

BRUM GROUP NEWS

December 1995

Issue 291

*The monthly newsletter of the Birmingham Science Fiction Group
(Honorary Presidents: Brian W Aldiss, Harry Harrison & Bob Shaw)*

GROUP CHAIRMAN - CAROL MORTON, SECRETARY - ANNE WOODFORD, NEWSLETTER EDITOR - MARTIN TUDOR, TREASURER - STEVE JONES, PUBLICITY OFFICER - SARAH FREAKLEY, ORDINARY MEMBER - ALAN WOODFORD, NOVACON 25 CHAIRMAN - TONY MORTON, NOVACON 26 CHAIRMAN - CAROL MORTON.

*Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!*

15th December 1995: Christmas Meeting Beer and Skittles. (Contact Carol Morton on 01384-825386 to see if there are any places left.)

19th January 1996: Annual General Meeting and Auction, 7.45pm for 8pm, in the upstairs Function Room of the Australian Bar, corner of Hurst Street and Bromsgrove Street in Birmingham city centre. (NB: If you receive any unwanted Christmas presents, or have anything else you would like to donate, please bring it along to this meeting!)

16th February 1996: ANDREW HARMAN, author of THE SORCERER'S APPENDIX and THE FROGS OF WAR, will be speaking to the Group, 7.45pm for 8pm, in the upstairs Function Room of the Australian Bar, corner of Hurst Street and Bromsgrove Street in Birmingham city centre.

The BSFG meets at 7.45pm on the 3rd Friday of every month (unless otherwise notified) in the upstairs Function Room of the Australian Bar, corner of Hurst Street and Bromsgrove Street in Birmingham city centre. The annual subscription rates (which include twelve copies of this newsletter and reduced price entry to meetings) are £10.00 per person, or £13.50 for 2 members at the same address. Cheques etc. should be made payable to "the Birmingham Science Fiction Group" and sent to the Treasurer, Steve Jones, c/o 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Mids., B66 4SH. Book reviews, review copies and other contributions and enquiries regarding the Brum Group News to: Martin Tudor, Newsletter Editor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX (NB: change of address).

**ATTEND THE BSFG MEETING
OF YOUR CHOICE FOR FREE!**

**WHEN YOU CONVINCED A
FRIEND TO JOIN THE
BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE
FICTION GROUP...**

**ASK THE TREASURER
FOR FURTHER DETAILS.**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS OFFER DOES NOT APPLY
WHEN THOSE INTRODUCED HAVE BEEN MEMBERS
OF THE BSFG WITHIN THE LAST 18 MONTHS.**

COLOPHON

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Personal opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the committee or the membership of the Birmingham Science Fiction Group.

All text by Martin Tudor except where stated otherwise. This issue was printed on the CRITICAL WAVE photocopier.

For details of WAVE's competitive prices contact Martin Tudor at the editorial address on the cover.

Many thanks this issue to BERNIE EVANS for producing the address labels and transferring files; STEVE GREEN, CRITICAL WAVE and WHAT'S ON for the news; TONY BERRY for the use of his spare room.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

UNTIL 27 DECEMBER 1995: *THE BORROWERS*, Britain's first major production of Mary Norton's children's classic. The Birmingham Stage Company presents *THE BORROWERS* at the Old Reo Theatre, Station Street, Birmingham, tickets £9.50, £6.50, family of four £28.00. Call 0121-605-4444 for further details.

UNTIL 6 JANUARY 1996: *THE WIZARD OF OZ* by Frank L Baum will be performed by the Worcester Theatre Company at the Worcester Swan Theatre. Call 01905-27322 for details.

UNTIL 20 JANUARY 1996: *TOAD OF TOAD HALL*. A A Milne's version of Kenneth Grahame's children's story *THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS*. Tickets from £7.00. The Mainhouse Birmingham Rep, Centenary Square, Birmingham. Box Office 0121 236 4455.

UNTIL 25 JANUARY 1996: *THE DEVIL IS AN ASS*, Ben Jonson's tale of devil worship, wife stealing, major business frauds and the strange appearance of a Spanish lady, as Hell is transported to seventeenth century London.

At the Swan Theatre Stratford-upon-Avon. Call 01789-295623 for further details.

UNTIL 27 JANUARY 1996: *FAUST PARTS I AND II* Swan Theatre Stratford-upon-Avon. Call 01789-295623 for further details.

UNTIL 3 FEBRUARY 1996: *ARABIAN NIGHTS*, "heroes and villains, magic lamps and jinnees, live music and puppets; all this and more in MAC's exciting Christmas production. *ARABIAN NIGHTS* is a glorious technicolour blend of five very different stories told in five very different ways but always with the same magical elements of fantasy and folklore. The stories are a mixture of the familiar - a Voyage of Sinbad, the original tale of Aladdin - and the unfamiliar - fascinating fables from Algeria, Egypt and Syria. Live and lively music accompaniment will add a rhythmic touch as Western technology and World Music meet the Mid East." The show is adapted and directed by John Ginman and designed by Alison Drake. The Midlands Art Centre theatre, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, tickets £5.45. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

15 DECEMBER 1995: *BSFG CHRISTMAS MEETING - BEER & SKITTLES* at the Samson & Lion, Wordsley. (Call Carol Morton on 01384-825386 to see if there are any places left.)

16 DECEMBER 1995: *COMIC MART* at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham. Opens noon. Contact: Golden Orbit, 9 Stratford Way, Huntington, York, YO3 9YW.

16 DECEMBER 1995 - 13 JANUARY 1996: *THE SNOW QUEEN* by Stuart Paterson, the story of a little boy stolen away by the wicked Snow Queen. Can the love and courage of Gerda, his friend, save him? The Crescent Theatre, Brindley Place, Broad Street, Birmingham. Call 0121-643-5858 for further details.

22-23 DECEMBER 1995: *THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN* directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, 1995. "A vibrant, bubbling cauldron of breathtaking f/x, gross-out humour and in-your-face imagery ... it roller-coasters in the ne plus ultra of grotesque adult fairy tales. A dark, Dickensian \$14 million-plus pinball machine of a movie, it's like a loony-tunes fantasy sprung from the head of Jules Verne. Wildly imaginative, elaborate and ingenious, and filled to amazing bursting point" says *VARIETY* with unaccustomed restraint. Showing at the Electric Cinema, Station Street, Birmingham. Call 0121-643-7277.

