

**AN ANNOTATED CHRONOLOGY OF
AUSTRALIAN SF FANDOM
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Version 2, published by Leigh Edmonds - hhandc@hemsleypark.com.au - for the 'Australian SF Fandom in the 1960s' panel taking place at Continuum XIV, 9 June 2018. The previous version was published for the session on 'Australian SF Fandom in the 1950s' held at the previous Continuum. This version contains additional material to that in the first version but not yet corrections to any mistakes made in that (or this) version. Copies will be available in pdf on efanazines.com sometime down the track (or 'going forward' as people say these days).

Note that all historical knowledge is provisional and interpretation such as annotations is even more so. Comments and corrections are always welcome. Note also that this is only the second attempt at an annotated chronology and that more information will be added as the project goes on.

October 1927 First Australian letter of comment, written by John Cooke, published in AMAZING STORIES

Fandom began in the American SF pulp magazines when fans started establishing contact with each other through them. Other Australians to have letters published in the pulps before the end of 1934 who became active in fandom were Ron Graham (AMAZING, May 1928), George Turner (AMAZING, July 1932, July 1933 & January 1934), Charles S Mustchin (AMAZING, January 1934) and Marshall L McLennan (ASTOUNDING, December 1934).

15 August 1935 Sydney Chapter of the Science Fiction League formed

The Science Fiction League was an international association of sf fans founded by Hugo Gernsback through his magazine WONDER STORIES in 1934. Chapters were formed in the US and UK and the only one in Australia was in Sydney. Several new members are listed as joining after this date but the Sydney chapter does not appear to have lasted very long.

1937 Four Randwick Intermediate High School students produce ten weekly hand written issues of SPACEHOUNDS

This group included Bert Castellari as editor and Bill Veney as assistant editor. The group broke up when the boys left school at the end of the year. SPACEHOUNDS was a page or two of paper, hand written and circulated around friends at the school.

May 1938 Australian Government imposes restriction on importation of foreign literature

Due to pressure from conservative groups complaining about the moral degradation resulting from the importation of American literature some pulp magazines were banned. Initially this did not effect the few sf magazines being published but some new titles were banned from importation later on.

1939 Junior Science Club formed

This club was formed by Vol Molesworth and Ken Jefferys. It published three issues of the JSC BULLETIN in June 1939 but was defunct by July. The title of this club demonstrates the close association of science with science fiction in the minds of fans at this time.

January 1939 Harry Warner Jnr sent a copy of his fanzine SPACEWAYS to Bert Castellari

Warner, a prominent American fanzine editor, saw Castellari's name and address in a prozine and sent him a copy of SPACEWAYS on spec. This fanzine became the starting place for later Australian fanzines.

February 1939 SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW edited by John Devern, sole issue published

This is generally regarded as being Australia's first fanzine although it created some controversy by using material copied from overseas fanzines without permission. John Devern's proper name was John Dauvergne Gergor, which made it difficult for fans to find him after he dropped out of fandom after producing this single issue.

26 February 1939 Inaugural meeting of Junior Australian SF Correspondence Club held

This short lived club was formed by William Veney and Eric Russell but had very few members. It held it's final meeting on 25 June this year.

May 1939 AUSTRALIAN FAN NEWS, edited by Bill Veney, Bert Castellari and Eric

Russell for the Junior Australian SF Correspondence Club), sole issue published

The second fanzine to be produced in Australia. Publishing difficulties meant it was not distributed until August that year and only one issue was published.

1 September 1939 World War 2 commenced

Britain declared war on Germany on this date and, as a consequence, Australia was also at war. The immediate effect on fandom in Australia was minimal because most of the fighting occurred in and near Europe. The introduction of national service and some disruption to shipping services inhibited fannish activities a little.

October 1939 ULTRA, edited by Eric & Ted Russell, first issue published

This was Australia's first regularly published fanzine. Fourteen issues were published, the last in December 1941

October 1939 A meeting was held leading to formation of a sf club in Sydney

Bill Veney, Bert Castellari and Eric Russell met to discuss the possibility of creating a sf club in Sydney, leading the for formation of the Futurian Society of Sydney the following month.

