompted this particular column, but for some reason I suspect it was the Flying Lizards, whose 1979 version of the Motown slice "Money (That's What I Want)" from 1959 became an unlikely hit, getting on 'Top of the Pops' twice.

For those of you who might have thought this a Beatles' tune, since they covered it fairly faithfully in 1963, here's the original (as by Barrett Strong):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeVx1C73o8k>

...and now, the Flying Lizards' deconstructed and arguably highly satirical version:

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

(Which you might consider to be a precursor to the sort of stuff churned out by Art of Noise).

Considered more or less a one-hit wonder, the slice continued to have shelf life in various movie and TV show soundtracks eg 'The Wedding Singer', 'Lord of War', 'Life on Mars' and 'Family Guy'.

Continuing with the aeronautical theme, I was inevitably reminded of another unlikely hit, the Xmas number one on the UK charts in fact, the 1983 a cappella cover of Yazoo's "Only You" by the Flying Pickets:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgDKtLPp46s>

The band came together practicing their a cappella on coach trips to acting gigs, founded by Brian Hibbard (pictured from them days), a Welsh socialist - hence, in part, the band's name, since various members had been involved with the miners' strikes in the early 1970s.



I suppose that if I don't also mention the Flying Burrito Brothers there will be Outraged Letters™ so here they are. Some bloke christened Ingram Cecil Connor III (better known as Gram Parsons) founded this mob with another ex-Byrd, Chris Hillman, in 1968 and released their debut album 'The Gilded Palace of Sin' the following year, a set critically well-received by the likes of *Rolling Stone's* Robert Christgau, but failing to trouble the charts.

Parsons got the boot for some of the same reasons he got defenestrated from the Byrds, but also for what was reported to be copious indulgence in the booze and other less legal substances. 'Gilded Palace' has stayed influential (and had a few reissues) over the years. The 1997 re-release included liner notes from Sid Griffin, who noted the meager original sales of 50,000 copies, but wrote:

...like the first album by the Velvet Underground, it would seem everyone of those 50,000 went out and formed a band inspired by what they'd heard.

So here's "Do You Know How It Feels" from that set, after which **Leigh** can presumably wake up...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnIDlk9-Oz8>

# MOVIE NIGHT

## LOVE HURTS

Once again, to the bemusement and/or distress of readers, I turn to a movie that was critically slagged off (19% on *Rotten Tomatoes*) yet with an audience score that belied this (61%, admittedly not stellar but still a rather different percentile to the critics' assessments). The main attraction of 'Love Hurts' (now streaming on Peacock) is Ke Huy Quan in the sort of role that smacks of a Jackie Chan vehicle from, say, the late 1990s or early 2000s with its comedy and romantic subplots.

Richard Roeper (*Chicago Sun-Times*) wrote dismissively (if wittily) as follows:

"It's as if they took various ingredients from the Quentin Tarantino catalog, mixed in a medley of fights from the *Bourne* franchise (only without any real sense of menace), sprinkled in some lame attempts at dark humor, tossed 'em into a malfunctioning AI Blender and hit 'Puree.' With the lid off."

That's fairly typical reviewing, sadly, for almost any second division action movie - chuck in unfair comparisons to critically acclaimed stuff like Tarantino or Bourne and imply if not state outright that it's all well unoriginal. Sigh. I didn't

clock any resemblance to a

Tarantino effort at all, and if you ask me the (many) fight scenes owed as much to Jason Statham choreography than anything else. I will grant that overall you do get the impression that, as Roeper says, "the lid [is] off" the blender, and you're never quite sure whether they're going for actual slapstick *a la* Chan - whatever the aim was, it doesn't include "realism", a word which has an entirely different definition when it comes to action movies.



Quan solidly conveys the slightly baffled "everyman" (sort of) who turns out to be a former (if unlikely) hitman, and there are equally sound turns from Mustafa Shakir as the knife-wielding "Raven", Lio Tipton as the put-upon assistant at Quan's realtor business, plus a typically sound slightly-more-than-a-cameo effort from Sean Astin, this time as a thoroughly good guy.

I'll likely get mocked (again) for essentially echoing Edmund Waller by more or less saying "If it's length be not considered a merit, it hath no other", but at a concise 83 minutes it hardly drags, and action aficionados won't be entirely disappointed - and as far as other merits may apply, those it hath...

## EXTERRITORIAL

Another action movie, this'un released on Netflix on April 30<sup>th</sup>. It's a 109 minutes long German production, though perhaps inexplicably including the always good Dougray Scott in a typecast villainous role. Reviews were "positive to mixed", with noted similarities to 'Die Hard' quoted as either a positive or a negative, the latter including the usual lazy bollocks about lack of originality. What most agreed upon was that the main character, a former Special Forces soldier suffering from some major PTSD, is very effectively conveyed by actress Jeanne Goursaud, and it's really her that keeps you watching. That, and DoBFO wondering when Dougray Scott is going to be revealed as the chief arsehole behind the disappearance of the young son of Sara Wulf (Goursaud's character) inside the US Consulate in Frankfurt.



According to *FlixPatrol*, this'un was #1 on the Netflix charts in 79 countries within three days of release, so shurely it can't be that bad ey?...

## TV GUIDE

THE OLD AND THE RENEWED AND THE NEW (NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT ORDER)...

There's plenty of gob going off on 'Murderbot' (which we like so far, not having read any of the books though) and inevitably 'Doctor Who', so I don't plan to add much to the

general gobbage, especially since 'Who' seems as divisive as politics these days, and I'm getting well fuckin' sick of reading all the nonsense meself. What I will mention is the just started on Max (or is it HBO again now, fucknose?) crime series 'Duster', created by J.J. Abrams and LaToya Morgan (it sez here). Set in 1972 Southwest, we have Rachel Hilson as the FBI's first black female agent and Josh Holloway as the World's Finest getaway driver in an uneasy alliance vs Keith David as the local bigwig crime boss. Two episodes in and it's all rather good. Because it's J.J. Abrams, you know there's a part for Greg Grunberg in it (as the FBI station chief), but also we have twisty little delights such as an Adrienne Barbeau guest appearance in an episode also featuring Mikaela Hoover as the actual 1972 Adrienne Barbeau. A barely recognizable (to me at first, until **Jen** clocked him pretty quick) Donal Logue recurs as the bible-quoting but inevitably corrupt police sergeant, and there's an almost blink-and-miss-him George Eads (ex-CSI) in the opener. Worth a shufti...

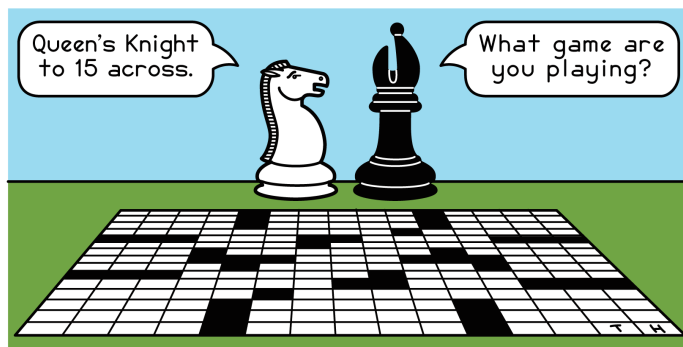


Renewed and ongoing: we're enjoying season 2 of 'Poker Face' (Peacock streaming), as I suspect is everybody else, since I don't think I've seen a bad word about the show anywhere at all. It's been a good move to resolve the issue of the mob chasing after Charlie in a timely manner before it got in danger of being tiresome. Season 2 has so far delivered some interesting "accidental" deaths rather than premeditated murders, but the best so far has to be (spoiler alert) the elementary school episode "Sloppy Joseph" where the victim is a gerbil...

'Leverage: Redemption' (Paramount+) also chugs along nicely, occasionally resembling the original 'Mission: Impossible' TV series quite a bit, and to good effect. The return of guest star Jeri Ryan in ep5, "The Grand Complication Job" doesn't hurt a bit either. My only complaint, as previously, is that there's Not Enough Aldis Hodge...

And speaking of, on days where there isn't anything else, I'm doing what seems an annual revisit of the original 1966-73 'Mission: Impossible' series, which always holds up. I just noted (having got to almost the end of s3) that Joan Collins is expected to die in any guest appearance (cf 'Star Trek' - "The City on the Edge of Forever"...

## GIVE US A CLUE



Lastish:

"Twin faring badly, you'll read it in *This Here...* (10)"

Definition: "you'll read it in *This Here...*"

Wordplay: "badly" is the anagram indicator; rearrange "Twin faring" to get FANWRITING

"Some group pedantry increased (5)"

Definition: "increased"

Wordplay: "Some" is a hidden word indicator; thus the solution is contained in "groUP PEDantry" = UPPED

"Passes Morlock's prey, left for fuel (6,3)"

Definition: "fuel"

Wordplay: "Passes" = DIES + "Morolock's prey" = ELOI + "left" = L yields DIESEL OIL

**Steve Jeffery** : clue: "twin faring, badly" => anagram, gives fanwriting.

"some group pedantry" => upped

"Passes Morlock's prey, left for fuel", suggests Eloi which strongly suggests oil for the last word. My knowledge of oils only extends to sunflower, olive, chilli and 3-in-1 (not to be confused, especially on salads). There's something called Argan oil, which sounds almost science fictional (probably to stop the photon torpedoes sticking in the tubes). I had to cheat a bit on passes and hit the synonym dictionary, and found "dies" which with an "l" for "left" suggests "diesel oil", but I suspect this of being more an Americanism as I think Brits would call it diesel fuel or simply diesel.

**Eli Cohen** : I've already wasted too much time on your crossword clues, so let me try to get those out of the way:

"Twin faring badly, you'll read it in *This Here...* (10)" I thought "faring" was going to be some sort of joke on "Farey", but couldn't come up with anything relating to "twin", so I started looking for anagrams, and "Twin faring" has 10 characters, so if "badly" is an anagram indicator... "FANWRITING" pops out as at least a plausible answer (must be some of it in that fanzine of yours, at least on the theory that anything a fan writes is fanwriting... we used to say that "anything two fans do together is fanac").



"Some group pedantry increased (5)": "UPPED" is 5 letters buried in "group pedantry", a synonym for "increased", so I'll go with that.

"Passes Morlock's prey, left for fuel (6,3)". "Morlock's prey" would be Eloi, which has "oil" in it, which goes with "fuel". So we need a 6 letter word now. "Passes", though it has 6 letters, doesn't seem to work as an anagram, though as a synonym for "Dies"... hmmn, dies+eloi is pretty close to diesel oil, without even anagramming, only missing an "l", which we can certainly steal from "left", so dies+Eloi+l gives us DIESEL OIL!

*[[DIESEL OIL was actually nicked from a Grauniad cryptic. 3/3 for both of you! Well done lads...]]*

Thish's clues:

"Clearly noticeable Fishlifter with Meskys and headless fly (8)"

"A wrongful act with Midge or Mary, like reading six issues of *Journey Planet* or a single *Vanamonde*? (7)"

"Pole on a ship, argument for pirate (7)"

## ANORAK

### IT DON'T MEAN A THING...

Some of the now disused lines in the UK are interesting for reasons beyond their simple history because of some of the infrastructure they hosted.

The Yarmouth-Beccles line, opened in 1859 as part of the East Suffolk line (absorbed into the new Great Eastern Railway in 1862) is one such.

Let's start with Haddiscoe station, or more accurately stations in the plural. The Haddiscoe station on the Yarmouth-Beccles line was named "Haddiscoe High Level" - formerly Herringfleet Junction until 1904 - because it was more or less adjacent to the Haddiscoe ("low level") station on the Wherry line (which still exists). Here's a picture of unknown date or provenance (but presumably pre-1959 when the Yarmouth-Beccles line closed), taken from Haddiscoe "low".



THIS HERE...

Just to add to the confusing but very anorak history, there was a *different* Haddiscoe station which opened in 1847 but closed in 1904 (cf Herringfleet Junction above) and replaced by Haddiscoe Low Level, although that station, still in service, was and is closer to the village of St. Olaves than to Haddiscoe itself.

The bit I wanted to get to in terms of infrastructure, though, is that the Yarmouth-Beccles line featured not just one, but two swing bridges over the River Waveney, one at Beccles and the other between Haddiscoe and St. Olaves.

For them not in the know, a swing bridge is one which rotates on a central axis to get out of the way and allow river traffic to pass. One of the better-known UK examples might well be the Tyne Swing Bridge (a road bridge, pictured) which opened in 1876 when the Grate Aitch **Harry Bell** was presumably simultaneously discovering the Use of Crayons, and may well thus have been an early subject for him.



