

Matrix 106

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Determinants

It appears that *Podkayne of Mars* is to be re-issued in the States by Baen with both endings — and that readers will be invited to vote which ending will be included in future editions.

Podkayne of Mars was Robert A Heinlein's last juvenile novel, published in 1963. It's a rite of passage book, following *Podkayne*, a nine year old Marsman (apply the conversion factor of 1.8808 to get real years) who travels to Earth via Venus and adjusts her attitudes on the way. The ending — where Poddy's brother rescues them both from vile kidnappers, but where Poddy disobeys his orders, returns to the prison to rescue a baby Venusian fairy, gets caught in the fall-out of the blast and dies — caused problems from the start. Heinlein's agent, Lurtin Blassingame, was succinct: "Enjoyed all of *Podkayne Fries* — except ending. She was such a sweet kid that I hated for you to kill her".

Heinlein had left *Podkayne* to die, clutching the baby alien in the swamps of Venus, babbling into her recorder "... very dark where I'm going. No man is an island complete in himself. Remember that, Clarke. Oh I'm sorry I fubbed it but remember that: it's important. They all have to be cuddled sometimes. My shoulder — Saint Podkayne! Saint Podkayne, are you listening? UnkaTom, Mother, Daddy — is anybody listening? Do listen, please, because this is important. I love — "...

Under pressure from both agent and potential publisher, Heinlein did agree reluctantly to revise the ending. In a letter to Lurtin Blassingame in reply to the one quoted above, he wrote "Oh, I could revise that last chapter to a 'happy' ending in about two hours — let Poddy live through it, injured but promised a full recovery and with the implication that she will eventually marry this rich and handsome bloke who can take her with him to the stars ... and still give her brat kid brother a comeuppance ... But I don't want to do this; I think it would ruin the story — something like revising *Romeo and Juliet* to let the young lovers 'live happily ever after'."

Heinlein still protested that it needed the deaths of *Romeo* and *Juliet* to get the warring families to see just how stupid their behaviour was; *Podkayne's* death was necessary to lay such a burden of guilt on *Clark* that he might have to grow up; and to force *Podkayne's* parents to see the error of their ways so that the mother would abandon her career and stay at home with *Grace*, *Elizabeth* and *Duncan* until they were too old to be influenced by maternal example. But as a professional author, he changed the ending in the cause of getting published. Poddy was critically injured, but likely to live; her rich, handsome admirer kept hovering around; and *Clark* is left with the baby fairy to look after, puzzling over an overheard phone conversation between *Uncle Tom* and his father where the former lays the entire blame on both parents, the mother in particular.

This is where the message of the book gets rather confused. Heinlein wrote to his agent, in the letter quoted above "The true tragedy in this story lies in

the character of the mother, the highly successful career woman who wouldn't take time to raise her own kids — and thereby let her son grow up an infantile monster, no real part of the human race and indifferent to the wellbeing of others". In the 1960s, it would be comforting for readers to see the essential barrenness of a high powered career woman, but in the 1990s, where women working is a crucial part of society, the readers get more confused than ever.

To start with, *Podkayne's* dissatisfaction starts when her younger siblings are uncorked and *Mother* gets disgustingly maternal "Her professional journals pile up unread, she has that soft Madonna look in her eyes, and she seems somehow both shorter and wider than she did a week ago" notes *Podkayne* in her diary. And the promised trip to Earth is off. And so *Podkayne*, with a stubborn streak rather wider than necessary, goes to *Uncle Tom* for help.

So the charge that *Podkayne's* mother puts her career before her children is uncertain. Since the only source of evidence is *Podkayne's* diary, it is only possible to judge from *Mother's* attitude to the triplets. It is true that *Podkayne* finds it odd: she writes "Mother's behaviour had been utterly unbelievable. Her cortex has tripped out of circuit and her primitive instincts are in full charge" but *Podkayne* wouldn't have remembered *Mother's* behaviour towards her and *Clark*.

The next charge against *Podkayne's* mother is that she neglected the growing children and — perhaps worst of all — she enjoyed her career. The internal evidence does suggest that *Podkayne* is, as she writes, "from time to time, the reluctant custodian of my younger brother" while her mother is away from home for professional reasons. There's no hint of child minders and the only person *Podkayne* had to turn to was her *Uncle Tom* (the father has a peripheral role).

Heinlein suggests that the failure of *Mother's* childcare can be judged by the results. But the results are ambiguous. *Podkayne* is "a bit of a dreamer", but *Clark* is an "asocial monster". After detailed study of *Clark's* character, I don't honestly feel that his behaviour would have been modified by more maternal care. I hope, for the sake of the human race, that *Clark's* character is exaggerated out of recognition in the cause of fiction, but feel that Heinlein had too much faith in nature as opposed to nature if he expected that imprisoning an intelligent and ambitious woman in her home would have produced a different *Clark*.

It seems, then, that Heinlein's attempt to deter women from high-flying jobs in the cause of caring for the young, has become a casualty of changes in society since 1963.

That has still left the issue of two endings undecided. Although I feel dubious about letting the votes of readers decide which ending should be used, for at best it is a publicity exercise, at worst it is the thin end of a dubious wedge — given the choice, I would prefer to read the original ending. It's more satisfactory, more thought-provoking — and doesn't patronise the readers by pretending that the internal consistency has to be manipulated to calm delicate readers' sensibilities.

News

From: Mark Amerika, Graham Andrews, David Bratman & Seth Goldberg, John Brunner, Norm Cook, Chris Croughton, Mike Don, David Dyer-Bennet, Donald L. Franson, Jim Goff, Roelof Goudriaan, Ellen Key Harris, Hal Heydt, Melita Kennedy, Dave Langford, Evelyn C. Leeper, Dick Lynch, Jim McDonald, Amanda MacKinnell, Laurie Mann, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Ian Odlin, Orin, Terry Pratchett, Lawrence Schimel, Pat St Jean, Peter Tennant, Pam Wells, Henry R. & Letha R. Welch, Jessica Yates and your editors

BSFA Awards

The BSFA Awards were presented at Mexican in Scarborough on 29 May as follows:

Novel: *Red Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson (runner up *Hearts, Hands and Voices* by Ian McDonald)

Short: "The Innocents" by Ian McDonald *New Worlds 2* (runner up "The Coming of Vertumnus by Ian Watson *Interzone 56*)

Art: *Hearts, Hands and Voices* cover by Jim Burns (runner up *Kaeti on Tour Interzone 66* by Jim Burns).

Nebula Awards

The 1993 Nebula Awards were given at the annual Nebula Award banquet in New Orleans by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America and the winners are:

Best Novel:
Doomsday Book by Connie Willis (Bantam)

Best Novella:
"City of Truth" by James Morrow

Best Novelle:
"Danny Goes to Mars" by Pamela Sargent (*Asimov's* October 1992)

Best Short Story:
"Even the Queen" by Connie Willis (*Asimov's* April 1992)

Grand Master: Frederik Pohl

Hugo Nominations

The nominations for the 1993 Hugo Awards and John W. Campbell Memorial Award have now been tabulated by ConFrancisco, the 1993 World Convention. They were chosen by popular vote by 397 members of ConFrancisco or MagiCon who submitted valid nominating ballots. These ballots were counted and verified by David Bratman and Seth Goldberg. The awards will be presented at a ceremony in the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, on Sunday 5 September. The numbers in parentheses indicate the minimum number of votes needed to get on the ballot. The nominees were chosen by popular vote by 397 members of ConFrancisco or MagiCon, which was the 1992 World Convention, held in Miami and are as follows:

Best Novel (45)
China Mountain Zhang by Maureen McHugh (Tor)

Red Mars by Kim Stanley Robinson (HarperCollins UK/Bantam Spectra)
Steel Beach by John Varley (Ace/Putnam)
A Fire Upon the Deep by Vernor Vinge (Tor)
Doomsday Book by Connie Willis (Bantam)

Best Novella (30)
"Uh-Oh City" by Jonathan Carroll (*F&SF* June 1992)
"The Territory" by Bradley Denton (*F&SF* July 1992)
"Protection" by Maureen McHugh (*Asimov's* April 1992)
"Stopping at Slowyear" by Frederik Pohl (Axolotl/Pulphouse/Bantam)
"Barnacle Bill the Spacer" by Lucius Shepard (*Asimov's* July 1992)

Best Novelle (16)
"True Faces" by Pat Cadigan (*F&SF* April 1992)
"The Nutcracker Coup" by Janet Kagan (*Asimov's* December 1992)
"In the Stone House" by Barry N. Malzberg (*Alternate Kennedy's*)
"Danny Goes to Mars" by Pamela Sargent (*Asimov's* October 1992)
"Suppose They Gave A Peace ..." by Susan Swartz (*Alternate Kennedy's*)

Best Short Story (27)
"The Winterberry" by Nicholas A. DiChario (*Alternate Kennedy's*)
"The Mountain to Mohammed" by Nancy Kress (*Asimov's* April 1992)
"The Lotus and the Spear" by Mike Resnick (*Asimov's* August 1992)
"The Arbitrary Placement of Walls" by Martha Soukup (*Asimov's* April 1992)
"Even the Queen" by Connie Willis (*Asimov's* April 1992)

Best Non-Fiction Book (12)
Enterprising Women: Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth by Camille Bacon-Smith (University of Philadelphia Press)
The Costumemaker's Art edited by Thom Boswell (Lark)
Virgil Finlay's Women of the Ages by Virgil Finlay (Underwood-Miller)
Monad Number Two edited by Damon Knight (Pulphouse)
Let's Hear It For the Deaf Man by Dave Langford (NESFA Press)
A Wealth of Fable: An Informal History of Science Fiction Fandom in the 1950s by Harry Warner Jr (SCIFI)

[An intermission here to give some details about a couple of the above nominations:

A Wealth of Fable is an informal history of Science Fiction fandom in the 1950s edited by Harry Warner, Jr. It is available, price \$25, from the SCIFI Press (PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409, USA). A few things of interest in it are:

- The origin of the Hugo Awards
- Harlan Ellison and Seventh Fandom ("The Mad Dogs have kneed us in the groin")
- Walt Willis, the fan for all ages
- The most single issue of a fanzine ever published, and the disease named after its publisher.

Let's Hear It For The Deaf Man is a collection of Dave Langford's humorous writing, edited by Ben Yalow and published by the NESFA Press (Box G, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139-0910, USA). Articles include:

- The Dragonhiker's Guide to Battlefield Covenant at Dune's Edge: Odyssey Two
- Somewhere near Penrynduethraeth
- The Leakey Establishment: The Final Drips
- Trillion Year Sneer

To find an unfunny passage in this book is difficult, so the last resort must just be to pick a couple of excerpts almost at random:

"The oldest form of biological warfare consists of poisoning wells, or forcing visitors to drink British hotel coffee" (from *Fun With Senseless Violence*) or his musings on forms of punctuation. "I have nothing against the humble apostrophe" he writes in *The Dragonhiker's Guide ...* "(though its intensive use can give the impression that spittle is spraying from the page. Do skiffy writers mean it to be a glottal stop, a click, a period of respectful silence, or what? Some of my best friends use apostrophes. But too often they illustrate the perils of falling so in love with your own terminology as to lose track of how bloody ugly it looks in English. There has to be something wrong when you can perpetrate straight-faced snatches of dialogue like McCaffrey's 'L'vin, W'ter and H'grave attended both Gathers. I've recommended M'gent.'"

But not, back to the Hugo nominations):

Best Dramatic Presentation (26)
Aladdin (Walt Disney Pictures)
Alien 3 (20th Century Fox)
Batman Returns (Warner Brothers)
Bram Stoker's Dracula (Columbia)
"The Inner Light" (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*) (Paramount Television)

Best Professional Editor (43)
Ellen Datlow; Gardner Dozois; Beth Meacham; Kristine Kathryn Rusch; Stanley Schmidt

Best Professional Artist (47)
Thomas Canty; David A. Cherry; Bob Eggleton; James Gurney; Don Maiz

Best Original Artwork (9)
Cover of *Aristoi* (W J Williams) by Jim Burns (Tor)
Dinotopia by James Gurney (Turner)
Cover of *F&SF* October — November 1992 illustrating "Bridges" (de Lint) by Ron Walotsky
Cover of *Illusion* (P Volsky) by Michael Whelan (Bantam)
Cover of *Asimov's* November 1992 (*Asimov* portrait) by Michael Whelan

Best Semi-Prozine (24)
Interzone edited by David Pringle
Locus edited by Charles N. Brown
The New York Review of Science Fiction edited by David G. Hartwell, Donald G. Keller, Robert K. J. Kilheffer and Gordon van Gelder
Pulphouse edited by Dean Wesley Smith
Science Fiction Chronicle edited by Andy Porter

Best Fanzine (21)

File 770 edited by Mike Gilyer
FOSFA edited by Timothy Lane and Janice Moore
Jan's Lantern edited by George J Laskowski, Jr
Minosia edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch
Stet by Leah Zeldes Smith

Best Fan Writer (12)

Mike Gilyer; Andy Hooper; Dave Langford;
 Evelyn C Leeper; Harry Warner, Jr

Best Fan Artist (19)

Teddy Harvia; Merle Insinga; Linda Michaels;
 Peggy Ransom; Stu Shiffman; Diana Harlan Stein

The category "Best Translator" included on the nominating ballot was eliminated due to lack of interest. A few voters commented that a knowledgeable vote in this category would require linguistic expertise beyond what can reasonably be expected of Hugo voters.

Dinotopia by James Gurney received enough votes to be nominated in both the Original Artwork and Non Fiction Book categories, but the administrators judged that it is a single sequential work of art, and thus best placed in Original Artwork.

Two nominations were withdrawn from the ballot. **Michael Whelan** declined nomination as Best Professional Artist this year and **Boris Vallejo** declined the nomination for Best Original Artwork for his cover of *Vernor Vinge's A Fire Upon the Deep*, saying that it is against his principles to enter in a competition among professionals. Both artists thank the voters who nominated them, and feel honoured to have been chosen.

Campbell Nominations

John W Campbell Award for Best New Writer of 1991-1992 (12)

(sponsored by Dell Magazines)
 Barbara Delaplace (2nd year of eligibility)
 Nicholas A DiChario (2nd year of eligibility)
 Holly Lisle (1st year of eligibility)
 Laura Resnick (2nd year of eligibility)
 Michelle Sagara (2nd year of eligibility)

Barbara Delaplace has written: "No Other Choice" (*Alternate Presidents*), "Freedom" (*Alternate Kennedy's*), "Legends Never Die" (*The Fantastic Adventures of Robin Hood*), "Wings" (*Horse Fantastic*), "The Hidden Dragon" (*Dragon Fantastic*), "Trading Up" (with Mike Resnick), (*Battlestation Vol. 1*), "Belonging" (*The Crafters Vol. 2*), "Lost Lamb" (*Whadunnits*), "The Last Sphinx" (*A Christmas Bestiary*), "Black Ice" (*Aladdin: Master of the Lamp*). Forthcoming are: "Fellow Passengers" (*Dinosaur Fantastic*), "Standing Firm" (*Alternate Warriors*).

Nicholas A DiChario has been writing for a living as a Technical writer. His first pro. sale was to Robert Silverberg for *Universe 2*. In 1991, Nick decided to take a chance and, encouraged by Nancy Kress' husband, Marcos Donnelly, sent "The Winterberry" to Mike Resnick, who was just about to return this unsolicited manuscript when he read the first page. His current published work is: "The Power of Love" (*F&SF* Sept. 1991); "Red

Poppy" (*Starshore* 1991); "Forty at the Kiosk" (*Universe 2* 1992); "The Winterberry" (*Alternate Kennedy's* 1992); "Fizz" *Tales of Aladdin's Lamp* 1992).

Works that have been bought but not published yet are: "Drainage" (*F&SF* 1993 any day now); "Just Do It" (*Deals with the Devil*); "While the Giant Sleeps" (*Dinosaur Fantastic* June 1993), (tie-in with *Jurassic Park*); "Extreme Feminism" (*Alternate Warriors* 1993 or 94); "Would He Do Woody" (*By Any Other Name* 1993 or 94), (formerly *Alternate Celebrities*); "Giving Head" (*Alternate Outlaws* 1994); "Enemies of Nickel City" (*Universe 3* 1994). Nick also has a great unpublished novel called *River Walker*. He's trying to get people to look at it, and Mike Resnick's been actively helping him.

Holly Lisle has written: *Fire in the Mist* (Baen); *Bones of the Past* (Baen); *When the Bough Breaks* (with Mercedes Lackey) and *Minerva Wakes* (forthcoming); plus a novelette in the last collection of new Harold Shea (*The Incomplete Enchanter*) stories.

Laura Resnick has written: "We Are Not Amused" (*Alternate Presidents*); "A Fleeting Wisp of Glory" (*Alternate Kennedy's*); also "No Room for the Unicorn" for Rosalind and Marty Greenberg's anthology *Horse Fantastic* and "Fluff, The Tragic Dragon" for *Dragon Fantastic*, edited by the same pair. She has also written over a dozen novels for the Romance market under the pen-name of Laura Leone.

Michelle Sagara has written: *Into the Dark Lands*; *Children of the Blood* which are the first two books of *The Sundered*, a four-book series in progress. Book 3 should be out in June or so, book 4 a year or so later. All are Del Rey.

Anthologies which include stories by some of all or the above are:

A Christmas Bestiary, edited by Rosalind and Marty Greenberg for DAW; stories by Barbara Delaplace, Laura Resnick, and Michelle Sagara.

Aladdin: Master of the Lamp edited by Mike Resnick and Marty Greenberg for DAW, has stories by Delaplace, Sagara and Resnick.

Whadunnits edited by Mike Resnick for DAW, has a story by Delaplace.

Laura Resnick's "No Room for the Unicorn" and Barbara Delaplace's "No Other Choice" were reprinted in one of the Pulphouse non-hardback issues.

Dinosaur Fantastic edited by Mike Resnick for DAW, forthcoming in July, is said to have stories by several of the above. Same for the following Mike Resnick anthologies, *Alternate Warriors* (Tor), due in September, *Ghosts of Christmas*, (DAW) due in November, *Deals with the Devil* (DAW) unscheduled.

Finally, although **Maureen F McHugh** and **Poppy Z Brite** received enough votes to be nominated for the John W Campbell Award for Best New Writer, they were ruled ineligible due to professional

publications of fiction in the Science Fiction and Fantasy field prior to 1991.

Lambda Award

The Lambda Award for the best lesbian novel of the year has been awarded to Nicola Griffith for *Ammonite*.

N3F Short Story Award

For the first time, a BSFA member has won this contest. There were 52 entries submitted, from 33 contestants. Judge Donald L Franson read each story twice, once when he first received it, and once again when selecting the 12 semi-finalists, to send to Jefferson Swycaffer, the final judge, who chose the three prize winners. Donald Franson had a hard job only picking 12 and Jefferson Swycaffer said "This was darned hard to judge. I had to read the best half-dozen stories all over again in order to make the final decision". Congratulations to **Robert J Frost** of Pinner who wins the first prize of \$25 for his story "Live Bait".