5 November 1939 Inaugural meeting of the Futurian Society of Sydney

After the failure of the first two clubs formed in Sydney earlier in the year the small group of fans known to each other decided to combine their forces. The club was named 'Futurian' due to correspondence and encouragement given by Futurians in New York. A Futurian was said to be interested in more than sf, also in helping to shape the future. It was a volatile group that experienced many squabbles and feuds.

December 1939 LUNA, edited by Vol Molesworth, first issue published

There were three issues of LUNA, the final one being published in February 1940. By this time Sydney fans had become keen fanzine publishers and a number of titles were published between 1940 and 1942 including: COSMOS (Molesworth, Veney & Castellaria), ZEUS (Castellari, Dwyer, Smith, Levy & Veney), TELEFAN (Molesworth), SPACEWARD (Molesworth & Haddon), FUTURE (Eric *Russell*), SCIENCE AND FANTASY FAN REPORTER (Roden, Russell & Stone), FUTURIAN DIGEST (Molesworth) and FUTURIAN SPOTLIGHT (Molesworth & Stone).

January 1940 FUTURIAN OBSERVER edited by Bill Veney & Bert Castellari, first issue published

This was the first frequent newszine to be published in Australia and 57 issues were published, more or less regularly. Veney and Castellari edited it jointly until the 30th issue (21 February 1941) when Castellari edited it by himself until issue 32 (23 March 1941) when Ron Levy joined him as co-editor. The last issue was published in March 1942.

April 1940 First contact made with British Fans

Sydney fans established contact with British fans Michael Rosenblume and Sam Youd. Rosenblume published the FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST from 1940 to 1945 which helped keep Australian fans in touch with the outside world during the war period.

1 April 1940 The importation of all fiction magazines from non-sterling countries banned

The ban was a wartime measure to conserve spending by the British Commonwealth to pay instead for war materials being purchased from the United States. One way and another these bans remained in place until 1959. This had a significant effect on Australian sf fans who were generally unable to get access to American sf and had to rely on sf produced in Britain or locally.

June 1940 AUSTRA-FANTASY edited by Warwick Hockley, first issue published

This was the first fanzine to be published in Melbourne. Six issues were published, the last one in September 1941.

28 July 1940 A meeting of Sydney fans decides to establish Futurian Association of Australia

Creation of the Association was announced in the 11 August issue of the FUTURIAN OBSERVER. A single issue of THE FAA BULLETIN, edited by Eric Russell, was published on 24 January 1941.

August 1940 Publication of the first issue of ZEUS

Attempting to overcome some of the disagreement over fanzine publication a number of Sydney fans pooled their resources in an attempt to publish a successful fanzine. However, a split in this group led to the publication of two versions of this fanzine.

September 1940 Vol Molesworth hospitalized with diabetes

Molesworth was one of the key members of Sydney fandom and his long stay in hospital furthered

the rift in Sydney fandom. He suffered from ill health for much of his life and this had some effect on future developments of fandom in Sydney.

23 September 1940 The Futurian Society of Sydney was suspended for a short period

Relations between members of the Society had become so poor that they decided to suspend it and planned instead to form a new group to be called the Fantasy Club. This new club appears not to have been established and the Society was revived in January 1941.

October 1940 MELBOURNE BULLETIN, edited by Warwick Hockley, first issue published

This fanzine followed the style of Sydney's FUTURIAN OBSERVER, a single sheet published every second or third week containing sf news and gossip of the fannish scene in Australia. Ten issues were published, the last one in December 1941.

November 1940 Graham Stone introduced to fandom

Graham Stone met Arthur Haddon at Sydney Boys High School and first met members of the Futurian Society around this time. He later became one of the key and controversial figures in Sydney and Australian fandom.

6 December 1940 First Sydney SF Conference held

Sydney fans had a lot of trouble getting on with each other and working towards agreed collective goals. This conference was held in the hope of bringing some peace and unity to Sydney fandom, but it was not a great success.

April 1941 PROFAN, 1 edited by Don Tuck, first issue published

This was the first fanzine produced in Tasmania. Three issues appeared.

April 1941 Sydney Hoax Convention not held

During this period of Sydney fandom there were a number of anonymous hoaxes. One was a pamphlet circulated widely supposedly about a convention held in Sydney over the Easter week end of 1941. It was taken seriously by some fans overseas and caused a great stir among Australian fans.