Both the Beccles and St. Olaves swing bridges were operated from signal boxes until 1927, and had to be crossed at "walking pace" - I assume that to be 5mph - with a pilotman on the footplate for the duration. Here's a photo of the Beccles setup - there's no point in punting a "today" pic for comparison because, like most of the line and stations, it's now just an overgrown mess. Most of the stations on the line have been redeveloped over.





Here, though is one from (I think) the 1970s or so: what then remained of Haddiscoe High Level station looking northwest toward the Waverley, and I believe in the distance there is the swing bridge signal box (converted to a private residence).



## THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

On a lighter note from last month's column...

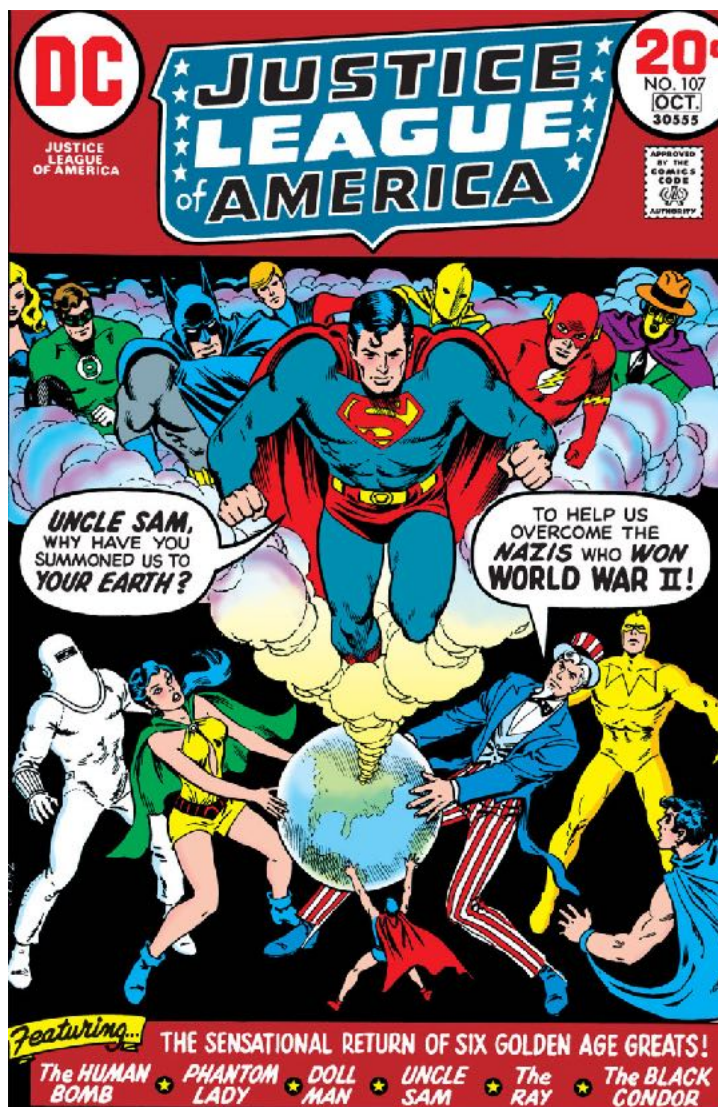
I'm a comic book fan, have been since I was five or six years old. Despite loving the British comic tradition of one or two-page funnies like Sid's Snake in Whizzer and Chips and the obvious Eagle and TV21 skiffy and media titles, I was a "Marvel zombie" before I even realised it due to the early Marvel reprints in Power Comics titles like Fantastic and Terrific and the Alan Class black and white reprints that seemed to be produced on something akin to sugar paper (Quick aside: long-time British comic book fan Nic Neocleous has produced an entire book about Alan Class called *Secrets of the Unknown...*, that details how he managed to secure the rights and repackage Marvel, Tower, and Charlton Comics titles for the UK from the late 50s through to the 1980s. It's a bit illio heavy and text light, but still a fascinating read:

[Secrets of the Unknown... Alan Class: Amazon.co.uk: Neocleous, Nick, Class, Alan: 9781399999557: Books](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Secrets-of-the-Unknown...-Alan-Class/dp/9781399999557)).

At that early stage, I would occasionally buy U.S. "four color" comics if they appeared in my local newsagent and caught my eye and still have a soft spot for Harvey Comics Sad Sack and his long-suffering Sarge (If anyone has any secret caches of Sad Sack sitting in their basements that they want to dispose of, send them my way... I wasn't so keen on Beetle Bailey for some reason).

In the early 70s and in my early teens (eleventyteen-ish), when I was already buying every Marvel title I could find on the British newsstands plus the British Marvel reprints that began to appear in 1972 with *The Mighty World of Marvel*, I

finally bit the bullet and starting buying DC Comics because I purely and simply ran out of reading material. Two of my favourite early DC titles that I remember reading were *Justice League of America* 107 and 108, which were Justice Society of America crossover issues and also introduced the Freedom Fighters, a collection of old Quality Comics heroes, to the pre-Crisis DC Universe. I've been a hardcore fan of both the JSA and the Freedom Fighters and Quality Comics characters ever since.



Marvel Comics has also spawned one of the biggest movie franchises of the 2000s, probably only surpassed by the Mission: Impossible movies for all out action. I have to admit that action movies are also a guilty pleasure of mine; from Big Arnie in the original Terminator and Predator movies, through the Nicolas Cage era of 'Con Air' (a completely bug fuck crazy gonzo movie) and 'The Rock' (is Connery playing a thinly disguised James Bond who has somehow managed to get on the bad side of the U.S. Government?), to the continually expanding Aliens franchise, I have watched them all. Although I am not a fan of Zach Snyder's dark and dismal DC movies, I do think Ben Affleck's casting as the



older, more world-weary Batman was masterful and, without the awful 'Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice' and 'Justice League' movies, we wouldn't have had Sasha Calle's very different and excellent performance as Supergirl and the return of Michael Keaton as Batman in The Flash movie, which wasn't as bad as many make out.

The issue I have with superhero movies and television series isn't the movies or series per se; most of them are at least okay and the very best are stunning. The issue I have is that, per the last estimates I heard, there are a maximum of 120,000 to 130,000 U.S. comic book readers worldwide (comic book readership has been falling continually since the 1960s. The last big drop in readership happened in the early 1990s with the ludicrous decisions to premiere a new X-Men book with five different covers and total print run of 2.5 million, print over a million copies of X-Force 1 bagged with five different trading cards making investor readers buy six copies (one to read, five to keep sealed), and the multiple editions of Todd McFarlane's Spider-man 1 which added up to another 2.5 million copies printed; all to service a readership of around 200,000 at the time), so the movies have broader appeal than the actual comics and this broader audience appears to have no understanding of the fundamentals of comic book storytelling.

'Captain America: Brave New World' has just started streaming on the Disney+ service. Like many of the post-Avengers: Infinity War and Avengers: Endgame movies, it got mediocre reviews at best. It also follows on from another Marvel movie that got absolutely massacred by critics and fans: 'The Eternals', based on the 1970s Jack Kirby title. 'The Eternals' was a problematic film; the basic story was okay and the cast of characters, especially Sersi, were well known to comic book fans, but the glacial storytelling wasn't really suited to superhero material and it maybe tried to introduce too many new characters in one go. The Eternals was meant to set up Sersi for Avengers membership, start the viewership down the extended cosmic character route (Pip the Troll and Firefox, Thanos' brother, were post-credit characters), and introduce the Black Knight, played by Kit Harrington of Game of Thrones fame, and Blade, Vampire Slayer, played by Mahershala Ali, possibly in time for the Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness semi-horror movie directed by Sam Raimi. None of these things came to fruition.

'Captain America: Brave New World' finally deals with the bloody great transmuted into adamantium Celestial being that is poking out of the Indian Ocean and has been complained about by Marvel movie fans since The Eternals first appeared in 2021, and this is going to play a crucial role in future movies, especially those that introduce the X-Men to the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

The real issue is all these movie fans who have never read the comics understand nothing about comic book style storytelling. Any Marvel Comics fan (or Bronze Age onwards DC Comics fan) understands that most storylines build over multiple issues of various titles and endless numbers of years; U.S. superhero comic books are soap operas and have been ever since Chris Claremont started writing the new X-Men in the early 1970s, but, truth be told, he was only building on the developments bought about by Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, and co with the introduction of the Fantastic Four and Spider-man in the early 1960s. (Another quick aside: I'm not getting involved in all the Kirby really did all the writing, Lee was a thief and crook bullshit that comic book fans seem to want to indulge in. Without Lee, in one way or another, Marvel doesn't exist. If Marvel doesn't exist then Kirby doesn't (co-) create the Fantastic Four, etc, and Ditko doesn't (co-) create Spider-man and it's not like both Kirby and Ditko hadn't burnt a whole kingdom's worth of bridges behind them with other publishers. Let's not forget: Kirby was going cap in hand to Lee for work after leaving Challengers of the Unknown at National Periodicals (DC Comics) in 1960. I think I may have given my views on all of this before.)

It's especially frustrating that the various fans and critics that lambast the Marvel movies for how slowly they develop storylines are happy to follow and praise television series that build over multiple seasons at an even more glacial pace. How long did viewers have to wait for the final season of The Umbrella Academy? How much longer do we still have to wait for the final season of Stranger Things? For Gawd's sake, Millie Bobbie Brown, the character Eleven in Stranger Things, actually looked only about Eleven years old in season one; she's now modelling swimwear in lifestyle magazines. The changes Elliot Page (I won't deadname, someone somewhere will tell me off) went through and made to himself between the first and last seasons of The Umbrella Academy are a soap opera in themselves.

I'm being picky, I know. It's unreasonable of me to expect viewers of superhero movies to have read Scott McCloud's Understanding Comics or Will Eisner's Sequential Art or Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative, but they could display a little consistency in their criticisms.

I haven't mentioned football in a while. Guess what? Spurs went and won a trophy. I know; it's a fucking miracle. Spurs beat Manchester United 1-0 in the Europa League final. It was one of the worst games of football I've ever watched and, to be candid, I'm not even that bothered that they won the damned thing, especially if it means that Ange Postecoglou (Poste-no-clue to many of the Spurs supporters I know) stays on as manager after we finished 17<sup>th</sup> in the Premier League, one place about the relegation places. In a season of surprises, Newcastle United won the League Cup (their first trophy since 1969), Crystal Palace won the F.A.

Cup (their first ever trophy), and the Europa League was the first trophy Spurs have won in 17 years and their first European trophy in 41 years. I'm gobsmacked but it'll probably wear off by August, when the new season starts.

Ah, now, that play I appeared in; it went well. I played a mohawked ex-tea boy at a post office that was sacked for making the tea in an urn using the dirty water from the cleaner's mop bucket. During the play I was attending an office reunion at a manor house whilst also being the Mr Big in a drugs ring which also involved the owners of the manor house. All very wacky, people laughed, mission accomplished. For fuck's sake, I'm turning into Ian Sorensen...



## LOCO CITATO

*[[“Your own mind is a sacred enclosure into which nothing harmful can enter except by your permission” (Arnold Bennett) ...]]*

From: phillies@4liberty.net

May 4

**George Phillies** writes:

Congratulations on the “Best Perzine” award.

*[[Thanks George. I'll point out, though, that while it's most definitely heartwarming that This Here... continues to be well-regarded within the community, I am most chuffed about scooping “Best Fanwriter” ...]]*

With respect to *File 770*, when I first proposed that N3F should have a newszine (early draft titles being *Nameless News* and *News of Fen*), I was emphatically told by a fan who shall remain nameless that there was no point to my proposal, because fandom already has a newszine, *File 770*. At some point in several tedious exchanges she claimed that I knew something because it had been published in *File 770*, which, as it happens, I only read on occasion. Her

response sounded nonplussed. (Though I do send them occasional news bits.)

*[[I'm the same, an occasional reader of F770, usually when there's some All Fandom Plunged Into War thing going on eg Chengdu, Gaiman ect ect. While Mike Glyer still kindly publishes FAAn Award news (as does Locus, of course - but not FanActivity Gazette), there's never seemed to be much in the way of fanzine news unless it's the latest six-issue burst of Journey Planet. This really just goes to show that we really are a tiny minority these days, don't it? There are other sources of news (all well & good): Ansible, naturally, but also the N3F's own FanActivity Gazette, Garth Spencer's The Obdurate Eye, and even This Here... on the specific topics of TAFE, Corflu and the FAAn Awards. It later occurs to me that, absent actual fanzine reviews, FanActivity Gazette could usefully report a summary of the previous month's uploads to efanzines...]]*

I hope that the medical issues turn out well.

