



A Windmill in Old Dannevirke...

(Photo by Keith Smith)

Issue XL - Feb/Mar 2014

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Musings from Under the Mountain

Another reason to love the internet—as midnight approached on New Year’s Eve I was wondering how to find a countdown, given that they don’t seem to have them on the telly these days. So, I stopped the movie we were watching, brought up a search engine, and in a couple of minutes we had the numbers counting down on the big screen.... And as midnight struck the whole neighbourhood exploded in fireworks. It had been one of the best New Year’s Eves I’d stayed up for ever. Many thanks to Martin and Raewyn for bringing cider and foodstuffs to enliven the evening.

It may have seemed strange that I was packing in between entertaining. But I do recommend doing your holiday driving on New Year’s Day. The roads were relatively quiet, with little heavy traffic, and not too many idiots. One had to suspect that the moron brigade were mostly sleeping off the booze from night before. Certainly, if we’d waited until the following day, we could easily have been held up by some of the nasty accidents the newspapers reported along our route.

Keith and I were heading south to visit Lyn McConchie at her home in Norsewood, near Dannevirke deep in the Manawatu, nearly six hours away according to Google maps. Paul was getting some time to himself at home, which turned out to be for the best, because he would complained greatly of lack of internet. And with the back seat empty, Keith had packed his big telescope, which turned out to be a very good thing.

I’d packed sandwiches, but as we approached Putaruru, we were both hankering for a nice cup of tea—and Keith has a cousin living there. So, we stopped for a cuppa and ended up being served roast lamb for lunch. The best thing was that Keith’s elderly Uncle Robert was visiting for New Year’s Day and it was really good to see him looking so well. And we did get our cups of tea...

Then it was on the road again, down State Highway One through the Waikato, turning left at Taupo onto State Highway Five, reaching the Hawke’s Bay coast just north of Napier. We stopped to fill the little Smart—we’d left Auckland with only 3/4 of a tank and it was looking low; and stopped again by the beach for photos and those sandwiches. On again, heading onwards and upwards towards the Ruahine Ranges. I had no idea that Norsewood was nearly 400m above sea level. Which,

along with the more southerly latitude, meant it was decidedly chillier than it had been in Auckland.

After some confusion, we found the proper gate, and our arrival was announced by the geese. We spent a pleasant three days at Lyn’s house, chatting and reading, and enjoying her hospitality. We took two boxes of old VHS tapes and returned with a box of books, some to keep, and some signed copies to auction at the convention. More importantly, Lyn graciously accepted our invitation to come to Conclave 2 as our guest, and so we now have three Guests of Honour.

It was on the second day that we discovered that we had a problem. Outside the library in Dannevirke where we’d taken Keith to get his internet fix, the car decided not to start. It was then that we realised that replacing teenager with telescope as back seat occupant had really saved our holiday. The telescope motor runs from a battery pack, originally intended for starting cars... and Keith promptly put it to its original purpose. And the little Smart started just as promptly. And again the next day, as we drove back up the other side, through Palmerston North, where Keith observed that his Alma Mater, Massey University, had grown more than a little; through Wanganui (without the “h” because that’s what all the signs said); and on through Waverley, where we enjoyed our packed lunch of corned beef sandwiches; to Waitara, just north of New Plymouth where Keith’s sister, Doreen, would be our host for the next couple of days.

To Keith’s dismay, Doreen’s internet was out of action due to a failed router. That he could fix, and when we drove down to New Plymouth to do some shopping, I correctly surmised that Warehouse Stationery would stock a replacement, and within a few minutes of getting back to Doreen’s house, we had internet, and Keith was happy. Fortunately, the trip back to Auckland was uneventful, aside from having to use the charger to start the car. Which was promptly taken to Midas in Onehunga where it underwent a quick battery transplant!

It’s now two months later, and I’ve since got onto Facebook. Had to because of the convention, but all those tempting little time-wasters! I can now understand the internet deprivation problem. We’ve just celebrated Keith’s birthday, along with Maree’s, and most significantly, Alan’s fiftieth, together at SPACE last Friday. There was salmon on water crackers, smoked salmon dip, watermelon, chocolate fish and sugar turtles; all washed down with home-made lemonade or a nice drop of pinot for those who weren’t driving. And I made cake. Maree had asked for my *Tres Leches* cake, an indulgent dessert cake we first came across on holiday in Florida, although my current recipe is from my British Women’s Institute Cakes book. It’s soaked in a mixture of evaporated milk, condensed milk and cream, hence the “Tres Leches”. A good time was had by all, especially by Kit-kat, who had to be deterred from getting at the salmon, but certainly welcomed all the extra attention. As you can see....



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by
**Jacqui
Smith**

Jacqui Smith, Editor



Guest Cat—Lyn McConchie's Thunder

Old Books, New Books...

Lately I've found myself thinking about the past and future of the written word. At the most recent BOOK in February, Jacqui screened an intriguing documentary about the history of books and book publication. It traced the history of reading through the development of the scroll into the codex (the binding system that's recognisably the earliest version of the modern book) and the rise of electronic recording of the written word, including e-books and the internet.

In one sense, the way we assimilate the written word hasn't changed since the earliest cuneiform stone tablets. From that time until the most recent e-readers, the process of reading is still a decoding process, associating the characters on whatever surface you're reading from with the equivalent sounds in spoken language. (As Isaac Asimov once pointed out in one of his innumerable essays about any and all subjects, this is why reading for pleasure will always be a relatively minority activity; there aren't that many people who become good enough at interpreting the marks on the page quickly and easily enough to bring the author's story to life in their minds.) Although e-books are cheap and easy to purchase online, and so might be a means of encouraging reading for future generations, there are also some possible downsides. With self-publishing easy to do online, there will inevitably be many books propagated into the world that would be too bad to ever have seen print via traditional publishing houses, even old-style vanity presses.

However, a more subtle problem with e-publishing may lie in the rapid changes in the technology used for propagating information. Not only are information processing machines changing so rapidly that old technology is quickly becoming incompatible with new technology (is there any operational computer left on Earth that can read any form of floppy disk?) but we simply don't know how long information in electronic form can endure. Degradation of the pixels over decades or centuries may mean that an old-fashioned hard copy could endure longer than an electronic document. Even in a world where unprecedented amounts of knowledge are readily available at the click of a mouse, we're still a long way away from giving up on books printed on dead treeware and the bricks and mortar bookstores and libraries to propagate them to the world. Perhaps we can all make a contribution to the future of reading by treating our e-readers as supplements rather than substitutes for old-fashioned books, and ensuring that the written words of our time will be guaranteed survival into the future by being backed up onto old-fashioned printed pages!

