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INTERNATIONAL PUPPETRY ORGANISATION

# UNIMA CENTRE AUSTRALIA

MARCH 1990.

Edited by  
Dennis Murphy

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

After the exciting year of 1988, it seems that some of the enthusiasm has evaporated among members. Not much of the great 'networking' (whatever that is) that individual members were going to undertake has happened. Our membership is up 3 individual members and 4 Companies have joined. Unfortunately we were forced to put up our membership fees because of an increase in International dues and cost rises here. Our Newsletter comes out 4 times a year on time and I hope gives reasonable amount of information to members. Good luck Dennis as new Editor.

Annie Heitmann has started to work towards a Puppet Festival in 1991, either in Adelaide or Brisbane.

There have been some overseas visitors. Last January Uwe Spillmann from West Germany spent his holidays here and assisted the Goethe Institut at a seminar for German language teachers in the use of puppets in schools. The Genty Puppets gave performances in most States and the puppet theatre 'Le Vrai Guignolet' of Paris gave performances of 'Guignol and the French Revolution' to commemorate their Bicentenary, assisted by the Alliance Francaise. We also had a visit from Ann Forbes of the New Zealand Puppet Theatre, sponsored by the Department of Foreign Affairs, to have a look at the Oz Puppet scene. The Shanghai Puppet Company were at Spare Parts Theatre to assist in their production of 'The Monkey King' and to give Master Classes. Leslie Trowbridge came from New Zealand to attend them.

Our puppeteers who went overseas include Peter Wilson and Noriko Nishimoto to Drak in Czechoslovakia, Richard Bradshaw to New Zealand to assist the New Zealand Puppet Theatre. David Poulton to give puppet performances in New Zealand and Axel Axelrad to the 5th Childrens Workshops in Jakarta.

The Centre put out a Newsletter for the Asia-Pacific Commission, and had requests from overseas countries for information, including Belgium, New Zealand, Indonesia, West Germany, Thailand, Czechoslovakia, Malaysia and Siere Leone. I also sent Seasons Greetings, on behalf of UNIMA, to over 20 countries, and we received greetings from them.

Sadly, Beverley Campbell Jackson died on the 9th June, and will be missed by all of us.

For puppeteers to meet, UNIMA together with Handspan Theatre arranged regular meetings which we hope will continue in Vic.

Thank you very much Annie and David for all your work during the year.

Axel.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT 1989:

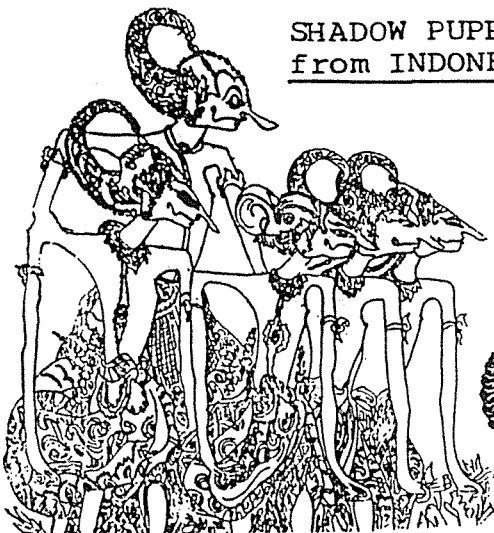
Personally, a year of great change and learning for myself, and UNIMA AUSTRALIA has also continued to develop and grow in its own slow but steady fashion. We maintained a reasonably representative membership of over 60 individuals, with several companies taking out group membership. I am glad to see many members of these companies still retain individual membership. It is only through the continued support of our members that we can continue to improve and grow into a truly effective organisation.

A big thankyou to Axel and Janet for 'maintaining' the Newsletter (editing, printing and posting) during 1989. The new format adopted for the September issue looks great. Dennis Murphy offered to take over as editor/typist for 1990 with Axel and Janet still being in charge of printing and posting. David (with Sally's able help) kept the finances under control. Meanwhile the Secretary's <sup>job</sup> continues to grow. Regular mail from overseas this year included; reports and Couriers from UNIMA Headquarters, publicity for International Festivals and Courses, requests for information from puppeteers interested in visiting Australia, invitations and promotional material from National Centres and Companies and personal greetings from friends in UNIMA. The network continues to grow at home, as well as abroad. The Victorian members initiated regular meetings in Melbourne this year to maintain the network and provide a forum for discussion of matters related to UNIMA and the Australian Puppetry scene in general.