*[[As do we...]]*

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From: rw\_lynch@yahoo.com

May 5

**Rich Lynch** writes:

Only a short comment this time, and it's about the time travel movie that you recommended. Thanks for that - I'd never seen (or even heard of) *Future '38* and now I'm looking forward to watching it.

*[[I hope you're not disappointed...]]*

There's another short film of a similar theme, also on Amazon Prime, that I can recommend to you in return: *The History of Time Travel*. It was created back in 2015 by a student filmmaker at Stephen F, Austin State University in Texas. IMDB describes it as: “A fictional documentary about the creation of the world's first time machine, the men who created it, and the unintended ramifications it has on world events.” Which is a bit of an understatement -- it's actually a clever examination of science-fictional “what-ifs” taken to the extreme: What if, instead of turning the completed time travel device over to the U.S. military, the scientist inventor instead used it to go back in time to save a family member from a deadly disease? What if the Soviets took notice and stole the machine and its plans for their own uses? What if persistent meddling in the time stream ended up drastically changing historical events? And what if it was continuing to happen as the documentary was being filmed?

I found it pretty entertaining, and at a concise 72 minutes running time it certainly doesn't drag. Check it out!

*[[We have in fact clocked that'un, some time ago. I can't remember if I was arsed to review it at the time or not, but*



*thanks to your prompting we rewatched it, concluding that it's still well good...]]*

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From: jabberwocky2000@hotmail.com

May 5

**Brad Foster** writes:

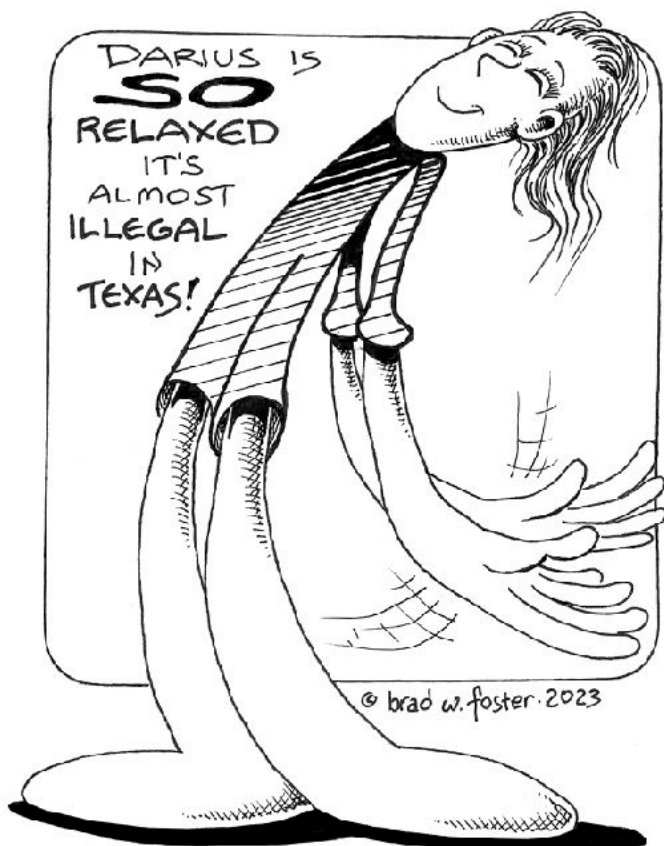
You used three fillos, here are two more to -almost- replenish your stock to pick from. And (while I don't want to make any rash promises here) I have actually been sketching out a couple of new things to see if I could finish them up in the next week or so. So maybe, maybe, something a bit fresher next time? We'll see. I've gotten excited before in the past year or so that I was actually drawing again, only to slack off because, well, there are still people on Facebook who are WRONG and must be corrected. Priorities, right?

*[[FYI, I currently have five Foster fillos sitting in your folder here - not counting the 1985 original I bought at the Corflu 42 auction. Thanks for keeping me on your list!...]]*

I did manage to get that new piece of art done for the Corflu souvenir book *Dancing to Architecture*, and kinda pleased with that image. So, all good signs for more to come in 2025, fingers crossed.

Teddy's 'toon on page 5 made me laugh out loud.

*[[As indeed it did in issue #85 when it was on page 6, per your previous loc...]]*



Recently discovered a tv channel on our DISH feed that runs old 'Mystery Science Theater 3000' episodes 24 hours a day (from the very first to the latest fan-funded group of shows), along with episodes of 'Riff Trax', 'Cinematic Titanic', and even 'Film Crew'. So these days something like 95% of my television viewing is just watching those all of the time. It has been long enough since I originally saw those MST3K episodes that I had pretty much forgotten them, so it's like getting to rediscover the fun all over again. Not to mention never did see any of the off-shoot programs, so those have been fun.

Have not been to an actual movie theater in ages, so we are always at least two or three years behind having seen any of the "latest" flicks. I mainly keep up with new stuff by watching episodes of "Pitch Meeting" or "Everything Wrong With...." On YouTube. So my main knowledge of new movies is from snarky reviews making fun of them. And I am happy with that.

Hey, I think I'll tune that in now to see what is on, and maybe finish the inks on that almost-finished little drawing over there!

*[[Have at it!...]]*

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From: kevinwilliams48@googlemail.com

May 6

**Kev Williams** writes:

Thanks for TH...86. An entertaining read as always. Good to finally meet you at last in the hallowed halls of Newbury last month. Hope the rest of the trip went well. I'll recuse myself from any further comment on Corflu, since am under orders from Dave H to direct any such towards his good self.

*[[As are we all...]]*

Sting: It was fascinating to listen to the Last Exit tracks. I had heard that tapes existed, but I guess, should've just looked on YouTube.

Sue and I had our first date in early 1977, and went to see The Alan Price Set at Newcastle's City Hall. Sue worked there and so we subsequently got to see lots of great bands. But that night when we arrived, most of the punters were in the bar. I always like to support the support bands – and occasionally you are rewarded with a discovery – in this case Last Exit. There was this guy in a yellow and black stripy sweater. We were impressed and went to their next gig in the Playhouse at the university. My memory is vague – but I recall them being very competent and jazzy and playing largely instrumentals, AND he was wearing the stripey Bee-Sweater!

The YouTube excerpt came as a bit of a surprise. He was obviously well advanced in his songwriting. I have read that

he pretty much had all the songs for the first Police album, before he left for London.

Like you, I've generally liked most of Sting's work with the Police and solo and include the Newcastle concert following the release of 'Dream of Blue Turtles' right up there. With ace jazzers recruited (Kenny Kirkland, Darryl Jones and Omar Hakim) it was a great gig.

<https://youtu.be/H2h8ZqMe0TY?si=qA1yyNUGafLyUdPC>

And after a long career he's still hits a good vein every so often. 'The Last Ship' I thought was excellent. Again, we saw him do it saw it in Newcastle, and although he got shit for exaggerating his Geordie accent, the sheer strength (and anger against his dad) in the performance won through.

I know what you mean about melding Arabic and western chord structures as in "Desert Rose". It's a seductive affect. It's brilliantly done by the French/Lebanese trumpeter Ibrahim Maalouf. His father was a musician and was frustrated by the inability of the Trumpet to play the quarter tones typical of the Arabic style – and invented a four-valve microtonal trumpet to fix the issue. His lad, Ibrahim is now internationally renowned with 20 or so albums and movie soundtracks behind him thanks to his effective and engaging melding of the two styles. Try this...

<https://youtu.be/HXzv7P7qGdM?si=G7zaLOqFqbQHRwoE>

*[[That's well good, that is...]]*

Black Mirror: By chance I've not yet watched the first episode, as you recommend not to – but started with the one with the great Paul Giamatti ("Eulogy" - Ep5) where he 'enters' old photos of a long, lost love. Great stuff. I'd just seen him being a crotchety old teacher in 'The Holdovers' – the Alexander Payne movie, and loved it so went straight to his episode.

A couple of comments on comments:

Yes I remember **Dave Cockfield** taking us out for dinner when he and the Bells visited us in Cincinnati in the 90s, and then borrowing the money off me to pay for it! It was in the amazing Art Deco Omni Netherland Plaza:

**Mark Nelson** - the theme tune to 'Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads' (great series – still holds up - very funny) was written by Ian La Frenais and Mike Hugg. Hugg was the multi-instrumentalist with Manfred Mann, and still does the rounds with Paul Jones in various versions of The Manfreds

or the Blues Band. I try to get to see them whenever they're around. They may be ancient but can still play!

**Kim Huett** – On Talking Pictures last year was a cracker of a little film ('Last Holiday') written by J.B. Priestley featuring Alec Guinness and Sid James in a serious role as a businessman. I was surprised it isn't better known – being another of Priestley's 'you cannot escape fate' stories like 'An Inspector Calls'.

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From: devhotmail@yahoo.co.uk

May 8

**Dev Agarwal** writes:

Thanks for sending me this issue. I enjoyed it a lot, having now met in person and got some sense of events at the pub meet in London and at Corflu.

You had a lot of fun reminiscences in this issue.

I saw Farah (who I know slightly) was there as well and **David's** response to her was right on the button.

Farah and I were fairly "outside the tribe" at Corflu and I was made to feel welcome, struck up several conversations with people I didn't know and spent time in the bar with you and **David**. I also observed attendees coming together with their friends, sharing joint experiences and having fun.

I also saw that a lot of hard work went into keeping the events on track and running smoothly. I didn't do anything myself but that doesn't mean I didn't see it was happening.

I don't know why I'm amazed that Farah's reaction was a list of grievances and even the idea that she'd take it over.

*[[“Take it over” is a bit strong, but I see what you mean. The mere thought of Ms. East Ham running a Corflu is such a [falls off chair] concept - Ulrika O'Brien has pointed out that there's people like that who stray into what we might call “fanzine territory” but are in fact “ni kulturni” when it comes to the traditions therein. What, I wondered, was she even doing at a Corflu, having shown no previous interest or engagement with fanzines (at least, that I'm aware of)?...]]*

I'm glad **David** ran that article rebutting her.

I hope you and **Jen** are readjusted to your lives in the US and recovered from the exertions of visiting and catching up with friends and family.

*[[More or less recovered in time for Jen's planned hip replacement surgery (see 'Health Diary')...]]*

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From: drl@ansible.uk

May 11

**Dave Langford** writes:

Thanks as always. Too knackered at present to say anything quotable, but it's appreciated.

Hazel and I are only just beginning to calm down after the high-stress infestation of builders in our front garden, which started in March and ran on through Corflu. A simple little plan for a paved front path (as a change from the traditional morass of cedar needles and holly leaves glued together with birdshit into a Son of Blob that stuck relentlessly to one's shoes, carpets etc) got out of hand when a routine check of the bloody huge cedar revealed it was now actively dangerous and apt to drop big branches on passing cars/pedestrians. In fact, as the chaps with chainsaws slowly took it down, it turned out that it had a big internal split full of icky rot. Extracting the mighty stump required all sorts of heavy machinery and took up the rest of the week. Eventually we found ourselves with new garden walls, a paved parking space (never before possible Because Cedar), terminal jitters and a lot less money in savings.

*[[I bet you're well pleased that's done, though. We have a sort-of similar issue in our little front yard/driveway which is also a Bloody Great Tree supplying a constant carpet of needles and, inevitably, birdshit. We hope to be able to cajole the landlord's agent into getting the cut bits off trees people in, since some of the branches are almost touching the roof. We shall see...]]*

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From: portablezine@gmail.com

May 11

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

I've been rather remiss in loc-hacking these last couple of months, but I did want to congratulate you in your seamless reentry into these here Yew Nighted States. So much fun!

**Dave Hodson's** piece on the ever charming Farah Mendlesohn seemed a bit. . . unedifying. I can understand why he was personally offended by those FB posts having been the one to present the convention but it seemed hardly worth the energy and angst, but I guess it blew some steam off. Farah's posts were thoughtless, selfish, self-important, hyperbolic, entitled, not properly honest, and ultimately, it seemed to me, of no value, since Farah has so little to do with Corflu or fanzine fandom. I can see where **Dave** might have felt his reputation needed to be defended. But when one is flamed or attacked on the

internet it seems best to just ignore it and let the idiot go on and embarrass themselves as much as they want. Anyway, hope this all blows over and doesn't leave Dave with a bad taste in his mouth for what seemed an otherwise successful and lovely Corflu.

*[[Part of Dave's reasoning for the reply to Ms. East Ham (whom I think you've summed up very well there) was the perception that this sort of bollocks doesn't get called out often enough, or at all...]]*

My best to Jen and swift recovery from the hip replacement. Keep the whining to a minimum, my boy!

