

# THE FRENETIC FANAC REVIEW

#2

AUGUST 2012



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## **NONSENSE NATTER**

First of all, you should understand this reviewzine is not meant to describe ALL the current zines newly available to fen. That would be an impossible task. Especially as new zines are published on damn near a daily basis. At the very least this would have to be a weekly zine to keep pace, and I'm frankly not up to it.

This is a bizarre example, only 9 zines reviewed and 4 of them are my own! All of them came out months ago. No current zines at all.

This because of this and that, the great enemy of Faneds. But now I am back on track, or at least trying to clear a backlog of publications to enable me to concentrate on preparing for the upcoming VCON 37

This of FFR still has value. It is not meant to be hot-off-the-press late-breaking news. Rather, it is a series of mini-essays giving my impression and reaction to a variety of zines (most still being published) that may be of interest to you. Even if you are already familiar with the zines, you may find what I have to say worth discussing.

At any rate, it is my intention to leisurely review this and that zine whenever I feel like writing a review, and as soon as I have a reasonable number of pages done, say twenty or less, pub it off and start filling in the next issue template. I hope this will result in at least one issue a month.

If you're hoping for a comprehensive compendium of reviews describing each and every issue of all zines I'd

say you tend towards the fantasy side of fandom. What you're going to get is a few reviews of a few zines, not necessarily the 'important' ones, and definitely not 'every' issue.

Where I will make some effort toward 'full coverage' is in the realm of Canadian zines, since I've given myself the endless quest of promoting Canadian zinedom, but even there I will fall far short of the ideal.

In short, please lower your expectations. All I intend to do is provide a glimpse of contemporary zinedom in the hope some readers will 'discover' zines they're unfamiliar with and start reading them on a regular basis, and that others, newcomers to zinedom, will be inspired to pub their own ish. Reasonable expectations, what?

Meanwhile, consider the burning question:

What the hell IS a fanzine anyway?

Most 'traditional' faneds know, by instinct if nothing else. This can be a huge source of confusion for fans of Science Fiction who know nothing about fandom.

'Fandom', of course, refers to a few thousand, possibly just a few hundred, demented individuals (like me) who carry the torch for 'traditional' fandom, which is to say: fans of fandom, of fannish ways. Which, come to think of it, constitutes a bunch of people in love with themselves, or at least, in love with what they do that marks them as fannish fans. (Hmm, I feel a theory abuilding... possibly a thesis...)

As opposed to the majority of fans, millions of them, who just happen to like the SF stuff and are the true bread and butter of innumerable film makers, authors, artists, and so forth. It's debatable which group constitutes the majority of convention organizers. I suspect fans, not fandom, is the answer.

And, of course, 'traditional fanzine' fandom is a smaller group than 'traditional' fandom.

And within 'traditional fanzine' fandom there is an even tinier group who reject most zines as being 'unfannish.'

And finally you have the rare individual who views himself as the only true fan and all other fans as fakes.

Is it any wonder fans are no longer attracted to fandom? That convention panels devoted to fannish themes often outnumber the audience?

Certain things I won't do any more at VCON. I won't run a fanzine room. I won't participate in a panel devoted to fanzines. There's no point. No audience.

*[To interrupt myself with actual late-breaking news, I just volunteered to moderate a panel on THE JOY OF FANZINE PUBLISHING. I is a sucker for punishment I is. Don't know if the programming dept is willing though...]*

But I'm still willing to lecture on fannish history, albeit with a slide show. People like looking at pictures. And a darkened room is always good. Allows for a quick nap & then on to the fun stuff. But I digress.

Truth is fanzines are obsolete, there's nothing cutting edge or exciting about them anymore. Not to newbies caught up in twitterland. We are the buggy whip aficionados my friends, Dodo riders, Dinosaur herders, etc., We ain't relevant.

Well, so what? We are all aware fanzine fandom is a wonderful hobby, intellectually stimulating, and an inexhaustible source of satisfaction and sense of completion (whenever you pub your ish). It's a joy precisely BECAUSE it's old-fashioned, arcane, different, and not something for the common herd.

Fanzine fandom gives individuals a chance to shine AS individuals, Ghu damn it! We can't stress this enough when seeking converts.

Consequently, I say, it's more important than ever not to be elitist and 'picky' when we peruse zines and judge them.

There are in this issue's selection at least one fan zine as opposed to fannish or fandom zines. Given that it is the proud boast of many a faned that their zine has very little SF content, it's somewhat ironic that the zine in question – DARK MATTER – is stuffed to the gills with Science Fiction content. The very thing fandom was originally all about before it evolved into the self-referential mini-club it is today.

I say it's time to remember and emphasise the 'fan' in 'fandom.'

Time to embrace 'Science Fiction' once again.

Time to embrace fans and clutch them to our bosom...

Well, that sounds a bit pervy...

All I'm really saying is, let's celebrate our hobby and what it's all about, proudly proclaim our joy and pleasure in what we do, our excitement, and above all...

Let's be WELCOMING to neofen! Share our excitement! Hook them! Addict them! Convert them to the sheer joy of writing and pubbing fanzines.

At the very least, let's stop being a bunch of grumpy old BOBs (Boring Old Bastards) moaning and groaning and whining about how the good old days are gone forever and how unspeakably boring and useless endeavour and effort has become.

Why not make zinedom BETTER than it used to be?

There's a challenge for you!

Your frothing editor, The Graeme

## CANADIAN FANZINES

**AURORAN LIGHTS #6 – April 2012**

**Faned: R. Graeme Cameron**

At: <http://efanzines.com/>



Here I am reviewing one of my own zines again, but only in the hope that those of you unfamiliar with it will be motivated to download it in the future. This isn't a particularly good example to describe for that purpose, unfortunately.

Normally, in the past, since the focus of this semi-official zine promoting the Aurora Awards is fanzine fandom (and the Aurora fan awards in particular – someone else can do one promoting the Aurora professional awards – I'm not qualified) I usually throw in several articles on fannish history or contemporary zinedom in addition to the latest CSFFA news. Not this time.

Having just recovered (finally) from a hernia operation, and noticing how close the deadline was for nominating people for this year's Aurora Awards, I rushed out this issue a few days before hand to remind people to nominate. It was now or never time.

Well, the Auroras had been averaging 3 or 4 nominators a day, but the number shot up tenfold the last two days. I'd like to think AURORAN LIGHTS #6 had something to do with it, if only as a timely reminder.

Contents are sparse: instructions on how to nominate, complete list of last year's winners, lengthy article by Kent Pollard on the CUFF voting campaign with statements by the two candidates Jane Garthson & Debra Yeung, a brief article on the current status of the Faned Awards, and a single loc from, you guessed it, Lloyd Penney. Good and worthy news, with some interesting bits, but not much meat to it.

Next issue will be better.

**BCSFAzine #467 – April 2012**

**Faned: Felicity Walker**

Available at <http://efanzines.com/BCSFA/index.htm>

Send comments and/or submissions to

[felicity4711@gmail.com](mailto:felicity4711@gmail.com)



BCSFAzine, like my SPACE CADET, is on the finalist list of nominees for Best Fan Publication Aurora. I immediately contacted Felicity, congratulated her, and suggested we could have great fun savaging each other as if in fierce competition. But not in the pages of TFFR, though potentially amusing, as it wouldn't be fair. I'll

just limit myself to praising the hell out of SPACE CADET. Meanwhile, as for BCSFAzine....