13 April 1941 Second Sydney SF Conference held

Many of the issues that had remained unresolved after the December conference, or has arisen since then, were planned to be discussed at this conference. Little was achieved although reports suggest that it was an enjoyable get-together.

August 1941 Attempt made to form a sf club in Melbourne

Warwick Hockley tried to form the Futurian Society of Melbourne which was mentioned in the prozine SUPER SCIENCE STORIES. However not enough members could be brought together to form the club.

12 August 1941 First issue of SCIENCE AND FANTASY FAN REPORTER published

Thirty four issues of this fanzine were published up until the final issue on 31 March 1942.

November 1941 Bill Veney called up for military service

Although war in the Pacific has yet to break out the government had begun to put Australia on a more organized war footing earlier in 1941 as the situation in Europe and North Africa worsened, and war with Japan looked increasingly likely. This began forcing Australia fans into a state of gafia.

7 December 1941 Pacific War started

Japan's entry into World War 2 with attacks on the United States and the colonies of Britain and the Netherlands forced Australia onto a 'total war' footing. This had a direct effect on fandom as manpower regulations, the rapid expansion of Australia's armed forces and rationing and restrictions limited every aspect of fannish activity. By the end of December 1941 both ULTRA and MELBOURNE BULLETIN had ceased publication, other such as FUTURIAN OBSERVER survived only a little longer and other planned activities were been shelved and, for example, Don Tuck had moved from Hobart to Melbourne for war work and had no spare time for fandom.

28 December 1941 FSS Court of Inquiry first sitting

A continuation of the fussing and feuding in Sydney Fandom. This was a particularly inquisitorial meeting and way of trying to resolve the group's problems.

4 January 1942 Third Sydney Conference held

This was a further conference of Sydney fans in an attempt to find common ground, mediated by the effect of the war with Japan. The conference included general discussion and plans for a further conference to be held at Easter that year which apparently did not take place.

3 February 1942 Soldier's Relief Fund established

The Futurian Society of Sydney created the Soldier's Relief Fund to send sf magazines and other sf material to readers on military service.

24 November 1942 FSS dissolved, to be replaced by the Southern Cross Futurian Association

This was another attempt to resolve the conflict of personalities in Sydney fandom. The new Futurian group does not appear to have survived long.

(There was some fan activity into 1943 but fandom in Australia had ceased to exist by the end of the year due to the pressures of the war effort on the whole of Australian society. Fans maintained their friendships but there were no club meetings or fanzines during the war or in the immediate post war period.)

1944, early Meeting held to discuss revival of the Futurian Society of Sydney

Four meetings were held to discuss revival of the Futurian Society but the meetings decided to wait until the end of the war before reviving the club.

9 August 1947 First meeting of the revived Futurian Society of Sydney

The FSS picked up where it had left off. Several fanzines were produced for the society including SYDNEY FUTURIAN (Vol Molesworth, 16 issues published between September 1947 and December 1948) and FSS NEWS (Eric Russell, three issues published in 1949). However the society's development was sluggish and special meetings were held in June 1950 and July 1951 to bring new energy to it.

1949 US Convention voted that \$150 be spent on books for the FSS Library

This appreciated gesture was necessary because of the ban on importing American books and magazines which separated Australian fans from the main source of new science fiction.

September 1950 Vol Molesworth bought a printing press and registered the business name 'Futurian Press'

Molesworth and associates attempted to create an Australian sf publishing industry with Futurian Press. It published Vol Molesworth's BLINDED THEY FLY and Graham Stone and Royce Williams ZERO EQUALS NOTHING. but wound up in 1952 after publishing Molesworth's LET THERE BE MONSTERS.

November 1950 STAR ROVER, edited by Roger Dard, the sole issue published

This was the first fanzine to be published in Western Australia.

1951 Australian SF Society formed by Graham Stone

Despairing of the failure of Australian fandom to promote sf properly Graham Stone launched the Association under his sole control to ensure it operated as he thought best and to avoid the personality clashes that had been endemic in Sydney fandom. As a result the Association remained in operation for decades, with limited success. Stone published 11 issues of STOPGAP for the Association, beginning in October 1951. In January 1953 he published the first of over twenty-four issues of SCIENCE FICTION NEWS for the Society.