22-23 DECEMBER 1995: BRAZIL Terry Gilliam's classic futuristic, fantastic distopian tale of bureaucracy gone mad. Showing at the Electric Cinema, Station Street, Birmingham. Call 0121-643-7277.

27-30 DECEMBER 1995: CASPER live-action version of the popular comic strip concerning the antics of a young ghost. Showing at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

27-30 DECEMBER 1995: BATMAN FOREVER directed by Joel Schumacher, with Val Kilmer as the Caped Crusader. Showing at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

4 JANUARY 1996: THE WIZARD OF OZ directed by Victor Fleming, starring Judy Garland in the 1939 classic. Showing at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

4-6 JANUARY 1996: MONSTER MASH "When the tranquility of a Celestial library is shattered its Caretaker transmits a mental plea for help. Those that respond must confront a terrifying barrage of horror.... Who is the deranged Doctor breathing life into the reconstructed remains of long-dead corpses? Who is the mysterious figure who stalks the Paris Opera House? And how is it possible for these fiends to come together within this Mash of Monsters? An original and bizarre nightmare devised by the 'talented' Stage Two Theatre Company ... Creepy costumes combine with devilish dances culminating in a glam-rock finale ('Vncent Price meets Gary Glitter')." The Midlands Art Centre theatre, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, tickets £5.00 (£4.00 conc.). Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

10 JANUARY 1996: THE YEAR OF THE HARE directed by Risto Jarva, arguably Finland's most gifted director (who died in a car crash on his way home from the premiere of this film in 1977). "A bittersweet portrait of an advertising executive who takes off into the woods and makes friends with a hare. So charming it might have strayed from the pages of Beatrix Potter. Witty and relaxed, this is a film that is infectiously enjoyable, and way ahead of its time. Showing at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

17 JANUARY 1996: THE WHITE REINDEER directed by Erik Blomberg, 1952. A stirring Lapp saga which tells the tale of the lusty Pirita (played by the director's wife Mirjami Kuosmanen), "born a witch, evil spirits in her belly...". Pirita lures one man after another to their doom, until she has a final confrontation with her beloved husband. Showing at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

19 JANUARY 1996: BSGF AGM & AUCTION, 7.45 for 8pm in the upstairs room of the Australian Bar, corner of Hurst Street and Bromsgrove Street, Birmingham city centre. NB: If you receive any unwanted Christmas presents, or have anything you would like to donate for the Auction, please bring them/it along to the meeting.

22-25 JANUARY 1996: NIGHTWATCH directed by Ole Bornedal, horror movie set in a hospital mortuary, some nice black humorous touches. Showing at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for further details.

5-6 FEBRUARY 1996: THE GREAT DIVORCE the world premiere of Saltmine Theatre Company's production of this classic by C S Lewis. Demonstrating the author's formidable talent for fable telling and allegory, the characters find themselves in a bus which plies between Heaven and Hell - anyone, it seems, can make the journey from one to the other.... Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon. Call 01789-295623.

13 FEBRUARY 1996: THE COMPANY, 2020, LTD. World premiere of a new musical from Rex Pogsom and Graham Westcott, performed by the Young East Warwickshire Theatre (YEWTH). Set 25 years in the future: the government has been privatised, computer technology provides 24 hour entertainment and information and record keeping is stored in hologram form. The potential in technology is for fun, enlightenment, enquiry and ever faster data retrieval, but the potential in human nature is for mind control more sinister than ever before. Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Theatre, tickets £2-£6, call 01789-295623.

16 FEBRUARY 1996: ANDREW HARMAN, author of THE SORCERER'S APPENDIX, THE FROGS OF WAR etc, will be speaking to the BSGF, 7.45 for 8pm in the upstairs room of the Australian Bar, corner of Hurst Street and Bromsgrove Street, Birmingham city centre.

23-25 FEBRUARY 1996: **DISECTION** the Intersection post-mortem con, Rutland Hotel, Sheffield. Attending £24.00 (£25.00 by credit card). Contact: 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

5-6 MARCH 1996: **IT'S A WOMAN'S WORLD**, world premiere of this new show by Michelle Dailey, performed by Stratford-upon-Avon High School. Set 100 years in the future with women now firmly in the dominant role. Men have become househusbands, staying at home, doing the housework, bringing up the children and catering to the breadwinners every need. Everything is going along smoothly, or is it? Suddenly, more men are being seen in the workplace, they don't just want menial jobs, some want careers! But they can only get as far as their female bosses will let them! Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Theatre, tickets £4-£9, call 01789-295623.

8-30 March 1996: **DIVINE RIGHT** in the corridors of political power left and right are combining to form an influential republican movement. Meanwhile, the heir to the throne takes a radical decision, throwing the spotlight onto his son. It is the beginning of a new millennium and the young prince finds an unknown world as he goes to discover his country. Peter Whelan's play asks the question for how much longer will Britain remain a monarchy? Tickets £6.50-£15.50 (concessions available). The Mainhouse Birmingham Rep, Centenary Square, Birmingham. Box Office 0121 236 4455.

12-14 MARCH 1996: **THE STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE** by Robert Louis Stevenson, adapted by Robin Brooks, performed by the Empty Space Theatre Company. "Do you know the real story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde? How one man's experiments led him to a terrifying end? Now the original and disturbing story with all its horror and excitement is brought to life, twisting a course of tantalising suspense in this famous psychological thriller. The dark side of human nature, lurking just below the surface is laid bare amid the fog and looming shadows of Victorian Edinburgh." Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Theatre, tickets £4-£10, call 01789-295623.

21-24 MARCH 1996: **YARNSPINNERS**, performed by Kaleidoscope Theatre, "encounters the world of faerie as amidst wonder, richness, strangeness and an ever-present peril, the story of a quest for an everlasting thread unravels. It is a tale of times and tides long gone and for today. A tale of universal

significance. Faeriefolk gather to tease and stir and to create a tapestry richly interwoven with drama, dance, music, mime, verse and imagery". Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, £4-£9, call 01789-295623.

26-30 MARCH 1996: **DR FAUSTUS**. Compass Theatre Company present Christopher Marlowe's epic tale. In return for 24 years of knowledge, power and pleasure, Faustus sells his soul to the devil, now the price must be paid. As the clock ticks toward midnight Faustus waits.... Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, £4-£9, call 01789-295623.

