

95p *Matrix* 88

The Newsletter of the British Science Fiction Association

Iain Banks

EastCon Speech

BSFA Awards

For Pratchett, Tuttle, Burns and
Red Dwarf

Reviews

Total Recall

Inertia Reel

2001: 22 Years On

Fanzines

What **should** they be?

Conventions

Lucon-tinued

Soap Box

20th Century Cathedrals?

Clubs

Student SF Groups

Cry Fanac!

Amateur Press Associations

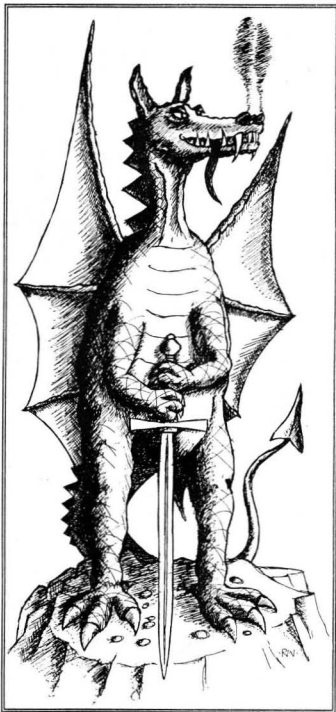
Plus

Information Service

Competition Corner

Letters

AGM New & Annual Accounts



June-July 1990

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Determinants

The first magazine following a change of editor is inevitably an interim one, based on its predecessor, while the new editor gains some breathing space and gets used to the layout: I used *Maverick* for a practice run, which helped a lot. By the second issue, the new editor is confident enough to experiment with the layout.

There are three major priorities for *Matrixes* (or should that be *Matrices*?) in the future. It is surprising how many regional sf events there are - plays, demonstrations, events, films (especially in specialised Film Festivals), lectures, meetings, workshops. It is difficult to publicise them in advance due to the *Matrix* bi-monthly schedule, but there is an ideal opportunity for BSFA members to go, singly or in groups, and write an opinion or appreciation for *Matrix*.

Secondly, *Matrix*, as a newsletter, will inevitably have a lot of snippets of information - who won which awards, members' wants, authors' latest projects. To prevent literary indigestion, more articles on popular features of sf are needed - this issue contains a prime example, ideas on how *Phillip K. Dick's We Can Remember it for you Wholesale* will translate to screen.

Finally, no piece of art can exist in isolation. One solution would be to anchor the illustrations to the text, the same way *D West* used to draw cartoons for the letter column. Another solution is to have an optional theme for the illustrations, like dragons in this issue. The range of dragons is marvelously memorable and delightful. Next issue's "ignorable theme" is a series of alien hands and heads.

It is interesting to know a little about the artists, the sf they read and their attitudes and influences - it gives the readers some understanding of why the artist has chosen one particular interpretation of a subject.

This is a fuller than normal *Matrix* because of the Guest of Honour speech, the accounts and the AGM minutes, therefore many regular features have been trimmed mercilessly, including this one. The next deadline is **Saturday July 14, Bastille Day**. Until next time...

About the Artists

Rob Weiham drew the cover dragon. His favourite artists are **Arthur C. Clarke** and **E.C. Tubb**. He likes believable work, which might be why he doesn't like the **Harry Harrison** plots where someone is put into a totally awkward situation then suddenly the hero unexpectedly finds a small weapon concealed in his hair, despite having just had a thorough strip search...

Other artists are **Matthew Freestone**, whose *Caterpillar Dragon* may be a reaction to studying maths. Or that might be why he likes **Rudy Rucker** and almost anything by **Gene Wolfe** or **John Crowley**. **Ian Brooks** will have finished his finals by the time he reads this and intends to remain in Manchester and get a vibrant sf group going. **Steve Jeffreys** is involved in running a *Storm Constantine* appreciation fanzine. **Shap** is an avid comics fan who has always been into *Swamp Thing* from the start and who works on a newspaper in Carlisle. Finally, **Ian Gunn** comes from down under. His deodorant cartoon is not strictly relevant to dragons, but is a valid point worth considering.

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Ian Gunn	13
Steve Jeffreys	18
Shap	23

ADVERTISING RATES

Cover (back, fbc, fbc)	£40
Full page	£35
Half page	£20
Quarter page	£15
Rates for multiple insertions are negotiable. Distribution of loose flyers with BSFA mailings and rates for booklets are also negotiable. Requests for advertising and flyer distribution should be sent to Dave Wood.	

Any opinions expressed are those of individual authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of either the editor or the BSFA.

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DEADLINE
Saturday, July 14

WALKING ON GLASS - THE BSFA COLUMN

CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION, held at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, Saturday, April 14.

Maureen Porter declared the meeting open at 1.03pm.

(1) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

MSP asked the meeting to approve the Minutes of the previous AGM, published in *Matrix* 81. This was proposed by Roy Gray, seconded by Mark Plummer and accepted by the meeting, the minutes having been taken as read.

(2) CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Maureen Porter observed that, superficially at least, it had been a quiet year for the BSFA. The magazines had been published regularly, and *Focus* was now back on a regular schedule.

