

# MUMBLINGS

FROM

## MUNCHKINLAND

# 29



Featuring: An Appreciation of Don Tuck, 1922-2010

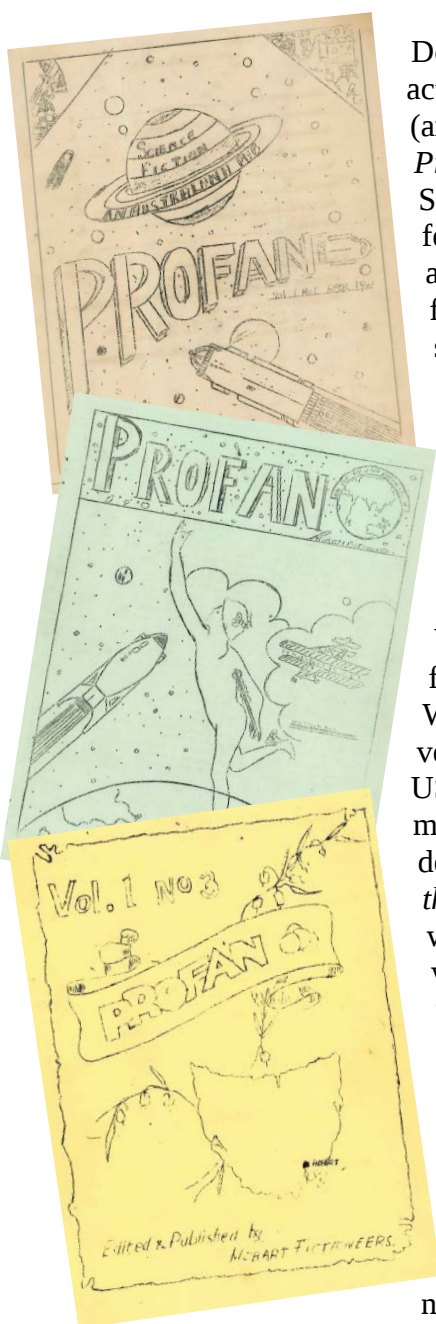
January 2011

Mumblings from Munchkinland – the only West Australian fanzine published in the ACT – wishes you a Happy New Year!

## DONALD H. TUCK, 1922-2010: An Appreciation

Donald Henry Tuck was born in Launceston, Tasmania on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1922. His family soon moved to Hobart, where his father was Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of Tasmania. ("Harry Tuck Prizes" are still awarded annually to top students of this field by the University.)

From an early age Don enjoyed playing cricket and Australian Rules football and was interested in all things to do with science and science fiction. Like other adolescents around the country, he discovered the gaudy American sf pulps on sale in his local department stores and soon began collecting them. Letters and Science Fiction League announcements in the magazines made him aware of fandom and it was not long before he had joined the SFL and was in contact with other fans around the country and overseas. Warwick Hockley, in Melbourne, was the first to suggest that Don publish his own fanzine.



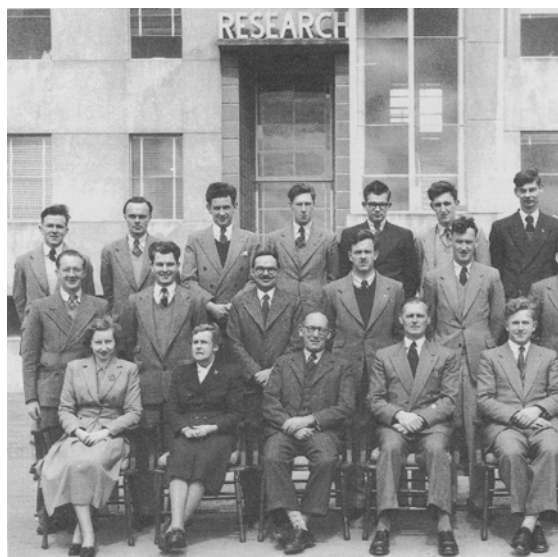
Don required little encouragement. Having located the few other active fans in Hobart, he gained their help to produce the first (and for many years, only) fanzine published in Tasmania, *Profan*. The three issues mimeographed between April and September 1941 were typical of early Australian efforts, featuring a mix of articles and fiction, confused page sequences and, with the third issue, multiple colours. The final issue also featured a short story, "Beyond the Atoms" under the seemingly transparent pseudonym of "Ed. E.A. Tryer". (If this was Don's first work of fiction, however, he must have forgotten about it over the years--when he offered "Invaders from Ceres" for publication in *Mumblings* #25 he referred to that as his "one and only sf story".)

More significantly, each issue of *Profan* included an "Author's Department" which consisted of a pro author's biography and an index to their published stories. As Don freely admitted with the first in the series (on Stanley G. Weinbaum) the story listings were incomplete, but this was very likely, given how far removed the compiler was from the US and how difficult it was to acquire full runs of the magazines. (It would be over a decade before Day's *Index to the Science Fiction Magazines* was published, and even that was not complete.) Even so, these story indexes were the first indication of Tuck's bibliographical interests.

This early foray into fandom was interrupted when Don enlisted in the Army in October. His medical noted that he had "defective



vision” and in any case his academic background made him more suited to service in a technical field. After basic training in Bendigo, he was sent to the Radio Physics Depot of the Australian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers Training Centre in Ingleburn, near Sydney, for specialised training. (During this time he took the opportunity to meet with Sydney Futurians Vol Molesworth, Graham Stone and others.) He was then assigned to the Radio Maintenance Section of the AEME Corps and served on Thursday and Horn Islands, in the Torres Strait, as part of Australia’s northern air defense network.



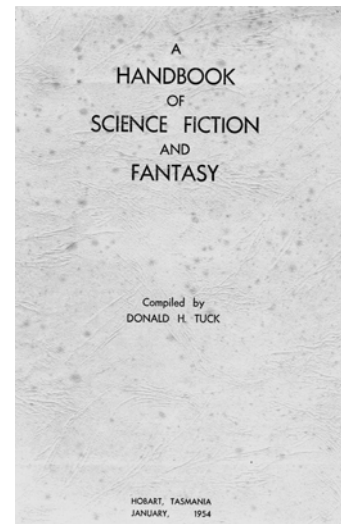
After the war Don lived in Melbourne for a short time before returning to Hobart to complete his science degree at the University of Tasmania. His entire working career following graduation was with the Electrolytic Zinc (EZ) Company at Risdon, near Hobart. The post-war era was a good time to be in the zinc business; the metal maintained high market prices for over two decades. Risdon became the second largest zinc works in the world and the company was a major employer in the region, offering good wages and bonuses. Tuck (middle row, far left in this 1953 photo of the EZ Research Dept.) began as a technical librarian and would rise through the ranks in a succession of roles.

He returned to fandom after the war, too, but mainly as a collector and correspondent. One of the people he exchanged letters with was another isolated fan, Roger Dard in Perth. He wrote much later: “back in the late ‘40s, Roger Dard and I reckoned we were the only true sf collector fans of that time”. Roger inspired Don by sending him a long list of the paperbacks he had acquired. Don realised that a comprehensive reference book listing all of the sf and fantasy published in various forms over the years would be very useful. No such works existed at the time and none of the mainstream publishers would have even contemplated the idea. Like-minded fans in the US had only just created Shasta Press precisely to publish the first serious attempt at a bibliography, Everett Bleiler’s *The Checklist of Fantastic Literature*.

Working initially from his own collection, Don set about creating a card index to all of the titles, authors, contents notes (not included in Bleiler’s checklist) and other details of every book in his collection. He also began building up a network of contacts around the world that were willing to supply him with bibliographic details of items he did not have. Roger continued to provide information, as did Tom Cockcroft in New Zealand and Howard Devore and others in the States. The amount of work involved in compiling and cross-checking this massive card index must have been enormous. Eventually, Don reached a point where he had to call a halt and begin typing up his work in book format.

1954 was a notable year for Tuck, in several ways. In January, he self-published *A Handbook of Science Fiction and Fantasy*, the culmination of his bibliographic work to that time. It consisted of 154 pages of foolscap-size paper bound in grey card stock, side-stapled. The main, alphabetical listing in encyclopedic style of authors and titles occupied just over 100 pages. Appendices listed all known magazine titles and tables showing the publication date and numeration of every issue; pseudonyms (largely, by permission, from Day’s *Index to the Science Fiction Magazines*); stories in series; and “pocket books and paper-covered items” (expanded from Dard’s initial list).