A major concern for me this year has been to begin some groundwork for the next Australian International Puppet Festival, scheduled for 1991. In November I attended meetings of the Victorian network and the NSW Puppetry Guild (many of whom are also UNIMA members) to discuss the Festival. I had hoped also to organise some cards to be printed on behalf of Australian UNIMA to be available pre Christmas, however this plan has been shelved hopefully for 1990, but certainly before the Festival in 1991. With elections due in 1991 I look forward to an active final 12 months as Secretary in 1990. Wishing all members peace and happiness in the coming year.

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### SHADOW PUPPETS from INDONESIA



Chakil

Arjuna



TREASURER'S REPORT

UNIMA Australia Balance Sheet 1989

|                 |                 |  |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| <u>Income</u>   |                 | <u>Expenses</u>                              |                 |
| Opening Balance | 444.52          | UNIMA Headquarters France                    | 154.71          |
| Subscriptions   | 1,252.88        | Beverley Campbell Jackson's<br>Cancer Appeal | 50.00<br>98.42  |
| Joining Fees    | 100.00          | UNIMA Newsletter 1988                        | 723.69          |
| Interest        | 13.32           | UNIMA Newsletter Expenses 1989               | 30.00           |
|                 | <u>1,810.72</u> | Photocopying, Setting, Postage               | 210.00          |
|                 |                 | Dishonoured Cheques                          |                 |
|                 |                 | Scholarship Fund                             |                 |
|                 |                 | Misc Expenses (Stamp Duty on<br>banking etc) | .1.52           |
| Debt to Axel    | 23.71           | Balance on hand 31.12.89                     | 1,099.09        |
| 1990 Sub's Paid | 33.00           |  | <u>2,367.43</u> |

Re-imburement from  
Scholarship Account

500.00

2,367.43

Balance of Scholarship Account as at 31.12.89      \$2,266.46.      \$500.00 to be transferred back  
in 1990 accounts.

Notes on Account

Balance of working account in reality is \$599.09.      \$500 withdrawn from Scholarship Fund by error  
of bank, should have been from working account.      This mistake will be rectified in 1990's balance  
sheet.

Secretary's Expenses paid by funds on hand.      (Balance \$20.59)

Receipts held for every expense.

## ANNIE'S NEWS

EUROPEES FIGURENTHEATERCENTRUM (European Figure Theatre Centre) I have been invited to be the 'ambassador' for Australia to pass on material for this newly formed centre in Belgium by the general co-ordinator Mr Freek Neiryck, whom I met in Japan.

He writes; *"The name of the organisation was chosen because at this moment, looking forward to 1992, there are more chances for getting subsidies for an initiative containing the word "European" in the title, than for instance an INTERNATIONAL FIGURENTHEATERCENTRUM, what it will really be.*

*The Centre will develop several functions; archiving and opening to the public, all documentation about puppets and figure theatre all over the world. I would also like very much distributing all possible information about your country, Australia.*

*The engagement of Ambassador consists of him/her regularly sending us documentation about his/her country concerning puppet and figure activities. This can be information about the country, but also material of individual groups who get to be known to the ambassador to the Europees Figurentheatercentrum and its informants."*

So! If any members have some special material concerning their activities they would like me to forward, please send it to me.

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## NEXT AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL UPDATE:

Following a lengthy discussion with David Poulton re possibility of Brisbane being host for the Festival, the current course of action we are pursuing is to ascertain whether Brisbane or Adelaide would be the most viable in terms of funding, venues etc. David is making further enquiries re Brisbane and I will be doing the same re Adelaide. We are meeting in early March to discuss our findings.

At this stage there is support for a puppetry festival in Brisbane via Brisbane Council, Qld Arts Council, State Government and possibly the Warana Festival. The question seems to be whether this Festival could be the next Australian International or a smaller national version. The Queensland State Government has offered support for a Brisbane-based Festival, but ALSO for a Qld component of an interstate Festival.

