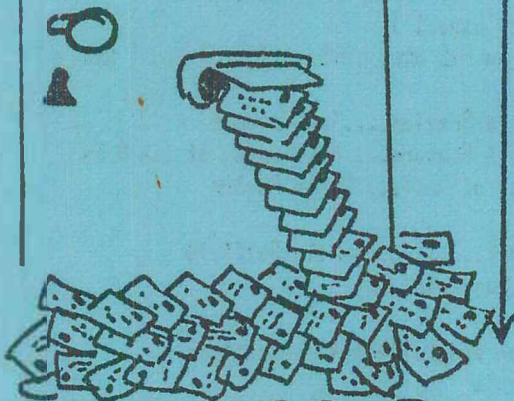


LOC'S ARE
THIN ON THE
GROUND.....

THIS LOOKS
LIKE A CASE
FOR...

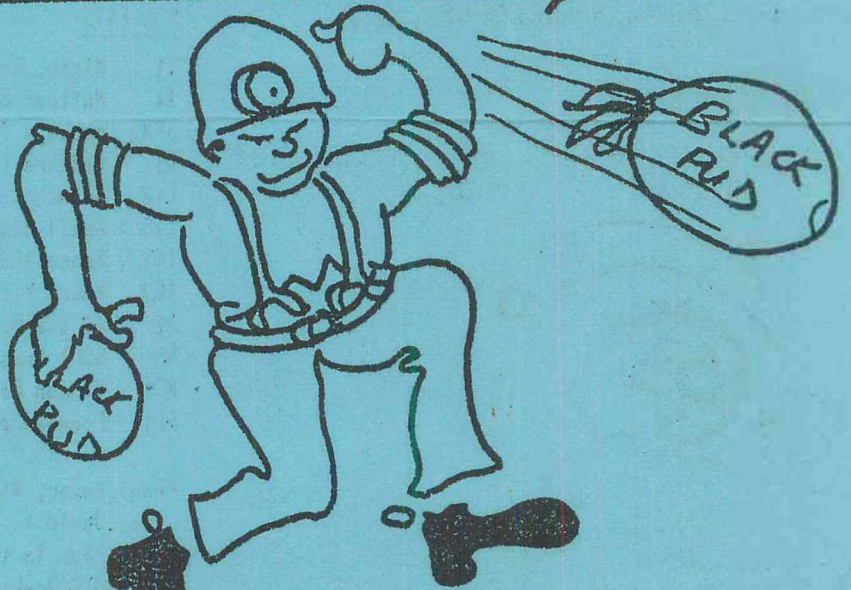


YET ANOTHER



SUCCESS FOR
FREEDOM'S
MONEY HERO!

2/1/76



THE FLYING
HORSKHOE
MAN !!!...

BSFA

MATRIX 7

Aug 76

Misen

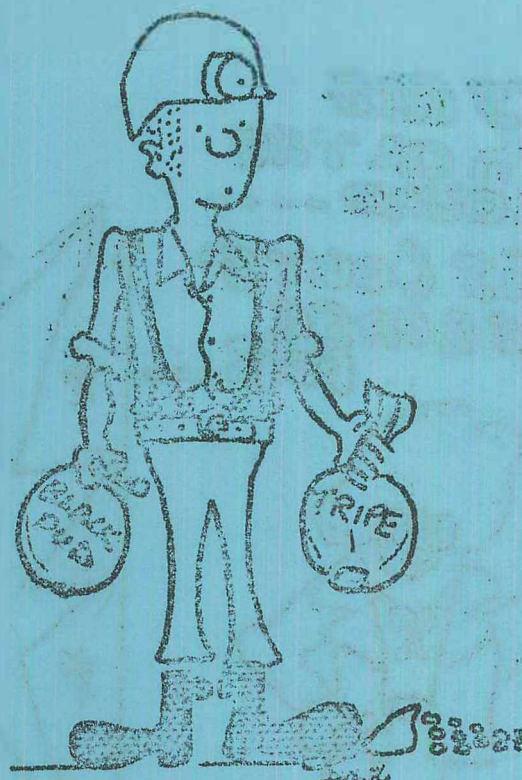
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Keith, Chris, Martin, Reading SF Club, et al.



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Front cover, Misen and Letters illustrations
.....David V. Lewis

Misen "Man in the Maze" and Mancon Report illustrations
.....Jim Barker



KEITH FREEMAN
(SKETCH TAKEN
FROM A PHOTO)



The Man in the Maze

MATRIX?, A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL

As you know, if you saw the first issue of the newsletter I published I wanted to change the name. I wanted to use an old magic trick; by naming something you know its character and thus by changing its name you change its character. I wanted to make the newsletter into something more than a newsletter, I wanted to make it into a general FUNzine. I think I'm on the right road to doing that.

So I held a name competition but nothing suggested really grabbed me. I toyed with Graham Poole's suggestion of "Revelations" for a time (this was the name of the one issue of the newsletter Graham managed to edit before the crash - which was no fault of Graham's, in fact he was one of the few people to try and do something about it.). Eventually I decided "Revelations" was a little too precocious for the type of magazine I was trying to produce.

So, the status quoed, until in some despicable rag in the review of fanzines section, the newsletter was not only passed over for comment but referred to as a VECTOR flyer!!! Some other person also said the BSFAN was edited and published by Chris Fowler! But I expected that person to get his facts wrong - it's edited by me and published by the BSFA. I was cut to the quick, but I realised that it was my own fault, by denying the newsletter a name I was denying it an identity.

I voiced my conclusions at a Reading SF Club meeting and Keith Freeman, a subtle genius, upped and said, how about continuing the BSFA tradition of using mathematical names, ie VECTOR and TANGENT, why not call it MATRIX. It was so easy, so that's what I did.

GOING OFF AT A....TANGENT

Many years ago, when I was a lad, the BSFA produced a fan fiction magazine, called TANGENT. It survived two issues and then disappeared, I don't know why. A number of members have asked me why the BSFA has no outlet for fan fiction, I've mentioned "Orbiter" but it's not the same as a magazine, they've replied. Fan fiction doesn't fit into the format of VECTOR or MATRIX (Though MATRIX does publish satires and funny bits and pieces).

The argument against fan fiction is that it must be rubbish or else it would be published in the professional mags. I can sympathise with this view but the counter argument is that fans trying their hand at fiction for the first time may not have sufficient confidence to bung the stuff off to a prozine.

Let me ask you the question; is fan fiction important? Should the BSFA bring back TANGENT, say twice or three times a year? What we do depends on what you tell us.

MONEY, THAT'S WHAT WE WANT

Dave Lewis makes some comments in his letter about the BSFA giving more services free to members and asks why we don't. I then realised that we haven't actually given you a cost breakdown anywhere. So here it is.

As you can see from the Administrator's report in the BSFA NEWS section we've had to put the basic membership up to £4 but for those who renew promptly we give a 25% discount so it only costs £3. Thus most members will pay us £3 this year. Where does it go?

The approximate cost of a mailing is:-

VECTOR.....25p

MATRIX..... 4p

Postage.....11p

Total.....40p x 6 mailings per year = £2-40p

Plus the Yearbook (this turned out to be free to members this year because of advertising and sales but we still had to lay the money out first), Little Gem Guide, Cyclotron (You'll be getting this soon).

So £3 just about covers what you get a year, all other BSFA activities have to be self supporting. Last year most people only payed £2 and we were making a loss on every mailing towards the end of the year.

The £4 we charge to new members helps to give us a capital base on which to work. We've shown, especially with the Yearbook, that we can produce saleable items, but we still have to lay the cash out for them first before getting any sales revenue back.

Providing printing, postage, duplicating, etc don't go up drastically then we hope to try and stabilise on this membership fee.

NEL, IS ANYONE ALIVE?

As you're all aware SF Monthly was given the chop by New English Library who then brought out SF Digest (a standard format SF magazine) to take it's place.

I decided to get together a couple of articles analysing why SFM failed, one by me and one by Ian Garbutt. I realised that one or both of these was more than likely to be uncomplementary to the editor and management of SFM so I wrote to SFM at NEL and asked if they would like to put forward their reasons for chopping the magazine and give their views as to why it had failed.

As you can see, not only did they not give any reasons or views but they didn't even acknowledge receipt of my letter. How can a publisher succeed when he alienates his readership. Never the less I'll be sending them a copy of MATRIX to see if they wish to comment on "Requiem for SFM" but I don't hold out much hope.

ANTI-FAN ?

Some people have suggested that I am anti-fandom, and some that I am deliberately trying to start a BSFA fandom separate from the accepted UK fandom.

First, I'm not anti-fan though I am anti some of the things in fandom. The one I always mention is elitism. Fandom has a tendency to form in groups and cliques and withing these cliques people are pushed, or force themselves, into positions where they are admired to the point of reverence. But please, I know that some fans are more active than others, some fans and fan groups have more imagination, more ideas, more get up and go than others, that's the way of the worlds. For these fans and groups I have only praise and admiration but by their very pre-eminence they have a duty to make sure they don't cross that fragile barrier into elitism.

As for a BSFA fandom, even if we wanted to we couldn't keep our members away from the rest of UK fandom, and we don't want to. But we still have to cater for those members who don't want to be fans. Anyone who thinks all BSFA members eventually become fans is wrong, probably less than half our members are fans. The majority have little interest in fandom, they're only interested in SF.

So we have to cater for fans and non-fans, we can't please ourselves, not many fan editors have that kind of problem.

Whilst we're on this subject Elke Stewart made a comment that stuck in my mind when she said that there were a large number of fans who weren't BSFA members. Thinking back over the years I've been in the BSFA from the point of view of membership the BSFA does more for fandom than fandom does for the BSFA.

What is sad is that not only do these BSFA members join fandom but that they leave the BSFA and, even worse, become very anti-BSFA! Why, surely if they're dissatisfied they could suggest changes and improvements in the BSFA and perhaps put some work into implementing them. But no, they would prefer to sit and jeer, these "fans" I have no time for, they're obviously only interested in enjoying themselves and to hell with anyone else.

Do I sound bitter, well in some ways I am. The BSFA can be a great organisation if everyone gets behind it, and that includes fandom, and helps. End of sermon.

DR. WHO AND THE ESTABLISHMENT

I have here a letter from PETE COLLEY, 67 Cowley Rd, Oxford, OX4 1HR, who needs information on Dr. Who, let me quote from it.

"I am currently trying to do some research into Dr. Who for a project in the second year of the Oxford Poly Publishing Course. The project involves producing (i.e. writing, editing, assisting in printing and binding)

a small illustrated handbound book. I so far know of two reference sources of written material. These are an out of print Piccolo Book THE MAKING OF DR. WHO by Hulke and Dicks, and a RADIO TIMES DR. WHO SPECIAL published in 1974. I am searching for copies of both these publications."

Can anyone help Pete on that count? And to continue,

"I also need information on the Dr. Who films of which I believe there were three." Well, I've seen two on the box, the first being the first Dalek one and the second being about Daleks also. Both had Peter Cushing, I think, as Dr. Who and were produced by Hammer Films. The first one also had Roy Castle (tap dancing with a Dalek)! They were terrible, travesties of the real thing and ripoffs as both stories had appeared in serial form on the TV. Can anyone else provide further information?

And back to Pete,

"Any other information which you have would also be appreciated. I have been in touch with the SF Foundation, but they had no information on programme, books or films. Although the BBC is the obvious source it is very much a last resort as I have been warned that previous student's projects have come to a dead end because of the BBC's reluctance to provide material without extortionate payment."

"Also do you have any info on films about SF - writers interviews, talks etc. available as I would like to try to organise something for the Poly Arts Society which is at the moment a bit predictable."

In 1971 or 72 I saw a series of films of interviews with SF authors, Asimov, etc, at the National Film Theatre in London. Unfortunately I can remember nothing else about them but you might try writing to the NFT, it can't do any harm.

WHITHER FANDOM

One good thing to come out of the Silicon silly was that I got in touch (vice versa) with Harry Bell. In one letter he had something, spurred on by Ian Garbutt's article on fanzines, to say about fanzines and fandom. I think the things Harry says are important and worthy of discussion and so I'm taking the liberty of reprinting them here in the editorial.

HARRY BELL

As to Ian Garbutt's article, I think the main thing worrying me is its potential for putting new fans off fanzines.

I'd be pleased to see a good serious fanzine in Britain, more than one even. ((Do you not think that VECTOR and FOUNDATION fall into that category?)) I subscribe to SF Review and Algol after all, so I can't be all bad, can I? In fact, if there were such a fanzine in Britain I'd be very interested in

submitting artwork to it. As it is I have to send most of my work to the States (although I have to admit I'm also very interested in US fandom as well - hope to be going over there next year)

The point is there is a lot of experience behind today's fanzines and the way to go about producing a new sercon fanzine is not to ignore that experience but to draw on it for help. Don't forget a lot of fannish fans are also sercon fans and would put a lot of support behind a sercon fanzine which accepted fandom rather than took one look and said "No, not for me". All the top line sercon fanzines in the States are produced by fans who have come from the milieu of fannish fandom and a good number of their contributors too (and that includes a hell of a lot of authors!) ((You speak a lot of truth in this paragraph, unfortunately. Certainly Geis with "SF Review" manages to mix serious articles with humour and a fannish feel, and there's no UK zine which does that))

BSFAN could do fandom a great service by showing new BSFA members that fandom really does have a lot to offer if they'll only make that little effort to find out what it's all about. Fandom goes in cycles; US fandom at the moment is moving into a sercon phase while Britain is coming up to a fannish crest (hence the interest being shown in UK fandom by a lot of US fannish fans just now), but after the crest we should be swinging back to sercon. A new, interested section of fandom, introduced by the BSFA, would probably hurry that swing along. I can't say that would make me wildly ecstatic, but I'd rather have a healthy active sercon fandom than an impoverished one.

((Some very good points, Harry. I won't go into them in any depth, in fact I won't go into them at all as I've rapped on about fandom enough for this issue, we'll restir the pot next issue when I've seen the respons to this letter of yours and bits of my editorial. Thank you for writing.))

EDITOR CONFESSES ALL

Just before last issue I gave Ian Garbutt 3 fanzines and said write about them, in depth, saying what he liked. Ian agreed but said he would be doing it from a position of ignorance in that he had no prior knowledge of fanzines. I said that was just what I wanted, an unbiased view by someone not steeped in the myths and ethos surrounding fanzines.

No previous article has produced greater response in this journal. But I knew it would because I deliberately chose the three zines so that whatever Ian wrote he was going to touch someones nreve. Sorry Ian, I dropped you in the deap end.

The comments, in both the letters and made to me personally are fairly evenly divided between "what a load of rubbish!" and "how true", as you would expect when you consider the diverse opinions

held within fandom.

Criticism is, of course, correct and to be encouraged but some people criticised from the wrong position (you should do it standing on your head with your toe up your left nostril), they criticised him because he didn't know about fanzines and the lore surrounding them but that was the whole point. **THAT WAS THE WHOLE POINT.** I imagined that people would be interested in how someone who is new to fanzines would react to them. Ian is a literate person who could put his confusion over some things, criticism and praise into words, something which new fans either find difficult or are loathe to do. I hoped fans would treat the article from that point of view, try to gain something from it, try to see things through someone elses eyes. Not necessarily to agree but to accept that things could justifiably seem that way to a newcomer. And that there might just be a few truths in what he said.

A number of fans did look at it like that, they accepted that Ian made "mistakes" which someone who was an old fanzine hand wouldn't make, such as his comment that a fanzine was better if it was about SF (a value judgement I'm told but then isn't life one long string of value judgements?). These fans also accepted that this was the way most new fans and outsiders saw fanzines and some of the criticisms inherent in that view.

But a lot of fans didn't, they were outraged, how dare an outsider, or at best new fan, express views and criticisms on a subject which they knew much more about! Shock! Horror! They retaliated with such comments as "how can he prefer X to Y, when Y is obviously better", which is just another value judgement. Or "he knows nothing about fanzines, he'll change his mind in 6 months", but the whole point was he knew nothing about fanzines and he may well change his mind in 6 months but that doesn't invalidate the article as it stands.

It was a good article. Sure it made statements and judgements which I didn't agree with, but then I've been reading fanzines for over ten years and have some fairly rigid ideas of what they should do/be of my own, but mostly I said that's a good point or I can see how it would seem like that or I didn't realise it would seem like that but perhaps it does.

One of the joys of SF in general and fandom in particular is that you can discuss new ideas, ideas which the rest of society might not like, we pride ourselves on having open minds but when it comes to questioning some of the ideas we hold dear about fanzines (and fandom) some fand are so ultra-conservative they could be John Birchers.

AND NEXT TIME

Because of lack of space I've had to hold over a sf record review and an article on sf & rock. Other goodies.

REQUIEM FOR SFM

Tom A Jones

Ian Garbutt

VIEW ONE by Tom A. Jones

Just why did Science Fiction Monthly fold? the easy answer is that the circulation dropped from about 60,000 to about 6,000. So, let's ask the next question; why did the circulation drop?

To answer this question we must first answer the more essential questions; what readership was SFM aimed at and what was it trying to do? If we can discover the answers to these questions then we can say if it achieved its aims and if not then our question about the drop in circulation is answered.

If we look at the first issues of SFM we find large, poster like pictures, initially all from the covers of New English Library books (NEL also published SFM), a few poor to mediocre stories and some reasonable articles on SF themes, authors and artists.

There is little doubt that what was selling the magazine was the artwork, this was its *raison d'être*. I believe the publishers were trying to produce a glossy comic with pretensions to be a magazine. The publishers knew there was an audience out there who had newly discovered SF; people who had discovered "Doc" Smith, Asimov, Clarke, Moorcock; people who watched STAR TRECK. Basically young people, in their teens who were still reading comics or who had only recently stopped (please note I am not, not, condemning comics in any way). My argument is further backed up by the fact that it didn't take SFM long to introduce a comic strip into its line up.

Thus SFM was aimed at young people and meant to bridge that gap between comics and magazines. Fine, you may not like the product but it's a legitimate aim, NEL saw a gap and tried to fill it.

So what went wrong? Easy, SFM lost its way. SFM started to take notice of the letter writers, the people who complained or made suggestions. That's a fatal error, only a small percentage of the readership ever write to a professional magazine and they're the ones who want to change something. The majority, who are quite happy, seldom put pen to paper. The magazine even asked people to complete a questionnaire and suggested it would base its future publishing policy on the results. Ridiculous! What percentage reply and what percentage of those make the same suggestions? A professional magazine makes policy decisions on the experience of the editor and the evidence of the sales figures, not on what the letter writers say. An editor

well versed in the history of the SF magazine in Britain would have seen the truth of this from what happened to Peter Hamilton's "Nebula". "Nebula" changed to suit the letter writers and lo and behold they became the sole readership, the magazine folded.

The changes were made, the cartoon was dropped, as were the artist interviews (though, perhaps they ran out of artists to interview).

So far I've discussed the packaging but not the meat; the stories. Although the magazine initially sold on visual impact it would need relevant reading matter to be assured of a continued readership. I have already stated that most of the readers of SFM were new to SF, on the whole this group prefer the main line authors who tend to write hard-core SF. From the outset SFM's fiction, whilst not experimental, tended to be "soft" SF, and this was a trend which, if anything, increased with time. As an example of this let us look at the Brian Stableford contributions. The majority of Brian's output has been in the space adventure story field. Just the kind of thing the SFM target readership would go for, but his short stories which appeared in SFM were "soft" SF, so much so that you could reasonably have expected to have found them in a Michael Moorcock "New Worlds".

One of the consequences was that SFM began to resemble a fanzine. The articles were fanzine like, the stories were, on the whole, only the quality of fan fiction, the sections, such as news and letters, always reminded me of fanzine sections. The only thing it had which fanzines don't were large, colour, glossy pictures. Fanzines have circulations measure in the hundreds, not thousands; who's going to shell out 50p every month for a glossy fanzine?

To sum up, SFM failed because it failed to understand its market. By following up too many suggestions from letter writers (and perhaps from contributors) it pursued a policy of change which alienated the majority of the readership.

I do not believe there are sufficient true blue SF fans in the UK to support an American style SF magazine, it is because of this that I cannot see a rosy future for "SF Digest", though I hope I'm wrong. But there is a sufficiently large body of readers, peripheral to the main core of fans, who would buy some kind of SF magazine. I think, and I feel the early sales figures of SFM support me,

that something akin to the early SFMs as against any other form of SF magazine which has been tried in the UK is what could succeed.

VIEW TWO by Ian Garbutt

After two years and four months of continuous publication New English Library's magazine: Science Fiction Monthly, has finally breathed its last.

The death of SFM came as no surprise to the majority of SF fans; its demise was predicted from the moment it first hit the news-stands in January 1974, and now that it is finished there are many who breathe a sigh of relief at its passing.