Awards at Easter

The Eastercon Awards were announced at Helicon in Jersey on Sunday 11 April 1993 and were:

Long Text: Was ... by Geoff Ryman
 Artwork: Jim Burns, cover for *Kaeti on Tour* by Keith Roberts

Dramatic Presentation: Illumination Fireworks (Armageddon Enterprises)
 Short Text: *Ansible* by Dave Langford

The Doc Weir Award was presented to Bridget Wilkinson.

The ESFA Awards Winners were:

Hall of Fame:
 Author Iain Banks (UK); Artist Jim Burns (UK); Magazine *Anticipation* (Romania); Promoter Larry van der Putte (Netherlands).

Spirit of Dedication Awards (fan):
 Artwork on Display Gilles Francescano (France); Fanzine on Display *BEM* (Spain).

Encouragement Awards (new artists/authors):
 Sue Thomas (UK); Fons Boelenders (Belgium); Radoslaw Dyllis (Poland); Josef Zarnay (Slovakia); Vasily Zvyagintsev (Russia); Ludmilla Kozinets (Ukraine); Alexandru Ungureanu (Romania); Cato Sture (Norway); G Nagy Pal (Hungary); Paolo Brera (Italy); Paco Roca (Spain); Jean Pierre Planque (France).

The Shock of the New

John Jarrold, Editorial Director of Legend, Random House's UK Science Fiction and Fantasy imprint, was announced as the new President of World SF at Helicon, this year's Easter SF convention in Jersey. World SF is dedicated to communication between Science Fiction professionals throughout the world. John Jarrold said "I hope that I and the other officers can help

professionals in areas where authors' organisations are less effective than those in Western Europe and the US. I'm very honoured to have been chosen for this office, and I'll do my best to see that World SF makes a difference". His first task as President was to announce that the World SF Library will be sited at Hangzhou University in the People's Republic of China.

Lois McMaster Bujold, who will be one of the Guests of Honour at the 1995 Eastercon, has just completed a new Miles Vorkosigan book. It's tentatively titled *Mirror Dance* and will be turned in to the publishers this June. She will then take the summer off and probably work on a sequel to *Spirit Ring* (coming later this year from Pan).

George Zehrowski is working on at least a dozen new novels, both Science Fiction and other. He writes that "The Macrolife mosaic of novels and short fiction now includes a new novel in progress, *Cave of Stars* and a novelette "In the Distance, And Ahead in Time", which should (at the time of printing) have just appeared in *Analog*, and may possibly be submitted to *Interzone*. Another novel, *Empires*, is a black comedy horror novel, also in progress. Additional novels, "each long meditated upon" and in progress are *Brute Orbit*; *This Life And Later Ones*, *The History Machine*, *The Mind's Place*, *The Book of Hannibal Barca* and *Begin with Death*. All of these are far along, but will probably require another decade to see print. Much of my short fiction may be found in the new large-sized *Amazing*, which will serialise *Behind the Stars* this summer, with illustrations by Eggleton. A recent story in *Amazing* was "I Walked With Fidel" which belongs to my series of Fantasy and SF involving historical figures. The other stories are "Lenin in Odessa", "Stooges", "General Jaruzelski at the Zoo" and "The Eichmann Variation".

Anne McCaffrey has finished the *Chronicles of Pern: First Fall*, which Del Rey will publish this Autumn. She and Anne Scarborough have just started work on the second *Powers That Be* novel and the latter author took up temporary residence at Dragonhold-Underhill. After seeing a working demo. tape of animated Pern, Anne McCaffrey was moderately pleased, though commented that the artists did not understand the nature and fall of Thread.

John Brunner's latest book, *Middle Earth*, will come out in paperback in September from Del Rey. It's described as "a far-future fable with a lot of British humour, most unlike his usual gloom and doom". He will also be doing a writing course in Wales near Cardiff in October and looks forward to seeing the Cardiff SF group then.

Jack Chalker has sold *The Wonderland Gambit* to Del Rey for a 1995 publication.

Bruce Sterling explained his occupation when giving a talk in Manchester. "I'm a Science Fiction writer by trade" he said "and, like a lot of my contemporaries, I've always been a lot more interested in computers than in robots and rocketships. I've never been in a rocketship. I've never owned a robot, but computers have turned my life, and the life of my contemporaries, and my own society, inside out in twenty-five years. So it seems to me to make perfect sense to be a Science

Fiction writer and to be into cybernetics". When explaining why he is releasing the text of his book *Hacker Crackdown* electronically to be free to anyone who has access to electronic media, he commented that "You can distribute the text, you can have it, you can read it, and you don't have to pay for it. It's kind of a Pied Piper thing. The odd thing is, the world of computing is so fast, it's the fastest technological transmission in human history, in two years this book will seem quaint; in five it will be an antique".

Jerry Pournelle went to Eastern New Mexico University on 30 April as the recipient of the Jack Williamson 1993 lectureship and gave an hour long lecture about the future of democracy (described as being "very interesting"), before the inevitable signing afterwards.

Iain Banks was interviewed by Lisa O'Kelly for *The Independent* in April where, over Earl Grey tea and biscuits in Mayfair, he argued the vital cultural role of Science Fiction saying "It's really the only kind of fiction that looks ahead and, as such, it is a way of trying to cope with it, which makes it pretty important as a literary genre". His next book, *Complicity*, will be published this autumn and features a serial killer questioning the right of a society that condones institutionalised violence like widescale killing by the tobacco barons to condemn him, as an individual, outright. "That makes it sound a bit worthy" adds Iain Banks "But it is mainly deeply unpleasant. It's going to annoy a lot of people — I hope".

Paola Sargent, who won the Nebula novelette award with "Danny Goes to Mars", a satirical story about former Vice-President Quayle, wrote recently about her current and future projects. "Another novelette I published last year is "The Sleeping Serpent" in *What Might Have Been: Volume Four, Other Americas* (Bantam 1992), edited by Gregory Benford and Martin H. Greenberg. I mention this story, which is about an America colonised by Mongols, because it is one of the few in which I've dealt with my own Native American heritage — my grandmother on my father's side was a Mohawk, born on a reservation outside Montréal, Canada. Another story of mine that uses Mohawk legends is "Big Roots", which will appear in *Journeys to the Twilight Zone: Volume Two*, edited by Carol Sterling, coming from DAW sometime this summer. And, for a change of pace, I'll have a story about the comics character Wonder Woman in *The Further Adventures of Wonder Woman*, edited by Marty Greenberg and due out from Bantam in the autumn. My story "Diana and the Djinn" may be the only Wonder Woman story that uses both Arab folklore and chaos theory".

Stephen Laws defends the horror genre by saying "The world is an insecure place, but what's needed is a belief that even when we are experiencing the worst, the human spirit calls on inner and, for the most part, forgotten spiritual resources. That's what a Stephen Laws novel is about. But that's not to say that my characters can breeze through a novel to a happy ending; by no means ... There's a feeling that the supernatural threat has been defeated and the human spirit triumphed. I've developed that theme in all my writing".

Pat Cadigan has a new collection of short stories titled *Dirty Work* scheduled for early June publication by Mark Ziesing, with an introduction by Storm Constantine.

Jack Williamson was 85 in April and 1993 marks his 65th year of writing Science Fiction. Jeff Conner, who is in charge of the Williamson Science Fiction Library at Eastern New Mexico University (the fifth largest Science Fiction library in the United States, maybe in the world), is organising a celebration in the late fall for him. The aim is to put on an event which will both celebrate Jack Williamson and re-awaken interest in his works, with a two or three day series of events, including either a symposium or workshop with invited authors, scholar and fans, together with a student art show with artwork centred on Jack's works. The big thing is a *festschrift* to be edited by Roger Zelazny and will include contributions by any who wish to. Jeff is open to suggestions for events and welcomes any ideas. Jeff Conner can be contacted either through the editorial address or at:

golden:conner@ziavms.enmu.edu
and is at the Eastern New Mexico University.

F Paul Wilson will be visiting the United Kingdom this June on a publicity and signing tour.

Nicholas Jainschigg, who won the 1993 Jack Gaughan Memorial Award for Best Emerging Artist, remembers when he was just out of art school and starting his artistic career: "The art director whose commentary I remember most clearly was the one who told me that my work was too weird to ever be published on a Science Fiction or Fantasy book, that I should get out of the field as soon as possible, and that, needless to say, I could expect no work from him. As a final, crushing blow, he gestured toward the wall of his office, on which hung a high-fructose rendering of a winged unicorn flying through a rainbow and said *That's the sort of work you should be doing!*"

Stephen Gallagher has a new novel, *Nightmare with Angel* being published on 3 September (£4.99) and further projects include a two hour television movie of *Rain* and a screenplay for *Valley of Lights*.

John Brunner writes "I suffer from an unfortunate condition known as a conscience. Sometimes it hurts rather a lot. For instance, now.

"A few months ago, I received a phone-call from the guy who wrote *The Sirius Mystery*. I think his name is Temple. He now lives in Somerset but not near me. He saw a letter of mine in *New Scientist* in which I referred to the original "thunderbolts", and fused into a glassy mass by lightning, and asked me for chapter and verse. I couldn't oblige. All I could say was that when I thought it over I kept recalling the phrase "cabinet of curiosities" which indicated that I'd run across it, probably in childhood, in connection with an 18th- or early 19th-century collector or natural philosopher. I then compounded my offence by losing the piece of paper on which I had noted the guy's phone-number ...

"Which I would dearly like to have to hand now. For in *New Scientist* of 8th May, page 13, I find

reference to "the mineral fulgurite, which is formed when lightning strikes". This matches what I remembered from so long ago: "The temperature reached nearly 2000° C, sufficient to fuse the rock into a hard black glassy lump".

"I'm sure someone in the BSFA must know how to reach him. If so, please save my good reputation by drawing his attention to this!"

Joe Haldeman finished his latest novel, *1968*, in January. It is more or less "mainstream" about that year, though the main character is a Science Fiction fan. Right now it's under consideration at Hodder & Stoughton, while he is working on *The Coming*, a hard SF novel which he aims to finish in 1994, also an untitled short story collection. He considers his best work to be the trilogy *Worlds*, *Worlds Apart* and *Worlds Enough and Time* and says he will write just about anything but criticism (or rather, he admits to having written criticism "but always limiting myself to writers I can praise without reservation"). He lists his pastimes as being "Travel, obviously. Omnivorous and indiscriminate reading. Cooking for daily relaxation. Casino gambling. Amateur astronomy, a lot of bicycling and a little fishing, canoeing, swimming, snorkeling, drawing and painting, gardening and guitar playing".

Peter Hamilton found that one of the greatest problems writing *Mindstar Rising* was creating a believable future and said "People can identify with a country where sugar cane has replaced sugar beet, citrus groves have been planted in the old apple orchards and the melting Antarctic ice is raising the sea level and threatening coastal areas. After that, it is an easy sleight of hand to slip in the smaller technological advances which are the unquestioned everyday tools present in the future ... I admit I had a lot of fun assembling this particular world. Prediction is a game we all play and employ, but it has its serious side. I had to keep reminding myself to highlight the detrimental effects the Warming had on the biosphere. Given a Mediterranean climate, England came dangerously close to being described as a desirable place to live in!"

Robot Championships: The three day World Robot Championships designed to test the skill of robots and their designers from all over the world will take place in Glasgow 23-25 September. Events will include archery, swimming, Sumo wrestling and high jump. More details from Mervyn Edgecombe, MEA, 174 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1QS.

More Shared Problems

The last issue of *Matrix* mentioned a problem Marion Zimmer Bradley encountered when she kindly wrote to a fan, praising the story which had been sent in and found that the fan said that if any concepts from that story were used in MZB's current project, her lawyer husband would sue unless she was given co-author credit and an appropriate share of royalties.

"Let that be a warning" wrote Marion Zimmer Bradley rather bitterly to the magazine *Writer's Digest* "to other authors who might be tempted to

be similarly generous with their universes. I know now why Arthur Conan Doyle refused to allow anyone to write about Sherlock Holmes. I wanted to be more accommodating, but I don't like where it has gotten me. It's enough to make anyone into a misanthrope".

It's perhaps fair enough to say that writers should be able to come up with their own ideas and characters (though Shakespeare, Homer and Milton may have something to say about this), but Hal Heydt puts the current situation more succinctly: "If Bradley does do any more **Darkover** anthologies, it will (if I guess right) be only by invitation to those she has found she can trust to show professional judgement in matters about copyright — and she will probably flatly refuse to read unsolicited manuscripts in order to preserve a solid legal defense against charges of swiping someone else's ideas". Marion Zimmer Bradley is not alone, though, in having problems with people intruding into her imagined worlds. Chelsea Quinn Yarbro was not too keen on receiving a story using one of her own characters and refused permission for the fan to publish it. However, the fan went ahead and had it published in a fanzine with a fairly good circulation. The editor noted that Quinn had refused permission, but noted "the story was too good not to publish". When Quinn became aware of this, she wrote to the editor for a public apology and the editor refused on the grounds that she had done nothing wrong and, besides, she couldn't afford it. However, after some correspondence from Quinn's lawyer the editor "sort of" apologised. "Unfortunately" writes Hal Heydt "neither the fanzine editor nor the author have enough resources for it to be worth Quinn's while to really go after them (as is her right)".

Hal Heydt concludes gloomily that the future may be bleak for authors practising their skills among other people's shared worlds. "I think the Science Fiction writing market is about to split into a three tier system. At the top will be those that write solely in their own universes. In the middle will be those that can be trusted to write in someone else's universe and at the bottom will be the few either writing otherwise publishable material but without "sanction" (because they haven't earned the trust) or unpublishable material. We may wind up discussing which authors are riding which lines between major groups — i.e. the ones that sometimes write in their own universes and sometimes in someone else's.

"The hard transition will be to get to publish in a known universe. For that, an up and coming writer will have to demonstrate that they can be trusted that close to another person's copyright without abusing the privilege."

Following difficulties with a Pern Role Playing Game, **Anne McCaffrey** issued the following statement in an attempt to solve a similar situation:

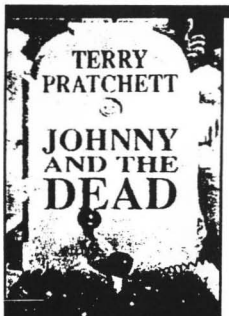
"A question seems to have arisen as to the source of rights/permissions to engage in RPG's utilising **Pern**-based materials. It is well known that under strict rules and limitations, Anne McCaffrey has permitted certain Games Masters to conduct RPG's without a written copyright license, so as to not unduly restrict those who wish to play in her popular world of Pern — for fun! Those rights/

permissions are available only from Ms McCaffrey or, in her absence, from her legal representative. Inquiries to Ms McCaffrey's legal representative should be made to Jay A Katz, Esq., Jacobs Persinger Parker, 77 Water Street, New York 10005 (Fax 212 742 0938). Clearance for use of all **Pern** based materials, must be made through Ms McCaffrey or Mr Katz. If copyright rights to license RPG's have been assigned to others, Ms McCaffrey or Mr Katz will direct the inquiry to the proper party. No one else has the authority to do that. Rights licensed to others are always subject to Anne McCaffrey's approval.

Games Masters who supervise current or future RPG's have received the rules by which Ms McCaffrey permits these games to be conducted. These rules are inviolate. Ms McCaffrey is not pleased with any efforts to avoid such rules or intimidate Games Masters who have been entrusted with the responsibility to see that these rules are followed. RPG's are permitted as a service to Ms McCaffrey's fans and are not intended as an invitation to introduce bizarre notions to the world of Pern. If the integrity of Pern is not maintained by the players, the permissions extended to Games Masters who supervise Ms McCaffrey's rules, will be withdrawn and those who violate her copyrights will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. This is particularly applicable to RPG's who lift portions of Ms McCaffrey's books for purposes of introductions to the games or for any other purposes. For those who continue to responsibly and reasonably enjoy the world of Pern — they are invited to continue — for fun — not for profit. **Fun** is the operative word here. Be creative, be imaginative, Be True to Pern, have fun: Now get on with it".

Terry Pratchett Down Under

It wasn't precisely a signing tour — but it was a resounding success. In Canberra, on the subject of *Elves*, he said "Elves are the sort of being that would make Hannibal Lecter say *Oo-er what nasty people they are*."



In Melbourne or thereabouts, he managed three book signings in two states in one day a TV appearance, plus dinner with his fans where he suggested "An Australian Discworld" where the Wizards might land in a boat and have a black man tell them that they are landing on a sacred site, adding as an aside that he had tried whichey grub, honey ant and XWing (!) while he was in Australia. On the TV show, "Channel Sevens in South Melbourne", he said that when he wrote, he assumed that his audience was at least as intelligent as he was and later said that one of the things he would really like to do is go to an orangutan park somewhere in Borneo.

Terry Pratchett is currently on a signing tour for *Small Gods* and is scheduled to be at the Edinburgh Festival, August 18:

11am SF panel event with Robert Rankin and Tad Williams
5pm Some kind of chat show thing

Terry also describes the book he is currently writing, possibly called *DEATH Sings The Blues*, thus: "It just so happens that the current book is about popular music on the Discworld ... let's just say that there's a run of guitars in Ankh-Morpork, the Dean has painted his bedroom black, and the Librarian has blown up the mighty organ of Unseen University while searching for a good riff.

And I think it's going to include the Discworld version of James Dean. Although it's hard to die in the wreckage of a burning horse".

Publishing News

André Deutsch: In Stanislaw Lem's *Mortal Engines*, published in May, the first eleven stories form a cycle called "Fables for Robots" and consist of "The Three Electroknight", "Uranium Earpieces", "How Erg the Self-inducting Slew a Paleface", "Two Monsters", "The White Death", "How Microx and Gigant Made the Universe Expand", "Tale of the Computer That Fought a Dragon", "The Advisers of King Hydrops", "Automatthew's Friend", "King Globares and the Sages" and "The Tale of King Gnuff". In "The Sanatorium of Dr Vlipeidus", Ijon Tichy of the *Star Diaries* discovers that the patients of a robot lunatic asylum suffer from some very human psychoses. The two final stories show a more serious side: "The Hunt" follows Pilot Pirx tracking down an errant and deadly robot mining machine and "The Mask" presents a strange angle on the Frankenstein theme.

Michael Kandel, who had translated several Lem books previously, deliberately made this volume an assortment of Lem robot stories. He writes in the introduction: "Lem's thinking machines are usually on the receiving end, not the dealing end, of villainy. When reading Lem, expect the villain in the piece — the monster in the fairy tale — to be slimy biological. In other words, human".

HarperCollins: Colin Greenland's *Harm's Way* was published in late May and, after a slow start, proved to be addictive reading. The description "filled with extravagant Dickensian characters and exotic locations, it audaciously marries the classic Victorian coming of age story with the whirlwind

excitement of space opera" is exact, though does not convey the sheer readable addictiveness of it. Katharine Kerr's *Deverry* cycle continues in June with *A Time of War* (£8.99) where Rhodry is forced to confront his half-elf destiny. It seems that he will be able to control the dragon, but a further twist is promised. Also in June comes David Zindell's *The Broken God* (£8.99) which relates the story of Mallory Ringess' abandoned son, Danilo the Wild, who, as a full human, is immune to a "slow evil" disease created by the sinister Architects of the Universal Cybernetic Church. Gene Wolfe described David Zindell as "one of the finest talents to appear since Kim Stanley Robinson and William Gibson".

