



PixelPapers the Seventeenth.

1 October, 2001.

[Verse](#) <> Contributed poetry, old & new

[Prose](#) <> Stories, Articles & First Chapters

[Editorial](#) <> Wordsworth<>News & Views<> etc.

[Screen](#) <> Film & television

[Gigs'n'Ads](#) <>Coming Events, advertisements, etc.

[Live Index](#) <> Contributors and titles of past issues: 60+ and 700+ respectively.

[Contact](#) <> An addressed e-mail blank instantly ready for your contributions to be pasted in, or news & views

[wacam](#)<> occasional photos

[Back Nos](#) <> The issues to date, sans irrelevant bits

(I'VE LOST MY ADDRESS BOOK AND RECENT CORRESPONDENCE, HOPEFULLY TEMPORARILY, AND HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO MAKE MY USUAL EXTENSIVE MAILOUT. PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES AND GET IN TOUCH AGAIN IF YOU HAVE HAD NO RESPONSE.

IF ANYONE OUT THERE KNOWS HOW TO RETRIEVE DATA FROM THE NETSCAPE GIBBERISH IN THE PREFERENCES FILE, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.)



Editorial

PixelPapers now enters its fourth year as a lusty

toddler, much like the little chap I drew in my book to accompany a poem about fishing in a bucket with a parsnip on a string.



Last issue was noteworthy, because apart from some editorial bits and pieces, it consisted entirely of the contributions of others. When I first embarked on the project, I estimated that, failing sufficient contributions, I had enough material to fill about twenty issues by myself, which of course was not an interesting or desirable outcome, but was like a new business having sufficient start-up capital.

I have been delighted with the response, not only from new writers but also from beginners. We have readers all over the world, thanks to our medium, and have also attracted international contributions.

My original target was about twenty poems, three or four stories and several articles. Now that this is being exceeded, there will be

some competition for publication, although I expect to be tolerant with the works of beginning writers.

Out most recent innovation, the live index, fully uses the potential of the medium so that it is possible to navigate easily through a considerable body of work that includes pieces by some of the best in Australian literature, as well as some obvious beginners.

After much difficulty, I've restored a counter to record hits. There is also a new suite of photographs of my home town, Cottesloe. Events and advertisements have been moved to a separate file so that those who are not interested do not have to wait for downloading irrelevant data.

Our new century has opened somewhat like the last, with its anarchists' bombs and assassins, but the terrible events in New York were on such a scale that they bewilder the mind. It is almost as if we are entering a period when the most bizarre stories of science and speculative fiction are emerging in reality. Let us hope that the monsters of our imagination do not materialise and that our world is not ravaged back to the moonscape of a new dark age.

There is some irony for me in the fact that the clip of the jetliner slamming into the World Trade Centre, destined to become one of the defining images of the century, was taken by Chris Hopewell, son of one of my schoolmates of yesteryear.

It also has some special resonance, as I once spent two weeks in New York on an education fellowship. (When I last spoke to Tom Shapcott, who had enjoyed a literary fellowship there, we found that we had stayed in the same cheap hotels, The Tudor on famous 42nd Street and The Pickwick on 55th.

New York is quite unlike any other city.

Wordsworth

Crusade, n. & v.i. American President, George 11, used this word very inappropriately in his description of the movement that he is attempting to build to fight terrorism in the aftermath of the horrible events on 11th September. As the word is derived from "cross" it was offensive to Muslims as it is defined as, "Christian expedition to recover Holy Land from Mohammedans: war instigated by Church for alleged religious ends" (COD). The crusades were bloody and wasteful and no credit to Christianity.

It was foolish to use *crusade* figuratively in the present circumstances. Surely presidential advisers would know that the charitable organisation, the Red Cross, has the Red Crescent as its counterpart in Muslim nations.

Crusade was not used again.

Plan, n & v.t. This word is used by telephone companies to describe the variety of arrangements offered to customers in the sense of, "scheme of arrangement; project, design; way of proceeding," (COD). Cynics may be forgiven for thinking that it has something to do with three cards or peas and thimbles, for the plan is obviously not to increase customers' savings so much as maximise the companies' profits.

News & Views

JANET WOODS.

Two more novels have been accepted by Robert Hale Ltd (UK) for hardcover publication.

Both are historical romances set in 18th century England, they are scheduled for release in May and November 2002.

ANGELINA.

FROM THIS DAY FORTH.

Australian Society of Authors

The ASA has re-designed its website. No longer do you have to wait for splashes of colour to manifest as the plainer, clearer format loads very quickly.

There is useful information for the public but access to Society news is protected by a password.