Alan Parker, President, Stella Nova

Alan (with Kit-Kat) at the Big Birthday SPACE



Lyn's Gaggle of Guardian Geese



by
Alan
Parker

B A T T L E C R Y

2 0 1 4

We turned up a Battlecry a bit later than we planned on the Saturday morning, but not too late to get into a good game of D20 Pathfinder—currently the most popular version of Dungeons and Dragons (yes, it's still around, but far more refined than it was back in the 1980's when I first started to play). Role-playing is our favoured gaming pleasure, but there was plenty else on offer, as you can see from the pictures on this page.

There was board-gaming in many forms, from Munchkin to a whole bunch of new games I hadn't seen before. There was the war gaming—fun to look at, and the miniature terrains and figures are a work of art, but I confess I really don't follow the action. There were lots of people selling stuff, including Paul Scoones with Retrospace; and Mighty Ape. We bought mostly from a chap who was selling a lot of used role-playing books at very good prices. By happy coincidence he had a lot of books for Cyberpunk 2020 which are lot out of print. As it happens we have just started a new Cyberpunk campaign with the boys and so I happily snaffled them all. They have already proved useful!

We might have bought more stuff if we hadn't run out of cash money... And at the end, on late Sunday afternoon, we both rolled good numbers and got to take home a couple of the book prizes for the role-playing. Nice! And now I'll leave you with a selection of photos of impressive miniature war zones and Lego dioramas.



Text
by
Jacqui
Smith

Pictures
by
Keith
Smith

Conclave 2014

35th NZ National SF&F Convention

Preparations for the convention continue apace, and I am constantly hoping that I haven't forgotten anything important. After I've put this issue of Novazine to bed, I'm going to get into the production of the con book, finding people to do presentations, run workshops, and be on panels, thus filling in the gaps in the program. There's also publicity—and I have to say that social networking is helping tremendously with that. Finding prizes is becoming a challenge because it seems that the publishers are no longer maintaining much in the way of surplus stock in New Zealand—if anyone can help in this area it would be greatly appreciated.

I'd like to thank Kelly for the great work she's been doing on the website, Maree for her advice and assistance, Jan for helping with the publishers, and Keith for his help with the finances. And now I shall fill out the rest of this page with a rough outline of what will no doubt interest you most—the proposed convention programme! If there's anything you would like to help with, please tell us!

Thursday

Writer's Seminar (2 x 3-hour sessions)

with Dave Freer and Lyn McConchie

My First Con—Maree Sole

Opening Ceremony—Hosted by Norman

Floating Market

The Late Show—*Ghostbusters I*

Friday

Video Show: *SF War Stories*

Presentation: *Don't Mention the...* - Steven (War in SF&F)

Panel: *How to Review*

Workshop: *Drawing Your Characters*

Panel: *Shooting Yourself in the Foot...*

(What works and what doesn't in Military SF?)

Presentation: *Feeding your Folk*—Jacqui (Food in Science Fiction and Fantasy)

Board Games: *How to Munchkin*

Quiz—Jacqui, Keith

Panel: *Collaborative Writing*

Presentation: *What's Up at WETA!* - Norman

Demo: *Board Games*

GoH Speech—Paul Scoones

Presentation: *How to Cosplay*

Panel: *The Pasts and Futures of Dr. Who*—Paul

Scoones, Andrew, others

Workshop: *Scratch Costuming*

Presentation: *What's Out There*—Keith

Masquerade & Cosplay: Hosted by Norman

The Late Show—*Ghostbusters II*

Saturday

Video Show – *Cats and More Cats*

Presentation: *How to Mine Bit-Coins* -Andrew

Workshop: *Model-Making*

Panel: *Cats Rule the Multiverse!* - Lyn et al

Professional Panel: *The Bechtel Test in SF and*

Fantasy—SpecFic NZ

GoH Speech: Lyn McConchie

Workshop: *Steampunk your Wardrobe!*

Auction: Norman, Maree

Panel: *Rivers Don't Flow Uphill!* - Jacqui

(moderator), Raewyn

(Common errors in world design).

Workshop: *Geekcraft One*—Fannish Terraria

(Put your miniatures into their place – design and make your own fantasy terrarium!)

Panel: *What would you most like to see on TV?*

Presentation: *Under an Orange Sky*

(Proper World-building)

Lego Play Zone—Need we say more?

GoH Speech—Dave Freer

Panel Game: *Just an SF Minute*—Norman

(moderator)

Lego Competition: *Who can build the coolest model in one hour with the Lego provided?*

Presentation: *Getting Out There*—Keith

(From recent advances in spaceflight to the 100YSS... How can we get there?)

Geekcraft Two: *It's Elementary*—Sew a cool periodic table pouch for your cellphone.

Banquet

Awards: SFFANZ

The Late Show—*Groundhog Day*

Sunday

Video Show-

SFFANZ AGM—SFFANZ

Meet the GoHs

Informal opportunity to chat with our GoHs, get books signed, take photographs, and so on.

Lyn, Paul, Dave

2016 Con Bids—SFFANZ

Closing Ceremony—Hosted by Norman

The Sky at Night

April 2014

I don't think I've written about Lunar Eclipses yet, so I should, especially at the time of writing since there's one in four weeks on the 15th of April, the Tuesday before Easter. From Auckland the eclipse has already started by moonrise at 5:48pm. The Moon enters the umbra at 5:58pm and is fully total eclipsed at 7:06. Mid eclipse is at 7:46pm and the moon starts to exit the umbra at 8:24pm. It finally exits the umbra at 9:33pm and the eclipse ends at 10:37pm. The reason that there are a lot of times is that there are two phases of the eclipse owing to the structure of the shadow that the Earth extends into space. The dark part, called the *umbra*, is the area where the Sun is totally obscured by the Earth. Around it is a partial shadow called the *penumbra*, where the Earth is only partially obscuring the Sun.

When the Moon passes into the penumbra, usually there's no visible effect. It's only when it passes into the umbra that a black shadow can be seen crossing the visible face of the Moon. Once in the umbra, the Moon's colour can turn a dark grey, an orange, or even a blood red as refracted light from the Sun passes through our atmosphere and is refracted on to the moon. Some people describe it as the light of thousands of sunrises and sunsets shining on to the Moon. The exact tint depends on how much particulate matter is in the atmosphere and how dense it is. The more there are, the redder the tint. With the Moon low in the sky at the time of totality, the light will be passing through even more atmosphere which will affect the colour of the eclipse.