August publications will be M John Harrison's *The Course of the Heart*, David Edding's *The Shining Ones*, Robert Holdstock's *The Hollowing* and Kim Stanley Robinson's *Green Mars*, all hardbacks except the M John Harrison one.

The *Eclipse* series of graphic novels continues with *Clive Barker's Dread* in June, a story of friendship which reveals the danger of a certain kind of very sinister curiosity, with art by Dan Breton. Another Clive Barker story will come in September, *The Life of Death* with art by Stewart Stanard and with each book, there is a Clive Barker short story accompanying the title piece.

Forthcoming titles range from Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* with art by Steve Parkhouse to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* with art by Jon Bright, including David Wenzel's *The Magic Book* and *The Maltese Falcon* with art by Thom Ang. Other authors on the list will be Doris Lessing, Brian Aldiss, Greg Bear, Stephen Donaldson, Jonathan Carroll and Peter Atkins.

The *Eclipse* series will join with the best of Grafton and Fontana in August to form the HarperCollins Science Fiction and Fantasy imprint. Later this year, there will be a Stephen Donaldson blitz with the reissue of the *Thomas Covenant* chronicles (B format), the paperback publication of *A Dark and Hungry God* and hardback publication of *Chaos and Order*. A virtual reality novel will come from Kathryn S Starbuck, *India's Story*, and a Las Vegas dark fantasy, *The Last Call*, from Tim Powers. Possibly the most unusual book of the year will be Jack Womack's *Random Acts of Senseless Violence* which will depict near-future New York seen through the eyes of a teenager, about to undergo an incredible transformation.

Pan: Freda Warrington has a double in July with *A Taste of Blood Wine* coming in paperback and *Sorrow's Light* coming in hardback and trade paperback. Dan McGirt has taken a break from fencing, acting and watching live coverage of Congress to write *Dirty Work*, described as a humorous fantasy in the bestselling mould of Terry Pratchett, Piers Anthony and Harry Harrison (with Josh Kirby cover artwork to emphasise that point). *Meridian Days* comes from Eric Brown in August, a thriller set in a fascinating near-future world, follow up to his short story collection *The Time-Lapsed Man*, which Pan published in 1990. More fantasy comes from Douglas Hill (his 50th book) with *The Lightless Dome*, first book in a brilliant new trilogy. The place is Quamarr. Magic is real. Joan D Vinge's *Catspaw* is another August

publication, strong Science Fiction following the adventures of telepath Cat, dragged to Earth to save the powerful TaMings from a fanatical killer. Julian May's *Jack the Bodiless* also comes in August, coinciding with the re-release of her backlist with stunning new covers. September publications from Pan start with *Fallen Angels* from Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle and Michael Flynn. In a passionate defence of science, they describe a new ice age where society turns on science and the hubris of scientists as scapegoats for the climatic changes. When a ship from one of the last remaining orbital stations crashes, it is left to a small group of diarch Science Fiction fans, who have kept alive a belief in scientific progress, to mount the rescue to save the crew, the fallen angels. Michael Flynn's thriller *In the Country of the Blind* is coming in September too as, this time working by himself, he considers what might have happened had Charles Babbage been able to develop his calculating machine into a working model. Another September publication is Ben Leech's *The Community*, a first adult horror novel, though he has already written several children's books under the pseudonym Stephen Bowkett and finally Charles de Lint's *The Little Country*, a quiet fantasy where avid bookreader Janey is attracted to a book written by her grandfather's Cornish friend, and magic begins to seep into Janey's mundane world as she starts to read it. In October, Pan will publish Richard Christian Matheson's *Created By*, which takes a savagely effective look at television's obsession with violence; *Dark Voices* 5 with another selection of the worst horror short stories (worst, in this case, meaning best); in November, James Herbert's *The City* is scheduled as a graphic novel with artwork by Ian Miller, another Dwina Murphy-Gibb, second in her Irish trilogy and in December, Lois McMaster Bujold's fantasy *The Spirit Ring*.

New English Library are publishing Connie Willis' Nebula winning and Hugo nominated book *The Doomsday Book* in August (£5.99), with a major promotion, advertising on the London underground and advertisements in the national press, including *The Daily Mail* and *The Sunday Times*. They are having a blitz on Robert A Heinlein in July, releasing *The Puppet Masters*, *Space Cadet* and *Starship Troopers*, then David Wingrove's latest *Chung Kuo* book, *The Stone Within* will come in September, together with the latest Piers Anthony, *Question Quest*. Robert E Vardeman and Geo W Proctor's *Swords of Raemlynn* Book 2 will be published in December. Treachery rules the evil-darkened city. The mage Aerion, his weapons terror and black magicks, reveals in human sacrifice in the name of Black Qar, God of Death. And that's only the beginning. Also F Paul Wilson will be in London for the week from 14 June to coincide with the publication of *Nighworld* (£4.99), a novel which brings to a magnificent conclusion the six novel cycle which began with *The Tomb* (which is also being reissued at £4.99).

Transworld: *The Guardian* wrote, with some justification, that "the juvenile scum, looking for a strong market leader to fill the vacuum left by the late Roald Dahl, may find him in Terry Pratchett". Terry Pratchett's *Johnny and the Dead* came from Doubleday Children's Books in May (£9.99). Johnny Maxwell, who featured in *Only*

You Can Save Mankind now finds himself involved in a battle to stop the local cemetery being redeveloped: the dead people help him too. It's hilarious and very moving. *Small Gods* was also published as a Corgi paperback (£4.99), with Brutha, the Chosen One who wants to grow melons, overthrow a huge and corrupt church and achieve peace, justice and brotherly love. Of course, he primarily wants his god to Choose Someone Else ... it has been selected for the 1993 WH Smith summer reading promotion and Terry Pratchett is currently on an extensive signing tour (see details above). Robert Rankin's *Armageddon III: The Remake (The Suburban Book of the Dead)* comes in June (£3.99). In 2062, Rex Mundi found a marble statue of Elvis Presley in his garden. And things get rather out of control thereafter.

Millennium: Plans for later this year include Roger McBride Allen's *Isaac Asimov's Caliban* (August) which questions Asimov's famous robot laws, while echoing the Asimov spirit; and Bruce Sterling's *Heavy Weather*. Mercedes Lackey also has a new *Valdemar* trilogy coming: *Storm Warning*, *Storm Rising* and *Storm Breaking*.

DAW: Coming in June is Kate Elliott's *His Conquering Sword*, a novel of the Jarun, *The Sword of Heaven*, Book two. The cover art by Jim Burns shows the Jarun tribes of the planet Rhui preparing to besiege the royal city of Karkand which is going to precipitate a tangled struggle between the Ilya Bakhtilian, leader of the Jarun, Tess Soerensen, heir to the leader of the failed rebellion and her brother Charles. It is all suitably complicated, but the three have to come to some arrangement if they wish to have any chance of overthrowing an Empire that, apparently, "was thriving before humans learned to walk erect". Titles to come later in the year include *Forests of the Night* by S. Andrew Swann; *Towers of Darkness* edited by Marion Zimmer Bradley; *Dinosaur Fantastic* edited by Mike Resnick and Martin H. Greenberg; *Future Earths: Under South American Skies* edited by Mike Resnick and Gardner Dozois; *Chanur's Legacy* (Chanur 5) by C. J. Cherryh (paperback); *Leviathan Rising* by Elizabeth Forrest; *Dancer's Rise* by Jo Clayton; *When True Night Falls* (Cold Fire 2) by C. S. Friedman and *Exile* by Kris Jensen.

Cornell University Press: New in paperback is *The Last Frontier: Imagining Other Worlds, from the Copernican Revolution to Modern Science Fiction* by Karl S. Guthke, translated by Helen Atkins. It traces the development of the idea that Earth is not the only planet inhabited by intelligent beings, but that there might be a plurality of worlds with humanoid life. Karl Guthke demonstrates the continuing importance of this question to the process of human self-definition by focusing on the period from the 17th to 20th centuries.

Tor: Tasters for the autumn include a book which Piers Anthony considers to be his most ambitious work to date: *Isle of Women* (September). He tells the history of mankind through the eyes of a single family, as they are reincarnated through history. Harry Harrison's *The Hammer and the Cross* will come in September too and also Robert L. Forward's *Camelot 30k*. He has created an alien race who live at a temperature of 30° above

absolute zero. When the first human expedition arrives, naturally they are unaware of the alien reproductive method (blowing themselves up in a nuclear explosion). And the city is approaching critical mass ... More SF comes from Fred Saberhagen's *Berserker* *Kill* where a Berserker ship seizes a floating laboratory full of human germplasm stored for growth in a future colonisation project. As the human pursuers almost bust a gut in pursuit, they are not aware of the one hell of surprise in Saberhagen's sleeve. Other September highlights are *More Than Fire*, where Philip José Farmer climaxes his World of Tiers and Ben Bova's *Empire Builders*, the long-awaited sequel to *Privateers* where Dan Randolph and Vasily Malik find their continual squabbling dwarfed by a frightening nemesis.

Magazines

Prohibited Matter A4, 84pp, \$6 per issue plus \$2 for postage from Rod Marsden and Don Boyd of PO Box 19, Spit Junction, New South Wales 2088, Australia. This new magazine of Crime, Horror and Science Fiction started, according to editor Rod Marsden, because all his closest friends were into Horror of one sort or another. The magazine, he writes "is dedicated to taking the reader to various hell's and, in the end, giving said person the realisation that his or her life isn't so bad after all. In times of high unemployment, economic strife and incredible price hikes, I think we all need that kind of assurance".

The Crime part consists of "Johnny Psycho" by S. Carcington, "Gone Fishin'" by Rod Marsden and Persian Gulf Murder Spree by Don Boyd; for Horror there is a feature on current Australian censorship, "Vampire Nights" by Rod Marsden, "Hauptmann Curse" by S. Carcington, "Library Guard" by Don Boyd, "Misadventures of a Train Traveller" by Rod Marsden and "Murderer's Moon" by Don Boyd.

The SF part consists of Rod Marsden's "Alien Encounters", S. Carcington's "Within the Yellow Maze", Don Boyd's "Strange Homecoming" and S. Carcington's "Horror in the Artion", with Stephen Carter as cover artist and other art by Stephen Carter again plus Des Waterman and Bodine.

Andy Hawks and Paul Leonard are publishing a new magazine called *Phage*, for people who are living on the new edge, surfing along the new wave of radical thought. This magazine has been born from the need for a forum for new ideas in a print media.

The probable contents will focus on the edges of culture, examining the fringes of reason and the reasons of fringe, via unstructured tones that ebb and flow from in-form information to formless rants of altered states. The Science Fiction content will concentrate on the fiction at the edge: cyberpunk, post-cyberpunk and hyper-real. More details from Andy or Paul at *Phage Magazine*, PO Box 10821, Green Bay, Wisconsin 54307-0821.

Peeping Tom 10 A5, 48pp, £1.95 or £7.25 for 4 issues from David Bell, Eyre Tree House, 15 Nottingham Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1DJ (cheque payable to

Peeping Tom magazine). Stories by Steve Harris, Tina Hughes, Ben Leech, D. F. Lewis, Denise Sodaro, Winter-Damon, John Carter, Janet Vale, Clive Evans and Philip J. Cockburn. Artwork by Debs Durnbrell, Peter Queally, Mike Philbin, Kerry Earl and Dallas Goffin.

Strange Attraction 3 A5, 56pp, £2 or £7.75 for 4 issues from Rick Cadger, 111 Sundown Road, Houghton Regis, Beds LU5 5NL (cheques payable to Strange Attraction). Publishes Horror, Fantasy, Slipstream. Stories by David Logan, Tanya Brown, P. J. L. Hinder, Andrew McEwan, Richard C. Williams, John Duffield, Jim Steel and H. J. Donoghue. Verse by Steve Sneyd, Bruce Boston and J. C. Hartley. Letters column and competition.

Supernatural Pursuits A5, 40pp, £2.50 from Ros Pardo, Flat One, 36 Hamilton Street, Hoole, Chester CH2 3JQ. Three Jamesian parodies by William I. I. Read. Illustrated by Nick Malore.

Dementia 13 No 11 A4, 64pp, £2.30 or £7.50 for 4 issues from Pam Creais, 17 Pinewood Avenue, Sidcup, Kent DA15 8BB. An illustrated journal of the arcane and macabre. Stories by Simon Clark, Rick Cadger, D. F. Lewis, Gregory G. Nymen, Martyn Blake, Roger Stone, Philip Holmes and Paul E. Pinn. Artwork by Mike Philbin, Lawrence Kenny, Kerry Earl, Dom Gannelli, Steve Lines, Stephen Skwarek, Dallas Goffin, Roddy Williams, Peter Queally, Alex Mathieson. Articles on the fictions of Simon Clark, Arthur Macken and William S. Burroughs. Small press artist Steve Lines discusses his influences and Derek M. Fox considers "The Art of Fear". Letters column and reviews of "obscure" books. Small press listings.

Picatrix 1 A5, 56pp, £2.80 from Chico Kidd, 113 Clyfford Road, Russlip Gardens, Middlesex HA4 6PX (cheques payable to A. F. Kidd). Publishes Science Fiction, Horror, Supernatural, Fantasy. Stories by William Smith, Muriel Smith, Roger Johnson, Lawrence Richard, Michael Chislett, Dora Doyle, D. F. Lewis, Alan N. Marshall, J. A. Hall, John Howard, James Parkhill-Rathbone, Lyn McConchie, Edward Rand, David G. Rowlands, Adrian Robertson and Rick Kennett. Artwork by A. F. Kidd and Dallas Goffin.

Grotesque 1 A4, 48pp, £2.50 or £9 for 4 issues from David Logan, 24 Hightown Drive, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland BT36 7TG (cheques payable to Grotesque Magazine). Stories by Kim Elizabeth Laico, D. F. Lewis, Lawrence Dyer, Donal Fahy, Philip H. Turner, Alexander Johnson, Rhys H. Hughes, Molly Brown, David Logan and S. P. Tollyfield. Book reviews and small press listings.

Flickers'n'Frames available from John M. Peters, 299 Southway Drive, Southway, Plymouth, Devon PL6 6QN, will publish the special anniversary issue in July including fiction by Bruce Boston, John Light, Steve Sneyd, Liz Honeywell plus articles by Chuck Connor, Tony North and Tony Lee, totalling 72 pages at least, with at least 12 plates of portfolio.

Black Ice

Black Ice Books is a new alternative trade paperback series that will introduce readers to the latest wave of dissident American writers. Breaking out of the bonds of mainstream writing, the voices will be subversive, challenging and provocative. So far published are *Avant-Pop: Fiction for a Daydream Nation* edited by Larry McCaffery which is an assemblage of innovative fiction, comic book art and graphics from writers including Samuel Delany, Kathy Acker, Stephen Wright, Harold Jaffe and Ricardo Cortez Cruz. The John Shirley collection mentioned last time, *New Noir*, includes stories based on his personal experience of extreme mental states and on his struggle with the seductions of drugs, crime, prostitution and violence. Mark Amerika's *The Kafka Chronicles* is described as "an adventure into the psyche of an ultra-contemporary twentysomething guerrilla artist, who is lost in an underworld of drugs and mental terrorism" and the fourth book, *Cris Mazza's Revelation Countdown* is a collection of stories which project onto the open road, supposedly describing a type of freedom resembling loss.

These books are available from good (US) independent bookstores, or can be purchased directly from the publisher at one for \$7, two for \$13, three for \$19 or all four for \$25 (but add extra for postage, \$2.50 for foreign postage especially). Information from Fiction Collective Two, Publications Unit, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois 61761, USA.

Obscenity in Gao!

David Britton, author of the novel *Lord Horror*, which featured a satirical portrait of ex-Chief Constable James Anderson, was jailed for four months on Friday 2 April under the Obscene Publications Act.

The conviction rises from various police raids on a retail bookshop owned by David Britton in August 1991, at which over four thousand *Lord Horror* comics were confiscated, together with a number of other comics, still being held by the police. It is likely that these comics will be dealt with under Section Three of the Obscene Publications Act. More details from: Michael Butterworth (Tel: 061 833 2664).

Best Young Novelists

The 1993 judging panel consisted of John Mitchinson, Bul Buford of *Granta* and two Booker Prize winners, A S Byatt and Salman Rushdie. John Mitchinson writes of the initial difficulties: "We were keenly aware of the shadow of the last Best of Young British promotion in 1983, which had proved not only a huge commercial success, but had gathered together a veritable roll-call of major contemporary authors: Martin Amis, Julian Barnes, Ian McEwan, Angela Carter and Rushdie himself, to name but a few. Surely the Class of '93 would find it difficult to compete".

Still, they managed, and John Mitchinson once more gives some explanations: "Where the new list

is particularly strong, far more so in my opinion, than in 1983, is in the range of writers represented. The apparently dying art of comic writing is much in evidence, ranging from the sophisticated and waspish (Helen Simpson) to the exotic (Louis de Bernieres) to the surreal (Will Self). There is complex and ambitious historical fiction (Lawrence Norfolk, Caryl Phillips); there are highly wrought literary thrillers (Candia McWilliam and Philip Kerr); challenging portraits of gay life (Adam Mars-Jones, Alan Hollinghurst); fresh and powerful tales of contemporary Britain, both North and South (Esther Freud, A L Kennedy); novels set in completely different cultures (Nicholas Shakespeare, Tibor Fischer) and even imaginary literary excursions into Fantasy and Horror (Adam Lively, Anne Billson).

"Stepping back from the list, there is the sense of a new kind of literary scene beginning to emerge: one that is vibrant, diverse, multi-cultural, in tune with a wider cross-section of contemporary life; even, on occasions, prepared to grapple with ideas".

These novelists with recent publications are Louis de Bernieres' *The Troublesome Offspring of Cardinal Guzman* (Minerva, May), Nicholas Shakespeare's *The High Flyer* (Harvill, May), Caryl Phillips' *Crossing the River* (Bloomsbury, May), Adam Mars-Jones' *The Waters of Thirst* (Faber, June) and Adam Lively's *Sing the Body Electric* (Chatto, June). This last is the most Science Fictional: it imagines Britain in 2064, segregated into two areas one of which is post-industrial high-tech and the other is a coastal rural protection zone, home of pre-industrial longings.

Although it might have been relevant and suitable to select Iain Banks as a best young novelist when *The Wasp Factory* was published, but it all seems that the definitions are blurred when he is a ten novel veteran and pushing forty. Nor does it appear to be an honour which Iain Banks particularly relishes. Although invited to a party given to celebrate the promotion, he has declined in the strongest possible terms, according to the "Literary Review" column in *Private Eye*. He objected to the Conservative impregnated venue, among other things, and wrote "Didn't it ever occur to anybody that writers spend a fair bit of their time manipulating symbols and that therefore these might be quite important to us? Did the words "Saatchi Gallery" just leap into the head of the person concerned with no associations, no implications, no weight of meaning (in which case, where has this person been for the last 14 years)? Perhaps it was just assumed that your average young (*sic*, in my case) novelist thinks *Hey*, these Tories aren't really a shower of smug, mean-spirited, hypocritical incompetent liars: actually they're kind of neat! ... Well, wrong. Whatever ghastly lapse of taste or political sense led to the decision to use the Saatchi gallery, I shall not — as you might have guessed by now — be attending".