She noted that the survey instituted shortly before Christmas had drawn a remarkable response, forms having been returned by approximately 300 people, out of the 1000+ distributed. The unprecedented response meant that it had taken rather longer to analyse the forms than had been anticipated, but MSP noted that analysis was well in hand. The results will be used as part of a campaign to increase awareness of the BSFA's activities, particularly among publishers and other potential advertisers, in order to increase BSFA revenue.

MSP also welcomed new committee members Jennifer Glover, editor of *Matrix*, and Cecil Nurse, editor of *Focus*. Also Nicholas Mahoney, who had taken on the post of Awards Administrator. She also noted the resignation of John Stewart as auditor, and his replacement by Remo Vernasachi.

The BSFA was also hoping to start merchandising. Logo designs were being formalised, and it was intended to produce sweatshirts and/or t-shirts, and probably badges. Other publications were also being considered, particularly information sheets and 1-sheet bibliographies.

MSP also announced the raising of membership rates to £12 per year, plus the increase of advertising rates and cover prices of magazines from 1 June 1990. The last such rise was in 1987, and the BSFA Committee was pledged to hold to the newly-announced rates for as long as possible.

(3) TREASURER'S REPORT

Brett Cockrell had prepared accounts for 1989 and these had been audited. Profits had been reduced from over £2000 to somewhere over £1000, mostly due to dilatory payment for advertising. Over £100 of advertising costs had been written off. The increase in postage and in the size of the magazines had also increased costs, as had the payments for meals for those assisting with mailing sessions. BC anticipated a further drop in profit during 1990 possibly to an overall loss, due to further problems with advertising, and inflationary costs on postage and production. However, he felt that a £2 increase in membership should help to offset this loss. The accounts were accepted; proposed by Nicholas Mahoney, seconded by David R. Stewart and passed by the meeting.

Further to this, David Stewart suggested the use of a billing agency to ensure payment of advertising costs. BC agreed that this should be considered, but as the turnover was comparatively small, this might be of little use. It was felt that the proposed new stationery might lend the BSFA more credibility. It was also suggested that communication problems between people commissioning advertisements and those responsible for making payments might have contributed to BSFA difficulties in retrieving payments.

Nick Mahoney asked about the level of financial reserve needed by the BSFA, and BC said that he would like the BSFA to keep a reserve of £5000. It was also suggested that a thirty day payment discount might encourage a better response, but BC answered that the amounts are too small to represent any kind of incentive. MSP asked the meeting to formally approve the increase in membership. Proposed by Keith Freeman, seconded by Nic Farey and passed *nem con*.

(4) ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

MSP explained the function of Council Members, describing them as non-executive directors of the BSFA. Jennifer Glover and Cecil Nurse had been co-opted onto the Council during the year, and now offered themselves for ratification as Council Members. Cecil Nurse - proposed by Keith Freeman, seconded by Nicholas Mahoney, passed *nem con*. Jennifer Glover - proposed by John Waggett, seconded by Wilf James, passed *nem con*.

The following members of Council retired by rotation and, being eligible, offered themselves for re-election:

Malcolm Edwards - proposed Roy Gray, seconded Terry Hunt, passed *nem con*
David Langford - proposed Oliver Gruter, seconded Ian Brooks, passed *nem con*

Simon Ounsley - proposed David Langford, seconded Kev McVeigh, passed *nem con*

David Wood - proposed Nic Farey, seconded Keith Freeman, passed *nem con*
Jo Raine - proposed Maureen Porter, seconded Kev McVeigh, passed *nem con*
Brett Cockrell - proposed Jo Raine, seconded Andy Sawyer, passed *nem con*

(5) TO APPOINT REMO VERNASACHI AS BSFA AUDITOR

John Stewart had stood down, after many years as BSFA auditor, due to his marriage. Remo Vernasachi, a business acquaintance of Brett Cockrell, was willing to take on the role of auditor for a reasonable fee. Proposed John Waggett, seconded Keith Freeman, passed *nem con*.

(6) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nicholas Mahoney asked about current members, which at present stood at 1012 plus 39 new members and an unknown number left. The trend was very slowly upwards.

Various members of the meeting expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of paper received in mailings, or else requested that they should not receive one or another magazine. It was felt that the administration costs would outweigh any advantages derived from cost saving, and Keith Freeman pointed out the problems of selective stuffing. It was also pointed out that one never finds 100% of any organisation's membership wanting all of the material produced. It was proposed that the BSFA revert to producing one magazine, but so far survey results suggest that people are happier with retaining four magazines. However, MSP acknowledged the problem and would pursue it further.

BSFA influence over conventions, particularly their programming, was requested, but MSP confirmed that all conventions were organised independently of the BSFA and as such, the BSFA had no influence whatsoever on their content or organisation.

Roy Gray suggested that Committee members should claim travel expenses in order to be aware of the costs, and then see if this would be cheaper otherwise. MSP responded by suggesting that it was up to each individual Committee member, observing that her own wish was not to claim travelling expenses as this was a token of her commitment to being involved with the BSFA.

The Committee were asked about the capital sum to be set aside for merchandising. BC observed that there was so far no budget but that he thought about £400.

