

# MATRIX

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Newsletter of the British Science Fiction Association

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February – March 1994

## Data File

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This costs £15 per year (UK and EC).

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## Determinants

It seems to make more sense to start a new year in February when the weather is once more becoming civilised, rather than having it immediately adjacent to the glutony and indulgence of Christmas. A British winter seems to be an endless tunnel of low-level misery and dampness, so the first appearance of the sun produces a primitive resurgence of joy. As the skeleton trees slowly blur into buds and the ground changes from mud to mud with stalks, there seems more point to life; and, perhaps, there may seem to be more to life than reading SF.

Unlike the metamorphosis from larva to dragon fly, an SF reader can become a fan without being irrevocably cut off from any SF roots. A fan will almost by definition start as an SF reader who wishes to take a more active role in the SF community. I'm not entirely convinced, though, that people deliberately set out to become fans. There are a whole series of circumstances which seem to be coincidences and which cascade onto the unwary reader but which will fail to activate anyone unless some spark of curiosity or sense of wonder gets ignited. Becoming a fan, then, is a two way process, with the SF reader reaching out and some source of fanish information reaching over. There's no compulsion to become a fan, though it could be compared to walking out of a comfortable house (leaving the door ajar) and seeing the vast expanse of the world. No one will expect anyone to like everything in sight; nor is everything visible. Some fanish things may need investigation and it will be up to the emerging fan to decide whether this will be worthwhile.

My own fanish interests are with fanzines, though the postman who has to deliver them is not so enthusiastic. I like to sort through the post and sit down over breakfast, flicking through the contents. Then I can vegetate fanishly throughout the day, concentrating on my job and only allowing my thoughts to flicker to the morning post occasionally — there will be time for that in the evening when I can relax in a child-less environment. I like to see these windows on different worlds and to know that by commenting on them, I can become part of that world.

I like to communicate through writing. It's a satisfying and indirect form of communication which allows me to reveal as much — or as little — of my feelings as I wish to. The main problem, though, is that it lacks the nuances of personal conversation. The more you may reveal of yourself, the more you risk touching a tender spot in the nerves of the recipient; and the more chance you may have of initiating an exhilarating discussion in the letter columns for several issues to come.

Other people may prefer more direct contact through clubs, conventions, costuming or role-playing games. Fandom is a broad church. This may go some way to explaining the breadth of subject matter in *Matrix*. For example, the major article this issue concerns the influence of Rudyard Kipling on Science Fiction. There is also a discussion of how to do a first fanzine with a recipe to use as an alternative to photocopying or duplicating; there is an article on the Klingon language. The news ranges from Keith Roberts' illness to SF victims of the recent Los Angeles earthquake. I aim to provide a balance between Science Fiction news, feedback of members and information of ways to become more than an SF reader, if people should want to. I don't want to force people into fandom — just to indicate what is available — and I'd never want to suggest that fans cannot be SF readers as well.

**Deadline**  
**15 March 1994**

## News

From: Pete Cox, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Doug Faunt, Ellen Key Harris, Terry Pratchett, Amy Thomson, Bill Higgins, Herman Kuiper, Laurie Mann, John Madracki, Robert Baruch, Mark Stackpole, Gary Ehrlich, Matthew Michael Brenner, David V. Barrett, Jessica Yates and your editors.

## Arthur C Clarke Award Shortlist

The shortlist for the eighth Arthur C Clarke Award for the best Science Fiction novel published in the United Kingdom in 1993 are, in alphabetical order of authors:

*A Million Open Doors* by John Barnes (Millennium [Orion])  
*Ammonite* by Nicola Griffith (Grafton [HarperCollins])  
*Vurt* by Jeff Noon (Ringpull)  
*Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson (Roc [Penguin])  
*The Iron Dragon's Daughter* by Michael Swanwick (Millennium [Orion])  
*The Broken God* by David Zindell (HarperCollins).

The judges are Mark Plummer and Maureen Speller for the Science Fiction Foundation, Catie Cary and Chris Amies for the British Science Fiction Association, Dr John Gribbin and Dr Jeff Kipling for the International Science Policy Foundation.

The winning title will be selected in late April. The Award, an engraved bookend and a cheque for £1,000, generously donated by Arthur C. Clarke, will be presented by a guest celebrity and Fred Clarke, Arthur's brother at a ceremony in London.

The 1993 winner of this Award was Marge Piercy for *Body of Glass* (Michael Joseph).

## Publishing News

**Bantam:** Events in *The Return of the Jedi* happened five years ago and the fragile New Republic now reels from the attacks of Grand Admiral Thrawn, who has not only rallied the remaining imperial forces, but has driven the rebels back with an abominable new technology: clone soldiers. It's time for Timothy Zahn's *Star Wars* Volume 3: *The Last Command* where the Republic's only hope lies in sending a small force, led by Luke, into the very stronghold which houses the cloning machines. This is promised to be the last in this particular series — the dark Jedi C'boath certainly hopes to get rid of Luke for once and for all.

Another February publication is *The Hand of Chaos* by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman. Chaos is everywhere as the Lord of the Nexus orders his servant Haplo and the human child, Bane, to further their master's work on Arianus, the realm of air. Haplo is not sure whether to obey his master, because disobedience can lead to peace in the Universe; this contrasts with Anne McCaffrey's *Damia's Children*. All the children had been 'paired' with the furry one-eyed Mrdinis at the age of six months aiming to create prosperous worlds and guard against the terrible threat of the annihilating Hivers. These four children will play a vital part in the conquering and investigations (in that order?) of the alien threat of the Hivers. Volume 4 of the series, *Lyon's Pride*, also comes in hardback. Again, the talents of these four children are desperately needed. This may be the last book in the series, although the Hivers may still have a trick or two up their sleeves (or equivalent). This last book will appear as a trade

paperback in August — Anne McCaffrey is visiting the UK for a publicity tour in June.

The March publications lead with Isaac Asimov's *Forward the Foundation*, the seventh (and concluding) volume of his **Foundation** series. Other books coming that month are John Saul's *Shadows*, which shows a school for children out of the normal and also *Guardian* which presents more horror as a mother attempts to guard her children against a cunning killer. John Saul is currently working on his next novel. Harry Harrison's *The Stainless Steel Rat Sings the Blues* will come as a hardback, decorated by a *Daily Telegraph* quote, comparing Harry Harrison to "the Monty Python of the spaceways".

**Corgi:** Simon Maginn's first novel *Sheep*, published in February, begs comparisons with *The Wasp Factory*: a deceptively casual narrative builds layers of horror upon each other. Terry Pratchett's *Johnny and the Dead* is scheduled for March. It's the sort of juvenile which is suitable for all, or at least most, ages as Johnny discovers that he can see the dead, that the council is about to sell the cemetery for a building site and that the dead have quite a bit to say about this.

**HarperCollins** have just published the second volume in their series of the Asimov complete short stories (£16.99). The stories included are: "Not Final!", "The Hazing", "Death Sentence", "Blind Alley", "Evidence", "The Red Queen's Race", "Day of the Hunters", "The Deep", "The Martian Way", "The Monkey's Finger", "The Singing Bell", "The Talking Stone", "Each an Explorer", "Let's Get Together", "Pâté de Foie Gras", "Galley Slave", "Lenny", "A Loint of Paw", "A Statue for Father", "Anniversary", "Obituary", "Rain, Rain Go Away", "Star Light", "Founding Father", "The Key", "The Billiard Ball", "Exile to Hell", "Key Item", "Feminine Intuition", "The Greatest Asset", "Mirror Image", "Take a Match", "Light Verse", "Stranger in Paradise", "That Thou Art Mindful of Him", "The Life and Times of Multivac", "The Bicentennial Man", "Marching In", "Old-fashioned" and "The Tercentenary Incident".

In the Introduction, Isaac Asimov wrote: "Sometimes stories arise because other people make some casual remark. Such stories as 'Let's Get Together' and 'Rain, Rain, Go Away' are examples. I don't feel guilty about lifting ideas from the statements of other people. They're not going to go anything with them, so why shouldn't I?"

"But the point is that stories arise out of anything. You just have to keep your eyes and ears open and your imagination working. Once during a train trip, my first wife asked me where I got my ideas from. I said 'From anywhere. I can write a story about this train trip'. And I started writing it longhand. That story does not appear in this collection, however."

*A Plague of Angels* by Sheri S. Tepper is scheduled for March, a blend of SF and Fantasy where monsters start to appear in a devastated Earth while any human survivors fled to stars such as Betelgeuse. One last battle must still be fought against the evil Quince Ellel and her antique warrior androids who threaten to bring back tyranny: the book is described as being both exciting and frightening. Kim Stanley Robinson's *Green Mars* is an April paperback. The First Hundred have been scattered and the survivors need to create a new world with trust and co-operation rather than enforced terraforming for the benefit of a ravaged Earth. A May hardback is Robert Silverberg's *Hot Sky at Midnight* which introduces Victor Farkas who has intense personal reasons to hunt down the sinister geneticist, Dr Wu. However, events overtake everyone, as Earth dies and the satellite worlds, like Valparaiso Nuevo, come to the centre of the political stage.

Further ahead in September, the third book of the **Mode** series will be Piers Anthony's *Chaos Mode*. Colene and Darius survived *Fractal Mode* and have reached Darius' homeworld, Hlahatar where they appear to gain some more companions, Nona and Seqiro, the

telepathic horse. The plot is so complicated that it is reasonable to expect several other books to resolve it.

**Headline:** Tanith Lee's *Eva Fairdeath* (hardback) and *Nightshades* are scheduled for March, with Bridget Wood's *Sorceress*. *Eva Fairdeath* is set in a polluted future world where there are dead trees, no birds and a yellow sky. Everyone appears to be slightly mad and Eva has nothing to look forward to but to be some man's slave. A stranger with a gun arrives one day, a seller of death, but possibly the instrument of Eva's freedom. In April, there will be a new Storm Constantine book, *Calenture* (hardback), which describes a city where Casmeer lives alone, surrounded only by lumps of crystal which used to be his compatriots. A stranger arrives, a terranaut who uses small crystals to guide the moving cities and another stranger, brings peace to the dying in the flying city of Min. The three men are brought together by the pilot stations. More April publications include Ramsey Campbell's *Along with the Horrors* and *The Long Lost* plus John Gideon's *Golden Eyes* and Dean Koontz's *The House of Thunder*.

**Hodder and Stoughton:** Please note that they have moved to 338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH (tel: 071 873 6000). James Byron Huggins' *A Wolf Story* (March paperback) is slotted into the religious section. It concerns a great grey wolf's passion to overcome evil. It would be stretching the Science Fiction definition to include it, even with the powerful final confrontation between good and evil, but it might be worth looking at it with a Fantasy-oriented eye.

Pierre Ouellette's *The Deus Machine* (April hardback) is set in the spring of 205AD. The USA is in the grip of a paralysing depression and a genius renegade computer-systems designer sets DEUS — a super-computer with the potential for real intelligence — on the most fateful course possible. It's described as a hi-tech thriller and hopefully DEUS will have more to do than attempt to assassinate the president. Not that A.A. Attanasio's *Solis* (May hardback) looks more cheerful. Here, the setting is a thousand years in the future and Charles Outis wakes up. He'd been cryonically frozen when he died in the twenty-first century and he finds a world of technocracy which intends to use his brain to operate machinery. Luckily, there is a friendly drone Munk to rescue him and others and they all set out for the strange Martian city of Solis.

Gene Wolfe's *Lake of the Long Sun* was published in January (hardback), book two in his new series. Life inside the huge spaceship continues and protagonist Patera Silk starts to uncover sinister secrets. This makes it sound bland, but it is fascinating to read.

The eighteenth Piers Anthony Xanth book will be published this April in hardback (look for the word 'Xanth' on the cover). A steadfast gargoyle called Gary is transformed into a human being and encounters a girl called Surprise plus a seductive sorceress and a crazy demoness. As their Quest leads them to the city of Stone Hinge, Gary emerges as the unexpected hero and is described as being one of Piers Anthony's "most engaging creations".

**Orbit:** The compelling story of Doona will continue with Anne McCaffrey and Jody Lynn Nye's *Treaty Planet* (£16.99 hardback, £4.99 paperback) in February. The huge black spaceship in orbit around Doonarralla is apparently unarmed and seems to present no immediate threat, apart from its existence. Todd Reeve, the leader of the Human colony there and Hrriss, his Hrruban friend, see the ship as an opportunity to present the hands of friendship, but they appear to be very much in the minority about this.

An interesting March publication will be L.E. Modesitt Jr.'s *The Magic of Recluse*, first book in a new fantasy adventure series. It appears to be a rite of passage book and the author's style is compared favourably with Robert Jordan.

Orbit publications later in the year will include *A Night in the Lonesome October* by Roger Zelazny (May paperback), *Feersum Endjinn* by Iain M Banks (June hardback), *Otherness* by David Brin

(June paperback), *The Hammer of God* by Arthur C. Clarke (June paperback), *Partnership* by Anne McCaffrey and Margaret Ball (June paperback), *The Ship Who Searched* by Anne McCaffrey and Mercedes Lackey (June paperback), *Greenthieves* by Alan Dean Foster (June paperback), *Stargonauts* by David Garnett (July paperback), *Left to His Own Devices* by Mary Gentle (July paperback), *Riverrun II: Forests of the Night* by S.P. Somtow (August paperback), *Other Days, Other Eyes* by Bob Shaw (August paperback), *The Towers of the Sunset* by L.E. Modesitt Jr. (September paperback), *Black Unicorn* by Tanith Lee (September paperback), *Rama Revealed* by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee (October paperback), *The Fires of Heaven* by Robert Jordan (November paperback) and *Cardinal Brownponey and the Wild Horsewoman* by Walter M. Miller Jr. (December hardback).

Horror from the Little, Brown and Warner Book imprint part of Orbit will include Katherine Ramsland's *The Vampire Companion* (February hardback), Shaun Hutson's *White Ghost* (March hardback), with *Deadhead* in paperback, plus Tanith Lee's *Darkness, I* in hardback and *Personal Darkness* in paperback. *The Stephen King Story* is promised in April, edited by George Beahm, together with Christopher Fowler's *Spanky*, both in paperback.

**Pan:** Esther Friesner's fantasy *Yesterday We Saw Mermaids* is published in February, the "true" story of the discovery of America. The year is 1492. The Spanish Inquisition is sweeping Europe and as Christopher Columbus sets sail, so do a boat load of nuns. The nuns discover the magical kingdom of Prester John. Another February publication is Roger Zelazny and Robert Shekley's *Bring Me the Head of Prince Charming*, which is aimed at the Terry Pratchett market, a hilarious spoof of everything from fairytales to the cold war.

While Pamela Belle will introduce readers to *The Silver City* in a vast world of teeming empires, James Herbert has another *The City* in mind, a city dominated by rats, a powerful graphic novel illustrated by Ian Miller, who illustrated the cover of *The Difference Engine* and has already worked on *Luck in the Head*, adapted into a graphic novel with author M. John Harrison.

*Quantum Murder* by Peter Hamilton will come in March. This is a passage from it: "Greg's existence had collapsed to a flimsy universe five metres in diameter. Night-time flying was always bad. But night-time and gof, that was shit awful."

"He was hanging in a nylon web harness below a Westland ghost wing, gossamer blade propeller humming efficiently behind him. The photon amp band across his eyes bestowed an alien blue tint to every surface, the glow of electron orbits in decay. A column of neat chrome-yellow figures shone on the right hand side of his vision field: time, grid reference, altitude, direction of flight, power levels, airspeed. The guide 'wae' placed him eight hundred metres high, two kilometres out from Peterborough above the Fens basin".

Greg, as usual, is facing an awesome challenge, but is likely to get through it, as Peter Hamilton is currently working on his fifth novel. On the other hand, he has not absolutely guaranteed that this novel will involve Greg (more details separately).