Reaction to the *Handbook* was very positive, with reviews appearing in each of the “big three” sf magazines of the time (and *Science Fiction Quarterly*, over a year later!) Anthony Boucher in *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* (August 1954) called it “a sort of index to everything connected with the field” and declared “it’s astonishing how much information is crammed into small compass here”. Groff Conklin in *Galaxy* (September) wrote: “Anyone who makes science fiction a serious hobby will almost *have* to have this book...compiled and beautifully mimeographed by a devoted amateur who lives in Hobart, Tasmania, an island province of Australia”. It was probably P. Schuyler Miller, however, who best appreciated the amount of work the *Handbook* had required. In *Astounding* (November 1954) he wrote:



*“The diligence and enthusiasm of fiction fandom is proverbial and amazing. Its members do work which would appall professional bibliographers, then use their own scanty money to make it available.*

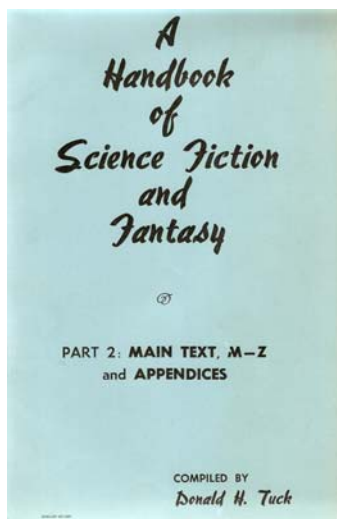
*“Latest in the list, and right up in the ranks of the Day bibliographies, is Don Tuck’s “Handbook of Science Fiction and Fantasy” from--of all places--Tasmania. The energy that we’ve learned to associate with the continent “down under” apparently spills over into its satellite.”*

*“The core of this well-mimeographed legal-size paper-bound manual is 107 pages of brief but complete notes on authors, magazines, books and stories, including synopses of many of the latter. I don’t know any other source that will give you the contents of all the anthologies of the past several years. Appendices add information on the appearance of most of the principal magazines in the field--pseudonyms--story-series (that I’ll make good use of!)--and paper-backs. All this is as of mid-1953, since Tuck had to sit down to a good many hours at his stencils sooner or later. He hopes to make it a perennial. If you collect, you’ll need it.”*

Before any of these reviews appeared, the second reason why 1954 would remain memorable to Don had occurred. On the first of May, he married Audrey Jean Cranston, the daughter of a builder. Were these events connected? Did his impending marriage spur Don on to “close the books” and publish the *Handbook* at the beginning of the year, to get it out of the way? We can only speculate. What we do know, from fellow Hobart fan and friend Mike O’Brien, is how the bride’s father initially viewed his new son-in-law. He recalls:

*The story in his family was that when he married Audrey, her father volunteered to help them move house. After watching box after box of science fiction and fantasy publications loaded into the truck, he turned to his daughter and blurted out “Audrey, you’ve married a nut!” Audrey’s response is not recorded.*

In a way, though, her response is recorded, and in a most appropriate place. Juggling married life and work at the zinc factory with his sf interests, Don continued to expand his card index. In 1959, he published the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of his *Handbook*, now almost 400 pages in 11 point type (reduced from the 12 point of the first edition) and requiring two volumes. The first edition had had no dedication but the second did. It read, simply: “To my wife, who understands”.



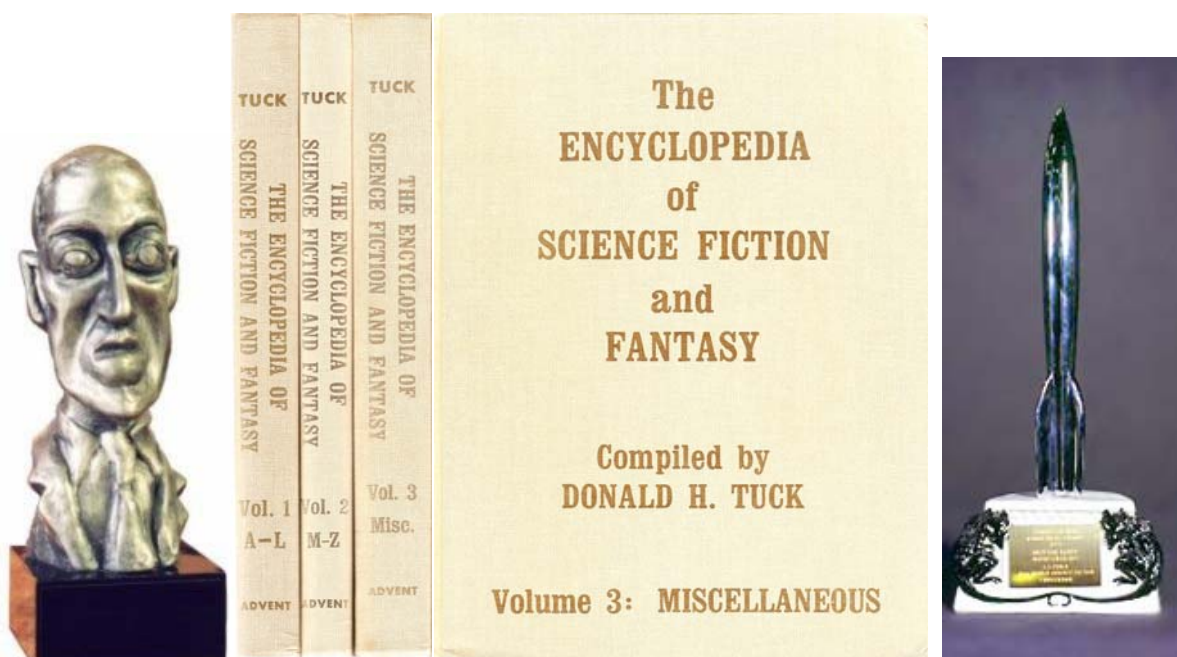
Others did, too. Enthusiastic reviews again appeared in the leading sf magazines, as well as the *Library Journal* and the newszine *Science-Fiction Times*. The broader sf community's appreciation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *Handbook* was also demonstrated when it was awarded a special Worldcon award at Chicon II in 1962.

Don was also producing a high-quality publication at work, the glossy in-house magazine *EZ Review*, which ran until 1975. At home, he continued to expand his index and he and Audrey also expanded their family with the birth of their son Marcus, in 1961. They established their home in Lindisfarne, on Hobart's eastern shore, and this became the venue for regular informal gatherings by local and visiting science fiction fans for the next 20 years. One of their favourite visitors from the late 1950s onwards was A.

Bertram Chandler. As a captain on Australian-New Zealand Line freighters, he would occasionally deliver zinc concentrate to the Risdon refinery. It always pleased Don that one of the spaceship bases in Chandler's stories was named Lindisfarne.

The culmination of Tuck's efforts was the publication of *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy: a bibliographic survey of the fields of science fiction, fantasy and weird fiction through 1968* by Advent, another publisher founded by dedicated fans. Now totaling 920 pages of even smaller type, the work appeared in three volumes published at 4-year intervals between 1974 and 1983. The acknowledgements alone now filled almost two full pages and this time the dedication was to both his wife and son.

Widely welcomed in reviews spanning the leading professional, fan and, now, *academic* sf journals like *Extrapolation*, the *Encyclopedia* also received more awards, including Locus Awards for best non-fiction reference work for volumes 2 and 3, a special World Fantasy Award in 1979 for volumes 1 and 2, a Hugo for volume 3 in 1984, and others from Europe. This was in contrast to his reception at home--rather embarrassingly for the Australian sf community, Don was never even nominated for a Ditmar.



Don was invited to be a Guest of Honour at the first Aussiecon in 1975. His record of achievement and publication of the first volume of the *Encyclopedia* the year before made him an obvious candidate. A very private person, polite but not gregarious, Don was initially reluctant, but he appreciated the offer and did eventually accept it. As the date of the convention approached, however, commitments arose which he felt required his presence at Electrolytic Zinc. At the end of 1974 zinc prices had fallen drastically, leading to job losses and industrial action at the plant. Greater environmental awareness had also led to criticism of the company over pollution of the Derwent River--so all senior positions at EZ were under some pressure. His absence at Aussiecon became controversial, overshadowing his hosting of several fan groups in Hobart after the convention and his presentation with the Big Heart Award for 1975 by Forrie Ackerman. Also known as the E.E. Evans (and, now, Forrest J. Ackerman) Memorial Award, Tuck was the first Australian to receive it. It was only decades later, however, that he offered his version of these events (see *Mumblings* 17).

1982 was another watershed year in Don's life. The final volume of his *Encyclopedia* was published at the end of the year, and despite receiving requests for updates, he decided not to continue with it. By this time, the number of sf and fantasy books being published annually had long surpassed what any single bibliographer could hope to keep up with. Science fiction and fantasy had become acceptable fields of academic study and many mainstream publishers were issuing reference works compiled by teams of writers, such as the *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* edited by Peter Nicholls, and specialised volumes like Contento's *Index to Science Fiction Anthologies and Collections*, to name just two. The age of reliance on dedicated fan indexers and publishers was well and truly ending.