There are usually only two reasons why a magazine fails; (a) a drop in sales or (b) it becomes impossible to produce. In the case of SF Monthly a drop in sales is the most likely explanation for its failure, for despite its apparent popularity the magazine was cancelled by many people who were disgusted by the way in which it was heading. The trouble with the periodical was that it just didn't place enough emphasis on the traditional ideas of what should constitute an SF magazine; for SFM was revolutionary in the sense that it was the first mag to publish poster-size reproductions of book-cover artwork. This was initially a good idea, but it was generally felt that artwork was over indulged in; that articles (especially in the fiction department) were being crushed out because of it. This problem was agitated by the fact that any attempt to reduce the amount of artwork brought in a host of complaints, and when the reader's poll of 1975 produced demands for even more artwork SF fans felt that this was going just too far.

Another bad attribute of the magazine was the editorial department's apparent lack of concern for the interests of the readers (ie the editors were stuffy-guts). This was plainly reflected in the amount of space set aside for reader's letters: usually half a page, sometimes as little as a quarter. This attitude is in direct contrast to the policy of fanzine editors who try their damndest to cram in as many letters as they possibly can; a policy which usually pays off in the sense that the letters column becomes one of the most interesting and informative features of the publication.

Being a commercial magazine the principal function of SFM was to make money for New English Library: this also meant the magazine would be on the side of sales promotion rather than be an aid to the development of the SF genre (I'm not saying all commercial magazines were like this; "New Worlds" and "Science Fantasy" weren't). It also meant the mag would have to pander to the tastes of the majority, which turned out to be young people under the age of

twenty; and thanks to the readers poll, which I mentioned earlier, the kids made sure that SFM took on a more comic-book appearance with every issue, much to the disgust of those who were genuinely interested in SF as a literature. This adoption of comic-book format was probably the main reason for it's downfall. The mag tried hard, true, and occasionally there were some interesting and informative articles; however the fiction, apart from a few exceptions, continued to be mediocre, and in a publication that is supposed to act as a vehicle for literature of a speculative nature such a thing is inexcusable.

The importance of fiction in a SF magazine is now evident, and in NEL's new magazine "SF Digest", the emphasis has shifted from articles and artwork to short stories. Unfortunately despite this change it doesn't seem as if this new magazine is going to succeed. SFM was bad, but this is worse! The fiction, although written by well known authors, is awful; and those consumer guides! All I can say is: "Come back Science Fiction Monthly, all is forgiven!"

SUMMARY by Tom A. Jones

As you can see Ian and I do not agree. We see different events occurring and even when we do see the same events we see different consequences. Whilst I contend that SFM was moving away from its comic book image and thus losing it's young readership Ian maintains it was adopting more of a comic book style and thus losing its serious SF readership.

I look forward to your letters on this subject and feel sure that you'll shoot one of us down, unfortunately I have this feeling it's going to be me.

-1-

SPLASHDOWN ON FEBRUARY EIGHTH, 1975

Sky-lab crew had circled round the earth -
Thought risks and hardships may abound in space -
To gain fresh knowledge for the human race,
The secrets of our universe to probe.
Full dozen weeks they voyaged through the void,
Breathing reprocessed air soon somewhat stale,
Striving the sunshine's searing heat to veil.
On tasks abstruse their journey they employed;
The starts to study and the solar flare,
The comet lately come and soon to go.
Their labours done, they longed our life to share.
To gain our little orb so far below,
Here on the fatherland which saw their birth -
And now, thank God, they're safely back on earth.

I. O. EVANS.

LETTERS



DAVID V. LEWIS. 8 Aldis Ave, Stonemarket, Suffolk.

PREAMBLE: THE LOCZINE CONCEPT:

As you have noticed this Loc is in a different form to previously, this is an attempt by me to produce a response to a fanzine which reflects the aspirations and efforts of the editor in producing that zine, which is within my technical competence and creative ability. Several of these have gone out in response to recent fanzines and hopefully will go out in the future. This is, of course, halfwayhouse between producing a Loc and a fanzine. I would like to see other fans in my position produce them as it will give them, as it gives me, a sense of repaying in kind the creative efforts of fanzine editors who are kind enough to send me their creations to enjoy. ((Thank you, David. Certainly as a fanzine editor the thing which gives me most pleasure is, but you're not interested in that, anyway I also enjoy getting letters in response to this magazine. And, the more comprehensive the letter the better, thus I welcome David's idea.))

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

Jon Langford's illustration was very good (don't let him disappear, prevail on him for more) "Flash" MacWalson, mother would not like it; mother's not getting it! "Fail to grasp its significance" YE GHODS these Yorkshiremen are thick! ((Watch it, sunshine, there's quite a number of us Tyke fans and I'm sure that come

a convention we can prevail on you to change your mind about the intelligence of Yorkshiremen.)) Media notes, well OK but almost the same as in the YEARBOOK.

DIGRESSION: THE BIG NONE EVENT:

Which is, I am afraid, a BIGRIPOFF after all the publicity and waiting for this gem. ((THE YEARBOOK, is what David is now going to criticise.)) Gra says what appears in BSFAN and Andrew Ildmarsh does the same. David Ross passes over all other zines except ANALOG as if it was the best of all, which it is definitely not; AMAZING and FANTASTIC being streets ahead for originality and freshness whereas ANALOG's stable grind out the same story formulae laid down in Campbell's time and now ossified. Showing his bias towards the ultimate in crud SFMONTHLY which is worth 40p of nobodies' money to rehash his words. So far from being a record of a year in SF's continuing development it is a big nothing. In fact 59 pages of nothing much, sorry but I was not impressed with this much vaunted enterprise, please try again. ((Humm, I feel you are being overly critical, after all this was a first issue. It was not perfect, and I too thought the magazine article was biased, but I thought it was biased against ANALOG! I think we must realise that this is a very ambitious project which the Stewart's are undertaking and a very worthwhile one. I, and I believe the majority of the BSFA, wish them good luck in this task.))

A NEO ON THE CORN TRAIL!

A newcomer looks at fanzines, WHOOPS, a lot of corns are trodden on and Ian falls neatly into the Neo trap as fanzines are not necessarily about SF. Fan talk has evolved over the years as a short cut to meaningful communication which can quickly convey concepts to other fans, with a minimum chance of misunderstanding. Written communication is open to interpretation and I, myself, have been misconstrued. ((Oooo, nice, ducky.)) Most fanzines are stapled, baby, 'cos it is the cheapest available method and fanzine editors are not rich in money or time. Ian exhibits the liquid behind his ears for all to see. Having been weaned on SFM what can be expected except sheer confusion when confronted with the REAL THING, however he will no doubt get over it. But many truths lurk in his outpourings which one hopes will be noted.

Although Gannets, being noisy birds, react violently to any criticism and one little person ((this wasn't the original word but is similar)) in particular whilst producing good stuff needs a kick up the jacksy for persisting in his stupid vilification of good ole Keith Freeman. ((I've made my points about Ian's piece in my editorial, but it certainly brought a lot of response.))

DOWN AMONG THE SHRIEKS, GRANS & YELLS

It must be remembered that "Read All About It" lives in a rarified atmosphere and is totally out of touch with the happening world of literature, so what is said on that proggy is pure fantasy and has no true relevance. Who wants to be recognised anyway? An official letter to BBC, OH WOH that is accepting their dictum, is it not? I am sure it will impress no one there, they will probably give it to Kit Peddler to answer. ((On consideration I too feel that a letter would have little point, it would probably be used as fodder by that smart alec, Melvin Blagg, to get a cheap laugh. There is a difference between being recognised as literature, which I'm in favour of anyway, and not wanting to see SF blackened in front of N million viewers because of one poor book, agreed?))

I enjoyed immensely your put down of the aforesaid little person. Nice to see Malcolm Edwards emerge from obscurity with a lively loc, to give you a put down.

Now, about these BNFs (Big Name Fans) coming back from the luCRUDive fields of SFM, the barb sinks home to the very hilt, perhaps we don't want them back?

As to rock music and poetry. The former whilst I enjoy, some fanzines spend over long discussing and older fans (there are a few you know) ((I know, I'm now an old timer.)) may not appreciate it. I remember reading many a yarn in which classical music featured (apparently favoured by mathematicians for

its relationship to maths) or modern jazz, so Rock cannot be considered as the sole outlet for the expression of SF in musical terms. A fact which has been sadly forgotten, nay not even considered, by the present generation of fans. Also, I dislike what I call the "Hushed Tones" approach to reviewing this artform in some of the zines. ((As you see, the first review of a SF oriented record is included in this issue, I look forward to seeing what kind of response it gets.)) As to the latter, poetry, I do not relate to it at all but feel, nevertheless, it has been neglected in BSFAW. How about it, Tony, as you seem to dig both art forms? I have found that saying what you said about a topic usually generates this response from editors.

I look forward to the review of THE VELDT from Merf Adams, having read the story from which it was taken, ie. the wall to wall TV room which goes wrong.

REPORTS & RIPOFFS

SF Foundation charging subs for US using OUR OWN library, Keith Walker maybe right in what he says after all! As a former user of the library when it was in the capable hands of Ms. Wash I view this RIPOFFF with outraged horror! As £4 is paid in subs now and all we get from it is BSFAW and VECTOR services like this should also be subsidised. BSFA should not let its assets disappear like this. Are the dusty minded academics paying to use our library? If not, why not? BSFA should remove the library from the grasping capitalistic paws of the SF Foundation forthwith. What with pieces of the lost magazine library appearing at the convention auction things are not as they should be. Sorry, but things like this arose my ire rapidly!

((Right, first the library. The BSFA have always charged for the loan of books, how else would we get the money to buy new ones? It used to cost 3d for paperbacks and 6d for hardbacks, now it's 2p for paperbacks and 3p for hardbacks; hardly galloping inflation. I see where one mistake may have occurred, reading the library report it does sound as though there is a charge for the Library catalogue, there isn't, only the SF Foundation catalogue costs money. Sorry for that confusion it was my fault as I wrote the library report from information supplied. I see nothing wrong in paying £2 before getting any books, it saves paperwork for both sides, think, if you got just one paperback, costing 2p, the cheque or PO would cost more than that, Prepaying £2 thus saves you money. You will note the breakdown of costs in the editorial, you can see that £3 just about covers it and that's all members are being asked to pay, only new members, joining for the first time, are being asked for £4. We should thank the SF Foundation for taking on the task of running the library. Not only is it a lot of work but it requires a lot of room

There has been no suggestion that the Magazine Library was sold at the Easter convention, though it has been suggested that the Fanzine Foundation was auctioned, for the facts behind this please see Keith Freeman's section. As for the magazine library, that was lost some years ago in a fire, though the committee of the time could be criticised for not insuring it. Certainly the committee's decisions and actions should be constantly scrutinised, past troubles whilst stemming from committee errors or malpractices have always caused more trouble than they need because the membership has tended to stand apathetically by. But, surely you should find out the facts before making accusations? Your criticisms did bring home to me the fact that we haven't explained the financial breakdown in the past so at least they have done some good))

SPACE OPERA & OTHER THINGS:

This ((Mac Malsen)) was enjoyable and light entertainment at its best. I have seen some supposedly witty stuff in some zines in the same vein which fail miserably but this succeeds brilliantly. I look forward to more from the Langford pen. ((So do I, I must admit to liking Dave's zany humour, but it's an acquired taste, like good Yorkshire beer.))

Freeman seems in a hurry, as usual these days. One hopes the decorating goes well and the new house soon becomes suitable for normal occupation and normal service will be resumed, as his reviews are informative but his constant referral to LGG was offputting. ((Keith is pressing on, I actually got a seat, on a pile of fanzines, last time I was round there. He tells me he is devoting most of his attention to the most important room, the den - good job Wendy doesn't read this.))

Nice to see the Blue Pages on the scene again as a regular feature, another useful service to members. However the repro could be better, a minor carp. The overall repro is readable and the transmission to micro-elite has been a success, to my way of thinking. ((No one has complained of going blind either, well one member did but I assured him it was because of his other funny habits, like reading MAYA.)) Headings are definitely required to break up the layout a bit but after my brief flirtation with lettering I appreciate what you are up against and doing it on, or transferring it to, stencil presents difficulties, but once this is overcome the results will be worth it. ((That sure was one hell of a letter, in several ways. But let me say that after lengthy communication Dave and I are still friends, I've even said nice things about him in the editorial.))

JOHN WELSH. 23 Kelvinside Gdns East, Glasgow.

I have only one thing to say to you and believe me it'll be dynamite when I do say it...

Held up however by the trivial fact that I haven't thought of it yet, let me thank you for yet another star-studded (me and you...well, me anyway), scintillating and beautiful Newsletter!! Thank you. ((Keep talking, you were getting it right towards the end.))

Though I've been thinking like nothing on Earth, or Mars or Jupiter or Saturn or... for the past 3 minutes, I've only been able to come up with 20 criticisms of your sparkling little production. Just be glad us geniuses are incapable of sustaining Critical Tracks Of Thought for very long when under the inhibitive influence of Irn Bru, oor uther nashnul drink!

Anyhow, here they are:

- 1) I didn't like the cover, or at least the picture on the cover. When I saw it I spent a dazed minute (second then) wondering where the SCI FI RULES OK was that should have been stamped across it in fuzzy aerosol characters. It was just that kind of cover. ((But surely you realised it was a satire of that kind of cover, to go with the Mac malsen satire?))
- 2) What a silly system you've got for numbering pages! It's the first time I've noticed it. Change back to numbers, for goodness sake. I mean, I'll always know page 12 lies between page 11 and 13 but nothing's going to convince me to learn that page #N1 lies between pages NVR2 and IG1...((The numbering system is done for my convenience, especially as the last article usually arrives just before we duplicate it. At least the contents list is in the correct order so that should point you in the right direction even if it doesn't take you to the right spot.))
- 3) Your editorial was too short. I love your humour and we don't get enough of it. In fact, you're lightly scattered witticisms are one of the best things about the Newsletter, don't y'know? ((How true, seldom have I seen such perception in a mere mortal. For you, but not you alone, I have written a large editorial, actually as I type this I haven't written any editorial but I'm intending to write a large editorial.))
- 4) You didn't tell us who the Newshounds of the BSFA were and consequently made my life a misery trying to guess. But those news items are a great innovation as are the ads.
- 5) Media Notes. Graham Poole goes on a bit about the Survivors, doesn't he? What with the bit in the Yearbook (for which I'm bursting with praise, by the way) and then another bit in the Newsletter.. Still, it's all good stuff, so I shouldn't really complain.

6) Why did you agree with me about fannish jargon? You've genuinely embarrassed me now. I'd completely forgotten I'd written that bullshit about it and have been happily sending off LoCs (see!) to other editors immersed in the stuff. I mean, you've got to adapt to your environment and all that...No?

7) The Thing for Inner Space...Oh, I can't. The quark-repellant saves it. I wouldn't risk another silly space opera though. ((It was meant to be silly, it was a satire of the Hook books, perhaps your humour doesn't bend that way.))

Tell Bob Shaw all is forgiven.

Time to interrupt this tirade because I've just worked out what I was going to tell you.

Listen you twit faced nonentity (I don't mean that, not really - not if you're going to sue) ((Dear Sir, we have been asked by our client, Mr T.A.Jones to inform you that he intends to sue for libel, t'wit...))

Heisenberg is NOT, repeat NOT spelt 'Eisenberg'; neither is it spelt Heisenbergh as you insist in BSFAN 6, despite my heroic attempts (why be modest) to educate you in my last letter. HEISENBERG!! you fool! I mean, how can your life be complete if you can't spell that one simple word, go on, tell me? ((Easily.))

Hey, I've just watched the last episode of guess what, Graham Poole ((I didn't know they were serialising Graham Poole?)), and my God, it was good. Some of the more recent episodes have been bad, but, still, I'll miss it.

And that's all, except to thank Keith Freeman for the loads of fanzines he's reviewed. No doubt a handful of them will be hearing from me in the near future (wails of horror burst forth, several editors give up their editorship, several old fans die of shock, several new ones shoot themselves... I know, I know). I've got to go now. I know you don't want me to, and I know you're crying and beating your fists off ((!!)) the table and begging no, no, don't go but honestly I've just got to.

Goodbye.

((Hey, who was that guy? I don't know, he just came in here and started acting like Olivier. Must be one of those out of work actor bums. Even worse he's probably an SF addict, entering the terminal stages because he couldn't get his Doc Smith. I hear they've just passed a law which allows you to shoot them. It's more humane that way, after all they haven't got feelings like real people.))

KEVIN RIGHT. 50 Beaufort Rd, St. Thomas, Exeter

I read with interest your comments with regard to keeping the BSFA in existence, by advertising in libraries and elsewhere. I would very much like to see what type of notice you intend to use. Will it, for instance, be eye-catching enough on its own?

Possibly a more effective form of advertising would be in the form of posters? Obviously I don't know how effective a poster would be in comparison until I know what your notices look like. I'd appreciate any comments you might have on the poster idea, I'm even willing to design it myself, if no one else wants to...

((Thanks. I think this is a good idea. The notices are highly informative but hardly eye-catching. A poster couldn't contain the same amount of information but could generate sufficient interest to cause people to write off for information. I'd be very pleased if you'd have a go at designing a poster.))

MICHAEL A. HAMILTON. 38 Park Way, Etwell, Derbys.

BSFAN 6 is up to its usual high standard (don't you ever get bored of being praised?) ((No, no! Call me masochist but I like it. Just keep that praise coming in.)) The change of print size seems a success and comes over as very neat.

The front cover comes over as very odd! I think the BSFAN really needs art work, but I suppose this means us fans will have to send it in. One reason for our reluctance to do this, (speaking for myself) is that doodling SF on newspaper corners requires less nerve than attempting a drawing for BSFAN. What are the ground rules for artwork, (besides using a pencil) what type paper, rules on shading, areas of black, etc. ((Good questions. Now that Keith Freeman has developed his technique of xeroxing and then thermo-stening the artwork does not have to be in pencil, virtually anything will do. And the first person sending in a drawing done with a bit of burnt stick will have said stick placed in a very unusual place. Paper should be white, any grade is okay as long as it's not transparent. The drawings should be at least a fifth of an A4 page, this is an A4 page. The reproduction technique produces only black and white so different shades can be produced by variably spacing lines and dots. An area of grey on a drawing will come out black. Large areas of black don't work very well, so please don't use them. VECTOR uses an offset litho technique so these problems don't arise as much though with large areas of black, such as the last VECTOR cover a photo plate has to be made, and that is expensive. Please don't worry about submitting art, we're not ogres, well I'm not and Chris only eats virgins.))

The article on films and TV, I liked, right length everything. The bit on the Survivors was good, but I felt the first series was better; the atmosphere of chaos, of petty squabbles and little dictators. I think this series has a number of faults:

i) The population is reduced to about 10,000 (as given in the first series) of which 5,000 are alive at the start of year 2. Yet the impression given by the programmes (especially the one referred to in the

article) is of a lot less.

ii) The supplies in Britain ready for 55,000,000 people run out in the first year (half way through the first series). Hard to take, even with supplies unavailable in large towns.

iii) Seeing small errors like newly cut fields on either side of the survivors during journeys.

Now the crux of the letter, according to the news, the SILMARILION is to be published, great! But the bad news MGM are to film LORD OF THE RINGS, they couldn't, could they! Even a 12 hour film would be silly, to even consider filming it would be criminal. Ideas created in the mind of the reader should not be destroyed by some product, it's inhuman. Worse, much worse, is the suggestion of a cartoon. Could you see Walt Disney doing the same treatment they tried on Jungle Book or Sword in the Stone on Lord of the Rings. The sights and sounds of Gandalf and Frodo bursting into song in a horrible American accent would literally drive me batty...! ((The thought of a film horrifies me also, LotR is my desert island book and I don't want any film director spoiling my images. If we have to have a film I would prefer a cartoon. OK so it would be terrible if it were Disneyised but there are good people working in the cartoon field. Hopefully MGM will decide it's going to cost too much and shelve the project.))

The letters, only two of real comment, music criticism and poems (including that object on page NYR2) in BSFAN, never! We all read BSFAN because we are interested in SF, but if you include poems, music comment then you are not providing an article which all BSFA members would enjoy, whilst sticking to the normal diet of articles will suit the majority of readers. ((It is true that not everyone is going to approve of the reviews of sf oriented music, but some people will. You only have to read the letters to see that not everyone likes everything. Music isn't going to take over and I think it's worth devoting the occasional page or 1/2 page to, surely that's not excessive?))

My other comment is to agree with John Welsh, hard SF does need saving. I also rather like the book pages, but according to page B1 there's a C.S.Lewis book called VOYAGE TO VENUS, has Pan changed the title of PERLANDER and if so why? ((Yes, Pan changed the title some years ago, obviously it was an attempt to get in on the space/SF boom. Stupid really, PERELANDER is a much better title.))