As always Felicity opens with the loc column, a habit I rather like yet do not indulge in myself. Not sure why. Anyway, in response to a comment by Sheryl Birkhead on the subject of zine reviews, Felicity writes:

*"The goal of 'Zines Received' is to REVIEW the zines, but I don't know how to do that, so I comment on the specific things for which I have a reaction, and the rest of the articles I list."*

Which, to my way of thinking, is **exactly** how one reviews zines. First, search for comment hooks, quote, and comment. The comment can be brief, or a mini-essay, depending on whim. Then capture the gist of the remaining contents, but be sure to voice an opinion based on your own reaction. To sum up, how does the zine personally effect you? Was it worth reading? Was it rubbish? At the very least try to leave the reader a clear impression of what you thought of the zine which, hopefully, reflects what the zine is actually all about, its purpose, intent, and so forth. Filter the zine through your

personal reaction. There's the fun of reviewing. The key. With any luck the reader will enjoy reading your review nearly as much as you enjoyed writing it.

Dave Haren makes the interesting point: *"Climate change is a prime example of the way media/politics conspire to keep everyone afraid. The climate has changed before and humans survived it; we don't need to turn into Chicken Little..."*

Well, strange things are a'happening but the only thing I ever allow myself to say is that we all know the human race is too collectively stupid and greedy to prevent Global Warming even if it were possible. Whether the cause is manmade or not is irrelevant. The only real question is, what are we going to do to cope with the consequences? And that's when I usually shut up to avoid becoming the troll version of the giant chicken heart that ate Chicago....

Dave also takes Michael Bertrand to task for setting *"the bar far too high for the average modern writer. Trapped in an environment of limited artificiality they rarely encounter any other life forms or attempt to unravel the motivations of wildlife they do see. So crying that the writer should have a completed understanding of an unrelated species hardly seems reasonable."*

I assume the subject at hand is author attempts to portray alien species in a credible manner (as opposed to, say, discussing the reproductive habits of Squirrels).

Felicity responds: *"In fairness to Michael, if a writer has created a species, it's reasonable to expect the writer to be familiar with it."*

Myself, if the described alien creature is nifty, cool, AND stirs my sensa wonda, that's good enough for me.

Point is, the loc contributors in BCSFAzine frequently offer intelligent discussion of comment hooks and consequently the loc column is more often than not one of the strengths of the zine.

A loc from Michael Bertrand is immediately followed by a loc from 'Bert M. Rand' (uhuh...) in which he states:

*"First, love the new format. Call me old fashioned, but I will always prefer the feel and physicality of ingesting a thought tablet and feeling it dissolve into my simulated bloodstream before passing through the blood-brain barrier to this modern trend of just having the thought stream loaded directly into your digital brain. I grew up eating my books, and I will probably keep doing so until the day I..well, obviously not die. 'Til the day I can't get them that way, I guess."*



To which Felicity responds: *"It's certainly easier than the old suppository format."*

Did I mention Bert M. Rand is a denizen of the 28<sup>th</sup> century? I love these kind of SFictional bits slipped into the pages of BCSFAzine from time to time....

Speaking of the bizarre... the Calendar of upcoming community events is... amazing. Oh, the usual thing, computer swap meets, gaming nights, cartooning courses, & such... but also things like *'The Annual Talk Like Donald Pleasance Day'* (April 4<sup>th</sup>) and the *'Annual Trade Convention of Scary Homeless People'* (I suspect the veracity of these items)... but most remarkable of all, three Sci-Fi themed events:

- 1) Video Game Burlesque show featuring Kitty Bang Bang in SONIC THE HEDGEHOG, Sweet Sashay in TOMB RAIDER, Bunny Meugens in METROID, etc., etc.
- 2) GEEKS AFTER DARK: *"Experience nerdlesque from the likes of: CHAI TEA & SPARKLE PLENTY, SEX LUTHOR, MADELINE MASQUERADE, DOLLIE NOX, LACE CADET, [and] newcomers THE ROYAL PROVOCATEURS!"*
- 3) *"LUST IN SPACE! FETISH FASHION SHOW!... Anything and everything science-fiction, with a fun, sexy twist!"*

Well, this IS Vancouver after all. None of the above three are events I would attend, being rather old-fashioned, but it is kinda neat to see SF entering the mainstream, mundane world... so to speak.

Main thing is, a lot of people probably skip calendars of events on the grounds they assume they are are simply lists of boring items. Not in BCSFAzine! You never know what you're going to find. Well worth perusing. Some items you'll skip reading, some will amuse, some will make your jaw drop. Always something different.

Felicity devotes three pages to describing the conversation at the last BCSFA meeting on topics ranging from the dying of the clubs to the weird constraints on Saudi Arabian Archaeologists. Damned if she doesn't make it sound interesting. Fact is, we talk about everything under the sun, everything that has struck members as noteworthy of late. If an evening of quiet, often invigorating conversation appeals, try coming out to a BCSFA meeting some time. (See the zine for details.)

Five pages are devoted to Garth Spencer's THE ANARCHO-SURREALIST MANIFESTO which I won't review here since it is also printed in Garth's ONE

SWELL FOOP issue #7 (which is perfectly acceptable since the 'subscription' lists of the two zines only overlap to a slight degree). One difference, though, is that Felicity has added portraits of revolutionaries which add a certain 'zing' to the visual impact of the article.

The final page reproduces a 1955 ad for a ditto machine. Quite amusing. *"Turn handle and out comes up to 300 or more bright, clear copies."* Really? It's in the ad, so it must be true. A full address is given for the company's US address, but for Canada? Write *"Ditto of Canada, Ltd., Toronto, Ont."* I had no idea Toronto was a one industry town back then. A small town, evidently.

## **BROKEN TOY # 2 – April 2012**

**Faned: Taral Wayne**

Available at <http://efanzines.com/>



**Forgotten glory**

For those wanting a second look at some of the best... The house could have been applied a couple of times ago... I'm not sure if it's the same old story... I'm not sure if it's the same old story... I'm not sure if it's the same old story...

Crisp, clean and lean layout (no art by Taral!), designed for a quick easy read. More importantly, designed for a quick, easy production. Very much what I'm attempting these days.

Taral opens with a rather sad editorial titled 'Forgotten Glory' in which he explains his 11<sup>th</sup> Hugo nomination

has left him feeling unexcited, *"not indifferent,"* but unexcited. He assumes he will not win. He goes to great length to explain why. Good grief! Has Taral never heard of the concept of a 'self-fulfilling prophecy?' Is he clueless when it comes to self-promotion? Being cynical and jaded is one thing, but tearing himself down when an opportunity arises to spread awareness of his art, to encourage others to appreciate his body of work, strikes me as something close to perverse.

I mean, I have no talent whatsoever, but no one has ever accused me of lack of ego. I recently wrote (I forget where) *"Like I always say, if you're short of egoboo, provide your own!"* In the loc column Christopher J. Garcia is accused of writing, not for others, but for himself. Is there any other way to write? If you can't please yourself, you can't please anybody. Sure, I chuckle and giggle as I write. I feel sorry for faneds who don't.

