

# This Here...

*"...a real pain in the arse." (L Kuehl)*

## EGOTORIAL

### SMOKIN'!

So this here 'Egotorial' is sort of adjunct to 'Health Diary', in that I'm going to tell you about my continued efforts, as urged by nice Dr Peters & Lee (vascular surgeon) to pack up nicotine....

You may already be aware that I stopped puffing actual cigs (cigarette-like cigars in my case because they're super cheap at about \$16 a carton of 200 and I almost chain-smoke) and switched over to nicotine vape. The Foger brand has approx 2,437 flavors, one of which is actually "tobacco" which is almost impossible to get so I went for "coffee" flavor which I deemed likely more acceptable than something like watermelon-mango-chocolate-dishwater or whatever was next on the shelf. I'm still craving a "proper" smoke every fuckin' day, but have so far resisted that temptation (for a few months now) despite shit going on which would normally have got me puffing three at once.

The Foger refills are \$20 and, according to their blurb, good for "up to" 30,000 puffs. Given that one of them lasts me about 5 days, that's 6,000 puffs a day, innit, which seems implausible, but I do *feel* like I'm vaping as much or more as I was smoking in the first place.

For the last couple of weeks I've got to stare at the box of nicotine patches sitting atop the filing trays here in the Fancave. The extensive quitters' brochure within has all sorts of psychobabble in it, at least that's the impression I got from a brief but eye-straining scan of the incredibly small print it's conveyed in.

You're supposed to designate a "Quitting Day" and chuck out all your ashtrays, but since I've had them sitting around

(albeit shoved out of the way) for the last months since I switched to vaping, I don't think their mere existence or indeed visibility is going to be a trigger. It's arguable that because I'm still craving, getting rid might help that, though.

I *did* have a Quitting Day more or less scheduled, and that was a week or so ago, and then the fan became acquainted with the feces to an extent which led to me quoting lines from Lloyd Bridges in 'Airplane'.

The patches are still there, though, right where I *do* see them every day and that encourages me to want to name the day sooner rather than later.

The process is supposed to go like this: 4-6 weeks on "Step 1" (21mg patch), then 2-3 months of "Step 2" (14mg) followed by however long at "Step 3" (7mg) and thence, in theory, becoming nicotine-free. I'll note that they had me on the 21mg patches while I was in hospital in December for my bypass, and I wasn't really having any cravings, though (DoBFO) I had other things on my mind at the time like that fuckin' broken disaster of a hospital bed.

The cost of the patches (which insurance, inevitably, won't cover) isn't as exorbitant as I surmised, probably equivalent to or even less than that of smoking in the first place.

I'll still retain my title of "Last Fan Smoking (tobacco)" I guess, and do positively plan to join my dear mates **Rich Coad** and **Pat Virzi** (for two I know of) as ex-smokers.

We'll find out...

It's all good.

**April 2026**



# TAFFNESSABOUNDS

## CONGRATULATIONS KAT!!

And it's a solid victory for our Katrina, well done! It did seem to take a bit of time (a full week, just about) to announce the result, but I suppose that can be attributed to the joys of transatlantic communication, ey?...

You can, I think, follow her trip plans at her FBF page:

<https://www.facebook.com/retstak>

[taff.org.uk](http://taff.org.uk)



# CORFLUX

## 2028 BID NEWS!

I hear from **David Hodson** that a bid to hold Corflu 45 in Sweden (coo er gosh) is being put together by **Johan Anglemark** (and that it's ok to publish this news). More details as we get them...

# FAANWANK

Responses to lastish's column (with interspersed comment):

**Jerry Kaufman** writes:

About the administration of the FAAn Awards, I favor accepting **Spike's** offer [to act as teller]. It would be as good thing to avoid the appearance of self-dealing just as much as avoiding actual self-dealing. Lots of people operate on cynicism because they see self-dealing in so many places that they come to expect it.

*[[Or is it projection? I dunno. I ask the Killer if he prefers the "teller" or "auditor" option, and he says he favors "teller" but would like to see some discussion there. So would I, and it's a shame he doesn't appear willing to start it...]]*

**Steve Jeffery** writes:

As long as the full votes and voters are published for all to see in the *Incomplete Register*, I don't see anything dubious or

wrong about the Administrator also being a contender in one or more categories or, if it comes to it, a winner. If you are going to cry foul or fix from the corner of the room, then I think you need to show your working out.

*[[Indeed. Optics aside (but acknowledged), it would be helpful if the habitual complainant could articulate exactly what it is I'm doing wrong...]]*

What's the other option? Force the current administrator into gafia for the whole of their stint? Or hand it over to someone who has so little involvement in fanzine fandom that they don't have a stake in any of the categories? Which pretty much excludes most of fanzine fandom and probably anyone who attends Corflu.

*[[The complainant (some years ago now) suggested Curt Phillips for the gig on the basis of not being a contender, and it was pointed out at the time (by Ulrika, as I recall) what a massive insult to Curt (a regular vote-getter for Best Fanwriter, in fact) this was...]]*

I suppose one alternative is that someone who has the requisite technical savvy can cook up some form of online voting forum or app, but that implies a pre-selection of nominated titles and categories to choose from rather than a free vote and somebody to vet and oversee that selection, and merely moves the goalpost back a stage to a pre-nomination round, and also has the disadvantage that it would exclude any latecomer entries after some arbitrary nomination date. None of which seems particularly satisfactory. No, unless someone can actually prove the current system is badly broken, leave it as it is, at least until a new Administrator volunteers with ideas of their own.

**John Hertz** writes:

Thanks some more for administering the FAAn Awards and pubbing *The Incomplete Register*. Please continue. Brother **Hooper** is wrong.

*[[While we disagree on several other things, John, I do appreciate your consistent support on this subject...]]*

**Mark Plummer** writes:

When the BSFA published the short-lists for their awards this year I skimmed down the announcement. It's force of habit as much as anything; I don't expect to recognise many of the books or even the authors these days. One work did immediately stand out, though, a novel written by the chairman of the BSFA.

I don't know anything else about the book and the author is little more than a name. I'm sure its presence on the shortlist is entirely justified in that it secured enough legitimate nominations to make the cutoff. It just looks... off. The optics, as you say. I know I'm not alone in thinking this.

The FAAn Awards are not the same as the BSFA Awards although I don't think either are particularly consequential. But my general feeling about awards administrators is that it

really is best if anybody concerned with the administration is not eligible for those awards. Either they're not in contention anyway or if they are they recuse.

It is a small part of the reason why I've never offered to do the job myself. By far the greater part is that I don't particularly want to do it, but if for some reason I ended up taking it on then I'd recuse myself and anything I produced from consideration. I know there are people -- including you, I think -- who say that's wrong so it's a no-win situation. It also helpfully absolves me from ever being the FAAn Award administrator.

*[[You're correct that I don't agree with recusal, even though its purpose is to remove the appearance of impropriety. As you say above, we're talking about something that's "[not] particularly consequential" yet apparently serious enough for the complainant to wail about it and strongly imply tampering or some other egregious behavior. Without any proof...]]*

But that's just me.

*[[I don't think it's "just" you but carry on...]]*

So far as you're concerned I think it's important to stress that I have no problem at all with your conduct of the FAAn Awards administration. Quite the opposite really. I think you promote the award openly and fairly in the face of a lot of disinterest within the community, you help the voters to be informed and to apply consistency, and I'm entirely sure you count the votes accurately. If you or something you produce wins in a category then that's because more people voted for you or it than anything else.

*[[Exactly, and thank you. A while ago I looked at historic voting numbers in the FAAns, and the average was in the mid to low 40s. I've usually managed to get more than that, with the average over my 7 years doing the gig being 57, with a high of 78 (2018, Toronto) and a low of 42 (2023, Belfast). I could sarcastically but shurely inaccurately observe that one of the complainant's problems is that the larger number of voters includes people who do not always vote for A P Hooper. It may also be of interest to note that the second-lowest voting total of my administration (49) occurred in 2024 (Las Vegas) which is the one that conspiracy theorists might think most susceptible to jiggery-pokery...]]*

It's not as if there isn't precedent for administrators winning the awards they administer. You cite **Andy Hooper** winning when he was FAAn administrator, and similarly I had no problem with his conduct in those years. And while it's not the same thing, for the 1977 Novas **Dave Langford** was tasked with producing rules to move from a juried award to a popular vote -- and in 1977 the Nova Award was won by **Dave's Twll-Ddu**. (I wonder whether a Nova administrator ever won a Nova during their administration? If not, did

they rule themselves ineligible or was it simply that they never happened to win?)

Looking back further, and with a UK-centric view because that's what I know best, the British newszines used to conduct polls of British fan activity, all awards of a kind.

Ron Bennett ran the *Skyrack* poll in the 1960s and for two years running its best fanzine category was topped by *Skyrack*, edited by Ron Bennett.

*Skyrack's* successor was *Checkpoint* edited by Peter Roberts. *Checkpoint* itself was deemed ineligible but in the first two years of its poll the best fanzine winner was *Egg* edited by Peter Roberts while in its last year best British fanzine article or column went to the TAFF report by Peter Roberts.

**Dave Langford's** *Ansible* took on the responsibility of conducting a fan poll when *Checkpoint* folded and followed its precedent with *Ansible* itself being ineligible. In its first two years the best fanzine was *Twll-Ddu* edited by **Dave Langford**. He also topped the fan writer category three times while in 1979/80 best British fanzine single issue went to *TAFF-Ddu* edited by Jim Barker and Dave Langford.

So there's plenty of precedent for administrators of fan awards winning themselves. I also don't think any of those administrators have fiddled the vote in their favour. I mean, really, why would anybody do that?

*[[I'm pretty sure it was Mike Glycer who, possibly quoting from somewhere else, snarkily observed that "It's a poor fanzine that doesn't win its own egoboo poll". But he's trying to say that the FAAn Awards are effectively the "This Here... egoboo poll" which I would argue is not the case at all, albeit that the initial mailing list (of over 140) is the same one I use for all my fanac. Other fanzines (and File770, and Locus) are strongly encouraged to disseminate voting information, and some of them actually do, which I suggest dilutes that contention...]]*

But for all that there's precedent and I have no issues with any individual administrators we still have the optics, something of which you say you're not unaware. I certainly have seen comments about the administrator winning their own award from people largely outside the fanzine world. And maybe the response to that is who cares what they think?

*[[ "Who cares what they think" indeed! But fans do love a good controversy, however manufactured it might be (looking at you, Coxon). I've never thought of the FAAns as being "[the Administrator's] own award" at all. It's sponsored by the incumbent Corflu, determined by the voters, and the phrase habitually used by the complainant, "Nic Farey giving himself awards", is massively insulting and indeed tincture of pure bollocks...]]*

Still, what can we do about it?



It's true that the very nature of the field is such that anybody who might have a role in the running of the Awards is almost inevitably going to be eligible in at least one category. I think there are plenty of people who would acknowledge that while they're technically eligible they're unlikely to win and could simply recuse without it having any bearing on anything.