1 July 1951 Fourth Sydney SF Conference held

The meeting was held to revive again fandom in Sydney. It resolved to revive the FSS and appointed a committee to organize a sf convention. This was not successful and the FSS appointed a new committee to organize the convention on 24 September 1951.

August 1951 Reestablishment of fandom in Melbourne began

Race Matthews and Bob McCubbin met at Franklins and in early 1952 Lee Harding first wrote to Matthews who already knew Dick Jenssen where they were both students at Melbourne Grammar. This led to a number of informal gatherings before the group decided to establish something more formal.

22 March 1952 First Australian SF Convention, Sydney

About 60 members attended this one day event. It began with members viewing a number of displays, followed by a formal opening, talks about sf and fandom, an auction, a business session at which delegates reported on various sf activities, a dinner and films shown in the evening. Although not a formal part of the program, fans met informally the following day, Sunday, and seem to have enjoyed themselves just talking with each other.

9 May 1952 Inaugural meeting of Melbourne SF Group

The meeting was held at Matthews place; group members included Race Matthews, Dick Jenssen, Bob McCubbin, Lee Harding and Mervyn Binns.

July 1952 Sydney fans held a science fiction weekend at Wentworth Falls

This was a largely informal weekend shared by a number of Sydney fans. It was successful so a second weekend was held there over the weekend 9-10 August 1952 and a third in December.

8 August 1952 The FSS made a sound recording which was sent to that year's Worldcon

Australian fans were very keen to be recognized by fans overseas and the sound recording was their most ambitious attempt at making a contribution to a World sf Convention. It was damaged when it arrived in the United States and could not be played.

14 August 1952 The Melbourne SF Group held its first meeting at Val's Coffee Lounge

Since its inauguration earlier in the year the Group had been meeting in members' homes but these gatherings had become too large for that so this new venue was chosen. This too proved unsatisfactory and the group moved to a room in the Oddfellows Hall on 14 November that year and a booking was made for fortnightly Melbourne SF Group meetings there in 1953.

19 August 1952 Fifth Sydney SF Conference

At this conference eleven fans heard reports on various fan activities, including a report on developments in Melbourne, and resolved to hold a second convention the following April.

September 1952 FORERUNNER, edited by Doug Nicholson, first issue published

FORERUNNER was given that title because it was hoped to lead to publication of a viable professional or semi-professional sf magazine in Australia. However, only two issues were published, the final one in August 1953.

24 November 1952 A meeting of Brisbane fans held with a view to holding regular meetings

On 14 February 1953 the group, meeting at Frank Bryning's place, decided to meet weekly at a coffee lounge in Queen Street.

17 December 1952 Second Sitting of Futurian Court of Enquiry

This Court of Enquiry was held to delve into the creation and operation of a trust that had been set up to oversee the library that had been established by the Futurian Society of Sydney. It was highly legalistic and did little to resolve underlying problems in Sydney fandom.

1953 South Australian SF Society formed

Fans met every second Sunday at Mrs Joyce's place. The evidence so far is unclear on the development of the Adelaide Group. Vol Molesworth says that the group adopted a constitution modelled on that of the Futurian Society of Canberra in 19 March 1954 and another source says the group was established on 19 May 1954.

February 1953 PERHAPS, edited by Lee Harding, first issue published

PERHAPS was the first fanzine to be published in Melbourne since Warwick Hockley's MELBOURNE BULLETIN in 1941. It was an ambitious project hampered by its editor's lack of experience in fanzine publishing at a time when there were no other fans in Melbourne to give him useful advice. The final issue was published in January 1954

1 March 1953 ETHERLINE, edited by Ian Crozier, first issue published

ETHERLINE was Lee Harding's brainchild but Ian Crozier quickly took it over. With Crozier as editor and Mervyn Binns as publisher, 101 issues were published between then and 1958 and it became Australia's main fanzine for this period.

April 1953 BACCHANALIA, edited by Race Matthews, first issue published

BACCHANALIA was the third of three fanzines published in rapid succession by members of the Melbourne SF Club under the AFPA banner. Like PERHAPS, it was an ambitious project also hampered by the grand plans but lack of experience. Only two issues were published, the second one not under Matthew's editorship.