Obituaries

Lester Del Rey died on May 10 at 3.30pm (Eastern standard time). He was 77 years old. Born Ramon Felipe San Juan Mario Silvio Enrico Smith Harcourt-Brace Sierra y Alvarez del Rey y

de los Uerdes in 1915, in later life he (understandably) preferred to be known as Ramon Felipe Alvarez-del Rey.

Although his early work showed much promise, in particular the short stories "Helen O'Leary" (1938) and "Nerves" (1942), he will probably be remembered more for his book reviews, which he started writing for *Analog* in 1974 and as editor and co-founder of Del Rey books with his fourth wife, Judy-Lynn, for whom he discovered such commercially successful authors as Terry Brooks, Stephen Donaldson, David Eddings and Barbara Hambly.

John Clute, writing the obituary in *The Independent*, comments that the editors of Del Rey Books "were probably more responsible than anyone — with the possible exceptions of George Lucas and Stephen Spielberg — for the huge popularity of the genre in the 1980s".

There will be no public funeral and no memorial service, according to Lester's own request.

Irish SF fan and book collector Frank McKeever died March 28 1993 in Belfast, after a long illness. He was 52. McKeever was a founder member of the Belfast Science Fiction group that formed around James White and Bob Shaw in the early 1970s. He continued to play an active part in Irish fandom right up until his recent hospitalisation. McKeever had one of the largest SF collections in Ireland — perhaps the largest (5000+ volumes). But he also read and collected widely in other genres: Westerns, mysteries, historicals, etc. His favourite authors included Edgar Rice Burroughs, Robert E Howard, H Rider Haggard, Louis L'Amour, Edgar Wallace, Jack London and Gardner F Fox.

Avram Davidson died in Seattle on 8 May 1993 of complications arising from his diabetic condition aged 70. He edited *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* from 1962-64, contributing towards the magazine's Hugo win in 1963, and also was awarded a Hugo for his short story "Or All the Seas with Oysters" in 1957 and a World Fantasy Award for his collection *The Enquiries of Dr Esterhazy* in 1975. The Doctor Esterhazy stories were described by John Clute, writing the obituary in *The Independent* as "genre fiction meets Umberto Eco". John Clute then sums Davidson up precisely thus: "Davidson was vastly erudite, in a scattershot and medieval fashion, sounding sometimes rather like a blind man trying to describe a dragon. Raised as an Orthodox Jew, his best work was idiosyncratically pagan".

Robert Westall died suddenly in April, aged 63. Born in Tynemouth in 1929, he lived through heavy German bombing during World War II, and his experiences formed the background of several children's books, such as *The Machine-Gunners*, *Fathom Five*, *Blitzcat* and *The Kingdom by the Sea*. He began to publish in middle age and after the success of *The Machine-Gunners* in 1975 discovered his talent for the supernatural, with a string of long novels for the 12+ age range: *The Wind Eye*, *The Watch House*, *The Devil on the Road* and *The Scarecrows*, a controversial winner of the Carnegie Medal.

SF followed with *Futuretrace Five* in 1983 and *Urn Burial* in 1987, but he settled for crossover SF/F with *The Cats of Seroser* in 1984.

Certain preoccupations recurred in his books: how to introduce the young to adult concerns, especially sexuality, the love and respect for cats and World War II. All these came together in *Blitzcat* (1989). In later life, Robert Westall sublimated his grief for the premature death of his son Christopher in his writing, at the cost of his marriage, but not of his writing.

Sandy Sanderson, one of the best-known British fans of the 1950s, died of natural causes at his home on Long Island the evening of May 12. He was known for his excellent fanzine, *Aporrheta*, but will probably be remembered as the creator of "Joan W Carr", perhaps the most successful hoax ever perpetrated on fandom.

"Joan W Carr" first saw life in 1952 when Sandy, new to fandom, read about the Bob Tucker death hoax in an old fanzine and he began to wonder if he could make a big splash if he worked out a genuine hoax which would create life instead of ending it. So he constructed a female fan from "a typewriter, paper and carbons, a bottle of green ink and a broad-nibbed pen, an assortment of photographs borrowed from a young cousin and my own mental agency" as he wrote later.

The hoax was originally meant just for fans in his home Manchester area, but it spread throughout fandom while he was serving in the military in Egypt: he spread it with an occasional reference to a girl in the WRAC whom he had met at his post and had been delighted to find interested in Science Fiction. Sandy transferred to "Joan" an assortment of his interests which he hadn't made known in fandom to any great extent: music, poetry, philosophy and semantics, in particular. What's more, "Joan" was becoming much more active than Sandy might have wished. Requests for articles by Sgt. Carr were arriving so frequently from fanzine editors that Sandy's own fan activity began to suffer. The hoax went on for nearly four years (!) before it was finally unravelled in May 1956. But when the truth finally came out, fan reaction was mainly of praise.

Sandy's involvement with fandom diminished when he moved to the States in the 1960s, but he continued to show up from time to time in the letters column of a few fanzines, and maintained his interest in fandom right up until his death.

Walter Breen, 64, the author of many works on numismatics, died of cancer April 27 at a hospital in Chino, California. He was also a notable science fiction fan in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and was married for a time to author Marion Zimmer Bradley.

Although he was involved in unproved scandal, Walter Breen was regarded as one of the most intelligent fans of his day; in 1952 he completed his work on his B.A. degree at Johns Hopkins University in the minimum period possible.

Tor Newsletter

Following the launch of the Del Rey electronic newsletter, Tor have also decided that it is a good idea. *Near Futures* by Patrick Nielsen-Hayden and Beth Meacham has just been published and starts by justifying itself "We [Tor] are, in fact, a for-profit business, and a rapidly growing one, and we're aware that some people frown on the use of online channels for crass advertising and promotion of this sort. We figure all we can do about that is to try to make our crass advertising and promotion as entertaining and worthwhile as possible".

The Tor June publications lead with *By the Sword* by Greg Costikyan, notable because it is a first novel, as far as is known, ever offered as a serial by a national information service. Other June publications include Gwyneth Jones' *White Queen*, which Bruce Sterling describes as "thoroughly original, genuinely weird, and stuffed to bursting with deep-dyed genre virtue. And with its lounging, verminous, hyper-civilised space visitors, it boasts a truly unforgettable treatment of the theme of the alien": Charles Sheffield's *Cold as Ice*, a major novel of solar system exploration and discovery; Charles de Lint's *Spiritwalk*, a powerful story of sacrifice, revenge, etc., as de Lint returns to the spirit world of *Moonheart*; Debra Doyle and James D Macdonald's *Sparliot's Grave*, book 2 of *Magewords*, where Beka Rosselin-Metadi, who was looking for the man who arranged her mother's murder, discovers something far more important, that the Barrier between the human galaxy and the *Magewords* is down; and Gordon R Dickson's *Lost Dorsai*, a new edition, including a brand new Dorsai Concordance.

July publications include *Once Around the Bloch*, the unauthorised autobiography of Robert Bloch (hardback), plus *High Steel* by Jack C Haldeman II and Jack Dann which describes how Mohawk Indians, people with no inborn fear of heights, built the skyscrapers of New York using conscripted labour. John Stranger doesn't want to stay a conscript for ever, however...

Other Forthcoming Books

One major publication in August from Ace is Amy Thomason's *Virtual Girl*, described as "a Science Fiction novel on the cutting edge of machine intelligence", though Larry Niven is more succinct: "Excellent Novel!".

Kim Stanley Robinson's *Green Mars* is coming from HarperCollins in August (hardback). It's a self-contained novel, but follows *Red Mars*: Michael Bishop describes it as "The War and Peace of Science Fiction". A small swarm of scientists have banded together to keep Mars free from Terran exploitation. Another August publication from HarperCollins is *Strange Dreams* edited by Stephen Donaldson, 27 short works of fantasy, with stories by Greg Bear, Michael Bishop, Jorge Luis Borges, Orson Scott Card, Harlan Ellison, Franz Kafka, Rudyard Kipling, Nancy Kress, Robin McKinley, Lusius Shepard, Theodore Sturgeon, Sheri S Tepper, Jack Vance and John Varley.

BSFA News

At the BSFA Annual General Meeting, Kev McVeigh resigned as co-ordinator and Catie Cary and Maureen Speller agreed to take his place. Although Kev has put in a lot of work in the last two years and has achieved a great deal, most notably in finding a replacement for hand collating in Reading, the administrative burden was becoming too much for him and he will be concentrating, in the future, on special projects — of which, more later.

Maureen Speller and Catie Cary hope to improve the efficiency of the administration by sharing responsibility and creating a number of new posts to spread responsibility further. More details will be released as they become available.

Although they have a number of exciting and even expansionist plans, the current financial situation is such that an improvement in the bank balance must be the first consideration. They will first be turning their attention towards a drive to increasing membership, assisted by new membership secretary, Alison Cook. A new advertisement is being designed, leaflets and posters will follow. If anyone can offer practical suggestions or offers of help, they will be pleased to hear from them.

In particular, would anyone who will be attending any conventions this year and who will be able to distribute leaflets, contact them.

All correspondence to Maureen Speller at 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ; or telephone Maureen at 0303 252939 or Catie at 0483 502349 evenings before 10pm.

Membership Renewals

As a result of the new professional mailing system, many of you will have received your membership renewals reminder forms by separate cover. The BSFA is currently examining ways to improve this system, but for the near future the reminders will come separately. For those unsure of the date of expiry of their membership, please check your address label on the current mailing. Above your address will be a date of expiry, or the letters SO if you are a Standing Order subscriber. If the date is followed by **** then your subscription is due for renewal.

Standing Orders: There are a number of members who are not updating Standing Orders, costing the BSFA almost £500 last year. This is not something we can allow to continue. If you pay by standing order please ensure that it is for the correct amount, ie £13.50. This extra income could mean that we can afford to print *Focus*, for example, or invest in improvements to other areas of the BSFA service.

Empire Dreams Kev McVeigh

By the time you read this, the BSFA will have held its Annual General Meeting, but don't worry about major decisions being taken without consultation. This year has been one in which the BSFA has

endeavoured to tidy up a few loose ends: as I've said before, people like Elizabeth Billinger, Katie Cary and Jenny Glover have put in enormous effort and considerable talent to create a functioning and stable BSFA. We have a few minor creases still to iron out, but these are close to have successfully consolidated and can look to the future with the confidence to investigate new projects in the knowledge that this might no longer be idle speculation.

Of course, we can not be complacent: there is still a major recession, and we must be careful. We need to improve certain areas of administration — my own delay in answering some of your letters, for which I apologise, is one example — and communications.

As the recent *Matrix* figures showed, we need to do something about membership figures. The Gollancz advertisements are generating a slower response than we hoped, but they were always a long-term project. Other possible ads. are being negotiated, and any promotional avenue will be considered. Unfortunately, Joanne Raine has decided that seven years as membership secretary is more than enough, and work commitments and health problems have persuaded her that now is the time to seek new enthusiasm. Jo has worked hard for the BSFA, all our volunteers do, and will carry on helping in various little ways — not least in forwarding new membership enquiries to her replacement. Fortunately, offers for the position were immediate, and as soon as a suitable handover can be orchestrated. Alison Cook and Brian Stovold will be taking on Jo's duties.

Star's End Andy Sawyer

"I'm no man of action; no hero of any television. I'm a librarian". (Homir Munn, Asimov's Second Foundation)

"Ook". (The Librarian of Unseen University, Ask-Morpork).

When I relinquished *Paperback Inferno* last year, I had all these idealistic plans about reading SF without feeling obliged to write about it, even of reading books which weren't SF at all, and of discovering to my own satisfaction, if no-one else's just why the poet-playwright Taylor was forced from the city of Kaerlud to wander the highways in fear of My Lord Witchfinder.

Now I find myself — or will do so, once I start in August — Administrator of the Science Fiction Foundation Collection. Words like "consistency", "hobgoblin" and "small minds" start to revolve before my eyes.

A new era begins. The Collection of the Science Fiction Foundation is now safely housed in Liverpool University, near the archive of Olaf Stapledon, author of *Last and First Men* and possibly the only SF writer to have a wood named after him. I have been appointed to catalogue and oversee the collection — the largest such collection in Europe — to liaise with the M A in SF Studies,

due to start in 1994, and to promote the collection, the M A course, and Science Fiction along the lines of the ideas of the Science Fiction Foundation. This is certainly the most exciting project I've been involved in, professionally and personally, and I'm pleased to be aboard. And to welcome you with me.

The Science Fiction Foundation was founded, thanks to the persuasive efforts of the remarkable George Hay, in 1970 with the aims of "promoting a discriminating understanding of the knowledge of Science Fiction, or disseminating information about Science Fiction, of providing research facilities for anyone wishing to study Science Fiction and of investigating the usefulness of Science Fiction in education". With Arthur C Clarke and Ursula Le Guin as patrons, it was supported by the North East London Polytechnic (now the University of East London) who funded a senior lecturer to act as administrator. Names such as Peter Nicholls and Malcolm Edwards (the first two Administrators), Colin Lester (Research Assistant 1975-77), David Pringle (Research Fellow 1978-79) and Colin Greenland (Writer-in-Residence 1980-82) may not be unfamiliar to BSFA readers. Since those heady days, the Foundation shared in the Thousand Cuts afflicted upon education by its funding bodies. When Malcolm Edwards left in 1980, the Administrator post was left unfilled and the position became "Honorary" although the critical journal *Foundation* survived. (Now edited by Edward James, it recently won, for the second time, the Prix Européen de Science Fiction for Best Magazine). Without the help of a succession of indefatigable people whose labours and lobbying refused to let the Foundation die, and especially the wonderful Joyce Day who acted for so long beyond the call of duty as part-time secretary, the Foundation would not have survived these barren years.

The crunch came early in 1992 when UEL decided that it could no longer financially support the Foundation. The Foundation was faced with the prospects of having its resource collection dispersed. Fortunately, Liverpool University came to the rescue, and agreed to fund an Assistant Librarian to manage the collection and promote it and the M A course. Further funding will eventually come from the M A and any further sources I and the Friends of Foundation can persuade to sudden acts of generosity.

Now, the Collection is now in the Special Collections department of the Sydney Jones Library at Liverpool University — which also holds the archive of Olaf Stapledon, author of *Last and First Men*, former lecturer at Liverpool University. It awaits my arrival in August ...

As I have known about my appointment for less than two weeks (at the time of writing), I'm not really in a position to present a detailed agenda: ideas are coming all the time and will be discussed and dovetailed with the plans of the University authorities (who have delighted me with their enthusiasm) and the Friends of Foundation over the coming months. There are certainly areas of the collection I would like to expand, events I would like to organise, interests I would like to build upon. One thing I can say is that there will

clearly be a strong Foundation presence at the 1994 Eastercon, to be held just down the road from us at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool!

In the meantime: "start as you mean to go on", they say. We're looking for your support. Donations — of books, magazines, your fanzine/small press magazine, anything to do with Science Fiction — are welcome: please send to the University Library at the address below: duplicate copies can be added to the general library stock or sold to provide funds for further purchases. Financial donations are also more than welcome: please contact the Friends of Foundation.

Contact Addresses:

Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction edited by Dr Edward James is now published c/o New Worlds, 71-72 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0AA.

Donations of material can be sent to the S F Foundation c/o Special Collections, Liverpool University Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA.

For information about/offers of help to Friends of Foundation, contact Rob Meades, 75 Hecham Close, Walthamstow, London E17 5QT.

Inquiries about the academic implications of the move to Liverpool should be addressed to Dr David Seed, English Department, Liverpool University, Liverpool L69 3BX.

Clubs Column

The question was posed on what a BSFA member might reasonably expect from a local group. Here are some initial reactions.

The Hull Trip D M Roberts

To put it at its simplest, I expect a SF group (when it meets in that capacity) to discuss Science Fiction in some way. This should really be self-evident, but it would appear that this is not always the case. It seems to me that once a group reaches a certain size, it may well tend towards becoming little more than a social club. The members only seeing each other on the meeting nights, and doing what a group of friends does when it meets infrequently — it chats, catches up on gossip and tend to splinter into smaller groups of closer friends. A very similar atmosphere to the local pub. With this type of group, the common interest in Science Fiction gets relegated to providing a subject of conversation for people new to the group. The shy (such as myself) would feel very daunted by this.

My experience of specific groups is very limited. I've been with the Hull group for about five years, and have never been a member of any other group. It is only a small group, with typically 8 to 12 people turning up to any particular meeting. We do talk about Science Fiction or some related topic. This is because we make a concerted effort to run

the group in that way. We meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month, in a town centre pub (pubs do tend to be the most convenient to arrange). About two years ago, a large proportion of the group left the area, which meant that the number of people turning up to meetings did not justify renting a room in a pub and for a period the remaining members took it in turns to host each meeting. This means that it is comfortable and cosy, but effectively closed to people that would only turn up occasionally, and also to new members.

The group has been subsequently "relaunched", and a number of new people have since joined. The meetings are planned by a small group meeting (which is in fact open to any of the members), at which suggests for meetings are made. Typically, these are talks by individual members, story readings, general discussions on a specific topic (a recent example was "Religion in Science Fiction") and occasional guests when we can afford them. The plan will normally cover about 10 to 12 meetings.

This may seem a little rigidly structured for such a small group, but it does have a number of advantages. It ensures that at every meeting, some aspect of Science Fiction is discussed. People giving talks on topics that interest them mean that we all get exposed to topics we may know little about (recent talks have been about Science Fiction drama, The Small Press, Drugs in SF, as well as talks about individual authors). Everyone in the group gets to contribute as much as they feel comfortable with, and are encouraged to make contributions. As well as this, we attempt to advertise our existence with flyers in bookshops and libraries, and the plan may mean that someone new with a particular interest may come along for a specific meeting, when they wouldn't turn up to something just advertised as a Science Fiction group meeting. The meetings themselves are anything but formal, and "heckling" has become a traditional part of any discussion.

Most people in the Hull group have known each other for some time. We tend to see quite a lot of each other outside of meeting nights on a social basis. We get plenty of opportunity to talk about mundane things away from the meetings, so it seems pointless to run a Science Fiction group to sit and chat about the same things we talk about when we meet up elsewhere.

I said that the size of the group will affect the way people behave in it. I also think that a group of any size can just become a social club if allowed, and the only real way to stop this is to have people with the ability and commitment to organise. The larger the group, clearly the harder this is to do. Surely within a large group, there would be sufficient people interested in a semi-formal group to make it worth trying to arrange something. If you meet in a pub, book a room for the formal meeting and let those not interested in the subject under discussion accumulate in the pub proper. Much the same way as at a convention, no one is forced to go into the panel items, and those that aren't interested, chat in the bar. A Science Fiction group is really nothing more than a disparate group of people with a common interest. What they do when they meet is up to them. It just

seems a great shame that those who want to talk about Science Fiction feel restricted from doing so simply because the majority would rather discuss mortgages.