We've separately discussed the idea of splitting the admin work and you've set out various ways in which that would be problematic. Your auditor suggestion -- and we spoke about this the other day -- may help. Yes, somebody could "accuse [you] of not forwarding all the ballots for whatever imaginary nefarious reasons" but the list of voters is published, it's not that long, and presumably people would notice their absence from that list. So that covers that. Still, honestly I think those who are inclined to see it as "Admins giving themselves awards" wouldn't be swayed.

*[[I agree, so the conclusion there could be to just leave the process as is without bolting on an added layer of bureaucracy. I know that the votes are fairly counted and checked for proper categorization and (where obvious) for being in or out of the qualifying year. If someone else is recording the ballots I wouldn't be able to do that, which would make me a less than diligent Administrator, wouldn't it?...]]*

So I don't have an answer. I just want to say again that this isn't in any way a criticism of how you've done the job and I'm not going to object if you continue to do it. I'm entirely sure you'll do it well.

*[[And to sum up this tempest in a teapot, I am quite angry and upset that I should need to defend my conduct of the FAAn Awards administration from those who would impugn my integrity...]]*

Jen Farey writes:

As for the FAAn awards, well, you already know how I feel about the whole thing. But I want to say something for the public record: No one out there knows just how much work Nic Farey puts into those bloody awards. There's so much more involved than just tallying votes. And if anyone thinks he would even want to receive an award that he didn't fairly win, please say that to me directly and we'll have a nice chat about how wrong you are.

## HEALTH DIARY

### OLD MAN PROBLEMS

It's doctor visit time with three this month (since I saw nice Dr. Park (PCP) on the 1<sup>st</sup> and from her acquired another specialist appointment for the dermatologist because I've got another one of those little fatty lumps (between neck and shoulder this time) that's usually benign but annoying, and since it might be growing they'll look at removing it.

I also got asked if I have any problem with what they politely call "leakage", leading to the embarrassing thought that they can possibly detect it and are consigning me to the "grandad smells of wee" column. I'm also reminded of what I was always taught was the fifth or possibly sixth Law of Thermodynamics, which goes something like: "No matter how many times you shake it, the last few drops always go down your trouser leg".

This is just another "old man problem" though, meaning that I'm more or less on schedule with the various frailties that come along with getting closer to 70. I am persuaded by nice Dr Park to get Moar Drugs, so now here's a prescription for Tamsulosin which is a one-a-day at bedtime pill for prostate health. I'm still nowhere near the number of bottles in Jen's medicine cabinet, so I should be grateful I suppose.

Not quite two weeks later I'm off the the audiologist to get my hearing (such as it is) retested and the hearing aids adjusted accordingly. Since they apparently don't take my Medicare insurance (the last time I got tested was under my old work health plan) I must cough up \$55, which isn't bad, and learn that they have insurance workarounds and in any case the expensive hearing aids are under warranty until November. The hearing has deteriorated a bit, but again that's consistent with old man ect ect...

The next day is the dermatologist, and what an utter waste of fuckin' time that is. I get questioned by the nursing assistant and mention a couple of other dermatological things while I'm there. The actual doctor whizzes through in less than 90 seconds, can't address other issues because the referral is only for the neck lump, looks at that and says "Just keep an eye on it" (physically impossible given where it is and the fact my eyes are not on stalks) and off he goes. At least their office wasn't way across town otherwise I'd have been even more miffed...

Alarmingly, I'm starting to get the pains in my calves again after exertion occurs, but that's a reminder that I'm probably overdue in making a followup appointment with Dr Peters & Lee. Yeah, I'll do that Monday, honest...



# TV GUIDE

## FOR ALL MANKIND

"For All Mankind season 5 is really bad. Fascism and unregulated capitalism is a really bad, and implausible, way to run a colony on a planet that will kill you in a second." (Ian Sales)



Salesy, you may recall, is a longtime mate and one of the eminent crew on the list of those who have done the best man gig at a Farey wedding. I encourage you to check out his contemporary and retrospective sf book reviews at [iansales.com](http://iansales.com) (which, hilariously, the spellcheck elf wants to render as "[insoles.com](http://insoles.com)" which is also A Thing). Now I often disagree with Salesy's comments about stuff, since he's got curmudgeonly in his old age, but here he's got a bit of a point, and I don't admit that reluctantly, but I'm looking at it in a different way.

The trick that makes 'For All Mankind' work in not just that it's an alternate history with an identifiable point of divergence - it's more a *parallel* potential development of human history under the defined circumstances in which coo er gosh space stuff is the driving force. We continue to get all this told, appropriately enough, in Harry Turtledove style ie following the journeys and interactions of approximately 427 characters. (Not a verified count, but sometimes it feels like that don't it?)

Ian's observation does note a shift in the nature of the storytelling, although we can contend that it's been signaled all along. Before we got to Mars, we had the spacefaring powers (USA, USSR and North Korea) playing out their jingoistic rivalries on the Moon but also having moments of interaction with their opposite numbers and, because there weren't *that* many people involved to start with, individual actions which prove pivotal, if temporarily.

Getting to Mars brought in the unfettered capitalism player in the form of the Helios group, and latterly its Soviet equivalent Kuragin. So all that's been churning on as we arrive at the year 2012 (ten year jumps between seasons, remember) with a Mars colony now comprising 5000 or so

people representing a microcosm of what's happening back on Earth.

So yeah, we've got "unregulated capitalism" + an effective police state which is all depressingly familiar. Ian's right that this is a mad way to run things in what NASA used to call a "dynamic environment" (a euphemism for "well fuckin' dangerous") but I disagree with it being "implausible" - a classical Marxist interpretation would consider it as being more like inevitable, and in the narrative is causing events to resemble the French or Russian revolutions.

I'm interested to see how the writers are going to play this out. Half the problem might be that there's a bit of a lack of characters you want to root for, the ones that do exist (the Good Cop, the hacker ect) are telegraphed extremely broadly.

Not *all* the original cast are dead by now, and it was well nice to see a cameo from Krys Marshall as Danelle Poole. Oh yeah, then there's the competing (!) missions to Titan on the go for what I guess will be the main goshwow component. Still and all worth watching...

## MOVIE NIGHT

### ACTION STATIONS!

Yes, action movies *again*, although the first one is a heist story with action in it rather than pure wham bang stuff blow up ect...

### CRIME 101 (Amazon Prime)

Just for a change, here's the critics/audience disconnect in the other direction. The "professional" reviewers liked this rather well while the viewing public turned in a pretty solid "Meh", and I might suggest that I can see why...

So yeah, this'un is the heist movie involving a briefcase with \$5 million of diamonds in it, an averse-to-violence jewel thief (Chris Hemsworth), a dedicated cop (Mark Ruffalo), an underappreciated high level insurance broker (Halle Berry) and a psycho biker (Barry Keoghan) who has been favored over Hemsworth's character to do jobs by the controlling underworld fence (Nick Nolte). Quite the cast list ey? It's well DoBFO that this lot intersect around the diamonds and we get plenty of character arc for each of them, meaning that at 140 minutes it all takes too fuckin' long to get to the denouement. There's secondary stories for them all, at least one of which (jewel thief Mike's happenstance romantic interest) could have been dispensed with in favor of a less emotional portrayal. The cast in general could be described as "All right, I suppose", with only Ruffalo rising above that meh assessment.

It's all fairly clever in the heist tradition, but while the critics contributed to an 88% *Rotten Tomatoes* score, the paying punters, while not entirely staying away in droves,

generated a box office of about \$72 million worldwide against a \$90 million budget, and not all that \$90 million shows up on the screen if you ask me. If you're a dedicated heist movie fan you will get something out of it, but otherwise it's 140 minutes in which you could more usefully do something else...

### THE RUNNING MAN (Amazon Prime)

2025 remake of the Arnie effort, and while the overall concept is the same there are some significant differences...

You've got the basics of a totalitarian USA run by the TV network who distract the great unwashed masses with game shows, the crown jewel of which is "The Running Man", produced by the oleagiously evil Dan Killian (Josh Brolin, who, for my sins, I can never *not* see as Jonah Hex). In this version, rather than having to navigate a preset "game zone" as in the 1987 flick, the runner has to survive out in the world for 30 days to get the big prize of a billion dollars (a clever little touch has Schwarzenegger's face on the money) while being chased by the network's professional hunters (led by Lee Pace out of 'Foundation') as well as any member of the public who fancies their chances and can thus also win money.



This version's Ben Richards (Glen Powell) is a regular Joe who needs money for his daughter's medical needs, because there's DoBFO no healthcare in *this* America, and ends up on "The Running Man" more or less without meaning to, along with the geeky and weedy Tim Jansky (Martin Herlihy from SNL's "Please Don't Destroy" group) and riot grrl type Jenny Laughlin (Katy O'Brian) who you just *know* aren't going to last long.

There's naturally a resistance movement and an underground that helps Ben along (including William H Macy as a provider of false documents and disguises) but a lot of their help gets fucked up in what's basically a series of vignettes, at which point you start to realize that 30 days is too fuckin' long for the game to go on. Lots of bits of AI deepfake by the network to put Richards in as bad a light as possible when his required daily tape messages don't suit them - typical satirical content from director Edgar Wright (the "Cornetto Trilogy" ect). It's actually all quite non-stop entertainment, has the satisfying ending you'd expect, but yet also did a bit shit at the box office, \$69 million worldwide against a \$110m budget, though unlike 'Crime 101' I reckon you can see all that spend up there.

And it's another instance where the critics liked it a fair bit, as did Stephen King, apparently. I enjoyed it meself, as might you, and do watch out for Sandra Dickinson as the utterly bonkers mother of one of the rebels...

### WAR MACHINE (Netflix)

Alan Ritchson! And an almost unrecognizable Dennis Quaid to boot. And army boots...

Now this is yer basic action movie with a plot you can summarize in a very few sentences and loads of crash bang wallop. Erewego: Army Staff Sergeant has tragic backstory from Afghanistan, applies to join an elite Army Ranger unit which requires *very* intense training. He gets in. Final exercise mission is to locate and destroy a classified aircraft and retrieve its pilot. "Aircraft" turns out to be an alien invader, the deadly War Machine of the title. Staff Sergeant prevails (of course he does, it's Alan fuckin' Ritchson), everybody else - er - not so much.

This'un was straight to streaming on Netflix, though it did get a limited theatrical release in Australia, where it was mostly filmed. One reviewer thought it was a bit too long at 107 minutes, and I'll concede a "maybe" there, but generally it was summed up as an '80s-style B-movie elevated by Ritchson into something rather better. There's talk of a sequel and even possibly expanding into a franchise. Oo, I'd watch that...



## RADIO WINSTON

### SONGWRITING PARTNERS

The history of popular music is well-populated with songwriting partners, and you can probably go all the way back to Gilbert & Sullivan, up through Rogers & Hammerstein and keep going to Lennon/McCartney and of course Jagger/Richards to name a few legends. Moving up



to the late 1970s there's Strummer/Jones and Difford & Tilbrook as prime examples an'all.