1-3 May 1953 Second Australian SF Convention, held in Sydney

This ambitious two day event suffered from many organizational problems although it was generally well received by the fan community. During the business session some of the rifts between Sydney fans began to appear in the open.

June 1953 WASTE BASKET, edited by Lee Harding, first issue published

Afer Harding was forced to resign from AFPA he embarked upon a simpler but more fannish fanzine project. In a short period he produced four issues (the first one was considered so scurrilous by some fans at the time that he was persuaded to destroyed most copies and published a second first issue). This is the

most interesting fanzine to be published in Australia in the 1950s because it broke most of the expectations which had made most Australian fanzines to that point so drab. The third and final issue was published in August 1953.

8-9 August 1953 Gathering of fans at Albury, called the Riverina Conference

A small number of Sydney and Melbourne fans travelled to Albury where they spend two days socializing. The only formal event was a meeting on the Saturday afternoon where various groups reported on their activities and plans for the next convention were discussed.

8 November 1953 First meeting of Futurian Society of Canberra

A few fans in Canberra formed a group using Sydney fandom as a model. The small number of members held attracted wider interest by holding film nights of scientific and more general interest.

January 1954 *A Handbook of Science Fiction and Fantasy* by Don Tuck, published

Don Tuck became a world renowned bibliographer. His Handbook was widely applauded by the sf world.

17-18 April 1954 Third Australian SF Convention, held in Sydney

The convention included formal discussions on the Saturday and an auction and business session on the Sunday. At the business session the schism in Sydney fandom became even more evident.

December 1954 Mountain District SF Club formed

A small number of fans living in the Dandenong Ranges in the vicinity of Melbourne formed a separate club. This appears to have been a matter of geographic separation rather than any disagreement and the two groups maintained cordial relations.

1955 Arthur Clark visited Australia

He was in Melbourne on 19-20 January and, travelling by ship, visited Sydney, where he was Guest of Honour at the national convention this year, and spent a lot of time in Queensland working on a book on the Great Barrier Reef.

18-20 March 1955 Fourth Australian SF Convention, held in Sydney

The previous three conventions in Sydney has been organized by the Futurian Society of Sydney. This fourth convention was organized by the breakaway North Shore Futurian Society and the hostilities between fans and groups of fans in Sydney were strongly revealed during this convention. The main saving grace was that Arthur Clarke was the Guest of Honour.

4 April 1955 Conference held to resolve problems in Sydney fandom

Again the divisive nature of Sydney fandom led to a conference aimed at bringing peace and stability. Again, it failed. This resulted in the creation of a new group, the Albion Futurian Society at a meeting on 10 April but it had stopped meeting by the end of the year. It also appears that the North Shore Futurian Society had ceased holding meetings by the end of 1955 although a splinter group of the Sydney Futurians, the Bridge Club Group, continued to gather into 1956. At the next national convention, held in Melbourne in December 1956, no Sydney fans or groups reported on fan activity in Sydney.

October 1955 Melbourne SF Group moved from its room in the Oddfellows Hall to premises at 168 Lennox Street, Richmond

Problems with the Group's location in the basement of the Oddfellows Hall forced it to find a new place to meet and keep the club library. It is likely that this new location was related to Ian Crozier's job at the time. As this location was not in central Melbourne the group continued to look for a new place for meetings and the library in following years.

1956 Bert Chandler migrated to Australia

A Bertram Chandler established a strong reputation as a sf author in the 1950s. He was also a ship's officer and later Captain on the Britain- Australia run and had previously become well know and popular with Australian fan groups when he visited here.

Easter 1956 Gathering of fans in Canberra

Because the next national convention was not to be held until the following December fans from Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra held a small conference in Canberra earlier in 1956. This appears to have been the final occasion when Sydney fans undertook an organized fannish activity for many years.

8-9 December 1956 Fifth Australian SF Convention, 'Olympicon', held in Melbourne

This was the first sf convention held in Melbourne. It was held at the Richmond Town Hall and was reasonably successful. However, it was not supported by interstate fans and ran at a loss.

May 1957 Melbourne SF Group renamed Melbourne SF Club

By 1957 much of the early enthusiasm of the Melbourne SF Group had evaporated and many of its founders had gaffiated, leaving Mervyn Binns holding the baby. There was nothing sinister about the name change, Merv apparently believed that calling the 'group' a 'club' made it appear more established in the eyes of the mundane world.