Forthcoming Schedule

22 June	SF Poetry
13 July	André Norton
27 July	Mythical creatures in Science Fiction and Fantasy
10 August	Urula Le Guin
20 August	Comics
14 September	Guest Speaker (to be arranged) or Tom Robbins
28 September	Tom Robbins or Guest Speaker (to be arranged)

Future Talks

J G Ballard; Anthropomorphism in Science Fiction; Books reviews; Pre-emptive response to the Cyberpunk talk; New Women SF authors; Witches.

All meetings take place on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, at Ye Olde Blue Bell, market Place, Hull at 8pm. 50p per meeting, £2 per year waged, £1 per year unwaged.

[From a small club to a large one. They don't get much bigger than the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc. Who and what the LASFSians are is now described in excerpts from their introductory welcome leaflet].

Los Angeles Welcome

In 1977, the Society relocated to its current location in North Hollywood. Now housed in two buildings, the club has room for its library — one of the largest private special interest libraries in the country — as well as rooms for the computers, that now are an integral part of the club, and of course a big room — Freehafer Hall — for its weekly business meeting.

LASFS members represent a variety of special interests, some not obviously connected to Science Fiction and Fantasy. Many are comic-magazine fans, many love mystery stories. A small group of LASFSians started what became the "worldcon" of mystery fandom, BoucherCon. Within the society is even a small contingent of Western fans — but don't tell anybody.

The club meets every Thursday night (come hell, high water or holidays) in Freehafer Hall. A typical meeting night will find the other building (called 45J) opening between 6 and 7pm for socialising as the members and guests arrive. During this interval, the print and video libraries will open and the Registrar will begin to circulate, looking for new faces. At about 7.30pm, there is usually a pre-meeting programme, an old movie-serial chapter, or cartoons or preview of a new movie. Just after 8pm, the President calls the business meeting to order for reports from club committees and other announcements, during which period the Registrar can announce any guests. The actual meeting can last from one hour upwards, and is frequently followed by a

programme, like a speech or panel featuring well-known authors.

Meetings are always open to visitors, and guests are cordially welcomed. Life membership is a bargain at \$5 US. In fact, dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of Science Fiction and Fantasy, LASFS also provides a place for fans of all special and related interests to get together and have fun.

The current LASFS project is a recommended reading list for young people (sent, on request, by Galen A Tripp, c/o LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601-2309, USA, 52c postage to US, \$1.34 to UK). The list, specifically for "mature" children and young adults, includes Terry Bisson's *Talking Man*, Thomas M. Disch's *The Brave Little Toaster*, James P. Hogan's *Inherit the Stars*, E E Nesbit's *Five Children and It* and Jane Yolen's *The Devil's Arithmetic*.

Other Club News

NESFA (the New England Science Fiction Association). This club has also just assembled a preliminary list of essential Science Fiction and Fantasy. They've used the usual sources (like all Hugo and Nebula nominees, certain major anthologies and certain critical reviews) but would welcome comments and suggestions.

Queen's SF Society: June 8 very special preview. All meetings at Queen's Student Union, University Road, Belfast, 8pm. More details from Eugene Doherty at 110 North Parade, Belfast BT7 2GJ.

Peterborough SF Club: Following the success of the *Trek Dwarf* Convention, plans are underway for a series of one day mini-cons. The first, on June 26, will focus on *Red Dwarf*, and should include some rare footage tapes being shown. The second will be on August 28 and will be a *Star Trek* mini-con. The third is planned for November 27, but the theme has not yet been finalised. Membership of these should be £8. A second full *Trek Dwarf* convention is being mooted for the end of March next year to be held in Leicester again. The club meets every Wednesday at various venues around the City — on the first Wednesday of the month, there is a discussion evening at the Bluebell Inn, Dogthorpe and on the third Wednesday there is a social night held at the Poachers Bar at the Great Northern Hotel, opposite Peterborough's BR station. Details from Pete Cox, 58 Pennington, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough.

Information Phil Nichols

Four years ago, I had just taken over The Information Service. Susan Francis of Colchester was trying to figure out the titles of the books in a series by George Chesbro. I helped a little, but couldn't be specific enough for Susan, who, at long last, has now obtained the information she wanted. How she managed to sustain an interest for four years, I'll never know, and in fact it's irrelevant to what I meant to be telling you, which is this: she found a useful reference tome called

Adult Sequels compiled by Marilyn E Hicken. I've not come across this one before, but according to Susan 'it's got the essential 'what' link between a recommended 'who' and using Books in Print or a library catalogue to find out 'where'. So, if you are stuck tracking down sequels or books in a series, ask your friendly local librarian for *Adult Sequels*.

And now, if you're ready, it's question time. No prizes, unless you count the warm glow inside at the realisation that (a) you know more than most and (b) you'll be helping a fellow human.

Question 1 Any Christopher Stasheff fans reading this? No, that's not the question. The real question is: what are the titles in the *Warlock* series? It starts with *The Warlock in Spite of Himself*. But where does it go from there?

Question 2 Another wonderful "what the hell is this?" question. Read the following plot, and see if it rings any bells. Please?

... plot revolves around Humankind, in the near future, being forced to accept compulsory termination at around 40-odd years of age, and then having their brains stored until there becomes available a suitable 'body' to be transplanted into ... they have their brains transplanted into young babies ...

Question 3 And the same again. Recognise this? (Could it be *Healer* by F Paul Wilson?)

...SF character, who lands in his lifeboat upon a little known planet, in search of his enemies who crash-landed before him. Upon waling into an unexplored cave, he is set upon by an alien thingy who drops on his head, probably hoping to eat him ... alien turns out to be some sort of symbiote whose personality takes up residence in this bloke's head. After some time passes, the character finally realises the isn't going mad, but has effectively gained a new partner, who proceeds to make him into an immortal human, by genetically improving his physical self ... this character and his companion become some sort of psychic healer, travelling around the galaxy, healing the sick and insane, etc.

You may recall in the last *Matrix* that I asked for your help in recommending suppliers of hard-to-get books. Well, one respondent brought my attention to the service offered by Waterstone's. Those of us lucky enough to have a local branch, already know that Waterstone's are streets ahead of WH Smith and the like — I could easily spend all day in the Birmingham branch, taking the lift to the seventh floor and leisurely working my way down. I am told that Waterstone's are second to none in tracking down virtually any in-print book from anywhere in the world, and although I've never needed to use them for this, I can quite believe it's true.

What I certainly did not know is that Waterstone's also offer a postal booksearch service for out-of-print books which may be information worth having for those who don't live in a large town or city. If you'd like details of the service, ask in any branch, or contact Waterstone's Booksearch, 90/101 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LE.

My thanks to Ian Brooks for the tip-off.

So if you think that you recognise any of these peculiar stories above, do tell. Send your suggestions — and any questions you may have about anything to do with Science Fiction — to Phil Nichols, 17 Allsops Close, Rowley Regis, Warley, West Midlands B65 8JAB. I look forward to hearing from you.

WriteBack

Letters are invited on any subject — though it does help to have some Science Fiction relevance. Please write to Jenny and Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP, by the deadline

July 14 1993

What makes HG spin

From: Adrian Soames, The Croft, Cheney's Lane, Forncett St Mary, Norwich

[In *Matrix 105*, Barbara Davies reviewed *A War of the Worlds*, the tv series, with a couple of references to the film, and found it more true to *The Invaders* than to HG Wells, who thought it all up in the first place].

I am sorry to disillusion Barbara Davies, but that closing line on Paramount's 1953 production was not Hollywood Bible-thumping, but actually genuine Wells, very nearly the only surviving fragment of the original text. HG actually referred to the bacteria as "the humblest things God ... put on the Earth" rather than the "littliest things" of the film, but the lines are there in the book.

The quote comes from the chapter "Dead London", from that passage where the narrator stumbles upon the Martian redoubt atop Primrose Hill, only to find the all-conquering aliens slain by disease. It is here that Wells refers to the inspiration for the novel, the account from *Kings II* in the Bible of the destruction of the Assyrian army by plague as it besieged Jerusalem.

While Wells in the book attempts to retain his atheistic credentials by tortuous rationalisation, I was surprised that Ms Davies passed over the very profound religious sub-text of the tv series, which was a central theme, extending far beyond the superficial scriptural references in episode titles, such as "Resurrection", "A Multitude of Idols" and "The Last Supper". In some ways, the Stangis *War of the Worlds* almost seemed like a Jehovah Witness's parable.

The Mortaxan's emphasis on the trinity, their dependency on technological artifacts to an almost spiritual extent, and their hierarchical culture, all reflect Witnesses' views of the established churches, while the implicit concept of diabolical possession, the penchant for the aliens to take over low lives and sinners, as nuances such as the aliens in one episode failing to harness a laser, the "purest" form of light, while in another story Col. Ironside uses a laser gun to destroy an alien scout,

all serves to identify the Mortaxans with demonic forces, in classic Witness fashion.

On one point I do concur with Ms Davies, about old Herbert George spinning in the grave, but I think it might have less to do with the literary merits of the adaptation, and more with that footnote on the credits that says "War of the Worlds is a registered trademark of the Paramount Corporation". Now, that's a real Hollywood punchline.

On Book Reviews

[In *Matrix 105*, Hanna Worrall lamented the lack of reviews easily available. "Reviews are important and *Paperback Inferno*'s format with short and precise opinions and a few longer in-depth reviews was wonderful" she wrote "how else can I hit on another Iain Banks or Dan Simmons?"]

From: Jim England, Roselea, The Compa, Kinner, West Midlands DY7 6HT

I was very interested in Hanna Worrall's letter saying she feels "short-changed" by the great reduction in the number of Science Fiction reviews in *Vector* (which we were told would not occur). She adds that she has to search hard to find "good" Science Fiction. As a *Vector* reviewer for many years, I understand the feeling. In fact, in my last review, I announced that I was ceasing to review books for two reasons, one of which was that I was fed up with poring over stuff that was "neither science-fictional nor well-written".

This announcement was edited out of the review. (The other reason was that two reviews disappeared recently, but that is not quite so important).

Looking at the "Reviews of Hardcover and Paperback Originals" in the latest *Vector*, I see that, whilst most of the books are by males, most of the reviewers are females. (Do their reviews never get lost?)

There is also an interview of an author greatly concerned with vampires (mentioning *Arthur Mee's Children's Encyclopedia* — which never existed) and an article by a woman about the ghastly Anne McCaffrey, chiefly concerned with dragons, whose "achievements for women's Science Fiction have been many". Gord 'elp us! What is "women's Science Fiction"? Does it have to be stuff about dragons, vampires, witches, sword-wielding female warriors? No, my opinion of women is too high to enable me to believe this. But it does seem that a number of single-issue fanatics obsessed with "the gender question" are having an influence on the BSFA out of all proportion to their percentage in the membership.

From: Peter Tennant, 9 Henry Cross Close, Shipdham, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 7LQ

Like Hanna Worrall, my main interest within Science Fiction lies in reading the books, and I look to the BSFA for my news and reviews. I was afraid that the merger of *Paperback Inferno* and *Vector* would mean less coverage of new releases and subsequent events have seen my fears realised.

The new review columns may look good and be easy on the eye, but the coverage is far from comprehensive. Increasingly, there are books on the shop shelves that I haven't heard of, let alone seen reviews for. Some of this may be owing to my poor memory (and without an index I can't readily check if that's so) but it seems obvious that a lot of books, for whatever reason, are slipping through the reviews net.

What's to be done, then, given that a return of *Paperback Inferno* isn't an option at this time? I'd like to see a listing of all books received, similar to that in *Interzone*. Presumably these books are read and reviewed by someone, even if the reviews don't see print, so perhaps the listing could be accompanied by marks out of ten or a brief comment (as with the reviewer's choices in the latest issue of *Vector*). Certainly, I hope something can be done, as like Hanna I feel short-changed by the new set up.

Psst! Wanna Buy Some Feelethy Ashtrays?

It appears that the fanatical anti-smoker Ken Lake has resumed smoking (in Micronesia, from where he sends a postcard of Bikini with the message "I felt you would appreciate the reminder of how Science Fiction encouraged the scientists to do research which created the lasting memorial to 'science harnessed for the good of mankind'"). The editorial in *Matrix 105* considered smoking and reaction there came swift].

From: Philip Muldowney, Golden Harvest, Tamerton Foliot Road, Plymouth

As an ex-cigar smoker of six months, with a wife murdering me with giving up cigarettes over the past ten weeks, I feel on the subject! There is an interesting aspect here, that Science Fiction has little touched on. Indeed, it was not so long ago, when it was quite common for the SF hero of several centuries hence to be relaxing with a pipe or cigarette. Shades of Poul Anderson. It is quite revealing how little lack of foresight Science Fiction writers have had in how the future will change the most personal of our habits. Would anybody care to hazard a scenario where smoking is still popular a hundred years in the future? Given present day social attitudes towards it in Western society? Of course, that is only in Western society. Cigarette consumption is going up in the Third World, as a sign of growing affluence. The moral maze as regards smoking is totally confused. They make a great play of banning public smoking in France, yet at the same time cigarettes in France are very much cheaper than in this country. Would that have anything to do with cigarette making being a state monopoly in France?

The most anti-smoking society — or at least the one that makes the most noise about it — is the United States of America. There again, cigs are comparatively cheap. Indeed, to stay in competition, Marlboro has just been reduced by a substantial amount. One could go on and on and on with arguments. Maybe it is because nicotine is just as addictive as heroin, that society exhibits the complete gamut of hypocrisy when dealing with it?

From: John Madracki, 17 Goldrill Ave, Brightmet, Bolton, Lancs. BL2 5NJ

It was with some disquiet that I read of the Isle of Wight's proposal to become a totally smoke-free zone by the end of the decade. Regardless of the success, or failure, of this project, it is inevitable that many mainland regions will follow suit. But to what extent will the drastic measures, required to achieve these aims, be taken? It is already forbidden to light up on public transport, in shops and in most cafés, which sounds reasonable enough, but it was only the thin end of the wedge. I'm sure that many non-smokers take great comfort from knowing that any pleasure the hapless nicotine may derive from going out for a meal, or a trip to the theatre, is ruined by their not being able to enjoy a cigarette as well; while denying them access to a smoking area when they have to visit a doctor or dentist, and are at their most stressed, was a malicious stroke of genius.

The media has long led an unrelenting assault on the tobacco fiend: ubiquitous soap-operas present a fairy-tale world where smoking is as common as leprosy, and is regarded as much the same, while in dramas proper, the only people who are seen to smoke are tarts, crooks and journalists. Forget the black hats and suede shoes, you can now immediately spot the baddies by their indulgence in this wicked habit. More serious, though, is the propaganda posing as news or documentary programmes. By highlighting selected instances, no matter how dubious their source or how atypical they would prove to be, the overall picture can easily be shaped to conform to any pre-determined trend. (This technique was used to great effect in the scandalous misrepresentation of the threat of AIDS to this country, and it is only now that the scam is slowly being exposed).

Not content with making smoking a diabolic vice and abstinence from it a beatific virtue, the media has now elevated anti-smoking to the status of a heroic crusade. A celebrated newscaster recently boasted that when his octogenarian mother came to visit, he always made her stand in the garden if she wanted to smoke. (Oh! How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is . . .) But then, the most popular bugbear in this issue is 'passive smoking'. Breathing in someone else's smoke may be unpleasant and if prolonged it can be detrimental to a few but, for most people, occasional contact with a fuming cigarette is hardly life-threatening, although, to judge by the hysterical reactions of some, one could be forgiven for thinking that the unfortunate victim had contracted, on the spot, not only cancer of the lung but also a whole host of other maladies, ranging from bunions to baldness. Of course, it is an undeniable fact that even the faintest wisp of cigarette smoke will always seek out the nearest non-smoker within a radius of three miles, and home in on them like a Cruise missile, but this is only a cause of annoyance rather than physical harm.

And what happens when smoking in public is completely abolished? Will the next stage be a ban on smoking in private? Will we see the compulsory installation of ultra-sensitive smoke detectors in every home? After all, they could easily be monitored and linked to a penalty system. (Lose 6 points and you lose your wife. Lose 12 and they

take away your car. 18 and your house is repossessed).

Smokers are already prevented from being adoptive parents, but what of those with natural offspring? Surely, it is only logical that they be deemed equally unfit, on the same grounds, and that their children be removed and placed in the care of the local authority.

As for a "No Smoking Day", I fail to see the point. What good can come of it? All it does is bolster the pious smugness of those who don't smoke and pile even more pressure on those who do, making them reach for another cigarette. It wouldn't be so bad if other aspects of anti-social behaviour were also addressed. Maybe we could have a "No Drink/Driving Day" or a "No Domestic Violence Day" — or would they come too close to encroaching on someone's personal freedom?

Help wanted

From: Stephen Kruger, State Attorney, Koror State Government, PO Box 116, Koror, Palau 96940

I am working on a project of editing a Science Fiction short story anthology, the theme of which is law. Has anyone information about the state of the publishing world? It may well be that the financial mood among publishers has lightened, and there is interest once again in books other than blockbusters.

The format of my proposed anthology, will be a mixture of old and new. Has anyone an unpublished story which I should consider? One stumbling block to publication has been the lack of recognised contemporary authors among the names in the index. Without a few quality names, I can't get a publisher's interest, let alone commitment. Without a commitment, I can't get good writers interested in the project. Help!

Otherwise, life goes on here in Palau, as it does everywhere. The place is unique politically, because it is the last UN trust territory. There is a measure of autonomy, so Palau operates under two governments — the United States as trustee and the Republic of Palau as the local authority.

I work as the State Attorney for one of the 16 states of Palau. The legal system is similar to that of the United States, as one might expect. Social relationships are based on clans: the system is influential, though traditional values have taken a beating here as they have in the rest of the world. The infrastructure is on the whole of a second-world level. The economy has third-world characteristics, such as high foreign debt, government as the major employer, and tourism as the main industry. Palauans are not unlike people everywhere, so the country has its share of people-generated problems. The imagery of Gauguin is inappropriate, in part because the world has changed so much, and in part because of human aspirations. The visitor who comes here seeking the simple life will find that Palauans are seeking the benefits of technology.

Ms vs Mr

[The on-going debate over sexist language rumbles on, tentatively concluding with this letter. If anyone wants to continue the discussion, it will have to be with something witty or sophisticated. Otherwise this will be The Last Word on the matter].

From: Pam Baddeley

Some sort of gremlin seems to have hit my letter in *Matrix 104*; I was proposing "humanity" as an alternative to "mankind", not "humankind" because of the baggage "mankind" carries and the various difficulties people have with it. Hopefully, that resolves Terry Jeeves' puzzle. I think he misses the point about "Ms" though: it's not a "paysafe" alternative to Miss/Mrs until you know a woman's marital status, it is a perfectly valid honorific for women in the same way that Mr is for men. No doubt I'll be accused of being puffed and ultra-sensitive by John Madracki, which is ironic considering the laid back intention of my letter in *Matrix 104*. As I said then, I'm surprised to see so much vitriol being banded about. Obviously John is unable to appreciate that there's an alternative explanation for why people responded to his letter — not so much a lack of humour on their part, more like his letter just wasn't funny. (At least, according to the majority taste — that's the trouble with humour, it's so subjective).

