



The Thirty Seventh issue of a sortof letter substitute, kinda thing, maybe weekly, maybe not, from:

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Corflu UK

Just because I wasn't there doesn't mean I can't write about it. In Corflu UK Progress Report I wrote about the FAAn awards and how I hoped they would be more representative of Fanzine Fandom than was previously the case. The results of the awards are now in and I'm very happy to say that a lot of what I'd hoped has indeed come true.

As a little reminder her is what I predicted would win (from TW 36) Best fanzine: 1) Trapdoor2) Idea 3) Bob. Best fan writer: 1) Mark McCann 2) Geri Sullivan 3) Christina Lake Best New fan writer: 1) Lesley Reece 2) Alison Freebairn 3) Mark Plummer. Best Artist 1) D. West 2) Dave Mooring 3) Sue Mason and Best Letter Hack: 1) Steve Brewster 2) D.M. Sherwood 3) Lloyd Penney.

The actual results (with votes) were:

Best Fanzine: 1) Idea 105 2) Attitude 63 3) Trap Door 51

Best Fanwriter: 1) C. Lake 64 2) G. Sullivan 56 3) D. Langford 31.

Best Fan Artist: 1) D. West 94 2) I. Gunn 70 3) B. Rotsler 55.

Best Letterhack: 1) H. Warner 71 2) L. Penney 42 3) V. Rosenzweig 37.

Best New Fanwriter: 1) Lesley Reece 71 2) Ulrika O'Brien 47 3) Claire Brialey 23.

In the best Fan writer category it was not a bad result as they go and I think that Christina and Geri were the better writers of last year. Naturally my huge ego led me to see where I placed and I thought 11 was fairly respectful and although I would have liked a better placing, in all honest this was probably right. However the ordering of those above and below me was well out. I mean, I don't think that I'm half as a good a

writer as Ted White, or Mark McCann who were placed joint 12th and 16th respectfully. The other side of the coin is that David Langford who is as good as it gets when he puts his mind to it, doesn't have the emotional honesty of Alison Freebairn or Victor Gonzalez, both of whom placed lower than him. Strange.

In the best Fanzine category the top three were perfect. Excellent choices I thought and my own personal choice of Bob was a lot lower down, not an entirely unexpected result. Attitude got a better placing than I thought it would, but again, no bad thing. TommyWorld itself placed a little higher than I thought joint 15th, for which many thanks. However in some of the lower places things were getting a little weird. Götterdämmerung, which put out at least one excellent issue last year, was way down the list, and was joined by some other zines which, to be honest here people, deserved a hell'uva lot more. Who on Earth thought that Pognophobia and Squib were worse than, well much of everything above them? Both fanzines have writing and style that even TommyWorld is hardly ever going to match. That was one of many travesties of justice in the lower orders of the rankings.

Best Fan Artist and Best New Fanwriter were the only two correct guesses I made and, to be quite frank, there wasn't much that could go wrong with them. Best letter hack was always going to be a toss up, but I'm glad Lloyd Penney got a look in and slightly disappointed that Murray Moore didn't make an appearance. There you go.

But here comes the rub. I came seventh in the best new Fanwriter category. Me? Steve Glover has brought this issue up on RASSFF, and notes: "There must be two Tommy Fergusons then: the one I know was running NIcon in 1987/88 and had a fanzine or two not long after..." The truth is even weirder. I attended and ran my first conventions in the same year: 1986, and published my first fanzine (an apa zine called Thingy) in the same year.

Now whilst the egoboo is wonderful, the results are obviously inaccurate. I placed above Alison Freebairn and Bridget Hardcastle, which makes me wonder why people vote in these things. Is it as I've mentioned before, a result of 'putting your fanac about'? A popularity contest? Why do people vote if they have no idea of what, who or why they are voting? A bit of a laugh?

That got me thinking of my own agenda. I can remember voting in a TAFF race for Michael Ashley, against Abigail Frost as it happens, for the sheer hell of it. I thought a miserable sod like Michael going to a WorldCon in the ruthlessly up beat America, (what I think is his personal idea of hell,) would be a gas. I can imagine the con report now. However the reality of the situation, and Abi's actions, was even worse. That made me re-evaluate my reasons for getting involved in what for a large part of the time is essentially a popularity contest, a flavour of the month vote or even a wild random guess. If we are to continue to hold these things up as being the best of what our community has to offer then we need to pay more attention to them. I'm not even going

to get in on the Hugo thing I just think that whole are is a travesty and should be completely abolished but a smaller grouping of fanzine fans, (Novacon attending fans, or BSFA members, for example) should be able to organise and arrange a decent voting system whereby the quality is assured.

And now, you.