John Falrey proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee for its work, seconded by Bridget Wilkinson and passed unanimously.

NEW MEMBERSHIP RATES

UK & EEC	£12
Europe (outside EEC)	£15 (surface)
Australia/Asia	£18 (surface) £25 (air)
USA	\$25 (surface) \$40 (air)

Sample mailings currently £3.50 (including copies of all four magazines)

NEW COVER PRICES

Focus 75p; *Matrix* 95p; *Paperback Inferno* 95p; *Vector* £1.25

BACK ISSUES

All back issues are now safely with Maureen Porter, who is currently listing the holdings up to date. They will shortly be available for sale and lists may be had on receipt of an A5 or bigger envelope stamped to the value of 30p.

Members are cordially reminded that anyone who wishes to dispose of BSFA back issue could do a lot worse than to contact Maureen Porter at 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ (Tel: 0303 52939) to arrange their donation to the BSFA.

I am also very interested in hearing from anyone with very early issues of BSFA publications to dispose of. I also have the archives of the BSFA, but we are missing the first six issues of *Vector*, plus early issues of *Paperback Parlor*, precursor of *Paperback Inferno*. Anyone who can help fill in these gaps, please contact me.

THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED (A company limited by guarantee)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

30 September 1989

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The directors submit their report and financial statements for the year ended 30 September, 1989.

RESULTS AND DIVIDENDS

The profit for the year, after taxation, amounted to £1039 as shown in the profit and loss account. The directors do not propose the payment of a dividend.

REVIEW OF THE BUSINESS

The principle activities of the company during the year were the promotion of science fiction and the publication and distribution of science fiction magazines. The level of turnover achieved is consistent with the previous year and again a profit for the year has been achieved. The directors hope to utilise the profits achieved over the last two years to ensure the continuation of the association and its continued expansion. As in previous years the directors have not been remunerated for their services which are provided on a voluntary basis.

STATUS OF THE COMPANY

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital.

FIXED ASSETS

The movements on fixed assets are shown in Note 5 to the financial statements.

DIRECTORS

The directors who have held office since 1 October 1988 are as follows:

A.C. Clarke	President
J. White	
M.J. Edwards	
D.R. Langford	
S. Ounsley	
A. Sawyer	
D.V. Barrett	Resigned 18 January 1990
M.S. Porter	Co-ordinator
P. Kincaid	
D. Wood	
J. Raine	
B. Cockrell	
L. Holliday	
K. McVeigh	Appointed 29 May 1989
B. Parkinson	Appointed 29 May 1989
C.E. Nurse	Co-opted 19 November 1989
M.J. Edwards, D.R. Langford, S. Ounsley, D. Wood, J. Raine and B. Cockrell retire by rotation and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.	
C.E. Nurse co-opted on the 19 November 1989 offers himself for election.	

TAXATION STATUS

Given the mutual trading status of the company it is not subject to corporation tax on its trading profits.

AUDITORS

F.J. Steward F.C.A. resigned as auditor during the year and R.G. Vemasachi A.C.A. was appointed to take his place. A resolution to reappoint R.G. Vemasachi as auditor will be put at the annual general meeting.

By order of the board

Brett Cockrell Secretary
40 Cyprus Road,
London N3 3SE. 14 April, 1990

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

I have audited the financial statements on pages 4 to 9 in accordance with Auditing Standards. In my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at 30 September 1989 and of the profit for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985.

R.G. VERNASACHI
48 Eastdean Avenue,
Epsom,
Surrey KT18 7SN

Chartered Accountant

14 April, 1990

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

for the year ended 30 September 1989

Notes	1989 £	1988 £
TURNOVER	10,768	10,910
Cost of Sales	6,549	5,502
GROSS PROFIT	4,219	
Other operating expenses	1 3,202	2,771
OPERATING PROFIT	1,017	2,637
Interest Receivable	—	5
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION	2 1,017	2,642
TAXATION	4 (22)	1
PROFIT FOR THE YEAR	9 1,039	2,641

The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET

Notes	1989 £	As at 30 September 1989 1988 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible fixed assets	5 76	82
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	6 754	1,359
Cash at bank	3,525	2,701
	4,279	4,060
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	7 626	1,452
NET CURRENT ASSETS	3,653	2,608
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	3,729	2,690
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Other Reserves	8 27	27
Profit and Loss Account	9 3,702	2,663
	3,729	2,690

These financial statements were approved by the directors on 14 April 1990.

Maureen S. Porter

Brett Cockrell

DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR

The following notes form part of these financial statements.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.
- Depreciation is provided to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives using the reducing balance method at the following annual rates: Library - 10%. No depreciation is provided on the awards fixed asset as the cost was provided by the members by request and was posted to an undistributable reserve.
- Turnover represents income from subscriptions, publications, advertising and associated sales.

**We are legally obliged to publish
the accounts of the Association as
approved by the Annual General
Meeting.**

to page 614, I suddenly found... this... I thought "Oh my God, it's been censored" [laughter]. In fact, it goes straight from 612 to 615, there are no actual page numbers. It turns out it is actually an advert for Maggi Soup. I know you think I'm making this up, but I'm not. I'm not making the soup up either in future and it actually has the temerity, the nerve... I found out that apparently the publishers in Germany had done this sort of thing in the past, some specious idea of trying to cut back on production costs by putting in ads for soup!