To say that "numerous Trekkies buy everything by or featuring their heroes" may be a marketing point for William Shatner's *Tek Vengeance*, coming in April, but may be a more general point than necessary. William Shatner, of course, played Captain Kirk in *Star Trek*, but it is possible to be an author as well as an actor. There is just the unworthy thought that the *Tek* books can be gathered into the SF genre. With *Tek Vengeance*, Jake Cardigan's girlfriend is captured and treated rather badly while Jake is stranded in a Brazilian jungle. He then has a reason to seek vengeance "of the terminal kind". One of the marketing points for Simon Harding's *Streamskelter*, also coming in April, is equally unusual: "as if Iain Banks had decided to write a fantasy novel". The book is a dark fantasy with a first person narrative, concerning David, who had been locked in a derelict cottage

with an elderly recluse who set fire to the place when he was a school boy. He survived (unlike his companion) and now his recurring nightmares are getting worse. The publishers anticipate great local press coverage, as the author works as an editor on his local paper group in Bristol.

**Virgin:** The *Dr Who* paperback series continues with *No Future* and *Dr Who: The Robots of Death* in February. This latter book is by Paul Cornell, who has also written two previous books in the **New Adventures** series, *Timewyrm: Revelation* and *Love and War*, in which he created the character of Professor Bernice Summerfield. In *No Future*, the Doctor ends up in a London of 1976 where Black Star terrorists foment riots in the streets, the Queen barely escapes assassination and the Doctor has to protect this world as well as protecting himself.

**The Women's Press:** In February, Joanna Russ's *How to Suppress Women's Writing* is to be reissued. So there is a chance to see if her classic is as pertinent as ever, and with female Booker prize nominees under attack, the publishers hope it is. They suggest that *How to Suppress Women's Writing* is Joanna Russ's *tour de force* in the field of literary criticism. With scholarship, style and passion, Russ reveals how women's literary tradition has been systematically belittled in the past, and how the prejudices that drove George Eliot and the Brontës to disguise themselves behind male pseudonyms are still alive and well today. A provocative, comprehensive survey of the forces at work against women who dare to write, *How to Suppress Women's Writing* is a scathing reply to critics like Anthony Burgess who declared "I can gain no pleasure from serious writing ... that lacks a strong male thrust." A joint publication with this classic will be *The Female Man* which describes the lives of four very different women struggling to survive in "a man's world". Joanna lives in a present similar to this world's present while Janet comes from a world where no men have existed for centuries. Jeannine is a romantic dreamer from a place where World War II never happened and the Great Depression continues, while Jael hopes to unite all the women.

## Annual Bestsellers

Alex Hamilton considered a retrospective of the 1993 bestsellers for *The Guardian* and considered that "the great frustration of the year for publishers was not the behaviour of consumers but of distributors. The collapse of two key wholesalers, suppliers not only of supermarkets but other non-traditional outlets like corner shops and newsagents, the consequent mergers and restructures, the delays in filling orders and the apathy of the supermarkets when the books did not show up, may explain the lower figures of some of the best-known names on this list. It's possible that for them the confusion could account for as much as a 10% drop". He also suggests that dividing the Booker prize did not help sales of the winning books, though that it is not normally relevant for the Science Fiction genre. Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park* (Arrow) came top of the list with total sales of 1,018,642. Like John Grisham's *The Firm*, it was a film tie-in and was unignorable except by those households who had previously encountered the book and were determined to make their dwelling dinosaur-free.

Douglas Adams' *Mostly Harmless* (Pan) was the top fast-selling Science Fiction novel according to this list: number 13 with total sales of 2,245,430 followed by two Terry Pratchett's, both reasonably classed as Fantasy. *Lords and Ladies* sold 1,302,484 copies for Corgi, despite not having been published until November of 1993 and *Small Gods* sold the relatively small number of 1,258,697 copies, also for Corgi, considering it came out in May.

The genre classifications are somewhat idiosyncratic, including "diet", "saga" and "glitz", but the label "SF" is lacking, apart from being attached to Douglas Adams, unless it is likely to be prominent in positions 101 and downwards. Robert Harris's *Fatherland* (Arrow)

does appear in position 10 with 2,386,587 copies sold, but Alex Hamilton firmly considers it to be a "thriller".

For completists, and those who mourn the lack of SF book sales, the list of the top ten paperback fastsellers in Great Britain during 1993 (arranged firmly in order of amount of money earned in pounds rather than number of books sold) is as follows:

1. *Jurassic Park* by Michael Crichton (Arrow): 5,083,023
2. *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang (Flamingo): 7,533,970
3. *The Firm* by John Grisham (Arrow): 3,248,315
4. *1994 Horoscopes* by Anon (Diamond): 1,820,622
5. *The Copper Beech* by Maeve Binchy (Orion): 2,957,035
6. *The Pelican Brief* by John Grisham (Arrow): 2,852,503
7. *House of Women* by Catherine Cookson (Corgi): 2,691,940
8. *Driving Forth* by Dick Francis (Pan): 2,570,279
9. *Maltese Angel* by Catherine Cookson (Corgi): 2,424,022
10. *Fatherland* by Robert Harris (Corgi): 2,386,587

## The Shock of the New

**Robert Sawyer** wrote a short piece recently for the Ottawa Science Fiction Society discussing whether he had ever wanted to tie all his six SF novels together into a single universe, the way Isaac Asimov or Robert A. Heinlein did. "Frankly, I have no interest in doing that" he wrote. "Indeed, I'm always surprised that any SF writer would want to do it. One of the great joys of writing SF is the building of new worlds and new histories. Limiting one's entire life's work to a single world seems a terrible constraint."

"Besides, the way I deal with the extinction of the dinosaurs in *End of an Era* [coming from Ace in November 1994] completely contradicts what I wrote in *Fossil Hunter* [Ace 1993], so I'd never be able to reconcile those two books as a coherent history."

"Now, yes, the dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago — but that's the whole point. Creating a coherent single universe in SF means a lot more than just making a couple of centuries of space exploration consistent across a series of books. In SF, you get to play with fundamental questions about the very nature of the universe."

**Robert Anton Wilson, Terence McKenna, and Rudy Rucker** finished filming scenes for a 55-minute movie to be released in the U.S. later this year at a San Francisco film-fest. The film, whose working title is *LX-23*, finds the three men out on the streets of a historic European city, as they encounter a host of bizarre and wondrous characters and find themselves enmeshed in a conspiracy of high adventure.

**Pat Cadigan** will be in the UK during March to promote the publication of her third novel *Fools*. In a world of brainsuckers and bodysnatchers, you can't take anything for granted. Marva is a struggling Method actress and wakes up in a hologram pool in an exclusive priv club with fancy new clothes and plenty of money. She senses that something is strange and when she starts remembering something about murder, she realises that she had better start remembering the whole lot or else.

**Keith Roberts** sent out a circular to inform interested parties that he has now finally been diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis. "I have been reduced from my former six feet plus to wheelchair height" he writes. "Increased spasticity has made artwork and production things of the past, while a so far unexplained complication has led to me contributing a major piece of my anatomy to the hospital incinerator. I'm therefore a one-legged hasbeen at the age of fifty eight. ... For me, life has been reduced to a daily battle to avoid the clutches of the People Farms; the normal euphemism for them is Residential Homes. In this, I may or may not be successful; I am buoyed by the thought that the ever-obliging State has at least provided a species of alternative. Having stood back for a month or so and watched my leg

rot at the rate of several millimetres a day, the powers that be finally pressed on me enough pain-killers to solve my problem several times over. Either way, I would of course vanish from human contact". [This was reported in Dave Langford's news-sheet *Ansible*, available from him at 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU].

**Steve Barnes:** On December 10th, Steve Barnes gave an overview of his career as an SF writer on *Hour-25*, a Los Angeles radio programme. He mentioned his responsibility as one of the very few African-Americans writing in the SF genre and how pleased he was with his new novel *Firedance*.

A sequel to *The Legacy of Heorot* is under contract to Tor (tentatively entitled *Beowulf's Children*).

**Harlan Ellison** is "conceptual consultant" to *Babylon V* and may be writing a script for this season (a "Demon with a Glass Hand" crossover) if they can work out the details of merging the two universes (and if they can get Robert Culp to play Trent).

Coming soon from Morpheus International is a collection of Ellison short-stories inspired by the works of Polish artist Jacek Yerka, *Mind Fields*. And the original teleplay to "The City on the Edge of Forever" with comments by him and all the original *Trek* cast except Shatner is due in book form as well. And a new collection of short fiction, *Slippage* has been announced for later this year, too. Harlan has also signed a contract with *Sci Fi Buzz* (on the Sci Fi Channel on cable) for an additional twelve installments of "Harlan Ellison's Watching."

**Elizabeth Boyer**, whose latest novel, *The Black Lynx*, was published by Del Rey in December 1993, began planning her writing career during junior high school in her rural Idaho hometown. She read almost anything the Bookmobile brought and learned a great love for nature and wilderness. Science Fiction in large quantities led her to Tolkien's writings, which inspired a great curiosity about Scandinavian folklore.

**K. D. Wentworth's** first book *The Imperium Game* has just been published by Del Rey. Her second novel, *Moonspeaker*, will come out this autumn and she apparently has no plans to slow down. She writes of how it all started: "My mad rush to publication started at the beginning of a steamy Oklahoma summer six years ago. Then, as now, I was working as an elementary teacher and had the summer off. I have always been blessed/cursed with a lot of nervous energy and find it impossible to stay sane watching *Perry Mason* re-runs and dusting bric-a-brac, but when I mentioned looking for a part-time job, my husband — still smarting from paying the extra taxes on my part-time wages from the year before — paled and said, 'Why not stay home this summer and write?' The twinkle in his eye added: No danger of you making any money at that!"

"I said, 'Okay,' bought a copy of Damon Knight's *Creating Short Fiction*, and decided to either read about how to write or write for two hours each afternoon. For the first few weeks, I did a lot more reading than writing. My poor husband would come home and say, 'How was your day?'"

She celebrated her first personal rejection by going out for a meal, then entered the Writers of the Future contest, won third prize and started collecting rejection slips seriously. *The Imperium Game* was her fifth novel. When asked if it was worth it, she replied "I took inventory of my life the other day and realized that somewhere along the way I have given up cooking, working out at the health club, folk dancing with my friends, and watching television. I recently had to admit to my fourth grade students that I don't know who Steve Urkle is and have never watched *Beverly Hills 90210*. I see my husband on alternate Saturday nights and wash clothes only when the dirty ones threaten to overwhelm the house. And I have an appointment with a tax accountant next week and my husband is hinting I might like to take up ceramics next summer instead of writing".

**Peter F Hamilton** was recently interviewed by Pete Cox and briefly described his new novel due out in March from Pan: "A *Quantum Murder* is a who-dunnit, a classic locked room puzzle in an isolated English country house which Greg Mandel is called in to solve. It's set two years after the end of *Mindstar Rising*, and for the romantics among you, Greg and Eleanor are now married. ... The third Mandel book, *The Nano Flower*, is set fifteen years after the end of *A Quantum Murder*".

**Larry Niven** commented that, in the absence of civilisation, women are chattels and victims and they remain that way until civilisation is rebuilt (a reference to his female characterisations in *Lucifer's Hammer*) when he was questioned at ConFrancisco. He added that he was proud of having predicted gravitational lensing by neutron stars and explained that the things he got wrong were because they were based on current science of the time (no examples given). He added later that for years his mother only read his SF until he urged her to widen her horizons. Unfortunately, she selected Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and His Dog" and decided that she would prefer to read only her son's SF.

Ellen Key Harris reports: "*Crashlander*, the Beowulf Shaeffer collection, will be out in March (it's officially an April book) in paperback. The new Ringworld novel is being written now, and will probably be out in hardcover in '95, but we're not sure yet".

**Harlan Ellison** was also at ConFrancisco, aiming to promote *Mephisto on Ice*, his new small press book. He said that he was pleased that his short story "The Man Who Rowed Christopher Columbus Ashore" has been selected for the mainstream annual *Best American Short Stories 1993*. On career choices, he suggested that electricians or plumbers are of more use to society than writers and commented that "Writers mostly sit and masturbate, that's all we do".

**Joanna Russ**, currently Professor of English at the University of Washington in Seattle, still works as an impassioned advocate of women's writing by sitting on several literary panels and judging The Spinster Award in the US despite having an ongoing back complaint and other illnesses. Of her illness, she says "I often feel I'm supporting the place of at least three other hearty, pain-free, temporarily able-bodied types at the other end of the bell curve — and I would love to get my hands on them!" She says that her writing is for "All lesbians everywhere, all feminists (whether lesbian or not), all connoisseurs of exciting, zoopy, gorgeous writing, and anyone who loves to cry and laugh".

**Donald Kingsbury** used his childhood memories of living in New Guinea in his books, like *Courtship Rite*, a Hugo-nominee in the early 1980s, where humans living on an inhospitable world practice cannibalism out of necessity and scarification out of self-expression. On one occasion, Kingsbury's father threw away a broken teacup and the next day a ten year old boy appeared with the broken handle through his nose. It only lasted a week, as he was murdered for it a week later, by a member of another tribe.

**Rebecca Ore's** next book will be a contemporary leftist fantasy which she says "gets at the radical roots of SF. I bailed out of an alternative history (one that would have used my archived research material) at least for now. The fantasy, *Slow Funeral*, should be out in hardcover July 1994, which means sometime in June".

**Lyn McConchie** comments on potential authors: "As for those who won't or can't write, that's up to them. If it is important enough, I think you can usually make time. And if that is impossible, then you have to wait until it is. Those who expect it to be easy are wasting everyone's time including yours. I guess it was one of the reasons I tried. Years and years ago, I worked in a home for old ladies. It was distressing to hear how many had had ambitions and allowed themselves to be persuaded out of them, either by friends and family ('But dear, NICE girls don't go on the stage') or fear ('If I fail, I'm a bad person and I'll KNOW I've failed. If I don't try there is always the chance I could have

made it and I don't have to know I couldn't). Four years and one month ago, I said to hell with all that. I'm going to TRY and if I do fail at least I know I gave it my best shot".

## News from the LA Quake

Quite a few well-known SF professionals and fans lived near the epicentre of the recent earthquake: they were extraordinarily lucky.

Mog DeCarmin is fine, if freaked, also Paula Marmor and Glen Blankenship. Lee Ann Goldstein, Lauraine Tutihi, and Tom Collins, all emerged unharmed. Marty Cantor is OK — Robbie was in Winnipeg at a Canadian meeting during the earthquake. Bruce and Elaine Pelz are OK, but their cat Scabble was killed when a wall in their yard collapsed on Monday morning. Mike Glyer, Matthew Tepper and all the LASFS folks are OK.

The Nivens had an interior brick wall in their house collapse and have lost a lot of valuables. Harlan Ellison evidently broke his nose while rushing downstairs in the dark and also lost a lot of valuables.

It sounds like people were tossed around, some minor cuts and scrapes and stuff was damaged but there weren't any "total property losses" the way there were during the Oakland fires a few years back. David Gerrold's house, being close to the epicenter, received extensive damage.

Marty and Alice Massoglia are fine, though their house and book-shop (Other Change of Hobbit) was damaged and Lydia Marano, owner of Dangerous Visions bookstore is also fine though both her house and the store look like it was turned upside down.

## Obituary

Jeff Morrow was born in New York on January 13, 1913. His early acting career encompassed both radio, where he was the voice of Dick Tracy, and Broadway, where he specialised in Shakespearian tragedies.

As he was tall, dark and handsome, Hollywood eventually beckoned him and he made his screen debut in *The Robe* in 1953. He then went on to make several cult SF movies, and is remembered in particular for his portrayal of Exeter in *This Island Earth* (1955). Other genre films included *The Creature Walks Among Us* (1956), *Kronos* (1957), *The Giant Claw* (1957) and *Legacy of Blood and Octaman* (both 1973).