Speaking of the latter pair, under "songs that make me cry" you can always include "Vicky Verky" off the 1980 set 'Argybargy'. How Glenn Tilbrook even sings it without bursting into blubs himself I'll never know:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFBqn2ikhFM>

Now as far as I'm aware, Lennon/McCartney became a less "genuine" collaborative effort in the sense that there were clearly "John" slices and "Paul" efforts (the latter's often derided by Lennon as "granny songs"). Although it was the case that the other person did make a contribution to the tune in one way or another. Strummer/Jones also had what were clearly "Mick" songs, an early example being "Stay Free" off their second set 'Give 'Em Enough Rope' (I do love a "slice of life" story), and perhaps most famously "Train in Vain (Stand By Me)", the final and unlisted slice on 'London Calling':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDa8T9EM4Tg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUzBgeI5dpc>

Jumping back to the earlier 1970s, I had considered the Holder/Lea partnership (Slade) to be generally underrated (argue with me if you like) but they definitely had a way with the football chant style, and uniquely for the time being apart from the ubiquitous producers/writers combo of Nicky Chinn and Mike Chapman who were punting the slices for just about all the "glam" bands of the era eg Sweet, Mud, Suzi Quatro ect. I was surprised to discover, though, that just as many of Slade's songs were credited to Lea/Powell, at least up until the 'Slayed?' set (1972) which was almost all Holder/Lea. Here's what you might consider yer typical slice which isn't about Xmas:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEv6jy\\_7PQQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEv6jy_7PQQ)

However, rather than staying with perennial pairs, I'm using this as a weak-ish excuse to punt slices from fav bands that had *occasional* pairings up with fab results, starting with Hunter/Ralphs out of Mott the Hoople. Ralphs, of course, left to form Bad Company where he had a hand in composing most of their hit slices, but here's two classic ones which he wrote with Hunter: "One of the Boys" off the 1972 'All the Young Dudes' album, and the venerable "Violence" from the following year's 'Mott':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5MvCYKjHvU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6pT6KfLDV8>

The other band that falls into the "occasional" excuse is Roxy Music, so that'll cover two of my favorite bands of all time

(Roxy and Mott), neither of whom I ever managed to clock live. The first two Roxy Music albums were written entirely by Bryan Ferry, but on the third set, 'Stranded' (1973), he shared the credit on two of the slices: "Amazona" with Phil Manzanera and "A Song for Europe" with Andy Mackay. Now I've got to admit the co-credit list overall for Roxy is pretty thin, but y'know, column inches to fill ect ect...

"A Song for Europe" almost comes across as a parody of Ferry's lounge lizard world-weary persona and chucks in some really rather overblown bits, but it is quite anthemic in its own way and does manage the quiet/loud signature Roxy style management with actual bravado...

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



The following year's set, 'Country Life' (the one with the dodgy birds on the cover that is supposedly the most censored album cover worldwide ever) included the Ferry/Manzanera composition and live favorite "Out of the Blue", which I was almost going to skip past. However, and with no disrespect (well not much anyway) to Eddie Jobson's recorded original, Lucy Williams' violin solo on that slice at the 2001 London Apollo gig is goosebump central. That meme that occasionally comes around asking "if you could time-

travel to any gig in history..." comes around, my answer is always this'un...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qQV8t-E460>

My fav Roxy set has always been 1975's 'Siren', which I retrospectively reviewed in a long ago ish of this here pod of mermaids, and my enduring adoration of it is in no small part because it expressed exactly how I thought of myself at the time, which looking back was almost pompously silly of me, but *at the time*...

Andy Mackay co-wrote the huge hit "Love is the Drug" (which you already have in your head so I don't need to link it) but also the slice that I felt defined me: "Sentimental Fool". Whether this represents an accurate me from them days I leave as an exercise for the reader. I still think I'm a bit like this really...

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY\\_TiaJGjdo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY_TiaJGjdo)

Having said that, another friend thought I was best summed up by the Steve Earle line "I admit I fall in love a lot, but I nearly always gave it my best shot", and I didn't argue.

Ahem. Anyway, let's finish up this month's column with "Whirlwind", a Ferry/Manzanera slice also from 'Siren', which on first listen I immediately went "Oo! Northern soul beat". It's a banger...

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

# GIVE US A CLUE



Lastish:

"Doctor rides this somehow (3,6)"  
I cocked this one up, sorry - should have been simply "Doctor rides that! (3,6)". It's not original to me and I copied it wrongly *and* misunderstood the wordplay! (Must have been tired.)

Definition: Something a Doctor may ride in

Wordplay: There's misdirection in folding the wordplay into the definition. In the correct version, "Doctor" is the anagram indicator, so rearranging "rides that" yields THE TARDIS. Apart from mistyping "this" for "that" I also failed to clock that "Doctor" was the anagram indicator in the first place, superfluously adding "somehow"...

"Saw dog wearing lead (7)"

Definition: "Saw"

Wordplay: Generic name for a dog = ROVER, "wearing" (ie inside of) the chemical symbol for lead (PB), yielding PROVERB

"Half-vast then strangely tiny, just what Thackeray wrote (6, 4)"

Definition: "what Thackeray wrote"

Wordplay: "Half-vast" = VA, then "strangely" (anagram indicator) "tiny" = NITY + "just" = FAIR, yielding VANITY FAIR

**Alan Rosenthal**, temporarily "Clueless in Toronto" is 3/3, having seen past my fucked up first clue and interpreted as follows: "Doctor (change) "rides this" to "rides that". Rides that (somehow) is an anagram of THE TARDIS, definitely the Doctor's ride."

**Steve Jeffery** also determined that the "Doctor" clue *must* solve to THE TARDIS, and got VANITY FAIR as well.

**Eli Cohen** surmises THE TARDIS too, but (because of my error) can't see how. He's 100% on the other two.

Thish's efforts which I shall try not to fuck up:

"Badly dirty room in a hostel? (9)"

"'Lies! Let's recount!' angrily cries Orbán about these? (8,7)"

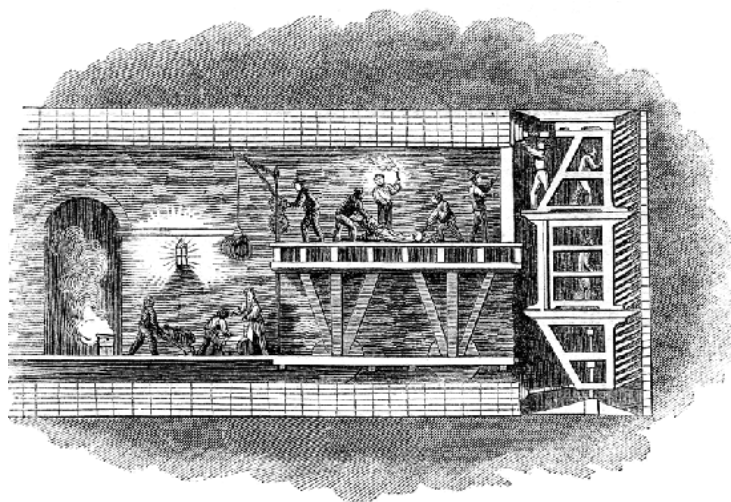
"How Moses makes coffee for his tribe? (7)"

# ANORAK

LONG, LONG AGO...

As is often the case, I get a topic for this column from something that pops up in the FBF feed off one of the many, *many* ((c) **E Gunn**) Anorak groups. In this case, I learn that this month is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the extension of the East London Line north from Wapping to Shoreditch, from where it linked to Liverpool Street, and concurrently the opening of stations at Shadwell, Whitechapel and Shoreditch itself.

The original line, which took four years to build, opened in 1869 using the Brunels' original Thames tunnel (Rotherhithe - Wapping), claimed as the first to be built under a navigable river (although the Babylonians may have a claim for one 4,000 years earlier) and the first to use the tunneling shield invented by Marc Brunel and Thomas Cochrane, a system still in use to this day.



The tunnel itself, described as a "wonder of the world" at the time, was ruinously expensive and inevitably dangerous to construct, usually due to flooding which happened several times (eg killing six men in January of 1828). To try and get some dosh in, you could go and observe the construction for a shilling, and when complete pedestrians paid a penny to walk through. Despite its "engineering wonder" status the tunnel soon became a disreputable area, inhabited by muggers and pickpockets (then called "tunnel thieves") as well as prostitutes plying *their* trade. Katherine McAlpine, Brunel Museum Director, notes: "Sex workers would use the space - both male and female. The archways between the north and south tunnel provided appealing nooks and crannies where they could take their clients." The tunnel was open all night, and there was typically little to no police presence, or if there was they might well have been getting the end wet an'all...



The East London Railway consortium bought the tunnel in 1865 for £800,000, an eye-watering sum equivalent to about £87 million today and began construction of the railway link. Wapping station was built on the (by then disused) northern tunnel access shaft. Here's an illo from the *Illustrated London News* of January 8<sup>th</sup> 1870 showing a train exiting the tunnel into the station.



These days the narrow, curved platforms are deemed a safety hazard, even though it's been rebuilt and remodeled a couple of times, most recently in 2010.

You could say that what's now the Windrush line has had an identity crisis for most of its lifetime, or at least since its adoption into the London Underground in 1933, where it's been part of the Metropolitan line, then the "East London Section" (officially renamed in 1970). In many ways it's been the poor relation to the rest of the network - the only interchange with the rest of the Underground was at Whitechapel, although there were links to main line trains at the two New Cross stations at the southern end. The docklands development boom of the 1980s and 90s linked the Docklands Light Railway at Shadwell in 1987, though, and in 1999 a new station at Canada Water provided an interchange to the Jubilee line.

Given the red-headed stepchild status of the line, as you might expect passenger services were provided by clunky old A-stock trains, pictured here at Whitechapel.



And for comparison with the 1870 photo, here's a couple of arrivals at Wapping station: first an ancient F-stock (1958 photo by Dr. Heinz Zimram) and A-stock in 1986 (photo by Colin Tait).



The newly-monikered Windrush line is considered part of the "Overground", so of course it's all supposedly a bit fancier, or at least nicer looking I suppose. So here's the latest rolling stock: Bombardier Transportation's Class 378 "Capitalstar" units, shown here with the City of London skyline in the background.

And there ya go...



# THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

As anyone who follows me on Facebook will know, April post-Eastercon has been about hospital appointments and has turned May into another hospital and doctor heavy month. It seems there's nothing "serious" going on, but things need to be looked at in order to make sure they don't become serious in future. Absolutely fine by me, but life becomes tedious when all you're doing is waiting for things to happen and those things then get in the way of other things that you were more eagerly waiting to happen.

I now need something called a Stress Echocardiograph, which may involve exercise or a drug called Dobutamine (or both), to make my heart beat harder and faster so the doctors can get information about one of the arteries that leads to my heart; the one that the technicians at Bart's in Mile End couldn't get an image of during the CT scan I had in mid-April.

The annoying thing is I knew the minute I was told that I needed this test that it would interfere with my plans for May. The consultant I need to see at Barnet Hospital, where the tests will be done, only works there on Thursdays and Fridays and the cardiac specialist nurse that I deal with there will only see me on the Thursdays and Fridays that he's in attendance, so the dates when anything could happen narrowed down quite quickly and, lo and behold, Friday May 8<sup>th</sup> and Friday May 29<sup>th</sup> for the follow-ups came out of the hat. That's Norncon in Belfast and Satellite in Glasgow buggered, but there's absolutely no choice because, without getting all this signed off and put away (I hope), the travel insurance for Metropolcon in Berlin in July, another con in Lisbon in December (hopefully), and Corflu in Vancouver next February will become prohibitively expensive and even dropping one of the trips wouldn't make it any less costly.