Pamela Boal, PJBoal@aol.com "Dear Tommy, Thank you for your most interesting review of NQA 6, what a pity that you do not quote an address or give details of availability. My own votes for all the categories in the Fan Awards were all idiosyncratic. I could not decide whether to refresh my memory and look back over the years collection for consistent output of merit or to go for items that had stuck in my mind be it one letter or one piece of artwork. In the end I went for the latter feeling if it stuck in my memory without reference then it was worth a vote. Those with consistent out put might get other awards or be recognised in other years. I'd be interested in the final results, will you be publishing them?" ((NQA is available for the usual from: Christina Lake, 12 Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 8QA. Email her at the address below for further information. I think your system of voting was as fair as it can probably get and a t least rewards impact of writing. Talking of which))

Christina Lake christina.l@virgin.net "Thanks for the review of NQA! I still can't believe I won that FAAn award - I was too busy having a great time at the Corflu banquet with Frank Lunney, Ted White, Ken Brown and a comically knackered Martin Smith to even consider that I might be about to win something. Shame you weren't there - loads of people asked after you. See you at Eastercon? Christina." ((Awww, shucks. And congratulations, fully deserved. I don't know about Eastercon, but if I'm still about then I will be at Novacon this year. Mekon the Belfast convention next month will also be a must attend.))

Ann Green ghost.words@virgin.net "Thanks for TW, I've caught a few off the website and enjoyed them - apologies for not responding. Your opening article put me in mind of another excellent Irish writer, Martin Tudor, although he was maybe a little less coy about his relationship with alcohol. I hope you've got it sorted. Think yourself lucky that "Irish" pubs are trendy these days - at least their popularity is based on the premise that you guys know how to have a good time. Funny thing stereotypes, you never hear any black guys saying "Well actually I have a rather small penis." If Welsh theme pubs were to become the in-thing we'd end up jostling with Jack Russells and their miserable owners for space around the single calor-gas heater in the corner while the locals fought among themselves before throwing up seventeen pints of Ansells in the car park and lying down in the middle of the road (This is not a stereotype - I'm Welsh, I know these things...) You did the right thing in teaching the guy with the gun a lesson; it took more courage to do what you did than to do what he did. Best Wishes." ((For people not at Corflu UK I produced a one-off paper edition of TommyWorld, featuring reprints of

articles in the earlier editions. Just for the record, the story about the gun WAS made up. Check out previous TW for more information.))

Daniel Farr. trip03@interserv.com "You actually missed a rather mild Toronto (Southern Ontario) winter. Mostly rain. Kinda makes you miss us, huh? Actually tomorrow being the first day of spring it actually kinda feels like it. So I see you put you pen in your mouth again so to speak. 50% of the Corflu attendees are cutting contact with you --- mmmm. Depending on who the 50% are you might turn out luckier than you bargained for. ----We'll let that rest. Thought of you the other day when the T.V. news was showing Belfast first St. Paddy's day parade (ever?) and no violence either---? Just a short note, let you know I'm still around, Ciao." ((Many thanks Daniel and I'll be in touch RSN. As for the weather, yeah the one winter I'm not there and it is nice. Huh, typical. And I think that Lilian was referring to half of the female members of the Corflu UK committee not being in contact with me))

Evelyn Murray Eve@murraycoltness.demon.co.uk "Dear Tommy, Thanks for the latest TommyWorld. I am still recovering from Corflu. I must remember it is a bad idea not to wear a watch when drinking at conventions. I met loads of really interesting Americans and my team won the quiz. On Thursday night Greg commented that "this was a real Corflu" because we had more Americans than Brits. Met Mark McCann, James Shields and Eugene Doherty from Belfast who had lots to tell about you! Mark did not seemed too surprised when I told him we were intending in visiting Belfast soon. Even promised to buy new sheets, why? Nice group of guys you hang around with. I hope they venture over for more Cons. Also noticed in RASFF today that someone is claiming that there must be two Tommy Fergusons. Now, I am willing to believe a lot of things, but really. Ev." ((Yeah, good bunch of guys and I have been getting a lot of feedback about them from Corflu attendees. It is about time they got out a bit more and we're all hoping to get to Novacon this year. Should be a laff))

Lloyd Penney. yvonne_penney@email.whirlpool.com. "Hello, Tommy! Since you left...Yvonne and I each won an Aurora Award, Yvonne for her running a convention in 1996, and me for fanwriting. Also, if you've read Rob Sawyer's latest novel, Illegal Alien, you'll find me Tuckerized as a minor character in it. Finally, I've even found some work, even if it's a temp job, so I now have some money to play with, and even pay the bills. Take care, and keep in touch with us." ((Yeah, I'd heard about the Auroras and meant to write but Congratulations to both of you, it's about time. Consider yourself on the mailing list and hey, tell all your friends))

IAHF: David G. Hartwell ("I like your email fanzine and I enjoyed your remarks on Seattle, and the lettercol"); Andy Hooper; Jack Weaver and Lesley Reece (frequently);

Alun Harries ("Corflu was sort of so so, highlight probably being meeting Mark, James, and Eugene")

This is being distributed to a whole bunch of friends on the net, if you received this and would NOT like to be on the mailing list please accept my apologies for this intrusion and let me know so that you will not be bothered by further ramblings. If you know someone who would like to be on the mailing drop me a line.