Chris writes in his loc *"It will sound weird, I know, but I'm not in it for the egoboo (shudder). I love zines, I*

*love creating them, the actual act of doing them, and that's the most important thing to me."*

I know exactly what Chris is talking about. I feel the same way. Tremendous sense of accomplishment and completion when I convert a zine into a PDF and send it off. Any response, any response at all, positive or negative, is merely icing on the cake.

Isn't that what zinedom is all about? Self expression?

And art too? I always imagined artists feel a thrill when a piece is completed. Or is this fantasy on my part?

Taral's art is unique. It's furry fandom combined with SF, and to a high standard of line, perspective, detail, and composition. Deceptively simple, yet often more sophisticated than meets the eye at first glance. I'm no artist, but I recognise good art when I see it.

Granted, I'm not keen on his ubiquitous furry character, but she has a personality all her own and I perceive her as a fantasy element in compositions best described as SF or alternate reality. Taral's covers for FILE 770 are justly famous. They help 'define' FILE 770, at least as far as I'm concerned. It's not just the skill, it's the personal touch. There's something of Taral in his every piece. There's nothing impersonal in his art.

In short, I feel Taral embodies the very spirit of fannish art and has long been deserving of a Hugo. That he has been nominated 11 times prove that others think so too. That he has yet to win is the luck of the draw. In lieu of victory I think Taral should set himself the goal of being nominated twelve times. That number has a solid feel to it. Feels like victory to me.

Elsewhere, Taral comments: *"As for the Auroras, it's as though Canadians never heard of me. That may well be the case, though, since most Canadian fans don't seem to read fanzines."*

Well, I've been promoting Canadian fanzines like crazy, in part through the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards for which Taral designed the certificate awarded to winners, including himself. I nominated Taral for Auroras because of his fan-writing and for his fan-art. He didn't get in the final nominee round in those categories, but he **did** get a 'Fan Achievement (Other)' nomination because of the CFFA certificate! Hot damn! I truly believe my promotional activity is beginning to have an effect! Too early to expect a renaissance of Canadian SF zinedom, mayhaps, but I'm hoping.

The rest of the loc column (filled with heavy-weights like Eric Mayer, Gregory Benford, Brad Foster, Chris

Garcia, Dave Locke, Jerry Kaufman, Andrew Hooper, Robert Runte and others) revolves around the 'worth' of assorted fan artists. Fascinating stuff. I personally rely on Taral and Brad Foster for 'fresh' art (for which I am most grateful) and my backlog of work by Barry Kent Mackay, Scott Patri, and William Rotsler. Plus some clip art. There is much talk of fan art disappearing, fewer venues, less appreciation, etc. Bloody hell! If you're a fan artist, send your art to me! I guarantee I'll use it!

Granted, my zines are not among the 'big boys,' and they may not be particularly noteworthy in and of themselves, but they've got enthusiasm, damn it. Tons of enthusiasm. Absolutely riddled with enthusiasm. Dripping with enthusiasm. Enthusiastically enthusiastic. Boy, I got enthusiasm. No skill or talent maybe, but enthusiasm galore. Including a great love for fan art. Especially if it is in some way an SF illustration, though fannish and fantasy themes will do as well, but my first love **IS** SF illustration. So, fan artists, if you're searching for a faned willing to pub your art, I'm the guy!

Taral likes to 'play around' with history. An allegedly genuine letter from gangsters Bonnie & Clyde praising Ford motorcars is transformed into Ford boasting about it on radio. Something he was more than capable of doing. For that matter, he was more than capable of 'creating' the letter in the first place. A supremely immoral and amoral man. Ford kept an autographed photo of Hitler on his desk, Hitler likewise an autographed photo of Ford. The Fuhrer was particularly pleased by Ford's infamous book demanding the elimination of Jews from American life, and greatly prized an autographed copy sent to him by Ford. For some reason none of this is ever mentioned in contemporary publicity for the Ford company. Anyway, Taral is well aware that history is even worse than what people generally know, and his 'cynical' playfulness regarding history, while always fun, is, if anything, greatly understated.

## **THE CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION FAN # 6**

**– April 2012**

**Faned: R. Graeme Cameron**

Available at <http://efanzines.com/> but only if you are a member of e-APA and possess the correct password. Nevertheless, once a year (every October) the issue is open to anyone. Go to efanazines and check it out!

This yet another zine of mine, specifically for e-APA whose O.E. is Peter Sullivan in England. That means you don't get to read it, unless you join e-APA. Well, why not join? A monthly deadline might seem extreme but it **IS** an online APA. No fuss or muss in terms of printing out multiple copies and mailing them off to Peter for

redistribution by mail. Just put together a zine-like document in PDF format and email it to Peter at the end of the month, and a couple of days later you get back all contributions combined into a single PDF file. Loads of fun. Easy to do. And costs nothing! No dues.

Currently the members are me, Peter, Garth Spencer, Steven H Silver, William McCabe, Christina Lake, Eunice Probert, Ahrvid Engholm, Kate Templeton, Ryan Speer, Chuck Connor, & Michael O'Brien. Twelve people in all with roughly a 75% contribution rate per issue. There is room for three more members. Each member must contribute at least six times a year, to a maximum size of no more than 500 K per contribution.

So far I've contributed 6 pages per month. Issue #6 is typical: two column landscape with no images. I devote one page to Canadian affairs (changes to the pension plan, abolishment of the penny) and the rest to last issue's contributions, waxing verbosely on subjects as diverse as the meaning of life (involves the 'Sex Life of Godzilla' lectures), when is a father really a father, how to stay married, my first computer (purchased in 1981 – had Word Version One!), computer games, how to become an instant fannish legend, and sundry other reactions to comment hooks. YOU get to decide what the comment hooks are. YOU get to decide what you want to blather on about. The others will respond, but only if they want to. Basically, it's like having a dozen or so pen pals. Far more satisfying than just posting to the vast void of the internet.

Be aware I have a somewhat bleak view of the future based on a lifetime of reading history and understanding the difference between reality as presented (historical tradition, popular belief, propaganda, etc.) and reality as it actually occurred (far worse than you want to believe). Past history and contemporary history in the making tends to swell me up to troll-like proportions. A kind of allergy I guess. In general in most of my zines I resist the urge to be a were-troll, but I allow myself the luxury of speaking my mind re history & politics in e-APA. That way I offend, at most, 11 other people.

I should mention I've been training myself not to respond to facebook statements that are obviously false or stupid. What's the point? People don't want to know the truth anyway. They just want evidence to confirm their preconceived beliefs. Truth has nothing to do with it. For example, does it serve any purpose to remind people that the unique American practice of invading countries for their own good was invented by President McKinley? Of course not. It just upsets people.

I don't actually want to upset people with my fan-writing. I just want to entertain. But in e-APA I allow myself a combination of good fellowship with occasional

outbursts of rant and rave. If that intrigues you, by all means join. If you are put off by the idea, well, I don't do it all that often. Mostly, e-APA is good fun. I like fun.