5-8 APRIL 1996: **EVOLUTION** 47th UK National Convention, the Radisson Edwardian Hotel at Heathrow. Guests of honour: Colin Greenland, Bryan Talbot, Jack Cohen. Attending £28.00, supporting £16.00. Contact: 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London, NW3 6PX.

6-8 APRIL 1996: **GENERATIONS II** the 30th birthday celebration of STAR TREK presented by Stargazer Productions International Ltd at the Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London. Guests: Leonard Nimoy (Spock), Roxanne Biggs-Dawson (Belanna Torres), Robert Picardo (Dr Zimmerman), Walter Koenig (Chekov), George Takei (Sulu), James Doohan (Scotty) - all subject to work commitments. (NB: Some guests may be appearing only once over the show days. Some guests have only agreed to a maximum one hour autograph session. Stargazer cannot guarantee that every attendee will obtain an autograph.) Some of the features of the day will include: "First class audio and visual display; specially designed laser display; galaxy class dealers room (with dealers from both sides of the Atlantic); behind the scenes slide and video presentations; charity auction with excellent collectables from the sci-fi genre; fancy dress competitions; and for the first time in the UK - the Museum of Science Fiction, with original props, costumes and curiosities from your favourite sci-fi shows." Privileged seating £45.00 per day, Premiere £35.00, Premium £30.00, Standard £20.00 and Economy £10.00. A 10% discount scheme is available for attendees booking for all three days - this applies only to tickets purchased that are of the same type. All tickets are sold as non-refundable except in the case of cancellation of the event. Contact: Stargazer Productions International Ltd, 4 Aspenwood House, Ipsley Street, Redditch, B98 7AR.

6 APRIL 1996: **GENERATIONS II THE PARTY** at Le Palais, Hammersmith London, from 8.30pm "till

very, very late". Stargazer Productions International Ltd are hosting a "stupendous party ... in attendance will be guests from the hit show STAR TREK along with other celebrities ... the theme of the evening will of course be STAR TREK in all its forms and fancy dress code will be observed ... the evening will entail a first class presentation of music hosted by Le Palais best Disc Jockeys, fancy dress competitions, promotional give aways, and lots, lots more ... the event will be covered by media from around the world". Tickets £12.50, which includes a "special gift pack only available at the party". "Several bars will be open along with food outlets". Contact: Stargazer Productions International Ltd, 4 Aspenwood House, Ipsley Street, Redditch, B98 7AR.

6 APRIL 1996: THE TIME WIZARD, presented by the All Electric Puppet Theatre, featuring the recorded voice of Jon Pertwee. "Join the Time Wizard along with a little man in a red hat, robots and a whole host of magical creatures in the race to save the precious sun diamond from a pack of evil rodents and their alien monster. Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, £3-£7, call 01789-295623.

22-3 JUNE 1996: BABCOM '96 BABYLON 5 "event" presented by Stargazer Productions International Ltd at Le Palis, Hammersmith, London. Guests: Claudia Christian (Cmdr Ivanova), Jerry Doyle (Garibaldi), Andrea Thompson (Talia Winters), Richard Biggs (Dr Franklin), Mira Furlan (Ambassador Delenn), Peter Jurasik (Ambassador Londo) - all subject to work commitments. (NB: Some guests may be appearing only once over the show days. Some guests have only agreed to a maximum one hour autograph session. Stargazer cannot guarantee that every attendee will obtain an autograph.) "Babcom '96 will have lots of extra attractions such as charity auction, lasers, video wall, behind the scenes specials, specialist merchandise and much more". There will be two price bands, with a 10% discount scheme for those attending both days in the same price band. For further information contact: Stargazer Productions International Ltd, 4 Aspenwood House, Ipsley Street, Redditch, B98 7AR.

8-10 NOVEMBER 1996: NOVACON 26 the Brum Group's own convention, Hotel Ibis, Ladywell Walk (off Hurst Street), Birmingham. Guest of Honour David Gemmill. Attending membership £25.00 until Easter 1996, supporting £10.50. Progress Report #1 and hotel booking forms

now available. Contact: Tony Morton, 14 Park Street, Lye, Stourbridge, West Mids., DY9 8SS.

29 AUGUST - 2 SEPTEMBER 1996: LACON III 54th World SF Convention, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim Hilton and Towers and Anaheim Marriott, California, USA. Guests: James White, Roger Corman, Elsie Wollheim, Connie Willis (Toastmaster), Takumi and Sachiko Shibano (Fan Guests of Honour). Attending \$110.00, Supporting \$35.00. Contact: c/o SCIFI, PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409, USA.

14-17 FEBRUARY 1997: ATTITUDE: THE CONVENTION at the Abbey Hotel, Great Malvern. Attending £23.00. Contact: First Floor Flat, 14 Prittlewell Square, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1DW.

28-31 MARCH 1997: INTERVENTION the 48th UK National SF Convention, Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. Theme "communication". Guests Brian W Aldiss, David Langford, Jon Berg and Octavia Butler (NOT Robert Silverberg as previously announced). Attending £25.00, supporting £15.00, cheques (payable to "Intervention") should be sent to: 12 Crowsbury Close, Emsworth, Hants., PO10 7TS.

3-5 SEPTEMBER 1997: LONESTARCON 55th World SF Convention, San Antonio, Texas, USA. Attending was \$65.00. Contact: PO Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755-2277, USA.

27 DECEMBER 1999 - 2 JANUARY 2000: MILLENNIUM. Venue to be announced, but definitely in Northern Europe (probably a BeNeLux country or UK), £3.00 (f10.00) per year, to be deducted from eventual membership fee (to be announced before 1997). Contact: Malcolm Reid, 186 Casewick Road, West Norwood, London, SE27 0SZ.

Although details are correct to the best of my knowledge, I advise readers to contact organizers prior to travelling. Always enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope when writing to any of the above contact addresses. Please mention the BRUM GROUP NEWS when replying to listings or advertisements.

If you know of any events which you think may be of interest to members of the BSFG please send details to the Editor.

If you have attended any events or seen any films or videos that you would like to recommend to other members (or warn them of) please feel free to write a report/review and send it to the editorial address.

*Chairman's
Piece*

by Carol Morton

Another year gone and time for me to give you my report on the year.