Of course, there are various ways you can reply to this. I eventually chose to call up the Macmillan people who had sold the rights and say "Look, this is a rather bad show here" and put it into future contracts that this thing never happens again.

This other book I have here - this is the world's only shot copy, as far as I know of *Dianetics*. [Boo, hiss]. I thought you'd feel the same way as I did. This book was actually shot by the University of Edinburgh Science Fiction Society. I actually went along to one of their Freshers a couple of years ago. The year before, they'd had a sort of poll to choose the book they'd most like to have shot, as several people in the sf society were also in the rifle club and volunteered to shoot any given book which won the poll - surprisingly *Dianetics* came out as a very, very impressive winner. Basically, I disagree with doing anything with books, even bending the spines, but I thought that in this case, it was a worthy exception. It had been shot several times - looks like a 22, but I'm not absolutely sure. I went along in a fit of drunken enthusiasm and said "Great ideal! I'll buy that!" and duly got the book. I then looked inside and just under the bit where it says "You can always write to Ron" (this is the first thing in the book after the title) it says "I am always willing to help. By my own creed, a being is only as idle as he can serve others". This is the very first part of the book and it is dramatically nonsensical. "You can always write to Ron"

But back to puns. I've actually found that I'm not very good at spelling, as anyone who's ever had a letter from me (until I got the spell check program) will probably agree wholeheartedly. My excuse is that I did have a cousin who was dyslexic and I think there's probably some small part of it in my make up and that's why I recognise words by their sound - maybe that's why I love puns so much.

So to pass on to the strange and rather terrible subject of clichés. Clichés are actually jolly good fun if you use them right. I think it was Flann O'Brien who said he could tell a lot of the time when a newspaper was using clichés because you could guess what the next word was going to be. I've noticed myself that in the news - whenever there is a really bad disaster which happened at night, they always say "only with dawn did the full extent of the carnage become clear" and people are always tearing at the rubble with their bare hands. Good grief, why not tear at the rubble with their bare elbows or feet or something? Teeth, for God's sake. No, but they always tear at the rubble with their bare hands. Obviously, these people don't have earth movers or shovels or anything else, but they do have a journalist on board with a grainy stock of clichés. In fact, at one point, I decided I'd seen so many films with car chases that I thought it might be fun to have the most limited possible car chase so, in a book which never actually saw the light of day, and you can be thankful for that, believe me! I had a car chase in the middle of a river on a chain-driven ferry. Right? I'm serious. This was a gigantic book about 400,000 words because, for the first time in my life, I didn't plan the book, it just grew, it had a cancerous aspect which smudged all over the place. Since then, if possible, I always like to have the last line of the book, in fact, and I always have a plan.

The very, very few times I've tried to write anything under the influence of drink (or anything else, for that matter), it's just not really good. Apart from all the spelling mistakes, you do quite often start writing in clichés, thinking that "tearing at the rubble with one's bare hands" is actually very good and original, ha-ha. Of course, apart from the writing aspect, and this is where you have to be careful with sf, is that it can lead to doing silly things, which always seem to happen at five o'clock in the morning.

[At this point, Iain Banks read Chapter VI from his next book *The Use of Weapons*, which will be published by Macdonald Futura in September. It is a "Culture" book, really interesting. After that, he asked if anyone had any questions.]

Q: When will your next "Culture" book be published?

A: "Culture" book? That's the one I've just read from - *The Use of Weapons* - coming out in September. That will be the last one for a couple of books. The book after that will be non-sf and the next sf due out in two years' time will be a non-"Culture" story.

Q: Which book did you most enjoy writing?

A: I think, probably *Consider Phlebas* or *Espedair Street* because in both of them I could let myself go, as it were. The one I consider is the best of the books is *The Bridge* and it was HELL to write, it was really bad. I had awful arguments with my editor about this. He was suggesting that I did a lot of things which I didn't want

to do to it and at one point I was either going to commit suicide, kill him or just go off to the Highlands on the part of the advance I'd already had and say "OK, sue me" and live in a little caravan somewhere in the Outer Isles or whatever. As you may have gathered, none of these things actually came to pass but... And also, in terms of literary work and excellence, although that's probably the BEST book, something like *Consider Phlebas* is still my favourite in some ways, I think. It's a bizarre thing, not because it's me, the space opera, but because it's not carefully constructed and doesn't have all these wonderful twiddly bits, as it were. I mean you can't make a nice diagram or flow chart of how it goes. Basically it's a yam, a shipwrecked sailor who falls in with a gang of pirates and goes in search of buried treasure.