So, what else is in the sky? Jupiter is shining brightly in the evening sky but will be setting earlier and earlier in the evening sky. However, both Mars and Saturn are starting to return to the evening sky, Mars first, then Saturn. Mars will eventually pass Saturn in the sky. Mars also reaches opposition on the 8th of April and will be closest to Earth on the 14th. This is going to be a close opposition so views should be good. Saturn doesn't reach opposition until the 28th of April.

Meanwhile Venus is high in the western sky before sunrise and Mercury is rising later and later in the morning as it moves behind the sun. It doesn't reappear in the evening sky until May. Our usual summer constellations, (Orion, Taurus, Canis Major, Gemini – where Jupiter is) are getting lower and lower in the eastern sky. Autumn is on the way as we are now

seeing Leo and Virgo before midnight. Stay up later and Scorpio and Sagittarius can be seen. The Southern Cross is also getting higher in the sky each evening whereas the Magellanic Clouds are getting lower.

Phases of the Moon (March):

New Moon—1st March
 First Quarter—8th March
 Full Moon—16th March
 Last Quarter—24th March
 New Moon—30th March

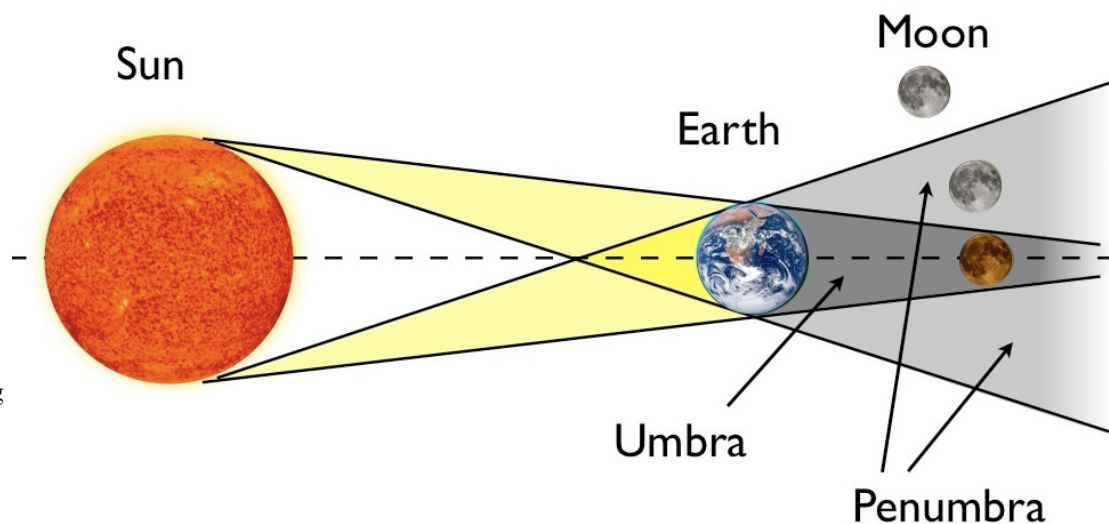
Phases of the Moon (April):

First Quarter—7th April
 Full Moon—15th April
 Last Quarter—22nd April
 New Moon—29th April

Phases of the Moon (May):

First Quarter—7th May
 Full Moon—14th May
 Last Quarter—21st May
 New Moon—28th April

The Dec 2011 Lunar Eclipse



by
Keith
Smith

COOKS IN SPACE!

Tres Leches Cake

This is the cake that Maree asked me to make for the Big Birthday SPACE. And if Maree likes it that much, who am I not to share the recipe?

Cake:

150g butter, room temperature
225g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
175g sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
2 tbsp milk

For the soaking liquid:

125 ml evaporated milk
150 ml sweetened condensed milk
90 ml double cream

To finish:

300ml double cream
2 tbsp icing sugar
1/4 tsp vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 25 cm square pan with baking paper.

Beat the butter with the sugar in a large bowl until it is light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the vanilla. Scrape down the sides and beat again. Whisk the flour, baking powder and salt together. Fold in half of the flour mixture, until the two mixtures are almost combined. Stir in the milk. Fold in the remaining flour mixture, mixing just until combined. Pour into the prepared pan.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean and the cake is well risen.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool on a wire rack for 20 minutes.

Make the soaking liquid by stirring all the ingredients together in a large jug. Using a fork, puncture the cake all over. Pour the soaking liquid over top, allowing time for the liquid to soak in before pouring on more. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Chill for at least 2 hours in the fridge.

Just before serving whip the cream with an electric whisk until it starts to thicken. Sift in the icing sugar and continue to beat until the cream just holds its shape. Be careful not to over whip. Spread over top of the chilled cake in soft waves. Cut into squares to serve. Yum!



Directed by Francis Lawrence
Produced by Nina Jacobson, Jon Kilik
Screenplay by Simon Beaufoy, Michael deBruyn
Based on *Catching Fire* by Suzanne Collins
Starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson
Liam Hemsworth, Woody Harrelson
Elizabeth Banks, Lenny Kravitz
Philip Seymour Hoffman, Jeffrey Wright
Stanley Tucci, Donald Sutherland

Reviewed by Nicolette Lever

In the first Hunger Games movie, viewers found out that USA in the future is a dystopia divided into twelve districts. Every year, two people (a male and a female) are chosen by lottery from each district to participate in a televised fight to the death where only one person can remain standing. When Katniss Everdeen's younger sister was an (un)lucky lottery winner, Katniss volunteered to fight in her place.

It's probably not spoiling much to say that not only did Katniss survive, she found a way for Peeta (the other participant from her district) to survive as well. Needless to say, the malevolent President Snow (a great performance by Donald Sutherland) is annoyed that this teenager from a poor district bent the rules to survive. If Katniss knows what's good for her, she has to demonstrate that she's a loyal citizen in love with Peeta, and not start any revolutions because of her victory.

However, revolution is already simmering throughout the land. The President's 'solution' is to have the next Hunger Games participants be made up of only previous victors. But many of them, like Katniss, already have post-traumatic stress syndrome symptoms from being a victor... who will be the final survivor of these games? I was glued to the screen the whole way through. Dramatic, often dark and with a great costume budget (again), the second Hunger Games movie was not to be missed.