I see it's already getting up near a hundred in Vegas. I don't envy you!

*[[Dropping back into the 70s for the second week of May, but now we are in triple-digit territory...]]*

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From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

May 11/13

**Gary Mattingly** writes:

*[[re: TH...#85 ]]*

I was actually going to work on this LoC between the 2nd and the 5th of April, but then the next issue appeared so this is beyond even your April 5th date. Now I must immediately start on the nextish. This is a bit short because, well, just because.

'Egotorial': It seems you got into the UK and then back into the US. It is fortunate that that is true. I'll check out the next issue relative to any mobility issues you encountered on your trip.

*[[That'll all be in the Trip Report. Well, mostly anyway. Something will appear in the 42 Memory Book...]]*

'Corflux': I voted for the FAAN Awards and I gave notice as to my dietary desires. Gee, I missed the The Vry UnSrs Music Quiz. Sorry I went to bed early.

'Radio Winston': I listened to "I'm Gone", "What Can I Do", and "Lost Without You". I enjoyed them.

'Movie Night': I saw 'The Electric State'. I thought it was okay. I saw 8 or 9 movies over the eleven days of the SFFilm International Film Festival (that's San Francisco, not science fiction). Most were good. I saw one of their groups of short films also. That was entertaining. There's now a bunch of other new films I want to see, but I have to figure out where and when I will see them.

Tomorrow I hope to see 'Sinners', and the next day 'Thunderbolts\*'. I've seen a few other movies after



the SFFilm festival, including 'Dog Man' yesterday, which I thought was fairly funny, not a great classic film, but I laughed. Today I watched two films from a Bela Lugosi collection I have, 'The Black Cat' and 'The Raven'. I can't remember seeing them in the past, but I might have. Again, not great movies, but I like films with Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff, plus they were both fairly short, 61 and 65 minutes, respectively. There are two more films in the collection to get through. I'd already watched the first film in the collection, 'Murders in the Rue Morgue', but no Boris Karloff in that one.

*[[As you may (or perhaps more likely may not) recall, Bela Lugosi was a friend of Jen's family...]]*

'Health Diary': Well, things sound better. I take an iron supplement three times a week. I had no particular symptoms. Some blood test the doctor had me take said I had anemia and an iron deficiency. The iron deficiency seems to have decreased (blood tests indicate I am less iron deficient), but the levels still are not very high so I will continue taking the iron supplement. I haven't noticed a particular difference in my health. For leg cramps I recommend a product called "Hyland's Leg Cramps". It has worked great for me. You can find it on Amazon. On my own health front, I just found out I have osteoporosis and have to start some medication or infusion in the near future. I hadn't noticed a problem. The doctor just thought I was of an age at which I should have a bone density scan, which indicated I had osteoporosis. My mother had it. She did have more bone breaks than other people. The only time I broke a bone is when I smashed my hand into a wooden beam. Another time someone hit me in the face and broke my nose, but I think that's cartilage really and not bone.

*[[Arg! Best of luck with the osteoporosis. I can't remember if the supposed leg cramp (homeopathic) pills I tried were Hyland's or not, but I'll have a shufti next time I'm at the pharmacy, because whatever it was I got did fuck all. If the Hyland's are different I'll give them a go...]]*

'TV Guide': I cannot recall ever watching 'Welcome to Paradox'. I also haven't watched 'The New Statesman' and don't watch 'Are You Being Served?'. I have heard a lot of recommendations of 'The Resident' but haven't gotten around to checking it out. The second season of 'Poker Face' started this month. I watched the first three episodes. I look forward to more. I've also been watching the new season of 'The Last of Us'. The second episode was pretty startling. I'm not familiar with the actual game, but I guess those who are familiar with it expected what happened, or something to that effect.

'Anorak': Interesting article about abandoned railroad tunnels. I checked out the US. There's a lot.

<https://www.steamphotos.com/Railroad-Photos/Abandoned-Railroad-Tunnels>

Some interesting maps here:

<https://stb.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

including one of abandoned rail tracks

<https://stb.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=59c5662600854756a7e6f18bca1a0f44>

or old railroad properties

<https://stb.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=0a75e92dcd4942439ae3606e79d6585e>

Pictures of old depots:

[https://pbase.com/nmsandrail/old\\_kansas\\_depots](https://pbase.com/nmsandrail/old_kansas_depots)

Almost makes me want to buy one (an old depot).

*[[It's likely worth a look into North American disused lines - my reflexive thought would have been that the USA didn't have enough railways in the first place to actually abandon any of them, but that's a brainfart since I know full well that Las Vegas used to have a passenger rail service which stopped at the Downtown Plaza hotel where the station was effectively inside the casino itself. The rail lines themselves do still exist and are well-used for freight...]]*

'The Old Sod': I haven't watched 'Adolescence', although I know many people like it and it has received good reviews. I may eventually watch it. I agree that in the past many people lived in a bubble. Actually, even today many live in a bubble, but it is one created by others, one they choose to inhabit. The news travels to them more quickly, but that doesn't mean that it is necessarily true.

'Loco Citato':

**Kim Huett:** Interesting Hungarian conspiracy theory. I don't think I've watched any of the "Carry On..." series.

**Bob Jennings:** I rode a bicycle a lot when growing up. Fortunately, I never encountered a problem. I even rode on a two-lane highway occasionally. Even as an adult I've ridden my bicycle, although not much over the past few years.

**Steve Jeffery:** I don't pick up phone calls with numbers I don't recognize.

**Leigh Edmonds:** Patricia Peters, my wife and occasional fan, still smokes. However, these days she never goes to conventions and rarely leaves the house.

**Gary Mattingly:** Oh, I remember now about a person being a member of fwa, "If you do fanwriting and think you could be a member of the fwa". I also remember the part about being voted in as a "Past President". Maybe my brain chose to forget. Actually, I have forgotten that part numerous times. I'll probably continue to forget it . . . for various and sundry reasons. I agree about US fannish history, that "much of the history appears in club newsletters and/or regional APAe". I would like it if more were written beyond those pages, but I'm certainly not going to do it. Relative to not continuing with the viewing of 'Paradise', I just had other



things that I'd rather watch, not necessarily better, just series or movies I like more. Too little time, too many shows. Relative to 'The Great Train Robbery', I haven't researched it further, and yes, it is possible they used more than one engine.

I enjoyed the art in the issue from **Ross Chamberlain**, **Brad W. Foster**, and **Teddy Harvia**.

Now I must walk and feed the dogs.

*[[Loc on #86...]]*

'Egotorial': Glad you made it back and that you're getting back to normal. An echidna is not blah, IMO.

'TAFnessabounds': Having met **Zi Graves** at Corflu 42, I am sorry to read that she lost. However, yes, who knows what traveling to the US from other countries might hold for those who are not US citizens (or even those who are).

*[[“Lost” is relative, not to say possibly demeaning to what was, in fact, a strong showing; I tend to prefer the passive phrasing of “didn’t win” in this context...]]*

'Corflux': The number of attendees at Corflu in Santa Rosa will be interesting.

'Faanwank': Congratulations to all winners.

'Radio Winston': Interesting history.

'Movie Night': I enjoyed 'Conclave' also. However, I saw it before the current Pope became Pope, not that that changes anything.

I haven't seen 'Future '38'.

'Health Diary': Good luck to **Jen** on the hip replacement. I know a number of fans who have had such a replacement and seem to have had little to no difficulty with it after the recovery period. I've never had one so I cannot speak from personal experience.

'TV Guide': I still haven't watched 'Elsbeth', 'Matlock', 'Leverage Redemption', and probably not 'Black Mirror', although there's a chance that I watched an episode of it when it first started. I do continue to watch 'Doctor Who'. I also continue to watch 'The Last of Us', 'Andor', 'Will Trent', and 'Poker Face'. I finished watching the seasons of 'Daredevil: Born Again' and 'The Wheel of Time'. I watched one episode of 'Common Side Effects' and 'Scavengers Reign', both animated, but probably won't watch more. I have thought about watching 'Star Wars: Tales of the Underworld' but not sure if I will actually give it a try. I watched a few episodes of 'The Bondsman', but probably won't return to it either. I look forward to 'Murderbot' and will also check out the new series 'Fountain of Youth'.



'Anorak': I enjoyed the current events and historical information.

'The Old Sod': As **Dave Hodson** notes, Farah Mendlesohn definitely undercounted the number of Corflu attendees who were not over 70. Admittedly, I am in the over-70 crowd, but I don't have issues going up and down the stairs. I'm one of those odd people that would rather take the stairs than an elevator, usually. For me, it is good exercise and frequently faster than an elevator. I don't think **Dave** was dishonest about accessibility, although I will admit I didn't pay much attention to that information.

'Loco Citato':

**Brad Foster**: Sorry to hear about the cold.

**Leigh Edmonds**: With respect to fannish histories, I agree that something beyond the first draft is needed. It would be nice for someone to go through all the apa and

club notes, smooth everything out, and make it an interesting and informative read, while also being entertaining.

**Kim Huett**: Vegetarians are not an acceptable part of a vegetarian diet. Some seemed to like the vegetarian nut roast a lot. I didn't really like it that much. Just personal preference.

Re your (Nic) comment, gee, now I'm wondering if my LoCs are anodyne. TS.

*[[I'm not going to get into individual critique on that topic, least of all with you. Correspondents will have noted that they are subject to fairly light editing off me, usually removing salutations and the like and "non-comment" comments. I do think, though, that loccers in a frequent fanzine will get edited less than they might in, say BEAM (wherein Ulrika wields the scythe). It's arguable, I think, that when an ish is fairly hot (or at least warmish) on the heels of the previous one, there's less emphasis on having to be more concise (and by implication, relevant, perhaps) about content, so here we get something more like people chatting up the pub. I'm not sure that came out quite right, and shouldn't be seen as derogatory. Other faneds may express it much better...]]*

Enjoyed the art by **Brad W Foster**, **Teddy Harvia**, and **Ulrika O'Brien**, also the various and sundry photos.

Well, it is time to go see 'Thunderbolts\*' so I will send this email.

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From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

May 12

**Leigh Edmonds** (Past President, fwa, 2024) writes:

Thanks for *This Here...* 86. There's no stopping you is there? Back home only a couple of weeks and out comes the next issue, like clockwork. Inevitable is the word I'm looking for to describe *This Here* ...

*[[Well-ll, #86 did drop about a week later than usual...]]*

It's now about a month since we were at Newbury and I don't know about you but I'm still experiencing it. Whatever version of the lurgie I picked up at Corflu is still with me. True, only a shadow of its former self as I had it at Eastercon and at home for a week or so. I don't know if it is natural to be thanking a severe cold but I really did enjoy myself at Newbury and, in its own funny way, every tissue I pull out of the box is a reminder of good times.

So much for my current state of ill health. Of course, after all the stress and trouble of the previous year I was fairly well run down before setting off on my travels so I was not surprised to end up catching something nasty. Over 40 hours sealed up in hurtling metal tubes, inevitably with a few people who are infected, is certain to end up with a run on the tissues. But I'd have felt much better about it if I'd got infected on the way home so I could have enjoyed Eastercon more than I did.

I enjoyed seeing the photo of the little echidna on your first page. Nice little creatures if you don't rub them the wrong way. I haven't seen one out in the wild for some time but they are apparently resident around here so there are probably some nearby. After three weeks in foreign places it is nice to be reminded of home, so thank you for the gesture.

As usual I subjected myself to the links you provide in Radio Winston. I had neither known nor cared about Sting before "Roxanne", and not much after. You have reminded me why.

*[[Once again, mission accomplished...]]*

'Anorak' was good, as usual. The British railway system seems to be an endless supply of odd and interesting stories, not that I traveled on any of the odd little lines. Getting around London on the underground and trips to and from Newbury was about it. And, how could I forget, Eurostar from Paris. I did not much like the fast intercity trains like the one that took me from Paddington to Newbury. It made me think that the designers had gone to special trouble to copy the worst aspects of the interior of a Boeing 737. Perhaps my most enjoyable trip was when I found that the Elizabeth Line ran all the way out to Reading so I spent a relatively comfortable hour watching the landscape glide past with some enjoyment. After that, a short trip on to Newbury in one of the 737 imitations was much less pleasant.