That's it, rather longer than I wanted, and I still haven't commented on the Yearbook, but that does not really need a great deal of comment, I found it very enjoyable and thought provoking.

GWYNFOR JONES. 34 Bryngwynt, Amlwch Port, Anglesey

Thanks for the mailing. I read all the publications (shows that I'm a dedicated member) and found the 3 very interesting, informative and well put together. Though I suppose I could grumble that my name wasn't amongst the legion of new members - but I won't, I'll just carry on and swallow that microscopic thing I have called pride - gulp! (sorry, just noticed that you couldn't have possibly included me with the others, you printed the list before I joined.) ((See, not only a mention in the new members list this issue but your letter as well, how's that for blanket coverage?))

I thought the artwork for the Yearbook' cover really super and if Andrew Stephenson isn't professional he should be, and if he is, well, the best of luck to him.

While the Yearbook had polish the Newsletter had style and a more personal approach which I think works very well. I liked the big chunky sheets with the one staple holding the whole thing together - to hell with sophistication I say, it's what's inside down in print that counts!

Remember in the early sixties when Boris Karloff would host an excellent TV SF series with stories like Asimov's "Little Lost Robot", also "The Cold Equations" and others? ((Yes, with fond memories.)) I don't think the series has seen its equal, those were the days. It nearly broke my stainless steel heart to note that Graham Poole thought that the "Survivors" merited the label of SF. It doesn't, it's a load of morbid melodrama for Kit Pedler freaks. ((My personal preferences were for the fixed length, ie 6 part, serials. "Quatermass", "A for Andromeda", "Undermind", sigh...))

RICHARD SEALS. 157 Station Street East, Foleshill, Coventry

I liked the reading material you sent me, that and "Nebula", which arrived a few days before, were the first fannish SF I had read for months on end. I meant to get back to reading this sort of (choke) literature, but my ~~disturb~~ filing cabinet is full at the moment so it's kicking about all over the house. Found it in the toilet once, must have its own motive power.

I must admit I liked it, thoroughly enjoyed sitting down and reading it all. Liked most of it, though it could have been slightly more humorous and this would help to relieve the long boredom which sets in when reading the long articles one after the other, which I wasn't very interested in. (ie. "Films in 75" by Andrew Tidmarsh which was full of metaphors etc, and was heavy reading on a hot

day and as far as I could see it didn't get anywhere anyway, not that I was following it too closely.)

As it's still a hot day, the heat is drying up my felt tip pen I'm sweating from the exertion of writing, and I have to get up and go to work tomorrow, I won't write a long criticism of what you sent. I'll just say it was well above average, and most enjoyable.

DAVID J. WINGROVE. 4 Holmside Crt, Nightingale Ln,
Balham, London

Thus rides the virgin loccer (2 "c"s or a "k" in there ?). BSFAN 5 came as a pleasant surprise and number 6 was even better and prompted these comments. The new type face is an improvement and - as if by magic - the standard of commentary/locs seems to have risen in response (go on, say it, and now it's dropped again!). Something there to get your false teeth into at last.

The News section was as good (if not better than, may I say, flatter aside) as SFM's column at its best. ((As it's true I'll allow you to say it.)) A good, if laboured poem by I.O. Evans (Mr. Evans?) ((Yes)) Media Notes: Yes, I agree with Graham Poole about "The Survivors" but can't say that I like the programme all that much. It has its good points but rather looses out in the "sense of wonder aspect" (and who yet has described that mixture of image and idea better than in those 3 much abused words ?) And good also to learn that "Bug Jack Baron" will soon be a film - vive le Spinrad!

Ian Garbutt's piece was just right (I'll drop you a line, Ian, concurrent to this. I'm not female 16 to 40, but then again I do live in the UK.)

John Welsh makes some valid points, particularly when he says about the "sense of wonder"... "when you've lost it you're withered up, you're dying." That's why we SF addicts can appreciate such diverse offerings as "Foundation", "Barefoot in the Head" and "A Canticle for Leibowitz".

Ray Harrison writes one of the most sensible letters I've yet seen. I read "Dying Inside" at a single sitting. (Laying actually, I was in bed with the flu at the time) And it's still with me after 3½ months. Compulsive, excellent. I have yet to digest it fully. (Read it, Tom, by all means read it.)

Malcolm Edwards makes a very good point, well countered by Tom in his editorial capacity. I thought Sapiro's grouching was petty. As soon as fanzines become "fight you for every penny" affairs then all the fun will have departed for good. SF must be the only genre where practically all of the big names in the field put themselves out to write for non-profit-making magazines. (ie Brian Aldiss for Extrapolation)

They do it because they love SF (another much abused word).

Tony Dent wanders merrily into the mire with a peg firmly clamped to his nose, putting forward the same old arguments about SF being a literature of ideas/things/science/alternatives etc, etc. Will anyone out there argue if I propose that it is a literature where idea and image coalesce in metaphor. Whether the accent is on the idea or the image, it must have something of each (and be coherently written) to be good, entertaining SF. It doesn't have to be "philosophy for the masses", but it must be more than Popular Mechanics meets Readers Digest. (OK, let's hear it from out there. Let's have some real comment on the nature of SF!) ((I like your definition, though perhaps it is a little too concise, could you expand your ideas somewhat ?))

But, Tony Dent saves himself with a word on SF oriented music. He is right, of course, more people listen to rock music than read SF, although there must be a healthy overlap of casual listeners/readers of both.

Here's to David Lewis' survey of how many SF books we buy/borrow/steal/read/eat a year. Perhaps he could undertake the project. He can send me a preprinted form to fill out if he wishes. I'm sure the BSFA has enough on its plate without falling into Big Business's current dead-end-trend of statistical surveys! ((How about it Dave ? You prepare a questionnaire, we'll run it off and send it out with a mailing, then you collate the answers. We'd all love you to do it, Dave.))

Dave Langford (is he really the thing from Inner space ?) was excellent with what must have been a reprinted story from U-sack Karamazov's fifteen thousand page collection-come-autobiography-come-tak-dodge, "Before the Wooden Age". Anyway atoms don't squash... they sort of squelch and cling when you sit on them (All that is except Krypton, but that's another story..) ((The front cover of last issue was, of course taken from a photo of Dave himself wearing swimming trunks and a cricket box, an idea which I believe he stole from Spike Milligan's "Puckoon".))

ANDREW MUIR. 11 Devon Gdns, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow

You should first of all be warned that if you are not an admirer of that late and great J.R.R. Tolkien much of the following will be very boring and tedious. Add to this the bad writing and meandering start (of which this could well be a part) and you will wonder why you should bother reading the damned thing. Intrigued ? Good - there is, however, a slight reward for you, eventually,

if you struggle through the remainder of this masterpiece (hic).

Due to a long overdue 5th re-reading of "Lord of the Rings" I have a huge backlog of (lesser) reading to do, therefore I only had time to quickly read BSFAN 6 and write this ~~Abba!hah!hah~~ - eh! letter. Having read the Newsletter 3 points came to my immediate attention - a very rare occurrence and a great recommendation for any publication. The first 2 points were of great hope and great despair respectively - and the 3rd may be of hope to you in your despair (this is so bad my pen will soon collapse).

The point of great hope was your news of Sunday 16 May, although I feel we will not see the Silmarillion before 1978. Still you gave me hope and I will eagerly await any news about this (hint, hint!) ((I shall be writing to the publishers just as soon as the BSFA headed notepaper arrives. The BSFA used to have a stock but it seems to have disappeared during the chaos, anyone out there got any? Please return it.))

The point of great despair was the announcement of the proposed filming of LotR. This is far more than "disturbing" it is a regular Orc trick and could well be the greatest crime ever committed in our world. Yes, even worse than "The Shape of Things to Come" in SF Monthly (now also late and great !?). Surely this must not take place - please publish immediately any news of the hoped for breakdown of the dastardly scheme. This may seem harsh but not even with the best of intentions could the film makers fail to do the book the greatest of injustices. How do you enact the scene of Gandalf and the Balrog? How do you portray Galadriel, Tom Bombadil, etc, to say nothing of Ents, Hobbits, Orcs - and Gollum? Harry Harrison's problems with "Soylent Green" will fade in comparison to the slight done to Tolkein's memory if this film is made and shown.

Now that I've got that off my chest we can proceed to point 3, the only one that will interest yo. ((You do yourself an injustice, as I agree with you about the film.)) I can post notices about the BSFA. ((HereAndrew gave a list of places he could post notices. This was not the only offer with regard to notices and I've only mentioned this one because it leads on to..)) If there is any other way I can help I would be very willing to do so.

((I took Andrew up on this offer and, at present, he's conducting a survey of British publishers to find out what SF is selling best/worst. This is a good taking off spot for a more general point. One of the things which used to annoy me about the old BSFA was the constant cries that they needed volunteers but when someone did offer help they turned it down.

During my early days as a member I offered help twice in response to requests for assistance, in both

instances I was given a polite brush off; it was obvious that the BSFA was really after help only from experienced fans. OK, so certain jobs, such as VECTOR editor, or Treasurer you wouldn't ask a new member to do but in which case you don't ask generally for assistance, you go to who you want. The brush off is bound to make people apathetic, or make them angry enough to resign. One needs to encourage new members, not all of them want to actively participate but there are plenty of projects which are at a standstill because there isn't anyone to carry them through. We will always encourage those who offer active help. Message ends.))

If the finances are being stretched why not raise the membership fees? After all anyone joining is, presumably, able to pay for many books at ever increasing prices. Considering the service rendered I think you are entitled to ask for much more - I know I would be willing to pay an increased fee and I'm sure most others would too.

((It is our intention to keep the fee as low as possible but we must cover expenses. Last year we were given the go ahead to increase the fee to £4 but we held back until Easter this year, since then new memberships have cost £4. But, to encourage prompt renewals we shall be offering present members continued membership for £3, provided they pay on time. We shall hold this as long as we can, let's pray there are no more large increases in postage costs!))

RAY HARRISON. 18 The Witham, Grange Estate, Daventry, Northants.

Thanks for the latest issue of BSFAN, I'm pleased to see you managed to get a cover drawing for this issue.

Whatever happened to the idea of giving the Newsletter a name? I hope you have not changed your mind. It would be a great pity if you have because the Newsletter has been evolving, as many people have been commenting on, and the clumsy title of: BSFA Newsletter, really does not do it justice. Indeed, under your very able hands, it is still evolving and is already a unique and individual zine.

((You're too kind, too kind, but I agree with you the zine has developed a personality and so it now has a name, MATRIX.))

I think Ian Garbutt may well be embarrassed by his contribution to this issue when he looks back in hind-sight sometime in the future. How could he put Drilkjis before Maya? ((Easily, I certainly do.)) I know he is obviously a neo, but then so am I, and even a neo ought to be able to see which is the better of the two. ((Forgive me for saying this but new fans can be impressed by a fanzine which is well produced, nicely laid out and

have well known people write for them but this doesn't mean it's a better zine than a duplicated production by a couple of guys. Personally I prefer D to Maya because D has wit and humour and I feel that this is what Maya lacks, this is what stops Maya being a great zine.)) If Ian enters fanzine fandom, in about 6 to 12 months it will probably be painfully embarrassing and I don't think he will thank you for publishing it.

In your answer to Dorien Rogers letter about films you touch on a point which might possibly have a broader application. You're right, of course, when you say relevance comes a poor second to entertainment and I find it interesting to think of this with the new and old wave in mind. Much of the new wave is extremely relevant but is also extremely boring, whereas much of the hard-core is entertaining but lacks hardly any relevancy. In such generalisations as this there are obvious exceptions, moreover what I have said is, I'm glad to say, more accurate when aimed at about 5 or 6 years ago. I think then that new wavers were over-reacting to the hard-core and have been turning out much better stuff in the last few years. There is no reason why entertainment and relevancy can not go together, indeed, this is what must be aimed for. This is why H.G. Wells reigns so God-like, even today, because he merged the two successfully, and this is what a few writers are doing today (no doubt you can think of examples for yourself so I won't quote any, they would probably be inadequate anyway). It seems strange though that it has taken so many years to get back on the right track that Wells put us on all those years ago. I only hope we can follow it this time

GRAHAM R. POOLE. 23 Russet Rd, Cheltenham.

June 21st and what should arrive but the May issue of BSFAN and the Yearbook. A little late, methinks, but do not worry unduly. It did tend to make the information slightly out of date, though, such as the Nebula Award Nominations...I learnt what the winners were 3 weeks ago. (See NESFIG NEWSLETTER 11, amongst others).

((OK, so you know them, and I know them and maybe 50 to 100 of the BSFA members knew, though I doubt if it were that many. But what about the rest of the members, most of them don't get many, if any, other zines, especially news-zines. For once I think you've made a totally irrelevant point.))

Even older news is the rumour that Tully Zetford is a Ken Bulmer pseudonym - it's been talked about at cons for over a year now. ((Only a minority of the BSFA members go to cons, I haven't been to one for some years, it was new information to me.)) And there's no need to be "Told it's an open secret that Edmund Cooper is the pen name behind "The Expendables"", you only have to refer to the INTERNATIONAL AUTHORS AND WRITERS

WHO'S WHO, 1976 for positive verification. I haven't lowered myself to buying any of the later books in the series yet but I have been told that the copyright notice is in the name of Edmund Cooper - further proof if such be needed. ((Not too many of us have read the WHO'S WHO or seen the notices, which you've been told about. These criticisms are irrelevant, the rest of us don't have your wide knowledge of the field.))

Incidentally, the Who's Who sheds no light on the Zetford/Bulmer rumour but gives a few interesting details about other SF authors' pseudonyms. For example, did you know that Michael Avallone (writer of BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES and some of the U.N.C.L.E. books) has at least ten pseudonyms including Priscilla Dalton, Vance Stanton, Troy Conway and Dorothea Nile...And did you know that Gene Wolfe (THE FIFTH HEAD OF CEREBUS) has written under the pseudonym of David Copperfield? The book also lists Harlan Ellison as a pen-name of Brig. Gen. Theodore R. Cogswell but that's either a mistake or an incredible coincidence. Can anyone enlighten me on this? He is also listed as using the pen-name Mack Reynolds! ((Someone at the Reading SF Club thought he remembered some stories written under the name Harland Ellison, if that's so perhaps the name was mis-spelt in the book.))

Now for a bit of a downer. This isn't aimed at you, Tom, at least I hope it isn't because the following comments are directed at an anonymous person.

I'm very annoyed at whoever wrote the Silicon 1 news item in "News, Views and Rumours" because he/she/they display obvious prejudice and ignorance of the organisation and motivations of a convention. Whoever the Newshounds of the BSFA are they write "It's going to be a no programme, fannish con, the sort of thing some people have suggested for the Easter con (which, thank God, has never come to pass)". Whilst agreeing that the Eastercon should never become a fannish no-programme con I'd like to know exactly who has suggested that it should be. ((Hasn't Bram Stoker made some such suggestion?)) They continue "According to our informants, it's going to be a select affair, membership limited to about 70, the intention being to avoid publicity amongst those not familiar with SF cons!" The next item starts off "And now a con where you don't have to be a BNF (it's supposed to stand for Big Name Fan, a superior no-prize will be given for the most original suggestions as to what the letters really stand for)..."

I'm not one of the organisers of the con, nor is it likely that I'll be able to afford to attend, but as far as I can see it Silicon is not restricted to Big Name Fans, but rather restricted to people who would like to attend an informal convention and talk, chat, have fun and spend a relaxing weekend in the

company of other SF fans. Now what is so wrong with this? Why shouldn't the Gannets organise a no-programme con if they want to? Have you any idea of how much hard work has to go into getting guests of honour, arranging speakers and panels, organising hotels, bookings and programme items, programme booklets, progress reports, badges, of how much time and effort has to go into all this? Therefore any convention that removes most of these problems is reducing the tremendous work load and pressures on the committee.

I'm not saying that all conventions should do this but why shouldn't a bunch of nice guys try to organise an additional convention to be held in this country this year? If they don't organise it nobody else will! For Christ's sake be glad that a convention is being held at all even if it happens to be a programmeless con. But aha! It is not going to be a programmeless con. According to flyers put out by the Gannets it is probable that a couple of films and a couple of other items too will be held... or don't the BSFA's newshounds read that far?

As the BSFA is supposed to help the newcomer to fandom rather than put him off it I find it inexcusable for such comments to be made. If you must publish this sort of thing with a disclaimer at the start reading "Neither the editor nor any other member of the BSFA accept any responsibility for the accuracy of any item" then you should at least credit the author of each item. Rather than the prejudicial comments made by those anonymous newshounds what you could have written was:

"Unlike a Novacon or an Eastercon, Silicon will not be formal. Instead it provides an ideal opportunity for those fans who would like to spend a relaxing weekend in the company of other fans to come along and enjoy themselves. This is the sort of convention you would attend after going to a couple of Eastercons or Novacons and have made some friends and contacts. The newcomer obviously attends a convention in the first place for the SF but after a while he wants to know the fans better, to talk, exchange ideas, make friends. For this sort of person Silicon may be worth a try, for a newcomer perhaps not."

As you know, Tom, I'm not usually this critical of ignorance, especially in the case of a newcomer where it is understandable and where a gentle word does wonders. I'm only being very critical here because this was published by the body claiming to represent SF in this country, and they should know better.

Changing the subject: I've been sending SPI out to various BSFA newcomers with varying results. Some have not answered whereas others, like Brian Griffin and Alison Lowe have made the effort to reply... Alison commented in her loc (letter of comment) about the language (fan language) I used and only

this morning I received a loc from Jim Darroch who also commented on my use of SF slang and suggested that the BSFA produce a dictionary of fannish words and phrases. Like you, Tom, I don't realise I am using the slang half the time, it just rolls off my tongue or out of my mind onto paper quite naturally. It is only when you get letters like these or hear from other newcomers that you suddenly stop to think and realise you're acting in an offputting way from a newcomers point of view. For this reason I like your idea to publish a "Bumf sheet for all new members which gives explanations of the more common fan words" but suggest you approach someone like Pete Roberts to either produce this for you or to give you a hand. Pete is probably the best person to ask since he is interested in language and since he is also British Agent for Bob Tucker's THE NEOFAN'S GUIDE and Elst Weinstein's THE FILLOSTRATED FAN DICTIONARY.

On the subject of this terminology it is evident that John Welsh mistook my real meaning when I said there are less than 500 hard core SF fans in this country. I wasn't talking of fans of hard core SF but the hard core of SF fans (subtle difference) who are active in attending conventions, publishing fanzines, meeting each other, corresponding, and so on. Even I wouldn't be so foolish as to suggest that less than 500 people like hard core SF in this country.

Ian Garbutt displays some of the typical reactions of a newcomer to fanzines which is a pity but is partly understandable. He has a lot to learn and if his column becomes a regular feature I shall follow his progress with interest. Dare I send him SPI?

I agree with Malcolm Edwards in the Riverside Quarterly argument. ((Pity, you usually side with the angels.))

I enjoyed Dave Langford's story but I'm wondering whether he submitted it before or after a certain Timothy C.S. Apps ripped off another of Dave's Mac Malsenn stories and tricked me into publishing it in SPACES under the pseudonym of Ian Trent. Unfortunately for the aforesaid T.C.S. Apps, he was at Mancon and so were Dave Langford and friends who exacted just retribution! (I see from your editorial in BSFA 5 that it was submitted before SPACES appeared). ((It was a great shame you were dupped, but no blame reflects on you. It is sad that someone like Apps should have infiltrated fandom.))

Geral Bishop's "Blue Pages" new book list seems to be rather a misnomer since it is duplicated on white paper. Run out of the blue? ((No, but blue is too expensive. In fact the last stock of coloured we got was so expensive we decided to only have a coloured cover, we intended originally to start each section with a different coloured sheet. Thus, the "Blue Pages" is now so called only for historic reasons))

The new micro elite type is very nice and not at all unreadable. Mind you, I am short sighted but even with my glasses on I had no trouble. Using type of this size you need good duplication and black (not grey) ink and, apart from one poor page, you did very well on this score. ((Thank you.)) ((Thanks for a very meaty loc, I think I deal with your 2 major criticisms, Silicon and Ian Garbutt's article, elsewhere in this issue so I hope you don't mind me not rehashing my statements again.))

HARRY BELL. 9 Lincoln St, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear

It was quite a surprise to see your name surface again a few months back - it's been a long time since PaDS, eh? ((Yes indeed. PaDS was the old BSFA Printing and Distribution Service. Harry and I cut out first fanzines here.))

I meant to write to you earlier, as a matter of fact, partly to claim the book prize (after all, I know you're a Yorkshireman) and partly to compliment you on the way the Newsletter was shaping up.