It's worth a look at: <http://www.asauthors.org>

Joker

One day, three men were hiking and unexpectedly came upon a large raging, violent river. They needed to get to the other side, but had no idea of how to do so. The first man prayed to God, saying, "Please God, give me the strength to cross this river." Poof! God gave him big arms and strong legs, and he was able to swim across the river in about two hours, after almost drowning a couple of times.

Seeing this, the second man prayed to God, saying, "Please God, give me the

strength and the tools to cross this river." Poof! God gave him a rowboat and he was able to row across the river in about an hour, after almost capsizing the boat a couple of times.

The third man had seen how this worked out for the other two, so he also prayed to God saying, "Please God, give me the strength and the tools...and the intelligence... to cross this river." And poof! God turned him into a woman. She looked at the map, hiked upstream a couple of hundred yards, then walked across the bridge.

SEND THIS TO A SMART WOMAN WHO NEEDS A
LAUGH AND TO THE GUYS YOU THINK CAN HANDLE IT!

Two men were sitting next to each other at a bar. After a while, one guy looks at the other and says, "I can't help but think, from listening to you, that you're from Ireland.

The other guy responds proudly, "Yes, that I am!"

The first guy says, "So am I! And where about from Ireland might you be?"

The other guy answers, "I'm from Dublin, I am."

The first guy responds, "Sure and begora, and so am I! And what street did you live on in Dublin?"

The other guy says, "A lovely little area it was, I lived on McCleary Street in the old central part of town."

The first guy says, "Faith & it's a small world, so did I! And to what school would you have been going?"

The other guy answers, "Well now, I went to St. Mary's of course."

The first guy gets really excited, and says, "And so did I. Tell me, what year did you graduate?"

The other guy answers, "Well, now, I graduated in 1964."

The first guy exclaims, "The Good Lord must be smiling down upon us! I can hardly believe our good luck at winding up in the same bar on this very night. Can you believe it, I graduated from St. Mary's in 1964 my own self."

About this time, another guy walks into the bar, sits down, and orders a beer. The bartender walks over shaking his head and mutters, "It's going to be a long night tonight, the Murphy twins are drunk again."

[Top](#)



Longitude, Channel 2

This two part film originating from Britain's Granada, tells not only the story of the country genius, carpenter, John Harrison, who invented the chronometer in the 18th Century, but also the story of his populariser and horologist, Rupert Gould, two centuries later. The technique of running two such stories more or less simultaneously has been done before, but cutting between the two is done so abruptly that it causes much confusion and jars, especially when exactly the same location frames both. The Gould story is so dreary that its value in exposition is questionable: I am sure that Harrison's story could be made to stand alone to be much more satisfying. There is an entirely gratuitous and irrelevant American epilogue and prologue, doubtless to satisfy the American co-sponsor and the peculiar American market.

The film was written and directed by Charles Sturridge and based on a book by Dava Sobel.

In these days of satellite navigation we have forgotten the importance of a means to establish longitude and the film shows the potential for disaster very well, with the debris and drowned crew members of four of a squadron of British ships piled on the shores of the Scilly Isles, attended by some looting locals.

Sailing ships were especially vulnerable as they could otherwise blunder into lee shore situations from which they could not escape in stormy weather. Australia's Western coast is littered with the wrecks of Dutch ships from the 17th century, chiefly because they misjudged the northerly change of course after easting from the Cape of Good Hope and struck the alien shores of Western Australia.

Harrison spent fifty years of his life in attempting to win the huge prize of twenty thousand pounds from the British Government for solving the problem of longitude. (An assistant surgeon in the British navy earned about twenty five pounds per year in Smollet's time, so that the prize was considerable.) All the cranks were attracted, including proponents of *the sympathy of wounds*, cited also by Eco in his book on the longitude theme, *The Island of the Day Before*. (This consisted of wounding a dog with a knife, then transporting the dog on board ship but retaining the knife in London. Because of the relation between the two, if the knife was put into the fire or plunged into the powder of sympathy(?) at noon, Greenwich Mean Time, the dog, wherever it was, would yelp, thus establishing accurate time!)

The maritime shots of fleets of ships and on board ship are stunningly detailed. I was interested, too, to hear a reference to the orloop deck, a term I encountered when researching about Dutch vessels of a century earlier, and also to see the rapid dismantling of the captain's cabin which was done whenever a warship went to battle stations. (In this case it was to make room for Harrison's massive first chronometer.

Harrison's problem in gaining his prize was exacerbated by snobbery. The judging panel consisted chiefly of academically trained astronomers who believed that the solution was bound to be astronomical and likely to be based on moon observations, despite the fact that the moon could only be seen on twenty days of its cycle and not at all in bad weather! They could not entertain the thought that a carpenter without any formal academic study could better them. It took a further resolution of parliament to have the prize awarded to him in his old age. (Had he been anything but an artisan, he would doubtless have won a peerage or knighthood, as well.) The clincher to his success was from an Australian

connection, Captain James Cook, who had an awesome reputation for accurate navigation and lauded Harrison's chronometer.