On the question of timing and the invitation of international guests, David and I came to the conclusion that January of 1991 is too soon and that September school holidays in 1991 would be more viable for both the organisation within Australia and international input. David has also offered to work in connection with the Festival in the capacity of helping to organise and tour Overseas artists within Australia.

If anybody has any comments, suggestions or criticisms regarding the Festival developments, contact me.

ANNIE

## N.S.W. NEWS

Puppetry Guild meetings continue to have regular attendance with the largest meeting being, as always, the Christmas Party. The Party was officially opened by Lady Hortense and featured a performance from a newly-founded puppet company, The Bondi Puppet Theatre - a very promising duo.

Jonquil Temple (Jonquil's Theatre Workshops) has been taking a puppetry-performance workshop into the NSW schools. After an introduction to puppetry, she distributes a vast multitude of aquatic puppets to the students and they work on presenting a short underwater scene set to music. Some students are manipulators, others are directors or do sound and lighting.

Jonquil has teamed up with Murphys Puppets and Sydney Storyteller Zoe Robb to do workshops in libraries teaching librarian/storytellers how to incorporate puppetry into their storytelling sessions.

Murphys Puppets went to Adelaide in February to take part in the Adelaide Fringe Festival with their school show. They also performed their Esperanto show at Adelaide University.

Murray Raine (Murray Raine Puppets) has been busy on the shopping centre and cabaret circuits. His "tits and feathers" adult cabaret has to be set up in 20 seconds of blackout at the clubs. One night the tearing heard was not part of the act. Stagehands had put a heavy case on one the puppets backstage. The tear as the puppet came on was a \$400 dress.

Richard Hart was in Sydney for all of January doing puppetmaking workshops for children and building scenery for the Murphys. He returned to Melbourne with lots of new ideas for his work with kids there.

Sydney Puppet Theatre has begun rehearsals on their new adult production with actress/director Dasha Blahova, choreographer Aku Kadogo and artist Dorothea Dauter. Should be excellent, judging from their other works.

The Hetherington Family now presents Mr Squiggle on ABC TV. Daughter Rebecca who toured with the 30th Birthday show will be also be holding Mr Squiggle's hand in the TV version. Margaret Hetherington has written 42 scripts for the new season and production got underway in March for Mr Squiggle's 31st year. As Norman describes it, "it's a show produced by a family for families."

American Puppeteer/Storyteller, Jan Kaufmann, (Tallahassee, Florida) gave a workshop in Sydney for the Puppetry Guild in February teaching puppetmaking using sheet foam. Jan uses puppetry and storytelling in her work with disabled children and in her classes on communication.



VICTORIAN NEWS.

We are all recovering from the summer break, and there has not been much puppet news to report.

"Mr. Squiggle" was here for a season at the Alexander Theatre which had the usual good attendances.

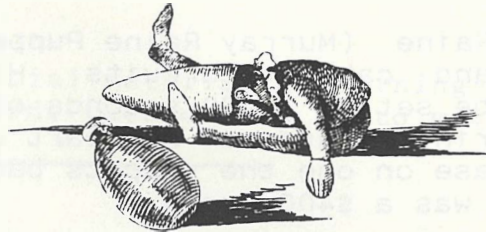
"Mr. Squiggle" was followed by "Sooty".

Ann Davis played at a shopping centre at Geelong to a very appreciative audience.

Richard Bradshaw will be in Melbourne touring Schools from 19th February for two weeks.

Terrapin Puppet Theatre will be touring here during the year for the Victorian Arts Council.

The next meeting of Victorian Puppeteers will be at HANDSPAN, 108 GERTRUDE ST, FITZROY on Wednesday 4th April at 8 p.m.



NEW ZEALAND

NORBERT HAUSBERG is starting a tour around the North Island from February until August. He has been asked to perform at Waitangi during the commemoration ceremonies there, quite an honour, and hopefully there will be no demonstrations concerned with the Treaty of Waitangi, although some are expected.

NORBERT has published a Puppet Play called "Mustava and the Moon" costing \$6 N.Z. including postage. His address is: 30B Kinsey Terrace Christchurch 8.