\*Sigh\*

===

I had an uncomfortable revelation last Sunday.

I was waiting at a bus stop in Enfield Town to catch one of the little hoppa buses to Crew's Hill, a part of Enfield full of garden and antique centres, to see if I could score any of the comics on my wants lists at a small, local comic mart that happens every month.

At the same time, in the town centre (I call it a town centre, it's actually just a modest High Street with a modest shopping centre including a Marks and Sparks, a couple of other medium sized shops, several charity shops, and a single decent pub (I don't count the Wetherspoons clone as a decent pub)), there was a local charity fund-raising event

which included troops of scouts from all over the near-ish North London region.

I'm usually quite oblivious to crowds of people around me, I have other things to think about, although I generally have a good radar for threatening environments. There was nothing threatening about Church Street, the High Road in Enfield, on this particular Sunday afternoon, but something was triggering my Spidey senses.

I spent a good few minutes just looking around, up and down the street, trying to figure out what it was that was making me so uncomfortable.

Then, the penny dropped...

Absolutely everyone in that street was at least eight inches shorter than me and most were considerably shorter than me than that, and, not only that, but most of these short people were actively avoiding coming near me. Families with pushchairs and kiddies in tow would pass me by on the extreme opposite side of the pavement, nearest to the building walls and shop fronts, almost as though they were trying to slink past me unnoticed.

I was gobsmacked!

Eventually, the bus came along and on I got. Once seated I didn't seem to attract any unusual attention at all, but the attitudes of the passersby at the bus stop still confounded me, then bemused me, then absolutely fuckin' irritated me. Yes, I'm 6'4" (192cm to those of us who prefer metric), and yes, I'm quite a substantial lump, even with recent weight losses (still dropping, albeit at a lower pace, which is the healthy way to do it so I'm told), but I'm not aware that I'm putting out any threatening vibes.

As anyone over six feet tall knows, there is a phenomenon called "short-bloke syndrome", where the lairiest, most arsey, short bloke in the pub, backed up by a belly full of, usually, Stella Artois, the lager known as "wife-beater" in the UK due to its ability to turn the meekest, mildest, most well-balanced librarian into a raging pugilist, will pick a fight with the tallest bloke just to prove his penis is proportionately larger than he is. I know this all too well because, usually, I'm the tallest bloke in the pub.

There's a common belief in the idea of the "gentle giant", but, contrary to popular belief, most of us "giants" aren't very gentle; we're actually bloody frustrated at living in a world built for 5'10" midgets. Every bus you get on doesn't have enough knee room unless you use the seats put aside for elderly people or pregnant women, at which point you get accusing stares from the actual elderly people (I'm sixty-fuckin'-five now myself, fer fuck's sake...) or pregnant women that get on. Tables in cafes have the same problem, as do some of our finest hotels in the UK; witness the bloody cubicles in the Birmingham NEC Hilton bar just this last



Easter. It's lucky I've lost two inches round the middle or I'd never have got into it.

The other problem is, when that short-arsed little bastard picks a fight with us, we're never believed; it's always us that must be the aggressor, after all, he (short-arsed bastard) would be mad to pick a fight with you (giant). The only option we giants frequently have when these altercations take place is to walk away and get looked at by everyone else in the pub as a bit of a milksop, which, whilst I could give a fuck what any stranger might think of me, is still an uncomfortable experience in the immediate short-term and invites potential hassle at later dates when another pisshead decides to push his luck.

Fortunately, my family has a cautionary tale about rising to the bait of any of these short-arsed bastards or, indeed, anyone else, for that matter.

Back in the late-1950s, my father raised the money to start his own scaffolding business. Being a bit of a villain and crook himself, my father's ways of raising finance weren't entirely above board (honest, Tommy, I don't follow in his footsteps...).

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 1958, a work friend of my father, Ronald Marwood, was at a dance hall, Gray's, in the Seven Sister's Road, Holloway, Islington, when a fight broke out between two gangs of teddy boys. As was the custom in those days, both groups were extensively armed (plus ça change) with knives, knuckle dusters (brass knuckles to the lamb shanks in the audience (that reminds me, where did I put mine?)), and, in at least one case, an axe. The usual broken bottles came to hand as well.

One of Marwood's friends, Michael Bloom, was in the process of being restrained by a 23-year-old policeman, Constable Raymond Summers, who had happened upon the altercation whilst on the beat, when Marwood, supposedly dazed and groggy after being struck by one of the rival gang members, struck him from behind. The story gets very confused at this point, but it seems that Marwood had actually stabbed the young officer with an underwater swimmer's knife he just happened to be carrying (Many British youngsters these days are astounded that so many young men in the 1950s were armed with quite sophisticated weapons, but they frequently don't know about "national service"; the state trained vast numbers of men to be able to inflict deadly violence on each other and, when things like bayonets went missing when men were "demobbed", didn't bother to investigate. That's on top of all the

illegal firearms that made their way back to Blighty after WWII; there were at least two in my family).

Marwood, following questioning and going on the room for a short while, and accompanied by his father, eventually turned himself into Caledonian Road Police Station on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1959. Under caution, he admitted to detectives to the murder of PC Summers: "I did stab the copper that night. I will never know why I did it. I have been puzzling over in my mind during the last few weeks why I did it, but there seems no answer."

Marwood was charged with the murder of a police officer in the execution of his duty, a capital offense under the 1957 Homicide Act, and stood trial at the Old Bailey starting Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1959. Marwood pleaded not guilty, claiming that the confession he had given to the police was fabricated by them and he had signed it after being held and interrogated for ten hours straight and his recollections of the night of the killing were muddled by having drunk heavily that evening, first in the Spanish Patriot's pub in White's Conduit Street, Clerkenwell, then in the Double R Club, in Bow Road (a favourite haunt of the gangster brothers Ronnie and Reggie Kray in the 1950s, also my own dad...It wasn't somewhere you just walked into), and, finally, in Gray's.

Marwood was found guilty by a jury and sentenced by Mr Justice Gorman "to suffer death in the manner authorised by law." After several appeals and demonstrations outside the prison which required mounted police to disperse the crowds, alongside disturbances inside the prison against the sentence, Ronald Henry Marwood was hanged in Pentonville Prison, Caledonian Road, at 9am on Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1959.

Marwood's execution caused a bit of a furore in the British legal system; Marwood was hanged because he murdered a police officer, but, had he murdered another youth or a member of the public intervening to stop the gang fight, he would only have been guilty of non-capital murder and sentenced to life in prison, unless he had used a gun. Along with the notorious cases of Timothy Evans and the serial killer John Christie, the Marwood execution was instrumental in the formulation of the Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act 1965 that initially suspended and, eventually, abolished the death penalty in Great Britain (but not in Northern Ireland, which is a whole other controversy altogether).

I only found out about my father's connection to Ronald Marwood after I had started working at Pentonville



Protesters outside Pentonville prison on the day of Ronald Marwood's hanging, Friday May 8<sup>th</sup> 1959



Prison in the education department in the mid-1990s, and it wasn't my father that told me about him, it was my Uncle Roy who said "Oh, you're working there? That's where your dad's mate was hung! (sic)" I asked my father about Marwood, and he refused to speak about him.

I also only found out about Marwood after I had visited the still extent condemned cells and execution room in the basements of A-wing of Pentonville Prison. It's not a pleasant place to visit; I imagine it's a much worse place to spend your final hours, especially when you are still questioning exactly what happened and how it happened in order to put you there.

## LOCO CITATO

*[[“You better take care of me Lord, if you don't you're gonna have me on your hands.” (Hunter S Thompson) ...]]*

From: grahamcharnock85@gmail.com

March 29

**Graham Charnock** writes:

I spent the first couple of months of this year in hospital with a gammy leg which then as now has defied any diagnosis or treatment. Hence I was out of the loop for Alun Harries' death. He was a good bloke and I liked him a lot. When Nigel Rowe visited London I took them both to explore Alexandra Palace, which was a local landmark. We had fun and ended up of course in a local hostelry. Alun's death focused my mind on my own mortality, my faith in which has been recently sorely tried by my hospital stay. It was quite the most horrible six weeks of my life.

I'd woken up one day with an unaccountable pain in my left calf. It felt a lot like I imagined a DV thrombosis might feel. My GP was baffled and I stupidly let him talk me into calling an ambulance. They took me to the Whittington, a hospital I was not unfamiliar with. I spent a couple of nights in the Clinical Decision Unit, attached to ER, then unaccountably one night they closed the unit and cleared us all out. I ended up in a holding semi-geriatric ward. The only time I saw a doctor initially he explained they weren't there to diagnose or treat met and true to his word that was what they didn't. I had a side room of my own but it didn't screen out the howls of pain and geriatric noise from the main ward and I was soon sidelined into a regime of regular invasive blood pressure and diabetic pin-prick tests. I pissed and shat myself regularly and remained immobile due to my leg. A consultant visited the ward once a week,

ran her stethoscope over me and then buggered off. Any enquiries I made about my condition and possible discharge were simply shrugged off. I became fairly suicidal but never saw any opportunity to end it that way. Eventually I think they saw no alternative but to release me under a so-called "care package" which involved vetting my living conditions and enlisting third-party "carers".

Sick as I was I was still able to perform basic functions, with the help of Pat and Dan, which made the concept of carers redundant although it was a battle to persuade the various agencies involved that this was the case. So here I am, still in daily pain struggling to re-instate my old familiar routines so that my life once more makes sense. I still piss my bed every night. And occasionally think about Alun.

*[[Gordon Bennett mate! Makes my travails seem almost trivial by comparison. Saying “Good to hear from you” at this point seems highly inappropriate, even though on one level it is...]]*

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From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

March 30

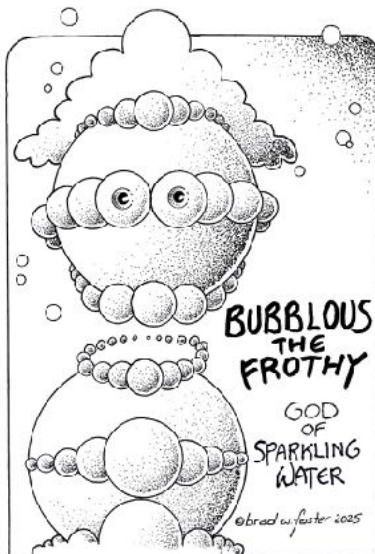
**Leigh Edmonds** writes:

I liked **Brad Foster's** suggestion that we write letters of comment to let people know we're still alive. I don't know that I write letters of comment to *This Here...* to let others know that I'm still in the land of the living, I suspect I write them so remind myself that I'm still with us. Writing a letter proves that I'm still reading and writing fanzines, one at least. It's probably just as well that there are less fanzines than there used to be because, if there were more, I'd be struggling. The other day I had the need to look up an old issue of *Yandro* on Fanac.org and Buck Coulson's list of fanzines received in a month goes on and on for pages. How Harry Warner Jr ever kept up is beyond

comprehension. Those of us who were producing fanzines back then remember his letters, always two pages long and almost always somehow related to your fanzine. We try to live up to his high standards, but fall miserably short.