He also had a busy TV career, and one of his last guest roles was in *The Twilight Zone's* affectionate self-parody *A Day in Beaumont* where he appeared alongside two other veterans — John Agar and Kenneth Tobey.

Jeff Morrow died in December 1993, aged 80, and is survived by his wife, Anna Karen, and a daughter.

— John Madracki

## Assorted Stop Press Items

NESFA Press published *The Rediscovery of Man, The Complete Short Fiction of Cordwainer Smith*. This collection included pieces never published in America and is about to go into its second printing. It can be ordered directly from NESFA Press (Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203). The book costs \$24.95, runs to over 670 pages, and includes the J.J. Pierce foreword.

Stephen Briggs is getting some Unseen University scarves made up (based on the UU coat of arms from the Mappe and also on a description in *The Discworld Companion*). Apparently they'll be genuine 6' long university scarves made up in the UU colours

(crimson and midnight blue, with a couple of pairs of thin yellow and purple stripes to represent octarine, with the UU coats of arms in gold thread). He hasn't really considered it as a commercial venture!

Anyone who wants to talk to him about them could try [sbriggs@cix.compulink.co.uk](mailto:sbriggs@cix.compulink.co.uk).

In a bid to boost flagging sales, *Detective Comics* once had the bright idea of killing off Superman (temporarily, of course) and the Man of Steel was duly done to death by the Doomsday Creature. Now, DC have reproduced a limited edition (1,250 copies, each signed by Jerry Siegel) of this infamous issue, and Equinox, an SF and Fantasy bookshop, has obtained a number to raffle off.

Equinox is situated on Blackburn Road, Bolton (tel: 0204 593348) — the tickets are £1 each, and all the proceeds will go to the NSPCC. The raffle will run "as long as it is popular".

Suzette Haden Elgin's final book in the *Native Tongue* trilogy is coming out this Spring.

"William Goldman never knew the trouble he would create for publishers when he wrote *The Princess Bride* and *The Silent Gondoliers*. Or" writes Ellen Key Harris of Del Rey publishing, "maybe he did. There is no S. Morgenstern. There are no other versions, edited, pirated, or original and unexpurgated, of *The Princess Bride*. It was all made up. Repeat, *invented!* By Goldman. There is no country called Florin (nor is there one called Gunder). You, the savvy SF and Fantasy reader, would never believe the volume of mail we get every week asking about S. Morgenstern's original edition of *The Princess Bride*. Mostly we get requests for the reunion scene mentioned on page 153, which readers can supposedly write in for — we get about 10 or 15 of those letters a day, from all over the world — but we also get plenty of mail about Morgenstern and his/her original opus, which many readers are desperate to track down even though Goldman says that he's taken all the good parts and put them into *The Princess Bride* and the rest is really dry and boring.

"What I haven't seen yet is someone submitting to Del Rey the facsimile edition of Morgenstern's dry, dull tome. We could probably publish it very successfully..."

Suzy McKee Charnas has a new book coming from Tor this year, a sequel to *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines*, called *The Furies*.

Michael Crichton sells. Serious SF readers may ponder as to the reasons, but Ellen Key Harris of Del Rey has a few ideas: "Crichton has a *modus operandi*: first he finds a hot scientific or technological topic (for example, dinosaur DNA from the bellies of prehistoric mosquitoes). Then he revs it up and lets it run ahead of current developments, cursorily explaining the fictional solutions to current roadblocks (how to actually clone a viable dinosaur from that fragmentary DNA: fill in the blanks with frogs). He sets the book as near in the future as possible — in fact, nothing separates Crichton's fictional worlds from our own *except* the fictional scientific technical advance. And he then explains the technology or science to the reader as the plot unfolds (Malcolm expounding on chaos theory in *Jurassic Park*, or the mini-essay on reptiles *versus* birds that's inserted into the action near the end).

"Science Fiction has developed a style that's harder to read than is most fiction; Crichton has taken the subject matter of SF and divorced it from that style. Along with Tom Clancy, Michael Crichton has found a way to present advanced technology and scientific information (fictional or otherwise) to a mass audience in a palatable, easily digested format. You don't have to be an experienced reader to read Crichton; you certainly don't have to be an experienced SF reader. Crichton's books, and his astounding success, point out something that's not so obvious: to read Science Fiction requires specialized skills. And since a lot of people who lack these skills want to read

thrillers about the latest hot topics in science, Crichton has a huge market that regular SF can't touch".

## Magazines

**The Third Alternative** (Andy Cox, 5 Martins Lane, Witcham, Ely, Cambs. CB6 2LB, £2.50 per issue) This magazine concentrates on the slipstream which borders Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror with the aim of providing "the finest speculative literature, new writing that is not constrained by conventional plot-devices". The first issue includes work by Joel Lane, Andrew Darlington, Nicholas Royle, Lawrence Dyer, Steve Sneyd, Pete Crowther and Conrad Williams with a cover by Dave Mooring. Future issues will feature work by Neil Williamson, Jim Steel, David Logan, Norman Jope and David Chorlton.

**Mindsparks:** The latest issue of this new magazine focuses on science with an astrophysics article about the rotation of Hyperion, plus each issue aims to have a couple of hard science fiction stories. (Subscription \$18 for 12 issues from Molecudyne Research, PO Box 1379, Laurel, MD 20725-1379, USA).

**Expanse:** A hard-science, strictly Science Fictional magazine. The first issue has stories by L. Sprague de Camp, Mark Rich and an interview with John Brunner. (\$4.95 per issue, Box 43547, Baltimore, MD 21236-0547, USA).

## Music on the Shuttle

You may know that there's a custom on Shuttle missions for Mission Control to "wake up" astronauts by playing a song over the voice uplink. It's a different song every day, and it's usually chosen to be relevant to the mission. For some reason, this is scrupulously documented in the mission status reports issued to the press.

Filker and techie Frank Hayes's song "Cosmos" was played on recently to wake up the STS-61crew. Hayes used to be a member of Chicago science fiction fandom before he moved to California to become a Unix™ guru, become staggeringly famous, and made the (literal) Top of the Pops.

Other wakeup tunes on the mission to fix the Hubble Space Telescope included:

Friday: "Here I Come" by Rare Earth

Saturday: "Fanfare for the Common Man" by Aaron Copeland

Sunday: "With a Little Help from My Friends" by The Beatles

Monday: "Doctor My Eyes" by Jackson Browne

Tuesday: "I Can See Clearly Now" by Johnny Nash

Wednesday: "traditional Swiss song chosen by Mission Specialist Claude Nicollier"

Thursday: "Hard Day's Night," by The Beatles

Friday: Astronauts allowed to sleep in... They'd worked very hard and the contingency spacewalks were deemed unnecessary.

Saturday: "My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys" by Willie Nelson

## Klingon Information

The American publisher, Simon and Schuster, has realised the value of producing Klingon reference texts for Star Trek's fans with curiosity and questions about Klingon language, RP gamers wishing to lend some authenticity to a Klingon character, as well as students and professionals in the fields of linguistics, philology, computer science, and psychology who see the Klingon language as a useful metaphor in the classroom or simply wish to mix vocation with avocation. Klingon is not an exceptionally difficult language to learn, though it would be advisable for would-be students to get a large

supply of paper tissues to mop up the saliva which is forced out by the alien guttural sounds.

Apart from The Klingon Dictionary and the language tapes "Conversational Klingon" and "Power Klingon" in which one gets to actually hear Marc Okrand, the inventor of the Klingon language, get a sore throat over his Klingon consonants. Michael Dorn, who plays Worf in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, provides the narration for this latter tape, thereby ensuring that it is something not to be missed.

The Klingon Language Institute have sponsored four projects: the Klingon Writing Project, the Extended Corpus Project, the Klingon Bible Translation Project and the Klingon Shakespeare Restoration Project.

The Klingon Bible Translation Project is a project to translate the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (aka Old and New Testaments) into Klingon. One problem so far: there is no Klingon word for or concept of God. Shoulson used the word "joHa," Klingon for 'Great Lord.' The finished product will be called the Klingon Authorized Version. The Klingon Shakespeare Restoration Project seeks to translate Shakespearian prose from English into "the original Klingon".

## Andersons Are Go!

From February 25 to March 2 1994, the Cinematheque at the Hague presents a retrospective titled *Andersons Are Go!* - *The Supermarionation Story*, covering the complete Gerry and Sylvia Anderson puppet productions, i.e. *Thunderbirds*, *Captain Scarlet* and *Stingray*, as well as a number of special projects such as commercials and pop videos. Besides the special projects and both feature films *Thunderbirds Are Go!* and *Thunderbird Six*, an episode of each series will be screened in the original film format. The event will be combined with an exhibition of costumes, props, puppets, sets, merchandising items, etc. Moreover, all episodes of most series will be available on video for viewing on request. Both the exhibition and the screenings will be illustrated with a bi-lingual brochure.

The event will be opened by Sylvia Anderson who was not only the inspiration for *Thunderbirds*' Lady Penelope, but was also intimately connected with production of the Supermarionation series. More specifically, she was instrumental in creating the different formats as well as being involved in supplying character voices, writing the series scripts, wardrobe design and character development.

Technician and Director of Photography John Read and sculptress Mary Turner will be doing a demonstration of the Supermarionation technology, using original puppets and sets. This demonstration will be followed by an audience interview with both puppeteers, and Sylvia Anderson and Derek Meddings. Together with Gerry Anderson and Reg Hill they formed the nucleus of the original Supermarionation team.

Also, the British Mime Theatre Project is doing performances based on characters from the series and they will be appearing in the adjacent Theatre a/h Spui.

The location of the event is the Cinematheque in the Hague, which has at its disposal three screening rooms and a bar and library where one can converse informally. The main screening room has a 120 seat capacity, the two others can each hold 55 people. The Cinematheque is part of the new Theatre Complex at the Spui, which was designed by architect Herman Herzberger, and shares the complex with the World Wide Video Centre, the Theater aan het Spui and Stroom/Haags Centrum voor Beeldende Kunst. Within walking distance one can find the Nederlands Dans-theater and the Dr. Anton Philipszaal, home of the Residentie Orchestra.

The Cinematheque is not a commercial institution. Instead, it tries to stimulate the debate about the position and significance of film in a broader cultural sense. Besides daily screenings of new films that are



not released in the regular cinemas, cinematographic history is kept alive through regular showings of historically important films and by organising special events such as this retrospective.

ITC Entertainment, who owns the rights to characters and visual material, has reissued both the *Captain Scarlet* and *Thunderbirds* series in combination with a renewed merchandising effort. Both series are currently shown each Friday and Saturday at 1900 hrs. local time on BBC2 and Ned1 respectively.

The *Thunderbirds* television series had its world premiere on Dutch television on September 15, 1965. The first season was dubbed and met with an increasing popularity, especially when its timeslot was moved from Wednesday 9 pm to Saturday 7 pm. The Dutch merchandising campaign started in the wake of this popularity on June 9, 1966, two weeks after the last show of the season.

For more information, please contact Alex van der Wyck, Het Haags Filmhuis, Spui 191, 2511 The Hague, The Netherlands (tel: +31 70 3459900).

## The BSFA Awards for 1993

### Nicholas Mahoney

If you have not already filled in your BSFA award form then you could do worse than filling it in right now.

If you've not filled it in and you're still reading then perhaps you haven't read the books and stories. It would be an understatement to say that you could do a lot worse than doing so as soon as possible and then filling the form in.

If you've got this far you can obviously put up with articles written to a deadline and possibly have not considered the logistics of how you would read the books and stories. For those who like to follow simple straightforward plans read on (for those who don't skip the next two paragraphs).

Novels: Plan A — Go to the library, search for the books on the list, if you can't get them order them (in my library this costs 35p per book (not exactly a fortune unless you're as poor as me — but then again, I manage). Any books the library is tardy in providing may be begged or borrowed off friends or the ultimate solution may have to come into play, namely Plan B: write to The Andromeda Bookshop, 84 Suffolk Street, Birmingham B1 1TA or any other specialist bookshop and say what you are interested in buying (or send the money if you think you can telepath the amount of postage you'll have to pay) then later on buy it (it is a possibility that even this will not turn up a copy of the book — such is the value publishers place on any one book). If you've got this far, then I'm sorry but the BSFA cannot afford to buy you a medal, but probably would if it could and knew of your efforts.

If you've not read the short stories then ... what's the problem? Subscribe to *Interzone*, buy *New Worlds*, buy the back copies of *Interzone*, read your friend's magazines. Economics is cruel to publications like *New Worlds*, *Interzone* ... and *The Lyre*, so for Christ's sake support them if you care about the future of British SF. It will not be an easy task to try and actually find a copy of *New Worlds* in a bookshop, for instance, but think of it as a challenge and then again if all else fails — plan B applies.

I will revive the operations of the BSFA jury now that the pressure has come off a bit, anyone who wants to start the ball rolling again should drop me a line and anyone else out there who just wants to then just drop me a line.

One last thought: reading all the nominations is not strictly necessary — who knows? Perhaps you bear a grudge against one of the authors after a previous bad experience, perhaps you'll find one of the

nominations unreadable. Many of the reasons for not voting aren't reason enough. Forms should reach me before I set off for the Eastercon (say March 29 1994) unless you're going to vote when you get there. Send now and you only need a second class stamp.

## A Master of our Art

### Fred Lerner

"He is for everyone who responds to vividness, word magic, sheer storytelling. Most readers go on to discover the subtleties and profundities ... Thus his influence pervades modern science fiction and fantasy writing". Thus Poul Anderson, writing in praise of a writer who was born in the 19th century and died in the 20th. He wrote of new inventions and future wars, and warned of the social consequences of technological change. And he exerted an immense influence on modern science fiction.

I'm not speaking of Jules Verne (1828-1905) or H.G. Wells (1866-1946). True, both names come immediately to mind when we seek the roots of science fiction. When Hugo Gernsback founded the first real SF magazine in 1926, he filled out the early issues of *Amazing Stories* with reprints of their stories. The writers who shaped modern science fiction — Heinlein, Asimov, van Vogt, De Camp — read Verne and Wells as boys. But today their works have achieved the status of classics: much honoured but little read. It was their contemporary Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) who has exerted the most lasting influence on modern science fiction.

Like Verne and Wells, Kipling wrote stories whose subject-matter is explicitly science-fictional. "With the Night Mail: A Story of 2000 A.D." portrays futuristic aviation in a journalistic present-tense that recalls Kipling's years as a teenaged subeditor on Anglo-Indian newspapers. "The Eye of Allah" deals with the introduction of advanced technology into a primitive society that may not be ready for it.

But it is not this explicit use of science and technology in some of his stories that makes Kipling so important to modern science fiction. Sam Moskowitz and Bruce Franklin have shown that many of Kipling's contemporaries and predecessors wrote scientific fiction. Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, Mark Twain and Conan Doyle were among them; yet echoes of their work are seldom seen in today's science fiction. Kipling's appeal to modern readers lies instead in his approach and his technique.

The real subject-matter of Rudyard Kipling's writing, whether in prose or verse, is the world's work and the people who do it. Whether that work be manual or intellectual, creative or administrative, the performance of his work is the most important thing in a man's life. As Disko Troop says in *Captains Courageous* "the most interesting thing in the world is to find out how the next man gets his vittles".

That is not a view shared by most of 20th-century literature; nor is Kipling's special sympathy with the work of Empire. This explains why Rudyard Kipling has received less attention from the literary community than his writings deserve. But he was an enormously popular writer, especially among working people; and even to this day he is widely quoted, often by people who would be shocked to learn the source of the colourful expressions they so often use. Today's science fiction writers find their audience among the same strata of society that in Victoria's time read Kipling: adults engaged in the shaping of our world and young people exploring what life has to offer.

Kipling faced the same technical problem that the science fiction writer does: the need to make an alien time and place understandable to his audience. Whether the scene be India under the British Raj or Mars under the Solar Federation, the reader needs to know the

essential differences in biology, technology, and sociology that govern the characters and their actions. This information needs to be provided without interfering with the narrative: the reader wants a story, not a lesson.