Also at the end of 1982, Don retired from the zinc factory and he and Audrey hosted the final gathering of fans at their Lindisfarne home. He dispatched the remainder of his extensive sf and fantasy collection to the Fryer Library at the University of Queensland, having earlier sent his fanzines to Murdoch University in Perth. Soon afterwards, he and Audrey themselves left Tasmania for Melbourne, to be nearer to their three grandchildren. Don took no active role in fandom but kept in touch with many of his correspondents. The pair led an active retirement, enjoying fossicking and mineralogy.

Don passed away at 87 years of age on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2010, six weeks after his beloved Audrey. He leaves his son, three grandchildren, and an enduring legacy to the literary genres he enjoyed. His *Encyclopedia* has been acknowledged by virtually every sf reference work published since and it remains the most comprehensive single source of information available for the period it covers. Scholars and fans alike will remain indebted to Don's bibliographic endeavours for years to come and, while few knew the man, many will cite the name:

*Tuck*



## THE READER SQUEAKS

Grant Stone, Balcatta, WA

8 March 2010

Thanks for the *Mumblings*. I do so love to get them and find out what sf historical research you are up to Chris. Your listing of Aussies from the letter columns of the early pulps matched with Justine's speech at Fisher was priceless – fabulous work. The listing should prove really useful to my own interest in Roger Dard when the PhD is written.

To comment on Justine's article: It was my own summer on self-secondment from Murdoch to Fisher that led to the effort to put Ron's comics in order and produce a guide on cards which Pauline eventually edited and published (Dickinson, P. (comp.) *Index to the Comics in the Science Fiction and Fantasy Collection, University of Sydney Library*, 1984). I, too, was given space in the stacks to work and for me also this was formative in my continuing interest in sf, fantasy and collections.

While doing this project I became thoroughly involved in the story of Ron's collection and the mythology that has grown up around it. Three items have lodged permanently in my brain. Firstly, the fanzines which formed the greater part of Ron's collection, like so much of his collecting, had begun with a single purchase (from Donald A. Wolheim) and at the time remained unorganized. I think a primary sort/listing has since been attempted – I only had time for the comics, which necessitated a further two weeks stay in Sydney sleeping in a slant shack in Glebe with fellow West Aussie Rob McGough. Secondly, when Ron died Pauline was overseas and a strict reading of Ron's will was enacted. As the will stated that only the science fiction and fantasy was for Fisher all the 'horror' was dispersed by auction into the wider community. Thirdly, for the same reason about 80 pieces of original pulp art by Virgil Finlay which Ron had acquired (some even framed for his library walls) were missing from what arrived at Fisher and although Pauline made extensive enquires they have never been seen again.

Re: the loc from David Medlen. I think we (Murdoch) only lack the second series of *Scansion*. We have 39 issues of the first (weekly) series from the mid-fifties and 2 issues of the third series from 1960. I had a brief look for David before he trekked across the river from his institution and had drawn a blank so was pleased to read it may have been a misquote. I should comment while we are on such matters that the reason why Murdoch (a uni which first took students in 1975) should have such material is due to Don Tuck. When he offered his fanzine material to any takers, as a collection, in the early 80s I grabbed it with both hands. It has been subsequently catalogued and is now available to the nation. I also have acquired for Murdoch Leigh Edmonds' fanzine collection (rich in APAs) and the archive of U-boat publications, Ron Smith's collection of fanzines and Craig Hilton's furry fandom APAs. These are all rich resources currently below the radar.

*[Thanks for the compliments and information, Grant. I guess many in Australian fandom are now a little apprehensive about the fate of the fanzine collection at Murdoch University following your early retirement. Are you able to give us an update?]*

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Rex Meyer, Pennant Hills, NSW

12 March 2010

[On receiving the last *Mumblings*, along with a few other items...]

I was very impressed with issue 28. Very professional. It was quite a surprise to find you have tracked down my letters to *Amazing* and *Planet Stories*. I have no memories of these at all and wonder what I was writing about.

I certainly remember producing *S-F Review*. Fascinating to see long lost and forgotten material. A strange story about *S-F Review*: the first issue of the 'zine was an unmitigated disaster and I trust it is consigned to total oblivion. When the manuscript was ready, one member of the "group" (who shall be nameless) offered to produce it at virtually no cost. He assured me he knew of a typist who would do this as a "favour" to him. Against my better judgement I agreed to this.

The typist turned out to be very “junior” and did the job with great reluctance. The issue was full of ghastly spelling mistakes, was very badly typed, full of typos, and generally disgraceful. I was so ashamed of this that I gave copies to the authors and destroyed the rest. After that lemon all other issues were professionally produced. If you do happen to find a copy of issue no.1 please do not reproduce it -- or if you do please correct all errors and preferably retype.

*[Ah, that would account for its rarity. If a copy is found, perhaps a section of the original could be preserved as it was and the full contents retyped, to demonstrate its history as you describe.]*

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Lloyd Penney, Otibicoke, Ont.

12 March 2010

Many thanks for the newest of your 20-year run of *Mumblings from Munchkinland*, issue 28. Congratulations on that run, and as long as it's still fun for you, keep 'em coming.

For the preservation and recreation of fanzines, I think you should keep them as they were, but perhaps create an overview zine, describing what you did, and explaining errors within them. That way, you can point out the errors without failing to preserve the originals. That way, you'd be able to point out the differences between Eric Frank Russell and Eric Fred Russell, plus anything else that you and your readers have detected over the years.

Greetings to Bert Castellari! Being involved in fandom isn't a sign of not growing up, but a sign that you need the additional mental stimulus. I am trained as a journalist, and I got on with a paper or two, but was never able to make a career out of it. SF and editorial work seem to be a logical pair for a lot of fans.

*[I've finished converting all previous issues; all minor typos were fixed without comment and any significant errors are noted in an addendum page, more or less as you suggest.]*

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LynC, Coburg, Vic.

21 March 2010

Fascinating reading. Had meant to skip over the annotated index, but the annotations sucked me in. You say "well known" in reference to the fans letter hacking -- but I've never heard of Roger Dard.

We don't hear enough about your family these days. My favourite piece was the SF con you ran in Samoa with just the family in attendance. It was an inspired weekend and produced a superb article.

*[It was fun to write, too. There will be more of the family in the next issue. Roger was considered Australia's No.1 fan in the 1950s by many. He was also a keen collector. A fine article about his long-running feud with the Customs Office, by James Doig, was in Steam Engine Time #5.]*

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Eric Lindsay, Qld.

29 March 2010

So many titles on *Mumblings from Munchkinland* 28 I do not know where to start. *Fantastic Story*, from Thrilling Publications, and at the right price, plus it is a two-colour cover.

I also enjoyed reading the Don't be Skinny advertisement. Who would have imagined we have moved from wanting weight gain to wanting weight loss in a handful of decades. I was reading something today to the effect that high fat, high sugar, high flavour foods caused most rats to become addicted to that style of food. This especially when they had unlimited access. However, even rats allowed only an hour a day managed to binge eat and cram an extra 60% of calories down.

Great to hear digitising of *Mumblings* for eFanzines continues. *MfM* is such a great resource for future fan historians. Given how often material on the web gets corrected, I doubt future readers will find it hard to forgive corrections. However since space is essentially unlimited, listing corrections made would also seem appropriate.

Identity theft as a result of web postings doubtless occurs. I imagine eventually governments will decide we all need to be thoroughly identified as card carrying citizens. I can imagine how well that will work. I tend to restrict a lot of my comments about conventions to first names. Someone with access to the membership list, and so on, would doubtless figure out who is who. However just searching should be less effective.

Thank you for the piece on Roma Castellari, as the invisible Futurian. Justine Larbalestier provided a wonderful background to how she came to write on her topics.

In reading your annotated list of fans and their LoCs to the prozines, it is interesting to note appearances from people we have with us, such as Graham Stone and Dick Jenssen.

*[Did McDonald's sponsor that research? All Mumblings are online now at efanzines.com]*

Robert Lichtman, Calif.

15 July 2010

I'm really glad I'm retired and so don't have to give a toss about what an employer might learn about me from an internet search. You ask, "Is it really prudent to post zines with personal information online?" I think the answer is that it all depends on what sort it is. Looking at the five issues of *Trap Door* I've made available electronically, the mention of my brother's death in #21 is the most personal information in any of them. Otherwise many of them are my reactions to the deaths of various long-time fans and friends. I don't care if that's known to strangers.

As for your other questions: Other than the factual error you mention in #24 as an example, I don't think corrections are called for. No harm is done in perpetuating the wrong middle name of the Australian Eric F. Russell. *[I disagree; that misidentification persisted long enough!]* But I do agree that if it's no bother and it creates a better presentation, it's okay to "amend past issues to match original concepts" since by that you mean such things as adding color. [Perhaps I'll ask] my cover artists on those five on-line issues of *Trap Door* if they would care to color their work.