This issue, however, seems to have an unwarranted amount of Gannet bashing. I'll leave Ian Williams and Rob Jackson to defend themselves against yourself and Ian Garbutt respectively (except to say that whilst Garbutt may be unbiased he is also uninformed), but I guess it's my duty as Chairman of the first Silicon to say something about the rather offensive sneering tone adopted by "Newshounds of the BSFA" in their mention of the con.

The majority of fans attending Silicon do not by any means fall into the category of BNFs (the term is a relative one anyway - few fans would actually claim to be BNFs) but they have been to at least one con before registering for Silicon. They are therefore aware of the friendly atmosphere to be found at cons, and in particular are enthusiastic about the more social aspects of conventions and fandom (the very aspects which have kept fandom going since its beginnings in the thirties).

Avoiding publicity amongst those not familiar with SF cons is, as I should have thought obvious, a safety measure to prevent someone coming expecting a full programme of panels, talks and films on SF. Someone with those expectations would quite possibly be deeply disappointed by Silicon; he would be miserable and should there be a number of similarly miserable folk present the atmosphere would suffer.

Sercon fandom has its Eastercon and Novacon and enjoyable affairs they usually are (I have to believe that: Gannetfandom did, after all, organise the highly successful Eastercon, Tynecon 74.). Fannish fandom now has its Faancon and Silicon, smaller and more relaxing. Silicon, we hope, is providing the type of convention wanted by those attending, but I see no

obstacle to prevent someone organising a more sercon convention at any time during the year, or even at August Bank Holiday for that matter. I don't suppose I'd go to it but I'd wish them well. Perhaps Silicon could be afforded the same courtesy and respect, or is having fun now something to be frowned upon?

Would it be possible to learn who the "Newshounds" are, or do they still feel the need to shelter behind a nom-de-plume? I can assure them Gannetfandom has few violent tendencies, but we do like to know who's sneering at us.

((Well, let me explain the situation. I was shown a notice, virtually an advert in a fanzine relating to Silicon. This gave the impression that it was a very exclusive con and new fans would be dissuaded from going. Hardly the kind of thing to encourage people to join fandom, Graham. So, although I knew the item would bring in howls of protests I decided to print it. Following publication of the item I learnt the true nature of the con. Why didn't I try to find out the true nature before hand, well I thought I had because I thought I'd been shown an official notice. There is no doubt now that I was wrong, and I apologise for myself and the Newshounds, but in the same situation I would do the same thing again. As for the names of the Newshounds, I'm sorry but it's a matter of trust, it would be unethical for me to give you their names. I have, of course, written to Harry who assures me we're still friends. I wish him and Silicon the best of luck and, hint, hint, I would love a report on it from one of the attendees.))

SANDY BROWN. 18 Gordon Trce, Blantyre, Scotland

Once again I take cudgels with you on "Read all about it", but this time I am leaping to its defence. Does one have to have an interest in science to be able to read sf? This, to me, smacks of J.L. Campbell's attitude (which I thought had long departed) that 90% of readers of "his" SF had science oriented educations (or am I getting confused with Sturgeon's law). ((No, Sturgeon's law says 90% of everything is crud.)) After all, you don't read SF to learn about science. Fiction is an artistic subject, not a scientific one (no matter how many books of all kinds there are which appear to have been churned out by a poorly programmed computer); can you really imagine a book review programme containing the BBC's house-trained scientist, Dr. Magnus Puke?, who at one swell foop has set back the public's idea of scientists forty years, or, even worse, one of their instant scientists.

Anyway, "The Eyes of Heisenberg" is probably Herbert's weakest book; and to set the record straight, Irene Handl has written at least one novel; so there. ((I agree about "The Eyes..." but that doesn't detract from the fact that they used their condemnation of that book, about which I have no quibble, to

launch into a condemnation of SF inheneral. I deliberately mentioned using a scientist because I know it would generate a reaction. Obviously what is needed is a person with a good knowledge of the field, what his, or her, profession is doesn't matter. There are some scientists who would do very well on a literary programme, though they might not like SF, Prof. Eric Laithwaite springs to mind. I feel your comments about Dr. Magnus Pike are too harsh. I'm a scientist, I work in a scientific establishment, you should see some of the cases we have! Pike has the ability to explain things so that a layman can understand, most of my non scientist friend rate him very high in this respect; a lot of the scientists I knew aren't sufficiently lucid to make themselves understood by other scientists!))

I'll finish by saying that I like the manner in which you comment on the letters which you receive and disagree with, or which disagree with you. I received recently a zine which seemed to cut up nasty about evryone, which left a bad taste in the mouth, although it was well written and well argued. Not to mention another one where I gave it the gentle (or rather, trivial) answr which turneth away wrath; and I got wrath back.

((There was a time, the period following university, when I worried, I get easily excited and angry, and I would retaliate; I'd spit out a harsh word, I'd lash with a sarcastic tongue. Then I realised that if I carried on that way I'd have a heart attack by the time I was 20 so I stopped it. I'm still stopping it, ingrained habits are hard to break. So, even though a letter might annoy me I can think about it much more calmly by the time I type up the letter column.))

((This next letter was written in response to BSFAN5, but due to a slip up, hello Chris Fowler, I received it too late. I include it here because it makes some valid general comments, criticisms and suggestions.))

ROY GRAY. 72 Thornton Ave, Macclesfield, Cheshire

I'm afraid this letter is rather critical of BSFAN 5 but I hope it is also helpful/useful. I feel that you tended to sacrifice quality for quantity with BSFAN 5 and this is disturbing because the BSFA has not yet recovered from the lapse of 1973/74.

BSFAN 5:

11 pages of letters out of 17
3 pages of editorial/opinion
3 pages of news - new members and fanzines

This seems to be the wrong balance. Fewer issues per year would be acceptable to me. If this issue was issued especially to catch the VECTOR mailing then I feel it was a mistake. Had you titled it "BSFA Letters" I would not be complaining.

Having criticised the contents of the issue it

would be unfair of me not to make some suggestions for replacing the reviews and letter columns. However my views are based on a personal requirement which is not likely to be common to many members. My reason for joining/remaining in the BSFA is simply curiosity. I want to know what is happening, where and why. What people/fans/writers (are fans people) are thinking and what their reactions are to events in the field or of interest to us.

So my suggestions are as much questions I would like to have answered or answers I would like to see "discussed" as much as ideas for articles. On the literary scene.

What is the reaction to new novels such as "Children of Dune" and "Extro" ? I do not mean reviews; more a review of reviews if you like.

What has happened to "Galaxy" in the UK? Can we do anything through our contacts in the USA to obtain these magazines?

((It would certainly be interesting if we could get a discussion of the major sf novels going but this seldom seems to happen. The only book in recent times which has generated that kind of discussion was "Dhalgren". Few people will have read "Children of Dune" or "Extro" yet, we'll have to wait for the UK paperbacks to come out. You're right, "Galaxy" is difficult to get, perhaps one of our bookseller readers would care to explain why? I am trying to establish contacts with our opposite number organisation in the States and perhaps when I've done this we can get some kind of trade scheme going.))

Who is/was James Baen - the new editor of "galaxy" ?

What news is there of Farmer's "Riverworld" series, will we ever see it completed? ((I always imagined that Farmer did finish it off with a serial in "Worlds of Tomorrow" some years ago, this following on from the story now called "The Fantastic Riverboat". This was some years ago so I may be mistaken. By the way, talking of the Riverworld, does anyone agree with me that the books have been prettied up, de-Farmerised, in fact. For example the original stories have the Neanderthal relieving himself after eating, the crowd wanting to do him in but Burton saving him, there's also an excellent short story about Christ which helps give atmosphere to the stories. Both these seem to have been removed, surely they weren't considered too controversial to stop the novel becoming a best seller?))

Asimov came to the UK for a MENSA tour. Did anyone interview him or see his lectures? If so is there a transcript you could publish? ((I don't know, I left Mensa some years ago and have no contacts there anymore, are there any Mensa members out there who could help us?))

An interesting side of SF is the publishing.

Do the US magazines still have a future? ((I think some of your questions about the future of the US magazines may have been answered by the article in the Yearbbok. As for the publishing side, one of the active, energetic and Scottish based (well you can't have everything) members is about to do a survey of UK publishers to find out exactly how well SF does sell and what kind of SF sells the best.))

Which SF paperback and original short story series are successful? Can we compile a SF top ten, in terms of sales, not fan popularity? ((Both covered by the above mentioned survey.))

On the Fannish Scene.

Convention guests of honour are usually major SF writers but there are personalities of equal (?) interest to fans (Eg. Neil Armstrong or Carl Sagan) (no, no, not Von Daniken).

After Mancon 5 alternatives to large hotels as sites can be considered (Eg Butlins or Pontins camps, Holiday caravan villages) ((See the editorial for the comment on Freakon))

These two subjects can be treated seriously or humourously. I leave you to decide which camp my suggestions fall into.

I haven't seen much mention of "Britain is Fine in 79" campaigning in VECTOR or BSFAN. ((The British bid for the 1979 world SF convention seemed to be a walk over but now there is at least one serious US contender I shall certainly plug it. BRITAIN IS FINE IN 79. And TVCon is Great in 78 ?))

In one book programme Robert Robinson interviewed the owner of "the world's largest second hand bookshop" which is located in Hey on Wye I believe. A report on its contents, particularly SF, might be of interest to fans or BSFA members (Are BSFA members fans?). Is there a member in the locality prepared to write such a report and would you publish it? ((If any member would write a report I'd publish it, any volunteers?))

Now that magazines such as "Galaxy" are not imported into the UK is there a US dealer who would act as a pusher? (I need my fix of SF magazines). Subscriptions are not reliable, except for "Analog". (Any US, or UK, member care to recommend a good US book/mag dealer who'd be prepared to ship the goods to the UK?))

elevised SF

There is a fair amount of home produced SF on TV now. The worst is exported to the USA but how about the best, eg. "The Goodies". (Do any other members agree? If so how about proposing an episode such as Giant Kitten, Big Bunny or Living Machine for a Hugo.)

It would be interesting to know what is shown elsewhere and to what reaction.

A review of televised SF, or programmes likely to be of interest to members, might usefully fill a few pages.

After all most programmes are repeated within a year. ((I think our coverage of SF on TV, and films, is one of our good points, re Graham Poole's notes on "The Survivors" of last issue and Ian Garbutt's preview of the next "Space: 1999" in this issue.))

Finally a few points on previous issues. "The Eyes of Heisenberg". The book's treatment on "Read all about It" was deserved. I agree that a reader should be prepared to make some effort to follow/understand a novel but I feel the novel should motivate a reader to make that effort. This book is too boring to do that. Ms Fraser's point about the "optimen" (endpoints of a breeding programme to produce the best humans) being aryan types was a valid criticism.

Question. Did anyone see that curious ITV play about a "science fiction jamboree" which included a "Ms. Fandom" with a distinct Liverpool accent. Who perpetrated that? ((Anyone got any information on that play? It sounds as though someone's trying to make money out of a convention!))

I can recommend, if it is ever repeated for a third time, the Nigel Kneale play "The Stone Tape". It was a very taut production and enjoyable, despite the predictable end. ((I agree, one of the best SF plays on TV ever.))

If your policy remains to publish all letters
then this one should be ruthlessly edited. Otherwise
you will bore your readers to sleep.
(Zzzzzzzzzzzzzz. Wake up. Huh! He's finished now.
I wrote to Roy thanking him for a very interesting
letter containing some useful suggestions which as
you can see from my comments we are starting to
implement. I did ask Roy if he was interested in
helping but for good reasons he was unable to do so.
If other members have suggestions please do
write we may not be able to follow them all through
but it does help us to know what you, the members
want.))

NDY SAYER. 14a Fifth Ave, Manor Park, London E12

The Newsletter gets better - more information and entertainment. Dave Langford's story was lethal in its pun content, I'm still reeling. (All this praise for Dave is not good, he has to buy a new hat everytime he reads one of these letters of praise. I, on the other hand, have forced myself to suffer for the sake of thers so you may ignore the contributors and heap all your praise on the editor. I can stand it.))

Congratulations and thanks to Pete Roberts for the Guide and Elke and Alan Stewart for the Yearbook. With so much information in them it would be difficult to pick out particular aspects for praise, but as a newcomer to the BSFA I think the thing that strikes

me is their well-documented and tightly packed factual content mingled with an entertaining style. The articles in the YEARBOOK by Sonya Porter and Graham Poole were equally good. The many lists of books, stories, etc has filled me with shame for missing so much ((me too)) and exhilaration at the thought of what I will eventually get round to reading.

The Newsletter compares well with VECTOR, leavening the diet of serious reviews and articles with news, facts and a great deal of humour. The letters column is hurtling on with gusto ((Perhaps I should re-title it Hell Bound Train ?)). I agree with your comments on Tony Dent's condemnation on "literacy in SF". I think he's mistaking literacy - the ability to convey emotions and ideas by words in a meaningful and entertaining way - with the practice of some writers who seem to equate obscurity with depth and verbal dexterity with story telling ability. Naturally there will be arguments as to which is which - in individual cases this is only a matter which critical discussion can decide and I, for one, am in favour of writers experimenting with "mainstream" techniques - any technique so long as they harmonise with what he's saying.

I'm not too sure, in any case, whether SF as "basically mainstream novels set in the future" is necessarily inferior to, for example, SF as basically Westerns set in the future which, lets face it, covers a heck of a lot of classic SF. In any case what the hell is this "Mainstream" that we're all so defensive about? I don't know what other BSFAN contributors define it as, but any definition I've seen seems to boil down to something like "literature about contemporary people and their problems" with the implied addition, as in Tony Dent's letter, that it is necessarily well written. Surely that's what we need in SF? And if we don't - even if we want, as I often do, a complete escape into total unreality and wild extrapolation, we should demand a certain standard of that ability to convey images with words which is every storyteller's basic tool. I'm willing to put up with a certain amount both of pretentiousness and inability because I love SF, but I don't think I should defend it. The best SF writers are those who tell stories, not those who dazzle us with science. ((A good set of points well argued which, on the whole, I go along with. Surely the thing about SF is that it can cover everything from total escapism to social relevance and beyond but, as you rightly say, whatever kind of tale it is the writer must have the basic writing skills.))

I'm interested in Tony's comment about SF and rock music, though. It seems to me that the connection between the two fields is more of a parallel reflection than a direct link - ie. both developed in relative isolation from the mainstream (there I've used that word!) of their respective art forms, with, to some

extent, their own rules and conventions. Both, to some extent, were/are in a ghetto, cut off from "serious" artists developing in relationship to their producers and consumers with little critical acknowledgment of their successes or serious analysis of their faults., which led to an inferiority complex and the sort of "fan" mentality which leads to pointless rivalry - is Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix or Jimmy Page really the best guitarist in the world? Is Isaac Asimov, Doc Smith, J.G. Ballard or James Tiptree Jr. the best writer? Is Michael Moorcock both?

Similarly - and this is only my opinion but I hold it strongly - SF and rock music are the two areas in their respective art forms which still possess life and energy, which still offer relevant areas for experimentation and which still have the basis for popular appeal. Many artists are now appreciating this. Just as many SF writers are becoming aware of more sophisticated techniques, so rock musicians are aware of different musical forms or styles. So called "serious" musicians, or at least, musicians with a certain amount of classical training are coming to rock.

The dangers, which are those of Tony's "literacy" are obvious - the energy gets diluted and the sophisticated take over. But without refreshment from other sources, the genre remains locked inside the ghetto.

It's these parallels which I think are important; much "SF rock" is on the level of the hack lyric-writer looking for some easy images, but yes there are some interesting examples. I can remember an album called, I think, ARK 2 by Flaming Youth around 1968, also some of Roger McGuinn's Byrds' tracks (CTA-102, Mr Spaceman - which aren't among the best Byrds tracks - and Space Odyssey - which is). And of course, there's the Jefferson Airplane/Starship and, not to be forgotten, good old Tyrannosaurus Rex, if you want a bit of pure fantasy (my 5 month old daughter's favourite record is definitely Unicorn., which possibly says something about Marc Bolan's writing ability ?) As for Hawkwind and their SF/rock, they're one of the few such bands I've seen. They have a great name, superb visuals, effective if limited music and, I must admit, some of the worst lyrics I've ever heard! (although my enjoyment of the gig in question was perhaps limited by the guy next to me who shoved every drug known to man down his throat and then proceeded to vomit them up again.)

Awaiting the next Newsletter.
((Thanks for a really good letter, good points, well argued. I would go along with you about the parallel development of SF and rock. Most of the progressive groups - isn't that a bad adjective - discovered rock well before they discovered SF. Yes, concerts can often be spoilt by twits, one of the reasons I go to few concerts these days, I don't mind other people smoking, hash or tobacco, but I object to having to

breathe it also. I look forward to more interesting letters from you.))

IAN WILLIAMS. 6 Greta Ice, Chester Rd, Sunderland

Thanks for the latest BSFA Newsletter which I received and read with interest. There are a few items in it which I feel I must disagree with or correct information.

The first is about Silicon:1. The report of this was so inaccurate that I must protest. For a start it is not true that there will be no programme. We decided to hold this con shortly after returning from the excellent unprogrammed fancon at Blackpool in February. We came to the conclusion that there is room for 4 British conventions in a year. However, there would be no point in imitating either the one at Blackpool or the two established conventions. So we decided to offer something a little different. This is a fairly luxurious convention in an excellent hotel, a fairly lazy convention the main purpose of which is mainly just to sit and talk, but not solely. For a start there is going to be at least one film, we're also hoping that Bob Shaw (who is definitely attending with his wife Sadie) will be giving a talk, plus we're in the process of arranging a couple of panel discussions. There's also a likelihood of a couple of games of Dungeons and Dragons. We're also investigating a Sunday morning coach trip to Hadrian's Wall. It is not intended as a select affair. But obviously it is not representative of British SF conventions so it would be unfair to encourage people who haven't been to one before to come because we honestly feel they may not enjoy themselves. But no-one who wishes to attend will be refused. The membership is not limited to 70. That is the number we hoped would eventually turn up, or, if you like, an estimation, a guess on our part. It's a pity you hadn't written to Irene Bell for information yourself before you printed this misleading piece and I hope another Newsletter appears before the Con is held so you can correct it. ((I hope you too accept my apologies as given to Harry Bell and thanks for the information on the Con programme. Silicon must now have had more publicity through the massed letters that have fallen on my head than any other Con the BSFA has mentioned, I'm beginning to think I was fed that duff gen by your secret publicity manager))

Now Ian Garbutt's views on Fanzines. You're quite right, his views are unbiased. They are also uninformed. One criterion he expresses quite forcefully is that: if a fanzine is devoted solely to SF-oriented material then it is better than one that is not. This is a value judgement on his part, it is also a misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of fanzines. A fanzine is produced by a fan for his pleasure and, hopefully, the pleasure of his readers. By and large, a fanzine will express (some of) the interests of the editor and his readers which is not necessarily solely SF.

(For example, the next issue of my fanzine contains material about feminism, conventions, religion and SF, specifically Delany's two most recent works.) When I started reading fanzines I was naturally more interested in those which dealt with SF and it took a few months before I saw the virtues and interest held by zines that didn't. My views changed and I suspect so will Ian Garbutt's.

Ian also expresses a dislike of jargon, as do you. This I also disagree with for the simple reason that jargon is useful. It didn't arise because fans like to think themselves different, superior, etc, or to confuse outsiders. It arose for a purpose. In any special interest sphere (such as anthropology, football, philately, etc ad infinitum) jargon will arise. This is because each (let's call it a) matrix will have certain circumstances or conditions that arise frequently inside the matrix that are less common outside. Now these conditions can be described using non-jargon, but it is far more convenient to adapt or invent new words to describe them. It is simply a form of shorthand. It does not seem unreasonable to me that newcomers should learn this. It's easily done, all you have to do is ask someone. Jargon is not used to keep newcomers (neos) away, nor do I feel that there is all that much in common usage in fandom anyway. Anyway, I notice you use one piece of jargon with complete equanimity, in fact without apparently realising it is jargon; I refer of course to amateur science fiction fan magazines, you know, "fanzines". ((I trust you are not serious in suggesting I don't realise fanzine is jargon, after all that would be insulting my intelligence and I'm sure you wouldn't do that. My work involves lots of jargon, many times have I sat in meetings thinking that a layman would consider we were speaking in a foreign language but I use the same jargon. Why? Because it's easier, I'm lazy, it's easier to say Sins than Ship's inertial navigation system. But it is a barrier to a newcomer, okay it's a soft one but it's still there and it does increase the mystique. To take an example, for years programming was regarded as a field requiring specialists, programmers, to actually write the programs. Only with the early teaching of program languages and techniques did it become apparent that any engineer or scientist could program. Our own SF jargon doesn't hold these dangers but it could put some people off and as some of the BSFA members aren't fans and have no intention of becoming fans I keep the jargon down to a minimum. I would regard myself as the ultimate bigot if I said to them "Now you've joined the BSFA you've got to learn the jargon before you can understand the magazines". Of course I use the jargon, I've been a BSFA member for over ten years and the stuff has been ingrained into my memory, but it doesn't mean that I have to

like it.))