Dimensions, Channel 2.

This series, filling the 6.30pm - 7.00pm is largely entertaining and successful, despite some critics decrying it and citing preference for re-runs of old comedies. Personally, I would tolerate another round of the classic *Yes Minister* some time in the very distant future but would do anything to escape the other old chestnuts, remarkably good as they were in the past.

Monday's Media Dimensions covers some of the Media Watch territory, but having more time allows it to introduce some positive aspects of the media instead of unremitting negative criticism. Annette Shun wah is a very able and interesting presenter. Jean Kitson's segment on magazines is a delight.

Health dimensions on Tuesdays is hosted by Norman Swan with Tanya Ahmed.

People Dimensions on Wednesdays is hosted by James O'Loughlin, with reporter Claudia Taranto, and is "a program that looks at relationships between people of all ages and how they interact with each other". It sometimes descends into dementians.

Thursdays, On the Move is hosted by DAVE MORLEY and focuses on cars and modes of transport. I find it the least interesting, but watchable.

Changi, Sunday, October 14 at 8:30pm on ABC TV,

This mini series is written by John Doyle, aka Rampaging Roy Slavin of Roy and HG. The setting is the well known Singapore prison camp during part of World War 2. Doyle's story, on the evidence of the first episode is compelling viewing, well conceived, well written and beautifully acted and filmed.

Two things jar very slightly, but how could it be otherwise? The actors are a little on the chubby side for starving men and the Japanese soldiers seem to be physically too large for the times. (Japanese were in fact 25 cms shorter on average then, than is the case now.) One line, "When do we get to go home," with its clumsy verb cluster, would not have been uttered at that time. But perhaps John is too young to remember when the redundant "get to" crept into the vernacular.

The use of flackbacks, which can be confusing, was well handled. As the series tells the stories of six young soldiers at Changi and in the present time, this augurs well for the remaining episodes.

This is a five star achievement.

BANG RAJAN (THAILAND - - 2000): REVIEW SYDNEY ASIA

PACIFIC FILM FESTIVAL AUGUST 9-18, 2001:

Bang Rajan portrays the historical battle of 1765 between the forces of the Burmese Empire and the Siamese. Like, for example, the contrast between the tough-guy patriot general, Barnes, and the rebellious, anti-authoritarian, distributive justice, alternative life-style general, Elias, of Oliver Stone's Platoon, or like the hypocritical treacherous tandem confusion in portrayals of Oscar Wilde's homosexuality between admiring sympathy for Wilde and odious acceptance of his foul-mouthed, putrid, English-public abusers, the Burmese in Bang Rajan seem to be somewhat demonized in portrayal over against the more favoured Siamese, whether or not, we might suppose, this historically was the true relation between the forces. And like Australian films such as Gallipoli, Bang Rajan is notable for following the fortunes of an ultimately vanquished rather than victorious force, the Burmese by the film's conclusion finally overcoming resistance to capture the besieged Siamese village which is the film's focus. The film is a good portrayal of the contingency of human existence that has been in Asia -- brutish, short, not rising above the level of the vain power of violence to control and to subdue; although Buddhism and its doctrine of the afterlife, or the beyond-life, appears to provide some scope and incentive for ultimate purpose and meaning, as well as love between fellow beings, man and woman, the virtues of heroism and courage, and to invest some understanding of the operation of justice and mercy. Yet the ultimate battleground, none the less, remains the conflict of war, in spite of the farther speculations of Buddha. The film dispenses some simple Eastern philosophy such as comprehension of the discrepancy between present action and ultimate human powerlessness, without providing any greater answer than that, although men cannot travel to and then from the bourn beyond death, there remains the imperative of present action and existence. The film's cinematography and music capture well not only Buddhist clarity and longing but also the commotion, carnage and savagery of war.

Michael Haig



[PixelPapers TheSixteenth](#)

[PixelPapers The Fifteenth](#)

[PixelPapers The Fourteenth](#)

[PixelPapers The Thirteenth](#)

[PixelPapers The Twelfth](#)

[PixelPapers The Eleventh](#)

[PixelPapers The Tenth](#)

[PixelPapers The Ninth](#)

[PixelPapers The Eighth](#)
[PixelPapers The Seventh](#)
[PixelPapers The Sixth](#)
[PixelPapers The Fifth](#)
[PixelPapers The Fourth](#)
[PixelPapers The Third](#)
[PixelPapers The Second](#)
[PixelPapers The First](#)



[Letters or Submissions](#)

[Top](#)