*[[We did all right for the most part, apart from having to drag Too Much Luggage around - that and the amount of walking required to get from the trains to the buses through eg Victoria Station. The final train trip (Grantham - Leeds) and the final leg of the flights (Detroit - Las Vegas) both turned out horrible, coincidentally I'm sure...]]*

The thing that astounded me the most was the cost of traveling by rail in Britain. The day after Corflu I'd planned to go to an aviation museum down towards Cornwall but it was closed so I decided to visit the Tate Modern in London instead. I turned up bright and early to the Newbury station and was told that if I wanted to travel right then it would cost me 82 GBP. If I came back after nine it would cost me about 48 GBP which included traveling around on the underground. So I stooged around the station until 9 and then had a pretty interesting day out for my money. (Details in my trip report when I get around to it.)

In comparison to this, last Friday I went down to Melbourne to have lunch with some fine fannish friends. The travel time between Ballarat and Melbourne is about the same as between Newbury to London but the relatively fast trains we have here are a bloody sight more comfortable than the British trains. But the cost difference is the most startling and my return trip to Melbourne, and traveling on trams in the city, cost me the equivalent of 2.65 GBP. Australia, the worker's paradise!

*[[Claire pre-booked all of our train tickets with a magic touch which meant they were all reasonably priced, but then again we had the advantage of a "travel together" railcard for two persons. As much as everyone pissed and moaned about British Rail back in the day, it's all much worse since ratbag Thatcher (who was known to hate trains) sundered and privatized the system...]]*

Speaking of which, on the final leg of my flight back to Melbourne I ended up sitting next to a Pom who was migrating to Australia. I didn't blame him, so many people crammed into such a small island, the cost of living, the weather, etc, etc. Again I thank my great (add a few more greats here) grand parents for having made the journey a century and a half ago.





Young Farah did get **Dave** exercised, didn't she? The only part of her facebook post that really annoyed me was the suggestion that it is somehow my fault that I have white hair. I blame my parents for this. I didn't set out to get old and grey, it just sort of happened and somehow Farah made me feel guilty for it.

*[[She has more reasons to feel guilty than you ever might. 35,331.27 of them...]]*

Anyway, in retrospect I look back on the lack of lifts at Corflu the same way as I feel about the infection I got there, or the cost of British train fares, part of life's great tapestry. Of course, being on the second floor and being somewhat old and increasingly frail (see above), I did not look forward to having to go up and down the stairs. I could do it, and obviously did, but standing at the top of the stairs looking all the way down I felt a sense of excitement and fear the same way the Stuka pilots must have felt as they began their dive bombing runs. Either I'd survive it or I wouldn't. As for climbing the stairs, an oxygen bottle at the top of the stairs for the convenience of residents would have been appreciated.

After the hotel at Newbury I was mightily relieved to find that there were lifts in the hotel at Belfast. Of course, the problem there was that the lift wouldn't recognize my existence unless I showed it my room card at precisely the right angle and appropriate signs of deference. Of the two hotels I preferred Newbury which had a sense of being somewhere in Britain rather than the Hilton in Belfast which could have been any one of thousands of international hotels around the world. The hotel I stayed in in Paris was better than either but I'm keeping that secret in case I can afford to stay there again one of these days.

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From: excellenceingardening@gmail.com

May 13

**Joseph Nicholas** writes:

Thanks for various recent issues of *This Here*...

I'm responding in particular to *This Here*... 86, and within that to the 'Anorak' column about the Boston, Sleaford and Midland Counties Railway -- and within that to your observation about the number of level crossings on the Grantham-Sleaford leg. If you widen the compass somewhat, to Lincolnshire, the Fen Country and East Anglia in general, there is a prodigious number of level crossings in the region -- because, of course, the land is rather flat, and when the railways were being laid out it would have been a price tag too far for the private companies to build the bridges required to cross the then-existing (and fewer than now) roads. As the road network expanded, bridge-building still proved a price tag too far for the Department of Transport

(or whatever it was then called). And it's not just roads: there are numerous footpaths and bridleways which require walkers to cross the actual tracks, although these are all branch lines rather than main lines. Network Rail, however (here's the point to which I've been driving), is now trying to close these crossings on the grounds that they're too dangerous to be allowed to remain in use, and that signs urging walkers to look and listen before stepping out are insufficient safeguard.



But is Network Rail offering to install pedestrian footbridges, or re-route affected footpaths and bridleways? Of course it bloody isn't; it just wants to close them off altogether, leaving country walkers with dead ends and sections of footpath unconnected to anything. As you might imagine, people who like walking in the countryside -- this includes me; walking in the countryside around London was one of the things Judith and I used to do together -- are seething. Network Rail's consultations with the affected public on proposals to close these crossings seem to be on hold for the moment, and the status quo prevails; but one imagines that sooner or later the issue will be resurrected, and Network Rail will start closing these crossings whatever the public says, and probably very often doing so by stealth, at night, and walkers won't know about it until after the fact.

End of nerdish rant about footpath crossings.

(Ekshly, it's not just East England which has footpath crossings. When I visited Sandwich and Richborough Roman Fort in Kent in September 2023, the path to the latter from the former, part of what's called the Saxon Shore Way, requires one to cross the railway line between Sandwich and Minster, the next village along. Doubtless that crossing will also be in Network Rail's sights, and walkers will be forced to use the narrow -- and thus much more dangerous! -- B road to the fort.)

Incidentally, I was impressed to see, in the little video about the Sleaford West signal box to which you linked, that

cyclists are provided with a dedicated cycleway under the railway line, rather than having to share the road space with other traffic. The provision of cycleways under the railway has been requested of the firms constructing the white elephant that is HS2, and they have refused -- in some cases, their representatives walking out in the middle of meetings with the public on this issue. How downright contemptible of them.

I hadn't seen any of Farah's comments about Corflu and the Eastercon on Facebook, and in the light of that won't comment on **David Hodson's** response. What I would enquire, though, is whether Farah has been sent a copy of *This Here...* 86 so that she can read same?

*[[A fair question, to which the answer is "not directly by me". On a previous occasion where she had been roundly criticized (in a BEAM editorial by me, and quoting several others re: 'Firefly') I did indeed send her a rare and expensive actual copy of the ish, only for this to be termed an act of aggression and resulting in me getting blocked by her and several others. This prevents us from following typical fannish "form" and leaves us depending on the grapevine. It will be interesting to see if Dave or myself get a publishable, non-DNQ direct response (which I doubt, since that didn't happen last time) or whether we hear somehow of complaints that she wasn't sent the ish, contradicting her previous stance. If you or anyone else is in contact with her on any level, please feel free to forward the ish. Having said that, I subsequently hear from a friend who recalls (not entirely 100%, they admit) that she firmly stated at the time a wish to never read anything by me ever again...]]*

But I shall stop here. I have an online LAMAS lecture coming up shortly (LAMAS being the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society -- although the county of Middlesex ceased to exist in the London local government reorganisation of 1965, the name of the society remains unchanged because it's over 150 years old), which is of particular local interest because it covers excavations of a Mesolithic site at Tottenham Hale (not unadjacent to Tottenham) -- a site which is now being built over by lots of shiny new apartment blocks (the work being visible on Google Earth). And before that, I must unreel the hose and water the garden after another bright, warm, sunny and very dry day (there's been no rain for several weeks).

Kick it for me one time!

\*\*\*

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

May 15

**Kim Huett** writes:

Attached is a news article from the Australian music newspaper, *Go-Set*, dated 30 August, 1969. Having scanned it for a different audience it seems only reasonable to send it to

you as well, if only so you can compare colonial shenanigans with your own memories.



Lovers Dream

During their recent three-State tour, Melbourne group, **Lovers Dream** performed at a discotheque in Wollongong.

Through no fault of their own, the group found themselves in the middle of a violent brawl in which one of their members was injured and their equipment damaged.

It appears that the cause of the brawl was liquor. Patrons were freely admitted bringing their own beer or spirits. One party brought an 18 gallon keg with them.

As the crowd became drunk the violence suddenly erupted. Glasses were thrown all over the place, at other patrons, at the walls and at the group. Windows were shattered, including an \$80

plate glass window facing the street. Furniture was smashed and pieces of it thrown everywhere. Some people even set fire to the furniture and wall fittings and it is a wonder that the whole discotheque wasn't completely burnt out.

Lovers Dreams' equipment was knocked over in the melee, their amplifiers and drums damaged and their girl singer, Evelyn, knocked unconscious when hit on the head with the broken off leg of a chair.

Roy Davenport, the group's lead guitarist, in

an effort to defend himself smashed a man over the head with his guitar, when he found himself being lunged at with a knife.

The strange thing about the brawl is that no-one bothered to call the police. In fact, later enquiries revealed that the manager of the discotheque wasn't even on the premises at the time.

Luckily none of the group were seriously injured, even though their equipment was damaged, but they are all most emphatic that they will not be returning to that particular discotheque in Wollongong.

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From: srjeffery@aol.com

May 18

**Steve Jeffery** writes:

Dunno where you got that [email cover] quote from Nic, but patently not true on multiple counts: My mind is neither an enclosure - it's far too leaky for that, and if I tried to describe it to Vikki as "sacred" she'd probably expire from a fit a laughter, or claim I had misspelt either scarred or scared. And nothing harmful getting in without permission fails to explain the persistent annoying Kajagoogoo earworm one day last last week. I didn't invite it, that's for sure. It just



gatecrashed one morning. Probably clutching a Watneys "Party 7" can. (When did those stop being a thing?)

*[[Arnold Bennett, as you now know. The Party Seven, introduced in 1968, was well popular throughout the 1970s and apparently has recently been reintroduced...]]*

And now I'm wondering why there's a picture of an echidna on your front page. I think it's an echidna. It has too long a snout for a hedgehog and not long enough spines for a porcupine (or even a porpentine, fretful or otherwise).

We were more bemused/amused at the weird and idiosyncratic twisty stairs and short corridors layout of the Chequers, but we can both (just about) cope with stairs, but stairs that ended abruptly at a door without a landing was a new - and slightly disconcerting - one on us. Vikki - whose peripheral vision is not good - was more wary of one of the short two-step risers on the split level corridors, where each of the stairs was a different height. To be sure, a lot of the hotel seemed a trip hazard waiting to happen. But the staff were helpful and patient, especially young Stephanie on the front desk most of the weekend - especially when one of the "care in the community" locals wandered into the foyer on Saturday to engage her in a rather one-sided conversation. (I'd encountered him earlier in one of the charity shops on the High Street.)

Congratulations to Mikołaj Kowalewski and to all the FAAn Awards winners, and indeed anyone placed in any of the categories in the *Incomplete Register*. I don't do nearly enough or regular enough fanac these days to expect to be in the top five, so I've taken to seeing how close my own votes check up against the final result as a reassurance that I haven't completely fallen out of touch with fanzine fandom. Or at least the FAAn Award vision of fanzine fandom. The only possible downside is that the announcement of Mark Plummer as the GOAT FAAn Award recipient might refuel Claire's erroneous feeling that she is the lesser half of the Fishlifter duo when, as any fule kno, this is patently untrue.

*[[Re: GOAT, agreed...]]*

About the only think I know about Sleaford is that there is a rather shouty crew that Radio 6 are fond of called the Sleaford Mods. I had rather hoped the video would show inside the crossing box with all the manual levers.

*[[There are a couple of vids of similar setups. I'm not sure whether Peter Honey would be allowed to video himself at work, but he could tell me otherwise...]]*

For an historian, FM does make some sweeping generalisations. I am still a year (strictly 52 weeks, as my birthday was a couple of weeks before Corflu 42) shy of 70. But we retread this "greying of fanzine fandom" lark every time Corflu rolls around and at some point you have to ask does it really matter if fanzine fandom as it currently exists dies with us? You can't exactly force a hobby on a younger generation who don't appear to have any interest or see any relevance in it.

*[[See 'White Smoke' thish...]]*

As for Dave's assertion that "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". Really? That seems an extraordinarily hubristic statement for a group of perhaps 100 or so active fanzine fans who the vast majority of science

fiction fans are barely, if at all, aware of. If you want to look anywhere, look for media fandom for TV shows ('Trek', 'Who', 'Hitchhikers', 'Red Dwarf', 'Mandalorian').

*[[In many ways, he has a point. Apart from 'Mandalorian' in your list, all those other fandoms you mention tended to follow the club/newsletter/fanzine model. I was introduced to the One Tun gatherings by a dedicated Whovian at work, where I met (and - er - married into) Trek fandom, got to know the HHG group, segued into "regular" SF fandom via Novacons, and in fact started The Official Red Dwarf Fan Club as a result of a First Thursday conversation which was by then at the Wellington. So we can contend that "pre-internet" (although rasff was already A Thing) the various*

*media fandoms tended to follow the "fannish fandom" model...]]*

Yes, I remember the classic "Everybody's gotta be somewhere" from Eccles in the Last Goon Show.