I see vulgarity is raising it's obscene little head again. If you found my use of that well known Anglo-Saxon four letter word offensive (or thought the membership would), then why didn't you use the prerogative of the editor and edit. It's your responsibility, after all. However I feel you do your readership an injustice. Are there that many people these days who are offended by swearing, that are (to use your terminology) pissed off with it. Certainly most forms of excess can be tiresome, but I doubt the occasional four letter word is seriously going to upset any intelligent person. And if Keith Freeman is going to not recommend a fanzine because of "immoderate obscenities", then I feel he has a duty to warn them off a great deal of excellent contemporary literature, including works by Silverberg, Delany, Moorcock, Russ, Farmer and (I even saw that certain word in a novel by) Poul Anderson. ((I included the four letter word to show that you were losing your cool, that your arguments were based on emotions not logic, my use of a four letter word being a parodying of your tone. Like you I see nothing wrong in the occasional use of four letter words, on a literary level they produce a specific dramatic effect and on a personal level they relieve tensions. Keith has no such duty. He comments on fanzines, he makes his position on them very clear, any reader of the column knows that they're either going to like what Keith likes or like what he dislikes. He did have the reasonableness to point out that he didn't like the fanzine because of the obscenities, the readers could then decide whether that was sufficient reason for them not to get it. Keith is not a Mrs Whitehouse and certainly has no duty to warn people about obscenity in SF novels, I take it you were being satirical/sarcastic.))

It is nice however, to see a lively BSFA Newsletter and VECTOR, but I can't help feeling that you're trying to create a BSFA fandom outside mainstream SF fandom. ((Though we seem to disagree on most points I always look forward to your letters, they always give me something I can get my teeth into, and savage. It is preposterous to say that I am trying to create a BSFA fandom, you make it sound as though I'm some kind of anti-fan, like an anti-Christ. On the whole I like fandom, the Reading SF Club meetings are some of the most enjoyable evenings of the month and I enjoy producing this magazine. But there are aspects of fandom which I dislike, the Big Name Fan cult syndrome for one. A large percentage of the BSFA membership isn't into fandom and no doubt a percentage of those don't want to get into fandom, I have to cater for those people. Agreed I must also cater for the fans and those wanting to become fans. But the BSFA is not a recruiting

office for fandom. I hope that through the pages of MATRIX we can introduce people to fandom. We can say, look this is a fun thing, an interesting thing, you'll meet interesting and good people, you'll have a good time. But I'll also say, it's not all milk and honey, fandom can sometimes be elitist, it can sometimes be cruel, there are some bad fans and there are some bores. But on the whole it's an interesting (and rewarding, in it's way) experience so long as you watch out for the dragons and tread on them when you can. Surely you can't object to me trying to stop the bad things and sometimes holding aloft one of the sacred cows of fandom and saying "Hey, look at this, do we really need it, is it such a good thing?" after all only by changing and growing can we stay alive.))

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SMALL ADS/ SMALL ADS/ THIS SERVICE IS FREE TO MEMBERS/

IF there are any SF groups in the Plymouth area, or people interested in starting a group please contact, Miss Alison Lowe, 'Holyrood Place, The Hoe, Plymouth.

NOVACON 6 - Royal Angus Hotel Birmingham.

5th and 6th and 7th of November. Guest of honour - Dave Kyle.

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((Ahh, there must be some kind of telepathic link between me and some of you out there who decide to send in your locs just after I've wrapped up the letter column. So he's the first one.))

I.A.Thomson. 3 Maryland Ln, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside

Thanks for BSFAN. Even in the short time I've been a member of the Association the Newsletter has gone from good to better. I've been in a few societies before (alcoholics anonymous, etc) and can honestly say BSFAN is the best newsletter I've seen. Even if there's nothing in it to interest me I can always sit and laugh at the spelling mistakes. ((What a 2 edged sword this tribute is. I shall scan the letter carefully for spelling mistakes, ah "cant" instead of "Can't", perhaps you should recant ?))

And now, onto my literary soapbox.

In the last issue (5), Mr. Dent ((hold on, the last issue was 6, wasn't it, perhaps it wasn't, perhaps I'm going mad, will Bonzo the wonder dog save the professor will he be delayed by his run through the forest, all this and more in this issue, number 7, or is it 6?)), I'm not saying that your ideas are wrong. Far from it! What I am saying, however, is that your definition of SF, that it is basically a medium of ideas, has led to outsiders believing that SF is not an art form, that its "writers" are not writers but "frustrated old spinsters" who can barely string two words together.

Perhaps if I took the points of your letter I could discuss my views in detail. You rightly say that; "many of the so called literate SF novels are basically mainstream novels set in the future." But does that mean that these "literate" novels (by the way, you never really gave a definition of what you meant by literate) aren't SF ? Does that mean that, because they are mainstream novels, they can't put forward ideas? All forms of literature have two basic functions. The first, and perhaps the most important, is to provide a form of escape for the reader from the harsh realities of life. The other is to put forward to the reader the ideas of the writer. Now, in any form of literature (indeed, in any art form) this last function can only be performed efficiently if the writer knows what he is doing. If he is a poor writer then, no matter how new or important his ideas are, the reader will never be able to grasp them. Therefore, a mainstream novel set in the future with "pseudo SF concepts" (though I'm not sure what you mean by this. If SF has any set concepts, then surely it's defeating its own purpose) can throw out as many relevant ideas as can a hard-core SF novel; for example. The most important ideas resulting from SF are those having a direct bearing on the society in which we live or, perhaps more importantly, the people in that society. For example, Pohl and Kornbluth's novel "The Space Merchants" shows us the path advertising could, and seems to be, taking. This idea is much more disturbing (if that is the right word) than the ideas expressed in Asimov's

"Nightfall", another excellent story. This is because "The space merchants" refers to our own society, whereas "Nightfall" doesn't. The same can be said of mainstream fiction, the only difference being that mainstream can only produce ideas relevant to our own society. If it doesn't it's science fiction.

To stress the point, there are many classic SF novels which are basically mainstream novels with a few SF "concepts" thrown in. For example, Alfred Bester's "The Demolished Man" is basically a futuristic Agatha Christie novel with telepathy added to it. Asimov's Foundation series is a futuristic projection of the fall of the Roman Empire. Frank Herbert's "Dune" is a rehash of the Bible, but the religion of Arrakis is violence-based. Mary Shelley's "The Last Man" (1826) is a projection of what could happen if a disastrous plague were to strike the human race.

More obvious mainstream novels are the parallel dimension stories, many of which, apart from the crossing from one dimension to another, could well be mistaken as mainstream stories. For example, Ward Moore's "Bring the Jubilee", Harry Harrison's "A Transatlantic Tunnel. Hurrah!" and Philip K. Dick's "The Man in the High Castle".

All these are, if you look at them, familiar stories told on a different scale. But they still "throw ideas out" as you put it. Bester shows how a telepathic society would react to violence and murder, both very old themes. Asimov shows how apathy in science could result in the fall of society. Herbert shows the results of violence as a religion.

The more lighter "mainstream SF", such as Harrison's "The stainless steel rat" has only one function; to entertain (and, Begod, that it does!) Surely you can't condemn that!

You go on to say, Mr. Dent, that; "Surely in SF it's not the importance of the writing that's paramount, rather it's the ideas the writing throws out". True. But if the writing's poor you're going to be bloody lucky to get any ideas at all, and if they are there you're going to have trouble understanding what the "writer" means. If the book falls in the "in-between" stage, a sort of mediocre level in literature, then the "bad" writing can detract from the basic meaning of the story. An excellent example is Heinlein's "Stranger in a Strange Land", a book which many enthusiasts appear to regard as their "bible". In many places, it reads like two books in one and this, for me, spoils it, as does the false-ness of its characters when he can't make them out to be eccentric (though this seems to occur in most of his books, for example one-armed Manny in "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress").

But Mr. Adams is right. Sometimes we do seem to take SF "a weent bit" too seriously. We should remember that SF is different for everybody, and should be. After all, its primary function is to entertain and, while doing so, to make us think.

((There are a lot of points here which are worthy of comment. I have always thought, and even committed to print in a letter to VECTOR, that the majority of SF novels/stories were in fact adventure stories - aliens instead of natives, spaceships instead of sailing ships, planets instead of desert islands or darkest Africa. But I would disagree with you in that I believe one of SF's legitimate tasks was to investigate the effects of science, soft and hard, on society and the individual. Agreed "The Demolished Man" is a detective story but I think this is only the surface tale and Bester's chief concern is to look at how a part telepathic society would work. Thus I can't agree that this book falls into the mainstream category. I would similarly disagree with some of your other choices. It seems that you are boiling the thing down too far, after all if you take it right to the bone every basic plot you can think of was probably done by the Greeks when the gods used to fornicate round on Olympus. I feel it is more important to look at the treatment rather than the basic plot. None the less you make your points well and I shall give them some more thought.))

And now, as I fall off my soapbox, I turn my ugly head towards BSFAN. I have a few points to make about the Newsletter;

1) How do you pronounce the title? ((MATRIX 2 mate ricks - why do you think I finally decided to change the name!))

2) Although it is a newsletter, I can never find any news of the BSFA in it, or if there is any it's tucked away somewhere between the letters (it took me half an hour to find the piece about Orbiter). Perhaps a definite section giving all the news about the BSFA would be an idea. ((The section reports were meant to cover this but odd bits did get lost. Most sections are in such a state that they are running smoothly, touch wood, so we don't need continuous reports from these sections. Thus a BSFA news section would seem to be a reasonably suggestion and so we'll give it a try.))

3) I have a feeling that off-beat sketches, like "The thing from Inner Space" would be better in VECTOR. I also have a feeling that nobody will agree with me. ((You're right, no one agrees with you. VECTOR is the BSFA magazine which is serious in nature with formal articles, MATRIX is the place where folks gather for a laugh, a gossip, an argument, to exchange views, for a bit of fun. That's why Dave's "Thing" was in MATRIX.))

All in all, I think that BSFAN is pretty damned good. Keep up the good work! ((Thankee sor. With the continued participation of people such as yourself who are willing to write interesting letters we'll continue to flourish. Jumps on horse, slashes Z for Zoro on corrupt lord mayor's backside and rides away into the sunset.))

((And at the top of the next column is another excellent letter which should have been an article and if it had arrived a little sooner I'd have chopped it up so it was one - editorial license. Everybody read it.))

R.I. Barycz. 16 Musgrove Rd, New Cross Gate, London.

Number (???) A nice cover. The number is a bit shy and retiring but after drawing such a cover I'm not surprised the artist's eyes were left a bit blurred and doublevisioned. Wherefore we ask is BSFAN 4? Lost with all stencils in a bibliographical void. ((This is a comment on No.5, this being a doubly Loc. As for 4 you may have noticed that you had two number 3s. Ahhh, if I remember right you joined between the two number 3s. This was a brave new experiment in zine numbering. No it wasn't, Jones, it was a cock up. OK, this was a brave new cock up in zine numbering. There you are, an explanation as clear as mud.))

"Misen" ! Here I was getting all European and artsy fartsy with subtle puns up porcelain trade marks and what happens? It's some Yorkie swear word! ((It is not a swear word. He he, we caught a load of intellectuals out with that one. Yes, all those intellectuals with dictionaries, I bet that's why the devils can spell as well.))

So you pub a bit (at least) of every letter you get. Aaarrgghh! he says. You cut off half my joke (was it that bad, Doc?) ((Terminal)). After "(if not it should be)" there was much storm in a cold porridge bowl sarcasm on the ubiquitously missing page 2 of BSFAN 3 but no doubt you'd had sarky up to the clog strings about that from all others and were sparing yourself the trouble of typing any more. My apologies. ((Well, there weren't too many without a page 2, but Graham Poole got one with half of his Media Notes missing. We feel that this Gestetner induced missing page syndrome is good for our readers, it introduces them to a mild form of future shock.))

"They need new blood"

So it is true what I have always thought about mainstream literature: it has turned vampire on its own tail. Garlic anyone? What else could be expected. When mainstream gave up the world and the Word and simple Imagination in favour of sociological cant and accuracy and experimental angst it divided itself into two: "serious" literature on the one hand, selling in the hundreds, solemnly noted in the supplements and eventually provoking academic textbooks about it which sell in the thousands ((Right, right)); and "popular" literature, the "Jaws" of the publishing world that sell in the hundreds of thousands and are ignored, or perhaps patronised, by the literary establishment. In the serious half of mainstream the author's name is more important than the novel or its title; in the popular half the authors are forgotten and books are remembered by their titles (you have three seconds in which to say who wrote "Summer of '42", one two three..??). Buried in the serious half (and sometimes confused with it and vice versa) is the avantgarde of the past (today's cliches and PhD fodder) and an avantgarde of the present (tomorrow's cliches and PhD fodder); popular literature just keeps on being read and it

is not beyond the bounds of irony to guess that Harold Robbins/ Irving Wallace / etc there I go forgetting the author's names again! will be according to the lights of 2077 the Great 20th Century Novelist. (Curiously enough the sole link between these laves seems to be porn from hard to flaccid). ((If porn wasn't literary and acceptable how would the donish critics get their cheap thrills?)) Perhaps just what did happen to mainstream can be epitomised by treating "Ulysses" and "Finnegan's wake" as symbolic fables about literature as a whole. "Ulysses" is the great coffin lid over the past, all that was alive and flourishing before it has been tied down by it. We have Penelope as the Art of the Novel, the suitors as fecund genric multiplicity and everyone having an amazingly good rivalrous time because no one actually makes it or is favoured by Penelope; until of course Ulysses comes home, engages in slaughter and asserts a monopoly. And as for the "Wake" what else is it but an attempt at symbolic resurrection, the loading of every word and punctuation mark with multiple and teeming content and meaning and constructing an intellectual Everest as a stumbling block for all who would come that way after, a book to make all others superfluous. Look on my works ye mighty and despair, etc,etc. Add to this a generation of academics that thought the novel, and more importantly the Art of the Novel, a serious, weighty and important matter, an epitome of civilization almost, and from then on decided it had to have relevance and intelligence and had to be taken out of the hands of the semi-hacks that had wrought it to such an importance and thus given over to a suitably enlightened, properly educated and versed, set of people determined to make the English novel their life's work -- and they proceeded to murder it with Profound Triviality and Self Doubt and Agonising there upon and their temerity in taking on such an awesome and responsible task, the superb excellence of the past lying like a great weight upon all their efforts and all they could do was repeat/echo ad nauseum or flee into silence.

Lord preserve SF from such an effete worse than death. Like whoever it was said it first I re-echo the cry; "Get SF back into the gutter where it belongs." It is safer there, will be too busy staying alive to paralyse itself with introspection and worries about its own relevance. Mainstream died at the end of the war (if not before) because its practitioners could see nothing ahead for Man but mushroom clouds and/or Big Brother and in such a world there would be no place, nor even need, for Literature as the epitome of all that was best in society. (Beckett writes the epitaph of that generation over and over again and it gets shorter and shorter and closer to incoherence each time. As to be expected there are critics who marvel at and praise his persistence in the face of such an overwhelming demand for the holy silence of complete despair in which literature may rest immune from mortality in a state of perpetual potentiality at the dry tit of the 20's and 30's. Because of this they argue, literature is not quite dead yet and there's hope for it yet, etc)

Things have been thrust back upon fundamentals and at rock bottom what is literature but something written by individuals who sit down with paper and pen/typer and a belief that makes them do a religious X,000 words a day until they can write "The End" on the last page ?

SF still has its blood and balls and a bit of fight left (look at the crowd of vultures!) because it believes Man has a future and is not too worried about whether SF AS A GENRE has a future (whether as a popular literature or something that is serious enough to be included in University courses and thus give intellectual respectability for practitioners and preachers thereon).

The one trouble with such popularity is that SF will become respectable but only as a literary genre, not as something with an interest beyond literature in today's technocratic civilization. That sort of respectability will only come when and if intellectuals lose the implicit loathing for science and technology they now seem quite happy to bless themselves with. Loathing and Ignorance. And the most elementary sort of ignorance. "What are these things called cyborgs?" you might well have a don ask, respectful in nylon implant wig, dentures, contact lenses, pacemaker, plastic veins and stainless steel hip joints.

But, however welcome/unwelcome this misapplied interest in SF is it is inevitable and unstoppable. SF is old enough now to have a history made up of books, magazines, personalities and people with lots of memories. A lot of would be PhD's unable to discover anything more virgin than "Shakespearean Allusions in the 13th Century Sermon" for their passport into the groves of academe and punditry on English literature are discovering SF as a barely touched popular 20th century art form and doing their research "far from the hum and odour of the noisome fen" and eventually asserting "this is what SF means" to their examiners and anyone who cares to listen. As far as the public is concerned the Public is still labouring in the mists of Gernsbachian delusionism ("What are these things called cyborgs?"). Let it at least enlighten itself in the only proper way: by reading and soaking it up through the skin rather than by having it subjected to an intensive educational and enlightening bombardment of information and popularization that leaves them at the end of it with half a dozen pat and trivial cliches to trot out every time the subject of SF comes up as the last and only word on the subject; that is until the next 9 days wonder turns up. No, it's barricades and brickbats. To be hit by overattention is worse than apathy, it is fatal in the smallest of doses. All any one who cares about SF can do is stand on the sidelines and jeer and brickbat the more pretentious and pseudoish pronouncements that are going to come forth.

I boo the "sterile" quip directed at OI'Fallible. He is doing the only thing he can do when faced by something as individual and wondrous strange as a

fanzine and that is

- i) he tells you that it actually exists,
- ii) where it exists,
- iii) what it looks like, page count, etc, and
- iv) how much (if anything).

What more does the quiper want in his implied demand for fecundity ? Blood ? More vampires! All I can say is if I like/dislike Mr F's description of the fanzine I myself have a look at it. The faneds don't find him "sterile" (whatever that means in this context) otherwise why do they keep throwing their fanzines in his direction ? Let's have more of him. ((Right, having seen Keith sat, surrounded by piles of fanzines it is apparent that there's a whole lot of faneds who really want their zine reviewed by him. If you do go in for in depth reviews of fanzines then you're going to tread on someone's toes and faneds are very touchy about their zines, let's face it you don't lay out good money to have someone criticise you and then let them get away with it. This is the way to fan feuds, one of fandom's bad points.))

And thus we leave the elderly antique of BSFAN (??) and go onto BSFAN 6.

Ah, our old friend Flash Gordon ((what an apt name)) on the cover. And flying without a licence, as us degenerate southerners say. Well, VECTOR came up with a full frontal naked woman; I take it this gentleman (?) stands (?) before us to forstall cries of sexist piggery. One good thing about having both a VECTOR and a BSFAN is the delicate and competitive tension set up between them. Should an ed of VECTOR get a nasty touch of hubris and the Power and the Glories Nemesis will always come duplicated in the post; and vice versa (only lithoed).

Viva microelite! One question: when do we get our free plastic made in Hong Kong magnifying glasses? But seriously faced with the demand for content without the space for it micro does very nicely indeed.

Are you recruiting mercenaries to combat ignorance in Garbutt ? That is what I call creeping respectability in SF; the sort that wants it to wash behind its ears, comb the witchknots out of its touseled locks, get a haircut and take the pledge with a new pair of socks well pulled up. I restrain further comment on the grounds it would be too vulgar even for me. If G. is an example of the New Fan I am not surprised the old want to keep them at arms length with the jargon. At least it compells them to keep quiet and listen and get the feel of things before opening their mouths to put both feet in. But then if G. was determined to woo the iceberg of SFM for 2 years without so much as a hot water bottle in reply he has the sort of trufan determination SF needs. As long as someone points him in the right direction that is. Real cruel that, he cuts stencils for you and you drop him in the deep end. Is he still swimming strongly ? Goodness gracious. ((As you see from this issue he's still going strong and expressing ideas that aren't going to be popular with fabdom as a whole.))

Welsh is surprised at the nuttyness of fandom ?

Does not he know ?? Has nobody told him ? Gracious ! Goodness gracious! (That is the trouble with this issue of BSFAN, if there is nothing you violently disagree with in it or agree with to the point of being stirred into your own rhapsode upon it you get reduced to such !!! very quickly.)