But I think it's either that or *Espedair Street*, partly because it's a first person narrative - which makes it easier to write, you don't have to be too careful to change the tone, which *The Bridge* has got a lot of where the actual authorial voice is changing. Doing a first person about a character who is fairly similar to myself - not an autobiography or anything - but the character in *Espedair Street* was sufficiently close to me for me to "let it all hang out, man" as one used to say. So I suppose it was that one which was the most painless to write, I guess. It's probably a case that the ones which are hardest to write are the ones you put your most effort into. I don't want to always write things which are difficult to write and are literally "wonderful" or whatever. But I also don't want to write stuff which will always be too easy either. I'm just trying to amuse myself by doing different things each time. So this is why I'm probably going to write a "whodunit" at some point. Ha ha! Coppel my editor's faintest. This is an idea - I've got these nasty bits of action, probably set in Edinburgh. I don't think Edinburgh has been written about enough and it is a dark sort of macabre place. I think that a rather grisly "whodunit" or mystery, whatever, might be quite fun to do. That should be fun to do. I think - to write within a genre. I think *The Bridge* is something I'd like to see on my deathbed thinking "Oh yes, that was good", but on the other hand, I think the genre-based books, like space opera, like *Consider Phlebas* can be more entertaining for oneself, as it were. It's a terrible admission - you're supposed to say "Oh, it's terribly hard writing all these books", but actually, as I say, it can be fun.

Q: Do you adopt a pluralistic approach to writing and do you attempt to transcend categories?

A: Pluralistic approach - yes. Does my stuff transcend categories, I don't know. In some ways, I'm deliberately putting them into categories - "*Phlebas*" was quite deliberately space opera.

Canal Dreams is a type of genre as well. It's my pathetic attempt to write a thriller. It's also a revenge thing as well. The actual setting is slightly unusual, especially as the central character is a middle aged Japanese cello player. But I wouldn't say that my stuff transcends categories, even something like *The Bridge*, which is a funny old book which still slots into the basic category of semi-Kafka. But, also in the case of *The Bridge*, it has one very definite forebear and that's *Alastair Grey's Lanark*. If I hadn't read that a few years earlier, I don't think *The Bridge* would have been remotely similar.

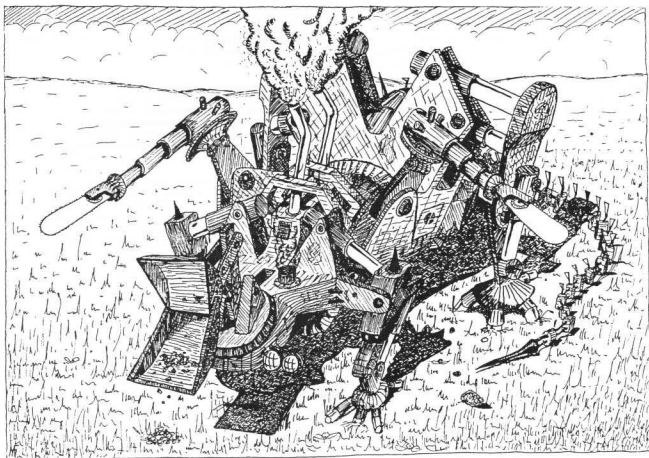
Q: Have parts of your dreams turned up in your writing?

A: Yes, one, which was one of the most structured dreams. There was this guy on the moor, just got the canal in front of him and then he hears the noise of the train. He looks down and he's standing between the tracks, so he tries to run. The tracks flow like quicksilver, there's always one in front of him and one behind him, no matter how fast he runs, he can't get away from the train. Eventually he jumps into the canal and floats down through this thick air - it's air he can breathe rather than water and with a mirror surface above him. He thinks "Got away from that" and then he sees the sheer walls of the quite narrow canal. He stubs his toe, he looks down and pulls the moss away and it's another length of railway track. Suddenly he hears prr-prr or whatever in the distance and the air starts to move passing him and he thinks there's a train coming and wakes up.

I actually had this dream, but it wasn't me. I would normally have managed to wake up with "Oh my God" and sweat and all the rest of it, abject terror. In fact, I woke up with "Wow! What a great idea for a story!" And it was going to be a short story for a long, long time.

Q: Have you had any translations of your work?

A: Yes, quite a lot, especially *The Wasp Factory*. The ones which are most fun are the Japanese and Hebrew because they're not just shuffled round ordinary letters, but a completely different script. The Japanese translation is quite a small book with a fairly tasteful Dali-esque cover with a melting watch or clock face on it. I had no idea what sort of cover it would have, but it meant that the unofficial competition for the least tasteful *Wasp Factory* cover remained in the hands of the Finnish, who put a burning greyhound on it. The French, however, for a long time had a picture of a gigantic wasp on the front, about the size of a face.



NEWS

Compiled by Paul Kincaid (with a little help from *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and other sources)

PRATCHETT, TUTTLE WIN BSFA AWARDS

The winners of the 1989 BSFA Awards were announced at Eastcon, the annual British Science Fiction Convention held in Liverpool at Easter. The winners were:

BEST NOVEL *Pyramids*, Terry Pratchett
BEST SHORT FICTION "In Translation", Lisa Tuttle
BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION *Red Dwarf*
BEST ARTWORK Cover: *Other Edens III*, Jim Burns

The awards were announced by the new BSFA Awards Administrator, Nicholas Mahoney and presented by BSFA Co-ordinator Maureen Porter. The awards take the form of a metal goblet about eight inches high on a base with an inscribed plaque. Lisa Tuttle and Jim Burns were present to collect their awards in person. The award for *Red Dwarf* was collected by Nic Farey, Chairman of the newly-formed *Red Dwarf* Fan Club. The award for Terry Pratchett was collected by Diana Wynne Jones.