In "One Hundred Small Wonders" you write that "Surprisingly, relatively few of the pulp magazines letter columns have been indexed." Frankly, looking at your list of resources on page 10 I'm surprised that so much has been done. There's really little I can say about the list you created other than to marvel at your industry in doing so.

It was an excellent pairing to follow your list with Justine Larbalestier's talk about how she got caught up, to her apparent surprise and pleasure, in the letter columns in the SF magazines in the Ron Graham collection. I'll confess that before I discovered fandom those letter columns—and also the fan columns—used to captivate me, too. (In fact, as I've written before, I discovered '40s fandom well before I ran into contemporary fandom back in the late '50s. And was surprised that what my 13- and 14-year old self took as Something That Happened Back Then was still going on.) I used to hang out in a large used bookstore in Hollywood after a class on Saturdays. They had a huge wall of pulp magazines, and I would methodically read all "The Club House" columns in *Amazing*, the letter columns there and in zines such as *Startling* and *Thrilling Wonder*, and whatever else I ran across that reflected this interesting phenomenon of amateur publications and devoted letter writers.

I agree with your comment to Lloyd Penney, who suggested that Australia "needs a national newszine", that the sort of immediate news of SF and fandom that used to be the province of newszines over fandom's long existence is definitely now better disseminated via the internet. I get paper editions of Dave Langford's *Ansible* and Mike Glycer's *File 770*. The former can still surprise me with tidbits of information that I didn't hear about first on-line and I appreciate its relentlessly monthly schedule, while the latter has slowed down to a more leisurely pace and has become more a general fanzine with a news element. Its news columns seldom offer anything I didn't already know and I tend to skim them, while I often settle down to read as much of the longer material as interests me.

*[The closest thing to an Australian newszine, The Bullsheat, is currently suspended and looking for a new editor. Competition from the email lists has been an issue, but it hasn't been as jaunty as it was under Marc Ortlieb and may now fold. We shall see...]*

## AMAZING AND FANTASTIC LETTERS:

*An annotated index to Australian and New Zealand fan content in Amazing Stories and its companion magazines (Part 1: 1926-1939)*



This listing follows the same format as that for the Wonder magazines in the last issue and has the same intent. Namely, to identify all of the readers “Down Under” who wrote to the professional sf and fantasy magazines and, in some cases, discovered or contributed to the development of fandom as a result.

*Amazing Stories* obviously provided the first forum for readers’ letters. Gernsback quoted a few in his early editorials before introducing “Discussions”, the regular letters column, in the January 1927 issue. Before the end of the year, the first letter from an Antipodean reader had been published. By the end of the 1950s, around 150 locs, reviews of Australian publications or mentions of Australian fan activities would appear in the magazine or its stablemates. This listing covers all issues of *Amazing Stories*, the *Annual* of 1927 (which did not include any letters), *Amazing Stories Quarterly* and *Fantastic Adventures* published before 1940. Part 2 will continue the listing in the next *Mumblings*.

As expected, there is a mix of recognizable and unknown names. Several authors-to-be make an appearance. Bleiler (1998) indexed several of these, but not Turner or Czysnski. Omitting the latter is understandable as he wrote under a pseudonym, but why Turner was ignored is hard to fathom. Known fan names are more frequent, particularly in the latter years.

A few letters not fitting the criteria above have been included for their related interest, including the very first one.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Issue</u> | <u>Mag</u> | <u>Page</u> | <u>Type:</u> | <u>Author</u>         | <u>Notes on contents with quotes of interest</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <u>Location</u> |
|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1927        | Jul          | <b>Amz</b> | 413         | Loc:         | Chandler, A. Bertram. | "...your magazine beats any magazine published here in England. It seems that you have a rather nasty habit, however, of resurrecting stories from 'Science and Invention'... " Also criticises the 'scientific detective stories' and explains why 'The Plague of the Living Dead' (A. Hyatt Verrill, April) was impossible. Has "read all of the leading English authors...but your magazine has introduced me to their American rivals".<br><i>(Not the earliest Australian loc, as Chandler was still a schoolboy in England at this time. He began his career at sea the following year. )</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [UK]            |
|             | Oct          | <b>Amz</b> | 708         | Loc:         | Cooke, John.          | 'A Letter from the Antipodes' "I suppose that you will be surprised to receive a letter from this distant part of the world...[AS] fills a place long vacant in current literature." Notes that in 'The Moon Pool' (Merritt) a character travels from Papua to Melbourne to get help. "Your author evidently forgets that such a place as Sydney exists...is 500 miles closer to Papua than Melbourne, and is also much larger and modern, with a much greater population." <i>(See full letter on page 16.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [NSW]           |
| 1928        | May          | <b>Amz</b> | 183         | Loc:         | Graham, R.E.          | "I have read <i>Amazing Stories</i> from the first issue. It is the only magazine which appeals to my vivid imagination and fills a long-felt want. Please cut out H.G. Wells, Jules Verne... Taking Wells. The only two of his yarns which can really be described as scientification are 'The Time Machine' and 'The War of the Worlds', and there is very little science in them. In my opinion, the science is only a cloak to allow Mr. Wells to air his views on civilization, what it is, where it is leading us, and how little it would take to upset it... Asks for his name to be published so "a few of these scientification lovers get in touch with me."<br><i>(Yes, Ron Graham, who much later left his collection to the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney, making efforts like this possible.)</i> | [NSW]           |

|      |     |            |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |       |
|------|-----|------------|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1929 | Apr | <b>Amz</b> | 95    | <i>Loc:</i> Eccleston, P.H. Enjoys the magazine but not critics in Discussions (recounts old sailor's joke they remind him of). "I am particularly interested in atomic stories as I believe that that is the solution to interplanetary travel". Adds, "I agree with another letter writer in suggesting you change the name to 'Scientifiction Magazine', as 'Amazing Stories' is rather bizarre.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | [NSW] |
|      | Jul | <b>Amz</b> | 376   | <i>Loc:</i> Lovell, Tasman J. Compliments the magazine and authors; suggests more stories should be set outside of the USA. Adds: "If the hero of the Skylark story really carried a pound of radium in his pocket, I pity him". ( <i>Earliest Kiwi loccer.</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | [NZ]  |
| 1930 | Jun | <b>Amz</b> | 285-6 | <i>Loc:</i> Eccleston, Philip. Comments on January 1930 issue, speculates on the nature of gravity and atomic worlds, and takes another reader to task for a criticism.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [NSW] |
|      | Oct | <b>Amz</b> | 668   | <i>Loc:</i> Bright, John. "I casually picked up your magazine at a local bookseller's and since then have been hunting the town for back numbers...here in New Zealand we are very badly off for anything anywhere near so enthrallingly interesting as your publication". Criticises description of collision between a spaceship and an asteroid in Hamilton's 'The Universe Wreckers' and other stories, but names 'The Gimlet' (by Endersby) one of the greatest stories he has ever read. ( <i>Bleiler describes 'The Gimlet' thus: "Confusingly presented, with large gobs of quasi-scientific speculation."</i> )                                                                                                                                   | [NZ]  |
|      | Dec | <b>Amz</b> | 861   | <i>Loc:</i> Kirby, E.R. A regular reader, states <i>Amazing</i> "is in danger of losing its prestige...(because) "there is scarcely a story which hasn't some 'sex interest' stuffed into it". Also complains that "all chief characters introduced into your stories are Americans" and argues that in future "Great Britain may still be dominant and that Germany may be a power able to make her influence felt in a conflict of planets".                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [NZ]  |
| 1931 | Jan | <b>Amz</b> | 957-8 | <i>Loc:</i> Osborn, N. (Miss) "I am eighteen years of age and a girl. But even this last fact does not impair my enjoyment of your journal... your stories always provide food for thought and speculation. Also they are cleverly written and bear witness to exhaustive scientific knowledge on the part of your authors. It is a pleasure indeed to hear from such men." Comments on criticisms of others, interplanetary stories and names a few she enjoyed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | [NZ]  |
|      |     |            | 958   | <i>Loc:</i> Tames, R.W. A reader of AS for "some time". Enjoys "picking out the little scientific flaws in some of the stories", for example, problems with the mathematics in a Baron Munchhausen story... ( <i>Surname may be a typo for James.</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [Vic] |
|      | May | <b>Amz</b> | 190   | <i>Loc:</i> Connell, Alan. "I must tell you that your magazine is great...[but] it takes a deal of trouble to get... [and] costs me the equivalent of 50 cents in American money. I don't suppose 100 people in Sydney know that your magazine exists." Comments on stories good and bad, objecting to the "collision with an asteroid, inflicting only minor injuries at the speeds described" in 'The Universe Wreckers' by Hamilton. ( <i>Ed.: "It is quite interesting to find how many letters we receive from the Antipodes"</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | [NSW] |
|      | Jun | <b>Amz</b> | 284   | <i>Loc:</i> Connell, Alan. Dislikes the frequent use of "absurd" time travel stories and criticises reprints as "ancient, out of date and unscientific rubbish". Suggests they reprint more recent stories by Merritt and others instead. Names recent liked and disliked stories and illustrations and congratulates Amz for printing "brickbats" in the letters column. Again notes that he has to pay the equivalent of 50c for monthly issues and \$1 for the quarterlies and invites other readers to correspond with him. ( <i>Ed. response includes: "We wonder if you know of "The Science Correspondence Club" who issue a very clever little bulletin, which had its origin in one sense in the "Discussions Columns" in Amazing Stories."</i> ) | [NSW] |