Ah, publicity. What about a page marker sized strip of thin card printed with some suitable Sfctional scene and the Membership Secs name and address and the usual interesting blurb; each member to get a few dozen and tuck one quietly in to every SF book they can lay their hands on in their local library ? Yes, money. Ther is in the British Museum the perfect god for all publicity and Membership Sec: a netsuke of a badger lying upon his back and drumming his forepaws on his empty inflated belly to attract a dinneron 4 feet. If you want to attract people and keep them you have to have something solid to do it with in the first place but without the £p they bring how can you get this solidity ? A vicious circle, a vicious circle. ((True, I hope that what we have at present is a solid enough foundation on which to buil.))

I came across Langford's thing but refused to read it on the grounds that all zinefic is bad and a danger to health but driven to the vice by a dull Sunday afternoon I discover it is not as bad as it threatened to be. It's quite funny in fact. Pity it is unrepeatable, or have you got something else lined up ? ((Yes, fanfiction is usually poor but Dave's piece and the others I have lined up aren't fanfiction, they're satire and they're funny. That's the prime requisite, they have to be funny.))

A small quibble about the mechanics though, what was to stop Mac Malsenn from sticking a bit of wire into the elctron gas of the metal floor he found himself upon and thus providing himself with enough power to work his repaired minaturiser ? Or come to that electrocuting the bad guy there and then in the same manner ? O the demands of plot, griz, griz. And another quibble: what was stopping him in his expanded 500' high state (I assume him to have ended up at about that height, all cosmic agents are 6' high, they don't look down on their girl friends so the young lady he held between his finger and thumb must have been at least 6' high herself in normal space and to him in his expanded state she would have to be about an inch high to be held safely between finger and thumb: about 500' says my pocket calculator and you don't argue with the Japanese) from undergoing spontaneous combustion from his body's inability to radiate away all the metabolic heat it was generating ? Perhaps it was doing that, no wonder Laura was gasping, the poor dear must have been almost cooked to a turn by his thumb and finger! Or was she being sonically pummed by the sound of his voice ? Or even close to suffocation from all that CO₂ he was wafting over her with every breath ? She must have been held close, otherwise how could Malsenn have heard her).? I must say though the benzene ring trap is ingenious but I am surprised Malsenn took minutes to escape from

it - the energy of his struggles to free himself would have generated would have quickly popped the bonding electrons of the ring into non bonding excited states and the trap would have fallen apart round his ankles. ((What, you want science in SF!))

((The comments you make in the first part of your letter are excellent. Sf is a young lively literature, and like the young we make lots of mistakes, and usually we don't learn from them but it's worth that for the times it does stick. The experimenting is good, even if you don't like the products. But it's often sad to see "respected" writers copying like school boys in a general science class the classic experiments of the past. I too worry about respectability and this desire to achieve it, though I do advocate that something should be well written. At present there are several writers who say they're "quitting" SF because they can't be respected as writers whilst they stay in it. Well, if respect is what you want and a try at a Nobel prize for literature and a good review in The Times Lit Sup then you'd better get out of SF because if that's more important than writing good stories people can enjoy we don't need you, you're dying, inside.))

((And now, the last word on Silicon.))

ROB JACKSON. 21 Lyndhurst Ave, Benton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

((This is part of a letter which Rob kindly wrote to me with regard to the Silicon affair, I think it settles the matter once and for all.))

It's not your fault for describing it the way you did; it's ours, or more specifically mine, as I wrote the offending piece of publicity material. Our only concern now is to correct any wrong impression I may have given. All I really intended to imply was that we wanted to avoid publicity in the press for the curious, the general public, and that we would not be doing anything to attract the casual SF reader by such gambits as putting adverts in bookshops.

We don't mind in the slightest if people make Silicon their first convention; we just want people to know what to expect before they come, and know that it won't be an intensely serious minded affair but is aiming to have a partyish atmosphere where friends meet. That, I think, is what I meant by "avoiding publicity among people unfamiliar with cons". I'll know better than to use a phrase like that again; my own fault, for making it so easily misinterpreted.

Certainly I don't want to give any impression that Silicon is trying to be cliquish or exclusive.

((Thanks, Rob, my apology still stands because I also made an error. Perhaps people will see by this that there is no feud between MATRIX and Gannetfandom, as some people have suggested. It's just that we're both active in the fan field and there are bound to be things we don't agree on and then argument/debate will take place, that's only to be expected, and, I think, it's all to the good.))

((And now,))

Terry Jeeves, 230 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield,

I want to thank the BSFA for the excellent load of mail which arrived today. This sort of mailing makes it worth being in the BSFA and I no longer feel very hesitant about recommending the society to several teachers at our school who happen to be SF readers.

Itemwise, no further praise is needed for the LITTLE GEM GUIDE. A superlative piece of work...and worth including in the Yearbook...particularly in place of some of those ghastly advert drawings...I said some...not all, by any means.

On the Yearbook I feel a correction or appeal may be in order while there is still time to rectify a perpetuating error. The Past Convention List is an admirable thing, but missed out several conventions...naturally, since it first appear it is being treated as gospel (we use it at the Ompacon) and each year sees the latest cons added...and others missed. Can any BSFA reader help me out for my own records with the dates of the following cons :-

A Midway Minicon...organised by Tony Thorner

A Bradford con...circa 1951. Of this one Ken Slater was just coming out of the army...and I fancy it was Bentcliffes first con. I have several photos taken there.

A Mancon at the Waterloo hotel organised by Dave Cohen, Phil Sless, etc...possibly the one you list as 1943. It was the Northwest SF Con.

For further information the 1954 Supermancon was at the Deansgate hotel.

Incidentally, I'm not trying to "one-up" anyone on this, I'd just like to see a complete con list...how about Novacons?

Finally the Newsletter...PLEASE could we have at least 2 staples to make it a proper fanzine booklet? ((Sorry but after you've put together about 800+ VECTORS and come to 500+ Newsletters it takes great strength of mind to put one staple in! Anyone who's really keen, of course, could put as many of their own in as they like.)). I enjoyed this immensely...and despite what others say, I enjoy Freeman on Fanzines and hope he keeps it up. I enjoy also, Graham Poole's media notes...although I cannot share his enthusiasm for "Survivors"...I rate it worse than "Space:1999", and that says summat. The later is at least redeemed to a certain extent by its superb special effects.

I also liked the Garbutt view of fanzines...I've just got the latest (and last ?) K 3 and again, it boasts no artwork (although one ed is an artist) and no page numbers.

I don't intend to pan or praise Dave Langford's piece, but for my money I'm not keen on seeing fiction in a Newsletter. ((Thank you, Terry. It's because of this expanding role that we've changed the name.))

SPACE:1999. a preview

by Ian Garbutt

Fans of the television series Space:1999 will be pleased to know that a second series of 24 programmes is currently in production at Britain's Pinewood and Bray studios; this time around, however, there will be several drastic changes to the show's basic concept.

The first will be the introduction of an alien female as a permanent member of Moonbase Alpha, but before all the Trekkies start complaining that this is copying Mr.Spock let me say that 60% of the show's mail requested it. The alien, who will be played by Catharine Schell, goes under the somewhat familiar name of "Maya" and will be capable of transforming herself into anything she desires. This could open up several new possibilities as far as the series as a whole is concerned and judging by the criticism levelled at some of the show's plots it could well do with them.

Another notable difference is in Moonbase Alpha itself, most of which has gone underground. The producers believe that this is a logical step the Alphans would take as being underground lessens the threat from any danger which could manifest outside. Also the feeling of compactness would heighten the tension of any dramatical situation taking place within the base. External necessities such as launching pads will, of course, remain on the lunar surface.

Other minor changes in the second series will be the adoption of casual wear: colourful costumes in favour of the old unisex uniforms which gave the characters a somewhat cardboard appearance in the first series. All the females have, naturally, opted for skirts in favour of trouser-suits, a less than subtle attempt to introduce glamour into the show.

The Eagle spacecraft, which have become the trademark of Space:1999, will now be capable of having a booster pack fitted which increases range and power, thereby opening further the vast reaches of space.

Despite these various additions, however, there will be at least one loss to the show: Professor Bergman, played by veteran London actor Barry Morse, will not be appearing in the second series. The Andersons are keeping quiet about the good professor's disappearance but he has apparently been lost in space.

By far the most important change, though, and the one which will probably be the best received, is that the producers are now going to make a serious attempt to improve scripts and the standard of acting. One thing that should help this is the addition to the production team of Fred Frierberger who, as all of you should know, was none other than the co-producer of Star Trek. Fred firmly believes that the new concept of Space:1999 is far superior to anything before attempted on television and he intends to make sure that the characters are portrayed as likeable, believable people. Certainly, if the acting is brought anywhere near the high standard of special-effects then Space:1999 should be really worth watching. There are even plans hovering around Pinewood and Bray for a Space:1999 feature film to be made for the cinema. Producing such a film would loosen the barriers of time and budget and making it would be a simple matter for the Andersons as they have produced three already.

Personally, I am very pleased that Space:1999 will be making a reappearance on our screens. I have been continually disgusted with the attitude of so-called sf "fans" towards this programme. It's alright to sit on your backsides and say "give us more sf", but what's the point of demanding this if, when you get it, you are going to hurl a load of abusive adjectives at it such as: "embarrassing," "pestilential abortion,"

and even "shit!" No wonder film and TV companies are so reluctant to produce sf material!

Okay so I know Space:1999 has weak scripts and lousy acting, but surely in the first series of a show as ambitious as this faults are only to be expected. Actually I have a sneaking suspicion that no matter how good the programme may have been it would still have come under attack, notably from jealous Star Trek fans. Why it has come under so much attack as it is I cannot understand, for as far as televised sf is concerned Space:1999 is certainly no worse than Dr.Who or The Six Million Dollar Man. Indeed, the programme is worth watching for the sets and special effects alone which are the best ever to be portrayed on television.

Another criticism levelled at Space:1999 is its apparent lack of attention to scientific fact. This I find irrelevant, for if sf had to adhere to science in every detail then the majority of both current and latter-day works would have to be written off. Anyway, surely the primary function of any sf programme, indeed any book, is to entertain, and if it succeeds in doing this then minor faults are insignificant. Edgar Rice Burroughs's work is riddled with scientific fallacies but no-one can deny that his books are a good read.

With a little work, help and encouragement Space:1999 can be made into an effective science fiction show; however improvement can only come by trial and error, and as long as there are people who mock and deride the attempts of others the Perfect SF Show shall always remain in the unreachable future.

IAN GARBUTT.

[illegible]

NEWS, VIEWS & RUMOURS

NEWS, VIEWS & RUMOURS

The Newshounds of the BSFA.

**** Double horror bill, VAMPYRES and THE DEVIL'S RAIN**
are now on the circuits, neither have been particularly
praised by the critics and THE DEVIL'S RAIN sounds
very silly.

**** AT THE EARTH'S CORE**, Peter Cushing in E.R. Burrough's science fantasy. See Peter Cushing defend himself against reptiles with nothing but an umbrella. I think the film is aimed at kids but the critics thought it was a lot of fun.

**** Airfix have announced a "Science Fiction Series" of kits. The first kit will be a Space:1999 Eagle to a 1/72 scale.**

****Robert Silverberg who is getting out of the SF writing field is to script the Star Trek movie!**

**Heard at a party for Philip Jose Farmer (thanks to Flo Russell);

1) I thought people collected the letters Chris Priest hadn't signed.

2) I'll plot it, you fill in the flesh, nothing very powerful and then we'll sell it to (censored as this publisher is a member).

3) I've been a hack since I was 9 when I found the local paper paid 5/- for printing poems in Kiddies Korner.

**** HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CHRIS FOWLER, FOR JUNE 14.** Pity the monkey glands are having those strange side effects.

** For sf art in the Gloucestershire region. "The Christmas Tree" in Cheltenham. Among other artworks the posters of Roger Dean.

****BRITAIN IS FINE IN '79.** The World SF Convention will be held at the Brighton Conference Centre between August 23 to 27, 1979. Accomodation will be in 4

hotels. Pre supporting membership is greater than 600 and is available for 40p (£ 7) to Malcolm Edwards. 19 Rammoor Wdms, Harrow, Middx. Vice Chairmen are Malc Edwards and Pete Roberts, Chairman is Pete Weston. ** NOVACON 6 (5 - 7 November 1976). At the Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham. Single room £3-75. Double or twin £4-90 includin VAT, service, continental breakfast. English breakfast 75p extra. Guest of honour DAVE KYLE.

Disco this year instead of a Fancy Dress Parade.
Registration £1 to Helen Eling, 124 Galton Road,
Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B67 5JS.

**Fame at last for Trekkies, Mandrake in Sunday Telegraph gives them a big mention, it also gives him a chance to print a picture showing a lot of people in funny outfits, including one young lady wearing hardly anything at all. Another step forward for SF.

**There are now 3 bids for the worldcon in 1979, Nashville (this was originally a hoax but is now firm), New Orleans and Great Britain. All good, sensible fans support BRITAIN IS FINE IN '79.

****Clifford D. Simak is to retire as a newspaperman after 50 years. But he will continue to write SF.**

****A series of juvenile Planet of the Apes books are due out soon. The writer is William Arrow which is a pseudonym for Bill Rotsler and Don Pfeil.**

** The recent New York Star Trek con, organised by Lisa Boynton, was oversold and thousands of people were turned away. A fraud investigation is under way.

* NEBULA "INNERS"

Novel: THE FOREVER WAR by Joe Haldeman

Novella: HOME IS THE HANGMAN by Roger Zelazny

Novelette: SAN DIEGO LIGHTFOOT SUE by Tom Reamy

Short Story: CATCH THAT ZEPPELIN by Fritz Leiber

Dramatic Writing: YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN

Nebula Grand Master: Jack Williamson.

** Andy Offutt has been elected President of The Science Fiction Writers of America.

** SF Records from Alternate World Recordings, 148 East 74th St, N.Y., N.Y. 10021. These are records of the authors reading their stories and include; Fritz Leiber "Gonna roll the bones" (\$6.95); Robert E. Howard "From the hells beneath the hells" (\$7.95); Gravelly, Robert Bloch (\$6.95, includes "That hell bound train"; Harlan Ellison "Harlan's" (\$6.95 includes "Shatterday" and "Repent Harlequin...") All four records for \$25.

**Silicon programme includes a panel featuring Bob Shaw, Rog Peyton, Eddie Jones and chaired by Kevin Williams. Plus a fanzine panel with Greg Pickersgill, Rob Jackson, Mike Meara and Ian Williams. Film: "Doc Savage", jeering encouraged. On Sunday a trip to Hadrian's Wall. Fanzine auction. For further info get in touch with Harry Bell ((Address on his letter in letter column)).

**These books may be of interest to BSFA members.

This information is supplied by R. Gray and culled from the Sunday Times.

1) "The burning man", S Jackman, Faber £3.95, pp234 Sequel to "The Davidson Affair". This seems to be a fictional look at how the media would treat the aftermath of the crucifixion. Hero is a TV reporter for Imperial TV Co making documentaries for an Empire wide audience.

2) "The Himalayan concerto", John Master, M. Joseph, £4.25, pp293. New future India awaits/ponders an imminent attack by China.

3) "Stories of the Macabre" Ed. Deany's Val Baker, Kimber £2.95

4) "Prevailing Spirits" Ed Giles Gordon. H Hamilton £3.50, pp216. Scottish ghost stories.

5) "Life after death". Weidenfield & Nicholson £4.95, pp272. 14 essays, one by Koestler, on this subject. One by 2 psychiatrists on the use of LSD by dying patients.

6) "The ecstasy of Dr Miriam Garner", Elaine Feinstein. Hutchinson, £3.75, pp160

"flawed, ungainly but startlingly original"... "metaphysical thriller". Heroine by "reincarnation in reverse" time travels to Toledo by several centuries ago to find out why the flourishing mix of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which then existed there, went wrong. The review makes it sound an interesting idea and a book worth reading.

7) "The year of the blue moon" L. Bidston. Blackie, £2.95. Whimsical fantasy (?) for 8 year olds

8) "The stones of Green Knowe" L.M. Boston. Bodley Head £2.50. Protagonist is "privileged to move in time" and watch the other children who have lived in his house. A juvenile as is,

9) "The shattered stone" R. Newman. Hutchinson, £3.25 231pp. Alternate universe? "disputation on the subject of innocence and aggression".

10) "The legend of the thousand bulls", Yashar Kemal. Translated by Thilda Kemal. Collins and Harvil £3.95, 288pp. Sounds like a type of fantasy based on the

religious/astrological beliefs of a nomadic Turkish tribe.

11) Mary Stewarts latest novel "Touch not the cat" contains some ESP or supernatural sequences.

12) I believe there was a non-appreciative review of a new non SF (or non-inner space) novel by J.G. Ballard in Sunday Times of 13/6/76.

** Philip Jose Farmer is now writing his 3rd Riverworld novel, provisional title THE MAGIC LABYRINTH which is a quote from Burton's KASIDAH, length estimated to be 20,000 words.

**New US prozine? Called GALILEO, due out early September with a print run of only 4000! Rates will be 1£ to 3£ a word for first US serial rights. The publishers agree it's unfair to give the big names more than the beginners but say they're short of cash. They're supposed to have material from Bradbury, Hal Clement, Lafferty, Ron Goulart and promises from lots of others. They're looking for fiction and the address is Charles C Ryan, Galileo, 339 Newbury St, Boston, MA 02115. ((TAJ here, I shall try to get a copy of the first issue and will report on it.))

**SF Theatre. Ken Campbell is bringing SF to the Theatre. This will start on November 23rd at the Liverpool School of Language, Music, Dream & Pun, 18 Matthew St, Liverpool 2. First production is ILLUMINATUS by Ken Campbell & Chris Langham from the trilogy by Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson. (The books will be published by Sphere in 1977 in the UK). Cast to include Pete Nicholls (of the SF Foundation), Ralph Steadman and Heathcote Williams. Further information from the above address or from Ken Campbell Studio, 96 Haverstock Hill, London NW3.

** The Nottingham SF Group are to organise the 1978 Easter Convention. Chairman and Treasurer is Pete Wilde. Venue is to be the Metropole Hotel at the National Exhibition Centre, if it's available, Nottingham not having a large enough hotel.

** The desert is great in '78? Phoenix has put in a firm bid for the 1978 World SF Convention. Accommodation will be in 2 hotels and events in a convention centre, all three being adjacent to each other. Facilities sound incredible, makes UK hotels sound third rate. This bid is in opposition to the Los Angeles bid. It would be nice for the Phoenix bid to win after all LA has had the Con before. Further info from Phoenix in '78 Worldcon Bid, P.O. Box 1749, Phoenix Arizona 85001, USA.

** Was PLANET OF THE APES really written by Shakespeare? At the Theatre Royal, Stratford the above named is to appear on stage, live (well as live as it can get) For further info ring 01-534 0310. Oh yes, that's Stratford £15.

**TV Time. Recently on the box have been; "Where have all the people gone?" They've hidden so they don't have to watch this thing. Big sun flare, 99.99% of population start to disintegrate (off camera) why do some survive? That's the question you'll ask also. You should be able to clear up the mysteries round about the first commercial break, especially those of you addicted to jeans.

"Who". The Algis Budrys novel done for TV. I missed this one so can't comment.

"The disappearance of flight 412" A teleplay recounting the events when 2 US jets totally disappeared when they went chasing UFOs and how the authorities tried to cover it up. Quite interesting.

****ODYSSEY** is the new magazine edited by Roger Elwood.

You can get a copy by sending one dollar to Gambi Publications, 333 Johnson Ave, Brooklyn, New York 11206, USA. Subs for a year, 4 issues, are \$4 plus 50¢ outside USA. The following information is supplied by Chris Fowler, who sent away for a copy.

Thanks Chris. The mag has 80 pages and is the same size as TIME magazine. There's a glossy full colour cover by Kelly Freas, very science-fictiony in the Daw Books mode. Contents? Well,

5 Exciting Short stories! - "Impasse" by Barry Malzberg; "Jeremiah, Born Dying" by Joseph Green; "Captain Clark of the space patrol" by Ray Russell; "Someday I'll find you" by Thomas N. Scortia (Billed as the author of THE TOWERING INFERNO, wrong, it was called THE GLASS INFERNO in book form) and "Beneath the Hills of Azlaroc" by Fred Saberhagen. 3 Important New Novellas! - "The prisoner of New York Island" by Fred Pohl; "Bind your sons to exile" by Jerry Pournelle; "ETFF" by Robert Bloch.

4 Exclusive New Features - "Charlie Brown's Fan Scene" "Out of my Head" by Theodore Sturgeon; "An interview with Zenna Henderson" by Paul Walker; "Editor's Corner" by Roger Elwood plus "Silverbob's Book Review Corner" by Robert Silverberg.

I haven't read the stories yet but the Charlie Brown article is OK - he says nice things about VECTOR. Silverberg's reviews are good, of Malzberg's GALAXIES and Bester's THE COMPUTER CONNECTION (UK title EXTRO). Elwood says he intends to hire the top artists around, Kelly Freas, Jack Gaughan, etc but apart from the front cover the interior artwork is uncredited and mediocre. Elwood also says "the crucial consideration will be quality" and promises a 27,000 word novellette by Larry Niven for issue 2.