O B I T S Obituaries

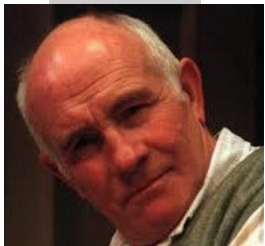
December 4

Charles Grigg, (aged 97), British comic artist who worked for DC drawing *The Dandy* cover strip *Korky the Cat*. He also did *Desperate Dan* after the original artist, Dudley Watkins, died. In *The Topper* comic he drew *Splodge*, *Willy Nilly*, *Foxy* and *Shorty Shambles*.



December 5

Barry Jackson, (aged 75), English actor who played numerous roles in both TV and film. He appeared in *Doctor Who* in the show's original run, including the stories *The Romans* and in the episode *Mission to the Unknown*. He played Drax, a school chum of the Doctor, in the Fourth Doctor story *The Armageddon Factor*. He would be more familiar to modern audiences in the role of pathologist Dr George Bullard in *Midsomer Murders*, whom he played for more than a decade, starting with the first episode.



December 8

Sir John Cornforth, (aged 96), Australian-born British chemist who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1975 for his work on the stereochemistry of enzyme-catalysed reactions.

Edward Williams, (aged 92), British composer, best known for his work on documentaries such as the *Life on Earth* series, and as creator of the Soundbeam music system, in which movement within a series of ultrasonic beams is used to control multimedia hardware and software.

December 9

Eleanor Parker, (aged 91), American actress who appeared in some 80 movies and television series. An actress of notable versatility, she was called *Woman of a Thousand Faces*. Her most famous role to modern audiences was Baroness Elsa Schrader in *The Sound of Music*.



Lloyd Pye, (aged 67), American author and paranormal researcher, best known for his promotion of the Starchild skull. He claimed it was the relic of a human-alien hybrid, (in spite of DNA testing showing it to be from a human male). He also believed that crypto-zoological creatures such as Bigfoot were real and that aliens intervened to create life on Earth.

December 10

Alan Coleman, (aged 76), English-born Australian TV series writer, director and producer, who worked on soap operas *The Young*

Doctors (which he also created), *The Restless Years*, *Punishment*, *Neighbours* and *Shortland Street*.

December 13

Harvey Littleton, (aged 91), American glass artist and educator, son of Dr. Jesse T. Littleton, who developed of Pyrex glassware for the Corning company—but Harvey took his fascination with glass in a totally different direction, becoming a pioneer in the field of glass art.

December 14

Peter O'Toole, (aged 81), British (or Irish) stage and film actor who achieved stardom playing T. E. Lawrence in *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) for which he received his first Academy Award nomination. He received seven further Oscar nominations – for *Becket* (1964), *The Lion in Winter* (1968), *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* (1969), *The Ruling Class* (1972), *The Stunt Man* (1980), *My Favourite Year* (1982) and *Venus* (2006) – and holds the record for the most Academy Award acting nominations without a win. He won four Golden Globes, a BAFTA and an Emmy, and was the recipient of an Honorary Academy Award in 2003. (Oh, and in case you're wondering, O'Toole himself was uncertain as to his place and date of birth, and had two birth certificates).



December 18

Ronnie Biggs, (aged 84), English thief, known for his role in the Great Train Robbery of 1963, for his escape from prison in 1965, for living as a fugitive for 36 years and for his various publicity stunts while in exile. In 2001, he returned to the United Kingdom and spent several years in prison, where his health rapidly declined.

December 19

Marty Hornstein, (aged 76), American production manager, producer and second unit director/assistant director. He produced the *Star Trek* movies from VI (*Undiscovered Country*) to X (*Nemesis*) and was associate producer on *Silent Running*.

December 23

Mikhail Kalashnikov, (aged 94), Russian general and small arms designer, most famous for developing the AK-47 assault rifle and its improvements, AKM and AK-74, as well as the PK machine gun. Even though Kalashnikov felt sorrow at the weapons' uncontrolled distribution, he took pride in his inventions and in their reputation for reliability, emphasizing that his rifle is “a weapon of defence” and “not a weapon for offence”.



Compiled by Jacqui Smith

December 28

Joseph Ruskin, (aged 89), American character actor, one of only four actors to have starred in the original *Star Trek* (up to and including *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*) and then in all of the spin offs. He played numerous other roles in many series including several in *Mission: Impossible*.

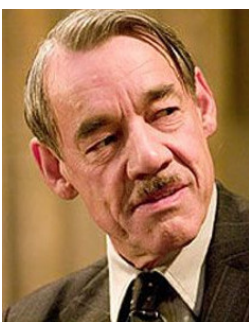


January 3

Phil Everly, (aged 74), American singer and musician younger brother of *The Everly Brothers*, country-influenced rock and roll singers, known for steel-string guitar playing and close harmony singing. The duo were elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986 and the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2001.

January 6

Čika Mišo, (aged 82) The last shoe-shiner in the city of Sarajevo, who took over the job of shoe-shiner from his father in 1952, a job he would keep until his death six decades later. He sat on his chair on the sidewalk throughout the Siege of Sarajevo during the war between 1992 and 1995, avoiding sniper fire. In an interview, he said: "There were shoe-cleaners in every street when I started and now, I'm the only one, why? Because I have been brave and people laughed at my jokes."



January 15

Roger Lloyd-Pack, (aged 69), English actor who made his name portraying "Trigger" in the BBC sitcom *Only Fools and Horses*, and Owen Newitt in *The Vicar of Dibley*. To international audiences his greatest fame was as Barty Crouch, Sr. in the film *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. In 2006 he played John Lumic and

provided the voice of the Cyber-Controller in two episodes of *Doctor Who*, *Rise of the Cybermen* and *The Age of Steel*.

January 16

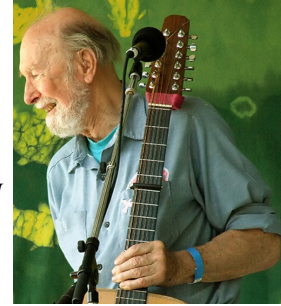
Hal Sutherland, (aged 84), American animator and painter who began his career as a Disney animator in 1954 working on *Sleeping Beauty* and gained recognition in the late 1960s as a director of animated productions at Filmation. There he directed the first sixteen episodes of *Star Trek: The Animated Series* in 1973 and *The New Adventures of Flash Gordon* in 1979, and several other cartoon series.