*[[Warner was certainly prolific, but in my undoubtedly heterodox opinion prone to “form letters”, as was the Mighty Robt Lichtman...]]*

I was startled to read that the Vancouver Corflu is likely to be held at the end of February next year. That's less than a year away! The end of February is usually about the hottest part of the year here so I guess that it must be about the coldest part of the



year over there. And Vancouver is a long way north so I assume that it's going to be colder than it would be further south in, say, California. I hope that the convention hotel has everything a convention going fan needs because, while I don't mind looking at photos of snow, actually having to wade through it does not appeal. In any event, if I am to make it to that Corflu I'm going to have to start planning soon, and that means a whole winter wardrobe the like of which I can't even imagine yet.

I would not have known that Angus Sampson was an Australian had you not mentioned it. He is, of course, the most likeable character in 'The Lincoln Lawyer' so it is only natural that he would be an Australian. We are good at being likeable, most of us anyhow.

My mental image of **Dave Hodson** grows with each issue. Now I imagine him with a wheelbarrow of comics at the London Comic Mart and his place stuffed full of comics, as well as all the other stuff that he collects. What I can't imagine is whether he has them all neatly filed or whether they are stacked up against walls in boxes in what must be a state of chaos. The latter view cannot be right, however, is he has lists of issues he needs to fill gaps in his collection.

I use **Brad Foster's** excuse for my trawling Facebook, that is, to check to see if some of my friends are still with us. Of course, that doesn't work and if Facebook is any judge then **Archbishop Bruce** has long gone. However, he informs me that he had some kind of disagreement with Facebook and has been kicked off. I cannot imagine that **Bruce** would ever write something to upset the sensitive sensibilities of Facebook but perhaps he mentioned Vargo Statten or Eando Binder, or John Russell Fearn, which would come pretty close to offending public decency in most people's books. Anyhow, Facebook had become so useless, to me but probably not to the people who make money from it, with all the ads so that it is often difficult to find posts on there that are actually relevant to what I want to know.

Unlike **Mark Nelson** I have absolutely no Manfred Mann records in my collection. There are probably many other records that he has that I don't, I'm not sure whether or not I should feel the poorer for it since I don't think any of the LPs that I have have been played in at least 20 years. Lack of a turntable, somewhere to put it and the lack of desire to have to jump up every twenty minutes to change sides has something to do with this lack of use. I suppose that I don't really need them at all, but they are a leftover part of my life that I don't feel like disposing of just yet. Interesting, perhaps, that I could get rid of so many books and no records. (Pictures of cats excepted.)

Speaking of books, your mention of the collected short stories of J G Ballard reminded me that last weekend I went with **Lucy Sussex** and **Julian Warner** to the Clunes Book Fair. Clunes is one of those little goldfield towns that time

forgot and you pass through on the way from one place to another. A couple of decades ago somebody dreamed up the idea of holding an annual book sale and now it had grown into a massive event drawing book lovers from all over the state. I don't usually go because I'm trying to cure my book addiction but it's a good day out and it is good to be surrounded by people who actually like to read and write for a change.

I did have one book in mind to buy, one of the few that I regret selling in the purge a couple of years ago. I have this question in mind: was Ballard really as good as I remember? (By the way, when I asked **Justin Ackroyd** this question his simple one word answer was "Yes"). So I scoured the book fair for a second hand copy of *Vermilion Sands* but was unsuccessful in my quest. I did, however, find an interesting and long sought after book on mining in Australia and a copy of Aldiss's *Barefoot in the Head*. Getting out of there with only two books bought was a successful day, given my addiction.

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From: lynn@berkshire-books.com

March 30

**Lynn Kuehl** writes:

(You don't do anything by halves, I'm thinking.) I did enjoy meeting and chewing the fat with you, too. Corflu was a lotta fun, reacquainting with old friends and making a couple of new ones. I'm rather flattered you consider me such.

*[[No doubt in my mind...]]*

I'm typing this on my new tablet - it's a real pain in the arse. I do know how to touch type so these screen keyboards irritate the hell outta me. Also the very helpful AI seems to want to cleanup my writing. Fucking AI! Nevertheless, I do feel I owe you a loc. I used to write locs to that nice Mr. **Wm. Breiding** when he was pubbing his ish. Since he's not doing that anymore I have more time to write to other people.

As we kids used to say, "You're it!"

*This Here...* (I keep hearing your fanzine name in my mind's ear as "This Year" - suspecting that is somewhat on purpose?) is filled with lots of great stuff about which I (mostly) don't feel qualified to discuss. Read and enjoyed, forshure! Also read the last 5 issues and a couple of early ones just for comparisons sake. I've been almost completely gafiated for more than 2 decades, with the exception of getting and responding to **Wm** and **Rich's** fanzines. Kinda been out of it, fannishly speaking. But I must admire the quality of your zine(s) and your amazing persistence in pubbing your ish. On top of major health issues, no less. So I'm loccing you (is that one c or two?).

*[[Two...]]*

But enough of this gratuitous egoboo. You know you're good. You have 2 Faan awards to prove it.

*[[Shurely you must recall that the 'boo is never gratuitous, and never enough...]]*

Since I'm joining you with *This Here...* #97, I feel I'm rather late to the party. Consequently...

Won't comment on relatively recent conventions since I haven't been to one in a coon's-age (prior to Corflu 43) and know hardly any of the attendees.

Won't comment on anoraks. Trains are interesting but I never did the youthful deep dive into train history or culture, so can't speak knowingly. As Clint Eastwood once said, "A man's gotta know his limitations."

Also don't usually do word puzzles not knowing faneds or fan history all that well, I couldn't figure them out to save my life.

I like movies and TV but not acquainted with any recent ones. Most all of our household viewing lately has been of old dvds. We own buttloads of old dvds - we have this bookshop and sell cds and dvds on the side.

Have too many of same. Also, incidentally, we personally own roughly 10,000 vinyl lp records and thousands of cds. Plus many thousands of 45s. Also hundreds of 78s. 'Notherwords, Cheryl and I own enough old media to choke a brontosaurus. (Yes, I know they don't call 'em that now. Fuck that!) FWIW, we recently were watching and enjoying 'New Tricks'.

*[[I binged all the 'New Tricks' a couple of years ago and enjoyed it a lot. Can't remember if I reviewed it, I don't think I did but could be wrong, as usual...]]*

Also 'Dalziel & Pascoe'. Also 'Maigret' featuring Rowan Atkinson. Enjoyed them all. Dalziel was played by the late Warren Clarke, who earlier in his acting career played Dim in 'A Clockwork Orange'. But you probably already knew that.

*[[Actually no...]]*

So like I said, I don't have experience let alone knowledge of the current topics in *This Here...* Wait a sec - my first record that I bought with my own money was the "Boots" 45 by Nancy Sinatra. But I'm not going to try to pick my top 10, top 20, or top anything. I agree with **Gary Mattingly** (I think it was Gary) when he said that it was impossible for him to choose. I can discuss earworms - do you do earworms? I often wake up in the morning with a song in my head. Not always a good or a welcome song. Anybody else have this experience?

*[[Me and Steve Jeffery used to have earworm contests, and occasionally still do. These days mine are more often the last song that came up on Pandora before I shut off to do something else, and latterly that was "Marionette" by Mott*

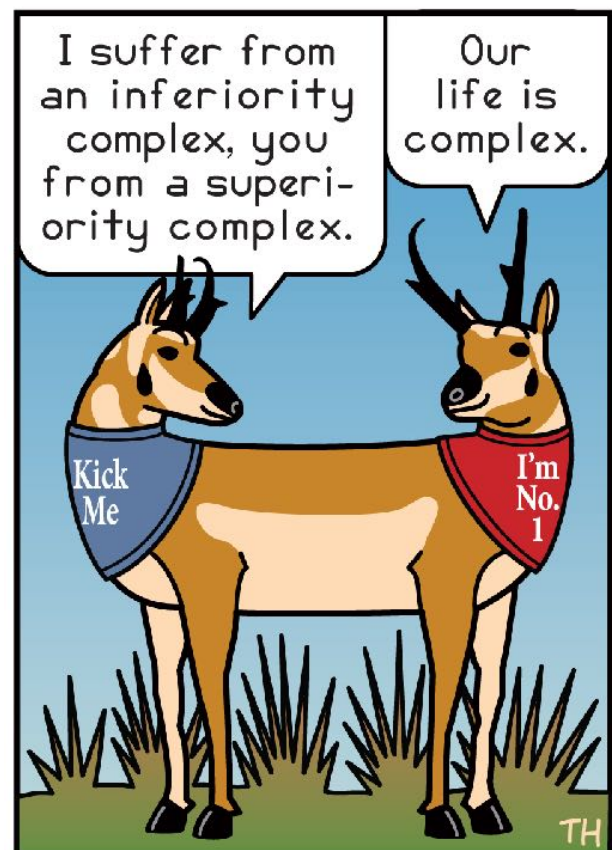
*the Hoople: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZcEyAuogfg> ...]]*

In any case, all I can offer is some fan history that I personally witnessed and that I hope will interest you. I'm referring to the first Corflu and the first fanzine published at Corflu: the infamous *Smocko* by Terry Floyd. (organ sting)

Some of you may have heard rumours or second or third hand gossip about the awesome and dreaded *Smocko*, but whatever you've heard, the production was perhaps one of the most horrendously difficult tasks in fannish history.

We have to go back, way back to the good old days of fanzine publishing when mimeo was king. It was 1984...

Corflu was the first convention where I felt I knew most everyone, attendees and committee members both. In fact I was a gofer for the convention. Which is how I became involved with *Smocko*. It was a very laid-back convention with some panels, some movie screenings ('The Trip' and 'The Undertaker and His Pals', iirc), and some other fan activities, including some ambitious ideas about producing fanzines. Terry Floyd had decided to make fannish history by not just pubbing his ish at Corflu, but by making it special and probably unique. *Smocko* would be something of a first in that it would be mimeographed in white ink on green paper. I happened upon the production as it was just getting started.



Terry and a couple of friends were struggling with their equipment and materials when I happened upon them. Part



of the problem was that to print with white mimeo, one needs to use a special ink pad that wraps the cylinder and which has the white ink that will be pressed thru the stencil - nobody ever loaded a mimeograph with white ink, not even Dave Rilke who owned dozens of mimeographs back in the day. Terry had the pad and he had white ink and he had the stencils. What he didn't have was the right kind of mimeograph. Those of you who have used different mimeographs will remember that the stencils were often particular to the brand of machine, thus the holes for mounting the stencils had to align with the pins on the cylinder.

No problem. One just has to punch new holes. Which they did. I happened upon them when they were finding out that the new holes were subject to tearing. Took Terry and crew only a few cranks of mimeo handle to find this out. Oh yeah, it was a hand-crank mimeograph. Not a Gestetner. So the solution to tearing stencils was to tape the edge along the holes to reinforce the stencil to keep it from tearing. Now they could start cranking out *Smocko*.