\*\*\*

From: chuck.connor@gmx.co.uk

May 20

**Chuck Connor** writes:

Poretti advert caught me recently.

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

The original piece used to turn up on the odd (or very odd) Italian compilation albums back in the 1980s. Apparently the idea behind it was that Americans were having more success in Italy than Italians, so he put this together to prove a point

(It's total gibberish, but here's the Italian TV 'Live' version (read backing tapes, etc) with subtitles)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpFhFV58FEs>

*[[It's a toe-tapper innit?...]]*

Yeah, any goats should go with basil... (bay-zil?)

\*\*\*

From: paulskelton2@gmail.com

May 21

**Skel** writes:

As I understand it we are now insignificant. We here in Fanzine Fandom were once the centre, because we were the only place where everyone could touch. But now we are not just stuck out on an obscure spiral arm of an insignificant fringe galaxy, but we are no more than a stain of mould on the rag used to wipe down one particular bar in that galaxy. So how come, given the efforts to spread the awareness of TAFF to other, much bigger, strands of the fandom subculture, us guys keep winning whenever we're involved? I can only conclude that the spirit of TAFF has not yet been successfully disseminated.

*[[I had to at least cursorily check the contention that "us guys keep winning", and it does seem to have legs...]]*

It was nice to finally meet you at Corflu, a convention which, apparently unlike Farah Mendlesohn, Cas and I thoroughly enjoyed... to the extent that we are (still) intending to try and book for a day at the next Novacon.

I've never actually had a conversation with Farah, but I was sitting next to Cas post-breakfast one day when she and Farah nattered interestingly for quite some time about how Stockport Market has basically gone to the dogs. Cas had innocently remarked, after her opening statement in this regard, "But of course you won't know anything about Stockport.", only to discover that Farah's mother, and her mother before her, had in fact had a stall on Stockport Market selling cloth and such. Cue two adopted Stopfordians falling off chairs.

Anyway, though we found her to be pleasant conversational company we both don't agree that the hotel was not "accessible". We are both in our late seventies, albeit with no significant mobility problems. People with major mobility issues had access to the ground floor rooms around the car park, but I do think she had a point in that people with issues, albeit less serious, in that area might have been better advised to book into a nearby hotel (always assuming there were any such... and if there were, they were any better).

*[[I'll take your word for the "pleasant conversational company" observation. I don't think I saw her at all for most of the weekend, except one surprising moment when she breezed past me in a corridor with a startlingly cheery*

*"hello!", leading me to conclude that she can't have realized who I was, shurely?...]]*

Anyway, I've finally gotten around to finishing this off; the delay not being attributable in any way to your fine fanzine, but rather to circumstances in my life, post Corflu.

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From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

May 29

**Eli Cohen** writes:

Glad Corflu 42 went off well, but **Dave Hodson's** column just confirms my resolve to not get involved in running any conventions (my only con-running activity to date was being treasurer of the 1972 Lunacon, where I got to pay Theodore Sturgeon's room service bill, and being a member of the 7 for '77 worldcon bidding committee — I ran away to Canada to avoid actually working on that con; all very much ancient history).

I'll just finish up with a science joke or two:

What's a nuclear physicist's favourite meal?

Fission chips.

The Heineken Uncertainty Principle says "You can never be sure how many beers you had last night."

\*\*\*

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

May 29

**Kim Huett** writes again:



It was one ordinary day with peanuts when Duff at last made it as far as the fabled city of Most Vega\$. It was a day he would not forget for a very long time. It began with a visit to the domicile of the Great and Powerful GuNToV.

"Hello Jen, hello Faanwank, hello cigarette butts!" exclaimed Duff as he simply walked in.

"Hello GuNToV! Do you think that in the Harry Potter universe Hooters is a very different sort of chain?"

GuNToV glared at Duff in response and all the little mice that lived in GuNToV's beard peeked out to glare along.

"What do you know of this business, miscreant?"

It took Duff a moment to realise GuNToV was asking him. Having never



been called anything as grand as miscreant before Duff wondered if he should thank GuNToV for bestowing such a title upon him. He hoped this honour meant he could now wear the ermine. Then he remembered to reply.

"Nothing you bloody oaf, I mean sir."

GuNToV harrumphed at this and wagged his beard in such a manner that all the little mice did gyre and gimble in the resulting wabe.

"Nothing whatever?"

"No sir. Nothing whatever."

"That's very unimportant," said GuNToV as he turned to the assembled correspondents so that he and the mice could see what they were up to.

Having been introduced the correspondents proceeded to panic slightly.

Half of them stood straight as possible and attempted to look all-knowing and competent while the rest made noises like foliage in the hopes of being mistaken for small bushes.

GuNToV glared hard at this display as did all the little mice.

"Very unimportant!.Everybody make a note of it!"

The assembled correspondents didn't need to be told twice. Almost as one they whipped out pen and paper and proceeded to write in the most studious manner they could manage. Some even held their pens the right way round.

It was at this moment that DoBFO the House Elf woke up with a start, "Did I miss something important?"

GuNToV waved a hand, "Oh yes, very unimportant."

DoBFO looked confused, "Don't you mean important?"

GuNToV looked down his long nose at DoBFO, and then a bit further down his mouse studded beard for extra emphasis.

"No! Unimportant is what I said and unimportant is what I meant. Uni my dear fellow is Latin for singular. Unimportant therefore means singularly important which means unimportant is more important than simply important."

Duff nodded along with this little speech. He was certainly learning a lot of interesting things today. Or did he mean uninteresting? He would have to ask GuNToV for clarification later...

The assembled correspondents looked up expectantly at this point because they had finished writing 'important' or 'unimportant' several times, each according to their hemisphere of residence. That is except for Unbridled Bill who had only found a slice of cheese in his pocket and was now pretending to write Palaeozoic with it in hopes of impressing somebody, anybody.

Feeling the dull weight of their gaze upon him GuNToV turned back to the correspondents and looking portentous

he intoned, "We are here today to consider Rule Forty-Two: No individual more than a mile high may enter Most Vega\$."

Everyone turned to look up at Duff. He glared back and put forward his best argument.

"I'm not more than a mile high!"

"You most definitely are," replied GuNToV.

"More like two miles high," added DoBFO the House Elf.

Duff arranged himself with all the dignity he imagined a miscreant might possess.

"That's not a regular rule. You invented it just now."

"It's the oldest rule in the book according to my lawyer, Hertzsgood," replied GuNToV with all the gravitas of a man who has mice in his beard.

Duff looked triumphant, "If that's so then why did Douglas Adams steal it?"

GuNToV turned pale and one by one, without any fuss, all the mice winked out of sight.

"Consider your verdict," GuNToV croaked to the assembled correspondents and slumped on the nearest couch, squashing Lean Edmoons who was quietly dozing there.

The correspondents clustered together to mumble. Eventually Jerry Coughman was pushed forward, "We choose cheese, M'lud."

***[[In the interests of strict accuracy I should point out that there is, in fact, no couch...]]***

In other news the chef who said that everyone has to be somewhere did so multiple decades after the show you mention aired. The only people who are still familiar with The Goon Show these days are in the 60+ category and grew up with the show.

I will agree that I was surprised to discover you agreeing with me. In general I'm not used to people agreeing with me as I apparently have a different take on the world from most people. Which is why I expect various parts of my last missive has resulted in some degree of push back. Anyway, I would like to point out given your response here that if you had given a little more thought to your original comment and expanded it the end result wouldn't of been the sweeping statement that so annoyed me. No need to name names but a more detailed statement of position is important.

Yes, I did misremember Patrick McGooohan's role. I think it's because they were all so young and so serious in their acting which made them hard to tell apart. I accept your point that Sid James had quite a few acting roles before he became defined as a comic performer but 'Hell Drivers' is the only non-comic role I've seen him in. The only early stuff of his I've seen is 'Miss Robin Hood' and the various St. Trinians

movies. Not especially comic roles but not far from his later typecasting.

*[[Sidney had a tiny bit part in the first St. Trinian's movie ("Belles of...", 1954) while he was still mostly doing seriouser stuff. He was also in 'The Pure Hell of St. Trinian's' in 1960, the same year as his first 'Carry On...' in a slightly bigger but still supporting role. I suspect you might be thinking of Frankie Howerd from 'The Great St. Trinian's Train Robbery' (1966), since both his and James' earlier character were named "Alphonse"...]]*

Lastly, has it ever occurred to you that if you give blood your contribution might well be the difference between some bloke, somewhere, getting an erection or not? Talk about with great power comes great responsibility.

*[[I may have already mentioned as an aside somewhere that the rules here have changed so that I am now allowed to donate blood. Any phlebotomy collection is, however, chucked away...]]*

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From: mark.fishlifter@googlemail.com

May 30

**Mark Plummer** writes:

It feels like it's been ages since you were here, although at the same time I still don't feel that I'm back to normal after the double-convention social whirl of April. I nearly wrote to you back then about the April issue, mainly because it would have amused me to write to you while you were elsewhere in the house, but actually it wouldn't have been strictly speaking about the April issue but about the last few days of voting in the FAAn Awards and that now seems more pertinent.

I appreciate that as voting closed you were then in the last stages of preparing for a significant international trip. I also appreciate that you've put a substantial amount of effort over the years into promoting the FAAn awards and encouraging participation, often in the face of raging apathy. What I don't appreciate is being told, even non-specifically as part of a mass mailing to the Corflu membership, that along with everybody else who hadn't yet voted I should be ashamed of myself because I haven't been arsed to vote in fanzine fandom's only dedicated awards, when this castigation comes when I still have four full days before the deadline for doing so.

*[[I'll interject here that the timing of and preparation for The Trip wasn't at all relevant to the FAAn Voting deadline which was agreed with Dave before FFS was A Thing...]]*

I know we go through a version of this every year. You don't get as many votes as you'd like and especially you don't get them early. But a deadline is a deadline. If I have until

Midnight Pacific time Saturday March 29 to cast a vote then likely I'll leave it pretty close to that date and time before doing voting. Probably not the absolute last minute, not least because I'm never sure whether midnight on March 29 means the start of the end of the day. I think it's the latter, but as a general rule I think it's better to specify 11:59pm for the avoidance of doubt. Even so, I know that if I leave it to the absolute last minute there's always the danger that something unavoidable will prevent me from doing it at all, so I don't do that, but I am still likely to leave it until towards the end of the window.

*[[Point taken about 11:59pm, which I shall try to remember for next year...]]*

And it doesn't matter how much time you give me. It was 5 January when you emailed round *The Incomplete Register* and opened voting. I had to check that date but while I couldn't have told you when I received the email I can be entirely confident about my reaction to it: OK, that's something I don't need to think about until mid-March at the earliest.

Much of my working life involved deadlines and they were a disproportionate sense of aggravation because many people start from the principle that their deadlines won't be met. Two things were particularly annoying. First, people lied about their deadlines. They'd say to me, I need this by 26 March when their actual deadline was 1 April. They assumed I wouldn't meet their deadline and they'd have to chase me so they gave me a premature deadline in the belief that this was necessary to get me to meet the actual deadline. Secondly, I'd be given a deadline and then would find I was being chased for the work before the deadline had expired. This was usually couched as 'just checking in', 'just making sure that it's on your radar', the clear implication being that they didn't trust me to remember and felt they needed to remind me. I would add that in a work context there were a couple of good reasons for not delivering significantly ahead of deadline, because I'd only be given something else to do, and if I waited until close to the deadline there was a significant chance that the requirement would change or evaporate entirely so doing the work early really wasn't beneficial.

All that said, I think in the context of something like FAAn award voting a reminder isn't out of place. Clearly some people do need the reminder as a spur to do vote. Personally, I don't. I'm usually pretty organised about deadlines and know what I need to do by when. But I can accept being reminded as part of the process of reminding everybody.

But if you want to tell me I should be ashamed for not voting I think you should at least wait until the deadline has passed and I haven't voted. You can then castigate me for not being arsed and I might have to accept that, although were that to happen even then I might challenge the contention. I was going to say that as long as there are FAAn awards I will



likely vote for them, but on previous evidence that's not true. I gave up voting for the Novas several years before they were formally discontinued because it was obvious that there wasn't enough interest and barely enough of a field to justify their continuance. I'm not ruling out taking that line with the FAAns at some point, although if I do and if you're the administrator I will at least let you know. If at some future point I haven't done that, and if I still don't vote by the deadline, then sure, tell me I should be ashamed that I can't be arsed.