To join, contact Peter Sullivan at:

[peter@burdonvale.co.uk](mailto:peter@burdonvale.co.uk)

## **ENTROPY BLUES # 01 – May 2012**

**Faned: R. Graeme Cameron**

Available from the O.E. of FAPA but only if you are a member.

Robert Lichtman invited me to rejoin FAPA (the Fantasy Amateur Press Association) so I did. I belonged briefly circa 1998 till personal problems temporarily put an end to my fanac. In this first new contribution I contrast my life then with my situation now and the obvious conclusion is that life is much, much better now, being retired and all. Couldn't be happier.

Entropy Blues was the title of my first fanzine I pubbed to no acclaim back in 1986. Revived it for FAPA in 1998. I have no idea how many issues I produced. At least three, maybe more. I have several FAPA mailing bundles buried in the back of my storage closet, but how many I do not know. Too much effort to dig them out. So, I decided to revive Entropy Blues once again but to begin numbering them from #1, albeit with a zero in front (#01) to distinguish them from previous mailings.

Robert was kind enough to send me several recent issues of his FAPazine 'KING BISCUIT TIME' so that I could include mailing comments in my first issue. Now I knew Donald Wollheim was inspired by mundane APAs to found FAPA in 1937. What I did not know, as revealed in Robert's zines, is that H.P. Lovecraft extolling the virtues of APAs in his personal correspondence with Wollheim is what led to the creation of FAPA! Fantastic! You see what a positive cultural force Cthluhu can be? His shadow inspires us all.

The ongoing joke is that FAPA is where old fans learn to become dinosaurs. Fine by me. That's what I is. I look forward to discussing fannish matters with 'penpal' buddies with years of fannish experience behind them. This is my main motivation for joining.

An obstacle of sorts is the cost. Annual dues are only \$20.00 US. But then there's the cost of printing copies for distribution. I chose to copy them out on my own printer on acid free paper. The result looks good. And I saved myself the trouble of going out to a print shop. Just mailed off the first batch at a cost of \$16.00. There are four mailings a year. I figure the annual cost of belonging to

FAPA, including paper and ink, will be around \$100. Eh, worth it from a hobby point of view. I spend that much a month on pewter warships...

FAPA is setup to handle as many as 68 members. Currently there are 32, so no waiting list! If you want to join, all you have to do is contact Robert Lichtman to find out if you meet the admission requirements: basically you're an active fan who has either had material recently published in two different fanzines or has recently published a fanzine of your own. I sent Robert a complete list of my fanac so far this year. His reply was "Gaach! Cut it down! Cut it down!" Apparently I qualify.

In this 'first' ish I talk about my one slim chance of tracking down a copy of Canada's first fanzine 'THE CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION FAN.' It was Wollheim who reviewed it in 1936. IF he kept it, it may have passed to Australian fan Ron Graham when Wollheim sold his entire fanzine collection to Ron in order to raise money to found DAW books, circa 1972. I believe Ron has since passed away. IF his collection was donated intact to a library or university, or purchased by a single collector, it may yet be possible to track it down, obtain a copy, and reveal its contents to contemporary fans. I ask my fellow FAPAns if they can point me in the right direction. (For that matter, I ask YOU. Any idea as to where the Wollheim/Graham collection currently resides?)

My first FAPA mailing bundle should arrive in mid-May. In some future issue of TFFR I will give a rundown of who belongs and a sense of what they have to say. I figure there's a bunch of you reading this who well deserve to belong to FAPA.

To join, contact Robert Lichtman At:

< [robertlichtman@yahoo.com](mailto:robertlichtman@yahoo.com) >

### ONE SWELL FOOP #7 – April 2012

Faned: Garth Spencer

Available at <http://efanzines.com/RSNG/index.htm>

Apart from a loc column, the entirety of this issue consists of THE ANARCHO-SURREALIST MANIFESTO wherein Garth announces the formation of THE SECOND REFORMED ANARCHO-SURREALIST PARTY WITH A HOT TUB IN

One Swell Foop #7



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### THE BACK YARD SOCIETY INC.

Garth tends to do this sort of thing at the drop of a hat. It is the form of social satire he likes best. Bit of an acquired taste. Either you like it, or you don't.

His principle technique is to babble on in a manner which almost makes sense, as if the material actually reflects the deranged agenda of a fringe group you are just now getting uncomfortably acquainted with. It can be quite funny, in a wry sort of way, but you hesitate to tell anyone for fear they'll take it seriously. Literal-minded people probably would mistake the intent of the piece and get very hot under the collar, being offended and all. It can be particularly dicey when Garth explains his ideas in person, as his deadpan expression on such occasions leads some people to believe he is being serious. But he isn't. The point of his satire is serious, but not the satire itself.

As Garth himself states: *"Some of the objections I anticipate are that no political party could expect serious support if they offer patently absurd proposals, such as equal status for Sasquatches, or allowing Bible-thumpers to pontificate on issues of economic policy or private lives. But there is evidence that this situation is already the status quo."*

Some of the campaign planks of this 'new' party are:

- *"Providing incentives for disadvantaged people to settle the underpopulated North;"*
- *"Exploring Canada's options for colonizing Antarctica after 2042;"*
- *"Promoting an easy-to-learn second language for our polyglot urban populations, combining the best-known vocabularies in English, Cantonese and Punjabi;"*

And here are a couple of further examples of Garth's Swiftian style of satire:

*"Now may be the time to propose the founding of a new, consciously-founded ethnic group, THE FRONG: people who promote and celebrate miscegenation as the highest goal of their clans."*

And:

*"If God has anything to do with this, he can speak for himself, I'm not going to speak for him. There are too damn many people putting words in his mouth as it is, and you know, most scripture sounds like other people putting words in his mouth."*

In short, there's something worth reacting to in almost every paragraph Garth writes when he is on a satire jag.



Certainly unique. I don't know of anyone else who does this sort of thing. (Possibly British fans.)

In the loc column Taral Wayne cautions Garth re his previous issue: *"I detect you backsliding into the old Garth Spencer here. Instead of waxing about the joys of life and the constantly surprising world around you, once again you're explaining the sort of fandom you thought you joined and describing the one you ended up. I think we've read that page before."*

I agree. This is one hobbyhorse Garth needs to dismount from as quickly as possible lest he be doomed to commiserate about his past forever. It's like being your own ghost and haunting yourself. Time for a change!

Then Taral suggests: *"What you might try is tell us how fandom can be re-shaped in our image. Is there some way to scare away all those organizational types, get rid of the aficionados who want to look at writers and listen to them talk, persuade the costumers and workshoppers and steampunks and all the rest to hold their own cons, and show the one-big-tent enthusiasts once and for all why they're wrong?"*

Hah? Hum... What the hell?

Most of those groups DO hold their own cons. The one-big-tent cons, such as VCON, are increasingly rare. Which is a pity, because if you're a general interest fan like me, they're great!

In truth, I don't actually like the term 'general interest', it's too blah, too bland. I'm an 'Every Interest' kinda fan, I love films, TV, magazines, illustrations, special effects, sculpture, comics, anime, fanzines, science, planetary geology, dinosaurs, astronomy, novels, short stories, and to some degree, poetry, costuming, filk... as long as it is all shoehorned into a sci-fi context. Nothing better than a one-big-tent kinda con, so much to choose from.