January 20

James Jacks, (aged 66), American film producer of several blockbuster films, among them the *Mummy* franchise movies.

January 27

Pete Seeger, (aged 94), Multi-award winning American folk singer and songwriter, his best-known songs include *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* (with Joe Hickerson), *If I Had a Hammer* (with Lee Hays of the Weavers), and *Turn! Turn! Turn!* (lyrics adapted from Ecclesiastes), which have been recorded by many artists both in and outside the folk revival movement and are still sung around the world.



January 29

Colonel Meow, (aged 2), American online celebrity cat, holder of the Guinness world record for the longest fur (nine inches). He was a Himalayan-Persian crossbreed, and became an Internet celebrity when his owner posted pictures of his scowling face to Instagram. No, he did not die of throwing up too many furballs.



February 1

Maximilian Schell, (aged 83), Swiss film and stage actor, who also wrote, directed and produced some of his own films. He won the Academy Award for Best Actor for the 1961 film *Judgment at Nuremberg*, but may be better known to fans for his roles in the 1998 movies *Vampires* and *Deep Impact*.

February 3

Richard Bull, (aged 89), American film, stage and television actor, best known for his performance as the Doctor on *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* and Nels Oleson on *Little House on the Prairie*.

February 6

Marty Plissner, (aged 87), American political commentator who worked for CBS News from 1964 until his retirement in 1996, and is most famous for coining the phrase "too close to call".

February 7

Christopher Barry, (aged 88), British television director best known for his work on the science-fiction series *Doctor Who*, covering the longest span of any director during the original run of the series, having overseen episodes from 1963 until 1979. He was one of only three to direct all of the first four actors to play the Doctor – William Hartnell, Patrick Troughton, Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker. His other science-fiction credits were for *Out of the Unknown* (1969), *Moonbase 3* (1973) and *The Tripods* (1984).

February 9

Roger Tomlinson, (aged 80), English geographer and the primary originator of modern computerized geographic information systems (GIS).

February 10

Shirley Temple, (aged 85)
American film and television actress, singer, dancer and public servant, most famous as a child star in the 1930s, appearing in numerous movies, including *Bright Eyes*, *The Little Colonel*, *Curly Top*, *Wee Willie Winkie*, *Heidi*, and *A Little Princess*. Her signature song was "On the Good Ship Lollipop", introduced in *Bright Eyes*. As an adult, she became a diplomat, serving as United States Ambassador to Ghana and later to Czechoslovakia, and as Chief of Protocol of the United States.



February 13

Gordon Bell, (aged 79),
British cartoonist, best known for humorous strips for D. C. Thomson's weekly comics, including "Pup Parade" in *The Beano* and "Spoof McGraw" in *Sparky*.

Ralph Waite, (aged 85)

American actor, whose best known role was as John Walton, Sr., on the 1972-1981 CBS TV series *The Waltons*, which he also occasionally directed. He also portrayed the slave ship third mate Slater in the mini-series *Roots*. In addition, he appeared in many guest roles on numerous television series, most recently in a recurring role in *NCIS* as Jethro Gibbs' father

February 14

John Henson, (aged 48),
American puppeteer, the son of puppeteers Jim Henson, best known as the creator of the Muppets. He performed the Muppet character Sweetums starting in 1991, and in several movies.



February 15

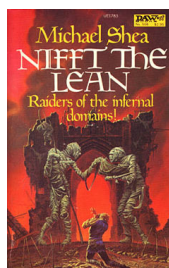
Cliff Bole, (aged 76),
American director of a number of American and Canadian television programs. He has directed episodes of *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Charlie's Angels, V: The Series*, *Baywatch*, *The X-Files*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and *Star Trek: Voyager* among others. The *Star Trek* alien race called the Bolians is named after him.

Christopher Malcolm, (aged 67),

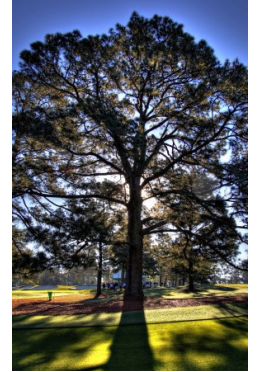
Scottish television and film actor, director and producer. He first achieved notability for his role as Brad Majors in the original stage production of *The Rocky Horror Show*. He appeared in numerous films including *Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*, *Reds*, *Ragtime*, *Labyrinth* and *Highlander*.

February 16

Michael Shea, (aged 67),
American fantasy, horror, and science fiction author living in California. He has won "year's best" World Fantasy Awards for the novel *Niffit the Lean* and the novella *Growlimb*.



Eisenhower Tree, (aged 100–125)
Loblolly pine located on the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia. In the 1950s it was named after then-U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower who unsuccessfully lobbied to have it taken down after it interfered with his golf game.



February 18

Maria Franziska von Trapp, (aged 99)
Austrian-born American singer, the second-oldest daughter of Georg and Agatha (née Whitehead) von Trapp. She was a member of the Trapp Family Singers, whose lives inspired *The Sound of Music*. She was portrayed as the character "Louisa". She died at age 99, and was the last surviving sibling portrayed in the film.

February 19

Dale Gardner, (aged 65),
NASA astronaut who flew two Space Shuttle missions (STS-8, STS-51-A) during the early 1980s.

Valeri Kubasov, (aged 79),

Soviet cosmonaut who flew on two Soyuz missions as flight engineer, Soyuz 6 and Soyuz 19 (the Apollo–Soyuz mission), and commanded Soyuz 36. Kubasov helped perform the first welding experiments in space,.

February 23

Alice Herz-Sommer, (aged 110),
Czech-British supercentenarian, world's oldest Holocaust survivor, survivor of the Theresienstadt concentration camp. A 2013 film about her life, *The Lady in Number 6*, won the Academy Award for Best Short Documentary.

February 24

Harold Ramis, (aged 69),
American actor, director, and writer specializing in comedy. His best-known film acting roles are as Egon Spengler in *Ghostbusters* (1984) and Russell Ziskey in *Stripes* (1981); he also co-wrote both films. As a writer-director, his films include the comedies *Caddyshack* (1980), *National Lampoon's Vacation* (1983), *Groundhog Day* (1993) and *Analyze This* (1999). Ramis was the original head writer of the television series *SCTV*, on which he also performed, and one of three screenwriters of the film *National Lampoon's Animal House* (1978). He won the BAFTA Award for Best Original Screenplay for *Groundhog Day*.