I suppose the best I can say is that this year has been mixed. We have had some entertaining guests including some old friends. In no special order they were: Bob Shaw, Anne Gay, Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen, Storm Constantine, David Gemmell, Robert Rankin, Dave Hardy, Iain Banks, Peter Hamilton and Mark Chadbourn. I must at this point say a very big thank you to Dave Hardy, Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen who stepped in at the last minute to talk to us due to the last minute cancellation by Colin Greenland (not once, but twice). With the customary debate with the Birmingham University SF and Fantasy Society being replaced with a quiz, the Beer and Skittles and the AGM/Auction it makes an impressive line-up of meetings. But where were the members?

I know that there have been illnesses, moves and a Worldcon, but some meetings were very sparsely attended; in fact the quiz participants very nearly out-numbered the audience. To those members who turned up month after month - thank you for your continued support; but to the rest of you I can only stress that it is not enough to pay your membership fees, the group needs you to attend the meetings to keep us afloat. If you don't attend the meetings what is the point in keeping the group going? The committee work hard and give of their time to bring you not only an entertaining meeting each month, but also a chance to meet like minded people to chat with. I personally will do my utmost to keep the group going because I know I would miss the people and the opportunity to meet the people behind the names on the books I buy, no few of whom I now count amongst my friends.

On a more positive note, this year, to mark the 25th year of the group, we asked Bob Shaw to become our third Honorary President. Bob was staggered to be offered the "job" and gave us a very good meeting and was a

wonderful guest of honour at Novacon 25. Novacon 25 itself was another high point of the year. To those BSGF members who were there I need say no more, but if you weren't there I can assure you that you missed one of the best conventions for a long time; so my thanks go to Tony Morton and his committee. The rest of my committee also have my thanks as they have worked very hard throughout the year and have come up with some good ideas for the future of the group. Once again my thanks, most of them will be standing for re-election to the committee next year, so whoever is Chairman then will have a hard-working and enthusiastic committee behind them.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**BIRMINGHAM
SCIENCE FICTION
GROUP:
COMMITTEE POSTS
1996**

by Bernie Evans

With the A.G.M. looming on the 19th of January 1996 it's time for all you enthusiastic members to send in your nominations for committee posts. You can, of course, nominate from the floor at the meeting if you wish, but if you KNOW you will be standing, send in your written nomination (and platform of no more than 250 words) so it can be printed in the January edition of *BRUM GROUP NEWS* for everyone to see.

Written nominations must reach Martin Tudor by the 20th of December 1995. He can be contacted either at the Beer and Skittles Evening or by post to 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, WV13 1HX.

So, what positions are there?

CHAIRMAN

Will chair and keep order at all meetings, and will also hold regular committee meetings (at least one committee meeting per

quarter). Will contact speakers, arrange accommodation where necessary and ensure they get to the meeting on time.

SECRETARY

Should be able to type, attend all committee meetings and produce Minutes of these to be sent to all Committee Members. Likewise the A.G.M. or other Group meetings. May also be asked to write to prospective speakers, etc.

TREASURER

If you don't know what a treasurer does, don't bother to apply!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Has to produce the newsletter every month. Access to a computer and desktop publishing software and/or a word processor is an advantage, but not a necessity, a typewriter and a pair of scissors will suffice. The ability to type AND meet a monthly deadline ARE a necessity, as is the ability to drag contributions out of people, ditto artwork. A knowledge of design/layout is also an advantage.

PUBLICITY OFFICER

Will produce A4 posters, A5 flyers, and so on for meetings, and arrange for them to be displayed in local shops, libraries, and as many other outlets as possible. Will also produce general publicity for the Group, and contact radio and tv if necessary. Enthusiasm and the ability to produce new IDEAS are an important factor.

In addition two other ORDINARY MEMBERS may be appointed by the Committee any time during the year at the discretion of the Committee.

So, that's who we need. Which do YOU want to do?

JOPHAN REPORT #90

Congratulations to Brum Group honorary president Bob Shaw on his rumoured marriage to Nancy Tucker on 16 December in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Within weeks of the announcement of his candidature for TAFF Michael J ("Simo") Simpson's "Dirty Subliminal Tricks Department"

at SFX magazine are already hard at work, reports Dave Langford. The following excerpt is from SFX #7 (page 14, "This Just In..."):

MYSTERIOUS WORLD

Arthur C Clarke's next novel will be TRIGGER, co-written with Michael P Kube-McDowell (author of the "Sim O'Fortaff" trilogy). It concerns a device which can remotely detonate any explosive or ammo, rendering all conventional weapons useless....

We await with interest a response from Tudor's campaign team....

Novacon 25 was held over the weekend of 3-5 November at the Chamberlain Hotel in Birmingham. Guests of Honour were Brian W Aldiss, Harry Harrison and Bob Shaw with Iain M Banks as Special Guest. Including day members the convention had 410 attendees and the hotel was pleased to announce that bar takings had topped £10,000 by Sunday lunch-time.

At the Book Auction on Saturday £59.60 was raised for TAFF, £39.43 for GUFF and the convention's raffle raised £170.55 for the RNIB's Talking Books for the Blind project. Harry Harrison organised a signing session and collection for the Diabetics Association which raised approximately £235. In addition to this a collection for long-time fan Brian Burgess (recently admitted to a nursing home and thus missing Novacon for the first time) raised £215.00. This will be passed to him by Greg Pickersgill, who also collected a Special Nova Award for "Best Fan" on Brian's behalf.

An impromptu United Fan Funds Auction, organised by Pam Wells, at the Black Country Beer Tasting on the Sunday night raised over £300 half of which will go to the Mexicon Hat with the remainder being split between TAFF, GUFF and the Friends of Foundation. The bulk of the £300+ was raised by Nic Farey's head being shaved (£100+) and his moustache being shaved (a further £100). Farey raised a further £5 by having "Tudor for TAFF" shaved into the stubble on his head and then charged a pound a time for people to take photographs!

The terminally sad amongst you (are you paying attention Mr Woodford?) will be delighted to learn that Stargazer Productions International Ltd are now selling the BABYLON 5 soundtrack by Christopher Francke for a mere £12.50 (they don't mention whether this is on CD, tape or vinyl) and the album OL' YELLOW EYES IS BACK by Brent Spiner (Data)

(CD £15.99, cassette £13.99) with backing vocals from "The Sunspots": Patrick Stewart, Jonathan Frakes and Michael Dorn. Not to mention the OL' YELLOW EYES IS BACK t-shirt (£10.99), tote bag (£9.99), mug (£8.50) and mousepad (price to be announced). Contact: Stargazer Productions International Ltd, 4 Aspenwood House, Ipsley Street, Redditch, B98 7AR.