*[[Re: your points about getting the arse over my more strident remarks pointed at people who haven't yet voted (or likely wouldn't be bothered to), I can only offer the weedy defense that "I didn't mean you", or to put it another possibly nicer way, "Don't take it personally". While I fully understand that most people seem to work to deadlines, it's a bit exasperating from my point of view that at the point when TIR goes out in the first week of January, you have all the information you need to cast votes for work done the previous year - not that I'm saying all that info is contained in the Register which is merely an aide memoire...]]*

I know that this year you were going to be travelling only a couple of days after the deadline and a flood of last minute votes might have been inconvenient, but if that was the case, sorry, but you should have set an earlier deadline. I suspect though that the concern is more that when there's little advance voting, as I assume is often the case, you're never sure whether that's presaging a low turnout generally. And if so maybe that's a separate problem.

*[[It's been fairly consistent over my tenure that around two thirds of the ballots come in the final week of the voting window. I've come to expect this. I actually did less in the way of mass reminders this year, but yes, they were more strident, and that seemed to work since there was an increase in numbers over last year. I also targeted individuals more via DMs and emails, and that approach also bore fruit in the sense that I'm sure some people submitted ballots just to shut me the fuck up. Those who also would have got eg mass mailings to the Corflu membership would have therefore, I suggest, correctly inferred that accusations of shame did not apply to them. As should you...]]*

Finally, I should add that it's not because of this that I'm writing to you the day before the target date for #87.

Anyway, onto **Dave's** column and Farah's comments about Corflu. I do find assertions like this, that the nearly the entire convention was 70+ years old, annoying because it's so obviously wrong and so easily refuted but it still derails the substantive point. I reckon that between thirty and forty Corflu attendees were definitely under 70 and I may be prematurely ageing a few people where I'm not sure. And as **Dave** says, the substantive point can really be made just as well by pointing out that most the attendees are 60+. As

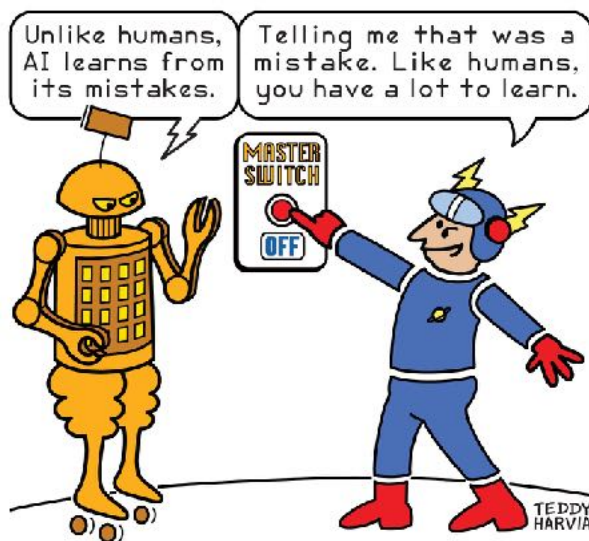
anybody who's attended one can see, Corflu is not a young person's convention.

But as to the substantive point, it's hardly a great insight that Corflu may only have another five years of life left in it. People at Corflu talk about this all the time and I really can't believe there's anybody who's aware of the people who typically attend who hasn't noticed that the average age of the membership rises by close to one year every year. I first attended Corflu in 1998. I was then 34, towards the upper end of the youth wing, and there were several other

attendees who were in their late 20s. Now in 2025 I'm still towards the upper end of the youth wing at 61.

**Dave** says that **Rich Coad** thinks it'd be nice to get to Corflu 50 in (presumably) 2033 and I agree that it would, even if it's only because there's a certain numerical neatness to it. Even that might be optimistic, though, and if Corflu doesn't last that long, well, so what? Most things stop eventually. I'm not sure whether fandom is special in this respect but we do seem inclined to keep things going long after the point when they should have stopped. Of course it would be nice if there were influx of people in their 20s and 30s, people who were interested in the same things as us, enthusiastically hoovering up the old fanzines the rest of us produced twenty or fifty years ago, sitting at **Doug Bell's** feet and asking him to "Tell us about the old days, grandpa", people who wanted to be a part of the Corflu gestalt and wanted to perpetuate it. But it isn't going to happen. And personally I don't see a benefit in finding younger people who are interested in something tangential and adapting Corflu to suit their tangential interests as a means of keeping Corflu alive. Yes, sometimes – often – events need to adapt to survive, but the alternative is that they don't survive. They were created to fulfil a purpose and that purpose no longer exists.

*[[See 'White Smoke' thish which tries to address many of these points...]]*



As for the significant loss made by the 2024 Eastercon, we do now have the example of the 2025 Eastercon to draw on. Both used convention centre venues, the first to do so in over 20 years, and so both had significant extra site costs. One lost a lot of money and it's my understanding that the other is fine financially although I've not seen a balance statement.

Why the difference? I suspect that this year's Belfast site deterred some people from Great Britain because of a sense that it's too far and too difficult to get to, but that was more than balanced by a significant number of attendees from the island of Ireland who don't usually attend taking advantage of the fact that it was both local and offered discounted memberships for Irish-resident members. Belfast likely gained from the Glasgow Worldcon last year in a way that Telford likely really didn't. This is highly subjective but it seemed to me that there were a lot of people introducing themselves on the convention Discord, saying it was their first Eastercon and they'd been at Glasgow.

To what extent was it predictable that last year's Eastercon would have such low membership numbers, so much so that by my reckoning it was the smallest in-person Eastercon since 2007, the year when the original convention had to cancel and an 'emergency' and purposefully relatively low-key alternative was put in place. Well, I'd agree that it's the received wisdom that the Eastercon is smaller in a British Worldcon year, and I think it really is true to a degree, but if you look at the 2014 Eastercon their numbers were only a couple of dozen lower than the previous year. Did it lessen the impact because the 2014 Worldcon was in London and the Eastercon was in Glasgow? Ultimately it's complicated with lots of other factors such as cost of living generally – as Farah and Dave acknowledge – and a degree on ongoing Covid-caution coming into play, as well as the unconventional convention centre venue with everybody off-site, the accessibility or perceived accessibility of Telford, and indeed Telford itself. Ultimately, I think we may only now be moving out of a period of post-2020 uncertainty about Eastercons.

\*\*\*

From: klepsydra@gmail.com

**S&ra Bond** writes:

You are a victim of your own munificence, you know. I always want to loc *This Here...*, which never fails to give me an hour or more of pleasure (subdivided into Amusement, Thoughtfulness, and Trying To Decide Whether I Agree With you and / or other fans); but too often I don't do so promptly, and the next thing I know, the wretched thing's next issue is already sitting there in my inbox, mocking me.

But today (as you know, Professor) I needed to contact you about something else, and you told me that the deadline was looming, so I have shoved other commitments – namely the third piece I'm writing for Pat Virzi and Geri Sullivan's massive History of Every Corflu and Everyone Who Ever Attended One, a murrain upon the twain of them – to one side, and here comes your sodding loc.

*[[Very prolific of you - I think I've only got two bits in...]]*

Although, sticking with Corflu for a moment, Just a Minac can only boast a seven-year uninterrupted run. It didn't appear at Corflu between 2016-2018; Marty Cantor never answered my offer to run it, nor (I believe) did Chris Garcia, and I suspect that following those two years, by 2018 I didn't even offer it to Colin and Catherine. If anyone else feels like running it in 2026, I'd grant them my blessing. And I hope to be back in the saddle for 2027.

(As I write, I see the announcement that Rich Coad has signed a hotel contract and the provisional date is locked in. Woo yay.)

Now that the race is over and the victor declared, I feel more safe in heartily agreeing with your avowed opinion that **Zi Graves** should stand again in a future TAFF election. This assumes, of course, that any such candidacy should be to a part of the planet where it's currently safe for them to actually travel to... I figure, mind you, that the next westbound race is likely to be to Montreal 2027, and so long as Canada hasn't become the 51<sup>st</sup> state by then, and so long as Quebec hasn't declared UDI from Ottawa...

Here's one for 'TV Guide' – have you seen Love, Death + Robots yet? Only caught half a dozen or so thus far, putting me way way behind on it, but given how little telly I watch at all, it says something about its quality that I've seen even so many. To adapt a 1956 Harlan Ellison story for 2020s TV has a certain chutzpah.

*[[I shall have to seek that out...]]*

I'm not surprised to learn about level crossings in Lincolnshire from you; well, perhaps I'm surprised to learn it from you, but the information itself, not so shocking. "Very flat, Lincolnshire." Which means lots and lots of level crossings compared to elsewhere.

*[[See also loc from Joseph Nicholas...]]*

I wasn't much of a fan of the Bishop's Finger either, though at least it was better than the Silver Cross which was utterly beyond redemption.

I've known the wretch for some 35 years and it still goes against the grain to agree with Crazy Markie, but he's right just this once (I suppose on the stopped-clock basis) that the best thing about 'Are You Being Served?' was the theme tune. And that back when he and I were young (Maggie), TV shows had much better theme music than they do now. I still remember the sheer delight I felt on discovering that the



theme of “Some Mothers Do ‘Ave ‘Em” was a transposition into music of the show’s title, in Morse code; I still remember eagerly awaiting the broadcast of every new episode of “Oh No, It’s Selwyn Froggitt” to see what new words had been fitted into the title song this week. I’m astonished, though, that Mark Nelson can’t remember the iconic theme tune of “Grange Hill”. Alan Hawkshaw, “Chicken Man”; library music, I suppose, like so many. It astonished me at the time – and gave me an early insight into the nature of such things – that the same music also served for a contemporaneous show on ITV, “Give Us A Clue” (you remember – Una Stubbs and Lionel Blair playing charades on a nationwide channel. How different things once were).

*[[There’s quite a bit of Morse code in various TV themes, perhaps most DoBFO Barrington Pheloung’s theme for ‘Inspector Morse’ (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEfv6QtYFAM>). I also only very recently indeed read that Lalo Schiffrin’s legendary 5/4 time theme for ‘Mission: Impossible’ is constructed as “dash dash dot dot”, which translates to Morse code M I...]]*

There are a few good theme tunes still around. In more recent times I’ve become hooked on both “Archer” and “Bojack Horseman” in part because their opening credits were so well done, and married visuals to music so effectively. So it can still be done. Why isn’t it? Too many shows succeed despite their opening sequences instead; what price “It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia” with its anodyne beginning?

I wonder whether **Eli Cohen** heard that first-generation punks the UK Subs got refused entry to the US this year? I’m pretty sure Charlie Harper is old enough now to be capable of wreaking no more havoc and anarchy than hitting you with his walking stick, but evidently punk is still seen as a menace to the American way of life.

I dunno about leprechauns shitting gold, but according to *Viz*, some kittens do.

On the subject of actors playing against their stereotype, like

Sid James (who was already a household name thanks to Hancock by 1957) – and bringing this back to Just a Minac once more – toward the end of the original ‘Doctor Who’, there was a regrettable trend to bring in Famous People in bit parts, almost all of whom treated their appearance as a mere joke and didn’t even try to fit in with the show (Ken Dodd was possibly the worst, though Hale and Pace were little better). Who was the exception to this? Nicholas Parsons, of all people. He got to play a vicar who was troubled by a loss of faith and then got zapped by evil aliens, and he struck exactly the right note. What a man. (“The Curse of Fenric”, by the way)

*[[Not Ken Dodd, in fact, but the generally agreed absolute worst was Richard Briers’ turn as The Caretaker in “Paradise Towers” (1987) which was beyond awful...]]*

This leaves **Dave Hodson** to comment upon. Oh boy.

I can see where he’s coming from, and I can appreciate why he’s pissed off, but I still think it’s a bad idea for him to launch an ambush against Farah Mendlesohn; not so much because she’s not capable of defending herself (because she is), nor because **Dave** isn’t thick-skinned enough to survive the fiercest of defences from her (because he is), but because I can already tell that if this dispute spreads any further, it will do the reputation of both parties involved – not to mention both Corflu and Eastercon – no good whatsoever. And this I find regrettable, as I like all four of **Dave**, Farah, Eastercon and Corflu.

I corrected Farah putting fifteen years on my age as soon as she posted that, and she withdrew her exaggeration gracefully. For that matter, **Dave** himself is putting five years on my age, and thus committing the exact same sin as Farah, differing only in magnitude. (I grant you that with my newly diagnosed arthritis, I struggled with the Chequers stairs myself, and probably looked older than my years. I’d’ve asked for an accessible room if I’d known what my body was about to spring on me... and I’ll be doing just that at Novacon this year.)