What Taral seems to be talking about is making other types of fan go away and leave the field to traditional fanzine fans. What's the point of that? We is what we is. For fanzine fans there's Corflu and Ditto (the latter con Taral helped found by the way). Small cons, but intimate and fun, and very old-fashioned, in that everyone attending has common interests (in zinedom) and get along together quite well and very enthusiastically.

## AUSTRALIAN FANZINES

**DARK MATTER #8 – March 2012**  
**Faned: Nalani Haynes**

At: <http://efanzines.com/DarkMatter/index.htm>



This is a somewhat controversial zine among traditional fandom fanzine fans. The problem is, it is all about science fiction. Traditional fannish fanzines are NOT about science fiction, but about science fiction FANDOM. That's the way it has been for eighty years.

To put it another way, traditional fanzines are expressions of personal views on fanac, often but not always to do with the writer's take on science fiction, and frequently nothing to do with science fiction at all. Indeed it is the proud boast of some faneds that the very concept of SF is 100% absent from their publications.

No wonder it is so damned hard to sell SF fans on the concept of joining and participating in SF fanzine fandom when, if anything, there seems to be an underlying current of ANTI-science fiction in said fandom. In a sense, it might be more fertile ground to seek converts from people who HATE science fiction. Sounds silly, doesn't it? And yet...

But the first decade or so of fanzine fandom was devoted to zines who were, if not the modern concept of semi-prozines, at the very least AMATEUR prozines. In Canada, Frome's SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES springs to mind, stuffed to the gills with amateur fiction, and PRO fiction by the likes of H.P. Lovecraft! You might say the faneds of the day were extreme fans of science fiction and wanted to imitate the prozines as best they could to help make SF fandom more respectable. Not the case today.

DARK MATTER is a throwback to the beginnings of fanzine fandom. It's a zine for fans of science fiction and NOT for fans of fandom, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. To judge DARK MATTER by traditional fannish standards is just plain wrong. Oranges and apples. It should be judged for what it actually is.

Basically, DARK MATTER is a labour of love by faned Nalani Haynes and her contributors. At 135 pages it is huge for a fanzine, yet Nalani pleads lack of time for it being smaller than usual! The font is equally huge, and if much reduced would cut down the size of the zine, but then the reading material would be rather dense visually (a fannish tradition) and perhaps less accessible to casual readers. Still, I personally feel the font is too big, and that

a compromise point size can be found without sacrificing readability. But that's just me.

Some faneds have stated they can find nothing worth reading in the contents of DARK MATTER. Well, hmmm. In this issue I found the review of the arena spectacular 'How to Train Your Dragon' absolutely fascinating (I wanna see the show!), the review of the Dr. Who Symphony very cool (I wanna see it), the account of BIG ARSE 2, the launching of 15 Australian comic books complete with reviews of same to be extremely interesting, and were I interested in contemporary SF writing (which mostly I'm not, my primary focus being the books I grew up with), the numerous short reviews of 14 or so recent novels also quite interesting. Add articles by and about authors, plus film news, convention news, & other stuff, and you have a fine snapshot of a contemporary moment in science fiction as perceived by Australian fans of SF. As such, of interest to future historians of SF seeking clues as to what the popular reaction of the day was to this or that event or book.

One fannish element is an editorial in which Nalani comes out in favour of separating podcasts from fanzines in the Hugo awards. I heartily agree.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the zine (from the traditional fanzine fan viewpoint) is Nalani's request for donors to step forward and help fund the production of the zine with regular infusions of cash. Fanzines are supposed to be a hobby maintained by the enthusiasm of the faneds and nothing else. A faned is expected to pay his own way.

Let me point out that clubzines (very much a traditional aspect of fannish zinedom) are funded by club members and not just the faned.

And that, before the invention of 'The Usual' (i.e. trade for trade) by Canadian fan Leslie A. Crutch (according to Harry Warner Jr.), the first fanzines were available only through paid subscription – hence the phrase 'sticky quarter' in reference to quarters being glued to postcards and mailed to faneds in payment.

I do agree, asking money for a traditional perzine posted to the web is a bit much, though perfectly understandable in the case of a hardcopy sent through increasingly expensive postal systems.

However, DARK MATTER is not a traditional fanzine. I would call it an amateur prozine aimed at fans of science fiction (as opposed to fans of fandom). With a bigger budget – through contributions – it could morph into a semi-prozine, much as Locus and SF Chronicle did in the old days. With even greater effort, well-funded by

subscriptions, it has the potential to evolve into a professional zine of significant importance to publishers, authors, and 'regular' SF fans. Potential to become what is known as a professional 'Industry Trade Zine' in other words. I should like to see that happen.

In the meantime it is a labour of love that risks 'burn-out' for Nalani, both in terms of finance and motivation, and I believe she deserves kudos for taking on the task. I rather admire her for this.

To criticise her for being unfaanish rather misses the point. DARK MATTER isn't aimed at faans, but at fans. (You remember, people who actually like science fiction?)

To be perfectly clear, I'm not praising DARK MATTER at the expense of traditional zinedom – I LOVE traditional zinedom—I'm just saying traditional-minded faneds should cut Nalani a lot of slack because she is doing something quite different from what faans write about, she's writing for fans. And that is, in and of itself, a worthy thing indeed. Just happens to be something most of us do not do, as our focus is rather different. Nothing wrong with being different.

Besides, I see DARK MATTER as a refreshing throwback to our origins, back to the days when SF fans were a crusading force to be reckoned with, when enthusiasm for science fiction knew no bounds.

DARK MATTER deserves praise. That's my opinion.

## AMERICAN FANZINES

**MANIPULATED PIXELS # 1 – April 2012**

**Faneds: Kristina Kopsnisky & Shaz De Sade**

At: <http://efanzines.com/ManiPix/index.htm>

Well laid out. Clearly laid out. Not surprising since there is lots and lots of white space. In contrast to the ancient fannish tradition of cramming as much material into the available space as possible. (Them stencils cost money! Not to mention the Gestetner paper... tubes of ink...) So this is very much a modern electronic creation.

Did I mention I hate the modern craze for overly complicated layout schemes? No such here. Crisp and clean and easy to read. Plenty of white space does have advantages it seems. Sets each piece apart as a unique entity. Adds emphasis to each piece. Makes each piece more attractive and enticing. Makes reading less of a chore to them as normally contemplates plenty of text as a chore. Somewhere in this observation is a clue as to what might inspire more modern fen to take up zinedom. But

I'm old school and prefer less white space and more text. Still, I can see how this 'new' method could work...

Only eight pages. Would be just four if it weren't for the white space. The typical first issue problem, what is the zine about and how to (half) fill it up?

Kistrina writes: *"We are still trying to suss that out. I can tell you that we will be a perzine. Our pieces may not be objective. Our opinions may be strong. Hopefully we will manage to be entertaining in the process."*

This is VERY typical for a first issue editorial, and typically vague at that. But then she goes on to define their intentions in more precise terms.