A black wooden crate containing 20 original oil paintings by prominent illustrator, Don Maitz, and three others by author/illustrator Janny Wurtz, was stolen from a Federal Express delivery van in Baltimore on 26 October. The paintings were done in oils on masonite, with themes including wizards, knights, dragons, and whimsical fantasy creatures. The artwork was being shipped from the home of the artists in Florida to the World Fantasy Convention in Baltimore for an exhibition.

Included in the 20 works by Don Maitz were two produced for the special edition of Stephen King's DESPERATION, due out from Donald Grant; 17 new works for "Guardians", a card game series just released that has sold over a million copies; and a book cover illustration for THE MISTS OF CALEDON. Maitz is best known for his illustration of the pirate from Captain Morgan Spiced Rum. He has won three Hugo awards for illustration and has also received a Silver Medal from the Society of Illustrators in New York.

The three paintings by Janny Wurtz were covers she painted for her own novels, among them an October release in paperback from HarperCollins entitled KEEPER OF THE KEYS; its forthcoming sequel SHADOWFANE; and the jacket painting for HarperCollins' hardcover edition of WARHOST OF VASTMARK, which was released in August. Wurtz is well-known as a novelist, with seven titles to her credit; and as an illustrator. Her cover for her hardcover novel, CURSE OF THE MISTWRAITH, just won this year's Chesley award for Best Hardbound Cover from the Association of Science Fiction Artists and her cover for MASTER OF WHITE STORM has twice won Best in Show at the World Fantasy Convention.

The crate containing the paintings disappeared at mid morning, on Paca Street, in the vicinity of the Inner Harbor Marriott in Baltimore. None of the other packages on the truck were disturbed. The loss has severely upset the artists, who had shipped them for exhibition purposes only. Insurance on the paintings was a mere \$500 of their estimated \$100,000 value, due to a policy by Federal Express concerning limited liability on works

of original art. The artists relied on Federal Express's renowned tracking system to inform them promptly in event of mishap, however, the theft was not reported to them until 11pm, nearly 12 hours after the event, despite repeated calls on their part to have the crate traced. A police report was belatedly filed by Federal Express 24 hours later, at the artist's insistence. Due to this slow response, the only chance for recovery of their work is the prompt and wide publicity of the images, that they can be recognised if they emerge in public and draw attention. A reward is offered for their return, damaged or whole.

A list of the stolen work follows with details on titles and dimension (size in inches). Identification is on the back of each painting. Additional information and colour images for publication can be obtained upon request from their publishers: HarperCollins, Laura Baker, publicist, Tel: 212 207-7000, Fax: 7759, or Friedlander Publishing, Michael Friedlander, Tel: 412 854-0200, Fax: 4470, or try Merryl Futerman at HarperCollins in the UK on Tel: 0181-741-7070.

Janny Wurtz:

Keeper of the Key, oil on masonite, 23.5x30.
Warhost of Vastmark, oil on masonite, 20x30.
Shadowfane, oil on masonite, 22.5x30.

Don Maitz:

Archer, oil on masonite, 9x12.
Caledon of the Mists, oil on masonite, 24x20.
Captain Red Nose, oil on masonite, 15x11.
Cleric, oil on masonite, 11x14.
DESPERATION: The Dream, oil on masonite, 11x14.
DESPERATION: The Wolf, oil on masonite, 24x18.
Dispell Magic, oil on masonite, 8x10.
Grand Avatar, oil on masonite, 9x12.
Grand Phoba Sheneeble, oil on masonite, 8x10.
Knight Corporal, oil on masonite, 9x12.
Lancer, oil on masonite, 11x14.
Paladin, oil on masonite, 14x11.
Seer, oil on masonite, 11x14.
Sheneeble, oil on masonite, 8x10.
Sorcerer, oil on masonite, 9x12.
Swordsman, oil on masonite, 9x12.
Vampire Hunter, oil on masonite, 9x12.
Visionary, oil on masonite, 15x11.
Warty Fiend, oil on masonite, 8x10.
White Unicorn, oil on masonite, 14 x11.

Ex-Brum Group and Novacon 25 chairman, Tony Morton, has been selected by the local branch of the Labour party to stand for election as a councillor in the Dudley by-elections in the New Year.

THE LEGEND OF DEATHWALKER by David Gemmell, guest of honour at next year's Novacon, is scheduled to appear from Bantam in February as a £15.99 hardcover. It continues the cycle of "Druss" stories which started in LEGEND and continued in DRUSS: THE LEGEND.

The British Fantasy Society's NEWSLETTER reports in its November/December issue that it is *rumoured* that Channel Four *may* be showing Terry Pratchett's DISCWORLD series towards the end of next year. They also report that Pratchett is doing the re-write for the pilot of GUARDS! GUARDS! for Granada. Apparently this is set to be a big production and *may* be the start of a series.

Membership of the British Fantasy Society costs £17.00 in the UK (£20.00 Europe, \$35.00 USA, £25.00 elsewhere). Contact: BFS, 2 Harwood Street, Stockport, SK4 1JJ.

Sir Kingsley Amis died at the age of 73 on 22 October. Born in 1922 he became an acclaimed novelist, "angry young man", poet and critic. Although best known for his social comedies, such as LUCKY JIM (1954) and THE OLD DEVILS (1986, for which he won the Booker Prize), he published four books of poetry and was closely connected with sf throughout his career.

A series of lectures he delivered at Princeton University in 1959 were later revised and published as NEW MAPS OF HELL (1960) and were widely recognised as the most influential critical work on sf of their time. Amis went on to edit, with Robert Conquest, the SPECTRUM series of anthologies (five volumes, 1961-66) and THE GOLDEN AGE OF SCIENCE FICTION (1981) by himself. In addition to his genre novels, THE ANTI-DEATH LEAGUE (1966), COLONEL SUN: A JAMES BOND ADVENTURE (1968, under the name "Robert Markham"), THE GREEN MAN (1969), THE ALTERATION (1976) and RUSSIAN HIDE-AND-SEEK (1980), Amis wrote a number of sf short stories which can be found in the collections MY ENEMY'S ENEMY (1962) and COLLECTED SHORT STORIES (1980, expanded in 1987).