5-6 April 1958 Sixth Australian SF Convention, held in Melbourne

This appears to have been a modest event with one day of formal programming in Melbourne and a picnic held hosted by the Mountain District SF Group at Upwey in the Dandenong Ranges the following day.

1959 Government restrictions on importing US books and magazines lifted

Australian sf readers and fans had been isolated from the mainstream of science fiction development from 1941 although fans had found ways of importing American published sf into Australia and British Reprint Editions had kept readers interested. Following the lift of the embargo Australia was deluged with American sf.

June 1959 QANTUM, edited by John Baxter, first issue published

This may be considered the beginning of a new generation of sf fans in Australia. They were aware of the older fans and their activities but drew much of their inspiration and energy from overseas fandom and copied its models rather than a previous generation of Australian fans. Baxter published eight issue, the final one in June 1960.

September 1959 The 101st and final issue of ETHERLINE published

ETHERLINE had begun as a fortnightly newszine publishing news and reviews but after Olympicon in 1956 its publication schedule had slowed and the final few issues were published with long gaps between them. This was the final expression of the group that had formed in Melbourne in 1952.

5 November 1959 20th anniversary meeting of FSS held

The Futurians Society of Sydney had ceased operating as a club around 1955 but Graham Stone kept its library running with a few borrowers. This anniversary meeting was attended by only three members.

September 1961 The Melbourne SF Club moved to Somerset Place

Again the Melbourne SF Club was faced with accommodation problems and the possibility of closing. However, Mervyn Binns convinced his employer, McGills Newsagency, to let the club rent the top floor of their warehouse in Somerset Place and the club moved there. This became the venue of the revival of Australian fandom a few years later.

February 1961 John Foyster published his first fanzine, EMANATIONS

John Foyster had become aware of fandom in 1956 but had not been attracted by what he saw when he attended the 1958 convention. He later discovered fandom overseas and, with several others including Bhub Smith and John Baxter, and Lee Harding who he attracted back into fandom, began reviving Australian fandom.

1963 Graham Stone moved to Canberra

Stone had kept the last vestiges of the Sydney Futurians going through the library which he continued to run. When he took up an appointment with the Australian National Library the library passed to other hands. It disappeared and so did the last vestiges of a fan group that had existed in Sydney from the late 1930s.

1964 Vol Molesworth died

Molesworth had not been active in fandom since the mid 1950s and had found a niche in teaching and writing about philosophy instead. His death, at a relatively early age, marks, as does Stone's move to Canberra, a final end to a fraught episode in the history of fandom in Sydney.

February 1964 John Foyster began publishing THE GRYPHON and SATURA

Foyster had established contact with fandom in North America and became involved with fanac there including membership with the Spectator Amateur Press Society (SAPS) which, among other sources, introduced him to American fannish fandom. SATURA began as his apazine for SAPS but soon took on wider circulation and took on the title THE GRYPHON.

August 1964 Ron Clarke and friends in Sydney started publishing THE MENTOR

Ron Clarke has learned about fandom through Graham Stone and the final vestiges of the Sydney Futurians. Together with some school friends, he began publishing THE MENTOR which marks the beginning of a new version of fandom in Sydney.

January 1965 Dr Who first broadcast in Australia

8-10 April 1966 Seventh Australian SF Convention, held in Melbourne

Organized by John Foyster and friends, this small convention was held in the clubroom of the Melbourne SF Club. It brought together most of the know fans and writers of science fiction in Australia and the enthusiasm generated on that long weekend had many consequences.

June 1966 AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW, edited by John Bangsund, first issue published

During a panel discussion about science fiction at the recent convention the idea of a fanzine to continue the discussion was floated and Lee Harding nominated John Bangsund as its editor. ASFR (as it was known), with its fannish approach to the serious discussion of science fiction, proved highly popular, established a strong Australian presence overseas and was nominated for a Hugo in 1967. Like the convention at which it was mooted, had many consequences. The twentieth and final issue was published in June 1969.

December 1966 Jenny's Cellar in Degraeves Street closed

Jenny's Cellar has become a meeting place for Melbourne fans and much of the planning for the 1966 convention took place there. This venue later reopened as the Degraeves Tavern and became a popular venue for Melbourne fans in the first half of the 1970s.