Several other awards were presented at the ceremony. The Ken McIntyre Award for the best artwork to appear in a fanzine during the previous year and judged by a committee which includes a representative of the BSFA, was awarded for the second year running to Jim Porter, though this year the judges gave an honourable mention to Sylvia Starshine. The Doc Weir Award for contributions to fandom went to Roger Perkins. And the Easterncon Awards, being given for the second year for "the most enjoyable work" went to Bob Shaw for long text with *The Wooden Speeches* and for short text with "Dark Night in Toyland" to Horizon on BBC2, for the "Voyager Reports" as best dramatic presentation; and to Sue Mason for the Cover to *The Drunken Rabble Project* for best graphic work.

CLARKE, BURNS, LANGFORD, INTERZONE NOMINATED FOR HUGO

The 1990 Hugo Award nominations have been announced. They are:

BEST NOVEL

The Boat of a Million Years - Paul Anderson (no British publisher)
Prentice Alvin - Orson Scott Card (LEGEND)
A Fire in the Sun - George Alec Effinger (no British publisher)
Hyperion - Dan Simmons (HEADLINE)
Grass - Sheri S. Tepper (BANTAM)

BEST NOVELLA

"The Mountains of Mourning" - Lois McMaster Bujold (Analog/Borders of Infinity)
"A Touch of Lavender" - Megan Lindholm (IASFM)
"Tiny Tango" - Judith Moffett (IASFM)
"The Father of Stones" - Lucius Shepard (IASFM/The Father of Stones)
"Time-Out" - Connie Willis (IASFM)

BEST NOVELETTE

"Dogwalker" - Orson Scott Card (IASFM)
"Everything But Honor" - George Alec Effinger (IASFM/What Might Have Been 1)
"The Price of Oranges" - Nancy Kress (IASFM)
"For I Have Touched The Sky" - Mike Resnick (F&SF)
"Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another" - Robert Silverberg (IASFM/Time Gate)
"At the Riato" - Connie Willis (Omni/The Microverse)

BEST SHORT STORY

"Lost Boys" - Orson Scott Card (F&SF)
"Boobs" - Suzy McKee Charnas (IASFM)
"Computer Friendly" - Eileen Gunn (IASFM)
"The Return of William Proxmire" - Larry Niven (What Might Have Been 1)
"Dori Bangs" - Bruce Sterling (IASFM)
"The Edge of the World" - Michael Swanwick (Full Spectrum II)

BEST NON-FICTION BOOK

Astounding Days - Arthur C. Clarke (GOLLANCZ)
Harlan Ellison's Watching - Harlan Ellison (no British publisher)
Grumbles from the Grave - Robert A. Heinlein (no British publisher)
Dancing at the Edge of the World - Ursula K. LeGuin (GOLLANCZ)
The World Beyond the Hill - Alexei and Cory Panshin (no British publisher)
Norwegian Short Souvenir Book - Greg Thokar (Ed) (no British publisher)

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

The Abyss; *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*; *Batman*; *Field of Dreams*; *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR

Ellen Datlow; Gardner Dozois; Edward L. Ferman; David G. Hartwell; Beth Meacham; Charles C. Ryan; Stanley Schmidt

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Jim Burns; Thomas Canty; David Cherry; James Gurney; Tom Kidd; Don Maltz; Michael Whelan

BEST SEMIPROZINE

Locus - Charles N. Brown (Ed)
The New York Review of Science Fiction - Kathryn Cramer, David G. Hartwell & Gordon Van Gelder (Eds)
Thrust - D. Douglas Fritz (Ed)
Science Fiction Chronicle - Andrew Porter (Ed)
Interzone - David Pringle (Ed)

BEST FANZINE

File 770 - Mike Glyer (Ed)
FOSFAX - Timothy Lane (Ed)
Lan's Lantern - George "Lan" Laskowski (Ed)
Pirate Jenny - Pat Mueller (Ed)
The Mad 3 Party - Leslie Turek (Ed)

BEST FAN WRITER

Mike Glyer; Arthur D. Hlavaty; David Langford; Evelyn Leeper; Leslie Turek

BEST FAN ARTIST

Steve Fox; Teddy Harvia; Merle Insaings; Joe Mayhew; Stu Shiffman; Taral Wayne

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

John Cramer; Nancy Collins; Katherine Neville; Kristine Kathryn Rusch*; Allen Steele* (* final year of eligibility)

BEST ORIGINAL ARTWORK

Cover: Quozl - James Gurney
 Cover: *The Stress of Her Regard* - James Gurney
 Cover: *Rimrunners* - Don Maltz
 Cover: *Hyperion* - Gary Ruddell
 Cover: *Paradise* - Michael Whelan
 Cover: *The Renegades of Pem* - Michael Whelan

Neither of these last two categories are Hugos. This is the first time that an award has been presented for Artwork (as opposed to the Hugo for an Artist). It is possible that this award has been introduced because exactly the same names have appeared regularly on the Hugo shortlist over the last several years, but if it was an attempt to introduce a little variety it has failed, given that the same names (Gurney, Maltz, Whelan) appear on both lists.