Changing the subject to the Skywatching column, I'm currently grinding my molars since reading and/or hearing recently that not only is BSkyB showing *Deep Space 9* in the autumn, they are also screening *Star Trek: The Next Generation* from this week! I am seriously pissed off with the BBC.

Slovenia Affairs

From: Marjan Skvarca via Maja Fajdiga, Slovenia

Hi, Maja Fajdiga informed me about the BSFA interest of writers and SF readers in "former Yugoslavia". I'll try to describe some events.

June 26 is the Day of Slovenian Independence. That day in the year of 1991 was the day when Serbian MIGs had taken some low-altitude flights over Slovenian sky and Serbian T-84 tanks had tried to take a trip against Slovenian western and northern borders. They had been stopped in few days by Slovenian police units and by Territorial Defence units. We Slovenians don't like the usual Western Europe label "former Yugoslavian republic" for our country. In the front of Crystal Palace, New York, USA, there is the Slovenian flag, which means Slovenia is the member of UN as one of the aims after in 24 December 1990 plebiscite decision by 85% of voters.

In the year of 1991, I was a member of the BSFA and in *Matrix* my letter was published. I've published the fanzine named *Blodnjak* with my friend Bojan Meserko's help. We've published 12 volumes of fanzine and we've found some hopeful

young Slovenian SF writers. SF fandom in Slovenia reached a peak level in the year of 1983. Since then, fandom almost disintegrated. Money was always the main problem in creating SF fandom — in the "good old times" it was dispatched by political line — but now modern Slovenian society doesn't allow money to be thrown away. Slovenian Cultural Ministry has got a miserly amount of financial funds in this year.

Last autumn we've done a very important thing for Slovenian fandom — we've published the anthology entitled *Blodnjak* (translated as *SF Maze*) of 17 Slovenian short stories. We've also established the private publishing firm called Kiki-Keram, which specialises in publishing Science Fiction and Fantasy. This March, we published another anthology, *Blodnjak 2*. In this anthology, there are six short stories, three Slovenian, one each Croatian, American and English. We've translated Michael Bishop's novella "Palely Loitering". Mr Bishop was amused for his novella to be published in such an "exotic" language as Slovenian is for an American (spoken only by about two million people). We couldn't get Mr Priest's address, but only his agent's in Germany (GPA Munchen).

Now we are working on a third book, a collection of the short stories of Miha Remec, who is the SF writer of the older generation. This was due to be published at the end of May.

SF in Slovenia is "trivial" literature. This is the consequence of "good old" soc-realistic legacy, which couldn't stand bourgeois elements in any cultural branch (for Heaven's sake — we all were workers and therefore we were equal. In Orwell's *Animal Farm*, there was a graffiti on the wall which said "All animals are equal". Pigs modified this graffiti a little bit — you-know-how. I also like Ursula K LeGuin's novel *The Dispossessed*, in which she says "we all can be equal only in case to possess nothing"). Though here, soc-realism was not so strong as it was in the eastern part of the former YU (where an ordinary expert graduated couldn't get a job without joining into Communist Association), people still live with the old patterns of thinking.

And there is another thing which is characteristic for Slovenian SF fandom — the majority of readers is still convinced that Slovenian SF short stories are not good enough. We were thinking to publish a Slovenian author with an English name — we probably could sell thousands of books. Until they find out the fake.

We think the Slovenian SF short story is good enough to enjoy reading it. The main problem occurs when we want to compare it with the American (or British) SF short story. Bojan Meserko sent his own story to *Interzone* a few years ago, but he was refused for the miserable translation. The idea was otherwise good, said the editors' letter.

The anthology of 17 Slovenian SF short stories is on a level of satisfactory quality. I can only describe the best of them (are there any British people who speak Slovene?) The best one is written in a language which was used in the years of 1891 by author Zlatko Naglic. It talks about

time-travelling into the future. A young couple from the year 1891 finds the way of time-travelling into the future (usually time-travelling goes from the present into the past). There's another serious story about a policeman, which is written in quasi-cyberpunk manner by Rok Blekous. There are also some Fantasy very short stories, written in almost *Sword & Sorcery* manner. Or some of them in pure Fantasy manner.

The most interesting short story was written by Viljem Vidmar. The head figure goes mad at the end of the story and he starts crumpling the paper. Author wanted for the last page of his story in the book to be manually crumpled. The books looks unusual, but it is original. Some readers refused to buy it for they are used to read common (smooth) pages. But I think SF is the literary area where originality is the most expected.

We also keep a kind of fandom on AdriaNet, a BBS in Slovenia. I've tried some different ways to make active these BBS fans, but I'm disappointed because a lot of them promise they'll write SF, but nobody did. Even when I've desperately sent the message "if you send me your address, you'll get a SF book" only 30 people sent their addresses. People are not interested in buying books, the standard is still too low. People live a little bit easier than they used to in "former" Yugoslavia — the monthly inflation doesn't exceed 3% vs. 200% or more in "former" YU — but it will take a few years to get "normal" circumstances. In Croatia, we are co-operating with the firm Bakal, which publishes the Croatian magazine, *Futura*. We represent them in Slovenia and I think this is the only connection between us. In Serbia, there used to exist a very strong fandom, but it's almost impossible to co-operate with them — there are a lot of promises and a minority of realised things. We've also tried to represent one Serbian publisher in Slovenia, but after a certain time found him unable to co-operate on a professional level. I don't have any particular news from Croatia. My friend Bojan Meserko knows Rastislav Durman [who was a Guest of Honour at Xasm in Leeds about a year ago] and he says Durman doesn't write anymore.

LETS explained

From: Judith Hanna, 5A Frinton Road, London N15 6NH

[The fanzine review in *Matrix 105* commented on the LETS system which Judith Hanna used as an example in her article on markets in the last issue of *FTT*. She now writes to clarify a couple of points].

Basically a LETS system, as your reviewer says, involves a group of people agreeing to trade in notional credit units, with an administrator or co-ordinator keeping track of their balances. As your review says, having a good co-ordinator is crucial if the scheme is to work. However, the co-ordinator merely produces contact lists of who can offer what goods and services within the system, and logs transactions. They do not fix prices. Prices are agreed by the buyer and seller between them, in classic free-market style. There is no need for a "communal agreement" setting prices.

Indeed, in that respect, the small-scale local contact nature of LETS is very much more a free-market than the money economy. Prices in high street shops seem mostly to be fixed not in terms of local supply and demand, but to meet the overheads demanded by head offices. Likewise, real estate rents are fixed not in terms of what those wanting to run a local business can pay, but to meet bank rates. All these factors produce distortions of the local free market. LETS systems exist to decouple transactions in locally produced goods and skills from those distortions. More free-market than Thatcher.

"If only they could work" says your reviewer. When I wrote, there were about 35 schemes running in the UK; the current count is 70. In Australia, government assistance of some form is apparently now available to help communities set up these schemes. One element of it is a computer database tailored for LETS record-keeping. I'm not sure of the rest. LETS schemes are also common in Canada (where they were invented in the 1960s) and in New Zealand.

Equally, they can break down. One factor, obviously enough, is that the administrator has to be able to stop any member milking the system, building up debts, without putting back goods and services in exchange. A credit limit is, of course, the answer. And people have been thrown out of LETS schemes for treating them as free rides. It echoes a problem frequent enough in the money economy: same behaviour, same trouble. Only the money economy can't as easily exercise the simply community based answer of sending the sinner to Coventry. In the UK and New Zealand, at least, national LETS newsletters are being produced, to keep members of different schemes informed about useful tricks, and problems.

Far from having to stay a fiction then, LETS schemes are a Science Fictional sort of idea which has become a growing reality. What is perhaps surprising is that the quiet small-scale revolution they embody has spread so quietly.

Fire and Hemlock

[It seemed appropriate to put the fanzine column immediately after Judith's letter: though if readers wish to pursue the subjects of LETS and their viability, they should write directly to Judith at the address given above.]

The Bleary Eyes — The Early Years: This has just been published by Ken Cheslin of the Guinea Pig Press (10 Coney Green, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 1LA). In the Introduction, John Berry explains how it all came about: "Thirty seven years ago, Arthur Thomson (ATOM) and myself inaugurated a new publishing medium for the Science Fiction organisation to enable us to write about and draw humorously and satirically about the characters and situations pertaining to Science Fiction readers and writers who communicated via fanzines. Consequently, between 1956 and 1961, we published seventeen issues of *Retribution*, and using the two bumbling characters of Goon Bleary and Art as the focal points, we were able to include a considerable number of

esoteric references regarding fans and fandom in the stories we wrote and illustrated.

"When I wrote the stories, I was a young man just over thirty years of age, thoroughly imbued with the incredibly fanish atmosphere pertaining in Belfast, thus enabling ATOM and myself to become uninhibited chroniclers of exaggerated circumstances via the typewriter and stylo".

James White, Walt Willis, John Berry himself, VinC Clarke can be found in these pages: it's living fanzine history, besides being a pretty superb read.

A taster from the upcoming Bath SF fanzine gives Simon Bisson questioning whether Science Fiction is dead. He concludes that:

"From where I sit there still is subversion and exploration out there on the shelves, there is relevance, there is literature.

"Everywhere I look, the signposts to the future, and the present, of written SF are clear, printed on the pages of magazines, in the indices of anthologies. They are there in the reference books, in the discussions of SF groups around the country. Just keep an ear to the ground, and you'll find your way through the maze of modern publishing, and you'll see that SF isn't dead. Who knows, maybe the next book you'll pick up is that classic you've always been looking for..."

Select a new Theme

When three fanzine editors get together on a public holiday, when there's only banal mush on television and when they take a break from eating and chatting, it's reasonable to assume that their thoughts will turn to fanzine production. Or at least, that's what happened to Andy Hooper and Jerry Kaufman and Stu Shiffman. It's a little odd to read reactions to a Seattle Christmas in an English high summer, but the writing counterpoints and almost supersedes, the seasonal greetings. Because they were looking over each other's shoulders when word processing, the result has more in-jokes than strictly necessary: but the writing has a vitality rare in current fanzine writing. The three writers have set writing sparks spinning, though Andy Hooper's "The Richest Fan in Town" should get a few people thinking the sort of "What if" thoughts which regularly accompany insecurity. *It's a Wonderful Ish* has the common thread of a reaction to Christmas and the articles mesh together well.

One way to have full control over the fanzine theme is to write the whole lot. That's the option taken by John Madracki in *The Cancer Chronicles*. It's a slim fanzine with a small circulation and its underlying theme is recollection for the late '60s, when he left travelling, finally camping in "Horrid" Hastings when he saw a flying saucer. Unfortunately, he doesn't believe in Flying Saucers, which makes the piece all the more effective as he struggles with his feelings of disbelief. Some of the illustrations echo the '60s feel; anyone remember the Ho Chi Min chant?

Jeanne Gomoll twists both these approaches in *Whimsy* as she combines family memories with the schedule of her renewed interest in fandom. The passages reinforce each thread as Jeanne details her growing involvement with the Tiptree Award and local conventions alternating with the trip to San Francisco to collect a walnut cabinet, made by her dead brother. It's superb writing, and repays several readings, especially the very last article when she's in London, feeling herself to be "alien". It a way, it was the people, the Londoners, who seemed out of place. "Anyone of them, alone, walking down a Madison street, would draw attention, although I couldn't have pointed out any specific style of clothing or mannerism that communicated that sense of difference to me" writes Jeanne "I had to keep reminding myself that I was the eccentric one, that all these people were at home, and looked and acted entirely normal for the place". Weird feeling.

To get a comprehensive view on one particular theme really needs several contributors. This lays a huge and sensitive burden on the editor since it is unrealistic to expect some ten people to simultaneously write excellent articles on variations on one particular subject. Thus the editor has to match up subject and contributor and face the inevitable that the result can only be described as a lucky dip. That can be exactly what the editor wants: and normally there is one article which stands out in readers' memories, that is the article which will provoke a mountain of response and cries to get the next issue out as soon as possible.

Tony Berry found this out about four years ago when he edited an issue of his *Eyeballs* in the Sky using obsession as a theme. Two people wrote independently about their cravings for buying, but not necessarily wearing, shoes, but the biggest response was to Martin Tudor's article on his fight against alcoholism. The current issue examines aspects of dreams and illusions and oscillates between the illusions of how life could be and the more pragmatic use of dreams as a tool to solve mundane ambitions. On the illusions side, Helena Bowles plans future journeys where "I will see sunrise over the pyramids and not as a tourist who simply skims the surface of the land, never knowing it or its inhabitants. There may be danger, probably little. My hair will grow long with grey streaks, dull with wind and sun" while Tony, the SF reader, laments the loss of a future promised by comics like *Eagle* and *TV21*. He'd envisaged men on Mars, videophone communication, helijets, marine farming, even a wall sized 3D television in every home. And so he puts the blame for all this lacking on the government, writing "As long as they can only see as far as the next election, we'll be held back. They should read more SF ... the government in this country doesn't give a shit about the future, but what can you expect from people who don't know the difference between subsidy and investment?" On the positive side, though, Alan Dorey recalls his dreams, collages of childhood memories, which he couldn't explain, but which he cherished, and Anne Gaj suggests using dreams as rehearsals for real life: "that feeling of being able to defeat your enemy empowers your subconscious so that you at least feel like you can tackle the real-life scenario not hopelessly, like you did yesterday, but in a new and powerful fashion".

Just as Martin Tudor sometimes writes for Tony's fanzine, so Tony writes for Martin's fanzine, *Empties*. Martin's inspiration to publish another issue after a four year gap came partly to support his friend Tony's nomination for the TAFF race to San Francisco and partly because he, Martin, realised that he is unlikely to be attending many conventions this year. He is therefore in a suitable frame of mind to consider Pet Hates and Irritations. However, while Tony's fanzine is gently optimistic, *Empties* is bitter. Tony riles against road hogs and temperamental machines; Helena Bowles spits written venom at the stereotypes of nurses, Debbie Kerr gives a few promising moans about working in a hospice, then cuts her best anecdote — the aftermath of a burst water main which swept away a car or two and caused extensive flood damage — tantalisingly short. But the gem of the fanzine comes from Bernie Evans, who introduces her feelings about public transport before getting to the meat of the article: feelings about her job. It makes uncomfortable reading. Her resentfulness about the injustice of the management practically leaps out of the page to strangle the reader. Bernie is stuck in a job which would be interesting and stimulating if only the management weren't continually hassling her to be sociable in a corporate way and ethically correct (as defined, of course, by 'The Management'). She's partially solved her problem by having an absorbing hobby outside work, doing registration for the Mexican, Novacon and Intersection conventions plus writing fanzine reviews for the news magazine *Critical Wave* and co-ordinating book reviews for the regular Brum group newsletter.

That article of Bernie Evans shows both the weakness and the strength of the theme approach. The editor can't be too precise in commissioning article, though potential contributors may feel confused by the sheer potential breadth of the subject, and one article, like Bernie's here or Martin Tudor's on alcoholism in *Eyeballs in the Sky*, may dwarf the rest and distort the treatment of, and reaction to, the given theme. And yet, in a more general fanzine, the editor's intent may be so subtle as to be invisible, giving the reader a scattered jumble of assorted pieces, random conversational hooks like feathered flies to attract fish with no obvious goal for readers to react to. With a theme fanzine, there is at least a stated starting point to use when responding. Letters might slant off on a tangent thereafter, but the common starting point can give a cohesive and satisfying letter column, one, perhaps, which might also suggest possible theme subjects for future issues.

It's a Wonderful Ish (Andy Hooper & Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave N 103, Seattle, WA 98103) *The Cancer Chronicles* 2 (John Madracki, 17 Goldrill Ave, Bolton, Lancs. BL2 5NJ)

Whimsey 7 (Jeanne Gomoll, 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704, USA)

Eyeballs in the Sky 7 (Tony Berry, 55 Seymour Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 4EP)

Empties 11 (Martin Tudor, 845 Alum Rock Road, Ward End, Birmingham B8 2AG)

Seventeen for the Road

The Kuarley Kneus (Henry L and Letha R Welch, 5538 N Shasta Drive, Glendale, WI 53209-4925, USA). Reviews and lots of reactions on smoking, along with moans that eating should not be allowed at computer terminals whereas smoking was: in those days when smoking was allowed in office buildings. San Francisco has also passed an ordinance prohibiting expensive perfume in public meetings. If you're interested.

Dreamgirl (BMZinet, London WC1N 3NG). A fanzine for readers of gender fantasy. The readers and contributors remain masked; in their anonymity they can write witty pieces with twists of varying degrees of sharpness. Intriguing.

Spent Brass (Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave, N #103, Seattle, WA 98103, USA). Fanzine reviews and letters mostly: a poem which makes duplicators sound interesting.

Reading Matters (£3/issue, £1 electronic copy from Tibs, 1/L, 30 Falkland Street, Glasgow G12 9QY). The main subjects discussed here include computers and typesetting, names and the importance of getting them right, candyfloss and sentimentality, sex in space and elsewhere with short sections on Lois McMaster Bujold, C J Cherryh, cyberpunk, Guy Gavriel Kay and Umberto Eco. Subjects wax and wane, as readers react to other readers' comments; fascinating read (and substantial SF content) — well worth reading.

Radio Free Thukandra 31: (Marty Helgesen, 11 Lawrence Avenue, Malverne, NY 11565-1406, USA). Edited and published for Christian fandom, it starts with a James White letter discussing the ethics of a confessor's seal, as in *The Silent Stars Go By*. Lots of long letters: 72 pages in all.

The Metaphysical Review 18 (\$25 in Australia, \$25 (US) overseas edited by Bruce Gillespie, published by Gillespie and Cochrane Pty Ltd, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia). After a couple of book reviews, it's party time with vivacious thumb nail descriptions of the Guests, a round the world travelogue which is far more interesting than it might sound. John Bangsund gives an account of the Adelaide Festival of Arts followed by a description of how he became an editor. Interesting.

Moving Finger 10 (Dave Bell, Church Farm, North Kelsey, Lincoln LN7 6EQ). "The people who need fanzines are the people who don't go to conventions". Dave is strongly in favour of communication and this fanzine, though brief, is a important step. "The reason we read SF" he writes "is because no other literary form so consistently pays attention to ideas. Especially the most powerful idea of all; that the world is going to be different tomorrow".

Gottedammerung (Mark McCann, James McKee and Tommy Ferguson, 16 Wellesley Avenue, Belfast BT9 6DG). Slick publication, by far the best article by Joe McNally, who finds himself, to his horror, threatening force to deter force. "I hate to admit it" he concludes ruefully "but violence worked". There's a readers' survey, which says

quite a lot about the attitudes of the question setters. In question 5, for example, the situation is posed that after a "thorough" analysis of R A Heinlein's novels and short stories, one should reach the conclusion that:

- *a) the man did for SF what Stalin did for Marxist-Leninism.
- b) I can rest easy in the knowledge that I am not alone in having spunky nipples, or
- c) he took gadget-fixated SF and skillfully crafted it to produce people-populated stories with slick plot lines and, on the whole, fairly believable and interesting sketches of the future*.