|          |            |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |       |
|----------|------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Jul      | <b>Amz</b> | 382   | <i>Loc:</i> Weste, G. 12 years old. Notes an astronomical error in story by Nathanson, discusses favourite stories and artists, compliments a few editorials, complains that the covers tend to fall off very easily and suggests an interplanetary monthly.<br>( <i>"We consider it quite a compliment to get a letter from an Australian correspondent. We like the young."</i> -- Ed.)                                                                                                                                                                                                        | [Vic] |
| Sep      | <b>Amz</b> | 575   | <i>Loc:</i> Morrison, C.E. Compliments Amazing and names best stories of recent issues, calling 'The Purple Plague' (Hays, Feb.) "an exceptional story". Dislikes poetry, states "covers are steadily improving" and says <i>Amazing</i> "is now the best magazine of its class on the newsstands in Australia, but has little circulation here".<br>( <i>Bleiler on the Hays story: "A rather good espionage thriller...one of the better stories in Amazing".</i> )                                                                                                                            | [Vic] |
| 1932 Feb | <b>Amz</b> | 1049  | <i>Loc:</i> Straede, John William. An older reader -- "my first scientifiction was Arthur B. Reeves' 'Exploits of Elaine' (read when I was seven years old) -- and a reader of AS "almost from the beginning". Names some likes and dislikes and applauds cessation of reprints.<br>( <i>Surname appears as Stuarde. The Reeves book appeared in 1915.</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | [Vic] |
| Mar      | <b>Amz</b> | 1149  | <i>Loc:</i> Straede, John William. (Letter from previous issue repeated.)<br>( <i>Name appears this time as John W. Strasde.</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | [Vic] |
| Apr      | <b>Amz</b> | 86    | <i>Loc:</i> Bills, L. "I am 15, just leaving school, and have a job as a carpenter." Picks fault with Meek's 'Submicroscopic' and says he and "a couple of friends" believe serials should be abolished in favour of complete stories in each issue.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [NSW] |
| Jul      | <b>Amz</b> | 378   | <i>Loc:</i> Pitfield, L.C. Enjoys interplanetary stories. Questions how an invisible man would be able to see. Rewards his children when they bring him AS from their postman.<br>( <i>"Tuck never met him, but found his name in magazines sold after his death" -- Graham Stone.</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | [Tas] |
|          |            | 381   | <i>Loc:</i> Turner, George R. "Another voice among the crowd of people that have read A.S. from the first, and who are only now beginning to write to the Editor." Reviews the magazine's "adventurous existence" to date, commenting on stories he has enjoyed (or not) as well as concepts of space-curvature and time travel. "Somebody will pick holes in my ideas...at the age of 15 one has not yet gained his Ph.D., etc. Still...one does have an opinion on how rotten some stories are, and I think that I can do better than some of these."<br>( <i>And so he did, eventually.</i> ) | [Vic] |
|          |            | 382-3 | <i>Loc:</i> Turner, George R. "I have been bitten by the author bug...I have written one yarn and started a second, both of which I wish to send to you...(but) having no typewriter...may I submit the handwritten manuscript"? Then "slings mud" and/or bouquets at various authors and asks why there have been no story contests for years.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | [Vic] |
| Aug      | <b>Amz</b> | 476   | <i>Loc:</i> Stacey, John Bennett. Comments on recent stories and compares them to those of 1928. States "I am thinking of trying to start a Science Club out here. Will any New Zealand readers of <i>Amazing Stories</i> correspond with me re the formation of such a club...it will help to get science fiction firmly established in this country. There is quite a big demand for this type of literature out here and I want to help develop it."<br>( <i>First sign of interest in organising a club in the region; see page 16.</i> )                                                    | [NZ]  |
| Oct      | <b>Amz</b> | 669   | <i>Loc:</i> Straede, John William. Names some liked and disliked stories and suggests some improvements, including changes in format, printing the Scientifiction emblem on the cover, non-fiction articles and an annual. Adds that he would like to correspond with other readers.<br>( <i>Name appears as John Wm. Straede. "Got it right this time. His son of the same name was in the Melbourne Group in the 1950/60s, later moved to Sydney. I met him in the 70s."</i> -- Graham Stone.)                                                                                                 | [Vic] |

|      |     |            |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |       |
|------|-----|------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1933 | Jan | <b>Amz</b> | 956-7    | Loc: Anonymous. 'An Admirer of Logic' complains about logical inconsistencies in "A Matter of Nerves" (Lemkin, June 1932 issue). <i>(Editor argues that sufferers of "nerves" are often illogical and takes writer to task for not signing his name.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | [NZ]  |
|      |     |            | 958-9    | Loc: Hayman, Gilbert. Argues against "destructive criticism", states "Talkies have not exploited the realm of interplanetary subjects sufficiently" and "Your authors are beyond criticism, they are all, in their own section, brainy." Finishes with "Your magazine finds its way here into high class libraries and newsstands." <i>(Ed.: "Your little resume of the standing of our magazine in Australia is quite delightful.")</i>                                                                                                                          | [NSW] |
|      | Feb | <b>Amz</b> | 1053-4   | Loc: Palmer, Eric S. An "enthusiastic reader" of <i>Amazing</i> for 4 years, member of the Victorian Astronomical Society, "employed in a large electrical testing laboratory". Discovered <i>Amz</i> in a second-hand book stall and found a Quarterly on a trip to Chicago, but was disappointed upon return at the difficulty in obtaining new issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                         | [Vic] |
|      | Jun | <b>Amz</b> | 284, 286 | Loc: McNairn, R. Explains difficulty of obtaining issues regularly in Sydney; notes some bad stories and states "The Blue Barbarians" (Coblentz, <i>AmzQ</i> , Sum 1931) as the best he has read. The artist "is good [but] he gets the most stupid part of the story to illustrate." <i>(Ed.: "It is quite gratifying to us to get letters from readers in Australia and New Zealand...Why do you not subscribe to the magazine and avoid wearing out your patience travelling through Sydney for it?")</i>                                                      | [NSW] |
|      | Jul | <b>Amz</b> | 380-1    | Loc: Browne, Maxwell S. "I am sixteen and have just finished my fifth year at the Sydney Technical High School and would like to thank you for the amount of help you have given me in Physics and Chemistry." Reads every issue and completes [science] questionnaires -- "I am pleased to call this 'effortless learning'. There is no hard 'swotting' or headaches from textbooks, but pleasant and interesting reading. Also comments on debate over E.E. Smith's use of slang. <i>(See page 16.)</i>                                                         | [NSW] |
|      |     |            | 383      | Loc: Turner, George R. Defends E.E. Smith against criticism (from Miss Robb and others) and compares thorough sf writing of John Taine to the hurried treatment most AS authors give their work. <i>(See page 16.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | [Vic] |
|      | Nov | <b>Amz</b> | 140-1    | Loc: de Vere White, S.M. Compliments the magazine and says has written half a dozen stories which will be sent along for consideration. Offers coins and stamps in exchange for back issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | [NZ]  |
|      | Dec | <b>Amz</b> | 139-140  | Loc: Marris, N.C. Searches Brisbane's bookshops for back issues. "The stories in your 'mag' are like the sailor's beer: only two kinds--good and better." Names favourite stories from recent issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [Qld] |
| 1934 | Jan | <b>Amz</b> | 134-136  | Loc: Turner, George R. Two full pages. Comments on comparison of Coblentz with Dean Swift; Darrow's hope for more 'Lemurian Documents' and, mostly, E.E. Smith's use of slang (a running debate with Miss Robb and others at the time). Also takes reader Sol Japka to task for suggesting humanity will abolish war in the future, and comments on call for more competitions. Ends by complaining about price of AS in Australia and admits that he should subscribe. <i>(Turner's biography notes that he swiped sf mags off magazine stands on occasion.)</i> | [Vic] |
|      |     |            | 139      | Loc: Mustchin, Charles S. A reader since the August 1932 issue. Compliments "our mag", including Sigmond covers, and names authors we would like to see more stories by. Suggests reprints only be used in the quarterly. Requests readers that have back issues for sale write to him.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [Qld] |
|      |     |            | 142      | Loc: L.S. A reader for three years, states "the magazine is quite O.K." and compliments Wesso's illustrations. Describes favourite story. <i>("We feel it is quite a triumph to get so many letters from New Zealand and Australia"-- Ed.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [NZ]  |