Not much of a cross-over with the Nebula nominations this year. In the Novel category, there's the Anderson and Card; in the Novella category, Bujold, Lindholm and Moffett; in the Novella category Resnick, Silverberg and Willis; and in the Short Story category Card, Chamas and Sterling.

Once again this year, British voters can only contribute seriously to the fiction categories if they keep up with the American magazines (especially *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* which again dominates the nominations as it has done for the past decade). None of the short fiction nominations has yet appeared in any magazine or anthology published outside the USA. Of the novels, only the Card and the Tepper have so far been published in the UK. The Simmons is lined up for publication later this year, but probably too late to make any difference for Hugo voters. The other two nominations, the Anderson and the Efinger, so far have no British publication lined up.

And, again, Britain has not done that well for nominations. No British writer appears in the shortlist for any of the fiction categories, though **Arthur C. Clarke**

has received a non-fiction nomination for *Astounding Days*. Otherwise the British nominees are **Jim Burns** as Artist, **Dave Langford** as Fan Writer and *Interzone* for Semiprozine.

It is worth noting that **Maureen Porter** has been sent, unsolicited, two books from the American publisher BAEN. Accompanying them was a letter which read, in part:

Dear SF fan, As you are probably aware, Lois McMaster Bujold's "The Mountains of Mourning" has been nominated for the 1990 Hugo and Nebula awards in the novella category, while Robert Silverberg's "Enter a Soldier. Later: Enter Another" is a Hugo and Nebula contender in the novelette category... Ms. Bujold's novella also appears in her *Borders of Infinity*, and Mr. Silverberg's novelette is in his shared-world book *Time Gate*; copies of both are enclosed with the compliments of Baen Books.

It is difficult to know how widespread this practice is (this is the first time such books have been sent to this household), but one wonders about the economics of such a practice. Both authors are already Hugo Award recipients (in Silverberg's case, a multiple award winner), so one more award is unlikely to make that much difference to them in broad career terms. Does the award to two pieces of short fiction therefore make such a difference that the publishers can afford the expense of a transatlantic mailing of two books?

BRAM STOKER AWARD NOMINATIONS

The nominations have been announced for the horror equivalent of the Nebulas. The **Bram Stoker Awards** are given by members of the Horror Writers of America. The nominations are:

BEST NOVEL

Carion Comfort - Dan Simmons (HEADLINE)
Geek Love - Katherine Dunn (HUTCHISON)
In a Dark Dream - Charles L. Grant (NEL)
Midnight - Dean R. Koontz (HEADLINE)
The Wolf's Hour - Robert R. McCammon (GRAFTON)

BEST FIRST NOVEL

The Dwelling - Tom Elliot (no British publisher)
Goat Dance - Douglas Clegg (no British publisher)
Laying the Music to Rest - Dean Wesley Smith (no British publisher)
The Lilith Factor - Jean Paiva (no British publisher)
Sunglasses after Dark - Nancy Collins (no British publisher)

BEST NOVELLA/NOVELETTE

"At First Just Ghostly" - Karl Edward Wagner (Weird Tales)
 "The Confessions of St. James" - Chat Williamson (Night Visions 7)
 "On the Far Side of the Cadillac Desert with Dead Folks" - Joe R. Lansdale (Book of the Dead)
 "Phantom" - Kristine Kathryn Rusch (F&SF)

BEST SHORT STORY

"A Last Sad Love at the Diner of the Damned" - Edward Bryant (Book of the Dead)
 "Bodies and Heads" - Steve Rasnic Tem (Book of the Dead)
 "Each Night, Each Year" - Kathryn Ptacek (Post Mortem)
 "Eat Me" - Robert R. McCammon (Book of the Dead)
 "Yore Skin's Jee' Soft'n'Pury ... He Said" - Chet Williamson (Razored Saddles)

BEST COLLECTION

Blue World - Robert R. McCammon (GRAFTON)
By Bizarre Hands - Joe R. Lansdale (no British publisher)
Collected Stories - Richard Matheson (no British publisher)
Patterns - Pat Cadigan (no British publisher)
Soft and Others - F. Paul Wilson (no British publisher)

BEST NON-FICTION

American Vampires: Fans, Victims, Practitioners - Norine Dresser (no British publisher)
Harlan Ellison's Watching - Harlan Ellison (no British publisher)
Horror: A Connoisseur's Guide to Literature and Film - Leonard Wolf (no British publisher)
Horror: the 100 Best Books - Stephen Jones & Kim Newman (XANADU)
H.P. Lovecraft - Peter Cannon (no British publisher)

This may be a stupid question, but why are all the main novel category nominees for the horror award available in this country (though they are all American books) when the same is not true for the Hugo Award for SF novels?

MIDNIGHT ROSE IS LAUNCHED

Fox, Neil Gaiman, Mary Gentle, Roz Kaveney and Alex Stewart have formed *Midnight Rose*, a packaging group which is putting together three series of shared world anthologies which will be published by PENGUIN. Their stated aim is to "do the shared world anthology better than it has been done before".