Norbert is short of a few editions of the Australian Puppetry Guilds Annual Newsletters, numbers 1,3,4, and if anyone has a spare copy, he would be very pleased to receive them.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Ruth Hadlow,    | 6 Randell St., Perth 6000                          |
| Murray Raine,   | 37/196 Harrow Rd., Glenfield 2167                  |
| Mildred Clarke, | PO Box 177, Wameroo WA 6065                        |
| Heather Monk,   | c/o Spare Parts Theatre, PO Box 897 Fremantle 6160 |
| Jenny Twydale,  | 3/623 Portrush Road, Glen Osmond SA 5064           |
| Rob Matson      | 625 The Boulevard, Eaglemont Vic 3084              |

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## QUEENSLAND NEWS



The Queensland Theatre of Puppetry (Q'TOP) members have been working closely with the Gold Coast Little Theatre during the last two months. Gerda Pinter, Q'TOP's Producer/Director, is producing the musical "Carnival" (which is based on Paul Gallico's Love of Seven Dolls) for the Little Theatre.

The play has four puppet characters - made by Kay Littler, Q'TOP's puppet creator who also made other large props used in the play. After the 'tinyness' of the puppet theatre and its characters, it's been interesting to see how a big spectacular play all comes together.

Rehearsals for our own performances during the year 1990 will commence 23 February. Every Tuesday and Thursday morning we will be at the Bandshell/Puppet Theatre in Macintosh Is. Park Southport and visitors are always welcome.

Best Wishes for the coming year.

Beth Jackson  
Hon Secretary

David Poulton is about to hit the road again for the year. He is working in northern N.S.W. for a few weeks, then the Canberra Show before going over to New Zealand for a short time. Later in the year he is going to Vancouver to do a Showcase, and will call in at Honolulu to give a lecture on working with Aborigines and will also give a performance.

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## TASMANIAN NEWS

Terrapin Puppet Theatre has four shows in their 1990 repertoire. In First Term they are presenting "The Moon Queen. Kagayahime" and "Tell us a Story".

The latter is a new play for the very young, created by Terrapin's Director, Jindra Rosendorf. It is a light-hearted retelling of the fairy tale "Hansel & Gretel", with the help of the audience. Have you ever wondered why the witch's house is made from gingerbread? It could be because the only spell book they have not mislaid is the Cake and Sweets Cookbook. As everyone knows, it all works out for the best in the end.

"The Moon Queen. Kagayahime" was directed and designed by Noriko Nishimoto. On the night of the full moon an old bamboo cutter finds a tiny girl in the heart of a bamboo grove. The girl, Kagayahime, grows quickly into a most beautiful woman. . . .

For details of where Terrapin will be performing write to them at P.O. Box 23, Sandy Bay Tas 7005 or phone (002) 34 6086.

OVERSEAS NEWS

The 2nd International Puppet Theatre Festival of Teheran  
13-19 July 1990

Applications by 15 March to:  
The Centre of Dramatic Arts  
Vahdat Hall  
Hafez Avenue  
Teheran -  
IRAN



\* \* \* \* \*

HANDMADE is Handspan Theatre's training service providing tuition in puppetry for students from primary to tertiary level, community groups, and professionals, tailored to their needs and budget. They can also provide a consultancy service for projects with a puppetry or object animation component. Contact Stephen Armstrong, ph. (03) 417 5978.

\* \* \* \* \*

OUR CONDOLENCES to Maeve Vella whose mother, Thelma, died just before Christmas. Maeve temporarily set aside her work with Handspan to look after her mother in the NSW country town of Booral.

\* \* \* \* \*



AUSTRALIAN  
PUPPETRY  
GUILD  
N.S.W. Branch Inc.

The Australian Puppetry Guild (NSW Branch) meets on the second Monday of each month except January and August at Petersham Public School, West Street, Petersham at 7:30pm. <Should that Monday fall on a public holiday or during school holidays, the meeting will be postponed to the following Monday.>

The Puppetry Guild publishes 10 newsletters per year and organises the Annual Puppeteers' Picnic, the first Saturday in August at Clovelly Puppet Theatre, Burnie Park, Clovelly.

Subscriptions are \$17.50/\$10 concession.

Subs and all correspondence to

Cathy Goudie, Guild Secretary, 362 Wilson St., CHIPPENDALE 2008.





A WORD  
from

LADY HORTENSE,  
O.B.E., T.B.A.