Well, not quite. There were further problems. As the helpful and semi-official gofer I felt it was my responsibility to help Terry pub his ish. It became obvious that the mimeograph they'd chosen also wasn't easily adjustable to using an ink pad. In consequence of which the green paper sheets had to be fed into the mimeo one at a time and the machine had to be held firmly in place or it would try to walk off the table. I became the mimeograph holder-downer. We were almost ready to produce an exceptional piece of fannish history. Fortunately there were four of us.

For some reason, the lovely dark green paper Terry had chosen was not twilltone, or anything like it. It was a fairly high finish and probably 24 pound paper, which is not ideal. Somebody had to slip-sheet every page.

So, one fan to crank the mimeo handle, one fan to feed the paper one sheet at a time, one fan (me) to hold down the mimeograph to keep it from galloping off, and one fan to slip-sheet each printed page. Two hours later we'd printed a six-page fanzine. Twenty copies, or was it thirty? I've tried to forget.

Those of us who worked with Terry that fateful day to produce *Smocko*, a fannish milestone, forged a life-long bond that lasted until then end of the convention. After which we went our separate ways, and I at least swearing to never help Terry (or anyone else) produce a fanzine at a convention ever again.

I was darned sorry Terry couldn't make it to Corflu so that I could tell the *Smocko* story to the whole convention. I do have a rare copy somewhere in my garage. Must look for it one of these days.

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From: mark.fishlifter@googlemail.com

March 31

**Mark Plummer** writes:

Do you recall the time Paul Morley showed up at Novacon? Truthfully, I don't, or at least not at first hand; I think I only learned of it later from *Ansible* #65 (December 1992) where Dave said, "Paul Morley the Guardian hack was sighted at Novacon and later published an odd article on sf's decease (11 Nov), all seemingly the fault of elves and Terry Pratchett". So that would have been Novacon 22 in 1992 at the Angus with Storm Constantine was the guest of honour. Maureen Speller commented somewhere that really Novacon was hardly the place to be looking for the cutting edge of sci-fi or whatever it was that Morley failed to find, and Novacon was far more fandom with its pipe and slippers. That was nearly 34 years ago and as I would imagine the average age of Novacon attendees has gone up by about 25 years in that time god knows how she'd characterise it now.

*[[Yeah that Morley ey? Sounds like he was after a low-hanging fruit hit job from the off. Wanker...]]*

Glad to hear that you were a bit more mobile at Corflu this year, and also that your diet now seems to include a lot more actual food. I am still mildly astonished, albeit pleased, that you're still confined to vaping. I had always thought you'd be the last fan to give up smoking cigarettes.

*[[And so it is...]]*

We were part of the fannish contingent at Alun Harries' funeral on 25 March. David Harries who delivered the eulogy does look a \*lot\* like an older version of Alun, to the point where it was slightly unsettling at the post-funeral gathering. I kept getting corner-of-the-eye glimpses of "Alun", overruling the rather obvious point that the reason we were all there was because he wasn't.

But yeah, I'd come to really like Alun in the last few years. When I retired a couple of years ago, and once I'd got my 60+ (mostly free travel) Oystercard, Claire was increasingly keen that I should join **Rob Hansen**, Alun et al on their tramps around some of the byways of London. A sort of fannish 'Last of the Summer Wine', as she saw it.

*[[falls off chair...]]*

Sorry, a bit brief this time. Off to Eastercon on Thursday -- and on my own. Claire has insisted I go but she feels she has to stay home for family reasons. It'll be the first time I've been to a convention on my own since the 20th century.

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From: jakaufman@aol.com

March 31

**Jerry Kaufman** writes:

It's all good, as you say.

**Brad Foster's** cartoon on page 12 makes me think of *Sinners*, a terrific film as you know. I'm tempted to watch it again.

**Ulrika's** drawing of cat and mouse on the facing page shows that not all of her animal sketches are cute.

**Mark Nelson's** remarks about tape fanzines, a phenomenon unfamiliar to me, brings back memories of my time living in the Avocado Pit with **Eli Cohen** and David Emerson in the early 1970s because we sometimes made tapes full of chitchat to send to Susan Wood in Edmonton (before Suzle moved in with us and before Eli followed Susan to the Far North.

**Mark** also talks about a YouTube video of "24 Beautiful Blonde Beauties of the 1970s." (Thanks for inspiring me to look up at last the difference between "blond" and "blonde".) He then lists all the women in the video. I recognize only a small portion of names, and am able to conjure images of even fewer.

*[[The usual 126mph stroll past, then?...]]*

**Mark** is dubious about including Honor Blackman in the list because he found few screen credits for her. But wasn't she also in early seasons of 'The Avengers' and one of the first Bond movies? Or are they credits from the 1960s? (Not stopping to check IMDB - it can be an exercise for other readers.)

*[[ 'Avengers' 1962-64, 'Goldfinger' 1964...]]*

\*\*\*

From: 236 S. Coronado St., No. 409, Los Angeles CA 90057

(Dated) April 2

**John Hertz** writes:

For someone so acute you can be crogglingly fat-headed. I sent that note about nominating in the fan-category Hugos as a "Paid Political Advertisement" because you'd growled you didn't want me to think you'd run such things on your own. "Let me know your price" was in a similar vein. I began by saying I sent it in case there'd be a *TH...* before nominations closed.

*[[I printed it anyway, though, because as little interest as I still have in the clearly degraded fan Hugos, TH... is in part a venue for news as well as opinion, including yours on occasion. I could counter "crogglingly fat-headed" with "fatuous twat" but as you sign off in your letter, you display "remarkable persistence" on this topic, as quixotic as it is...]]*

"Dosh required to be able to nominate (poll tax!)" is, if possible, even more fat-headed. Nominations are open to

members of the current or preceding Worldcon. There are two kinds of membership, Attending and Supporting. The purpose of a Supporting Membership is to support. Eligibility to nominate and vote is a side benefit (recently obscured by renaming Supporting Memberships as WSFS memberships).

And don't tell me "DoBFO". Evidently it's not obvious to you.

*[[What's not obvious? Fact: You have to pay money for a membership to be able to vote...]]*

I figure I'd better put a nod to Dr. Breuer's fine story "The Gostak and the Doshes" in a separate paragraph.

Traction? What traction? Of course people who have talked themselves into doing nothing don't like to be told they could do something.

*[[Yet again, the "do something" comes with a non-trivial monetary cost...]]*

Tocqueville said the danger to democracy is people having power and not using it.

I still love Dennis Boxell's three 'Macedonian Folk Dances' LPs for Folkcraft, everything from village bands to Kočo Petrovski. I love Artur Rubinstein's complete set of Chopin nocturnes. Choosing among Papa Bach, Haydn, Mozart is like voting in the FAAn Awards. Maybe Olatunji's 'Drums of Passion' for Columbia. I took drum lessons at his school while living in Manhattan. It's the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday year of Miles Davis and John Coltrane, another terrible choice. No such music ever appears in *TH...*

*[[Anyone, even you, is welcome to guest a 'Radio Winston' column at any time...]]*

Luckily for us all you're such a good fanwriter. My father used to say "It doesn't always matter that a person is a fat-head".

*[[The jury is still out on "fatuous twat"...]]*

Thanks for your Corflu XLIII report.

\*\*\*

From: jabberwocky2000@hotmail.com

April 3

**Brad Foster** writes:

I see you used one fillo and one, shall we say, unexpected piece of art by me this issue. And so, to keep the universe in balance, you will find attached a new fillo, as well as a piece of art that you were probably not expecting at all. Details on that one later in the loc.

**Pat Virzi** delivered my FAAn award personally after getting back from Corflu, and much thanks to all those who thought I should get this nifty new rocket — and it even glows from inside. Take THAT, boring ol' non-glowing Hugo rockets!

Thank you for letting me know what DoBFO stands for.

Thank you, **Jerry Kaufman**, for your comment on my use of dots and space in my fillo. Many people are so dazzled by the dots, they never seem to notice the careful placement of the spaces as well. Much appreciated.

Thanks to **Dave Cockfield** for revealing which of my past comic book endeavors he had been talking about. Much surprised to see it was "The Queen of Hairy Flies", a nine page strip I remember spending many weeks working on, and then felt it was probably seen by maybe a couple of hundred people total. (Originally printed in the appropriately named "Queen of the Hairy Flies" one shot comic, a Lovecraft inspired bit of new wave/underground pubbing by Michael Roden in 1984. When they were putting together the "Murder" one shot at Renegade a few years later, I managed to get it in there as well.

Quite a surprise seeing the first page of the strip here! It took me ages to do all nine pages (I recall getting my grandfather to model for me for the evil character in it!), and is pretty much why I didn't pursue the comic strip work, save for now and then, as much as I did single illustrations and cartoons. Drawing in that style just sucks up too much time, but it is the only way I know how.

So **Dave**, glad you liked that one. Did you ever see any of my attempt at a bimonthly independent comic, also from Renegade Press, called "Mechthings"? I managed to get four issues out, received some nice reviews, but sales not enough to be able to allow me to put in the full 18 hours a day to draw those things!

And, since you shared the splash for "Queen", here is the splash page from "Mechthings" #1 (If Nic is kind enough to pub it here) —I do like my busy splash pages!!

Back to the drawing board—

\*\*\*

From: srjeffery@aol.com

**Steve Jeffery** writes:

Well, Artemis finally made it off and indeed as I write this is approaching its swing round the dark side of the moon. (No prizes for guessing what's been playing on the radio most of the morning.)

*[[The Waterboys?...]]*

I have to sympathise with your missed bus stop story on the way back to the hotel. That's happened to me more than once. Too many times, to be honest, and made especially galling when the buses display a sign and voice message to "remain seated until the bus stops. You safety is important to us" and then the driver whizzes past the stop despite illuminated 'Bus Stopping' sign at the front and explains, when challenged that he missed the stop that "Well, no-one was standing waiting to get off". You can't win. Although one nice lady driver, overhearing my muttered "Oh bugger, I thought this was a 2A" as she pulled a right turn at the junction at the end the road, kindly pulled in briefly and opened the doors so I could hop out at the gully leading to our house rather than have to walk back the whole length of the road from the next stop.

Not only does the Corflu 44 hotel, Best Western Premier Grand Chateau Granville sound posh, it sounds more like an award winning posh bottle of wine. Which might just be a good sign.

Congrats to all the FAAn Award winners (and, indeed, runners up and anyone placed) for this year's awards.

"Did I mention I have this terrible pain down all the diodes on my left side?"

Well not exactly, but intermittent chest pains still continue, despite (or maybe, I'm beginning to suspect, because of) various blood pressure meds and a visit to the echo cardiology department at the John Radcliffe Hospital a few weeks ago for, unsurprisingly, an echo cardiogram. Which consisted mostly of lying on my side for an hour while a doctor ran a souped-up microphone about my chest and ribs listening for various whoosh, whoosh noises.

Which I took as evidence that something was still working despite

his slightly alarming comment that "You are proving today's challenge" while searching for a specific valve or something.

At at the bus stop for home on the way out I ran into our friend Janet from the church, who had spend the morning helping out at the League of Friends café. (The main corridor of the hospital resembles a mini mall with all the volunteer desks, stalls, cafes, and even a second hand bookstore. Was it always thus, or is this a recent thing? You never see emergency trolleys having to negotiate round a cabinet full of cakes and brownies in *Casualty*.)