February 27

Aaron Allston, (aged 53),
American game designer and author of many science fiction books, notably *Star Wars* novels. His work as a game designer include game supplements for role-playing games, several of which served to establish the basis for products and subsequent development of TSR's *Dungeons & Dragons* game setting *Mystara*.



Directed by Alfonso Cuarón
Produced by Alfonso Cuarón, David Heyman
Written by Alfonso Cuarón, Jonás Cuarón
Starring Sandra Bullock, George Clooney

Reviewed by Keith Smith

I recently had the opportunity to see Gravity, and found it to be an enjoyable movie, captivating one's attention from start to finish. Unfortunately, the physicist in me was going "No. That can't be right". First off, there's a few things that should be noted:

- 1) Newton's Three Laws of Motion
 - a) An object will stay at rest or at a constant velocity and direction until acted on by a force
 - b) An object acted on by a constant force will accelerate at a constant rate in the direction of the force.
 - c) For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.
- 2) Every object in orbit around the Earth, has its own orbital inclination, distance, and velocity, dictated by the laws of orbital mechanics.
- 3) Spacesuits are worn over an inner suit that provides cooling to the body (I can forgive them this one for the fans, but the poor astronaut would have drowned before ditching the outer suit).

First off the shuttle was doing a Hubble servicing mission, but they had the Hubble pointing towards Earth, which meant that when it would have been normally deployed, it would have been deposited into a faster, lower, orbit – not a good thing for a space telescope. Hubble is actually at a high orbit so it has a lower orbital velocity, making it easier for it to stay on target for long exposures. The space program in this universe must have got more funding than ours though as they had an extra shuttle (Explorer) and they were up to mission STS-157. Kudos to them – but I got the feeling that NASA had been skimping on its training program. I'm also not sure that the astronauts in the shuttle would have been in a shirt sleeve environment if there was a potential risk of densely concentrated space debris. They would have been in spacesuits with their helmets nearby. That is a minor niggle though.

What really got me was the guy needing to detach because 'there was too much tension on the rope'. By then he would have been dragged into the same orbit as the ISS, as the girl has attached to it and he was attached to her. I was thinking, he's safe, all she has to do is one sharp tug and he drifts in. But, the movie was claiming he still had his initial orbit that was deviating from the ISS, contrary to the first law. So, when he detached, and

drifted away, I was having a real disbelieving moment. He could have also detached the MMU and pushed it away with enough force in the opposite direction to the ISS to bring him back, especially since the MMU may be heavier than he was.

The lady astronaut appeared to be being flung about a lot as she attempted to enter the ISS. That might have been caused by the station flexing after the debris hit but. If that was the case, she was darn lucky the hab modules were still pressurised. This is where the bit about what is worn under a spacesuit applies – her garments were definitely designed for the fanboys.

The ISS, and the Chinese space station were really easy to see in space, even in the glare of the sun – speaking of which, why were we able to see the astronauts' faces clearly? They should have at least, the antiglare visors down otherwise they would have been literally blinded by the light. I would expect that what they would see, once the sun is out of the way, is a rather large collection of stars with the station moving slowly close to the earth as a faint dot of light – assuming the Earth isn't blocking it, the station is reflecting enough light and the glare of the Earth itself isn't drowning it out.

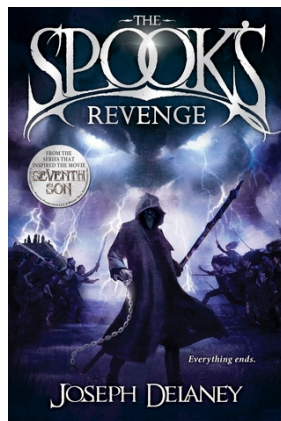
One does not just point a space craft at said point of light and boost in that direction. Driving a spacecraft between orbits is nothing like driving a car between two places of the earth. Everything moves in space, and to catch an object, the spacecraft has to end up in the same place as the station at the same time and with the same velocity and direction – otherwise the spacecraft will sail on past in the wrong direction. So, moving between orbits requires a lot of calculations and enough fuel to change the spacecraft's course and speed accordingly. It is difficult, if not impossible to have a shuttle get from Hubble's orbit to the ISS, with the amount of manoeuvring fuel the shuttle has. The only way this would work as the movie, is to have each object in the same orbit.

Using a fire extinguisher as a rocket is a very good idea because of the third law. However, one has to be mindful of the first law. One does not simply blast away in all directions. Not only is that a waste of propellant but if the thrust is not through the centre of mass, then the hapless astronaut is going to start spinning, and then have to burn exactly the same amount of propellant in the exact opposite direction to kill the spin. Slow and careful is the law in space. It's easier to come to a gentle halt relative to the station if you're drifting slowly towards it and apply small correcting burns on the way in than to come it at speed and frantically do a braking burn to stop. There's more chance of overshooting. And yes, poor Gus Grissom nearly drowned when the hatch on his Mercury capsule blew open on ditching. The only thing that saved him was being able to grab the cable from the helicopter hovering overhead. They couldn't save the capsule as the extra weight of water made it too heavy. They were correct though that one cannot leave a capsule while the water is pouring in. One cannot also open a car window until the pressure is equalised. Still, I'm inclined to wonder where on Earth she landed, and how on Earth she was going to get home!

by
Keith
Smith

The Spook's Revenge

by Joseph Delaney
Published by Random House
Supplied by Random House NZ
Reviewed by Jacqui Smith



It's hard to know what to do when I am asked to review the thirteenth and last book of a thirteen book fantasy series which is evidently very popular among its intended YA audience – especially when I haven't read any of the preceding twelve! The first thing was to read it, and this I did, although I found it not exactly smooth going, in some parts considerably more engrossing than others. Delaney does a good job of putting together his sentences, and his grammar is impeccable, as one would expect from a retired English teacher. But I'm still not sure about the novel's overall structure, and whether it provides a satisfying conclusion to such a long series. A major character dies, and although he's given a fair bit of exposition, I doubt if the manner of his death is sufficiently heroic for the fans. Another thing that did concern me, right at the start, was the map included at the front, with rivers branching as they flowed down onto the plains from the mountains rather than the other way round, and those branches ending nowhere in particular. This was intended to represent a county, somewhere in northern England, at some point in what felt like the seventeenth century because of the social structure, apart from the absence of firearms. It is however, a fantasy world, its human population plagued by boggarts and very old-fashioned witches. Tom, our lead character, is apprentice to a spook, a person whose job it is to deal with such incursions of the Dark. He is apparently a teenager still, and prone to acting without a whole lot of thought – it is apparent to the reader that a great evil cannot be destroyed without another taking its place, but Tom plainly doesn't get it. Personally, I tend to the theory that "destroying the ultimate evil" is generally a bad idea when writing fantasy, even if Tolkien did it... And, as in many of these fantasy worlds, there seems to be no ultimate good to balance it. Why is it so easy to write about devils, but so hard to write about the divine (God or gods, whatever)?