*"What is the criteria for content? Anything that interests us. Shaz and I are fen. If it interests us by loose definition it is of interest to fans. Both of us are passionate about horror and costuming. Expect lots of space devoted to those two subjects."*

First up is a review of a film I've never heard of: 'TUCKER & DALE VS EVIL.' We learn that it is cheesy, cliché-ridden, and predictable, but also hilarious, great fun, and well-worth watching. Fine. My kind of movie. But the review is empty of incident. No example quotes, no sample plot twists, no observed clever background touches, no amusing visual gags, no interesting concepts noted, or to put it another way, no 'proof' that the film is worth watching. The film has been judged, but not described. It's not only okay to quote dialogue or describe one or two scenes in a movie review, it is NECESSARY in order to evoke the flavour and impact of a film. Detail is needed. In short, the review is too distant and apart from the film to be useful. Kristina needs to get close and personal to the films she reviews, to vent her visceral reaction as opposed to expressing dry, somewhat academic concepts. Such is my opinion.

Then follows 'The Rocky Horror Life Show' by Shaz in which he describes a decades ongoing live performance accompanying showings of our favourite 'cult' film in Cambridge Massachusetts. The live cast *"mimes the film's actions but does not speak"* but nevertheless shouts insulting comments in response to the film actor's dialogue and actions. I've been to a similar performance in Vancouver. Great fun. (We used to show the film at VCON every year. I'd damn near kill myself trying to keep up in the dance sequences. No stamina.) Four surprisingly good photos – considering taken in a darkened theatre – illustrate the fun.

Shaz points out that the cast and crew pay dues and underwrite the costs of the show. Some have been doing it for years, others were only recently members of the

audience who've decided to get involved. To sum up, a true fannish family constantly evolving, where the distinction between cast and audience is largely erased by the commitment of both to the event itself. An interesting observation.

Kristina then contributes a short column musing over the use of the word 'douche' as an insult, explaining what the word actually implies, and which sort of fan would be the most appropriate recipient. Must admit I'd never thought along these lines before. Short, yes, but a gem. Well thought out.

A simple recipe for Lettuce Wraps concludes the issue's content, followed by a blank page titled 'The Future Home Of The Loc Box.'

To conclude, a quick and easy read showing much sign of promise and potential. My only critique is that film reviews need more 'meat,' and that more content is required to give future issues more substance. Heck of a good start though.

## LETTERS OF COMMENT

The Graeme's comments are in **dark red**.

**From: BRUCE GILLESPIE, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of SCTATCH PAD.**

Many thanks for the attached fanzine, Graeme, and the review of Scratch Pad.

I finally got in the application for the pension yesterday, with much help from Elaine (who can't claim it for another six years) -- there will be hiccups because of some material I can't yet supply, but maybe in about two months time I might get the first payment.

Our style of cat enclosure was invented by an organisation called CatMax. I have no idea whether it is an international company or not. Basically, something rather like fishnet (but stronger and more flexible) is stretched over strong anchors and giant zips to enclose whatever part of the garden you desire (or can afford). Ours is in two parts, one about the volume of an ordinary small room, the other a bit smaller. Cats have lots of dirt to dig in, lots of plants surrounding them, but they can't get out and wreak havoc on birds and wander all over Greensborough. This cuts vet's bills considerably. Ours cost \$4000 (from the difference between the money paid for our old house and the amount we paid for this house). If we had had \$10,000, we could have covered the whole garden, but that would have meant the birds could not

have got in and we would have kept the height of all trees to a minimum. And we didn't have \$10,000.

**Exactly how do you set up your 'mailout' so you can send a PDF to lots of people?** In the past, when I've tried this, lots of recipients reject the incoming email as spam. But there must be a way of doing it, so I am not dependent on efanazines.com for sending out electronic copies.

**Ahh, I just add the pdf as an attachment to an email. Haven't experienced any problems so far.**

Best wishes, Bruce

**From: TARAL WAYNE, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Faned of BROKEN TOY.**

I like the direction this is going... but... did you have to give it the title Frenetic Fanac Review? It's so much like that *other* Frenetic Fanac fanzine... you know the one... The Fanactical Fanactivist.

**Just be grateful I didn't use the other 'F' word in the title. (Although I've often thought the legendary phrase 'THE FUCKING FUCKER'S FUCKED!' would be a useful title for a zine dealing with fannish organizations...)**

Since you may have little reason to publish many more issues of that other frenetic zine, or at least little reason to publish frequently -- Hmm... Frequent Frenetic Fanactical Fanactivist Fanzine... do I sense *another* Graeme Cameron zine in the making?) -- since that, why didn't you just adapt the first zine to also be a review zine? That way, one title, more issues. For that matter, a more streamlined name would be a good move. I don't care what you do, from now on I'm calling *both* these puppies simply *Frenetic*. That makes this issue number 9. Whichever you do next will be Frenetic 10.

**As long as you read em and comment on em...**

The good thing about this first issue is that it has revived a style of fanzine reviewing I last remember seeing in the early 1990s. Since then, most reviews have been little more than lists of what the editor has received in mail, or downloaded. At best there's been a brief description and a glowing recommendation that the zine is the best thing since Wonderbread was discovered to clean salt from skate blades. What there has been a real need for goes beyond short exercises in boosterism -- we've been without serious attempts to establish the character and specific content of zines, issue by issue, evaluating them in the context of other fanzines as well as against other

issues of the same fanzine. What distinguishes this title from that one? What can I expect from reading it -- lists of cons and books? Crackpot opinions? Surreal humour? Political diatribe? Ingroupish self-congratulation? Sheer boredom? Yes... it may be necessary to hold up the odd example of a fanzine that accomplishes no worthwhile goal, just so that we may know how not to emulate it. But mainly, I don't want to be encouraged to read a fanzine full of homeopathic remedies and macrobiotic cooking when what I really want is funny stories, genre news or the worship of some cult author.

**Of course my focus is on my personal reaction to a zine's contents. Nevertheless, I try to convey the flavour of the zine such that the reader of my reviews can determine for themselves if they want to check it out, or chuck it out.**

To date, the only two reviewers of note are probably Lloyd Penney and Guy Lillian. Lloyd's remit would appear to be to give every fan editor positive feedback and recommend every fanzine to every reader. I see where he's coming from, but have thought it apt to be misled as much as it encourages. No editor would learn from his weaknesses if it is the reviewer's policy to notice none. Guy's reviews are more willing to pass judgement, but simply lack flair -- I think perhaps because Guy doesn't discuss issues in the wider context of what a fanzine should be, or what that particular zine could be. In either case, that's the best fandom has had to offer for the present.

**Though I've been zine pubbing for centuries, given that I always stick to the formula easiest for me and never experiment in layout or design, I don't think my opinion of the intrinsic value of any zine can be trusted. I'm always focused on content rather than appearance. I care more about what a zine says than what it looks like.**

**What my readers can count on though is that I will always say what I like and what I dislike. They just have to remember that my reviews are highly subjective and reflect the actual nature of the zine only so far as it has been filtered through my mind, an array of thought patterning not everyone seems to view as intelligently objective (or even sane).**

To my surprise, I think you may be giving them a run for the money.