April 6



*[[I hope your diodes get back to proper functioning. Medical oddity that I am, I've never had a problem with my BP - in fact it's typically a bit low...]]]*

First single I bought wit my own money? I suspect this was either "Ride a White Swan" by T Rex or "My Brother Jake" by Free.

Song I do at karaoke? You must be f\*\*g kidding. Even by karaoke standards I can't carry a tune even in a bucket.

Song I inexplicably know every lyric to. At one point this was a toss up between "The Musical Box" and "Supper's Ready" by Genesis, although more lately I discover that while I might know all the right lyrics to the latter, they are (in Eric Morecombe's immortal phrase) "not necessarily in the right order". And that I often lose count in the 'ONE-two-three, one-TWO-three, one-two-THREE' riff to the "Apocalypse in 9/8" section. The other contender at one point was also a toss up between Fred Wedlock's "Handier Household Help", "Talking Folk Club Blues" and "Robin Head".

Song that Makes me Cry. Sandy Denny/Fairport Convention - "Who Knows Where The Time Goes". Apart from the fact that it is achingly beautiful and sad, I can't explain this, but it always has.

*[[With you on that one. Here's the Peel Session version for yer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsqztvHIB9Y> ...]]*

Not sure a song has ever changed my life, but some have set me down a different path. One of those might be Here & Now's "What You See is What You Are" when a friend and I trekked from Reading to Oxford Brookes Poly to see them play (under the moniker Planet Gong) with Gong's Daevid Allen and which led me to spending a lot of my weekends over the summers between '76 and '77 hanging around with them in Notting Hill/Westbourne Gardens. However I was too straight for the full hippy lifestyle and just a year into my first job, so when they bugged off to Glastonbury and a tour of Europe on their bus I went back to bedsit-land and discovered fandom instead.

**Dave Hodson's** mention of the Wesley Dodds *Sandman* comic remind me that I saw a copy of one of these in the graphic novel section of our local library the other day. along with another by N. K. Jemisin, and Alan Moore's *The Killing Joke*. May have to check these out (in both senses of that phrase). Meanwhile I'm working through their selection of T Kingfisher's YA fantasies which are good fun.

**Brad Foster** - your luxury item on *Desert Island Discs* is not allowed to be anything practical, or anything that would allow you to get off the island, much less a luxury yacht. I suspect that even a machete for cutting down trees to make a raft would be looked on askance. You can probably have a coffee percolator, though. If you can find or grow your own coffee.

As **Bob Jennings** points out, your choices on *Desert Island Discs* would probably not be the same at age 25, 50 or 75. Or, in my case, the same as last week.

Oh, that's a great cat and mouse painting by **Ulrika** on page 13.

\*\*\*



From: daverabban@gmail.com

April 8

**Dave Cockfield** writes:

On the last bend before issue 100.

It was good to see the sentiment expressed for Alun Harries. It was great to talk with him in Newbury at Corflu after a gap of many years.

I have very fond memories of drinking with Alun. He had a quirky and fun outlook on life. Yep he had a weak bladder but I also remember him puking over my shoes with regularity. In pubs and especially on trains. I will miss the guy.

I haven't been watching much since the last *TH*... However I actually went to the cinema 3 times. I enjoyed the book of 'Project Hail Mary' by Andy Weir and the film was getting great reviews. Unfortunately couldn't find it in IMAX but saw it on the biggest screen I could find locally. I loved it so much so that I have been back twice more.

The last time I did that was probably the first Christopher Reeve Superman movie.

The first two screenings that I saw on large screens only had about a dozen people in the audience. 600 seaters.

The third time on a much smaller screen in a 100 seater it was two thirds full. Midday during the week where I was probably the youngest person there.

Probably reading more than anything. Discovering the new "hot" comics *Absolute Batman* and *Absolute Wonder Woman*. Very over the top but surprisingly fun and addictive.

Reading a couple of C.J.Box standalone novels.

In his loc **Skel** said that he had only ever found two of his books in local Charity shops. I have only ever found one. Thank goodness for ebay.

The YouTube list provided by **Mark Nelson** of desirable actresses was full of the usual suspects. The big surprise for me was the Blue Peter presenter Lesley Judd. Petite, attractive, with a bubbly personality, but hardly pin-up material.

However I do remember an eye opening episode of Blue Peter where she transferred between two naval vessels on a rope. She was soaked through. Braless in a white t-shirt that ended up completely transparent. It was a live event and I don't think that it was ever repeated.

Well worthy of a Blue Peter badge.

*[[Nor, it seems, are there any photos or video within easy reach...]]*

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From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

April 15

**Gary Mattingly** writes:

Enjoyable con report. Sounds like you had a very good time. I was sort of absent while supposedly in attendance. I don't think I ate at any of the restaurants you did. I drove to a couple of other restaurants in the evenings. I had some breakfast near Railroad Square. I went to Bikram yoga most mornings (hm, was it every morning?). I didn't go to the Schultz museum. I did go to the wine tasting on Thursday. I may have had another glass or two of wine over the weekend, but I really didn't drink very much. Actually, what I had was more than I usually have.

'TAFNessabounds': And **Kat** won. I'm glad. Congratulations to her.

'Corflux': I hope they shift the Vancouver Corflu dates to March.

'FAAnwank': Good luck with the Awards in the future, or getting help, or whatever.

'Hugowank': Well, I have a WSFS membership, and I could have nominated, but I got that membership about two days

before nominations were due, and, well, you know how speedy I am . . .

'Health Diary': A continuing wish for good (better) health for you and Jennifer. I'm mostly fine. Recent physical blood tests were all in normal ranges. Yesterday I had a tooth implant. That doesn't really describe it, IMO. Basically, they make a hole in my jaw, put something in there under the gumline that a crown can be screwed into. Well, it is something like that. Unfortunately, I have to wait another three months for everything to heal before the crown can be placed.

*[[Good luck with all that Gary. Actually health situations round here are mostly all right, but the 'Health Diary' column does tend to be an excuse to be overdramatic...]]*

I think my sleep pattern is fairly normal. I go to bed sometime between 9 and 10 usually (later when I go to a film or concert and get home late), get up sometime between 4 and 7 AM in order to get to Bikram early. Garmin says most of my nights' sleep is "Fair" or "Poor" with only a few being "Good". I think this is mainly due to insufficient REM time. I think that is mainly due to eating too close to bedtime. Bad Gary.

*[[My sleep situation is best described as "variable". Occasionally I'll sleep straight through the night for 8 hours or more. Last night I woke up several times troubled by dreams, but got back to sleep quickly each time. Other nights I'll be tired as all fuck but unable to actually fall asleep...]]*

'TV Guide': I'm sorry 'Star Trek: Starfleet Academy' is going away after season 2. I won't say it was the best, but I watched and usually enjoyed it.

*[[There's a fan petition going to try and rescind the cancellation. I doubt it'll do any good but I guess we'll find out...]]*

I still haven't watched 'The Lincoln Lawyer', 'Tracker', 'Elsbeth', or 'Matlock'. I enjoyed 'Young Sherlock'. I noted that some Sherlock Holmes fans thought it was dreadful. Fine, whatever.

*[[Young Sherlock' is getting a second season. I enjoyed it...]]*

I've mentioned in the past that I watched a few early episodes of 'Paradise', but never really got into it.

Of late, I've been watching 'Watson' (future seasons cancelled), 'Daredevil: Born Again', 'Will Trent', 'High Potential', 'R.J. Decker', 'Ghost', 'For All Mankind', 'Monarch', 'Phantom Lawyer' (Korean series on Netflix), 'Deadloch' (I recently watched all of season 1, and just watched the first episode of season 2.), 'Jo Nesbo's Detective Hole' (I watched the first episode recently, and plan to watch more. The first episode was very severe.). Of course, I'm still watching 'CBS Sunday Morning'. I'm also watching the documentary on Henry David Thoreau. Also slowly

watching 'The Count of Monte Cristo' on PBS. I'm probably watching something else too, but have temporarily forgotten. Hm, watch lots of news also. Maybe I shouldn't. I can't do anything about the idiot in the White House and his Cabinet, or the Republicans (who I mostly deplore), or a number of Democrats that I don't like. Then there's the Iran war, the ongoing thing with Venezuela, Cuba, the Pope, the deportation of Immigrants, and the extreme tactics of ICE, etc., etc., etc.

'Movie Night': I haven't watched 'In the Blink of an Eye'. We'll see if I get to it. The most recent film I watched was 'Requiem for a Dream' directed by Darren Aronofsky. It stars Ellen Burstyn, Jared Leto, Jennifer Connelly, Marlon Wayans, and numerous others. From IMDb, "The drug-induced utopias of four Coney Island people are shattered when their addictions run deep." I started watching it a while ago, but had to stop. It is very intense, really distressing, and depressing. I think it is a very well-made film, although it really is way over the top. I wouldn't say it is a film that made me feel good in any way.

#### [[Coney Island 'Trainspotting'?...]]

Before that, I watched 'The Stranger' (2025) at the Roxie, based on Camus' book, which I read many years ago and found very interesting and compelling. The film was directed by François Ozon. It starred Benjamin Voisin, Rebecca Marder, Pierre Lottin, and numerous others. I thought it was pretty good. I guess I haven't seen as many movies lately as usual. I need to get tickets for many of the movies at the SF Silent Film Festival and the SF Film Society International Film Festival. I may have time to do so over the next week. After the tooth implant, I'm not supposed to do any strenuous exercise for 7 days. I don't know if I will actually make 7 days. We'll see.

'Radio Winston': Thanks for the playlist. Interesting.

Odd musical thoughts that came to my mind:

"More" (Theme from 'Mondo Cane') - Kai Winding is very incongruous with the movie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-kaquSOLo4>

or Frank Sinatra's

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPPBIVPThL8>

Another, um, great(?) song I'll never forget:

"My Pal's Name is Footfoot" - The Shaggs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XR9d4ESlpHY>

A song that enters my brain now and then

"Malaguena" - Michael Lucarelli

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8B6jOUzBKyc>

or Roy Clark

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxDQQDF6j0Y>

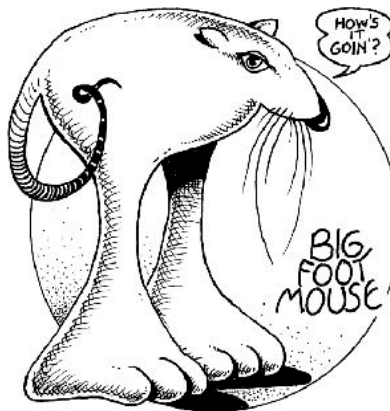
or a more orchestral version by Stan Kenton

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

*[[A quick note for you on links: you may have noticed that I reformat these since they take you to a playlist rather than just the slice itself, so I delete everything in the link from "&list..." onwards...]]*

I have been to more concerts. I saw Los Lobos at the Fillmore. I enjoyed it, but didn't think the sound was very good. I saw Dar Williams at The Freight in Berkeley. I enjoyed that also. And I saw The Ravi Shankar Ensemble at the Herbst Theater in San Francisco. I thought this was excellent.