What really lets the magazine down is the general pulpy appearance. It's full of low quality ads, the kind one sees in most US down-market publications, as well as house ads for Gambi Pubs main mag, UFO REPORT. According to Harlan Ellison, when I interviewed him, Elwood had no control over the appearance of the mag and was very upset about its appearance. But this is no excuse as he should have ensured he had control as the appearance of a magazine is so essential to establishing an image and assuring its success. I hope I don't put you off trying a copy. It's always good to see new magazines, but one can only hope that the appearance of this one will improve dramatically with the next issue.

((The US fanzines have generally been very critical of the mag, apparently distribution was very erratic, some areas being swamped and some getting none.

The appearance is also panned but no one comments in any depth on the contents))

****AT THE GATES OF HELL****

Being the story of how your intrepid, cuddly, tea-total VECTOR editor, whose name I forget, braved the torrid heat of an English summer to attend a reception for Harlan Ellison. As told to Tom Jones.

Courtesy of Millington Ltd, a new hardback house rapidly establishing themselves as publishers of excellent SF, Chris entered the big, exciting world of publisher's receptions.

Receiving the invitation to a reception for the launching of the new series of Harlan Ellison titles Chris dives for the phone to see if there's any chance of an interview. Lo and behold, there is. So, at 2.30 on Wed 7th July our protagonist arrives at the publishers office. The day was hot and dusty but after adventures on British Snail & Chris arrives, on time ((what went wrong?)). Drapped with his magic talisman, a portable cassette recorder he struggled with a brief-case full of Ellison books, having decided that he must read at least one of them before interviewing the author! But Ellison wasn't there, would Chris meet him at his hotel. Showing that his wallet only contained moth skeltons Tom Tassier, editor of Millington, thrusts £2 plus copies of AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS and THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED LOVE AT THE HEART OF THE WORLD into his hands and showed him a taxi. Finally understanding the purpose of a taxi, VECTOR editors being kept poor to improve their artistic nature, Chris arrives at Harlan's hotel. Pacing nervously at the foot of the main hotel staircase Chris worries. But all is well, Harlan Ellison, that devil of the written word, is extremely friendly, a warm and natural person. ((Having set the scene I'll let Chris tell the rest of the story in his own ~~barfing~~ inimitable way.))

He was also, as I had anticipated, highly articulate, intelligent and uncompromising in his views. We talked for 2 hours, taping 90 minutes which will, hopefully, appear in VECTOR 76. At 5 Harlan left to get changed for the reception - he had been wearing denim jeans and waistcoat, carrying his pipe but without his usual tinted glasses throughout the interview. He gave me a pile of manuscripts to read, which I devoured with great joy ((We don't feed VECTOR editors either)), until 6.30 when we left for the reception. I then met Harlan's wife of some 4 weeks, Lori (I hope I've spelt her name correctly!) who was charming and exceptionally beautiful. We travelled to the reception with Anne McCaffrey. Harlan revealed that the wedding had taken place in a friend's back garden, with Ed Bryant acting as minister. Apparently Bryant had sent \$25 to the Universal Life Church (which is recognised for such purposes) and become a minister thereof. Harlan and Lori had known each other about a year before marrying.

Travelling with my back to the engine of the taxi ((You should have ridden inside the cab, not the engine compartment)) made me distinctly nauseous,

which combined with the ight-headedness brought on by the heat and heady company made my brain into a kind of jelly like substance, incapable of coherent thought, so my report of the reception may be a little confused. Apologies to anyone if I make any errors in reporting. Most of London's SF circle seemed to be present, as well as visitors like Ursula LeGuin and Bob Shaw. Names I have written in my little note book, stained with ink running due to having wine spilt on it, include Jim Goddard (of Cypher), Josephine Saxton, John Clute, complete with infant, Peter Nicholls, Bram Stokes (of Dark They Were and Golden Eyed), Mike Moorcock (whom Christine Edwards pointed out to me was wearing the same suit as he'd worn at the last reception sh'd seen him at; one year ago at the ICA), Ian Watson, with his wife and small girl, of whom more later, Malcolm Edwards and his wife Christine, Peter Weston, Roy Kettle, John Brosnan, Pat and Graham Charnock, Judy Blish - who rescued me from death by thirst by finding me a non-alcoholic beverage- John Bush (of Gollancz) and Janet Freer (Harlan's agent).

From John Clute I gleaned the information that the last of the Moorcock Jerry Cornelius novels, THE CONDITION OF MUZAK, is forthcoming in Autumn from Alison and Busby; and that Clute's own novel, THE DISINHERITING PARTY - long awaited - will also appear about that time.

As the reception progressed Judy Watson and Josephine Saxton became increasingly merry, ((Surely you don't mean DRUNK, do you Christopher?)). Judy tried to palm me off with her small daughter, Jessica, on the basis that I was looking for a little Red-Haired Girl. ((Anyone who has read any of Chris' effective but depressing poetry will understand this reference, if you haven't I shouldn't worry about it.)). Not that little, I tried to explain, pointing out that the real little Red-Haired Girl might not be pleased, but Judy was most insistent ((That's his story, your honour, and he's sticking to it.)). Later, when Harlan Ellison tried to explain how he was planning to take London by storm, he was disrupted somewhat noisily by Ms Saxton and Ms Watson, which served to enliven the proceedings.

Shortly after this disruption, Jim Goddard and I left to go to another reception, in Kensington, for the launching by Jonathan Cape of a first novel by Martin Bax, HOSPITAL SHIP, reputedly in a Ballard mode. We arrived after a long walk, somewhat footsore, to find the star of the reception, J.G. Ballard, had left, foiled again in my attempt to meet the best SF writer in Britain ((Who?)). and that once again there was only wine to drink....Fortunately we managed to secure copies of HOSPITAL SHIP from the Cape people and to get them autographed by Martin Bax.

Shortly after Jim and I left, he to Southampton and I to Reading. An exhausting but fruitful day,

I thought, as I lugged my over-stuffed (with review books) brief-case and tape recorder with its precious tape back to Reading.

AND AFTERWARDS

Harlan Ellison said he would take London by storm. To achieve this he sat in a shop window (a favourite Harlan stunt) in Charing Cross Road, writing stories. As a result of this he got himself on the "Pii" programme on Radio 4 and an article appeared in "The Times", and maybe elsewhere. He may also appear on TV. Harlan says he is determined to become as big a name in the UK as in the USA, especially as his books become generally available to the UK public.

The 21 books from the Pyramid (US paperback) Ellison series are to be published by Millington over here, together with 10 others from various other US publishers. The first six are to be done by Pan in paperback. For more information on this and other Ellison matters don't miss the interview in VECTOR 76.

BSFA NEWS

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT - Alan Stewart

Dave Kyle is at present in the USA, so I'm reporting to you as his deputy. We expect to be able to bring you the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Manchester Easter Convention with the next newsletter, but in the meantime here are some details of the main subjects discussed.

As Dave mentioned in his last report before the A.G.M. a new Council was to be elected to serve for the next 2/3 years. The plan to have half of the Council consisting of interested professionals and half working officers was carried out, so that the following people are on the BSFA Council:-

Dave Kyle	- Vice-Chairman
Mervyn Haigh	- Company Secretary
Alan Stewart	- Administrator
Keith Freeman	- Treasurer
Chris Fowler	- Publication & Distribution
Bob Shaw	
James White	
Les Flood	
Dave Symes	

The first five of these, together with Tom Jones (Editor of MATRIX) and Elke Stewart (who is the new Membership Secretary), comprise the Management Committee which is responsible for the day to day running of the BSFA.

Perhaps I should mention what the "Administrator" is. This post is a new one intended to safeguard the smooth running of the organisation by always having a Vice-Chairman designate (the Administrator) "in training" so to speak, ready to take over from the retiring Vice-Chairman, who will stay on as a Council member and would be able to take over in an emergency.

As announced at the AGM Arthur C. Clarke has been asked to become Chairman of the BSFA in succession to Ken Bulmer who is standing down. Arthur has indicated his willingness and it now only remains for the formalities to be concluded for him to become our new Chairman. On behalf of the BSFA I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ken for all the good work he has done for us in the past.

We have, unfortunately, been forced to raise the membership fee once again - this time to £4 a year. To offset this, however, we are introducing a Junior Membership at half price for people joining (or rejoining) who have not yet reached their 16th birthday. In addition a family membership will be available where each additional person in a family can join for £1 each, and will receive the newsletter but not VECTRU or the Yearbook. Group memberships will continue to be available at a reduction of 20% for more than 4 persons receiving publications at the same address. Present members will get a 25% discount (ie membership for £3) if they pay their renewals promptly.

Looking towards the future, I have in mind the idea of founding local/regional BSFA branches where members could come together and meet each other personally, possibly in conjunction with existing local SF groups. In the South East Region, for example, 68 people joined the Association in the last year alone. I want to discuss the idea with the other Committee members first, and then I hope to be able to put forward concrete plans, at least for the South East, in the next issue of MATRIX. Until then I'd be very happy to receive your comments on the idea.

NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Elke Stewart, 7 Surrey Lane, London SW11 3PA

Hello. Oh no, not another new membership secretary, you'll say. Ah, but wait a minute - this one hopes to last a bit longer than some of the others. O.K. why should I? Just plain vanity, I suppose, thinking that my natural flair for organising and seeing things through if necessary, will match my enthusiasm (yes, I still have plenty left, so watch out all you potential members, who haven't been caught yet!).

No honestly now, the reason for my taking over the membership side from Tom Jones, who has done a very good job, is simple: Tom wants to concentrate on

bringing out MATRIX and not getting tired out trying to do two jobs at once.

If you want to know more about me you can buy me a drink in the One Tun (on every first Thursday of the month at Saffron Hill). I'm nearly always there so I'll see you.

YEARBOOK REPORT

Alan Stewart, 8 Surrey Lane, London SW11 3PA

You should all have received your copies of the first ever edition of the SF Yearbook by now and read it too, I hope. We want to get the second issue out in time for the 1977 Easter Convention at Leicester, so now's the time to let us know what you thought of the current Yearbook.

Suggestions we've had so far for next year include articles on SF art, SF music and more on awards (Jupiter, etc), but we want to know what you would like. And don't forget to let us know about SF groups, bookshops and evening classes on SF in your area.

Apparently someone thought the Yearbook a "ripoff". Well, well! Everyone's entitled to his own opinion, but I'd like to point out that the cost of printing it and sending it out to you was entirely covered by the advertising revenue plus the money from copies sold to booksellers (300) and to the London University SF Group (another 300). So BSFA members' copies were actually "free".

CYCLOTRON, IT'S SMASHING!

Graham Poole, that human dynamo who can crank a duplicator with his foot whilst writing separate articles with his two hands (and you wouldn't believe what he can do with his other appendages), is producing CYCLOTRON. Let Graham speak.

CYCLOTRON will be a magazine/fanzine aimed at giving information, assistance and encouragement to amateur and prospective professional writers.

The first issue will include the following:

- A cover by Paul Dillon,
 - An article by myself,
 - An article by Chris Morgan on writers' meetings,
 - An article by Dave Taylor, editor of NEBULA,
 - Letters from previous issues of SPI including Chris Morgan's letter in SPI 4 and the readership reaction,
 - A review of the SF HANDBOOK, REVISED.
- There might even be one or two surprises.

The BSFA will bring you this publication free with the next mailing!

NEW MEMBERS

The countries listed in brackets by each member's name are those to which the member would like to correspond.

- 1560 Andrew A. Richards. Feltham.
1552 David Flint. 67 Tufner Rd, London, E17 3JG. (UK)
1556 Edward Norburn. Nottingham.
1561 Richard A Hakes. 121 Soythey Hall Dr, Sheffield S67PS. (Anywhere - female preferred)
1562 Mr S.C. Hatch. Lancashire.
1564 Sharon Maria Jones. 26 Milwain Rd, Stretford, Manchester M326BY (Anywhere .. teens or twenties)
1567 Thomas Perry. Hants.
1568 John P Harvey. 64 Elthorne Ave, Hanwell, London, W7 2JN. (Anywhere)
1569 Jonathan Coleclough. 3 Wicks Green, Formby, Merseyside L37 1PP (UK - early teens)
1575 Andrew Alex Elliott. 149 Kathleen Rd, Sholing, Southampton, Hants. (EFC, USA)
1576 Denise Gorse. Manchester
1577 Robin Jonathan Hughes. 40 Wayside Ave, Harrogate, N. Yorks. (Anywhere - late teens and twenties)
1578 Robert B. Carey. Detachment No 1, Tadcru Airport Camp, British Forces Belize, BFPO 12 (Anywhere)
1581 Paul Hurtley. Flat 1, 2 Oakley Rd, London N13LS (UK, USA, EEC - older than 18)
1582 Katherine A Sterry. Watergate House, Bethesda St, Upper Basildon, Reading. (Anywhere)
1155 Roger Pile. 46 Trenoweth Estate, North Country, Redruth, Cornwall
1671 Cy Chauvin. 17829 Peters, Roseville, Michigan, 48066 USA.

Changes of Address

- 1492 31 Endcliffe Rise Rd, Sheffield 11
1534 A. Highcock. 130 Park Rd, St. Helens, Merseyside
Ian Garbutt, Brenacholle Lodge, Loch Katrine,
By Aberfoyle, Scotland
Dave Langford. 22 Northumberland Ave, Reading.

More NEWS

** There's a second bid for the 1978 British Easter Convention. This one's called SKYCON. The committee is Stan Eling, Liese and Martin Hoare, Kevin Smith, Dermot Dobson, Keith Oborn and Dave Langford, Ian Robinson, Hazel Langford, Janice Wiles and Helen Eling. ((If this is a big con Dave I'll ring your neck)). A hotel has been arranged. It's south of Manchester, north of Bournemouth and east of both ((sounds like Reading)), it's accessible by motorway, bus and train. Facilities include, restaurants, bars, 24 hr sandwich/coffee bar, exclusive use of a swimming pool and the possibility of real beer ((can't be Reading)). But the committee aren't saying where it is until Novacon! ((Come on, Dave, I won't tell anyone, honest.))

** Congratulations to Dave Langford on his recent (!) marriage to Hazel. (HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA)

** Quote from Chris Morgan's letter to Dave Langford's fanzine Tull-ddu, "Bob Shaw and Jim White will have to look to their laurels with a talented humourous writer like you coming up fast behind them." Sounds like a case for the odd lead underpants!

**ORBITER.

The Orbiter is alive and well! Following information from Graham Poole I contacted Roge Pile to discover he had kept the Orbiter alive during all the troubles. Thanks Roge.

I've sent the names of the following to him,
I.A. Thomson
John Welsh
David John Wingrove
Richard Seals
Ian Garbutt

I hope they'll be receiving information soon though I believe Roge is on holiday at the present.

Roge has promised to write a short piece on the Orbiter as soon as he can but if you're desperate to get information then you can write to Roger Pile at,
46 Trenoweth Estate, North Country, Redruth, CORNWALL TR16 4AH.

**((Tom here. Has anyone got a copy of Samuel Delany's pornographic novel which they would be willing to loan me?))

THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION AWARD

The award was won this year by;

BOB SHAW with ORBITSVILLE.

Well done Bob, a deserving winner.

Speaking of the award, this is given, by the BSFA, for the best novel published in the UK during the year, sorry, that should say published for the first time.

Because we've been putting our house in order we've been picking the winner by committee for the past couple of years. This will change next year. We hope to set up a committee of literary illuminaries to sift through the eligible novels and pick a short list, taking into account those nominated by members of the BSFA. This short list will appear early in the new year and voting will take place at Easter. There will be both postal votes and handed in votes at the Easter convention. More information will be given as it's known.

**READING SF CLUB

RSFC welcomes all new or old members. We meet on the 1st and 17th of each month. We have films, speakers and a good matter. For more info write to Keith Freeman, 269 Wykeham Rd, Reading, RG6 1PL

MANCON A REPORT

by
Martin
Hatfield

Notes and Impressions of the 27th British Science Fiction Convention (Mancon 5) held at Owens Park, Manchester, 16 to 19 April 1976.

Mancon 5 had a controversial air surrounding it before it started. The choice of a university hall of residence as a venue for the 1976 Annual Convention appeared to have split the regular con attendees into two opposing camps. One faction sighed with relief at the prospect of a relatively cheap (compared with hotels) bill. The other faction anticipated with horror the prospect of communal washing facilities.

I belonged to the first faction, I also had some forewarning since I had lived in Owens Park for a year as a student.

Leaving aside the accommodation aspect for the moment - did Mancon succeed as a Science Fiction Convention? SF Cons are the focus for the gathering together of people whose interests in the genre are not solely restricted to the literature. What may be termed "peripheral aspects" of science fiction are present in the form of film/ art shows/ war game sessions. Even fandom - without which conventions would never occur - could be placed on the periphery.

The most important items/aspects of the convention are the opportunities to meet people/fans (are fans people?) with a similar interest (and if this takes place in the bar or at a room party - all the better), and the opportunity to hear and meet pro and semi-pro authors, critics and artists.

This convention was the most successful in terms of attendance ever held in the UK, with a total attendance of over 700 throughout the weekend. But this only tells us it was successful for the organisers, the more important question is; was it a good con for the attendees? First I'll tell you what happened and then I might try to answer that question.

I arrived in Manchester on the Thursday evening after a pleasant drive across country, and along motorway from Reading with Florence Russell, Brian Stableford and Chris Fowler (who was crashed out for much of the journey - how was Chris going to last the con? I asked myself -- how was I going to last the con).

It was good to be back in Manchester, Owens Park did hold many images from the past. Registration, moving into the room, visiting the bar, the old gassy brews still being served; images.

No events being programmed for that night we spent the evening sampling the gassy brews. Room parties are a convention tradition and later that night we were informed of a room party, but upon searching the corridors

of Little Court and Green Court (2 of the halls) we could only find fellow party seekers. But they did put us on the scent of a common room party in the tower block. I didn't find out whose party it was but needless to say it was well attended. I spotted the presence of Ian Williams, Graham Poole, ...met the Sheffield SF Group, all 4 of them - and was impressed by their silk screened T-shirts which firmly put them on the map. I also had the good fortune to sample Dave Bridges' (Sheffield SF Group) home made wine, elderflower I believe, it was a mature one month old.

As an example of the cuisine; Breakfast on Friday morning. The usual greasy Owens Park fry-up, cold toast, coffee with a suspect taste. The service was quick, so much so that Graham Poole had his coffee removed before he'd finished it! But lightening fast reactions allowed him to retrieve it. So much for breakfast.

I then visited the book room where I saw Brian Stableford, who was set to start the afternoon programme. He was worried about how his speech entitled "SF and the Image of the Future" would go down, as he had expected that there would be more talks of a similar serious nature on the programme.

As far as programmed events went on Friday, there was the usual initial confusion experienced.... all con committees must surely be hit by this. The first set back was the discovery that the convention hall did not have a sufficient black-out to enable films to be shown during the daylight hours. This was due mainly to a rather poor candle which was impersonating as a projector bulb. The initial programme item, a Flash Gordon film, had to be cancelled and the Delta film awards put back until the evening. The second major set back was the failure of the members of the Trans Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF) panel to turn up for their discussion. Though I believe this event was initially scheduled for Sunday and the panel members only being told of the change at the con, when some of them weren't there! And so Brian Stableford had the honour of opening the convention.

Brian did this admirably with an intelligent talk (which I believe has been sold to ALGOL) which involved science fiction's early visions of a Utopian versus a Dystopian future. The speech was presented by Stableford the sociologist rather than Stableford the writer.

Meanwhile people were still arriving for the con, "Neo Fan" badges were available for first time con attendees, though these were somewhat misused by many

well known fans.

Another major observation was the fact that many people were walking around in sweat shirts bearing the engraving of a man riding his mechanical bedstead, over which was inscribed THE SPACE MACHINE, obviously referring to the fact that the bulk of the bedspread was open space. Upon inquiring where one could buy one, a sweat shirt that is, not a bedstead, I was informed that a man wearing denims was paying people to walk around wearing them in all the public places of the convention site! Obviously no connection with a writer of a book of that name, anyway H.G. Wells is dead.

The welcome to Mancón 5 was originally planned to be held in the bar but due to the large influx of fans who had not previously registered the main con hall was used. The intro was the usual chaos with many people missing, ie in the bar or elsewhere. It was chaired by Pete Presford and Eric Bentscliffe with interruptions by Chuck Partington.

After the Delta SF films on Friday evening the final item was to be a film entitled THE PHANTOM SPEAKS. This was also hit by first day mishaps, the second reel of MIGHTY JOE YOUNG being projected in error!