He was married to the novelist Elizabeth Jane Howard from 1965-83 and their son, Martin Amis, is also a novelist.

"Ellis Peters", Edith Pargeter, died on 5 October from a stroke at the age of 82. Author of around 90 mystery/historical books, she will be best remembered for her "Brother Cadfael" books.

(Many thanks to the BFS NEWSLETTER, DAVE LANGFORD and THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF.)

BOOK REVIEWS

ALIENS: ALIEN HARVEST by Robert Sheckley, Millennium, £4.99, 296pp, Reviewed by Tony Morton.

Take a successful movie. Make a sequel. Then a third movie. What shall we do next? Erm... A BOOK SPIN-OFF!

Well sorry, I don't think it works that way. It appears ALIENS: ALIEN HARVEST is the eighth in the "Aliens" series but, to be honest, why bother? Great (first) movie, but by the third I had lost interest (well, except for Sigourney Weaver). So why did I bother to pick this book to review? To be honest because Robert Sheckley's name was on the cover. I remember reading some excellent stuff by him way back in the 60s, in GALAXY, as well as collections ("Citizen in Space" and "Mindwarp" spring to mind), that I enjoyed.

However, his first outing in the "Aliens" universe, while having some interesting ideas, (such as the robot "Alien") proves the "shared world" method takes over and the author is stuck in someone else's world.

The story concerns (Professor) Stan Myakovsky and Julie Lish who team up to attempt to steal "royal jelly" from an "Alien" nest. As mentioned, some nice touches but a bit too much sweetness to be truly believable. You can probably guess the plot: clever but terminally ill professor and good female thief meet and she outlines an audacious plan to steal the phenomenally expensive royal jelly, of course the only thing that can cure said terminally ill professor. They coerce a pilot, who previously flew for the Prof., but lost his license unfairly, to take them to where the "Alien" nest is and meet up with unscrupulous agents of the baddies who can legally collect the jelly for the rich privileged. Outcome? If you want to know read it - I had to.

THE LORD OF MIDDLE AIR
by Michael Scott Rohan,
Gollancz £5.99, 253pp,
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan.

One of Mike Scott Rohan's ancestors was the 13th century scholar and mathematician, Michael Scot. He was the kind of man to whom strange tales accrete. Some suggest that he was a sorcerer. Rohan has taken these stories and distilled them into an excellent

fantasy tale.

The novel is set at a time when the Scottish Border clans were always feuding with each other. Reiving and cattle raiding was a pastime for bored young men. As the book opens, young Walter Scot, heir of Branholme, is hot on the track of cattle stolen by raiders from neighbouring Liddedale. As they approach a ford the air is rent by an explosion. Coming on the scene, Walter and his companions find one reiver dead, one blinded and one fled. The cattle are scattered. The cause of the mayhem introduces himself as Michael Scot of Oakwood, a kinsman returned from abroad.

Walter soon discovers that the raid was only part of a greater scheme by Nicholas de Soulis to annex Scot lands. His father is killed in ambush and his bride-to-be is abducted. De Soulis has the reputation of being a black sorcerer and impregnable in his fortress of Hermitage. And unkillable. Walter turns to Michael Scot for help and learns that the only way he might defeat de Soulis is by acquiring some kind of weapon or talisman from elsewhere. Elsewhere is the land of Faerie.

This is a delightful tale, blending history, magic and myth and works because people like Walter believed in the kind of magic Michael dealt in. At a time when God was an omnipresent spirit, the prospect of damnation was also very real and very possible. Walter constantly has to justify Michael's involvement in his affairs in case doing so causes his own damnation. Rohan has resisted the temptation to make this into an epic - the length is just right - but there is a very strong authorial presence. Often we are shown the land and its history from a present day viewpoint; a case of over-familiarity with a landscape that detracts a little from the ambience.

FABULOUS HARBOURS by Michael Moorcock,
Millennium, £15.99, 296pp, h/b,
Reviewed by Tony Morton.

Not quite a sequel but a series of nine stories relating to "the same characters and concerns". Some exquisite tales told by Moorcock as only he can. I am in total agreement with the cover blurb "one of the most unconventional of fantasy writers".

The superb cast of characters: Sexton Begg, Rose von Bek, Horace Quelch, Count Manfred, Sam Oakenhurst and Elric; all provide point and counterpoint to the varied stories. Amongst the "minor" characters we are

introduced to the Wandering Jew who is more (and less?) than you expect, being hunted through the ages by Count Manfred - but read "The White Pirate" yourself for a treat. Elric turns up in "The Black Blade's Summoning" meeting Count von Bek in a wonderful tale of the end of time, witnessing the fall of angels and learning of the pathways within the multiverse. But my favourite must be "Lunching with the Antichrist" in which Moorcock, writing as a journalist, sublimely unveils his meeting and the outcome of his association with said "Antichrist", all quite riveting.

Other stories hold the reader and explore Moorcock's wit: the "Sexton Begg" stories in particular. Obviously a spoof of the Sherlock Holmes stories; Begg (in his part of the multiverse) undertakes similar cases, but encounters stranger folk. "The Affair of the Seven Virgins" relates a blackmail story with a vicious twist, "Crimson Eyes" tells of a wave of murders and the path to their solution. Also in the detective vein, but in a different tack, "The Girl Who Killed Sylvia Blade" is presented; Moorcock leads us through a 30s-gangster-movie-style, intriguing tale of illegality (but I won't say what).

A set of stories I thoroughly enjoyed and while expecting a sequel to BLOOD I was not disappointed with this extravaganza. I have to say Moorcock is back to his "unconventional" best.

**ALIEN HORIZONS: THE FANTASTIC
ART OF BOB EGGLETON,**
Paper Tiger, £12.95,
Reviewed by Tim Groome.

As with all the portfolio books produced by Paper Tiger, this one has all the virtues, and the problems. Not that I am going to decry the obvious skill and talent of Bob Eggleton, or Paper Tiger's production values - as high as ever.