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|------|------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Feb  | <b>Amz</b> | 139-140        | <p><i>Loc:</i> McNairn, R. Notes his letter of Nov. 1932 appeared in the June 1933 issue. Discusses difficulties editorial staff must have in replying to all letters.</p> <p><i>(Ed.: "We get a surprising number of letters from Australia and New Zealand. These letters we particularly like to publish in order to demonstrate what a good traveller Amazing Stories is.)"</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [NSW] |
| Apr  | <b>Amz</b> | 133-134        | <p><i>Loc:</i> Connell, Alan. 17 years old. Refers to two earlier letters as "senseless conglomerations of voluble and denunciatory criticism,.. warped personal opinions". Compliments steady improvement in AS, names best stories of 1932 and 1933, notes contradictory facts in one issue, comments on cover art and asks if anyone has a copy of the 1927 <i>Annual</i> to sell or exchange.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [NSW] |
| May  | <b>Amz</b> | 136            | <p><i>Loc:</i> Anderson, L.G. "A young fellow who is just pining away for a few friends with whom he can discuss various problems in science and chemistry. When I get to talking 'space ships' and 'ray guns' etc., round these parts, my audience shakes its head knowingly and mutters its pity."</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | [Vic] |
| Jul  | <b>Amz</b> | 135-136        | <p><i>Loc:</i> Seymour, Fred'k G. A reader for twelve months, complains about "technical complexities" in time travel stories and his preference for interplanetary stories. Also comments on possibility of telepathy evolving in future.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [Vic] |
| Oct  | <b>Amz</b> | 137            | <p><i>Loc:</i> Sheppard, Cecil A.D. A reader of AS for two years, "16 and quite sane", he suggests improvements, lists favourite stories and authors and laughs at the "queer ideas of Australia" overseas authors have.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | [NSW] |
| Nov  | <b>Amz</b> | 138-139        | <p><i>Loc:</i> Denton, Faith (Mrs) Read her first issue of AS (Dec. 1933) in one sitting. Comments on Kelly's "theory of dematerialization and re-integration" in 'Into the Meteorite Orbit' and claims she has "seen this done with small flowers and inanimate objects". Agrees with another female reader that Morey's heroes are not handsome.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | [NSW] |
| Dec  | <b>Amz</b> | 138            | <p><i>Loc:</i> Kittle, Vernon T. "Picked up one of your magazines by accident some time ago" and now reads it every month.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [Vic] |
| 1935 | Jan        | <b>Amz</b> 136 | <p><i>Loc:</i> Jenkin, N.S. "This letter is to announce the advent of a much needed Science Fiction organization in New Zealand. [It] is to be a body for the promotion of this type of literature in New Zealand, and a medium through which all members may communicate and express their views... Would all New Zealand and Australian readers interested please communicate with Mr. N. Patton, Pokeno, New Zealand, or myself? We are thinking of publishing a small monthly bulletin..."</p> <p><i>(Rowe's Timeless Sands (1983) notes two issues of NZ SF Bulletin edited by Jenkin &amp; Patten, published in Feb and Mar 1935. The same letter was also sent to Wonder Stories, where it appeared in slightly garbled form--see last Mumblings.)</i></p> | [NZ]  |
|      |            | 137-138        | <p><i>Loc:</i> Hayes, Verbena E. (Mrs) A short story writer, alerted by her brother to the existence of AS two years before. Does not plan to contribute, but compliments aspects of the magazine and says she enjoys interplanetary and time stories most.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | [NZ]  |
|      |            | 143            | <p><i>Loc:</i> Abraham, Jack. A reader since 1930, asks for reprinting of the Skylark stories.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | [NSW] |
| Feb  | <b>Amz</b> | 139            | <p><i>Loc:</i> Ross, T. Alan. "An increasing array of letters in the Discussions from Aussie readers has moved me to add my humble missive to the post bag." A reader for four years, he names his favourite stories, compliments covers and editorial policy and welcomes correspondence.</p> <p><i>(Ed.: "There is always a bit of atmosphere in letters from the Antipodes")</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [Vic] |
|      |            | 139            | <p><i>Loc:</i> Green, W.R. "19 years old, very keen on scientifiction, dirigibles, poultry farming, luxury liners..." A reader for six years, he invites others to write to him: "I'm just crazy for a few Yankee pen pals."</p> <p><i>("We begin to feel that we ought to move our Editorial desk to that part of the world because we have so many friends...in Australia and NZ")</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | [NZ]  |

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|------|-----|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
|      |     | 139-140 | Loc: Hoffman, K. (Mr) A "highly satisfied reader of AS" for the past three years. Welcomes correspondence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | [NSW]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
| Mar  | Amz | 136-137 | Loc: Murtagh, Jack. Complains that "a large number of Americans think that N.Z. is a town in Australia". "A silent reader of AS for five years...first attracted to it by a nice bright and truly amazing cover". Names some "super-excellent" covers and great stories. "If you don't hurry up and give us straight edges to our mag I'll--I'll--send you an earthquake." Draws attention to a numbering error in the quarterlies and asks that they not publish any more Poe or Verne as they are both "procurable in the Public Library".<br>(Ed.: "It is true that there is nothing which a large number of Americans may not think." Some things never change! -- CN) | [NZ]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
|      |     | 137     | Loc: Bailey, Alan H. A reader for three years complains about the call for reprints. States the price in Australia for an issue is equivalent to 50c, hence most readers look for second-hand copies. Invites letters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | [NSW]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
|      |     | 141     | Loc: Clark-Kennedy, A.G. A veteran of WWI recounts how, whilst fighting in Palestine, he witnessed what appeared to be searchlight beams emanating from Mars.<br>("Your letter is most interesting, and it reads a little like an episode in a story in our magazine."-- Ed.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [Vic]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
| Apr  | Amz | 137-138 | Loc: Sheppard, Cecil A.D. Congratulates the last few issues but notes "though Verne was the master of science fiction, his stories are out of date". Has received correspondence after his first letter [in Oct. 1934].                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [NSW]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
| May  | Amz | 138-139 | Loc: McNairn, R. "Once again I find reason to write to you..." Criticises editorial on space travel, use of slang and American spelling.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | [NSW]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
| Jun  | Amz | 137-8   | Loc: Pilbeam, John F. On recent stories and possible reprints. Recommends Poe.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [Vic]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
| Jul  | Amz | 138     | Loc: Stephens, George F. 18 years old, a reader for over a year. Has introduced six others to <i>Amazing</i> , seeks correspondents and magazines to trade.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | [NZ]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
|      |     | 139     | Loc: Brizley, Marie. Hasn't read many issues as they are hard to get except in "spasms". Names favourite authors and asks for correspondents.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [NZ]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
| Oct  | Amz | 136     | Loc: Burdett, R. A reader since 1930. Lists favourite stories, compliments Morey and asks about stories mentioned by other letter writers.<br>("We receive the nicest communications from what we call the Antipodes" -- Ed.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [NZ]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
|      |     | 136-7   | Loc: Gregor, John. 14 years old, a reader of <i>Amazing</i> for 3 years. Offers to swap "native weapons" for back issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | [SA]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
|      |     | 139     | Loc: Stephens, George. Discusses stories in the Dec. 1934 issue.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [NZ]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
| Dec  | Amz | 137     | Loc: Beck, Claire P. 'Some Notes on Foreign Letters'. "I was distressed, however, to see a larger number of letters from England and foreign countries in the October issue than those from the United States..."<br>("There is a feeling that letters from far away lands...are very interesting; we like to feel we are appreciated by people halfway around the globe" -- Ed.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | [US]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
| 1936 | Feb | Amz     | 136                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Loc: L.S. A reader since 1931. Likes the smaller size and Professor Jameson stories. Notes NZ sees AS three months behind the US and rates it the best sf magazine. | [NZ] |
|      |     | 142     | Loc: Hopkins, St. A. On the "Appleten layer" [sic] in space, negating possibility of space travel.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | [NZ]                                                                                                                                                                |      |
|      |     | 144     | Loc: Abraham, Jack. Lists favourite stories since October 1933.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | [NSW]                                                                                                                                                               |      |
| Apr  | Amz | 136     | Loc: Dillon, Ernest. 18 year old regular reader and student of foreign languages. Objects to most letters due to the complaints of other writers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | [WA]                                                                                                                                                                |      |

## A LETTER FROM THE ANTIPODES

Editor, AMAZING STORIES:

I suppose that you will be surprised to receive a letter from this distant part of the world. I can assure you, that your magazine is awaited each month.