**There's money involved? Great galloping Ghu! I didn't know that. When may I expect it to show up? And how many trucks will it take to deliver?**

Taral



**From: DAVE HAREN, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Renowned Loc Hack.**

I was quite pleased to read through TFFR #1.

LOC awards should obviously be named Lloyd Penneys, in addition an academic has a gold mine in collecting the LOCs he has spread planet wide, could be a PhD thesis there.

**Or proof of an alien conspiracy... Just why is Lloyd weaving the strands of zinedom together in his web? Could it be Degler was right? We really are Slans? And the aliens are trying to forge us into an instrument of power? Hmmm.... Explains a lot...**

Carlyle did a 22 volume set on Frederick the Great which is an interesting treasure trove of historical stories. One of which concerns the introduction of the potato into Prussia. This wonder vegetable increased the nutrient levels of European diet.

Apparently the average bumpkin was resistive to the idea of the introduction of anything that was new. Freddy who was a genius managed to get around this attitude by planting his own patch at San Souci, using them for his own meals, and posting armed guards around his potato patch.

The guards were instructed to be less than vigilant, and in a short time Prussia was full of potato fields.

**Great story. One of the few things Freddy-boy did right.**

*"...fandom a small cadre of critical, insular loudmouths who do our hobby a disservice." – Eric Mayer*

I've found most of those who ride the hobby horse to be similar at times in every hobby that attracts people who are not the meek who will inherit as soon as we depart for the stars... GRIN

**If I interpret you correctly, Rush Limbaugh will inherit the Earth? What did the poor old gal ever do to deserve that?**

Warm Regards, Dave Haren

**From: JINNIE CRACKNELL, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of QUANTUM B\*LLOCKS.**

Hi R Graeme! (not sure what the R is for - have I got your name right?)

**R is for Richard. Family tradition to go by the middle name. My dad told me I was named Graeme after 'The Graeme', a Cameron clan warrior famous for using his teeth to rip out the throat of one of Cromwell's officers. This indicates two things, that my namesake was too poor to own a Claymore, and that my dad had an odd sense of humour...**

Thanks for reviewing my zine, Quantum B\*llocks. I'm glad you like it, I have lots of notes made for stuff to go in the next issue. The She-Ra picture was from when I was at school doing my A-Levels, and every year there was a where-what-you-like day at school for charity, you paid 50p I think it was and got to either not wear uniform or wear fancy dress. The picture was taken in the office bit of the boarding house I was in (yes I went to boarding school, it's nothing like the books make it out to be.) If I'm brave I may put some recent pictures of me as policewoman/kissogram Amy Pond in my next issue.

**Looking forward to it.**

Jinnie Cracknell

**From: JOHN PURCELL, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**Faned of ASKANCE.**

Graeme, you certainly don't seem to be slowing down in your fan publishing efforts. If anything, here is yet another addition to your fanac empire. You must be crazy.

**Well, I did slow down for a while, but I'm back at it. BELOVED BINEMA my latest zine. That makes 10 different zines I publish... 10 not too many?**

I think it is a good idea to have a fanzine devoted exclusively to reviewing other fanzines. Guy H. Lillian III produced *The Zine Dump*, which comes out infrequently (maybe two or three times a year), *Fanzine Fanatique*, a quarterly reviewzine from Keith and Rosemary Walker hasn't been seen in a long time, and ages ago Brian Earl Brown ran *Sticky Quarters*, which I thoroughly enjoyed. Like you said in your debut ish here, this is not a new idea, but it is good to get other people's perspectives on the fanzines being produced nowadays. I think *TFFR* will find its niche very nicely, especially if you consider both paper and online zines.

**The BCSFA/WCSFA archive contains a number of STICKY QUARTERS. The reviews were quite numerous, and as I recall, sometimes short, sometimes quite lengthy. SQ was a damn good review zine. Thoroughly enjoyed reading it.**

Face it, the ease of electronic publication makes it possible for people so inclined to write and pub their ish. If - and this is a mighty big if - you can sort of keep up with the rapid-fire online postings on efanazines.com, *TFFR* would be a good summation of those zines. Then again, Guy Lillian's *Zine Dump* has capsule reviews of all the fanzines he gets in the mail or sees online, so maybe your angle could be more of a focused, critical review of key zines that are pubbed. The format of this debut ish works well. If this is indicative of what you want to do here, go for it.

**Well, more of the latter I think, focused on a few representative zines rather than attempt to capture the entire endless stream of publications. Not sure my focus will be on KEY zines though, mostly on whatever piques my interest. No future fannish historian should regard my issues of TFFR as comprehensive. Tis merely a sampling.**

Which reminds me, what kind of a schedule are you looking at? Every month, bi-monthly, or quarterly? Being online, it would be relatively easy and inexpensive to do a review zine monthly. Of course, that is all up to you.

**I was aiming at monthly. Irregular would be more accurate. I'll write a few at a time and publish whenever I figure I've got enough pages done.**

Other than these thoughts, I really liked this first effort. Thank you for the kind words about *Askance*; muchly appreciated, sir. Overall, these are good, in-depth reviews of the zines. Plus, grouping them by country of origin is a good idea. Keep it up, and I look forward to your next issue.

Eight zines? Sheesh. You ARE crazy!

**As I said, ten zines now. Getting crazier all the time. Kinda fun, actually.**

All the best, John Purcell

**From: KEITH BRAITHWAITE, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Faned of IMPULSE.**

Hi From this Side of the Country, Graeme:

Got a look at your review of our club fanzine, *Warp* (number 80), and your thoughts on MonSFFA generally. We are appreciative of the kind words. Thanks!

The club's philosophy has always been one of encouraging our members, beyond simply reading and watching SF/F, to be creative, active, and get to know one another, face to face, either at our regular meetings, or

other events like MonSFFA's annual summer barbecue or our Christmas dinner/party. While we have nothing against online activity, and indeed, involve ourselves in such as well, we find that there is more fun to be had in face to face interaction. We encourage our people to share their specific interests within the genre with their fellow club members, and we encourage folk to join in the fun of group projects, which draw upon the many different talents of our members. Recently, for instance, we recorded an old-fashioned sci-fi radio show, with some of our group scripting the various skits and others performing as voice actors. We have now to edit it all together and add sound effects and music. Back in the early 2000s, we produced a number of short comedic fan films, which was a lot of fun. ConCept, the local fan-run convention out here, was founded by MonSFFA in 1989 and was such a group project for its first few years of life (the con is now a wholly independent operation).

**Ah yes, your wonderful fan films:**

- **PLANT NINE**
- **THE FEDEX FILES: MOXIE**
- **ENCOUNTERS OF THE VERY CLOSE KIND**
- **BEAVRA**
- **MOOSEMAN**
- **THE SIMPLETON'S LIFE**

**Some of them available for download on the MonSFFA web site I believe.**

**I recall I awarded Rene Walling (representing MonSFFA) an Elron Award for 'revealing' in the BEAVRA film that the Avro Arrow still existed, it being used to attack the monster. Highly entertaining stuff, the MonSFFA movies.**

But that's not to say that we are not without the problems of apathy and stagnation that are mentioned by the OSFS president in their zine (which you also reviewed). Like OSFS and BCSFA, MonSFFA is a smaller organization today than it once was, probably in part because younger fans tend to circulate online, as is the natural way of things for children of the digital age. The scale model builders in our group, for example, have noted that their particular hobby, in general, is not as popular as it was a couple decades ago because kids today don't build and paint plastic models the way their parents did as youngsters. Any modelling modern kids do tends to be of the virtual kind, using the latest cool software. So a club set up as ours was when it was founded does, today, face the challenge of attracting younger fans and marketing ourselves as something interesting and fun, even if we still do many things old school.