*(Lady Hortense is the Official Patron of the Sydney Story-tellers Guild and has long been associated, in one way or another, with Puppetry)*

I am very pleased to take official pleasure in greeting you from out the pages of the UNIMA Newsletter.

I was also very pleased recently to appear on the wireless to promote and discuss our gentle Art. {I wonder if the word "appear" is quite correct to use here for the wireless. No one actually saw me on the wireless, as such, though I did 'appear' at the studio of course. And the very nice presenter saw me of course, as did the fellows in the glass booth.}

Suffice it to say I was on the wireless {though not in the sense of sitting on the wireless apparatus as in the sentence 'the cat is on the wireless asleep', I mean to say.}

The event was the Australian Puppetry Guild's Annual Puppeteers' Picnic where I was asked to tell a story. {I am occasionally connected with the art of puppetry and so I readily accepted the invitation} As part of the promotion of the Picnic, I was to be interviewed on the wireless.

I do not mind telling you I was a bit nervous.. Even though I was assured that because it was the ABC hardly anyone would be listening, I still felt somewhat apprehensive. As well as my nervousness, I had to cope with a very cheeky puppet called Spike the Baby Dragon who also came to the interview.

{I wonder if the word "interview" is quite correct to use here for the wireless. No one actually 'viewed' me on the wireless, as such. Not like the sentence 'I viewed the cat on the wireless asleep'. Not at all. Because if I were asleep, I should not have been able to 'view' the cat anywhere, you see.}

But I am sure you get the drift of what I am saying so let us return to the subject at hand: Puppetry. Here was a marvellous opportunity to promote the Art of Puppetry through what the young people call "the Media".

I admit I did somewhat indulge myself by beginning with an impassioned plea for the fuchsia, which I am sure you will agree is a very neglected flower. But I am convinced it was the presence of that pink dragon that somewhat distracted me away from my intended subject and onto the inherent dangers of microwave ovens.

Then someone mentioned the Ancient Sumerians. Now, I have a lot of time for the Ancient Sumerians. {Young people who are unfamiliar with Cuneiform Literature just do not know they are alive}. But I fear I may have used perhaps too much interview time for the Sumerians.

Suffice it to say that I would like to hereby apologise to my Puppetry colleagues for my slight indiscretion in not actually mentioning Puppets at all.

In the meantime, I remain...

All the very best,

*Lady Hortense*  
xxx

## " Writing and Directing Puppet plays for Children "

By Masako Sakama  
Script Writer  
Ohanashi Caravan Center

Ohanashi Caravan serves children of three to twelve, that is, from preschool to sixth grade, though the main focus is on the younger groups. Children of these ages voice their feelings and thoughts quite openly and responsively. They seldom hide what they are thinking. We always take this into account when we perform for children. Our actors not only say their lines but talk directly to children and ask them questions. Children then respond in many ways: cheering and helping on the good characters and denouncing the bad. When this happens, the barrier between the characters on stage and the audience disappears.

The audience--that is, the children--participate in the conflict between the characters in the drama. Ohanashi Caravan's plays are composed so that the audience takes part in building up the relationship between characters and bringing the drama to a climax. As a play progresses, the children gradually become more excited and become a part of the story. At last, the children become so involved that they are able to supply the actors' lines themselves, and it is as if they were directing the story.

The stories are not "tailored" to children, at least in content, since children have an understanding of human emotions, but their form of expression takes into account the fact that the audience is composed of young people. Abstract, indirect and conceptual expressions are not suitable. What are necessary are concrete, direct and realistic forms of expression. We try to incorporate in our stories issues of contemporary society--that is, issues of the human heart that speak directly to us.

The situation in a play can be practically anything one chooses--a child's home life, for example, or the relationship a child has with his or her friends--but by exploring everyday aspects of life it is possible to discover a larger world. Children are quite quick in sensing this. They react to what they recognize as relevant to their own situations even in make-believe stories that takes place in a distant time or locale; for example, they see their own mothers and sisters in Cinderella's stepmother and stepsisters.

The main character should be an active person. Children are full of energy that is directed toward the future. They do not like characters that are easily discouraged. The hero should be righteous and not defeatist. He should overcome any problem, no matter how difficult it is. If possible, he should triumph in style and in creative fashion. He should

not be devious or fainthearted.