I think that the paper fills a place long vacant in current literature. I am afraid that I can offer much criticism as I think all the stories excellent, but I would like to say a few words concerning "The Moon Pool" by Merritt. In this story, after the disappearance of Throckmold Dr. Goodwin goes to Melbourne to get help to rescue him. Your author evidently forgets that such a place as Sydney exists, yet that city is 500 miles closer to Papua than Melbourne, is also much larger and modern, with a much greater population. Apart from that, however, I think the story is splendid, something absolutely different. It will be a far "tomorrow" story before that story is "cold fact." I would like you to impress upon the author of the "Visit to Mr. Wates, that the capital of New South Wales is Sydney, not Sidney. Apart from that important (?) point I think that the story is excellent and embodied the very spirit of the petition.

While thinking of the many "amazing" stories I have read, I remembered one by the late English author, Sir Rider Haggard. This was titled "When the Earth Shook," and was a fine thriller, besides being scientific. It would be a very suitable story for your paper.

Well I will not waste any more of your valuable time by asking you to read any more of my letters and opinions, so I will close with best wishes for the continued success of your paper.

John Cooke

Queenscliff Manly, N. S. W., Australia

[This letter has a special interest coming from Australia. When Colonel Lindbergh or some of his friends start an Airplane mail line to New South Wales, perhaps he will carry some AMAZING STORIES to our correspondents.]

Seriously speaking, we have enjoyed this letter and we are sure that Mr. Merritt was interested in the geographic notes on Australia and her rather distant neighbors in the South Pacific.—EDITOR.]

↑ The first ever letter from Australasia: John Cooke roasts Merritt's 'Moon Pool' (from a tightly bound copy of *Amazing*, October 1927).

A young man Hugo Gernsback would be proud of (extract from Maxwell Browne's letter in *Amazing*, July 1933). ↓

I am sixteen and have just finished my fifth year at the Sydney Technical High School and would like to thank you for the amount of help you have given me in Physics and Chemistry. I am never satisfied that I have read a number until I can answer every question in your questionnaire. I am pleased to call this "effortless learning." There is no hard "swotting" or headaches from textbooks, but pleasant and interesting reading. Your editorials are always instructive and are the first thing I read.

## QUALITY OF STORIES IN THE MARCH ISSUE AND NOTES ON OTHER ISSUES. HAS OUR MAGAZINE IMPROVED?—A NICE LETTER FROM NEW ZEALAND

Editor, AMAZING STORIES:

I have just finished reading the March issue of AMAZING STORIES. The best story is Francis Flagg's "Cities of Ardathia." Of course he is a little pessimistic about the future of the human race, but that makes the story all the more interesting. The other stories are all fairly good. Also, I have just been looking through the February and January issues again. The best in the February issue are "The Pent House," "The Sages of Eros" and "The Heritage of the Earth." The best in the January issue is "Power," by Harl Vincent. The others aren't much good, but are still readable. The best in the December issue are "Pirates of Space," "Sky Cops" and "Trial by Television."

Quite a number of your readers say that "our mag" has improved. Well, it has to a certain extent. I have just lately been looking over some of A. S. published in 1928. Candidly speaking, the stories published in that year were better than the ones that have been published over the last year. Still, don't take to heart too seriously my criticisms, as there are others who won't agree with me. Mr. Editor will please publish this announcement. I am thinking of trying to start a Science Club out here. Will any New Zealand readers of AMAZING STORIES correspond with me re the formation of such a club. I will be glad if they will, as it will help to get science fiction firmly established in this country. There is quite a big demand for this type of literature out here, and I want to help develop it more. Anyway, here's hoping for a better AMAZING STORIES as it comes out each month.

John Bennett Stacey,  
104 Grey Street,  
Onehunga, New Zealand

(We feel that people have a right to be not only a little but a good deal pessimistic about the future of the human race. At present they all seem to be governed by people who wish to be ready for war. We would be delighted in helping you to start a science club in New Zealand. We have quite a number of friendly readers out there.—EDITOR.)

↑ Keen to get organised (*Amazing*, August 1932).

Future author George Turner signs off after one of his lengthy letters (*Amazing*, July 1933). ↓

Vive la Smith! Vive Seaton! Vive Stevens! Vive Du Quesnel! (I wish he hadn't been bumped off) Vive "the gang" and "the bunch" and the "Spacehounds" and the "Skylarks" and all of 'em.

Just in case Mr. Campbell is sharpening his teeth in preparation for gastronomic operations upon my innocent self, I really do like his yarns. Paradox? I'll tell the world!

George R. Turner,  
67 Highbury Grove, Prahran, S1.  
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

|          |     |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |       |
|----------|-----|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|          |     | 138     | Loc: Abraham, Jack. Enjoyed 'Liners of Time', comments on other recent stories, the change of size and possibility of reprints.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [NSW] |
| Jun      | Amz | 135     | Loc: Duncan, Muriel. "I do not read the magazine but my husband is keenly interested in it...Tell [those who have trouble finding it] to give a definite order to a reputable book-seller for <i>Amazing Stories</i> (it costs 1/9d by the way) and they will get it within a fortnight of each month. My husband has been getting the magazine regularly for nearly 4 years."                                                                                                                                               | [Qld] |
|          |     | 139     | Loc: Buchanan, Joe. Finds the politics of future societies in sf stories unrealistic. Enjoyed 'Liners of Time'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [NSW] |
|          |     | 142     | Loc: Whiteley, Eric. A reader for 7 years. Discusses the need for constructive criticism in letters and the "Morey controversy".                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [NZ]  |
|          |     | 143-4   | Loc: 'The Raven' A reader for 2 years, writing from his laboratory. Names favourite stories.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | [NZ]  |
| Aug      | Amz | 136     | Loc: Seymour, F.G. Refutes comments of R. McNairn in May 1935 issue regarding English versus American spelling in stories. Also quotes a newspaper article on the atmospheric 'heat layer' discovered by Professor Appleton as proof that space travel will not be possible.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | [Vic] |
|          |     | 142     | Loc: O'Neill, N.J. 16 years old, discovered <i>Amazing</i> six months ago. Names some stories enjoyed, discusses sf in general and the difficulty of getting it in Australia -- but notes his 'pals' also try.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | [NSW] |
| Oct      | Amz | 141     | Loc: Gregor, John. 15 years old. Joyful at seeing his letter in the October 1935 issue and advises he has received issues of <i>Amazing</i> from penpals made in this way. Wants to buy more or swap for issues of 'Scoops'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | [SA]  |
|          |     | 141     | Loc: Aston, Barbara. A reader for several years, seeks penfriends in US of around 30 years old.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [NZ]  |
| 1937 Feb | Amz | 135     | Loc: Britt, Alan. 16 years old, comments on stories and invites "pen-cobbers" to write.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | [NSW] |
| Apr      | Amz | 137     | Loc: Leslie, Val K. A reader for 6 years and a subscriber for one. Names favourite authors as Smith and Campbell. Recommends Gordon & Gotch, local agents of <i>Amazing</i> , to readers unable to find it regularly.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | [Vic] |
|          |     | 139     | Loc: Czynski, S.J. 28 years old and a reader since 1922 -- of <i>Practical Electrics</i> and <i>Science and Invention</i> before becoming a subscriber to <i>Amazing</i> from its start (£2 per year). Donates issues to hospitals after reading; has enjoyed the Posi and Nega stories. Seeks correspondents. ( <i>Czynski had written a number of sf stories himself, including at least two published in Amazing (as by H.M. Crimp), in December 1932 and April 1935. See Stone (2001), p.20, for more information.</i> ) | [Vic] |
| Jun      | Amz | 139     | Loc: Knight, F.G. Criticises the "moaners" who complain about aspects of the magazine in every issue. Says not to worry about these as <i>Amazing's</i> competitors are not as good. Has read every issue since vol.1, no.6.<br>( <i>Editor's response states that they "publish [only] a small proportion of our mail from the Antipodes".</i> )                                                                                                                                                                            | [NSW] |
|          |     | 141-142 | Loc: Light, Alan. A reader of <i>Amazing</i> for 3 years, after a friend passed him an issue; knocks those who criticise the magazine (like Knight). Mentions favourite serials and asks for an article on the new 200 inch telescope at Mt. Wilson Observatory.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | [NSW] |
|          |     | 142     | Loc: Stephens, George G. Discusses stories in the May 1935 issue.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | [NZ]  |
| Aug      | Amz | 135     | Loc: Kirkwood, C. 15 years old and an admirer of sf, particularly Neil Jones' Professor Jameson stories. Offers to buy back issues from other readers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | [NZ]  |
|          |     | 139     | Loc: Leslie, Val K. On letter from G.R. Griffin in February issue (stating that only <i>Amazing</i> must be available in New Zealand). Advises that <i>Wonder Stories</i> , <i>Amazing</i> and <i>Astounding</i> are all available. Subscribes to <i>Amazing</i> , enjoyed 'By Jove' and stories by Jones and Campbell.                                                                                                                                                                                                      | [Vic] |