The Frozen Frog (Ben Girard, 1016 Guillaume-Boisset, Cap-Rouge, Quebec, Canada G1Y 1Y9). Varied letter column, reviews; the mixture as usual, but Ben gives it a new twist, the sort of zest an olive gives to a Dry Martini.

The Frozen Frog



DASFax (Denver Area Science Fiction Association, c/p Fred Cleaver, 153 W Ellsworth Ave, Denver, CO 80223-1623, USA). Book and record reviews with club news; the latest club project is developing programs for children of members, with an eye to the future, perhaps.

Opuntia 11.5 (Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2ET). Dale alternates issues between reviews and serious and constructive articles: this one has personal thoughts on Calgary and winter followed by a selection of letters where information clashes with trivia.

Science Fiction Notizen (Kurt S Denkena, Postfach 75 03 31, 2820 Bremen 70, Germany). Serious reviews of recent German releases: interesting for German language readers.

The Texas SF Inquirer 49 (Alexander R Slate, 8603 Shadow Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78239, USA). There's a couple of articles on Armadillo Con, one concentrating on the art perspective. Carol Stepp has more trivia, for example that 42 is

Japanese is something similar to the verb "to die" — consequently the Japan Auto Federation have banned that particular number from any racing vehicle.

Folly 18: (Arnie Katz, 330 S Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107, USA). Arnie seems to have revitalised Las Vegas fandom, with fanzines like this one, which concentrates on the Florida Worldcon last autumn. It's bright and stimulating, lots of details, it gives an excellent impression of the excitement of a Worldcon.

Ethel the Aardvark 46: (Melbourne Science Fiction Club Inc., PO Box 212, Melbourne, Victoria 3005, Australia). Reviews, fiction, a snippet about Terry Pratchett who was, at the time of publishing, about to visit Australia (he says "I've made a lot of money because I read books when I was young"), exciting and stimulating.

Trappdoor: (Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442, USA). Memories of Isaac Asimov, fragments of memory and lots of letters. Lots of reading here.

OverSpace: (Sean Friend, 25 Sheldon Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 0BP). Some fiction, some poetry, all hard SF, but an evocative one from Steve Sneyd, attractive art.

Another Role

Leigh Barlow

Out of all the things that people do to escape the real world, role playing is perhaps one of the most scorned and misunderstood. The majority of the general public will quite willingly accept that others will run around and shoot their friends with guns that fire paint, or that a book can be so exciting and consuming that it can have the reader on the edge on their seat and oblivious to their surroundings. Mention role playing, however, and people's reactions are usually something along the lines of: *Oh, that Dungeons and Dragons stuff*. What most people — and some role players — fail to realise is that RPGs (Role Playing Games) are not limited to Elves and Dwarves running around in a Tolkien-like world.

Role players are not forced to be fantasy characters going on quests for some magical item. A player can be anything from a normal human, or magician to an alien from *Star Wars*, or a god with unimaginable powers over everyone and everything. Nor are the worlds that a character can adventure in all fantasy ones. If epic fantasy is what a player wants, then there is, of course, the world of Tolkien or the many *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* worlds. But that is only the tip of the iceberg, for there are many different places where a character can be taken, and surprisingly enough there are a lot of words readers have already travelled in with their favourite hero or heroine. Fight in the land of Michael Moorcock's *Erlin* with the *Stormbringer* system, or ride with King Arthur and his knights in *Pendragon*. Perhaps Philip José Farmer's *River World* is more appealing, or having watched *The Prisoner* you have an urge to put yourself in the strange and surreal Village.

Starting from next issue, I hope to bring you news and reviews of RPGs, with the aim of not only interesting current gamers, but also those who have never role played before. If any wishes to see certain games or items included, please let me know; feedback is always appreciated. Contact me, Leigh Barlow, at 101 Darlton Drive, Arnold, Notts NG5 7LX.

The Periodic Table

ConFabulation is the name of the 1995 Eastercon, which will be held at the Britannia International Hotel in London's Docklands (already successfully used for Unification 93 this Easter). The Guests of Honour are Lois McMaster Bujold and Bob Shaw, with Roger Robinson as Fan Guest of Honour. The committee consists of Alison Scott, Mike Scott, Steve Davies, Guila de Cesare and Sue Mason who worked together on the film convention, *Foreplay*. More details from 3 York Street, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 9QH. Their only major theme will be fun.

The other large convention at Easter was held in Jersey, from where one roving reporter gives his impressions:

Helicon

Robert Sneddon

My first sight on arriving at the Hotel de France was of forty-odd (and when I say odd, I mean odd) Rumanians all wearing strange grey felt hats. Somehow, I knew this wasn't going to be your average Eastercon, and it wasn't. The Eurocon brought a lot of people not usually seen in the Eastercon bars; hints were dropped that it would be your fanish duty to buy them a drink. The Russians and Ukrainians were in the dealer's room selling off their country's heritage — Star Trek Russian dolls, KGB membership cards, Soviet space memorabilia etc. although they hadn't quite got the idea of capitalism; one of them was handing out free money (worthless roubles unfortunately).

The programming was kept deliberately light, with large schmoozing gaps between watchable items. Your reporter schmoozed with the best. The food was good and the beer prices reasonable — the chocolate shop did a roaring trade. Even with prior warning they nearly ran out of the 5kg bars — a total of 238 were sold, along with massive quantities of champagne truffles and liqueur chocolates. It was only after the con it was realised that the shop also had 10kg sacks of confectioner's feedstock to hand. "I didn't think anybody would want any of those," said the lady behind the counter.

The most memorable program item seen was on censorship — a Romanian expert explained how he had been conditioned by the system into censoring his writers himself, so that he could get by with a minimum of rewriting. The one anthology that did slip through the censorship net sold out an edition of 100,000 in a couple of days, before it could be recalled and pulped by the authorities.

This wasn't your average Eastercon, and some old buffer types weren't happy with the strangers in out midst. The rest of us had a different time. It has caused a lot of British interest in European cons and fandom, and the Eastern Europeans certainly enjoyed their taste of Western fanish life. Roll on the next one.

Contour Mapping

Dangercon (July 24, Ruskin House, Coombe Road, Croydon, £3 registration from Robert Newman, 37 Keens Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1AH) This will feature 12 hours of videos, quizzes, live action role-playing and cheap bar with real ale. Although the videos are juvenile (*Captain Pugwash*, *Noggin the Nog*, *Magic Roundabout*, etc.), the con is only open to adults.

Lunicon: (July 30-August 1, Leeds University, £12 membership from PO Box 157, Leeds LS1 1UH). Guests of Honour are Roger Zelazny, Michael Scott Rohan and Colin Greenland with a 24 hour video programme. Half price membership for students.

Excalibur 93: (August 13-15, Canterbury University, Kent, details from Mary Jupp, 19 Chester Avenue, Bethersden, near Ashford, Kent TN26 3BN). A convention for people interested in Blakes 7, *Garrisons*, *Gorillas*, *Robin of Sherwood* and *Young Riders*.

Lightspeed 1993: (September 17-19, Hilton International, Leeds, Registration £20 from 16 Bramwell Street, Eastwood, Rotherham S65 1RZ). The 1st British Star Trek: *The Next Generation* convention with videos, guest talks, disco, theme party.

VoCon (October 1-3, The Tollgate Hotel, Gravesend, £18 membership from 17 Guildford Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 3LS). People of Earth, your attention please! If you attend VoCon, there may be a reprieve for your apathetic little planet ... a *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* convention, featuring the Guide and Other Works of Douglas Adams.

Con Sur II: The Argentine Club of Science Fiction and Fantasy, proudly announces Con Sur II (Buenos Aires, 10-16 October 1993). The leit motif of this con will be the post-modernity of Science Fiction. Two Guests of Honour are scheduled, authors pertaining to the cyberpunk movement, William Gibson and Bruce Sterling.

Octocun 93 (October 30-31, Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, £15 membership from 20 Newgrove Avenue, Sandymount, Dublin 4). Storm Constantine is the Guest of Honour, with special comics guest Steve Dillon and Michael Carroll, Diane Duane, Katherine Kurtz, Morgan Llwyn, Anne McCaffrey, Scott McMillan, Peter Morwood, Robert Rankin, Michael Scott, Kellie Strom, Stephen Walsh and James White as other Guests.

ArmadaCon V (November 13-15, Astor Hotel, Plymouth). Guests to include Danny John-Jules, Bob Shaw, Martin Bower, Mike Jefferies, £20 registration, reduced rates for students, details

from 4 Gleneagle Avenue, Mannamead, Plymouth PL3 5HL).

Con-Yak: (November 26-28, hotel at the outskirts of Amsterdam, £24 membership, details from Richard Vermaas, James Wattstraat 13, 1097 DJ Amsterdam, The Netherlands). The Dutch Guest of Honour is Tnoke Dragt, with Annemarie van Ewijk as Fan Guest of Honour. The International Guest of Honour will be announced nearer the time. The con will be a comfortable mix of programming and relaxation, with programming part Dutch and part English.

Sou'Wester (Easter weekend 1994, Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, Guests of Honour Neil Gaiman, Diane Duane, Peter Morwood and Barbara Hambly, £25 attending membership, details from 3 West Shrubbery, Redland, Bristol BS6 6SZ). The twin themes will be Travel and Change, in all their various forms. Rhodri James explains, in the latest Progress Report: "What has happened to the American and Russian space programmes, for example? Why are skiffy and futurological projections so rarely accurate? What bizarre travel films can the projectionists find?"

THE 1994 EASTERCON



Postponed Worldcon Bid: Boston in '98 is now Boston in 2001

The American Political Science Association have booked the main hotels for the Labor Day weekend, thus taking up hotel space which Boston had required. Hence the postponement.

AD3: The Con that bit its tongue

Harry Payne and Omega

The annual Sheffield anime con was held for the second year running at the Rutland Hotel, Sheffield this April. This year marked the emergence of anime out of its media sub-category and its first tentative steps into mainstream fandom, with some very familiar names and faces which we certainly

didn't expect to see there. Perhaps the lack of an official video programme at Helicon the previous week had left some needs unfulfilled?

AD3 also marked the rite of passage of anime fandom into that uncomfortable world of being drawn to the attention of the forces of law and order. Those of you who saw Part 1 of *Wandering Kid* at Eastcon will not need telling that certain aspects of the genre are, shall we say, somewhat unsuitable for those of a nervous disposition. A few examples of this were sent to one of the con attendees from Japan, the week prior to AD3, and with a certain inevitability the package was opened by Customs. In the normal course of events the offending articles would simply have been confiscated and destroyed, but included in the package was a note which gave the erroneous impression that the contents were for sale. Result: the recipient was arrested, his personal video collection scrutinised by the Vice Squad, and the anime contact list is now probably on the Police National Computer. Coming as this did hard on the heels of the arrest of a well-known purveyor of dodgy tapes at a Birmingham comic mart for allegedly supplying a "nasty" to a minor, it was quite understandable that certain programme items were rescheduled.

Media File

Groundhog Day

L G Barlow

Bill Murray is a weather man and every February 2 he travels to a small American town to film the awakening of a Groundhog named Phil, who so legend has it can predict how much longer winter is going to last by whether he can see his own shadow or not. The problem is that every morning Murray wakes up he finds himself back in February 2nd listening to Sonny and Cher singing *I Got You, Babe*. At first, he treats this as a kind of holiday, a chance to do all the things he wanted to do, but without the consequences. He can run riot in a car or rob a cash delivery at the local bank, and the following morning the only discomfort he will have to suffer will be Sonny and Cher on the radio. After a while, however, Murray begins to fall for his producer played by Andi McDowell, and in his attempts to win her affection resorts to teaching himself French and learning how to play the piano among other things. What he also realises is that by getting to know the entire town and its inhabitants he can not only enjoy himself, but also save lives and put right the little things that matter.

Those who go to see *Groundhog Day* and expect to be rolling on the floor in laughter will be disappointed. It is a funny film with some hilarious moments, but it is also a romance along with lines of Steve Martin's *Roxanne*. The only thing that it does not explore fully is Bill Murray's reaction to being trapped in the same day for what must have been years, never being able to get anyone else to believe him for more than 24 hours, never experiencing anything new.

Skywatching

Mark Ogier

Sometimes I wonder what goes on in the minds of the people behind some of the so-called Science Fiction films that make it on satellite. I suppose to the producers of *The Dark Side of the Moon* (no, not Pink Floyd — it has nothing to do with them, thankfully) the idea of combining two great ideas with a dash of modern mythology seemed like a winner. But even to a drunken SF fan with a fondness for turkeys, the thought of putting together a film inspired by *Alien*, *The Exorcist* and The Bermuda Triangle mystery would probably have seemed a rather tenuous prospect at best.

But that is precisely what we have here — a dreadful little movie set on a spaceship that sets out to repair nuclear satellites that are orbiting the Earth. Like *Alien*, the sets are grubby and functional looking, but it looks like someone left a smoke machine running because many of the interiors have a misty quality to them.

When things start to go wrong, the ship's crew find themselves heading for the dark side of the moon (I can't remember why, but it doesn't seem to be important), so they ask the advice of the on-board computer.

For some inexplicable reason, the computer is not your average talking monitor, but a busty brunette dressed in skin tight black leather (I suspect this has a lot to do with the target audience of the film).

While her presence may be designed to be "moral boosting" (?) her advice is immaterial, because eventually the crew (this includes one woman among several men, just to keep things nice and equal) encounter a long lost Earth shuttle. On investigation, they find two dead crewmen and, unbeknownst to them, an "alien presence" enters their ship.

I won't drag this out any more. Suffice it to say that the presence is the devil, who possesses several members of the crew before anyone realises what is going on. The upshot of it all is that this creature has been using the Bermuda Triangle to capture souls for his collection. Eventually he catches those of everybody on board, except the hero, who manages to blow up the ship before the nasty monster can get him, too.

It's all totally naff and utterly devoid of merit. But it makes you wonder what will be next. A combination of the Loch Ness monster, *The Terminator* and *Silence of the Lambs*? Now, there's a thought ...

On a much more positive note, I am delighted to report that the people at Sky are obviously reading my last column, when I lamented the incessant repeats of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* on Sky One. They have now started showing the fourth season and, it appears, intend to carry on through the fifth and sixth, thus bringing British viewers up to date with the series in the States. So far we have had some superb episodes that, while they would be lost on newcomers, reward fans of the series with some marvellous character studies. We have

seen Captain Picard's former home in the episode "Family" (the only *Star Trek* episode not to have a scene on the Bridge). Data re-encountering his evil brother Lore in "Brothers" and Dr Beverly Crusher lost in a collapsing universe in the outstanding "Remember Me".

If anyone ever doubted it, the new episodes show that *ST:TNG* has established itself as an entity independent of its ageing predecessor (which, for the record, I find increasingly hard to watch). And the good news is that Sky One also plan to screen the spin off series, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. I've seen the pilot for this, and while it looks good I have my reservations about how they can develop the stories.

Still with Sky One (which is rapidly shedding its tacky image and importing a lot more quality first run, US programmes) we have just had the opening episodes of the Indiana Jones films' spin off, *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*.

For those expecting lots of crash, bang, wallop action with a cliffhanger at the end of every episode, the series must have been a bit of a disappointment (it seems that audiences in the US had just such expectations). But Lucas probably realised that to succeed, the series would need more depth than the films, and so has turned to history and the World for his inspiration.

The pilot has the old Indiana Jones (George Hall playing a very sprightly 93 year old) telling a couple of modern yobboes of the wonders of being a globe-trotting child. For, as a boy of nine, Indy (then known by his real name of Henry) was whisked off on a round the world trip, courtesy of his globe-trotting father.

The first half of the two episode pilot is set in Egypt, where young Indy bumps into T E ('call me Ned') Lawrence and Howard Carter (pretutankamun) just in time to witness the opening of a new tomb.

There is a murder, and a valuable object goes missing. The next episode cuts to Mexico, eight years later, where the older Indy encounters the man who was the prime suspect in the murder, and well as running into Pancho Villa, joining the revolution, and seeing a certain young Li Patton in action. Eventually he fights off the murder suspect, recovers the stolen object (with a cry of 'this belongs in a museum!') and rides off into the sunrise towards his next adventure.

All of this takes two hours of tv time (that's 90 minutes in the real world) to tell, and the fact is a credit to several things, foremost of which are a script which, while rather heavy on the 'this is history, isn't it exciting?' angle, nonetheless captures a child's sense of wonder. Then there is the photography, which would not look out of place on a cinema screen, some fine performances (particularly from the two young Indys) and finally production values that give the whole programme an epic (and expensive) appearance. Coupled with the gorgeous pictures, the whole arrests the eye while not entirely engaging the brain.

This is a series I shall continue to watch with interest.

Animé Geoff Cowie

Some *Matrix* readers may still be wondering why *animé* (Japanese animation) is being listed in a Science Fiction news magazine. *Animé* is the medium for video Science Fiction and Fantasy — all the SF and Fantasy videos you secretly wanted to see, but didn't know how to ask for. Reactions to *animé* divide sharply into two camps — those who haven't seen any and can't imagine what all the fuss is about, and those who have seen some, and as often as not are knocked out by it and develop varying degrees of *animé* addiction.

For the former, it's scarcely possible to explain what *animé* is like, as the subject matter can be almost anything, and the material pitched at almost any intellectual level, for any sort of audience (equally male and female). And it doesn't look like anything you ever saw before!

However, Science Fiction, Fantasy and comedy subjects are common. Like text Science Fiction and Fantasy, it's mainly a popular medium. And the amount produced is vast; a catalog of *animé* on laserdisc runs to thousands of items. One has the impression that *animé* directors have higher expectations of their audience than is common with filmed Science Fiction here.

The matchless strength of *animé*, though, is in the characterisation. One has to see it (and maybe talk to some fans) to appreciate just how vivid the characterisation is without the distracting intervention of actors, and how the shows are built around these characters. And the vivid characterisation can on occasion give *animé* an unexpected emotional power.

Perhaps you, too, can name another stimulating popular medium that is ignored and put down by outsiders ...

Now on Release

Bubblegum Crisis #6 (50 mins), *#7* (50 mins) (AnimEigo), subtitled, £21.95, PAL, Cert. PG. Now in shops. Ongoing monthly serial release of a OVAs. Reviewed in *Matrix* 103.

Riding Bean (AmigEigo), PAL, 50 mins, £19.99, cert. 18. Now in shops. This is set in Chicago and features Bean, a contract driver who hires himself and his special car, the "Road Buster" out to robbers. The all-action plot involves the kidnapping of a rich man's daughter. The action sequences are well constructed and feature an armed robbery and getaway, shootouts, high speed car chases with high-powered cars, and the efforts of an equally car-obsessed Police Inspector Percy to trap Bean. Apart from Bean, the main characters are his female partner, Rally, the kidnapped girl Chelsea and her father George Greenwood, kidnapper Semmerling and her young accomplice Carrie. The featuring of active female characters is typically Japanese. There's not much to the film apart from the action, touches of comedy and a couple of adult sex scenes, but of its kind it's well done and enjoyable. A good example of all-action adult *animé*, with the inevitable cert. 18.