The legendary editor John Campbell — the man who brought about the Golden Age of science fiction — once explained why he considered Rudyard Kipling the first modern science fiction writer. He was the first to go beyond simply providing the reader with the essential background information needed to read his story. "With the Night Mail" is a pseudo-journalistic account of trans-Atlantic dirigible traffic. In its original magazine appearance in 1905, the text was surrounded with weather advisories, classified advertisements, shipping notices, and a wide range of other snippets intended to suggest that the tale was in fact appearing in a magazine published in 2000. All this stage business was extraneous to the story, strictly speaking; but it did help to establish the setting.

Kipling had learned this trick in India. His original Anglo-Indian readership knew the customs and institutions and landscapes of British India at first hand. But when he began writing for a wider British and American audience, he had to provide his new readers with enough information for them to understand what was going on. In his earliest stories and verse he made liberal use of footnotes, but he evolved more subtle methods as his talent matured. A combination of outright exposition, sparingly used, and contextual clues, generously sprinkled through the narrative offered the needed background. In *Kim* and other stories of India he uses King James English to indicate that characters are speaking in Hindustani; this is never explained, but it gets the message across subliminally.

Modern science fiction writers and their readers have become so accustomed to this sort of thing — and so dependent on it — that it has made the genre literally unreadable to many who have not learned its reading protocols. Samuel R. Delany has observed that a statement that is meaningless in mimetic fiction (such as "The red sun is high, the blue low") can be a matter of simple description in science fiction, and a statement that could only be metaphorical ("Her world exploded") might be meant as literal fact in SF. It is this divergence in the way words are used, rather than any particular exoticism of subject-matter or the use of experimental narrative strategies (here SF is usually very conservative) that separates modern science fiction from the literary mainstream. And all this began with Kipling.

It is certainly a matter of fact that Kipling's works are immensely popular among SF writers. Allusions to Kipling in story titles and quotations from his verse may be found throughout the genre. Autobiographical essays and story introductions widely acknowledge Kipling as a favourite writer and a major inspiration. David Drake and Sandra Miesel have assembled two anthologies of stories written under the influence of Kipling, accompanied by introductions in which the likes of Poul Anderson, L. Sprague de Camp, Joe Haldeman, and Gene Wolfe describe the impact that reading Kipling has had on their own writing. (*Heads to the Storm and A Separate Star* were published by Baen in 1989).

But the best way to understand why Kipling has exerted so great an influence over modern science fiction is to read his own work. Begin with *Kim*, the most successful evocation of an alien world ever produced in English. Follow the Grand Trunk Road toward the Northwest Frontier, and watch the parade of cultures that young Kimball O'Hara encounters. Place yourself in his position, that of a half-assimilated stranger in a strange land; and observe carefully the uneven effects of an ancient society's encounter with a technologically advanced culture. SF writers have found *Kim* so appealing that several have told their own versions of the story: Robert Heinlein's *Citizens of the Galaxy*, Poul Anderson's *The Game of Empire*, Patricia Wrede's *Marellon the Magician*.

Then look at *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*, two collections of linked stories in which Kipling brings incidents of

English history and pre-history to life both for the children for whom the books were ostensibly written and for their elders. One could classify them as time-travel stories, thus bringing them into the taxonomy of science fiction; but their real relevance lies in the careful evocation of time and place echoed in so many later stories which bring a modern observer into direct contact with earlier days.

And by all means read Kipling's own science fiction and fantasy stories. This has been made much easier by the recent publication of two volumes, *Kipling's Science Fiction and Kipling's Fantasy*, in which the noted British SF writer John Brunner has brought together pieces from the thirty-six volumes of Kipling's collected works. (Both were published by Tor in 1992).

Among the nine stories in *Kipling's Science Fiction* are "With the Night Mail" and its sequel "As Easy as A.B.C.", which explore the social as well as the technical side of a world economy based on air traffic. Technological change touches human lives, individually as well as collectively, and in these stories we see that ordinary people as well as heroes will be affected by aerial technology and the social structures set up to govern it. In "Wireless" Kipling captures the excitement of the infant science of radio, and the single-mindedness of the young experimenter. "There's nothing we shan't be able to do in the next ten years. I want to live — my God, how I want to live and see it develop!" In parallel with the transmission of Morse across the ether, we share the unconscious communication of a dying lover with the poet who a century before had shared both his emotion and his consumption. "The Eye of Allah" explores a future that might have been, from the perspective of a 13th-century abbey. Kipling manages to recreate convincingly and empathetically the mediaeval attitude toward science and faith. The collection also includes a tall tale about a sea-monster ("A Matter of Fact"), two stories that get inside the soul of great machines ("The Ship That Found Herself" and ".007"), and explorations of the frontiers of psychology ("In the Same Boat") and medicine ("Unprofessional").

The variety of *Kipling's Fantasy* includes children's tales from the *Just-So Stories* ("The Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo") and *Rewards and Fairies* ("The Knife and the Naked Chalk") as well as sombre stories like "They" and "The Gardener" that recall the tragedies of Kipling's own life. In "The Finances of the Gods" and "The Bridge-Builders" Kipling works with the material of Indian legend, while "The House Surgeon" is a very English ghost story. "By Word of Mouth" and "The Children of the Zodiac" recall Kipling's brushes with death. But the most interesting stories in this collection are "The Finest Story in the World" and "The Village That Voted the Earth Was Flat", two tales that explore that most mysterious of human activities, the act of artistic creation. (If you do not consider a perfectly-crafted hoax the epitome of the creative impulse, you might not like "Village". If you hold the Art of Getting Even in high esteem, you will find it one of the funniest things you have ever read).

And there's more where they come from. Brunner omits "The Brushwood Boy" and "The Army of a Dream", and no doubt other Kipling enthusiasts will think of additional tales that might have been included. Still, anyone who reads these two books will come away with a good idea of Kipling's astonishing versatility as well as his prodigious capacities as a storyteller. The wide range of his subject-matter — his stories are set on every continent, and in every time from the days of the cavemen to the 21st century — together with the contemporary and historical allusions that dot his works can make Kipling rough going for the unprepared reader. Here is where John Brunner's efforts pay off. He knows his Kipling, he knows his English cultural history, and he knows his American audience. In a brief introduction to each story, Brunner explains words and concepts that might puzzle today's American reader.

Rudyard Kipling is a tremendously versatile writer, a superb literary craftsman, and an inspiration to those who have chosen to write of people and the work that they do. Any collection of science fiction and

fantasy will inevitably include many stories written under his influence. A good science fiction collection should also include Kipling's own contributions to the genre. John Brunner has made it easy to do so with these two attractively-packaged story collection.

(This article originally appeared in the October 1993 issue of *Voice of Youth Advocates*, a magazine for librarians working with teenagers in school and public libraries. It was reprinted in *Lofgeornost*, the November 1993 contribution by Fred for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association (FAPA) — for details of joining, contact Seth Goldberg at P.O. Box 271986, Concord, CA 94527, USA.

## Kipling on Tape

Fred Lerner

*Cold Iron*. Leslie Fish, with Catherine Cook. El Cerrito, California: Off Centaur Publications, 1986.

*Keep on Kipling*. Peter Bellamy, with Chris Birch and Anthea Bellamy. Workington, Cumbria: Fellside Recordings, 1987.

*Rudyard Kipling Made Exceedingly Good Songs*. Peter Bellamy, with Jamie O'Dwyer and Sharon and the Students. Keighley, West Yorkshire: [Peter Bellamy], 1989.

*Rudyard Kipling's Puck's Song*. Peter Bellamy [with others]. Keighley, West Yorkshire: [Peter Bellamy], 1990. [Re-recorded with the earlier LP records *Oak, Ash and Thorn* and *Merlin's Isle of Grammar*].

*Soldiers Three: Rudyard Kipling Songs*. Peter Bellamy, with Jamie O'Dwyer, Maggie Boyle, Steve Tilston and Keith Marsden. Keighley, West Yorkshire: [Peter Bellamy], 1990.

*The Undertaker's Horse*. Leslie Fish, with Dominic Bridwell, Margie Butler, Catherine Cook, Ellen Guon, Frank Hayes, Paul Macdonald, Keith Marcum, Arlin Robins, and Kevin Roche. El Cerrito: Off Centaur Publications, 1985.

Rudyard Kipling is famous as a poet, but it would be just as accurate to call him a songwriter. Ever since the Boer War — when his poem "The Absent-Minded Beggar", set to a tune by Sir Arthur Sullivan, raised large sums for the relief of soldiers' families — Kipling's verse has been sung as often as it has been recited. In every decade of this century Kipling has been musically interpreted in contemporary idiom, whether it be that of the turn-of-the-century music hall, mid-century swing, or the folk-inspired singer-songwriter tradition of our own day. For as long as I have been involved with science fiction, I have heard Kipling's songs sung at parties and conventions; but the tunes to which they were set were passed on only by word of mouth. In recent years, both in Britain and America, contemporary settings of Kipling poems have been released on tape cassette. Two very different singers have made a good start of displaying Rudyard Kipling's incredible virtuosity and versatility to the folk audience.

Leslie Fish has a crisp voice well suited to Kipling's verse, though her vocal range is not all that it might be. She is not always exacting in her fidelity to the words Kipling wrote: I don't believe that her substitution of "bastard" for "rogue" in the chorus to "The Sergeant's Weddin" (*The Undertaker's Horse*) improves either Kipling's scansion or his argument. I would also quibble with her two-syllable rendering of Lalage's name in "Rimini" (*Cold Iron*); but perhaps my preference for the more Latinate three-syllable pronunciation comes from hearing Karen Anderson sing it that way. All of which proves that the richness of Kipling extends to the near-infinite variety of ways to sing his songs. There is something precisely right about her interpretation of "We and They" (*The Undertaker's Horse*) and "The King" (*Cold Iron*); it is obvious that Leslie Fish not only knows and loves Kipling, she truly understands what he is saying in his verse. Certainly the poems that Leslie Fish has selected for *Cold Iron* and *The Undertaker's Horse* represent the immense range of Kipling's thematic

concerns and metrical forms. I find myself humming, whistling, and singing many of her adaptations of Kipling as I go about my daily business, and whenever I take down my copy of *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: The Definitive Edition*, I find her tunes popping into my head.

The late Peter Bellamy brought a wider variety to the business of singing Kipling. On his four cassettes he ranges from madrigal to music hall in his interpretations, with frequent detours into ballad, marching-song, and sea-chanty. A microcosm of this versatility may be found on my favourite of these cassettes, *Keep on Kipling*, which demonstrates as well the wide range of themes, voices, and techniques that Kipling employed in his verse. I was delighted by Bellamy's steady rendering of "The Land", Kipling's tribute to the English yeoman's love and respect for English earth; this is a poem that I had long known and loved. And I was blown away by "A Pilgrim's Way", in which Bellamy transforms an obscure poem — at least, I had no memory of it — into an ebullient celebration of the human spirit.

Of *Puck's Songs* my own choices would include "Philadelphia" and "Our Fathers of Old" lively tributes to the changeability of things. On *Rudyard Kipling Made Exceedingly Good Songs*, "The Roman Centurion's Song" is a stirring love-song to England, reflecting Kipling's own discovery of his ancestral soil; Bellamy fittingly renders it unaccompanied, with the bluntness of a forty years' soldier. I don't care for his setting of "Recessional", which sounds more like a dirge. (I prefer the one found in older Anglican hymnals, a tune that Americans may know better as the Navy Hymn). And I'm not all that fond of most of the songs on *Soldiers Three* — these settings of the *Barrack Room Ballads* don't show the variety that I admire in the other tapes. (But I'd very much like someday to see Tony Perini's play for which the settings were written).

An officer in the Kipling Society as well as a member of the folk group The Young Tradition, Peter Bellamy was uniquely qualified to interpret Kipling. It is a pity that these four tapes are all that we shall have; it is our good fortune that we have them. Together with Leslie Fish's two recordings (and may we someday soon have more!) they add another dimension to the enjoyment of Rudyard Kipling's polymorphous verse.

*Cold Iron* and *The Undertaker's Horse* are available by mail from Baen Books, Dept. Firebird, 260 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10001. The price is \$11 per tape, plus a postage/handling fee of \$1.75 for the first item and \$0.50 for each additional item. They are also available in the dealer's rooms at many science fiction conventions. In the UK, they may be available from Marion van der Voort at the bookshop At the Sign of the Dragon (tel: 081 876 3855).

The four Peter Bellamy tapes are available by mail from Jenny Bellamy, 16 Agnes Street, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 6AE. *Keep on Kipling* is £8.50 in the UK and \$18 in the US. *Soldiers Three* and *Puck's Songs* are £8 each (\$18 US). *Rudyard Kipling Made Exceedingly Good Songs* is £5.50 (\$12 US). In all cases postage is included in the quoted price. There is as yet no American distributor of these tapes.

Random Factors has just announced the release of *Our Fathers of Old*, the new Leslie Fish tape of Kipling poetry. On side A is "A General Summary", "A Servant When He Reigneth", "The First Chantry", "Helen All Alone", "The Disciple", "Jobson's Amen", "The Roman Centurion's Song"; on side B is "The Female of the Species", "The Portent", "Song of the Men's Side", "Our Fathers Of Old", "Harp Song of the Dane Women", "In the Neolithic Age" and "Recessional".

Price: \$12.00 plus \$1.50 shipping from Random Factors, 3754 W. 170th St; Torrance, CA 90504-1204, U.S.A.

## Kipling on Diskette

Forgotten Futures: Collection I - The A.B.C. Files: A Role Playing Game & Sourcebook for Kipling's Scientific Romances

This is the first of a series of resource collections, aimed primarily at users of table-top role playing games, but also relevant to anyone with an interest in early science fiction.

Each collection will look at neglected works in the genre. For copyright reasons these will probably date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The contents will include the full text of at least two stories, plus illustrations and a guidebook to the world depicted. For role-players there is a game system and a long adventure.

The A.B.C. Files are based on Kipling's scientific romances, written before the First World War. In two stories, the first with some extra material from "...the magazine in which it appeared", Kipling painted a vivid vision of the world of the twenty-first century. Of course it's a world that's rather different from the one we expect to see; read the stories to find out how!

This first pack is longer than most role playing games and many novels. It represents nearly a year's work. This is a table-top role playing game and resource pack, mostly in the form of ASCII text and .GIF graphics files, based on 19th and early 20th century scientific romances (the predecessors of science fiction). It contains two stories by Rudyard Kipling, "With The Night Mail" and "As Easy As A.B.C.", plus additional material and monochrome .GIF graphics files based on these stories, role playing rules, and a role-playing adventure.

This collection is distributed as a user supported publication. If you like it you are encouraged to register - registered users will be the first to receive the next collection of this series.

For further information, please contact Marcus L. Rowland, 22 Westbourne Park Villas, London W2 5EA

## Clubs

Cambridgeshire's fourth Fantasy Fair is to be held on April 10 at The Cresset, Bretton, Peterborough. Guests will include Peter Hamilton, marking the launch of *A Quantum Murder*, his second novel, as well as Rich Parsons and Tony Keaveny celebrating the paperback publication of their ribald yarn *Colin the Librarian*. Admission will be £1, and it will be open 10am-4pm.

May will see a handful of events to celebrate the club's eighteenth birthday. This will include an evening of literate fantasy (ie no elves) with local publisher Dedalus. Guests should include Brian Stableford (editor), Eric Lane and Robert Irwin (author of *The Arabian Nightmare*). The evening (co-presented with *Writers in Peterborough*) will take place on May 18 at the Great Northern Hotel, admission £3.

Other events later in the year will include the fortieth anniversary of local author John Kippax's first SF publications and the centenary of the death of Lady Charlotte Guest.