1967 Bruce Gillespie and George Turner introduced to fandom

Gillespie and Turner would become two of the key figures in the development and maintenance of Australia's reputation for insightful and sometimes controversial sercon discussion and criticism of sf.

June 1987 The hydraulic lift in the McGills Warehouse in Somerset Lane closed.

The hydraulic lift has been a novel way of entering the Melbourne SF Club. After it's closure people attending the club had to climb two flights of stairs to get there.

July 1967 Star Trek first broadcast in Australia

12-14 April 1968 Melbourne SF Conference

This conference was held in the Melbourne SF Club clubroom for the first two days and at a hall in Boronia on the outskirts on Melbourne on the third day where films were shown. Unlike the conferences that had been held in Sydney to sort out differences, the Melbourne conference was a convention in all but name and had more attendees, many of whom had been attracted to fandom by activities following the 1966 convention.

1968, late Melbourne SF Society launched

John Foyster and others attempted to launch a group to seriously discuss science fiction. It was not a success but the idea, in a more modest form, was relaunched at the 'Nova Mob'.

10 October 1968 The first mailing of the Australian Amateur Press Association sent out

This was Australia's first amateur press association, called APA-A for the first two mailings and then renamed the Australia and New Zealand Amateur Press Association (ANZAPA). It was intended as a place where Australian fans could establish friendships by sharing fanzines. It is still going.

4-6 April 1969 Eighth Australian SF Convention, Melbourne

This convention followed the model of the 1966 and 1968 conventions with the first two days taking place in the Melbourne SF Club rooms and the third day and the third day at the Capri Theater at Murrumbeena where movies were shown. The Ditmars were awarded at this convention for the first time.

1969 SF COMMENTARY, edited by Bruce Gillespie, first published

Noting the decline of ASFR, Bruce Gillespie launched SF COMMENTARY (SFC) to take its place as a fanzine for serious discussion of science fiction. Some of its early material was originally written for ASFR but over time SFC developed its own high reputation. It was nominated for a Hugo in 1973. It remains in publication and the 100th issue is due any day now.

28 July 1969 Star Trek fans protest at the cancellation of the series

Australian Star Trek fans took park in Deluge Monday to protest at the cancellation of the series. Prominent among them were Sue Smith and Shayne McCormack. Shayne formed Down Under Space Kooks (DUSK) as a Star Trek Fan Club and also became heavily involved in more general fandom.

1-2 January 1970 'Syncon '70' convention, Sydney

The first convention to be held in Sydney since 1955 and organized by a new group of fans who were members of the Sydney SF Foundation. It was held in a Scout Hall and was well attended by most established Australian fans and was the first meeting with media fans. A highlight of the convention was a discussion

of comics in Australia. A formal discussion of the possibility of bidding for a World SF Convention took place.

27-29 March 1970 Ninth Australian SF Conference, Melbourne

All three days of the convention were held at the Capri Theater and films featured heavily in the program. At this convention the decision was formally made to launch a bid for a World SF Convention to be held in Australia in 1975.

1970 NORSTRILIAN NEWS first published, by John Foyster and Leigh Edmonds

This fortnightly newszine contained news about science fiction and fandom in Australia and overseas. It was part of a general plan to boost fandom in Australia, create awareness of the WorldCon bid make Australian fans better aware of what was happening overseas. Later it was published by John Foyster alone, then by Bruce Gillespie and finally by Robin Johnson, the final issues in 1973.

1-2 January 1971 Tenth Australian SF Convention, Melbourne

This convention was held for the first two days in a hall on the Melbourne University campus with the final day at the Capri Theater. It is general remembered at GelatiCon.

February 1971 Melbourne SF Club relocated to South Yarra

The clubroom for the Club in Somerset Place had been closed by official because it was deemed a fire hazard. (Later the building was destroyed in a fire, so it probably was.) The club later reopened in a large flat shared by Paul Stevens and John Breden in South Yarra before later again moving to space above Space Age Books in the city.

March 1971 Mervyn Binns resigned from McGills Newsagency and started Space Age Books

With a little financial support from Ron Graham, Mervyn Binns launched Space Age Books as a dedicated sf bookshop. The shop started with Lee Harding in a small office and then a shop opened in Swanston Street, just over the road from the State Library and on the way to RMIT and Melbourne University.