Unfortunately on Friday I managed to miss one fan item worthy of note, the football match between Ratfan Dynamo (a London group) and the Gannet Flyers (a Tyneside group) for the Vector Macgroon Memorial Trophy. The rumour was that the match had been refereed by Bob Shaw who had in fact scored all the goals, resulting in a 2 all draw!

I spent most of Saturday morning trying to sell memberships to the BSFA. I failed miserably, and only sold one badge, which I actually paid for myself in a deal with a certain fanzine editor! Our Vice-Chairman, Dave Kyle, was much more successful in this respect and several memberships were renewed/opened. With Dave's vice like grip people soon become putty in his hands, unless they join.

Because of this I missed the "Mastermind" quiz. I'm told this was very interesting as Malcolm Edwards didn't turn up to answer questions on Bob Silverberg, who was the convention Guest of Honour, and so Bob Silverberg sportingly answered the questions himself! Unfortunately Bob didn't do so well on the general SF knowledge questions and the initial result was a tie between Mike Meara and Ian Williams with Ian as the eventual winner.

I was surprised the fan events, which had been promised, didn't appear. I never did manage to see the fandom room...it was always locked! All this must have been very frustrating for the Fan Guest of Honour, Peter Roberts.

Similarly the BSFA hospitality room failed to function as there were insufficient volunteers

to staff it. I think this was in the most part due to the distance of the room from the convention hall and bar.

Saturday evening saw Bob Shaw's excellent speech which has now become an Easter convention institution, long may it remain so.

The evening ended with the showing of the film ZARDOZ which I found interesting though I failed to see how such a society could emerge.

Worthy of note is that during one of the days panels Bob Shaw was asked how he had invented Slow Glass. To explain Bob used an analogy of a stick being placed into water and appearing to bend. Bob provided us with his own theory that no refraction occurs, the stick does bend when placed in water and straightens out again on withdrawing it.

Sunday and the con bidding session. Leicester, as expected, won the 1977 convention bid. This was followed by the introduction of some of the convention committee for Britains bid for the 1979 World convention, which we should all get behind an support.

In the afternoon Sam Moskowitz talked on Misplaced Landmarks in SF and there was a high powered authors panel, chaired by Bob Silverberg with Mike Coney, Harry Harrison, Chris Priest, James White and Brian Aldiss.

Sunday evening is the convention banquet followed by the fancy dress parade. The Sheffield group once again made an appearance, winning a special Bob Shaw award for depicting his walking vegetables, mentioned in his speech of the previous evening.

The final programmed event of the evening was THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH. Despite the fact that this film was shown in 7 pieces with a reel change of a minute or two between each reel it managed to capture the attention of the audience.

I would like to mention 2 other events of interest. The art show was certainly worth visiting. It included works by Paul Dillon, who won the Ken Slater Award for the best artwork published in a fanzine in 1975/76. Also present was Paul Ryan with much of the original artwork which has appeared in past issues of VECTOR. Paul Dillon said that he hopes to complete his folio, subtitled "a defence of space oper", this Summer. Paul Dillon also mentioned that he was soon to commence working on drawings of military uniforms and also that there was a possibility of him going to live in Leeds sharing a pad with Paul Ryan.

The convention Guest of Honour was Robert Silverberg, as mentioned, who did a sterling job. Instead of giving the usual Guest of Honour's speech he gave readings from his novels, two extracts from

DYING INSIDE and one from SON OF MAN with a question session. During the questions Silverberg appeared to be on the defensive - and quite rightly I thought - he appears to be plagued by questions concerning his recent statements that he has no plans to write anything. Tied in with this were questions to Bob about the possible autobiographical nature of DYING INSIDE. On the surface DYING INSIDE is about the loss of telepathic powers, which have never been fully used, could one interpretation of this be that Silverberg feels he has lost the ability to write well and does he feel he never really fully used his writing ability? As was to be expected Bob Silverberg managed to avoid answering these questions. But the session wasn't all deep introspection, some of the more standard questions, such as what his favourite work was, were asked.

I'm a relative newcomer to cons and although there were serious failings at this con I still managed to enjoy it.

I am told that a number of the regular convention attendees were very disappointed with this convention, and from tales of the past 2 or 3 cons I can understand why to some extent. I only hope that these fans aren't so disappointed that they fail to give their support to future cons.

I am also new to writing convention reports, this is my first. They are not as easy to write as I imagined, this being the fourth or fifth version. The first attempt was too personal, very diary like, it contained too many references to people who would only be known to the ardent fans. To some extent this is difficult to avoid if one is to report a convention at all. This isn't such a problem with fanzines where everyone as at least heard of the other members of the fan community but with this magazine most of our new members won't have heard of the fans I've mentioned. But the fans and fannish events are such an integral part of any convention that I could not leave them out. So I'm sorry if I've confused anyone with these names and events but you'll soon get to know who these fans are through the letter column of this magazine.

I was also torn between giving a temporal summary of the events or concentrating on a specific person/character who figures in the action. I finally decided upon the former, it at least has the advantage of giving some kind of picture of the official side of a convention. The second treatment could probably have been more interesting if it could have been done properly, done badly it would have conveyed no information.

I can tell you what happened at a con but I can't put over the atmosphere, you've got to sample that yourself. See you in Leicester?

MANCONMANCONMANCONMANCONMANCONMANCONMANCONMANCONMANCONMA

NOVA AWARDS

The Nova Awards are presented each year at Novacon and it is awarded to the best UK fanzine. Fanzines can be nominated by any Novacon attendee but the final selection is done by a panel of judges. No judge can have his/her fanzine win.

This set-up has been surrounded by controversy virtually since it was started. The nebulous concept of best fanzine always being a bone of contention. For instance if Y produces a fanzine Ugh which is really tremendous but only produces one issue then should he get the award rather than Y whose fanzine Yech was very good and came out 6 times during the year but no issue was as good as Ugh? Does the award go to one flash of genius or to steady excellence? This was further complicated by the fact that X could have brought out 6 copies of Ugh, 5 of which were average and one of which was brilliant, better than any issue of Yech. Who gets the award?

This year the selection committee say the award shall be judged on the basis of a year's run. I approve of this, as others have said, anyone with some skill can work for a year to produce one excellent issue but it takes real dedication to produce a year's run of 4/6/8/etc each of which is good.

The other point of contention is the selection committee, the argument being that it is not democratic. One counter argument I've heard to this is that the best people to judge a fanzine are other fanzine editors. Well, it depends on what you want. Certainly a number of awards are chosen by a committee of one's peers, so to speak, such as the Academy Awards. But this is usually only done when it is impractical for everyone to vote. In this case it certainly is possible for all con attendees to vote, and so the practice of using a committee has some vaguely incestuous air to it.

I am not suggesting that it's fixed, the people involved are far too respectable and respected, in fannish terms, for that to be so. But, I just don't see the point of a committee when it would be so easy to allow all attendees to vote, just like the Hugo Awards. If anyone has good reasons for keeping a committee then I'd be pleased to hear them.

Last year MAYA won, there was, I believe, some controversy and ill feeling surrounding this selection but I do not intend to go into that in the pages of MATRIX. Let us instead think of this year. Who's going to win? Well, as Rob Jackson isn't on the judging panel MAYA must stand a chance again. But for me the choice is clear, if you consider consistently good layout, contents and production schedules then how could anything else win it but

VECTOR.

To start with a little more on the BSFA Fanzine Foundation... Keith Walker (at present believed to hold the BSFA Fanzine Foundation) stirred up a storm in a teacup (am I mixing my metaphor's ?) over the "disposal" of the First BSFA Fanzine Foundation. First in a letter to present BSFA Committee Members, then to a wider audience in Checkpoint and Fanzine Fanatique. I feel the best summing up was by Roger Peyton in TWLL-DDU 3: "Sure, the zines were sold. They belonged to Charles Partington, who'd had them for sale since Chessmancon. He bought them from John Muir, who bought them from Charlie Winstone, who declared that only duplicates were ever sold. So what do you do ?". In FF19 Keith Walker lays about him in no uncertain manner at "the extraordinary behaviour of the BSFA Officials". He then goes on (knowingly) to commit libel: "it has given away its book library, lost its magazine library (in most perculiar (sic) circumstances) and thrown away its Fanzine Foundation!". As you are all probably aware the book library is not "given away" but on loan to the SF Foundation - who have the facilities/staff to look after it and administer it properly. It also means BSFA members can borrow the Foundation's own books. The magazine library was burnt in a house fire - what Keith's "perculiar circumstances" are I know not. Now we come to the fanzines sold at Mancon. Several members of the BSFA Committee were allowed to look through the pile of fanzines (but we didn't ask Keith Walker for his assistance - could this be the cause of the umbrage ?) - we found a few (to quote FF19 yet again "one or two"), we also found many more dated AFTER the original Fanzine Foundation had been lost. In fact some of the "incriminating items" were addressed to Charlie Winstone and could well have been personal copies, nothing to do with the Fanzine Foundation.

The above is, as I've said, a storm in a teacup... mostly history as well. Far more disturbing, to me, is the fact that Keith Walker, the BSFA Fanzine Foundation Librarian should publicly suggest that anyone donating fanzines should send them to the British Fantasy Society Fanzine Librarian (also Keith Walker). Further, I've heard that a BSFA Member wrote asking for the BSFA Fanzine Foundation catalogue several weeks ago and has had no reply. Is there anyone else reading this who's had a similar experience ? Lastly I've seen a letter from Keith Walker to Tom Jones claiming that the BSFA will never get the Fanzine Foundation away from him....

If Keith Walker is unhappy about the BSFA Fanzine Foundation I feel he should resign from the librarianship and hand it over to someone who's prepared to work for it.

Topic finished - doesn't leave me much room for noting what fanzines have been received. Will start on them (alphabetically) and if any are left over I'll add them next time. Because of this space problem (that is lack of it) I'll deal with fanzines on a "when received" basis in future.

A FOR ANTARES 2 - June 76: Ian Garbutt, Brenacholle Lodge, Loch Katrine, By Aberfoyle, Scotland. Irregular. Trade or 35p + large SSAE. Fiction (1½pp), record review (½pp), poem (½pp), Perry Rhodan (1pp). Xeroxed.

ALGOL 26 - Summer 76: Rather hard on the heels of 25 (see BSFAN 6). Excellent.

BELLICUS 34 - Jun 76: Will Haven, 4 Victoria St, Chorley, Lancs. PR7 2TX. A wargaming 'zine of 22pp. I'm not a wargamer but found several interesting things herein. If your interests lie in this field you could try it....

CHECKPOINT 70 - July 76: Ian Maule, 8 Hillcroft Cresc, Ealing, London W5 2SG. Freq 5 for 40p, 10 for 70p. SunCon, Expo76 (½p), new books (1p), new fanzines (1p). U.K. news (4 items) (½pp). Expensive - could improve.

CINEFANTASTIQUE V5N1: A Boy and His Dog, Black Moon, Open letter to Dino de Lauret - iss are the main items. Lots of others too. \$2.50 per issue - once again see BSFAN 6, I said it all there.

DARK HORIZONS 13 - Spring 76: Stephen Jones, 33 Wren House, Tachbrook Estate, London SW1V 3QD. 3 issues/year. Published by British Fantasy Society for Members. Editorail (1pp), 4 articles (12pp), 3 pieces of fiction (10½pp), poetry (2pp with illos), artwork galore and locs (2½pp).

DELAP'S F&SF REVIEW 12/13 - Mar/Apr 76: Richard Delap, 1014 South Broadway, Wichita, Kansas 67211, USA. Monthly. \$15.00 for 12 (airmail). This must be the next best thing to reading American SF books as they appear. Near thirty pages of reviews... and a work of love.

- * Between finishing the first stencil and starting this one I've been told I've
- * another page to play with... apologies to the fanzines on FF1 who got short thrift.

ECLIPSE 9 - undated: Mark R. Sharpe, 10262 John Jay Apt. D, Indianapolis, IN 46236, U.S.A. Qtly. 50¢, trade etc. A fair bit of money must have been spent on this slim zine. Covers are thin card, inside is litho (not reduced) on fairly thick paper. Contents are editorial (2pp), column by Steve Bridge (casting for film of LoTR, new books etc. (3pp), "How to Write a Fanzine Article" by Bruce E. Coulson (3pp), Sociology: Salmonson's Special Style (1/2pp) which I thought was the best item in the issue, review of The Shores of Kansas (1pp), 3 fanzine reviews (1pp) and locs (2pp). Artwork also to fill out the issue.

EGLADIL 4.- Trinity 76: Stuart & Rosie Clark, "Tirion", 36 Valley Rd, Liverpool, L4 0UD. 3 per year, 15p each. Layout is experimental this issue and varies from fair to very poor. Being reduced and litho'd the page numbers might mislead - I'd guess the reduction is 50%. Editorial (1pp), appraisal of 'Lud-in-the-Mist' (3/4pp), Record Review (1/2pp), appraisal of Nicholas Stuart Gray (3/4pp), recipe for mead (1/2pp), locs (1 1/2pp), fiction (3pp), poetry (?) (1/4pp), 6 book reviews (1 1/2pp). Of the artwork the smaller illos appear to be better than the large - perhaps an effect of the page size (A4). Content and policy appears to be settling down - more work needed on the presentation.

ERED NIMRAIS 2 - Apr 76: David C. Merkel, College Station, Williamsburg, Virginia 23186, U.S.A. Qtly. 50¢. Litho cover, duplicated (one side only) interior. Fanzine Reviews (6 1/2pp), satire (1/2pp), ProtoCon con report (1/2pp), "life in the Universe" (paraphrase of a lecture by the Chairman of the American Museum-Hayden Planetarium) (2 1/2pp), request for help with two projects (2pp), Gil Gaier's Project (3pp), Tengwar inscription (1/2pp). Personalzine, somewhat sercon - would have preferred more on the ProtoCon and less of some of the fillers.

ERG 55 - July 76: Terry Jeeves, 230 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield S11 9FE. Qtly, 3 issues for 50p, 7 for £1. To be honest I'm lost for words, Erg just goes on and on, quality remains high, and it's the perfect advertisement for the '77 TAFF candidate. Editorial (2pp), "Recent Reading" (18 short "notices" - not reviews) (5pp), Appreciation of Ray Bradbury by Michael A. Banks (2 1/2pp), puzzle (1/2pp), sf mags & fandom by Eric Bentcliffe (2 1/2pp), locs (2pp), fanzine notices (1pp), Collating & Storing/Cleaning stencils (4pp) - part of a series on how to produce a fanzine. In case my reference 4 lines up is obscure - I'll be voting for Terry Jeeves in the '77 competition.....

EXTRAPOLATION V17N2 - May 76: Thomas D. Claeson, Box 3186, The College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio 44691, U.S.A. Six monthly, single issue \$2.25, 2 for \$4, 6 for \$10. Increase in prices since I mentioned V17No1 in the last BSFAN. Mostly academically inclined articles in the 84pp (printed) - I found 2 very interesting articles (Reminiscence of Cyril M. Kornbluth by Frederik Pohl and "On Being a Literary Pariah" by Brian Aldiss), 3 fairly interesting articles and 7 that were way over my head - about the same breakdown as the previous issue.

Fanzine Fanatique 19 - June 76: Keith Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Lancaster. Now 6 per year, 15p each. Another layout experiment. An index to UK fanzines received by Keith in 1975 (3 1/2pp), fanzine reviews (8pp) and other items I touched upon at the head of FF1.

Foundation 10 - June 76: The SF Foundation, North East London Poly, Longbridge Rd, Essex RM8 2AS. 3 per year, £2.55 per year. 128 printed pages (print size varying, just to confuse....). High point, for me, was an article by Bob Shaw... I imagine Bob can't write a bad article, even his income tax return must be hilarious! Other contributors are Brian M. Stableford, John Brunner, John Radford, Angus Taylor (articles), numerous prestigious reviewers etc. I may not be for academics taking over sf, but I can't find fault with this.

GOBLIN'S GROTT0 3 - July 76: Ian Williams, 6 Greta Terrace, Chester Rd, Sunderland SR4 7RD. 6 monthly, 4Op. Editorial (3pp), locs (16pp), Pre, Con (Rob Jackson) and Post Report (13pp), Book reviews (2pp). I enjoy getting any (every) fanzine - but this is beginning to be one I particularly look forward too.

JAYLAND UNLIMITED 4 - Feb 76: Craig J. Hill, 220 Standish 1, Redwood, California 94063, U.S.A. 3 per year, 50¢ per issue or 16 for \$6. Printed, colour cover. Satire (5 1/4pp), article on C.S. Lewis by J.A. Nizalowski (11 1/2pp), Quality & Quantity of SF (3 1/2pp) by Wane Martin, film review (2/3pp), Dhalgren

review (1¹/₃pp). My general impression is that the presentation is better than the material presented.

K3 - July 76: Bernie Peak & Dave Rowe, 8 Park Drive, Wickford, Essex SS12 9DH.

Last issue. Loc/Trade or contribution only. If it's the last issue to what does one contribute contributions? Becoming a nice gen-zine - as its folding I'll say no more. R.I.P.

KARASS 21/22 - May/June 76: Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave, Prospect Park, Pa19076, USA. Monthly? 3 for \$1. Newszine plus personal chat - such as Con Reports from the editor.

* You'll realise, by now, I've still a pile of fanzines to be mentioned and I'm on
* the last stencil - so back to very short notes and the beginnings of another
* dozen fan-feuds!

LOCUS 190 - June 76: Charles & Dena Brown, 34 Ridgewood Lane, Oakland California, 94611, USA. 15 per year. 15 copies \$6(seamail), \$15 (airmail). Self proclaimed "The Newspaper of the Science Fiction Field" - it is that. News is pro- and USA slanted.... and several stories (to my knowledge) have been wildly inaccurate.

MYTHOLOGIES 8 - Feb 76: Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Drive, East Providence, Rhode Island 02914, USA. 6 per year. Sample \$1. Editorial (6pp), Satire (3pp), Poll (1pp), excerpt from an ad (he swears) 1pp. Poem (1pp), article on the Society for Creative Anachronisms (John Curlovich) (5pp), poem (1pp), locs (37pp). Something for everyone in this.

NATIONAL FANTASY FAN V36N2 - Apr 76: Joanne Burger, 55 Blue Bonnet Ct, Lake Jackson, Texas 77566, USA. The equivalent of MATRIX for the National Fantasy Fan Federation. Reports and news.

NSFG NEWSLETTER V2N2 - July 76: 42 Park Road, Lenton, Nottingham. News of the club activities etc. Announces another bid for the 1978 Convention. Makes three to my knowledge.

OUR FAIR CITY 3/4 - undated: Martin Easterbrook, Physics Dept, Royal Holloway College, Egham Hill, Egham, Surrey. 3 per year, 25p each (I think). Officially the University of London SF&F Society magazine OFC contains a lot of general interest articles, some fiction, news and editorials.

PHOENIX WORLDCON BID - Preliminary information on the bid for the 78 WorldCon bid - probably only of academic interest to UK readers.

PROCYON 4 - June 76: John G. Collick, 12 Melrose Rd, Bishop Monkton, Nr Harrogate, Yorkshire. 6 a year (?). 25p for 1, 60p for 4, £1 for 6 (why should it be more expensive to sub for 6 rather than 4?). Beginning to "gel" as a genzine though still rather a lot of John in this issue. (Editorial, news-items, book reviews, fanzine reviews and fiction (1²/₃pp)), also record reviews (5¹/₂pp), SF & Monsters (dave Taylor - 2pp) and locs (5pp). Poem on bacover I nearly missed. Improving.

PULP 8 - Spring 76: Robert Weinberg, 10606 S. Central Park, Chicago, Illinois 60655, USA. Qtly. \$1.50 each. Litho with numerous pulp mag covers reproduced. Editorial (1pp), The Masked Detective (5pp), Jungle Stories covers (3pp), Index etc of South Seas Stories (5pp), Reprint of story "Death to the Avenger" (17pp)

REQUIEM 10 - May-June 76: Norbert Spehner, 455 Saint-Jean, Longueuil PQ, Canada, J4H 2Z3. 6 per year, \$1 each or \$5 for 6. Wish I could really read french - I can just make enough out to know I'm missing a lot!

SF&F Journal 86/87 - Feb/Feb 76: Don Miller, UK agent yours truly. Journalis qtly, SF&F Newsletter 1/6 - Jan/May 76: Newsletter is monthly. J costs \$1.50 each, 4 for \$5, News 40¢ each, 4 for \$1.50. Translated to sterling.... 55p=\$1. News is good, though a little dated by the time it gets to the UK. Journal contains more in-depth reviews, articles etc.

* No room for more. Will concentrate on the remainder next time, before going on
* to new stuff. Apologies to the 12 editors left waiting.....