*A Change of Zinery* is the club magazine, which prints fiction, reports, interviews and news about the club, which meets every Wednesday at various venues around the city. The first Wednesday of the month is a discussion evening held at the Bluebell Inn, Dogsthorpe, which occasionally has special guests and the third Wednesday is a social night held in the Poachers Bar of the Great Northern Hotel, opposite Peterborough's BR station.

If you need more information, please write to Pete Cox, 58 Pennington, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, PE2 0RB.

The Birmingham Science Fiction Group ("The Brum Group") meets at 7.45pm on the third Friday of every month (unless otherwise notified) in the upstairs Function Room of the Australian Bar, corner of Hurst Street and Bromsgrove Street in Birmingham city centre. More details

from Martin Tudor, 845 Alum Rock Road, Birmingham B8 2AG (tel: 021 327 3023).

One fairly standard query about Science Fiction tends to centre on whether there are any SF clubs in a particular area. The answer tends to be a modified affirmative and the questioner will then disappear into a black hole and never be heard of again, though the club may see him or her once.

The few people who do manage to climb out of this black hole, an achievement in itself, tend to comment that their expectations of SF clubs were so completely diverse from the reality they encounter that they tend to flee back to the safety of passive SF reading immediately. When questioned closely, usually over the several pints necessary to break down the corseted British reserve which refuses to make any slightly critical comments, they tend to first say that finding the club was difficult enough, managing to say more than "Would anyone like a drink?" impossible and that the words "Science Fiction" were taboo.

It is true that Science Fiction clubs do not tend to advertise widely. One honourable exception here is the Brum group in Birmingham which **does** have regular meetings with SF speakers, **does** advertise, **does** provide a monthly newsletter with SF news and events and **does** run an annual convention. The club has strong links with the Andromeda Bookshop in the city centre and the organisers are active in contacting publishers and authors. The Brum group has formal meetings for which people pay a nominal sum and this is probably the reason why it is so successful, for if a group of friends meet informally in a pub, they will not have the seed corn amount of money to pay for function space or advertising which may attract new members and, after a while, they may prefer the social part of the meeting rather than the ostensible purpose of meeting at all.

It is not enough to advertise though. My first visit to the local SF group was a total disaster. It was in the Christmas run up when the pub was crowded and the barman harassed (besides, I think he was either temporary or new). He pointed in one way with one hand and with the other implied strongly that he would prefer to sell drinks any day and I found myself in the middle of a crowd of stockbrokers who were discussing scarlet leather and with an exotic, bitter drink and feeling totally alone. It was an interesting evening; but I then decided to arrange to meet an official club contact next time and after that I could recognise a few people and join them.

The small club faces tremendous problems about meeting. To meet in a pub is a popular choice. There is normally a range of drink to suit every taste, though not every pocket and the company can get more congenial after a couple of rounds. But while a pub can be central, the pub management want to attract a maximum number of people and, besides, a group of people discussing Science Fiction does not do much for the atmosphere and it certainly does not do much for the drink sales. So a group may find themselves competing with all sorts of money-making gimmicks: a pool table crammed into too small a space so that conversation is interrupted by periodic grabs at glasses to stop them being knocked over by cues, a games machine producing irritating ditties and, even worse, the chunk, chunk, chunk of someone else winning a jackpot or, which is the ultimate sabotage of pub management, a karaoke evening. I defy anyone to discuss SF seriously, or even have any form of civilised discussion when their ears are assaulted by overly loud "musical" backing and the sort of singing which should be patented as sonic drills.

If the beer is good, the club may book a meeting room. A co-operative management may benefit from this and may provide extras, such as occasional food. It can be a mutually beneficial arrangement until either one party gets greedy and the other party faces dwindling numbers. Numbers in any group fluctuate according to all sorts of market forces (which, in itself, is a powerful argument for advertising and continually attracting new people in) and there is nothing worse than a buffet laid on for thirty and two people turning up.

However, even when a new member has plucked up the courage to turn up at a group, it may seem daunting to be faced with a group of people who appear to have known each other for ever. This is probably not true and everyone will probably have slightly different tastes in SF, but this does not help the initial awkwardness of trying to participate in the conversation. It is easy to make the most embarrassing blunders, to offer to tell fortunes when people would prefer to discuss Rudy Rucker, or to discuss Rudy Rucker in — say — a David Eddings fan club situation. But while the new member may appear to be on probation for the first few meetings (assuming that he or she will feel it is worth while to return after the first), it is the new member who is the dominant party by representing one possible future for the group. A group which deters newcomers will stagnate and, even worse, consider this to be desirable. It's easy to say that few people respond to advertising, the ones who do are not suitable, the club is comfortable and will discuss Science Fiction at any time, honest. It's even easier to start thinking that people will need to be filtered, almost censored, before they are permitted to join a club, and that they will need to be sponsored by existing members who will then take the responsibility if they reveal some shocking vice. Sure it's easy. But it's not productive for the future of the club.

## Media

### Skywatching

#### Mark Ogier

Sequels. Love them or hate them, they are one of those things that film fans crave, even if they openly protest that there are too many being made. How many of us see a really good film, and end up wanting more? And how many of us go along to see the sequel and come away wishing we hadn't bothered? Ideally, a sequel should enhance the ideas of the original. But it doesn't always work like that, and many just end up being a thinly disguised re-hash.

Way back in the early 1980s, Canadian film maker and master of the bizarre David Cronenberg wrote and directed a relatively low-key (for him) film about powerful telepaths called *Scanners*. It was not among his best movies; that work was still in the future. But it contained one of the most notorious scenes in SF and Horror film history at the time, that of a man's head exploding in full view of the camera. Such effects are two a penny these days, but back then this in itself was enough to get people in to see the film.

But although *Scanners* had some good ideas, it lacked any sense of direction. The ending had the good Scanner and the bad Scanner merging to become one after a special effects-packed battle, and I suppose if a sequel had to be made it could have focused on the future of this "gestalt" being. Yet there seemed to be no real demand for it, so no sequel appeared, and like most of Cronenberg's work it looked destined to stand on its own.

However, Hollywood producers have never let a potentially commercial idea go to waste. No doubt thinking that there was more mileage in a more action oriented movie based around *Scanners*, they came up with a sequel about ten years later called *The New Order*. Watching this effort on Sky recently made me wonder why they bothered.

Yes, the exploding head effect is in there, along with lots of other shots of actors contorting their faces into paroxysms of fake pain while their necks bulge. But what is not there is anything like a decent plot. The film follows the fortunes of the son of the Scanner from the first movie, as he discovers his identity and tries to come to terms with his ability.

Of course, there are bad guys who want to use his powers to further their own ends, so we end up with lots of chasing around as the goody realises what they are up to and decides to put a stop to it.

But because it is almost impossible for a "normal" person to kill a Scanner, the only way the baddies can win is for them to use a bad Scanner. So, like the first film, the ending is simply a battle between good and bad Scanners. OK, so there are some good effects and the undiscerning might enjoy the action set-pieces, but it's a pretty thin retreat of the original.

So the sequel to *Scanners* did not really work. It passed from the cinemas without doing very much, and I doubt if anyone could have suspected what would happen next. Yup — *Scanners 3*.

And what is part three (called either *The Takeover* in the US or *Scanner Force* in the UK) all about? Well, amazingly, it's about this good Scanner who tries to come to terms with his powers, while a bad Scanner sets about abusing them. Wow. And would you believe that the film contains the exploding head effect, and lots of shots of actors contorting their faces in paroxysms of fake pain while their necks bulge.

The twist in the film is that the goody and baddy are adopted brother and sister, and that the sister is really a goody until she takes a new drug developed by her scientist father to "help" Scanners.

Again, there is some decent action and this time there are also one or two cheap gags (probably trying to emulate the Schwarzenegger films), but in the end it all comes down to a Scanner battle to the death. But unlike the other two movies, this one leaves a clear way open for a direct sequel. I can hardly wait.

As regular readers (hello to both of you) may recall, Sky One has been screening the latest offspring of the *Star Trek* phenomena, *Deep Space Nine*. They actually finished the first season just before Christmas, giving us a bit of a treat by putting the last couple of episodes on consecutive days.

It took a while, but after what I felt was a shaky start, the series ended up being a worthy addition to the *ST* canon. In my humble opinion, the last half dozen or so episodes were gripping examples of tv SF at its best, with the sort of conflict between characters that one never saw in *Star Trek* or *The Next Generation*.

While one or two of the characters are still hard to bear (the British doctor is a bit of a wimp and takes some getting used to), others enliven the proceedings whenever they appear. Foremost among these is the shape changing security officer Odo, whose dour comments and observations mask a complex character, whose true nature is hidden from all but a few, and which we glimpse only once or twice during the series. His relationship with the Ferengi bartender, Quark, is a double act reminiscent of the Spock/McCoy confrontations during the first series' heyday. And, probably more due to budgetary considerations than restrained writing, we do not get shapeshifting thrust down our throat every episode.

As is typical of *Star Trek*, the stories manage to address issues that are relevant to life on Earth today, as well as making damn good entertainment. During the first season religious intolerance, war crimes and terrorism were among the themes picked up.

*DS9* is not everyone's idea of good *Trek*, but if the doubters could look at it without comparing it to the classic series of *TNG*, I think they would be pleasantly surprised.

## SF and Fantasy on Video

Geoff Cowie

### Current releases:

**Firetripper** (Manga Video MANV 1028, PAL, 49 mins, cert. PG, £8.99) This is the first of the "Rumic World" series: unconnected videos based on stories by famous artist/storyteller Rumiko Takahashi. It's an intricate time-travel story which starts with forebodings of danger; after the dramatic credit sequences, the seventeen year old schoolgirl heroine, Sukuko, is seen looking after a little boy, Shu, who has just had an operation. With little warning, a massive gas explosion occurs and throws her back in time to a battlefield in medieval Japan. She is rescued from lecherous bandits by a young warrior, and brought back to his village where he lives with his adoptive father and young sister, Suzu.

Suzu, no fainting cherry blossom, she, soon has Shukumaru searching the battlefield for the missing boy, while the villagers prepare to repel a bandit raid. After more dramatic events the circle of time becomes complete...

Try not to be put off by the embarrassing "rubbish for the kids" cassette cover (you can easily reverse it). The English licencees clearly didn't know what to do with the stylish Japanese original, but it is fit for adults, and despite the funny voices on the English soundtrack it has plenty of drama and human interest — and it's cheap. But if money is no object you should seek out the superior and better-sounding American sub titled version (about £28), if not the Japanese laserdisc (about £60) which, as well as having better character voicing, should give you a shiver down the spine as the cart descends towards the medieval village.

As a footnote, the huge gasholders shown in the video do exist and are in a built-up area!

**Macross II Episodes 1 and 2, 3 and 4** (Kiseki Films KIS3001, KIS3002, cert. 15, 50 mins, PAL, English dialogue, £10.99 each) Briefly, this is a six part sequel to the **Macross** series, which is perhaps better known through the American adaption, *Robotech*. It's a Science Fiction adventure, with space battles and robot action as the youthful characters strive to repel or pacify the latest wave of alien invaders.

Annoying brat reporter Hibiki Kanzaki sets off to cover the invasion and encounters a mysterious young alien woman, Ishtar. Hibiki's love interest, ace space pilot, Sylvie Gena, is also involved in the battle, where the Earth fleet attempts to repel the invaders by projecting images of an idol-singer into space. Later, the alien warlord, Lord Feff, tries to recover his 'emulator', Ishtar.

It's best described as juvenile, but has some engaging features: for instance the aliens talk gibberish (subtitled) and the songs (also subtitled) are nice. And the opening sequence looks great on screen. Verdict: better than most tv SF.

At the time of writing, it was available exclusively from Virgin and Our Price Video outlets, but this may change.

**Crying Freeman, Chapter 3** (cert. 18, £8.99) Again, fairly brainless stuff, but quite a lot of fun, with attractive visuals, violent action, tasteful artistic nudity and more violent action. In this one, Freeman takes on an African guerilla organisation while Emu's loyalty and love are tested.

**Doomed Megalopolis, Chapter 3** (£8.99) Doesn't quite match the high standard set by the preceding chapters but worth having if you bought the other two. Yet another psychic defies Kato's latest attempt to ruin the megalopolis.

**Only You** (Anime Projects, 93 minutes, PAL, subtitled, cert PG, £12.99) First of the stylish and utterly hilarious Lum/Urusei Yatsura movies about 'annoying aliens'. Girl-chaser Ataru Moroboshi, already involved with a sexy demon from outer space, is kidnapped by a girl from planet E1 who wants to marry him. A glorious send up of the worst 'Siffy' clichés, complete with lively action, romantic entanglements and cute girls.

The best things about Urusei Yatsura (the title, itself a pun, means 'annoying people from outer space') are the strong characterisations, particularly the women, and the mixture of domestic Japanese life with wacky goings-on. This was immensely popular in Japan as a long-running comic and tv series, and with videos and six movies as well. It's also increasingly popular in the USA; now's your chance to see why. This is a British version of the US AnimateEgo edition. Support the small Bristol-based independent distributor (64 Stanley Med, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS12 0EG, p&p £1) and buy this video — I promise you won't regret it!

**Wild Palms** (Oliver Stone) (BBC videos, cert 15, 2 videos) It would be easy to carp about the confusing plot, excessive length, nasty characters, etc., but this was still the most *adult* treatment of SF we have had on our screens for some time, and for style, acting and ideas has much to commend it. Worth buying if you missed part or all of the tv screening.

February should see the video release of *Golgo 13 — the Professional* (cert 18) which has had cinema showings around the country. Apparently, it's a violent SF adventure starring an android secret agent.

A British video distribution and a Japanese producer are reported to be interested in licensing Savoy's controversial **Lord Horror** graphics series, created by David Britton.

**Akira** (Otomo) (ICA Projects/Manga Video, 124 mins, PAL, IWCV 1001, full 4:3 screen, dubbed, £12.99; IWCV 1002, widescreen, subtitled, double pack with production report, £19.99) The famous cyberpunk SF animated movie, shown on BBC2 on January 8. Note that the subtitled video release had hard-to-read subtitles on the picture and not *under* it as on BBC2.

"Akira" should be pronounced with all syllables short and equally stressed, ie "A-ki-ra". There is NO "ee" sound in it).

Finally, no less than three of the non-UK SF videos I mentioned last month should be released in the UK during 1994, probably dubbed.



# Virtual Reality: Thoughts on the BSFA

## Jackie McRobert

There should be an SF organisation.

It should be big: nationwide. It should be advertising in every library and bookshop in the UK. It should have agents in every area running meetings for its members. It should be recruiting at an unprecedented rate. It should be something so vital to SF that it would be irresistible to anyone even remotely interested in the genre, it should have a regular newsheet going out to all its members; informing them of meetings, new publications, conventions, all activity and news in the SF field. And, OK, even some media.

It should be run by people interested — nay, enthusiastic — about Science Fiction in all its various forms. It should be an ever-growing network which could and should be used by the members to convey information and ideas to one another. It should be unstoppable, a vast hive of activity carried by the sheer momentum of its own intensity.

At the very least it should, in some way, be able to inform every person out there of exactly what there is out there for them.

## Why isn't the BSFA like this?

When I asked my friend Ian Sorensen the above, he gave me an abridged version of the BSFA's history. It goes something like this:— In the beginning, the BSFA was founded to give information to fans which allowed them to contact one another. It also ran conventions. And even had a library (SF books being harder to come by back then). Basically, its aim was to promote Science Fiction in all its forms.

These sound like fine and noble intentions to me. What it doesn't sound like is the BSFA as it is today. At least, I assume not — you see, I don't know anything about it really — and that can't be right either.

## So what happened then?

Apparently, these aims became redundant as fandom grew. From then, the opportunities were more apparent to anyone who wanted to be active, especially as SF spread through the media and into other areas. What the BSFA ended up with was a small proportion of the available, able, active people wanting to do things.