Also, Dave is too busy being outraged to mention that there were ground floor rooms (on the other side of the car park; I looked longingly at them every time I had to face those stairs), which would, I dare say, have strengthened his argument with Farah, if he was determined to have one... “Level access option in the annexe” does not actually mean the same as “ground floor rooms”, and Dave could likely have avoided this whole kerfuffle if he’d actually said that to Farah in the first place.

*[[Maybe. The “ground floor” rooms were actually uphill (though not both ways), and ours was almost at the end of that block. Still, admittedly, better than stairs for us. I thought Dave conveyed the access issues adequately in his quoted email, and it’s clear to me that he was deliberately misrepresented by Ms. East Ham in her diatribe...]]*

I don't run conventions except when you bludgeon me into doing so, and seven times never get involved with running their finances, but it seems harsh for **Dave** to use Farah's alleged mismanagement of the 2024 Eastercon to condemn her for her comments on the 2025 Corflu. Quite apart from the fact that Corflu is not Eastercon and has far less money to juggle, the immediate question arises of "well, if he cares so much about that, why didn't he raise the subject before he needed a stick to beat Farah with?"

*[[Well, again while I take your points (which are as valid as anyone else's and a welcome contrast), I could suggest that she created her own stick which Dave then picked up with some alacrity. I read his use of the weapon as a riposte to her extremely risible suggestion that she might have wanted to run a Corflu when she can be said to have form for fucking up con running...]]*

Big conventions have been losing money for as long as I've been in fandom (literally; my first con was Conspiracy 1987, and my first several years in fandom were punctuated with fundraisers, fierce debate, and D West cartoons about what happened to the finances there). Before I was around to witness, other worldcons came off the rails in more spectacular fashion still – what price Constellation 1983? They wound up in the hole for a hundred and fifty thousand 1983 dollars. Compared to that, thirty-five thousand 2024 pounds seems mild.

*[[It's not only the big'uns - Corflu Glitter (Las Vegas, 2012) caught a serious cold by having failed to account for wifi charges. For me the argument isn't necessarily that a con can lose money, but whether or not those losses could have been mitigated or were in fact avoidable...]]*

Well, the cat's out of the bag now, and no doubt there will be much hot air expended upon what Farah did wrong in 2024 and how the loss of the Eastercon pass-forward could have been avoided. (Hey, hot air is free, at least.) At the end of the day, I tend toward a stance which I call pragmatic and which some will perhaps think is wishy-washy, which is that the pass-forward was there for just such a reason, and that while it's a shame that it's been used up in this manner, it's a damn sight smaller shame than it would have been if it hadn't been there and Farah had had to go round fandom shaking a collecting tin in the way that Chris Donaldson and Paul Oldroyd did after Conspiracy. (And, hey – they never got run out of fandom, either.)

*[[It's the magnitude of the loss, though, shurely?...]]*



In an ideal world this loc would not have been all first-draft. This is not an ideal world. Alackaday!

\*\*\*

#### WAHF

**Doug Bell** requests permission to punt the Corflu 42 Fanthology *Dancing to Architecture* as a pdf, available for a donation to the Corflu 50. I am happy to say yes... ; **Cuddles** forwards a photo of us from Eastercon ; **Tommy Ferguson** : "Thanks for this issue and great to see you and Jen at both Corflu and Reconnect – even if just ships in the night. Hope you both had a good time? Had genuine concerns you may not get back into the States – glad to see these were unfounded and you're both recovering from the trip." ; **Teddy Harvia** : "The appearance of an antipodal echidna on the editorial page of a fanzine published by a Brit living in Las Vegas turned my mental world upside down. I expect nothing less from you." ; **Perry Middlemiss** ; **Ulrika O'Brien** with more bookmark art for which much ta ; **R-Lauraine Tutihasi** ;

#### FANZINES RECEIVED

With the usual thanks, and an attempt to provide at least a tad of comment...

**FADEAWAY #69 (Bob Jennings)** - Good to see this'un back in the saddle; good stuff from **Rich Lynch** (on various versions of 'Around the World in 80 Days') and **Martin Grams Jr.** (on the Green Hornet, with a coda by **Bob**) as well as **Doug Hopkinson** on the 1930s West Coast Radio show 'Cecil and Sally'...

**TWO CHAIRS IN PRINT 4 (David Grigg & Perry Middlemiss)** - "This issue brings us up-to-date with the transcripts of Season 2 of the podcast. Next one in the middle of June."(it says here) ...

**MURDEROUS INK PRESS NEWSLETTERS (Chuck Connor)** - <https://murderousinkpress.co.uk/> ...

**LOFGEORNOST #159 (Fred Lerner)** - Travels through India (on the "Kim" trail) in which **Fred** has his own mobility issues, less severe than ours but still... Correspondents discuss the reading of *very* long books with typical erudition...

**VANAMONDE** some ishes from **John Hertz** who will complain if I don't mention I got them...

**CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #78 (Andy Hooper)** - A change up from "Horror Host of the Month" with a long article dissecting the 1945 war movie 'A Walk in the Sun'...



**TWO CHAIRS IN PRINT 5** (David Grigg and Perry Middlemiss) - Just in this very morning...

## INDULGE ME

✕ **WORLDTHINGWANK** : More load gun, aim at foot in the latest installment of WorldThing controversy, this time seemingly to do with the use of ChatGPT (which as I think we all know by now is homophonically French for “cat, I farted”) to “vet” programme participants. Partial Luddite that I am, I don’t really understand a lot of the nitty-gritty, but as you might expect [File770](#) does, and you can find the reportage under the tag “Seattle Worldcon 2025”.

In other WorldThing notes, **Jerry Kaufman** and **Suzle** will be running the Fanzine Lounge. The **Killer** writes (on FBF):

Suzanne Tompkins and I are the hosts of the Fanzine Lounge at this year’s World Science Fiction Convention in Seattle in August. We’ll have tables filled with fanzines, of course. Some will be part of a Reading Library; some will be free for the taking. We’ll be joined by **Joe Siclari**, **Edie Stern**, and **Mark Olson**, who will be scanning fanzines for the FANAC.org archive.

The Lounge will have tables and chairs so people can read zines and socialize. Next to our space, just outside the Exhibit Hall on the Convention Center’s second level, will be a coffee and snacks stand, so convenient. We’ll also have a monitor showing the Daily Newsletter. We’re looking for fanzines to fill that space. Do you have fanzines that are taking up room you want to use for something else? Send them to us or bring them by the lounge!


Do you have surplus copies of fanzines you’ve published over the years? Send them! Or bring them along! Or is your fanzine all electronic? With your permission, we can print sample copies to display or distribute.

If you’re going to be in attendance, we invite you to spend some time overseeing the lounge while we see a bit of the convention ourselves, or while we’re working on the Hugo Events Team.

The Lounge may also see the Worldcon Order of Faneds (WOOF) assemble their venerable annual Amateur Press Association distribution and maybe some surprise events. If you want to send us packages of your surplus or unwanted zines, send me a DM and I will supply you with street address or PO Box, depending on what shipping method you want to use. (Let us know in advance if you plan to bring stuff for us, so we can plan better.

I’ll punt any specifics about WOOF (to which I have been a very occasional contributor) if and when I get them...

✕ **FANZINE “READING” SERVICE** : **Tommy Ferguson** draws my attention to the latest, presumably AI-driven offering from Adobe for those with short attention spans for whom anything greater than a soundbite is TL:DR...

 This appears to be a long document. Save time by reading a summary.

**JOE GEORNOST**

#159 (May 2025) for FAPA mailing #351 from Fred Lerner  
at 81 Worcester Avenue, White River Junction, Vermont 05001, USA  
(Telephone: 802-295-6548, Internet: fred@fredlerner.org)  
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GSTK

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : Almost inevitably this month, an appearance by **Carole Ann Ford**...



✕ **SON OF SILVERCON: Kevin Trainor** (N3F treasurer) asks that I mention this upcoming convention in Vegas in July, offering discounted memberships to some locals and Neffers among others. You can judge for yourselves on the basis that this’un is described as a “libertarian/conservative” event, and last year’s GoH was Brad Torgersen ...



✕ **RADIO WINSTON EXTRA:** Pandora algorithm weirdness - presumably bleeding over from one of my ska channels, Phyllis Dillon and just now Jackie Mittoo have popped up on "Mott the Hoople Radio". Not that I'm complaining much...

✕ **ANORAK BACONIAN EXTRA:** Train drivers, despite being apparently very well remunerated, don't have it all that cushy sez the *Grauniad*, reporting on the age limit for trainees dropping to a mere 18...

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/may/11/its-an-illogical-job-why-driving-a-train-isnt-as-cushy-as-it-might-seem>

✕ **TERRIBLE "SCIENCE" "JOKE" FOR ELI:** I'm thinking of starting a cult that worships a particular shade of blue - I'll call it cyantology...

✕ **SCIENCE & NATURE:** Definitely up there in goshwow territory, "jousting galaxies" is A Thing, recently observed for the first time...

<https://www.cnn.com/2025/05/23/science/cosmic-joust-galaxies-merging-quasar>

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2):** Shurely even the **Killer** should recognize and approve of **Ann Jillian**?...



✕ **DoBFO NOT LEGIT:** I read loads of warnings about scam texts, emails and the like, often from the AARP, but I can't help but wonder whether *anybody* could ever be taken in by an email which begins with eg "Hello Dear, Eynic Far"...

✕ **WORD!:** Having read and very much enjoyed "Three Men in Orbit" by our very own **S&ra Bond**, I did

have one cavil over the use of the phrase "veriest novice", when shurely it should have been "veriest neophyte"? Oh all right, it's a minor quibble innit...

Buy your copy here: <https://www.sandra-bond.com/three-men-in-orbit>

✕ **MOVIE NIGHT EXTRA:** Browsing through streaming offerings, I end up clocking 'Things to Come' which I realized I hadn't ever seen, or equally likely, couldn't remember having seen. **Rich Coad** would, DoBFO, appreciate the presence of The Enormous Head of Raymond Massey™...

✕ **CORFLUX EXTRA:** This just in - **Bill Burns** reports: **Rich Coad** now has a signed contract with the Marriott Courtyard Santa Rosa, and the dates for Corflu Pickled (Corflu 43) are confirmed as February 27th - March 1st 2026....

✕ **TV GUIDE EXTRA:** I forgot to mention that I've also (finally) clocked 'Life on Mars' and (so far) the first season of 'Ashes to Ashes'. There's no doubt that DCI Gene Hunt as portrayed by Philip Glenister is a magnificent creation. I always wondered whether he was any relation to the John Glenister who was briefly my roommate at Carr-Saunders Halls of Residence when I started at LSE in 1976...

✕ **CORFLUX EXTRA:** This just in - **Bill Burns** reports: **Rich Coad** now has a signed contract with the Marriott Courtyard Santa Rosa, and the dates for Corflu Pickled (Corflu 43) are confirmed as February 27th - March 1st 2026....

✕ **CROGLING COMMONALITY:** I was yesterday years old when I learned that, like me, Unabomber Ted Kaczynski habitually raged about the wrongness of the phrase "You can't have your cake and eat it", which is DoBFO the wrong way around. You actually have cake, then you eat it, after which you no longer have it...

✕ **NEXTISH:** June 28<sup>th</sup> looks likely...

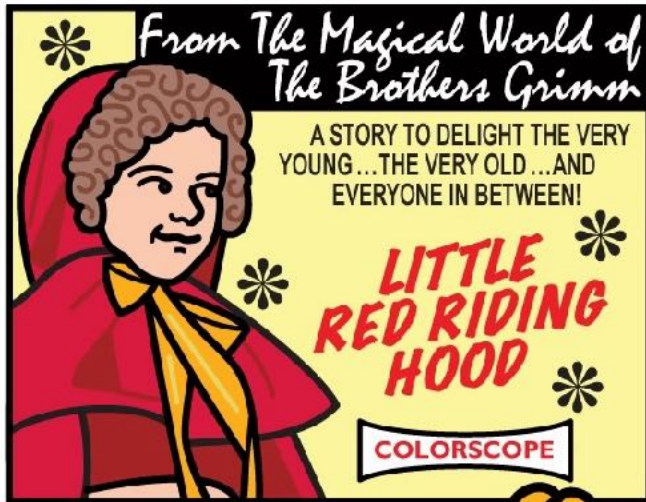


SHAMELESS FILLER



# Chat

**NOW SHOWING**



I went to a showing of *Little Red Riding Hood*, but they threw me out.

I couldn't stop laughing when she told the wolf what big teeth he had.



## MIRANDA

*THIS HERE...* is (mostly) written, edited and produced by:  
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"And of all my friends  
You've been the best to me  
Soon will be the day  
When I repay you handsomely"