### **Good points.**

And, of course, as in any group, there are those who do not participate as fully as others, who are content to sit and listen and watch rather than get up and do! In the almost 25 years that we've been a club, we've found that truth to be a constant. But as long as you've got enough folk that enjoy what a club does, whether as largely passive or enthusiastically active participants, you'll do alright. MonSFFA has been fortunate to have always had enough of the active variety on its membership list to keep things interesting.

**BCSFA is a bit moribund, but WCSFA retains enough active fen to put on VCON year after year... so far.**

Enjoyed your review zine; keep 'em coming.

Keith Braithwaite VP, MonSFFA

**From: ERIC MAYER, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Faned of REVENANT.**

Graeme,

It sounds as if you put this together like I put my zines together. I make a template then start filling it up as material appears (mostly my own) When it seems like enough -- ie not very much since I prefer short zines -- I neaten it up and send it off to Bill Burns.

FFR (What's your preferred abbreviation?) looks great with all those bright little covers and I am impressed that you actually quote from the zines and say something substantial about the contents. As you note in your discussion of Taral's Broken Toys #1 this review zine is the equivalent of a collection of locs. Yes, ezines don't get many locs, but I think we need to just get used to that and also realize that a review, for instance, is as good as a loc. Maybe even better since people who might not read your zine might read the review and go and download your zine.

**I tried conscientiously writing locs for a few months, but the effort forced me to cut way back in my zine pubbing. I find it easier to do this zine as a loc substitute. Best I can do.**

I don't exactly write for myself. I need to at least imagine I am writing for an audience because to me writing is about communicating/connecting to other people. It's a game to see how well you can do that. However, I don't need a very large audience and for the

time being enough fans still read ezines to make it feel like I'm not simply muttering to myself.

**I like to think I am writing to my penpals, to people who actually want to read what I write. Delusional, but useful.**

Funnily enough I just locced Garth Spencer's One Swell Foop which which your write about. You were expelled from Sunday School? Wow. That's kind of harsh? They didn't even try to teach you the true way? Just consigned you to the everlasting fires of hell? And so here you are, in fandom.

I suppose when I was younger I wanted to save fandom. Don't we all. But now I know that fandom can't be saved so I just get what fun I can out of it the way it is.

Yeah Quantum Bollocks is a fanzine I enjoy too because Jinnie seems to have the same publishing philosophy many faneds did years ago when I first got involved -- just publish for fun. Never mind an agenda. I get the impression some fans work too hard at their zines these days.

**The whole point of zinedom is to have fun. No point to it otherwise.**

Kind of sad to see that the BCSFA Archive has Groggies from the Susan Wood estate. I sent out less than forty of the first issue of that fanzine and I hate to think about how many on that mailing list have passed away, quite a few well before their time. And yes, I was crushed by that Willis piece. It is true that Walt -- unlike me -- loved cons also and yes, you're probably right that he wanted to do for them what he did for fanzines, but he clearly states again and again, so far as I read it, that conventions are not another equal aspect of fandom but clearly above fanzine fandom, the ultimate level of fandom, better than fanzine fandom. Well, Walt's still the best fanwriter ever as far as I am concerned but I'd as soon never have read that particular work.

You've got a great concept here. Indeed, review zines are nothing new, but I don't recall seeing one in which the editor actually responds to the zine. I think that makes for a much more interesting and valuable read than a reviewer giving out grades and setting forth standards. I look forward to the next issue. Oh wait...it is already out...

Best, Eric

**From: LLOYD PENNEY, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
Aurora & Faned Awards-winning Loc Hack.  
1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON, M9C 2B2**

Dear Graeme:

Would I consider creating a reviewzine? Nope. I have officially shut down the fanzine review column I did for John Purcell and his zine Askance. I didn't get much response to the column, and what little I did get was neutral to negative. You're on your own here, Mr. Cameron, and best of luck with it.

True, fanzine fandom is slow if not moribund, but there is a core of perhaps 150+ people who make it work, and keeps the trading going back and forth. Close to 80 people attended the latest edition of Corflu, this time in Las Vegas, and below are the results of the FAAn Awards...

**I don't know, hasn't zinedom always depended on about 150 – 200 Faneds? I think we're doing pretty well.**

Best Website: efanzines.com, hosted by Bill Burns

Harry Warner, Jr. Memorial Award Best Letterhack:  
Robert Lichtman

Best Perzine: A Meara for Observers, Mike Meara

Best Single Issue or Anthology: Alternative Pants, by Randy Byers

Best Fan Artist: Steve Stiles

Best Fan Writer: Mark Plummer

Best Genzine or Collaboration: Banana Wings, Mark Plummer & Claire Brialey, editors

# 1 Fan Face: Mark Plummer

These awards seem to be keeping some level of involvement going, and that's one reason why I support it, and vote each year.

There have been a few issues of Dominion Dispatch since number 3, and each time, Adam Smith puts out a great product. However, as most of us do, he is examining his activities, and he often feels a little stressed at getting everything done...he is thinking of shutting down the zine and putting together a Tumblr page. I'd prefer the paperzine or .pdf, but he's the man in charge. I have a book review I must finish for him.

**What the heck is a Tumblr page? Will it be a coherent magazine format? Or a click fest?**

I believe that Jinnie Cracknell got her start in fanzine fandom through the encouragement of Steve Green. Both

live in the Birmingham area of England, and Steve may have shown Jinnie issues of his zine at the time THE FORTNIGHTLY FIX. She is definitely enjoying herself, and I figure part of my job as a letterhack is to write in and encourage her further. I think it's worked.

**We need more Jinnie Cracknell's! As many newbies as possible! Let us welcome all new zinesters!**

In my response to Eric Meyer's Revenant 2, I certainly agree with him when he says that fanzine fandom is the most unwelcoming hobby I've ever encountered. Over the decades, I have been involved with stamp collecting societies, shortwave Dxing clubs and of course SF clubs, but it seems for those high muckety-mucks of fanzines, they tear a strip of flesh off you regularly for perceived fouls of mistakes of some sort. It does get tiring, and all one can do is hope that they will fall silent at some point and allow others to build the hobby. With newcomers like Jinnie Cracknell around, I think that can happen.

**Part of the problem is focusing on the past and holding everyone up to the light of comparison to the days of glory. This was how it was done then, which is the way it should be done now. Or so goes the argument.**

**Nah. The focus should be on the joy of fan pubbing today as an instrument of self-expression. We shouldn't try to reinvent the past, but explore and enjoy the present. It isn't even necessary to know the past. There are no traditions to live up to. Only new traditions to create.**

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

## TO SUM UP

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## COLOPHON

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