The dialogue should be lively and direct and not be expository. Dialogue that explains a situation or a position is rarely interesting. If necessary, it should be short. Dialogue should try to directly express a character's feelings, and it must have the power to move people. It must have the power to transcend the situation at hand.

A play must not simply be a narrative but be of dramatic interest. A play is of little value if it lacks this interest, no matter how well composed it is. The children in the audience are full of a sense of justice; they are eager to fight evil and aid the weak. If the hero responds to the audience and resolutely faces whatever difficulty confronts him, the children will be elated. The children will feel that they too have participated in the story.

Children must be drawn not only by a sense of participation in a story but by interest in the technical aspects of the presentation. The actors' particular skills--song, dance, acrobatics, and magic--can be incorporated into a play, as well as expressions, tricks and gags that are characteristic of puppets. The actors' skills determine how successfully a play is expressed. A play may be based on a wonderful idea and have a great plot, but it is the actors who communicate the idea and act out the plot. A play should be a medium that makes full use of the actors' own ideas and the children's input.

A play is put on in front of an audience, whose reactions are gauged by the actors, and it is through this feedback that the audience arrives at their eventual response to a play.

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Postage stamps issued in Japan  
for the 1988 UNIMA Congress.



WELCOME, and WELCOME BACK to:

Ron Millard,  
Katy Bowman,  
Australia Council  
Library,  
Philip Mitchell,  
Jane Davies  
Lou Chamberlin  
Lee Dixon

Fultons Lane, Birregurra, Vic.3242  
5 Westbourne St. Brunswick, Vic.3056  
PO Box 302, North Sydney 2060  
1/71 Warwick St. Hobart, Tas 7000  
25 Cambridge St. Leederville, WA 6007  
29 Graham St. Quarry Hill, Bendigo 3550  
33 Wellsford St. Stratford Vic 3862

FROM THE EDITOR:

Does this newsletter feel light to you? I have a profound suspicion that Axel has been more than editor of the newsletter, he may have been at least its midwife, if not its author.

I thank those puppeteers who sent in news but wonder where are all the others, the majority, and what are they doing? I have been so desperate for copy that I even asked a puppet to write something!

I see that there was no Puppetry in either the Festival of Sydney or the Adelaide Festival this year. Perhaps nothing is happening? I wracked my brain to recall conversations over the dinner table or snippets of information overhead at the Puppetry Guild meetings.

Even in the Overseas News section, there is only one Festival listing. It's in Iran and I personally think Iran should be culturally boycotted over the monstrous Salman Rushdie death threats.

{Did you know that 'aya' as in Ayatollah means 'helper' so that the title Ayatollah means 'helper of Allah'. The word 'aya' can also mean 'verse' so that the book title "Satanic Verses" becomes a very offensive, even blasphemous pun. Hence, the banning of the book without even having to read it. It's interesting to note that even a year after the troubles began, Britain has not changed its blasphemy laws to encompass Islam}

But as one mind closes, another opens elsewhere. A puppeteer friend in Czechoslovakia reports that the process of putting on a puppet production has been somewhat simplified since the "Quiet Revolution". There is no longer any requirement to present the show to a Censorship Committee for approval. And they've now got the next-best thing to a Philosopher/King; a playwright as President. And not just a playwright but Vaclav Havel.

My special thanks to Axel for his help in getting this newsletter out. He is still laying out, printing and posting the newsletters.

I welcome you to the Newsletter and hope that with your help the next one will be weightier (and less embarrassing to me).

Dennis

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>>>>>>>> DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 14 MAY 1990 <<<<<<<<<<

\* Send copy to Dennis Murphy, 79 Binalong Road, Old Toongabbie 2146

Thanks to this issue's contributors;  
Axel Axelrad, Annie Heitmann, Lady Hortense, Beth Jackson, PINZ,  
David Poulton, QTOP, Murray Raine, Terrapin Puppet Theatre, Masako Sakama.

\* SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW OVERDUE. \$20 per year (Joining fee \$5)  
Companies: \$60 per year. Joining fee (\$5.).  
If you have not already done so, please send your cheque now to David.

N.B. Members who have not paid their subs by June will not receive

the next newsletter. Sorry!