|      |     |           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |       |
|------|-----|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|      |     | 141-2     | Loc: Gregor, John. Considers the February 1936 issue "a flop... If you call 'Hoffman's Widow' science fiction, your brain must be getting weak". Criticises other stories and states "in going bimonthly you have cleared the way for your biggest rival". Ends with a request for a list of back issues available, with prices.                                                                                                                                                                                | [SA]  |
|      |     | 142       | Loc: Bowen, Evan C. A reader for 2 years. "The family all said, 'You're mad!' when I first brought one home, but now...their noses are glued to the magazine." Refers to a local "Amazing Stories circle" of "quite a few boys" aged 20-26.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | [Vic] |
|      | Oct | Amz 143   | Loc: Pollard, Howard F. On grumblers in letters column. States <i>Amazing</i> is the best sf mag and "At the rate it is improving your rivals will soon feel like a platypus chasing a kangaroo." In response to G.R. Griffin he notes that Australia gets all three sf magazines.<br>(In the Feb. 1937 issue, Griffin wrote that <i>Amazing</i> was poor compared to the other sf mags and said "Your magazine seems to rate highest in Australia. As many have admitted, they get no other science fiction.") | [WA]  |
| 1938 | Jun | Amz 142   | Loc: Edwards, I.M. Brief. Seeks pen-friends.<br>(This was the first issue published by Ziff-Davis. New editor Ray Palmer introduced a department called <i>Correspondence Corner</i> which ran brief letters from people seeking penpals, back issues, etc. It ran in both <i>Amz</i> and <i>FA</i> and occasionally the same letters were repeated in both mags.)                                                                                                                                              | [SA]  |
|      | Aug | Amz 142   | Loc: Kirkwood, C. Brief. Seeks pen-friends.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | [NZ]  |
|      | Oct | Amz 138   | Loc: Veney, William D. Brief. 14 years old, invites exchange of letters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | [NSW] |
|      |     | 138       | Loc: Williams, Norma. Brief. "18 years old and single", seeks correspondents.<br>(See letters opposite. In the 1950s Norma became active in the <i>Femme Fan Group</i> in Sydney and contributed to 'Vertical Horizons'.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | [NSW] |
|      | Dec | Amz 144   | Loc: Hockley, Warwick. Brief. Wants 'Skylark of Space'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | [Vic] |
| 1939 | Jan | Amz 146   | Loc: Green, Robert C. Brief. Wants pictures of World's Fair.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | [NSW] |
|      | Feb | Amz 142   | Loc: Castellari, Bert F. Brief. Seeks 14 year old penpals.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | [NSW] |
|      | Mar | Amz 143   | Loc: Murtagh, Jack. Brief. Has a want list of <i>Amazing</i> back issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | [NZ]  |
|      | Apr | Amz 138   | Loc: Murtagh, Jack. Brief. Has a want list of <i>Amazing</i> back issues.<br>(The entire <i>Correspondence Corner</i> was repeated from the March <i>Amz</i> .)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | [NZ]  |
|      | May | Amz 140   | Loc: Veney, William D. Brief. Announces revival of JASFCC.<br>(Name appears as "Voney".)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | [NSW] |
|      | Jun | Amz 4     | Loc: Veney, William D. Questions why Australians don't appear in 'Discussions' much.<br>(Quoted in Palmer's editorial, 'The Observatory'. See opposite page.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | [NSW] |
|      |     | 144       | Loc: Cass, Vivian. Brief. 23 years old, seeks correspondents.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | [Vic] |
|      | Aug | Amz 134-5 | Loc: Molesworth, Vol. Describes the rocket he has built and flown, as well as his sf collecting.<br>(Vol's claims for his rocket were derided in <i>Futurian Observer</i> #10.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | [NSW] |
|      |     | 140       | Loc: Heckson, John A. Brief listing of personal details.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | [NSW] |
|      | Sep | Amz 132   | Loc: Russell, Eric. Complains of changes in <i>Amazing</i> since Ziff-Davis became publisher. (See full letter on opposite page.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | [NSW] |
|      | Oct | Amz 138   | Loc: Veney, William D. A "friendly letter" on artists, previous letters and contacts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [NSW] |
|      | Nov | Amz 140-1 | Loc: Evans, David. On how Krupa's illustration to "Horror's Head" (Oct. 1938) reminded him of a real prank his brother played on him.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | [NSW] |
|      |     | 142       | Loc: Wright, John. Brief listing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | [NSW] |
|      | Dec | Amz 138   | Loc: Pollard, Howard F. Is in favour of changes to <i>Amazing</i> and notes time it takes the magazine to reach Western Australia.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | [WA]  |

[End of Part 1. Further letters will appear in the next Mumbblings.]

tics, microscopy, art and psychology. . . . William Veney, 11a Lawson Street, Paddington, Sydney, NSW, Australia, would like to exchange letters with AMAZING STORIES readers, foreign and Australian. He's 14. . . . Norma Williams, 18 and single, would like pen-pals in North and South America and England. She is interested in stamps, reading, chess, microscopes, (she owns a 450X), and various other subjects. Write her at 35 Cook Road, Paddington, Sydney, NSW, Australia. (If you don't know William Veney, Norma, this is a coincidence!)

**W**ILLIAM VENEY, of Sydney, Australia, writes: "I have noticed that Australia is not present in Discussions these days. Why?" Well, it probably is because our magazine reaches you so late. And too, it may be that Australia isn't writing as many letters as formerly. Come on, you foreign readers, let's have your opinions too.

Top: Bill Veney and Norma Williams 'meet' in Correspondence Corner (*Amazing*, October 1938).

Above: Veney quoted in 'The Observatory', Ray Palmer's editorial column (*Amazing*, June 1939).

**FROM AUSTRALIA**

**Sirs:**  
 Since you took over Dr. Sloane's job, **AMAZING STORIES** has been different—it has degenerated.

- (1) Why did you sack Morey?
- (2) What made you get rid of the good old "Comet tail"?
- (3) Why weren't the readers warned in the April, 1938, issue?

The best yarn in the March issue was "The Raid from Mars." But now for the real purpose of this letter. Bill Veney of 11a Lawson St., Paddington, Sydney, etc., will soon release a science-fiction fan magazine. (Australia's First.) It will be called "Australian Fan News," with about 12 pages. It will cost 10 cents or 6d. (Overseas readers should send International Reply Coupon) and will be sent postfree to anywhere.

Eric Russell J.A.S.F.C.C.  
 274 Edgecliff Rd.  
 Woollahra, Sydney, N.S.W.  
 Australia

● (1) We didn't.  
 (2) Legibility. The new title is more distinguishable on the newsstands.  
 (3) We didn't know ourselves.—Ed.

At right: Eric Russell endears himself to Ray Palmer (*Amazing*, September 1939) and presents him with a 'scoop', unaware at the time of writing that *Australian Fan News* had been pipped for the title of first Australian fanzine by John Gregor's one-shot *Science Fiction Review* in February.

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I thank many people for their contributions to the appreciation of Don Tuck in this issue. First and foremost, his son Marcus, for clarifying several Tuck family details and providing the photo of his father on page 6. Kim Huett allowed me to borrow copies of *Profan*, hence the scanned cover images on page 2 as well as the back cover illustration for "Beyond the Atoms", by Lindsay Johnston. The photo of Don on page 2 is from his service record, held at the National Archives. Some details of Don's work at Electrolytic Zinc and the photo on page 3 are from Alison Alexander's history *The Zinc Works: producing zinc at Risdon 1916-1991* (Pasminco-EZ, 1992). Mike's quote, page 4, is from his blog, <http://tasmanian.blogspot.com/>, of October 19. Don's quote, page 3, is from one of his letters. Paul's cover first appeared on the 200<sup>th</sup> issue of Taurasi and Van Houten's *Fantasy Times*, June 1954. Farewell, Don, R.I.P.

For their assistance in retrieving hundreds of pulps from the cavernous basement of Sydney University's Fisher Library, I again thank the Rare Books staff, especially Richard Ratajczak. Guido Zlatkes of the University of California at Riverside Library once more kindly examined and advised on letters in a few issues not available at Fisher.

All previous issues of *Mumblings* are now online at [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com), courtesy of Bill Burns. Letters of comment on this (or any other) issue are always welcome, to:

Chris Nelson, 25 Fuhrman St., Evatt, ACT 2617 Australia

or

[nelsonleeoz@hotmail.com](mailto:nelsonleeoz@hotmail.com)

# Beyond the Atoms

By Ed. S. A. Hoyer