'Anorak': Interesting reading and photos about railroads and trains in Cuba. The ride time is certainly long, but the price is obviously quite low. I would like to visit Cuba, but the US relations with Cuba make that very unlikely in the near future.



'The Old Sod': Interesting reading on the various topics covered, but particularly the memorial for Alun Harries. I'm sorry about your health or health aid issues.

I've got maybe four boxes of comics, which I haven't looked at in years. I keep thinking about attempting to sell them. They are all in plastic bags. Hopefully, they are still in reasonably good condition. Actually, I have a bunch of Franklin Mint coins that I would like to sell as well. I don't think I'll get very much from them. Just a matter of getting up

the time and energy on both.

'Loco Citato':

**Rob Hansen** - Thanks for your remembrances of Alun Harries.

**Leigh Edmonds** - Agreed, the 1790s were a good time for music. Gee, now you've made me listen to Wagner.

**Mark Nelson** - Hm, now I have to go listen to The Blues Band. I only have one Manfred Mann album, The Best of.

**Bob Jennings** - I'll have to look more at Discogs for Magpie Piano Blues.

**Dave Cockfield**: I think I've watched and enjoyed 'The Nevers'. Maybe I should go back and revisit it.

**Gary Mattingly** - Actually, it looks like 'Nautilus' doesn't return on AMC until June 29. 'Fallout' may not return until late 2027.

Hm, nah, most of the movies I go see have other people there. Admittedly, most of the population might not go see some of them, but that's not why I go, really.



And Artemis went up and came back down, seemingly everything in good shape, well, for the most part. I think there were some toilet problems and some Microsoft problems.

Again, enjoyable artwork by **Brad W Foster**, **Teddy Harvia**, and **Ulrika O'Brien**. Lots of nice photos too.

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From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

April 20

**Eli Cohen** writes:

**Leigh Edmonds** talks a bit about Wagner's operas in his loc. I must say, I'm not much of an opera fan, but almost the only operas I've seen are Wagner's Ring Cycle, which I saw (over the course of a week) with Frank and Anna Jo Denton, on a visit to Seattle (almost 50 years ago!). I remember enjoying it (I've always liked Wagner's music), but I have to say the best part of the experience was introducing the Dentons to Anna Russell's "The Ring of the Niebelungs (An Analysis)", a hilarious -- and actually pretty accurate -- synopsis of those operas. (Some examples: "And then Erda sings Weiche, Wotan, weiche, which means "Be careful, Wotan, be careful." In the next act she bears him eight daughters..."; "Hunding ... who happens to have an ash tree with a sword stuck in it growing through his living room floor ..."; "Siegfried and Brunnhilde go in for some very competitive singing... Then they fall in love and he gives her the Ring. She's his aunt by the way..." )

As long as I'm reminiscing, I suppose I should mention another highlight of the visit for me -- before *Das Rheingold*, when Frank and I were walking around the Seattle Center (Anna Jo was off accosting men with promises of trips to Acapulco; well, she was selling Opera Society raffle tickets, actually): We ran into Alan E. Nourse, who was also there for the opera, and he introduced us to the lady with him -- Ginny Heinlein. You know, Robert's wife? (She had come up to Seattle just for Wagner.)

Re your comment on my loc, about Québécois French vs European, yes, I am aware of the difference. In fact, I wrote a loc about it to some fanzine a while back, what was its name?... Oh yes, something called *This Here...*, issue #43, where I said: "There was a hilarious episode of 'A Very Secret Service' (*Au service de la France*, a French comedy series on Netflix that takes place in 1960), where some Québécois come to France to seek help with their

separatist movement -- there's a meeting with the French officials where the Canadians chatter on in their deep Quebec accent while the French shrug at each other in puzzlement, not understanding a word! ("I thought you said they spoke French!" "We do speak French!" "What did he just say?").

*[[Which loc I (DoBFO) remembered, though not the actual show...]]*

\*\*\*

From: fareyjen@gmail.com

April 28

**Jen Farey** writes:

In the last ish **Jerry** (or "Jarry"... did you mean to do that?) **Kaufman** wrote about our time at the Santa Rosa Corflu that "Jen was a bit subdued" and "perhaps you and Jen weren't ready emotionally for being plunged into contact with so many people at one time." That took me by surprise, but giving it more thought, I suppose it's possible both of those were true. While I didn't think I was particularly subdued, I did allow myself a fair amount of down time. If I was tired, then I went to the room and didn't feel bad about it. I was also more careful than usual. After two joint replacement surgeries in 2025 (right hip in May and left knee in November) I'm still a little wobbly, so I walk with more intention. I really pay attention to where I'm going and the state of the ground (rocky? carpeted? sloped? sinkhole? danger!) so it's not unusual for me to have my head down when I'm walking. That could make me look sad or just plain rude. And it probably contributed to me missing a few people I wanted to talk to. For example, it wasn't until I got home that I realized **Karen Shaffer** was at Corflu and I never saw her! So apologies to **Karen** and anybody else I may have seemed to ignore.

*[[And you found the typo!...]]*

To wrap this up on a high note, I'll answer one of your 'Radio Winston' questions (because there's really only one I can sort of answer). The first single I bought with my own money, but it's not a single, it's an album: Rick Springfield, 'Working Class Dog'. Bought it with my babysitting money. Good times.

\*\*\*

WAHF

**Steve Green ; Perry Middlemiss ; George Phillies** with FAAn Award congrats ;

## FANZINES RECEIVED

With the usual thanks...

*THE CHATTER BOX* 4 - 9 (Leigh Edmonds) - ...

*THE OBDURATE EYE* 61 (Garth Spencer) - ...

*INTERMISSION* 165 (Arvid Engholm) - ...

*FADEAWAY* #72 (Bob Jennings) - ...

*TWO CHAIRS IN PRINT* #16 (David Grigg & Perry Middlemiss) - ...

Several *VANAMONDE* (John Hertz) - ...

*NOTICIAS DE PFANDOM* #1 (Heath Row & Álvaro de Sousa Holstein) - ...

*THE PACIFIC QUARTERLY REVIEW* #1 (Garth Spencer) - ...

*CAPTAIN FLASHBACK* #89 (Andy Hooper) - ...

*TONOPAH ELUCIDATOR & LITERARY REVIEW* #5 (Kevin Trainor) - ...

## INDULGE ME

✕ **QUOTE OF THE MONTH** : “To the young, influencers are entertaining avatars, who can turn their hand to any number of activities and sell them through force of personality. To non-digital natives, these same influencers appear to be complete bellends.” (Rhik Samadder)

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : AKA the **Jerry Kaufman** fitness program, now with **Simone Griffeth**...



✕ **GREEN CARD UPDATE** : The required biometrics (photo and fingerprints) all done in an efficient and friendly manner and without being carted off to a prison camp. The expected long wait begins...

✕ **IT WASN'T ME OFFICER** : Perry Middlemiss

expresses surprise that I hadn't told him I was in country, sending this photo of a bloke at the Grand Hotel, Labrador, Queensland. Not me guv, honest, but uncanny innit? ...



✕ **THAT WAS CLOSE!** : An advertisement on FBF blares: “STOP PAYING \$500,000 A YEAR FOR SUPPORT”. I gratefully comply immediately, of course...

✕ **RADIO WINSTON EXTRA** : Dear departed Alan Corey used to punt an “Old, New, Borrowed and Blues” section in his steam radiio programme, with “borrowed” being interesting cover versions. I supplied him a few, aficionado of covers wot I am, and so for no other reason than it just occurred to me, here's the cover of ELO's first single “10538 Overture” done by the Italian outfit Laboratory Dei Capelli, Well good video an'all ...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wrYBBafLoE>

✕ **WORKING CLASS HERO** : Describing Andy Capp as “working” will DoBFO get a larf out of anyone familiar with the character. I'm happily getting Andy cartoons in my FBF feed and they rarely fail to raise a smile. What made me think about the legendary layabout was the bit of kerfuffle years ago when his usual ever-present cigarette disappeared from the strip, and creator Reg Smythe was accused of going all PC (nowadays it would be “woke”). The fact was, though, that Smythe had packed up smoking and said that if *he* couldn't have a cig then neither could Andy. Ey, what about a footy cartoon?...



✕ **IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING** : Thish is a few days late because the Old Sod has been a bit laid up with an ear infection and slept through the usual deadline when he wasn't questing up for hours for antibiotics (that's the gist of it anyway). Still, it gave **Jen** time to get her loc in...

✕ **NEXTISH** : May 23<sup>rd</sup> seems reasonable, since we're having a Fifth Saturday house party on the 30<sup>th</sup>...



## SHAMELESS FILLER (1)

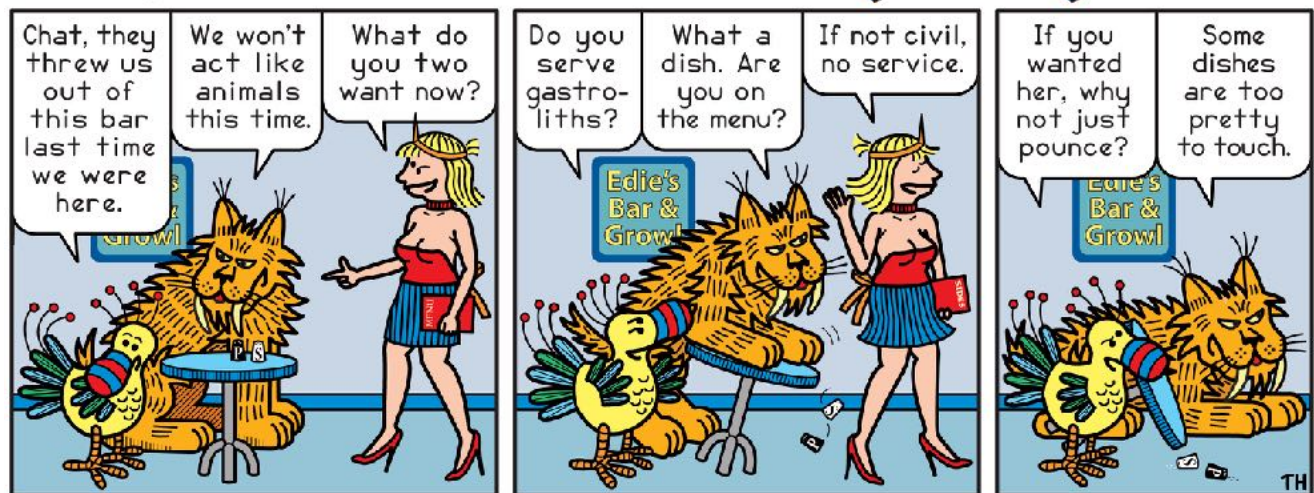
Keep on steppin' **Killer**, lest Ageless Beauty **Rebecca Solnit** accidentally invades your field of vision...



## SHAMELESS FILLER (2)



## Chat, the 4th Fannish Ghod by Teddy Harvia



## MIRANDA

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(p4) ; **Teddy Harvia** (pp 8, 14, 23) ; **Ulrika O'Brien** (pp 18, 21)

"In Seventy-two we was born to lose  
We slipped down snakes into yesterday's news  
I was ready to quit  
But then we went to Croydon!"