Any organisation is only as good as the sum of its parts, and the parts that made up the BSFA were wearing down. It is perfectly understandable, indeed, it's a time worn fact, that a few energetic, enthusiastic and active people who get very little response for their huge efforts become dispirited and therefore lose their enthusiasm. And the organisation lies dormant, at least until another active person or group comes along.

The question is: will the BSFA ever be able to regain its former status?

SF has come to mean so many different things to so many people that it seems improbable that it could ever satisfy the needs of what has become a very diverse collection of people, each of whom would call themselves an SF fan (I miss the fifties — and I wasn't even there!)

My own personal dilemma is: do I join and try to make something of it; try to tell people what it could be; try to make it into what I know it could be. Or should I save myself from the grisly fate of being ground down by the apathy which seems to afflict present day SF fans?

## WriteBack

If there is anything you wish to discuss, whether SF or not (but preferably SF related), please write to Jenny and Steve Glover at 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP by:

## Deadline 15 March 1994

### My life's too short

**Jim England, Roselea, The Compa, Kinver, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY7 6HT**

In asking (*Matrix 109*) "will Jim England be taking advantage of what he obviously considers to be a golden opportunity?" the BSFA treasurer misrepresents my views. First, I am too bloody old to consider life membership for £150 to be a "golden opportunity". Second, I question what "Life" membership means. Is it like so-called "life" imprisonment? (To suggest that the offer is safe because young people are unlikely to take it up is odd, to say the least). Presumably, it can mean "until the BSFA ceases to exist".

The short-termism and shenanigans of governments come to mind.

Not even BSFA officials can know what the future has in store, within (say) ten years.

Is there a faint whiff of acetamide?

### Science and Fantasy

**Pam Baddeley**

Bad fantasy is guilty of the "wave a magic wand" syndrome but the better stuff recognises that there are penalties to pay eg magic takes a lot out of the practitioner and/or magicians are persecuted by the state religion. (Examples include Katherine Kurtz, Barbara Hamly). Circumstances may force the practitioner to break magical laws and incur persecution by their fellow wizards. (Examples — Sheila Gilluly, Barbara Hamly's *Silicon Mage* series).

As for the general aversion to science, as well as the factors mentioned, you only have to look at the OTT films produced in the 1950s about the wonders of nuclear power and other 'marvels of the age' to see that science was presented as a cure-all. When it turned out to be beset with problems like any other human endeavour, especially because of a lot of scientists took a 'science for science's sake attitude and handed all the responsibility to politicians, people became more and more disillusioned. This process began slowly in the early 1960s with books like Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and gained momentum in the 1970s with the growth of the environmental movement. It became obvious that a blind worship of science, coupled with a determination to do everything on the cheap and use the planet as a colossal dump, was causing terrible environmental damage. So a lot of people were turned off science.

I think the other main element in Britain is the Oxbridge prejudice in favour of "the arts" which means that a lot of influential people including politicians are ignorant of the basics of science and place it well below the arts.

Just a quick response to Harry Andruschak's view. I think the cut and dried view he puts forward is a bit simplistic. Commonsense shows there is a lot of variation between individual women and men and between ethnic groups. Examples of tall big-boned women like the woman who played the She-Devil in *Life and Loves of a She-Devil*, or of strong hefty women like female shotputters obviously are taller

and/or stronger than a lot of men. If he'd prefaced his remarks with "the average" it would have made more sense. In any case, I don't see the need to bar men from space travel — smaller people of both sexes would surely be acceptable?

### Philip Muldowney, Golden Harvest, Tamerton Foliot Road, Looseleigh Cross, Plymouth PL6 5ES

Ouch! Well, Elizabeth Billinger did put me in my place, did she not? [About the VAT threshold]. Although whether a sidebar comment on VAT deserved the full forty gun broadside, I am not too sure. Anyway, the observation is irrelevant now, as our beloved Chancellor decided not to put VAT on printed matter. Now was that the case of a brilliantly organised PR campaign by the publishing industry, or a smokescreen by the Chancellor who never intended to impose it anyway? The only problem now, of course, is that with the biggest tax increases ever in peace time, due to hit us in April, no one will be able to afford to buy books.

One question more about voluntary registration for VAT. Oh and bear in mind, I am not a *professional*, so I may be completely wrong here. If we register voluntarily for VAT, is it not the case that we should be able to reclaim all the VAT on the printing and distribution services that are costing us so dear? So, since we do not have to charge VAT, and since VAT details would not be "frightening" to carry out, would we not be quids in if the BSFA did register? I would be interested to know.

The paperback bestseller lists for 1993, which appeared in *The Guardian* on 11 January 1994, make somewhat ambivalent reading for SF fans. I tabulate the authors, position and sales below.

- 1 *Jurassic Park*, Michael Crichton: 1,018,642
- 2 *Gerald's Game*, Stephen King: 453,945
- 13 *Mostly Harmless*, Douglas Adams: 449,986
- 17 *Dolores Clayborne*, Stephen King: 427,740
- 30 *Lords and Ladies*, Terry Pratchett: 261,420
- 32 *Portent*, James Herbert: 256,115
- 33 *Small Gods*, Terry Pratchett: 252,244
- 56 *Domes of Fire*, David Eddings: 153,021
- 68 *Elf Queen of Shannara*, Terry Brooks: 140,555
- 69 *Only you can save Mankind*, Terry Pratchett: 136,359
- 89 *The Crow Road*, Iain Banks: 110,779
- 91 *Mistress of the Empire*, Feist and Wurts: 107,917
- 99 *The King's Buccaneer*, Raymond Feist: 98,973.

Sales are total for home and overseas, publication date makes a big difference. *The King's Buccaneer*, for instance, was only published in December, but still made the top hundred. Apart from the massive sales of *Jurassic Park*, film and all, and the proven track record of Douglas Adams, not one SF title made the top hundred. Now that is a depressing prospect for the genre. On the other hand, the success of Terry Pratchett is quite remarkable. Three books in the top hundred, with combined sales of 650,023, that is a truly fantastic achievement. Four epic fantasies also make the bottom half, no wonder those *magnum opi* are crowding out the SF titles. Sales speak!

Curiously enough, these sales figures tie in with your editorial, and the conclusion about fantasy. Most of the epic fantasies are bought and read by women, and they bear more relation to the historical novel than the science fiction novel. This may well explain the decline of the historical novel over the last decade. Its place has been usurped by a brand that needs less research, and less thinking.

## Reaction to Akira

### Daniel Buck, Boat of Garten, Kincardine PH24 3BY

Having studiously avoided the Anime columns in past issues, mainly because I didn't understand what they were on about, I welcomed the chance last weekend to see *Akira* on BBC2. I should imagine most BSFA members would have watched this and I wonder what the majority thought?

As for myself, I was somewhat disappointed. The plot seemed to me to ramble, that's if there was a plot in there somewhere: it went something like this: Boy A is kidnapped and has something done to him, Boy B tries to rescue Boy A, whilst meeting Girl, trying herself to rescue Boy A to destroy Govt. Boy A destroys everything, or almost, and Girl is special somehow as well. Perhaps it would have worked better if the characters had been stronger. One of the problems with animation is that when Kaneda was being interviewed as one of the possible troublemakers, I wasn't sure whether it was him or not, whilst an actor, even if disguised, would have left no doubt. The fact that so much of the dialogue appeared as exposition is possibly a factor of the sub-titling and a dubbed version may have been different.

Supporters of Anime seem to have said, if I remember rightly, that the forms allows a vibrant use of a huge palate of colours. Well, this is as maybe, but the pure blocks of colour seemed very unnatural and colour can be used to great effect in real films, witness *Inferno*, and they have much more texture. Texture was also something missing from the soundtrack, because it is all studio sound. The silences were so perfectly silent it was uncanny.

I did sit and watch it a second time the next evening to see if I had missed something important, but I'm afraid it was just as boring on review. In my opinion, a film has to involve you with the characters and hold your attention with either gripping action (*Terminator*) or strong plotting (*JFK*).

I'm sure others found *Akira* to be fascinating and will defend it to the hilt, but I, for one, will not be going out of my way to either watch or avoid any Anime in future.

## Sou'Wester Writers' Circle?

### Sally-Ann Melia, 3 The Square, Broughton-in-Furness, The Lake District, Cumbria LA20 6JF

My many thanks first to Kim Cowie and Mike Siddall who leapt into the fray at very short notice last November and ran the writer's workshop at Novacon 23 in Birmingham. Heartfelt apologies to everyone else. There are a few things more important than Science Fiction, just ... and now the troubles that over-ran all careful planning back in November have been resolved, I can look forward to Sou'Wester and Eastercon in Liverpool. Onwards, upwards, or close the wall up with our English dead, etc. ...

So yes, there will be a Writers' Workshop at Sou'Wester. At this stage, I normally witter on about timings, single space copies and positive feedback. But forget that! The thing about an SF writers' workshop is that it's fun for those writers who write something — and remember to pack it — turn up at the allocated times and places, and generally get stuck in to have a good time.

Last year at Helicon in Jersey during Easter, the writers' workshop was an intoxicating brew of fame, international participation and writings flown in from beyond the remnants of the Iron Curtain. Fame came from the coverage by Alex Glendinning of the *Jersey Evening Post*. Participants flew in from the three continents of USA, Europe and Australia and stories were submitted by Danish, Romanian and



German SF writers, sometimes in their native language ... Imagine? There was instant poetry, epic fantasy and SF comedy that had us rolling in our seats with laughter.

This year, John Duffield has promised to drop by to share the secrets of his two dozen plus sales to SF magazines and assess our work. But the workshop won't work without you — and this is a particular plea to all those who dropped by at Illumination in Blackpool last Easter — OK, so you skipped Helicon, I'll be looking for you in Liverpool. As for those of you I missed at Novacon 23, remind me sometime that I owe you a drink.

Technical details: participants of the Sou'Wester Writers' Circle will need to submit up to four or five pages of SF, Fantasy, poetry, plays, tv scripts, preferably single-spaced. This will be collected on Friday for photocopying and redistribution. Sunday morning there will be group discussion, positive feedback, market suggestions. For timing and room details, see the programme at the convention.

For further information, please contact me at the address above.

## Max/Warp Factor

**John Madracki, 17 Goldrill Ave, Brightmet,  
Bolton BL2 5NJ**

Harry Cameron Andruschak's contention that women, by virtue of their physical make-up, are far more suited to travel through Space than their male counterparts offers much food for thought. It is an intriguing proposition, not least of all for the effect these pioneering Star Maidens would have on the accepted stream of Space Fiction. Can we now look forward to yet another generation of *Star Trek*? A refitted U.S.S. Henterprise, with Capt. Jeanne-Lucy Picard, and her colour-coordinated crew, boldly going where no woman has gone before? Their five-year mission: to discover new Malls, spread the word of Givenchy and probe the mysteries of the zero-gravity orgasm. Bookshelves too, could moan under the weight of a host of re-written novels. Everything would be grist to their Mills and Boon approach and we could expect to see titles covering all aspects of SF from *The Martina Chronicles* to *The Long Dark PMTeatime of the Soul*. I shiver in anticipation.

[So do we, Mr Madracki, so do we. Just what have you started here...  
-Eds.]

## Noticeboard

**Tommy Ferguson** would like to announce his change of address to 42 Ava Drive, Belfast BT7 3DW, Northern Ireland (tel: 0232 649341). As he has now bought a house, this is likely to remain a current address for a few years to come, which he knows will please some people tired of trying to track him down month to month. Any fans who find themselves in the near vicinity and would like to drop in, or even stay over, are more than welcome. Call first though.

**Gaslight SF:** We are announcing *Gaslight*, a new list to encourage appreciation of short stories from the Victorian era and up to 1919. The stories chosen for discussion will be about ADVENTURE, MYSTERY and THE WEIRD. All stories will either be commonly available or will be made available through etexts by email.

There will also be relevant non-fiction pieces and humour of the period. I am looking for sources of Science Fiction from the turn of the century. I'm also looking for recommendations of what should be considered to be GOOD Science Fiction from that period. I would guess that you people would know more about this subject than I would, because I have been studying only detective fiction, and now I would like to branch out.

Please contact Stephen Davies at Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta, (SDavies@MtRoyal.AB.CA) or Diana Patterson (DPatterson@MtRoyal.AB.CA)

**The Nordic Electronic Science Fiction Address Directory** is a list of e-mail addresses to SF fans in the Nordic region. It is updated approximately quarterly, and presently lists close to 200 addresses.

To subscribe, write to the list maintainers: broimola@abo.fi (Ben Roimola) or ahvrid@sfbs.edvina.se (Ahvrid Engholm).

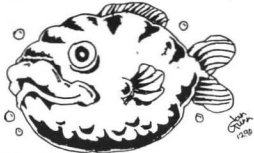
NESFAD is not yet on a mailing service, so your request for subscription is taken care of manually. NESFAD is in English. Each issue is begun with a brief news section, which for example includes information about conventions and clubs in our region. If you live in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway or Sweden, or if you are a Nordic citizen living abroad you can be added to the address listing. Write to me or Ben and state name, e-address, alternative "electronic media" address if appropriate (like a dedicated fax phone number), snail mail address, telephone and a two line blurb about yourself, activities in SF or Fantasy or whatever. The next NESFAD should come in late February.

**The Science Fiction Foundation Collection** welcomes donations of ... well, whatever you've got really, but in particular if you are an editor/publisher of a small-press magazine or a fanzine we would welcome copies. Support Britain's largest resource of SF material and place your creations in the archives for posterity. Contact Andy Sawyer, Liverpool University Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA.

**Unsolicited Chung Kuos:** New member Alan Kitch was rather puzzled by the arrival before Christmas of three trade edition copies of David Wingrove's *Chung Kuo* books. There was no letter or even a date stamp giving the place of origin and all inquiries among possible senders drew a blank. So he is wondering if there is anybody out there who can explain why they spent £4.50 sending these books to him. If you can put a confused Alan out of his misery, please contact him at 162 Taunton Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 6BL.

**VALIS Contactees Wanted:** Announcing *The Palm Tree Garden*, a book-length anthology from the publishers of Crash Collision that will feature the most outrageous speculations concerning Philip K. Dick's perception of reality. PTG is to be an open forum covering all possible viewpoints. Emphasis will be on symbolic and esoteric interpretations. Parallels may be found anywhere, if one but looks. We are not looking so much for answers, but for possible leads out of the maze "of death".

One possibility is this. Certain individuals may have actually undertaken attempts to contact VALIS, or may have been contacted spontaneously by same. Alternatively, they may have had information beamed into their heads by renegade Rosicrucians, or disgruntled Soviet scientists playing around with psychotronics. Have you ever caught a glimpse beyond the Black Iron Prison, leaving you with the knowledge of How Things Really Are? If so, we'd like to hear about it. All submissions will be acknowledged. We are also looking for artistic interpretations: fictional, poetic, visual, etc. Write Paul Rydeen, P.O. Box 250147, Montgomery, AL 36125-0147 for more information, or send e-mail to rydeen.paul@forum.va.gov.



## Fanzine Column

"On the Internet, nobody knows you're an E.T."

The first e-fanzine *Contes per a extraterrestres* in an ancient European tongue (Catalan) is running up now on the Internet as a gopher server. It comes from a mountainous area of the Valencian Country (the best place to live if you're an E.T.). This e-fanzine contains some short tales, a few interesting dossiers, poetry, and pictures. Most of it is in Catalan but you can also find short tales in Spanish and English.

Host: quincey.uji.es. Port: 2001. URL: [gopher://quincey.uji.es:2001](http://gopher://quincey.uji.es:2001)

Send any remark, suggestion (or congratulations) to the following address: [extraterrestres@guest.uji.es](mailto:extraterrestres@guest.uji.es)

**Conrunner 19** (Ian Sorensen, 7 Woodside Walk, Hamilton ML3 7HY) Ian firmly announces that this will be the very last edition of this fanzine. The contents reflect a year in conventions with Jonathan Cowie on Helicon, Ian Sorensen on SMOFcon and Mark Nelson/Ian Sorensen on Lunicon followed by Marc Rowland on "Saturday Night Fever at Novacon" followed by quick reports on Harris safety testers, stage tape and brief letters.