First, the high spots. I do groan inwardly if too much airbrush is used, and thankfully Eggleton is quite sparing, even in his space paintings, which are beautifully done; some are quite reminiscent of Chesley Bonestell. I was pleased to see the use of the brush to create texture: the crucified vampire and study of sharks show these particularly well and are among the most powerful pieces.

Now to the problems: most of these paintings were produced for a specific book or brief - they are meant to stand alone. Because of that, the portfolio format is

rather artificial, and could do the work a disservice. Having said that, the good thing here is that some of Eggleton's more personal work is included, and it shows.

In total, another fine production with much to commend it and a few surprises.

STAR WARTZ by Patrick Tilley,
Orbit, £15.99, 409pp, h/b,
Reviewed by Tony Morton.

I have always had a soft spot for Patrick Tilley, all the way back to *FADE OUT* and *MISSION*, and enjoyed the "Amtrak" series. This is a departure, leaning into the humorous sf category. The impetus of the story and the interaction of the main characters carries the book rather than the humour element, which is (relatively) subtle, creating a scene more so than a fait accompli, as in other humour based books. Tilley uses his skills well to mould a believable scenario in which we find the hero (Andrew Webber) being irrevocably drawn. The "difficult" science involved is not thoroughly explained, making the yarn more lighthearted and the plot easier to follow.

In essence Webber is lured to the Rimworld where he is unwittingly involved in a plot to overthrow the Organisation. The main culprit/brains behind the plot is Constantine Parnassus, a rather over large man who *eats all the time*. He, along with his aide, the beautiful Shallmar, convince Webber to assume an identity to infiltrate the organisation and discover ways in which to overthrow them. Parnassus however is not entirely truthful and Webber (now Andiamo Cartahaynyar) is a special agent within the Organisation's special services. This causes confusion within the Organisation with the people "Andi" meets and for "Andi" himself. One of these new friends (Kelly) proves also to be more than she seems, again causing further confusion for all. This makes the story whizz along and the twists and turns further the plot(s) as well as adding to the potential for Tilley to add gags that he takes with aplomb.

Nice touches from Tilley that add up to a pleasing story full of humour, wit, wonderful plotlines and technological trickery. The interaction of the two main characters in Andi and Kelly provide the balance as their unlikely cooperation fumbles them from problem to problem towards the climax of the story. Well written and enjoyable. Nice to have Patrick Tilley back in action.

LORDS OF THE SKY by Angus Wells,
Millennium, £5.99, 678pp,
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan.

LORDS OF THE SKY has elements familiar from Wells's other books but is also an attempt to be different. It is mostly written in the first person with passages in a third person narrative to give an added perspective. The narrator is Daviot, who we meet as a 12 year-old seeing for the first time the airships that carry his people's enemies from over the sea to invade. It is this event that alerts the mage of the nearest town to the fact that Daviot is a likely candidate for the College of Mnemonikos, due to his remarkable memory. When he comes of age he is sent there to train as a storyteller - this is a world that despite having writing relies more on the specially trained Rememberers to recall history. Messages are sent mind to mind via the mages. Daviot gets into trouble through falling in love with a trainee mage, but as he matures the raids from oversea are increasing. Daviot gets to thinking, what if dragons still existed and could be persuaded to fight our enemies? He is also unusual in that he makes friends with the Changed. Originally these were magically changed animals who have the appearance of men but are used as slaves. Daviot sees them as people.

This is a much more ambitious book than any of Wells's others, with much more attention given to detail. The society is carefully worked out but the pace is slow. The characters are much given to introspection and will go over and over something in their minds. While this is realistic it does not make for urgent storytelling. There is a noticeable fascination with journeys and in places the book takes on the aura of a travelogue. And everyone is scrupulously clean - the first thing anyone does on arriving is to ask for the bath house. The book also raises some ethical problems. The four main characters, each from a different race, all want peace for their peoples but they obtain it with a lot of bloodshed - by loosing the dragons on the armies. Is it right to advocate ending bloodshed with bloodshed? And is it right to hold peace by the threat of terror? Some of the arguments Wells solves by the constraints he sets into his plot, but others are open for discussion.

In *LORDS OF THE SKY*, he has tried to move away from the standard elements of sword and sorcery quest novels and to introduce more original themes. One big problem he has yet to overcome is his lack of time sense. Some simultaneous events seem widely separated

while distant ones appear too close, and the time taken to journey from various parts of his worlds seems to vary.

MORTAL REMAINS by Christopher Evans,
Gollancz, £8.99, 319pp, trade p/b,
Reviewed by Martin Tudor.

Everyone realised that Evans would have his work cut out to top his previous book, the critically acclaimed (and brilliant) *AZTEC CENTURY*, but I don't think even his greatest admirers thought he would be able to do so with such style....

MORTAL REMAINS is a wonderful, bizarre, fantastic, tale of a distant-future Solar System, where humanity has settled throughout the System with the aid of their advanced biotechnology - but where Earth has become an uninhabitable dumping ground for biotech mutants and monstrosities.

A taut thriller, the story opens with a strange womb being recovered from a crashed spaceship. Marea, who recovers the womb, realises that it is dangerous for her to keep it and swiftly passes it to a close friend to take it off planet. But the mysterious factions who are searching for the womb are already after her and on her return home she finds her "house" wrecked and both her husbands dead.

Her friend, Tunde, doesn't fare much better in his attempt to profit from the womb, and so begins a bizarre System wide chase as the two mysterious factions close in on the womb - leaving devastation and ruined lives in their wake.

The chase takes us through both "real-time" space and the strange psychic Net of the Noosphere - where the souls of the dead live on and from where they communicate with the living.

This is a superb tour-de-force which I cannot recommend too highly; if you think you're too jaded to enjoy a sense of wonder, think again, read this!

OTHERNESS by David Brin,
Orbit, 387pp, £5.99,
Reviewed by Tony Morton.

A short story collection from Brin with the added element of story notes and transcripts from (some of) his talks/essays. The collection is split into sections; each postulating an individual viewpoint. Transitions, the initial section, covers the human reaction to how we look at genetics and

how it affects us in everyday life: "The Giving Plague" introduces the concept of virus symbiosis and how research scientists "view" the world; "Dr Pak's Preschool" extends "enrichment parenting" to its er... "natural" (?) conclusion and "Detrius Affected" how archaeology can change our view of the past and its effects upon us now from those revelations. The story notes further explain the background and enlighten the reader to Brin's concept that is more fully developed later. There is, of course, (it's almost obligatory) an "Elvis" story (is this a US disease? "You can't be serious... no Elvis story?" Sorry, it has become terribly boring to have to keep reading them.).