**Earth Strike:
Star Carrier Book One**

by Ian Douglas
Published by Harper Collins
Supplied by Science Fiction
Outreach Project at LoneStarCon 3
Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

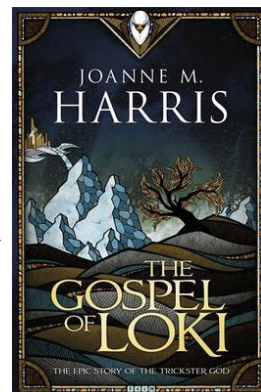


I'm still working through the pile of free books from LoneStarCon 3, and this is one of the last. It's also one of the best if you happen to like rock hard military SF. Ian Douglas is one pen name of the prolific American writer William H. Keith, who started writing Doctor Who adventures for the FASA games company, went on to write for their Battletech line and for Chivalry and Sorcery, and has authored several series mainly in military fiction, and military SF. Yes, he does have a

military background. I'm pretty sure that I've read some of his work before, but I'm not sure under which name. The novel takes a familiar approach in military SF, alternating between two principal characters; one of the admirals so as to follow the overall strategy, and a lowly lieutenant to take the reader into the forefront of battle. The lieutenant in question is a fighter pilot, and it's pretty obvious that the author, being a navy man himself, has gone to considerable trouble to make the idea of "aircraft carriers in space" actually work. There was a lot to like here. The aliens are really alien, very weird and their motives inscrutable. Why do they fear humanity? What do they mean by "transcendence"? The idea of alien organisms that are not either plant or animal but somewhere in between is a cool idea that I've tried writing about myself (must get around to finishing that story). I can't I entirely understood how everything works in this version of the Universe, but the sheer level of detail certainly was impressive. It is the first of a series, and I'd be tempted to hunt down more, if it wasn't for the sheer size of my books-to-read pile. Note to publishers: I shouldn't have to look up Wikipedia to figure out which is the book title, and which is the name of the series; it should be entirely obvious on the cover.

The Gospel of Loki

by Joanne M. Harris
Published by Gollancz
Supplied by Hatchett NZ
Reviewed by Jacqui Smith



It is what it says on the tin, a re-telling of the tales of Norse myth from the point of view of Loki. A thoroughly post-modern, and increasingly disagreeable Loki at that. He spends far too much time whining about how it isn't his fault, when it's entirely obvious that it is. But, that too, is part of the character. You'd really expect him to figure it out, but he never does; his character never really develops, which is possibly the point – the gods are archetypes and cannot change.

As for the book, it's an enjoyable and cleverly written romp through mythology, with a number of laugh-out-loud moments. You know how it's all going to end, only you don't, and frankly I think the ending is the weakest part of the story, with a throwaway last line that simply doesn't work, for me at least. It's not the only problem. There are a number of references to Pandemonium which I had thought was Greek myth, unlike I looked it up, and discovered that it was coined by Milton for *Paradise Lost*. So, not Norse. Bragi, the god of poetry, is depicted as playing a lute... which is also not Norse! If he did play stringed instrument, it would be a harp or a lyre (yes really, they found one at Sutton Hoo, admittedly Anglo-Saxon, but at least the right period). There are lots of other irritating anachronisms, such as calling someone a "septic tank" when "cesspit" would have done just as well. Even the title really doesn't fit. This is not a gospel, it is not any kind of good news; it's a legend, or more accurately a mythopoeia. So some pluses for entertainment value and writing skill, but a number of minuses for jarring anachronisms, and I'll rate it a C+.

Innocence

by Dean Koontz

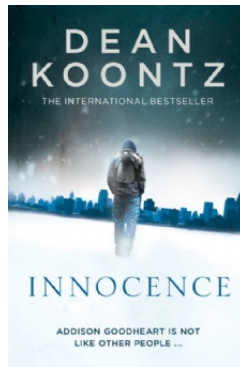
Published by Harper Collins

Supplied by Harper Collins NZ

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

The tag line reads... "Addison Goodheart is not like other people", and *Innocence* is not like other books. It started out reminding me of the old "Beauty and the Beast" TV series, as we learn of Addison Goodheart and his strange lonely life under an unnamed US metropolis (it evokes New York, but having never been there, I cannot be sure). He hides his face because people who see him want to kill him, as they did the man he called father. Then one night in a deserted library, he meets Gwyneth, a girl who is almost as isolated as he is, because she will not allow herself to be touched. She embroils him in her much more complicated life, and he aids her in her attempts to escape from her enemy. Meanwhile, in the larger world, disaster approaches...

The tale is told at least in part in flashbacks, but Koontz is a clever enough writer that this does not annoy me (for once). It's strangely lyrical, while at times horrific, and in other places deeply philosophical. It certainly made me stop and think. More than once. If somebody asked "What do you fear?" and "What do you hate?" how would you reply? I know that some people will absolutely detest the ending of this book, while others will love it... depending largely on their personal beliefs. Me, I found it a bit insipid, but certainly a different take on a familiar theme. I can't really say more, because that would definitely spoil it for you. Suffice it to say that the title is what it's all about... innocence.



expect some people will. This is a truly exceptional novel, and especially coming right after the success of "Gravity", I anticipate we'll be reviewing the movie in a year or so... only as long as they stick to the book, the science won't be nearly as broken as it was in "Gravity". We can hope that "The Martian" gets read by the masses, because it deserves to be, and more importantly, this is the kind of novel that can get people interested in real space. And put you off potatoes for life...