**DASFax** (Denver Area Science Fiction Association, Fred Cleaver, 153 West Ellsworth Ave, Denver, CO 80223-1623, USA) Movie reviews can be bad and they can give away too much of the plot, but this can't be said of anything Laura Givens writes. Even if you have absolutely no intention of ever seeing the films she mentions (like *Lois and Clark: the New Adventures of Superman*, for example), she still makes even the most avid cinemaphobe hesitate a bit and wonder if it's time to reconsider these opinions; and the reviews from Fred Cleaver are interestingly off-beat. In this issue, he highlights Sheri Tepper's books, emphasising that they straddle the SF/F boundary, in *Beauty*, for example, where she transformed traditional tales into SF or in *A Plague of Angels* where she combines the quest form with imaginative SF.

**De Profundis #261** (Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601, USA) This magazine strictly concentrates on the club's past, present and future activities with minutes of meetings and details of all magazines received for the use of club members. The list of club officers alone is bigger than the entire membership of many UK clubs.

**Drivel and Drool** (Mike D Siddall, 133 Duke Street, Askam-in-Furness, Cumbria LA66 7AE) Horse riding, love and the NHS: a heady combination which is carefully scattered in the hope of an unwary reader responding. The horse-riding bits are by far the best. Here's a sample: "She hands me a huge bucket of feed and, taking me outside, points at Billy, at which point I rapidly hand back the bucket. The thing about Billy is ... he's bloody huge and, although he's as gentle as a lamb usually, when it comes to food he's the reincarnation of Ivan the Terrible. The stables has a big Alsatian guard-dog which once made the mistake of getting too close to Billy when he was eating; Billy didn't butt her, Billy didn't kick her, Billy bit her".

**Erg 124** (Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ) Terry starts by not defining Science Fiction, but he does compare literature to a light spectrum where the borders between colours are parallel to genres, with the caveat that some stories transcend genre. Horatio Hornblower can belong in either the historical or military sections, or both, but Terry brings in the additional factor of the date of the story. He quotes chess-playing computers as once being strictly fictional and now quite mundane. Terry also considers time capsules which would be housed in gigantic vaults.

**FOSFax** (PO Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281, USA) "The reason SF did not take over the radio airwaves in the twenties or thirties" comments Patrick McGuire in the letter column "is that, particularly in those days, radio was inherently a medium addressed to large segments of the public. The small SF audience could not pull the ratings to support SF broadcasting. All the broad public was capable of appreciating was *Buck Rogers*. The very reason that *War of the Worlds* broadcast created such a sensation was that a significant part of the audience was so stupefyingly ignorant of SF that they couldn't even tell a piece of fiction when they heard one, let alone recognise the plot of H.G. Wells' greatest classic". The rest of the fanzine is divided between SF and politics with Joseph T. Major commenting on Heinlein's *Have Space Suit—Will Travel* and Greg Hill on Kipling. He uses one of his short stories called "My Christmas Caller, or the Prescription of Sieur Asmodeus" published in the *Civil and Military Gazette* in 1895 under the pseudonym of H.M.E. Smallbones as a starting point to a very interesting article. The politics appears to be overwhelmingly right-wing, but well argued.

**Gajjin** (Steve Green, 33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands BH2 7LQ) The letters, here, dominate the fanzine, but bounce from memory to other trivia. There's an interesting chunk of memory concerning singers and loathed songs written by Arthur D Hlavaty. Perhaps the kindest comment concerns John Denver. "Making one attempt at 'If you can't say something nice, don't say anything', I will confine my remarks on John Denver to pointing out that 'Calypso' did not make me want to throw up".

**Habakkuk** (Bill Donaho, 626 58th St., Oakland, CA 94609, USA) Ted White introduces the fanzine reviews, a mixture of constructive praise and constructive demolition and Debbie Notkin reviews books: Kim Stanley Robinson's *Red Mars*, Carol Severance's *Reefsong* and Mary Rosenblum's *The Drylands*; and among the gems of the letter column is an anecdote from Roy Lavender who went to visit an SFRA meeting with Jack Williamson. "We were seated well back" notes Roy, "listening to some academic type explaining the underlying secondary plots and themes of one of Jack's stories. Jack leaned over and whispered 'I didn't know that. When I wrote it, the rent was due.'"

**MarkTime 25** (Mark Strickert, ELCA Copy Ctr., 8765 W Higgins, Chicago 60631, USA) This is part memories, part diary entry which starts with Amtrak "a scenic, perhaps even relaxing way to travel. Just never count on them departing or arriving on time". Lompoc is described as being a Klingon town, though Las Vegas rates a few more lines: "When one subtracts what does not impress me (gambling, glitzy shows and hotels. 106° or more even if "dry heat", barely-edible breakfast buffet even if \$2.99 including steak, strip joints), not much really. I did enjoy the rotisserie chicken at Kenny Rogers' Roasters (yes, the singer, not the Rangers' pitcher), but there's a couple in the suburbs here now, so what?"

**Obsessions #1: Chocolate** (Bridget Hardcastle, 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 6PX) After discussing the pros and cons of chocolate overload in detail, she comments on the absence of chocolate in SF literature, apart from *Star Trek*, (where chocolate ice cream can be synthesised immediately on demand) and Niles Caulder, the head of the Doom Patrol. Bridget writes "Even when he is decapitated, his head is kept alive on ice and he is never seen without a chocolate milkshake or bottle of Crème de Cacao and a straw". Worth reading even if you don't like chocolate anyway.

**Opuntia 15, 16** (Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2E7) This gives a somewhat distorted peep into the Canadian SF scene; it's rather off beat, the best impression of the contents can be shown from the cover which invariably shows *Opuntia fragilis*, a hostile looking prickly pear with a sweet centre.

**Ormolu 2** (Ann Green, 33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands BH2 7LQ) A quick article on ghost stories by Lyn McConchie is followed by thoughts on Novacon before "Master

Locsmiths", a large and stimulating collection of letters, mostly reacting to politically correct terminology.

**Platypus 2** (Simon Ounsley, 25 Park Villa Court, Leeds LS8 1EB) Brief thoughts on Novacon in Birmingham, followed by letters on cats' whiskers, toilets and just what the plural of "platypus" is.

**Rastus Johnson's Cakewalk 3** (Greg Pickersgill, 3 Bethany Row, Narbeth Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA61 2XG) Of the comments on Novacon, these are perhaps the most honest and brutal. "As an event" he writes "the 23rd Novacon was not seriously flawed, although looking back on the programme it seems almost absurdly thin, with a predominance of light entertainment items with only good grief five items out of a listed **twenty-four** (counting Opening and Closing events) that weren't films, games, or other planned amusements ... And yes I did see a lot of the program. I was even on some of it, a team quiz that was about as slickly handled as a hedgehog". After some comments on fanzines, Greg appeals for any spare fanzines from readers, which will be sorted and listed then distributed free, apart from postage.

**The Light Stuff 9** (Rhodri James, 18 Harvey Goodwin Avenue, Cambridge CB4 3EU) After a holiday report of Finland recommending cloud berries and reindeer by Pat Brown, a comparison of the two conventions Mexican V and Helicon by Michael Abbott. The letters consider Gael Baudin's *Gossamer Axe* and ideas on fan rooms and filk.

**Trapdoor 13** (Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442, USA) He comments that now that the last of his children has left home, he can tailor his schedule to his own needs. "It's having a positive effect on my fan activity" he writes. For the next issue, he has made a general appeal: "In recent issues, I've moved the discussion towards family both in and out of fandom — a subject I feel is far from exhausted — but diversity is a joy in fanzines and I welcome it here. Intelligence and good humor are also things I value in (and out of) these pages. I want all of this in an ongoing fashion if this fanzine is to continue, and I want next issue's supply of it by no later than early March 1994".

**Under the Ozone Hole** (John Willcox Herbert and Karl Johanson, 4129 Carey Road, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8Z 4G5) The colour cover of issue 4 depicts Admiral Runté trapped on a planet of desperate women with a secret!! It's a clever collage which started life with a quick snapshot of said Runté captured in his back garden and has been embellished with glee — a collectors' piece. Inside, Runté continues his guide to fandom which presents the flip side to encouraging new people into fandom: that some of the older ones may go out. He presents the "you know it's time to gafiate when ..." list for people who are not sure, including: you find the current issue of your fanzine in the dealer room marked 'Rare Fanzines from the Yester-Year of Fandom' or you get really angry at an article by some jerk and then realise it's a reprint of something you wrote ten years ago. There's a lot of enthusiasm and it makes good reading: in addition, it represents a rather good snapshot of what's happening in Canada right now, which is especially relevant considering that the Worldcon is in Winnipeg this summer.

**Vapourware Two** (Greg Hills, PO Box 428, Richmond 3121, Australia) This fanzine is dominated by memories of Roger Weddall and bird watching, culminating in a cool article on time and the fanzine editor before the inevitable letters where John G Fuller's *We Almost Lost Detroit* gets recommended.

## Hectography

One of the reasons people cite for not producing a fanzine is the sheer cost of reproduction. There may be moral reasons for not photocopying fanzines at work — and there are very strong feelings about using work facilities for leisure activities of any description — and the cost of photocopying is often not seen to represent value for money. However, there is a method within the reach of everyone who has a kitchen and a touch of curiosity: hectography.

This is a method of great antiquity: it tends to turn up in old books detailing a thousand things a boy can do on a rainy afternoon, although the particular boy a friend of ours got it from preferred to attempt to overthrow governments in his spare time.

Here is the *Turkish Delight Duplicator Recipe* (so called because it looks like a slab of chocolate-less Turkish Delight and tastes sweeter).

### You Will Need:

A large roasting tray, big enough for a sheet of paper. This is going to be the 'bed'. A bag of sugar, about half a litre of glycerol and about 100g of gelatin. Sheets of good quality typing paper (laser printer or photocopying paper will do quite well) for the master copies; "Spirit Duplicator" carbons (one trade name is 'Banda'). Ordinary carbon paper will not do. These sheets come in a range of colours, but purple seems to be traditional. You prepare your master by typing or printing (with an impact printer, not a laser or inkjet!) so that the carbon material comes off onto your master sheet.

### Preparing the 'Bed'.

[This recipe uses gelatin, which **can** be produced from non-animal sources, but which usually isn't. Somewhere we have an equivalent recipe that uses carrageenan gel or agar-agar, but you will have to work these ones out for yourself by trial and error, as we're not so practised with these ones].

In a large saucepan dissolve 100g gelatin in 375ml water then begin to warm it gently while adding 385g of sugar. When it has dissolved, add 715g glycerol and slowly bring the mixture to the boil. Stir gently for one minute while boiling.

Remove the mixture from the heat and pour it slowly into your tray (**Care!** this mixture boils at a higher temperature than water — treat it as molten fat).

Make sure that the tray is on a flat surface where it can be left for a few hours until the gel sets. While the gel is cooling, you can use tissue paper to remove bubbles, foam and 'bits' from the surface.

### Using the Duplicator.

First, moisten the surface of the bed by swirling cold water across it and wiping it dry with a fine sponge. There should be no droplets of water left at this point.

Take your master copy and lay it face down on the gel, smoothing it down with the back of a spoon (or by hand), taking care to avoid bubbles and areas that are not in contact with the surface.

Leave it there for a few minutes to allow the ink to transfer into the top of the gelatin (care: the longer you leave it, the deeper the ink goes, so the more copies you can make).

Remove the master carefully (it may be re-usable, depending on how many copies you need) — if it tears, never mind, the surface was too dry anyway.

Take a sheet of ordinary paper and slowly smooth it down over the right part of the bed. Peel it back, and step back in amazement! It works!!

Repeat 30-50 times, omitting the step back in amazement as the miracle becomes mundane. If you want more copies clean the surface (see below) and replace the master.

## Cleaning the Surface.

Cover the surface briefly with warm water. This will dissolve the ink but also some of the surface, so swirl it away quickly while using a separate fine sponge to remove the ink. Wash the surface with cold water to help reset the gelatin, dry the surface again, and use a sheet of white paper to check for any leftover ink on the surface (ink below the surface isn't often a problem). Be careful not to damage the smoothness of the surface.

## Damage Control.

If you do damage the surface, all is not lost. Simply (if you are using a metal tray only) remelt the surface and let it re-form.

For serious damage, remove the gel from the tray, and redissolve in a little boiling water, bring back to boil as above and continue with the procedure as appropriate.

# My First Fanzine

## Ahrvid Engholm

I've actually published a fanzine with a hectograph. It was back in 1978. The zine was called *BBS-News No 1*. It was an internal chat and feud zine for the Scandinavian SF Association.

I bought the hectograph from a mail order service for youngsters and hobby-people. Most people in Sweden will have heard of Hobbex. Their advertisement showed a midget boy — he had to be a midget, because he was so small compared to the hectograph on the picture; the impression you got was that this thing could turn out high quality newspaper sized publications — and had a text saying something like:

"Amaze your neighbours! Astound your school mates! Publish your OWN NEWSPAPER! Turn your hobby into a PROFITABLE BUSINESS! Order now!"

I later learned that this advertisement had been the same since about the 30's. But I got my hectograph.

It was a surprisingly small box, slightly larger than the A5 paper size. The box was filled with a sticky gelatin mass. It had a couple of stylus pens and three bottles of ink: red, green and blue.

I did some test printing and found out that it did indeed work. I was now ready to turn my hobby into a PROFITABLE BUSINESS.

I had already earlier that year published my first fanzine. I had printed it on a dithograph (correct word?) belonging to my school. I had some dithograph stencils over, and found out that the ink cover on those stencils was quite similar to the ink in the bottles.

So, with the dithograph stencils, I could type my OWN NEWSPAPER. I placed the stencil so that I'd get the text as a mirror image on the back of a sheet, which was about A5 sized.

After several hours of one-finger ouch-typing I had filled two entire pages. (Ouch-typing is similar to touch-typing, but you only use one finger, and you say "Ouch!" every time you miss the keys.)

I then placed the original on the hectograph mass and waited several minutes. I removed the original, and placed papers on the surface, one after another. The first copies would only rest for 1-2 seconds, and after about 20 copies you had to increase the resting period. I made maybe 45-50 copies and the last ones had to rest for maybe 30 seconds.

It is known that you can make a maximum of 68 copies with a hectograph. Because that is the number of copies required for the American writing club, FAPA. That's the reason why FAPA still has only 65 members. (You are also required to send in three extra copies: one to the archives, one to fold a paper space shuttle, and one to put in your bird's cage.)

I surely AMAZED my fellow fans when I turned up with a true hectographed fanzine. It became an immediate collectors' item and is now very hard to find (for which I am grateful). I believe it is the last hectographed fanzine done in Swedish fandom.

But it could have been the second last. As the thousands of dollars from my business had failed to turn up, I decided to make another zine. This time it would be in A4-size. I bought some extra hectograph mass (I later learned that you could cook it yourself for 1/20th the cost I bought it for; you could get the ingredients at the local paint shop) and boiled it. I had made a bigger box for the mass and poured the melted mass into this box.

After several hours of more ouch-typing I had my A4-sized fanzine ready. But now the hectograph was destroyed while printing. I had used a special very slick paper to type on. I thought it would give off the ink easier. But what the new paper did was to glue itself to the hectograph surface, so when I removed the paper big portions of the hecto mass followed, stuck to the paper. The fanzine was never published. I turned to more profitable and modern printing methods. Like my first mimeograph. But that's another story.

# Information Service

Andrew M Johnson writes: "I am most keen to obtain any Fantasy or Science Fiction Karl Edward Wagner may have written, especially those featuring the Anti-Hero, Kane. I have read, and do not require *Bloodstone*, *Death Angel's Shadow*, *Darkness Weaves* and *Dark Crusade*. I would appreciate any help the readership may be able to give me in this matter. With reference to the recent scathing review of *Darkness Weaves*, it is without doubt the greatest novel ever written.