Overall, the stories as would be expected, are well constructed and entertain. As well as those mentioned, Brin covers many diverse topics; from VR that is totally interactive in "Natulife"; convincing aliens we have a hidden Talent that could outwit them ("Sshhh"); UFOs in "Those Eyes" provides an interesting extrapolation of two unconnected theories wonderfully merged. Together with alien contact in "Bonding to Genii; how humans outrate robots in "Warm Space" covering more traditional sf stories, Brin has given it all. The addition of the essays explaining Brin's dogma of "Otherness" only adds to the collection.

"Otherness" presented as a dogma insisting that "all voices deserve a hearing", that "all points of view have something of value to offer" has merit - to a point. However, where does it stop? I am unsure whether questioning *everything* can provide any positive action - and the acceptance of a view and responsibility are, for me, much more inclined to work for society as a whole. Purely following is obviously wrong and some ideas and theories *do* alter, but questioning everything appears the other extreme. A middle road, perhaps, Mr Brin?

MOONSET by Louise Cooper,
HarperCollins, £4.99, 437pp,
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan.

One would have thought that the author of 18 books would have learnt something about the art of writing. If I hadn't known otherwise I might have thought this was a poor debut novel.

This is the final volume of a trilogy and a mistake to read without knowledge of the previous two (books and trilogies). Cooper's first trilogy (rewritten at length from an earlier novel) introduced a world in

stagnation, overseen by the seven Gods of Order. During the series, the seven Gods of Chaos attempted to overthrow their counterparts with partial success so that the situation in the second trilogy was of an uneasy truce where people could choose which group of gods they wished to worship. In this, the Star Shadow trilogy, the time is considerably earlier when the Gods of Chaos are in charge. Aeoris, the chief god of Order has got a foothold in the human world but knows he and his brothers cannot break the bonds that hold them out while the Chaos Gate exists. This is in the basement of the Star Penninsular, the stronghold of the magi who owe allegiance to Chaos. One attempt to steal and destroy the wand that controls it has failed so desperate subterfuge is necessary. If you have read Cooper's other books it is obvious what the outcome is. The problem is, you don't care. Okay, so some individual characters have problems you might sympathise with but there is no identifiable "side" to be on.

The writing style borders on the amateurish, with elementary faults like fluctuating viewpoints, wordiness and over-emotional prose. Very disappointing.

THE EMERALD FOREST by Robert Holdstock,
HarperCollins, £4.99, 252pp, p/b,
Reviewed by Tony Morton.

A wonderfully told tale from Holdstock about life amongst the Amazonian rainforest Indians. Related via a child abducted from his American parents, there working on a dam project - further destroying the rain forest.

The child (Tommy Markham) with his family move to Brazil from the US for his engineer father to help design and build a new dam on the Yuruan river. They unknowingly encounter an indigenous tribe during a picnic who take the child as their own. Years pass with Markham senior annually returning to the interior in search of his son. During one such expedition Markham gets into trouble with another tribe, this one cannibal, and as he attempts to escape, he runs into "Tomme" his long lost son, who is now a fully-fledged Invisible tribe warrior. We learn of Tomme's life and how the Indians survive in the forest and of their customs

Holdstock presents a realistic and intriguing scenario of both the native Indians and of Tommy's family's frantic search for him. The backdrop of the Amazonian rain forest adds spice and mystery to the tale, allowing the spatial elements of Western type travel against the Indian days-march travel

to show each's perception of their lifestyle. The differences in culture prove the key to the story, emphasising both the contrasting outlook and expectation of two very unlike peoples. This is well used to express the disparity between the two main "sides" as well as pointing out the difficulties in *understanding* the thinking behind them.

As with the majority of works along similar lines, for instance the "Mythago" series, Holdstock presents a well-defined, realistic world in which to develop his ideas. Again he has done so with panache.

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Please remember that reviews of books should reach: MARTIN TUDOR at 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarks Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, within ONE month of your taking the book. (NB: COA!)

The following people owe reviews, please ensure that these (along with reviews of books picked up at the last meeting) are passed to MARTIN TUDOR at this month's meeting on Friday:

Dave Cox: HOT SKY AT MIDNIGHT by Robert Silverberg (May).

Bernie Evans: THE DEUS MACHINE by Pierre Ouellette (February); NIMBUS by Alexander Jablokov (March).

John Howes: THE WAR OF THE LORD'S VEIL by Adam Nichols (August).

Robert Jones: A HISTORY MAKER by Alasdair Gray (October).

Steve Jones/B'ham Uni: DRAGONCHARM by Graham Edwards (January); TALISMAN by Sam Lewis (January); WARHAMMER: WOLF RIDERS ed David Pringle (March).

Carol Morton: WITCHES' BREW by Terry Brooks (May); RONAN THE BARBARIAN by James Bibby (May); BELGARATH THE SORCERER by David & Leigh Eddings (July); ODDS AND GODS by Tom Holt (August); THE FEY: SACRIFICE by Kristine Katherine Rusch (August); SACRED GROUND by Mercedes Lackey (September); STORM WARNING by Mercedes Lackey (September); DJINN RUNNING by Tom Holt (September).

Tony Morton: HAWKMOON: ETERNAL CHAMPION Volume 3 (October).

James Robertson: BEGGARS IN SPAIN by Nancy Kress (September).

Apologies in advance for any book reviews I may have misplaced in my recent move. Please send me a copy of your review if it hasn't appeared yet and you are still being listed above!

The Christmas Puzzle 1995

First, carefully cut out the four sphinx, noting that there are letters on both sides.

Now place the four sphinx together edge to edge, to form a larger sphinx, (same shape, four time the area.)

When the larger sphinx is made with the pieces in their correct positions a small word puzzle will be on view.

To find the words connect letters in adjacent triangles, but not corner to corner. Each letter is only used once.

What was the first name of the cat that Dan Davis intended to take the Long Sleep with. The cat that liked trying all the doors.

What was the name of the dog that accompanied Winston Niles Rumfoord into a chronosynclastic infundibulum.

When you have found the names of the cat and dog, take the letters on view which have not been used and arrange them to spell the name of an alien world.

Send the name of this world to the Editor.