9-11 April 1971 Q-Con, the first convention held in Queensland

This was the first convention to be held in Queensland, organized by Dennis and Del Stocks. For those southerners unable to attend a small event, called the Mini-Melcon, was held at the Golden Age Hotel.

January 1972 Down Under Fan Fund (DUFF) launched

The Down Under Fan Fund was modeled on the earlier Trans Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF). It's intention was to establish personal links between fans in North America and Australia at a time when the cost of travel made personal visits prohibitively expensive. The first winner was the American fan Lesleigh Luttrell who was a guest at the 1972 National Convention.

1-2 January 1972 Adventon 1 held in Adelaide, South Australia

This convention was the first to be held in South Australia. It took place in at an Adelaide University guest house and became a mainly social event which was hugely enjoyed by those who attended.

1972 Aussiefan Film made

As part of the promotion of the Australia in '75 bid Melbourne fans, led by John Litchen and Paul Stevens, made a short movie in which Aussiefan (Malcolm Hunt) and the evil Antifan (Paul Stevens) do battle. A preview of the movie was shown at Syncon 72 and copies were later extensively toured around North American to promote the bid.

11-13 August 1972 Eleventh Australian SF Convention, 'Syncon '72', Sydney

The first national convention to be held in Sydney since 1955 and the first to be held in a hotel. Lesleigh Luttrell was the overseas Guest of Honour and the Aussiefan film was previewed there. Australian fans began holding their national conventions in August to get used to the idea of holding a major convention, such as a World SF Convention, at that time of the year rather than the traditional Easter long weekend.

August 1973 Australian fandom won its bid to host the 1975 World SF Convention

A group of Australian fans went to the World SF Convention in Toronto to present their bid for the 1975 World SF Convention. They succeeded.

17-19 August 1973 Twelfth Australian SF Convention, 'Adventon 2', Adelaide

July 1974 Murdoch University begins its fanzine collection

Grant Stone, a librarian at Murdoch University in Western Australia, began collecting material about science fiction for a PhD student. This led to the beginnings of the university's collection of science fiction and fandom related materials.

16-18 August 1974 Thirteenth Australian SF Convention, 'Ozcon', Melbourne

This convention, like others before and after, was held at the Victoria Hotel in the center of Melbourne. An innovation at this convention was a short writers-workshop led by Lee Harding.

18 February 1974 FANEW SLETTER, first issue published by Leigh Edmonds

With the slow-down in the publication of NORSTRILIAN NEWS Edmonds launched this new newszine as a small fortnightly publication about science fiction and fan activities in Australia.

July 1974 Space Age Books moved to a larger shop

The bookshop moved down Swanston Street a few shops to larger premises. Around the same time the Melbourne SF Club and its library moved into a large room upstairs from the shop.

August/Sept 1974 Leigh Edmonds won DUFF

Leigh Edmonds was the first Australian winner of the Down Under Fan Fund which took him to the World SF Convention held in Washington DC that year. Accompanied by Valma Brown, they visited many American fan centers during their trip.

5 December 1974 Nova Mob revived

The Melbourne science fiction discussion group, the 'Nova Mob', had lapsed earlier in the decade. It was revived with this meeting.

January 1975 Innuendo Inc, later the Magic Pudding Club, established

Ken Ford and Don Ashby moved into a house with John Hamm in Drummond Street, Carlton and, with later arrival, Derek Ashby, called their slanshack 'Innuendo Inc'. In June they renamed themselves The Magic Pudding Club. It became the center of fannish activity in Melbourne for the rest of 1975.

24-27 January 1975 Fourteenth Australian SF Convention, 'Syncon '75', Sydney

Sydney fans held a small national convention over the Australia Day weekend.

28-30 March 1975 Unicon held at the Ritz Theater in Melbourne

This small convention was organized by the Monash University SF Association in association. It was not very successful but it was the first Australian convention put on by a university group.

14-17 August 1975 Aussiecon, the 33rd World SF Convention, held in Melbourne

About six hundred people attended this convention, about one hundred of them were overseas visitors. It was the first World SF Convention to be held in Australia.