## Series Kane

*Darkness Weaves with Many Shades* (1970); *Death Angel's Shadow* (1973); *Bloodstone* (1975); *Dark Crusade* (1976); *Night Winds* (1978); *Darkness Weaves* (1978) [rev. *Darkness Weaves with Many Shades*]; *The Book of Kane* (Grant, 1985)

*In a Lonely Place* (1983) [rev. Scream Press, 1984]; *Legion from the Shadows* (1976); *Midnight Sun* (1974); *The Road of Kings* (1979); *Sign of the Salamander* (1975); *Unthreatened by the Morning Light* (1989) [C] [Author's Choice Monthly #2]; "Where the Summer Ends" (Pulphouse, 1991) [CB] [Short Story #31]; *Why Not You And I?* (Dark Harvest, 1987)

Written with David Drake: *Killer* (1985)

Edited: *Echos of Valor* (1987); *Echos of Valor II* (1989); *Echos of Valor III* (1991); *Intensive Scare* (1990); *The Year's Best Horror Stories VIII* (1980); *The Year's Best Horror Stories IX* (1981); *[The Year's Best Horror Stories VII]* (1979) by Gerald W. Page *Horror Story Volume 3* (1992); *The Year's Best Horror Stories X* (1982); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XI* (1983); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XII* (1984); *[Horror Story Volume 4]* (1990); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XIII* (1985); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XIV* (1986); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XV* (1987); *[Horror Story Volume 5]* (1989); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XVI* (1988); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XVII* (1989); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XVIII* (1990); *The Year's Best Horror Stories XIX* (1991); *The Year's Best Horror Stories: XX* (1992); *The Year's Best Horror Stories: XXI* (1993)

## So What's New?

### Andy Sawyer

Meaburn Staniland: *Back to the Future* (Nicholas Vane, 1947)

I recently discovered this among the stock of the Collection, and was amused by the title and even more so by the contents. The book has to do with the title and even more so by the contents. The book has to do with the title and even more so by the contents. The book has to do with the title and even more so by the contents.

Teachers today, though, might think again about where the author's barbs should have been directed if they were to read the section where, one hundred years from his starting-point, Monkland stumbles into a primary school. He finds a class of children playing unhappily with educational toys, and is shown a list of games and toys

"prohibited on the grounds of psychological unsuitability ... toy soldiers, model weapons, model vehicles ... games of pretence, animal books, rattles, dolls, bricks (excepting approved patterns of tuitional applications) ... swings, chutes, see-saws, conkers, whip-tops, hop-scotch, buckets and spades, etc".

So far, so politically-correct. Monkland is then shown the orders issued by the Ministry:

"There are, as you say, routine orders issued by the Ministry every month. These may be initiated by any of the three departments, that is to say, reading, Writing and Arithmetic; Technical and Vocational Training; or Fine Arts, Culture and Uplift, according to the subject and age of the pupils concerned. But then we also get special orders and extraordinary orders and even orders of the day, all signed by or on behalf of the Minister. I really don't know how he finds time to read them all, let alone compose them. Besides these, we receive directives and instructions from the County Council Education Committee, advices from the Combined Educational Faculty of the Universities, notices from the National Council on Educational Research, proceedings of the Standing Commission on education, injunctions from the Central Tribunal of Juvenile Delinquency ..."

'And where are the school books kept, Sir?' I asked.

'We don't use them' he said in a surprised tone. 'You are expected to know it all!'

Thank goodness the author woke his readers to the danger of left-wing educational bureaucracy in time!

## New Year Resolutions

**Andy Sawyer:** To put thirty six hours into a day; to remember people's names; to read Gene Wolfe's *The Book of the New Sun*. That's not to say that I haven't read it, but that I feel I have to re-read it in the light of much critical response to the book that has appeared since. I've been told by several people who should know that there is both much more to the *New Sun* works than meets the eye and much less to some of the critical responses. Wolfe is, it seems, a master of misdirection/indirection and his books need careful reading, for as much as what he *isn't* saying as what he is. Having read the four books of the *New Sun* fairly quickly some years ago, I now need to look at them again carefully and slowly, following the way Wolfe engages with his readers, and then move on to the sequels. I very



much want to read the sequels, but I think I would get very little out of them without reading the originals first.

**Geoff Cowie:** I intend to read the *Dead Girls* novel by Richard Calder and I ought to read *Dhalgren* and other later Delany as I used to read his early work.

## Convention Listing

**Microcon** (March 5-6, Exeter University. Details from 6 Clifton Hill, Exeter EX1 2DL)

**Sou'Wester:** (April 1-4, Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, £27 attending membership, details from 3 West Shrubbery, Redland, Bristol BS6 6SZ) The Guests of Honour are Diane Duane, Neil Gaiman and Barbara Hambly. The packed programme will include a celtic harp performance on Friday followed by a folk concert, a Masquerade on Saturday followed by a disco and on Sunday following the usual Awards Ceremony, there will be a cabaret. Programme items will include panels on how publishers and booksellers see SF, and "everything from crossing genre boundaries to martial arts will be examined by experts" the latest Progress Report promises. The science items will include panels and speeches on progress in astronomy and the future of war, plus Professor Jack Cohen, who is likely to talk on xenobiology.

**Albacon 94** (October 21-24, Central Hotel, Glasgow, details from 10 Atlas Road, Springburn, Glasgow G21 4TE tel: 041 558 2862) As the con will take place close to the Halloween weekend, the theme will be vampires although all aspects of the SF genre will be covered. The principal Guest of Honour will be announced later, but attendees at the previous Albacon will be glad to see the return of Professor John Salthouse with his chemical bag of tricks.

**Blake's 7/Dr Who convention** (October 28-30, London, details from Who's 7 1994, 131 Norman Road, Leytonstone, The Queens Hotel, London E11 4RJ) Guests, subject to work commitments, are likely to include Gareth Thomas, Sally Knyvette, Jan Chappell and Jon Pertwee. The video programme will run for sixteen hours per day and there should also be acting, writing and make-up workshops in addition to a full programme. It should be noted that the hotel is charging us an additional toll for each person using the hotel facilities but not staying in the hotel. This "poll tax" is actually £6.00 per head, but the convention is swallowing the additional £1 on your behalf. The committee consists of Ruth Saunders, Carol Keogh, Clare Goodall and Judith Rolls.

**Intersection:** Co-chair Tim Illingworth has resigned and will be replaced by former co-chair Vince Doherty who had resigned when being posted to the Middle East, but who has re-established international electronic communication. Mike Figg has also resigned. However, the toast masters have been announced as Diane Duane and Peter Morwood.

A message from Marc Ortlieb, who is part of the Australian bid to host a Worldcon in 1999:

~~~~~  

 SPACE 1999? HELL NO! WE'RE GOING TO AUSTRALIA!  
 AUSTRALIA in '99.  
 ~~~~~

## Unfinished Business

### Maureen Speller and Catie Cary

In this mailing, you will find the notification of the BSFA's Annual General Meeting, to be held on Saturday 2 April 1994. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting and during the convention. The BSFA will be running another tombola and taking memberships during the convention. Thanks to those people who have offered material for the tombola (the weirdest prize so far is a Harry Secombe CD) and also to the people who have volunteered to help during the weekend. More volunteers and donations would be welcome. Either contact Maureen Speller before the convention or come to the BSFA desk on Saturday morning to book a slot.

Phil Nichols, after years of dedicated service, has resigned as BSFA Information Officer. We would like to thank him for all his hard work during that time. We've truly appreciated his skills in dealing with those obscure questions. We had several volunteers for the job as Information Officer, all with impeccable credentials. So as not to waste this pool of talent, we have now formed a BSFA Information Group, to be co-ordinated by Paul Billinger, who is married to Elizabeth Billinger, the Association's Treasurer. He will be supported by Paul Allwood and Keith Walker. Keith will probably be familiar to long-time fans as the editor of *Fanzine Fanatique*. Paul Allwood is a relatively new recruit to the BSFA, but survived a baptism by BSFA desk at Novacon. All queries for the Information Group should be sent to Paul Billinger, 82 Kelvin Road, New Cubbington, Leamington Spa CV32 7TQ.

Maureen Speller now represents the BSFA on the Friends of the Foundation committee, promoting stronger links between the two groups. We have jointly begun a project to compile lists of novels and stories on particular subjects, which will be available to the Science Fiction Foundation to help with queries as well as to members of FoF and the BSFA. In each future issue of *Matrix* we will propose a theme or subject and will invite members to submit a list of about ten novels or short stories on that subject, from which a comprehensive list can be compiled.

The first two topics will be "robots" (which may include androids and cyborgs) and "Arthurian". We are particularly keen to hear about more obscure stories and novels. Please try to provide as full a reference as possible, especially with short stories, but author and title will suffice if you can't remember anything else. Please send your suggestions to Maureen Speller at 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ. We would also welcome suggestions for future themes.

Catie Cary seeks a production editor for *Vector*. For further information please consult the advertisement in *Vector*.



## The Prisoner

The Prisoner is a television series created by Patrick McGoochan, who also plays the title role. It first aired in England on October 1, 1967, and has retained a strong (some would say "cult") following ever since.

Although it may appear to be merely a thriller set of programmes, a closer inspection may reveal multiple levels of meaning reminiscent of Huxley and Orwell. The Prisoner is a refreshing change from the mindless rubbish so common on modern television.

The inspiration for The Prisoner was Danger Man, a series about the secret agent John Drake (played by Patrick McGoochan), a man who preferred to use his intellect to resolve situations. He did not carry a gun, nor did he get involved with every woman he met (and yet he was offered the role of James Bond before Sean Connery). Patrick McGoochan conceived the concept for The Prisoner while filming some episodes of Danger Man in Portmeirion (the Village). There is some debate on whether The Prisoner is a sequel to Danger Man. To call the disagreement violent would be a gross understatement.

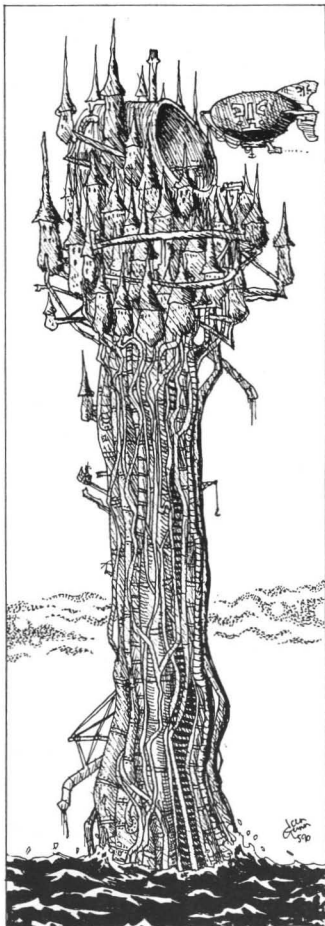
The order in which ITC later released the series is considered "official". "Arrival" is indisputably the first episode. "Once Upon a Time" and "Fall Out" are indisputably the last pair. "Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling" flashbacks to "Arrival" and "Free For All". Four of the script writers thought they were writing the second episode; in two of them, "Dance of the Dead" and "Checkmate", the Prisoner says he is new, although these were eventually shown about halfway through the series.

The Number Two from "The General" returns in "A. B. and C.", and in the opening he says "I am Number Two" instead of "the new Number Two". Also, the Tally Ho bears the headline "Is No. 2 Fit For A Further Term?" They seem to belong together in sequence.

The largest and best known of the fan clubs devoted to The Prisoner is called "Six of One, The Prisoner Appreciation Society". It is officially recognized by Patrick McGoochan and ITC. The Six of One newsletter is called Number Six and is published quarterly. A year's membership in the Society provides four copies of the newsletter and voluminous other material related to The Prisoner. Six of One also hosts a Prisoner convention in Portmeirion (the Village) every summer. For more information, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Six of One, PO Box 60, Harrogate, HG1 2TP, UK. Sister organisations include: Six of One, 871 Clover Dr, North Wales, PA, 19454, USA and Six of One/France, Jean-Michel Philibert, BP 633, 42042 Saint-Etienne Cedex, France.

The other main publication recognised by ITC is Once Upon a Time. Subscriptions are \$8 per year for three issues: David Lawrence, 515 Ravenel Circle, Seneca, SC 29678, USA. David Lawrence is a former member of Six of One who felt that it had become too authoritarian and "Village-like", so he started his own fan club and newsletter. (Naturally, there are those who point out that any "society" based on The Prisoner is somewhat ironic.)

In real life, The Village is a seashore resort called the "Portmeirion Village Hotel" (formally "Hotel Portmeirion") in North Wales. It is located in the town of Penrhyndeudraeth. The telephone number of Portmeirion Village Hotel is 0766 770228. To get there, you could resign and wait. Alternatively, travel by rail (recommended) or by car. Either way, the trip is around 260 miles and 6 to 7 hours from London.



## Competition Corner

### Report on Competition 109

The winner of this competition was Andy Mills, runner up John Madracki, who produced New Year Resolutions such as the following gems:

Isaac Asimov (as divulged to the ouija board): I resolve to cease from indulging in posthumous collaboration.

John Birt (of the BBC): Damn the expense! I resolve to pour millions of pounds into making new *Dr Who* programmes.

John Norman: I want to be published by The Women's Press

Terry Pratchett: I must be more prolific.

Kim Stanley Robinson: Mars, huh! I resolve to do a *Star Trek* novelisation.

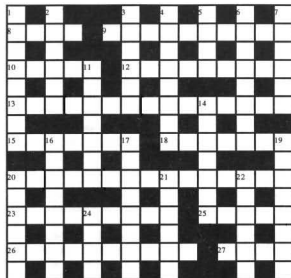
Stephen King: I resolve to give the accolade of most promising new horror writer of today to no more than a dozen authors in 1994.

### Solution to Matrix Christmas crossword.



The crossword attracted a worthy 26 entrants, all of which appeared correct. The winner was Chris Nash, runners up John Bray then Terry Jeeves.

### Matrix Crossword No. 11.



#### Across.

8. Take test when it's no longer morning (4)
9. Half thousand packed into racetrack used as place of trial (10)
10. Barrage balloon starts to bulge, like it might pop (5)
12. It's unkind to keep in with author of Mission of Gravity (9)
- 13, 20. Destroyers of clues; soon three of them are happy, excited (3, 4, 8, 2, 3, 10)
15. Galactic cataloguer is more untidy (7)
18. Convention held in main hotel finally used to cause drowsiness (7)
20. See 13.
23. Cohabitee's young animal imprisoned by convention in east (9)
25. One of 13 20 who speaks LIKE THIS... (5)
26. ... taking steps to be surrounded by money; another one of 13 20? (10)
27. Asimov's mutant slipper? (4)

#### Down.

1. Word for word, upset brave Mr. Powers (8)
2. One of 13 20 at home, held in renown (6)
3. Imitator of policeman; that is right! (6)
4. Beams which pull farm machinery (8)
5. Footwear to reveal final change of direction (4)
6. Clark Kent makes up names once Luthor is finally inside (8)
7. Light particle can be jumped aboard, we hear (6)
11. Vow to rip some out (7)
14. Vomiting in the van, like a druid going to cut mistletoe? (7)
16. Devil-worshiper perched on one first (8)
17. Repeated destruction of Perseid, last of shower overhead (8)
19. Oriental fruits conceal bloodsuckers ingesting last of gore (8)
20. Capture copper taken in by inaccurate copy (6)
21. Force applied to company by queen and church (6)
22. Exercise involving disturbed Gaul and one of 13 20 (6)
24. Book I buy holds Dick's novel back (4)

Entries please, with any other competition-related correspondence to Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Ave, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG, UK, by the deadline of March 15, 1994.