Teardrop

by Lauren Kate

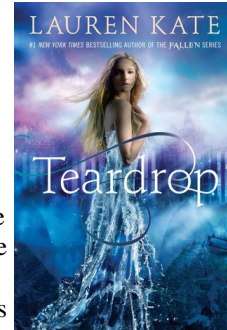
Published by Doubleday

Supplied by Random House NZ

Reviewed by Jan Butterworth

Eureka was in a freak car accident with her mother, who was killed. She didn't cry at her mother's funeral, the importance of her not crying having been emphasised by her mother years ago. No one understands her, her therapists are stupid, and the only people she can talk to is her best friend Brooks. She begins to fall in love with him but then Anders shows up, drop dead gorgeous and always where Eureka is.

Anders is part of a clan who watch the people descended from a goddess and capable of destroying the world. His family caused the accident that claimed the life of Eureka's mother and nearly took hers. Anders has one task - to kill Eureka. He can either save the girl or save the world. He's obsessed with her though, and as Brooks acts strangely and become distant, Eureka falls for him. Interesting concept but it felt familiar and I realised I'd seen the teardrop in a movie - POTC 4 I think. I liked the mythology and mystery but didn't like Eureka. She was full of teenage angst and I wanted to smack her and tell her to stop whingeing, other people have gone through worse. I felt it was a little creepy how Anders had 'been watching her since before he or she could talk'. Stalkerish and reminded me of Twilight and Edward watching Bella sleep. Not a book that grabbed my interest but it should appeal to Twilight fans.



The Martian

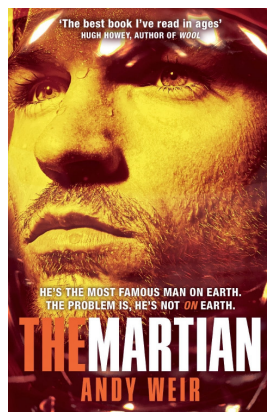
by Andy Weir

Published by Del Ray

Supplied by Random House NZ

Reviewed by Jacqui Smith

In trying to avoid the inevitable "Robinson Crusoe in Space" line... I have to say that I haven't read a book quite like "The Martian" for a long time, if ever. Nobody writes this kind of hard realistic solar system based science fiction any more. Partly because a book about an astronaut stuck on Mars and full of maths should be really awfully boring, but it's not. There's the constant suspense of the "what's-going-to-go-wrong-next?" variety, and "how-is-he-going-to-fix-this?" There's a great deal of irreverent humour, quite a lot of it directed at NASA. And a surprisingly light touch with the writing style that works very well for most readers. Perhaps the weakest part of the story is the set-up, the how of getting a lone astronaut left behind on Mars, but the scenario seems reasonable enough for me. The fact that it's the crew member with just the right combination of skills and personality to survive is authorial serendipity. The rest of it? Well, you have to assume that Weir has done the math right, or that at least somebody has... Because to go and check would take you away from the story, and you want to keep reading. Mind you, I



Dust: Silo #3

by Hugh Howey

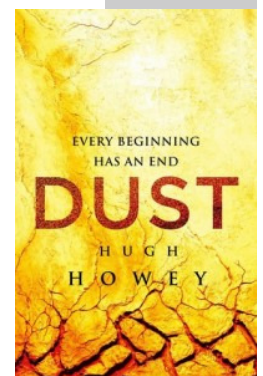
Published by Century 2013

Supplied by Random House New Zealand

Reviewed by Jan Butterworth

Jules has seen there's more to the world than inside the Silo. She knows there are other people in other Silo's and has promised some of them she'd return for them. She's finding it hard to find support to accomplish this though. People are afraid of the unknown and content to remain with the status quo, even though the future is looking doubtful. She needs help, which another Silo can give.

The characters hate their world and want something more, which they're strong enough to reach for. They finally figure out why things happened and what to do about it. I liked the new beginning of the ending but was left wondering what happened to the other Silos. The last instalment of the Silo trilogy is a good read and a worthwhile book to end the series with. There are no neat answers though and things are left hanging.



Conclave 2014

35th NZ National SF&F Convention

CONCLAVE 2 UPDATE

Where: Auckland
 When: 24th to 27th April 2014
 (ANZAC weekend—
 middle weekend of school holidays)
 Venue: The Surrey Hotel,
 465 Great North Road, Grey Lynn

**Guest of Honour:
 Dave Freer**

Dave Freer is an ex-South African ichthyologist turned author. He now lives on Flinders Island in the Bass Strait (between Tasmania and Australia) with his wife and chief proof reader, Barbara, two dogs and three cats. He has written some 15 novels for Baen Books, co-authoring some with Eric Flint and Mercedes Lackey, some of which ended up on best-seller lists. He's also written two YA novels for Pyr Books and published a slew of shorter fiction. He was also the artistic director for JBU. He can be found online at www.davefreer.com



**Guest of Honour:
 Paul Scoones**

Paul is a professional writer and a fan. He works on the BBC's *Doctor Who* DVDs, adding behind-the-scenes information for the special features. Paul has studied the early history of *Doctor Who* in comic strips, and has written a book on the subject, *The Comic Strip Companion: 1964-1979*. Paul lives in Auckland, New Zealand, with his wife Rochelle and their three cats. When he isn't writing he helps Rochelle run Retrospace, a SF collectibles store in Takapuna, Auckland. He can be found online at www.paulscoones.com.



**Guest of Honour:
 Lyn McConchie**

Lyn is a New Zealand writer of speculative fiction humour series, picture books and many short stories, articles, poems, and reviews. She lives in a small village in southern Hawke's Bay. Lyn is a member of the NZ Rare Breeds Association, breeding sheep on her farmlet. Lyn has won the Best Novel category in the Sir Julius Vogel Awards for New Zealand science fiction and fantasy six times, including three for novels set in Andre Norton's worlds.



Charity:

Auckland Rescue
 Helicopter Trust
rescuehelicopter.org.nz/



**AUCKLAND RESCUE
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Nova Zine Back Issues:

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Postal Address:

Stella Nova
 PO Box 74-013, Market Rd, Auckland 1543

President:

Alan Parker
president@stella-nova.sf.org.nz

Editor:

Jacqui Smith
editor@stella-nova.sf.org.nz

This Month:

- BOOK** Monday March 24th
 (at Chez Smith)
- SPACE** Friday April 4th
 (venue TBA)

Next Quarterly Meeting:

Wednesday 19th March 2014, 7:30 pm
 Auckland Horticultural Centre,
 990 Great North Road,
 Western Springs



Upcoming Events:

April 24-27th 2014
Conclave 2
 35th New Zealand National SF Convention
<http://conclave2.aucontraire.org.nz/>