Animé Projects are the UK licensees for *Bubblegum Crisis* and *Riding Bean*. The videos are available by mail order (p&p £1). SECAM and laserdisc versions are also available. Please write to 64 Stanley Mead, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS12 0BG Tel: 0454 619170.

June: *Urotsuki Doji 2 — Legend of the Demon Womb* (Manga Video MANV1009), 95 mins., PAL, English dialogue, cert. 18, £12.99.

Preview: Rather than being a strict sequel, much of *Womb* is concurrent with the previous movie. It begins with some action in Nazi Germany as Hitler's evil scientist, Myunhi Hausen prepares to open the door into Hell. The machine fails to work, Hausen is killed and the whole area bombed. Fifty years later, Hausen Junior flies over Tokyo using his magic orb to summon the demon Kokohi of the Makai. The demon reluctantly agrees to aid him in his quest to destroy the Chojin. Further action draws in characters we have met in the previous movie. Expect more scenes of graphic unpleasantness. For adults only.

July: *Heroic Legend of Arslan (Part 1)* (Manga Video MANV1012), PAL, 60 mins., £10.99.

Epic fantasy adventure. I saw a subtitled version of this at the A D 3 con. It has decent animation, well developed characters, and an interesting plot. The Kingdom of Palse is invaded and the army betrayed by one of its own officers. The King is captured and the only hope seems to lie with young prince Arslan, who is led away by Daryoon, a demoted division commander. To find help, he seeks out an old friend and former Imperial Secretary, Nalsun, now an artist recluse. The invading army lays siege to Palse's capital. Later joining the struggle are Pharansee, a female warrior sent by a temple, and Gieve, a wandering minstrel rogue who courts the Queen's favour before the capital is overrun. Recommended for epic fantasy fans.

July: *R G Veda (Part 1)* (Manga Video MANV1014, PAL, 90 mins.), £12.99.

Preview: An epic fantasy, seemingly of the Dungeons and Dragons type. Caught in the midst of a war between the armies of demigods Taishakuten and Tentei are four companions, Yasha, who wields the devastating Yama Sword, Ashura, a little girl with mystical powers, Karuma, a lady who can magically summon Garuda the war bird, and Ryu, a warlike young boy who wields an oversize sword which creates serpents whenever near water. There seems to be a fair amount of plot and fantastic combats, and the B&W stills in Manga Video publicity look rather pretty. Apparently made by an all-women collective.

Future Plans

Island World Manga Video indicate that they will release one or two videos a month from May, ie the above and:

August: *Crying Freeman 1*. Adapted from a manga about a man who is forced into becoming an assassin for a tong gang. Also *Doomer Megapolis 1*.

September: *Monster City*, *Cyber City Oedo 808 1* and the concluding part of *3x3 Eyes* will probably

come out this month. All these plans should be regarded as provisional and subject to change.

[Ian Mundell reviewed *Tetsuo, The Iron Man* in *Matrix* 95 and also the second in the series *Tetsuo II* in *Matrix* 104. Here are some more thoughts on the film].

Tetsuo

Tetsuo, The Iron Man, directed by Shinya Tsukamoto, ICA Projects, ICAV 1002, 67 mins., cert. 18. Japanese with English subtitles, B&W, £10.99. Screenplay, art director, lighting editor and special effects by Shinya Tsukamoto

The black-and-white film visually hardly resembles anything one has seen before, with ghostly and impressive special effects; flesh combines revoltingly with metal; fluids ooze, tangles of wires and pipes pulse and twitch as though alive. Every movement seems to have a sound effect. The background is seedy, with untidy half-derelict rooms full of dirt and clutter. The ideas and images are propelled by a post-industrial metal soundtrack that made the film a cult favourite in Japanese rock clubs. The narrative is fragmentary, but never entirely lost. The point of view jumps and leaps through suburban streets as the music pounds; an effect produced by cutting the film every few frames. The film's celebration of junk must have been especially shocking to the Japanese, whose horror of *gomi* (rubbish) is such that they don't even buy second-hand goods.

The film was made on a shoestring budget by its young first-time director. Tsukamoto and Fujiwara not only played leading parts in the film, but did almost everything else as well. It's possible to detect influences ranging from monster movies and *sci-fi* Science Fiction as well as anime and manga; and the result has been compared with Lynch and Cronenberg.

The sub-titling is clear and readable, and the packaging includes in its design the repeated Japanese characters for *tetsuo otoko* — Iron Man.

This is an astonishing cyberpunk film, full of deranged energy and startling sensory images, and demands to be seen. For adults only — not for the easily shocked.

Errata: Harry Payne writes "In my article, *Anime Overview 1992* (*Matrix* 104), I stated that the subtitled version of *Akira* had outsold the dubbed version by a ratio of 2:1.

"Island World Video have subsequently informed me that their sales figures show that the dubbed version has outsold the subtitled by a ratio of 3:1.

"I am happy to set the record straight, and apologise to Island World for any distress caused by this error".

Noticeboard

Books for Sale: General Science Fiction, a few SF art books and a surprising amount of *Star Trek* material. Send a stamped addressed envelope for list to: Phil Nichols, 17 Allsops Close, Rowley Regis, Warley, West Midlands B65 8JB.

The Loxley Times: This is a forum for news and views for people interested in *Robin of Sherwood*. At the moment, we are particularly interested in anyone who might have seen one of the following and could write a short piece about it: "Of Mice and Men", "Edwin Drood", any of Nickolas Grace's early theatre work, any theatre work by any of the cast and "Rothko". If anyone can help, please write to the White Hunter Press, c/o Rowena Sayer, 111 Farndale Avenue, Palmers Green, London N13 5AJ.

Penfriend Wanted: My name is Sian Jenkins and I live in Hamilton, New Zealand. I am looking for a penpal in any part of the world. I am 11 years old and I want either boys or girls to write to me, preferably my own age group (10-14). (I am a girl). I like the following things: Sports (hockey, squash, tennis, badminton, which is like cricket, and cricket); Music (Whitney Houston, Krisi Kross, Red Hot Chili Peppers and much more); Reading (especially Roald Dahl and Paul Jennings). Please write to Sian Jenkins, 17 Myrtle Street, Claudelands, Hamilton, New Zealand.

SF Fan History: Now that Harry Warner, Jr.'s *A Wealth of Fable*, an informal history of Science Fiction fandom in the 1950s, has been published, the time has come to start researching the history of SF fandom in the 1960s. Anyone interested, please contact Dick Lynch (PO Box 1350, Germantown, Maryland 20875, USA).

Reward offered for missing Gopher: There is a reward offered for the return of a toy Gopher by the name of Gordon, last seen at Helicon in Jersey. Please send it, or relevant information, to Harry Payne, Flat 46, 161 Corporation Street, Coventry CV1 1FR.

UFO information required: I am interested in UFO stuff primarily. Don Allen, 1807A Landing Drive, Sanford, Florida 32711, USA

SF for Blind Student wanted: My name is Matthew Weed and I am a blind senior at Yale University. I have been frustrated by the lack of access to novels and other fiction (particularly Science Fiction), which I have as a blind person. I am making a general plea to anyone who may be connected with people in the publishing industry, who might be able to convince their companies to begin consideration of the sale of books in ASCII format. Without these kinds of sales, my access will continue to be limited, something which is particularly frustrating for me, since books concerning universes like the Robotech Universe are not sufficiently popular to cause the US Library Service to consider taping titles written for that genre. I would appreciate any help or suggestions. Please contact me at weed-matthew@cs.yale.edu (Matthew Weed) or via the editorial address.

For Sale: Friends of Foundation currently hold a large number of duplicate magazines: US and UK editions, 1950s to 1990s, single copies and complete year runs. Condition varies, but prices generally low. Send SAE for lists to Mark Plummer, 14 Northway Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6JE or phone 081 656 0137 for more details.

The Tomorrow People: I am in the process of producing a new fanzine devoted to *The Tomorrow People* and I'm looking for articles, comments, fiction, artwork. The first issue will be a complete episode guide, with details of the characters and the background to the show, as well as all the above. Please write for more information to Helen Leithard, 191 Hillcrest Drive, Southdown, Bath BA2 1HF.

Liberty: Britain is the only Western European nation without a Bill of Rights. Discrimination is illegal but a racist attack takes place every 26 minutes, women are three times as likely as men to be sent to prison for a first offence and it is possible to be sacked for being lesbian or gay (at best life can be made extremely unpleasant). If you think there is something wrong about this, why not join Liberty the National Council of Civil Liberties, Freeport, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 6BP. Liberty believes in a society built on the democratic participation of all its members and based upon the principles of justice, openness, etc.

Late News

Millennium have a strong Science Fiction list with *A Million Open Doors* by John Barnes coming as a Trade paperback in June — it's a tale of multiple colony worlds of the far future, all about to be reunited by the advent of instantaneous travel, also a rite of passage tale of a young man.

The Golden by Lucius Shepard is coming in July. *Castle Banat* is a stronghold, so immense that it even has its own weather, home to The Family, clans which make up the vampire population of the world. The Golden is one of the most important rites; consequently when the Golden is murdered rather than sacrificed, there's the beginning of an epic story described as "a personal odyssey of sublime terror". Lucius Shepard's *The Ends of the Earth* is also coming as a trade paperback in July, a collection which won the World Fantasy Award for 1992's Best Collection.

Vernor Vinge is published in August as a trade paperback with *Across Realtime*. It combines two SF novels and promises to be "a thumping good read". Vinge's *A Fire upon the Deep* comes in July. Also in August comes Roger MacBride Allen's *Isaac Asimov's Caliban*, another trade paperback and a new robot novel which seems to be true to the spirit of Isaac Asimov's own work.

The Moorcock series continues with *The New Nature of the Catastrophe* in June and *The Prince with the Silver Hand* in August.

The third issue of *Nexus* is out, £2.95 from PO Box 1123, Brighton BN1 6JS. It's produced by a three person team, Paul Brazier as Editor and Publisher, Sylvia Starshine as Art Editor and Tony Chester as Advertising Contact. Articles include Charles Stross on "Despatches from the Frontier of Internet", Gwyneth Jones reviewing books while on a trip to India with "Peeks at Other Realms" and fiction by Syd Foster, William L Ramseyer and Geoff Ryan. There is a free insert of "The User's Guide to Science Fiction" which lists all recent books in the fantastic genres by surname.

BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

COMPANY INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

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J White
M J Edwards
D R Langford
M S Speller
J Raine
K McVeigh
J Glover
S Glover
C M Cary
E A Billinger

SECRETARY: E A Billinger

REGISTERED OFFICE: 60 Bournemouth Road
Folkestone
Kent

Report and Accounts 30th September 1992

1. Directors' report
2. Auditors' report
3. Profit and loss account
4. Balance sheet
5. Notes to the accounts

The following does not form part of the statutory accounts:

6. Trading account.

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

The directors submit their report and accounts for the year ended 30th September 1992.

Results

The results for the year are set out in section 3 to the accounts.

The directors are satisfied with the results for the year and with the state of affairs of the company at the balance sheet date.

Activities

The principal activities of the company during the year were the promotion of science fiction and the publication and distribution of science fiction magazines.

Directors

The directors who held office during the year were as follows:

Kev McVeigh
M J Edwards
D R Langford
S Ounsley (resigned 1st October 1991)
A Sawyer
M S Speller
J Raine
B Cockrell (resigned 17th July 1992)
A C Clarke
C E Nurse (resigned 30th May 1992)
J Glover
S Glover
C M Cary
J White

E A Billinger

C M Cary was appointed on 1st October 1991 and E A Billinger on 17th July 1992.

K McVeigh and J Glover retire by rotation and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.

Company status

The company has no share capital, being limited by guarantee.

Auditors

A resolution to re-appoint Messrs William Hinton, Chartered Accountants, as auditors, will be put to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

On behalf of the board

E A Billinger
Director

30 May 1993.

REPORT OF THE AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

We have audited the financial statements on pages 3 to 6 in accordance with Auditing Standards.

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs at 30th September 1992 and its loss for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

WILLIAM HINTON

Registered Auditors
Chartered Accountants
Ross House, The Square, Stow on the Wold, Gloucestershire

30th May 1993.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

	1992	1991
	£	£
Turnover		
Cost of sales	10,376	11,214
(see Note 2)	<u>6,498</u>	<u>7,022</u>
	3,878	4,192
Administration expenses	<u>4,807</u>	<u>4,339</u>
	<u>4,807</u>	<u>4,339</u>
Operating loss	(929)	(147)
(see Note 3)		
Profit (loss) on ordinary activities before and after taxation	(929)	
Retained profit brought forward	3,885	4,032
Retained profit carried forward	<u>£2,956</u>	<u>£3,885</u>

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

	<u>1992</u>		<u>1991</u>	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets (see note 5)		62		66
Current assets				
Debtors (see note 6)	300		710	
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>4,077</u>		<u>4,464</u>	
	<u>4,377</u>		<u>5,174</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (see note 7)		<u>1,456</u>		<u>1,328</u>
Net current assets		<u>2,921</u>		<u>3,846</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>2,983</u>		<u>3,912</u>
	<u>£2,983</u>		<u>£3,912</u>	
Profit and loss account	<u>2,956</u>		<u>3,885</u>	
Other reserves	27		27	
On behalf of the board				
E A Billinger)				
)		Directors		
K McVeigh)				
30 May 1993				
	<u>£2,983</u>		<u>£3,912</u>	

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

1. Accounting Policies

Accounting convention

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their expected useful lives as follows:

Library — over 10 years

2. Turnover

Turnover represents income from subscriptions, publications, advertising and associated sales.

3. Operating profit

This is stated after charging or crediting:

	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	247	176
Depreciation	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

4. Employees

The company had no employees during the year.

The services of the Directors have been provided on a voluntary basis and free of charge, as in previous years.

5. Tangible fixed assets

	Library	Awards	Total
Cost			
At 30th September 1991	<u>913</u>	27	<u>940</u>
At 30th September 1992	<u>913</u>	27	<u>940</u>
Depreciation			
At 30th September 1991	874	-	874
Provision for year	<u>4</u>	-	<u>4</u>
At 30th September 1992	<u>878</u>	-	<u>878</u>
Net book value			
At 30th September 1992	<u>£ 35</u>	<u>£ 27</u>	<u>£ 66</u>

6. Debtors

	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>
	£	£
Prepayments	<u>300</u>	<u>710</u>
	<u>£300</u>	<u>£710</u>

7. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>
	£	£
Trade creditors	968	1,328
Current corporation tax	19	19
Accruals	<u>469</u>	<u>176</u>
	<u>£1,456</u>	<u>£1,328</u>

8. Share capital

The company has no share capital being limited by guarantee.

TRADING ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 1992

	£	<u>1992</u>	£
Subscriptions			10,376
Printing costs	<u>6,498</u>		<u>6,498</u>
			<u>3,878</u>
Telephone & postage	3,282		
Advertising	470		
Motor & travel	372		
Auditors' remuneration	247		
Bank charges	325		
General expenses	107		
Depreciation	<u>4</u>		
Net (loss) profit for year			<u>4,807</u>
			<u>£(929)</u>

Competition Corner

Roger Robinson

Crossword Winners

A modest, mostly correct, entry this time — maybe some others were put off by the lack of any clue to 22 across. I allowed any/all answers to this — including leaving it blank. The answers were:

Across: 7 Glasgow; 9 Earshot; 11 Souwester; 12 Gerry; 13 Eclair; 16 Loch Ness Monster; 20 Dhalgren; 25 Inter; 27 Section; 28 Atlanta
Down: 1 Eggshell; 2,23 Samuel Delany; 3 Swath; 4 Metronome; 5 Brogue; 6 Stay in; 8 Grecian; 10 Hard set; 15 Ascendant; 17 Chaotic; 18 Narwhal; 19 Rickshaw; 20 Driest; 21 Garlic; 24 Knead.

The top winner was **Jennie White** of Sheffield who has been awarded an appropriate prize. Other prizes of Eclipse Graphic novels: *Miracleman, the Golden Age* by Neil Gaiman and Mark Buckingham, *Trapped* by Dean Koontz and *Revelations* by Clive Barker are awarded to **Mike Morris**, also from Sheffield and to **Terry Bone**, Peter Tennant and Caroline Needham with David McFarlane.

Matrix Competition 106 "Multiple Singularities"

Send me a list of Science Fiction/Fantasy book titles in which no letter is repeated within each title. The list should start with a two letter title, then a three letter, etc., for as far as possible. The prize will go to the entrant who submits most titles of different lengths. For example: 2 = OX (Anthony), 3 = ORN (Anthony), 4 = DUNE (Herbert). The longest I could find in a quick scan of my bookshelves was 12 letters long. NB You can't use the examples I give above.

Prizes will be on the usual magnificent scale, courtesy of Brian Aldiss, and entries should be sent to Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG, by the deadline of July 14.

Wizards Ahoy!

You've got one more chance to flood Roger with entries for the Wizard competition from last issue.

Don't waste David Allsopp's devoted research to find wizards for your delcction!

And take advantage of the extension of this competition which tests your knowledge in wizards Science Fictional and Fantastic!

Deadline as before.

And of course you know the address to write to — don't you?

Crossword 7

John English

Across:

- 1,5 Cite fen's iconic material? (7,7)
- 10 Calculating angle, I trim ore to fit (15)
- 11 Runner in 'ouse returned from frozen land (6)
- 12 Sash worn by Darth Vader's opponent? (3)
- 13 Worry caused by interlaced ornamentation (4)
- 14 Accountant laughs at American partnership (7)
- 16 Reattach tail in order to leave space station perhaps? (6)
- 18 According to Asimov, this in the sky goes "b-bleep!" (6)
- 20 Pressure units show low returning to Mars (7)
- 22 Transform uranium kept in an atmosphere of tritium and radon (4)
- 24 Sickened by headless galactic hero (3)
- 25 Satellite of Neptune — it's seen in a Disney movie (6)
- 26 Sea trip to Uranus results in excessive dissolution (15)
- 27,28 Alien insect looked at mentors quizzically (7,7)

Down:

- 2 Frozen body is found in crop circles after initial credit is withdrawn (9)
- 3 Single human leader confused by language (7)
- 4 Attend convention in Africa? (5)
- 6 Conspirator finds one true ring abandoned (9)
- 7 Invasive plant appears if tree found in edges of desert is pulled up (7)
- 8 Harangue Slippery Jim in Old English (5)
- 9 Is it simply 12 upset? It can't be true? (13)
- 15 Love to see virus at large, so supply an excess (9)
- 17 Senior captain keeps gold in chamberpot (9)
- 19 Religion (oriental) headed by Bova is solvent (7)
- 21 Work is needed to suppress goddess of mischief in religions, perhaps? (7)
- 23 By trading alien's head for uranium Enterprise crew member gains freedom (5)
- 25 Roots about in trunk (5)