The three series they are preparing are: *Temps*, *The World of Redfox* and *The Weerde*.

Temps follows the format of the American *Wild Cards* series in which characters have superhuman powers, but it is set in Britain and "views the basic material of the superhero comic with a jaundiced British eye". They go on to say: "If superhero comics and *Wild Cards* are James Bond movies, *Temps* is the Harry Palmer movies".

The World of Redfox is "occasionally-epic fantasy" based on the characters and settings created by Fox in his *Redfox* comics, where "Heroes struggle to fight evil and pay the rent".

The Weerde is an attempt "to use contemporary science to create the atmosphere of dread that Lovecraft extrapolated from the latest scientific ideas of the 1920s as much as from the stock paranoias of the horror writer". The *Weerde* are proto-historic shape-changers who form the basis for most of our legends.

The *Midnight Rose* project is being co-ordinated by Roz Kaveney, and any enquiries should be directed to her at 15 Muscott House, Whiston Road, London E2 8RZ.

AWARDS

The Philip K. Dick Award for the best original paperback SF book in 1989 has been presented to Richard Paul Russo for his novel *Subterranean Gallery*. The runner-up was Dave Wolverton for *On My Way to Paradise*. The award is usually accompanied by a cheque for \$500, but this year there was apparently some difficulty in raising the money and it is unclear whether the winner will receive any money.

Interzone has published the result of its annual readers' survey. This poll - which has the unique distinction that points are deducted for unfavourable mentions - produced the following result:

BEST FICTION

- 1: "The Magic Bullet" - Brian Stableford
- 2: "The Death of Arlett" - Barrington Bayley
- 3: "Star-Crystals and Karmel" - Eric Brown
- 4: "The Enormous Space" - J.G. Ballard
- 5: "The Cuttle" - Greg Egan

BSFA Award nominees, "Once Upon a Time in the Park" by Ian Lee and "Tommy Atkins" by Barrington Bayley came 8th and 12th respectively.

BEST ARTIST

- 1: SMS ("Listen", IZ32)
- 2: Iain Byers ("The Magic Bullet", IZ29)
- 3: Mark Salowski (Cover, IZ32)
- 4: Dave Hardy (Cover IZ31)
- 5: Jonathan Coleclough ("Gravegoods", IZ31)
- 5: Keith Scafe (Cover, IZ30)

BEST NON-FICTION

- 1: Brian Stableford - "The Way to Write SF"
- 2: Brian Stableford on Stephen Donaldson
- 3: Michael Moorcock interview (Collin Greenland)
- 4: J.G. Ballard on his ten favourite SF movies
- 5: Brian Stableford on Douglas Adams

Finalists for the Compton Cook/Stephen Tall Memorial Award for a first SF/Fantasy novel are:

<i>Sunglasses after Dark</i>	Nancy Collins
<i>Twister</i>	John Cramer
<i>The Gate of Ivory</i>	Doris Egan
<i>Child of Saturn</i>	Teresa Edgerton
<i>The Steerswoman</i>	Rosemary Kirstein
<i>The Shining Falcon</i>	Joseph Sherman

The Kirstein is the only one with a British edition, which will be coming out from PAN.

PEOPLE

Paul J. McAuley reports: "GOLLANCZ will publish my collection of short stories (tentative title: *The King of the Hill*) in March 1991, and my SF novel *Eternal Light* (the sequel to *Four Hundred Billion Stars*, in which space opera tropes are reworked to incorporate recent radical cosmological theories) in June". - Paul J. McAuley

Another acclaimed new British author, Ian McDonald, has delivered his third novel, *King of Morning*, *Queen of Day*, to DOUBLEDAY/BANTAM in the USA. There is still no word whether his second novel, *Out on Blue Six*, or his short story collection, *Empire Dreams*, will see British publication, though his first novel, *Desolation Road*, will receive its first hardback edition from DRUNKEN DRAGON PRESS.

Ian Watson has just sold a new SF novel to GOLLANCZ, as well as completing a *Warhammer* book for GW.

Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett have sold *Good Omens* to WORKMAN PUBLISHING in America, an imprint which has not published fiction before, though it has produced illustrated books with SF elements, including work by Vincent Di Fate and Ron Miller.

Brian Stableford is looking for new or reprint stories based on the legend of the Wandering Jew for a new anthology, *Tales of the Wandering Jew*. Stories need to be with him by 15 June at 113 St. Peter's Road, Reading, RG6 1PG.

Brian Aldiss has taken *Dracula Unbound* to GRAFTON despite earlier reports that it had been sold to NEL. NEL will, however, be publishing his memoir, *Bury My Heart at W.H. Smith*. *Dracula Unbound* is a companion piece to his 1973 novel, *Frankenstein Unbound*, the film of which, by Roger Corman, is due to be released later this year.

Stephen Jones and Ramsey Campbell are joint editors of *Best New Horror*, a new anthology series from ROBINSON which is liable to provide a companion volume each year to Gardner Dozois's *Best New SF* which comes from the same publisher. The anthology of the best horror stories of the year is to be a massive 170,000 words long.

OBITUARIES

Wayne Ackerman, translator of the Perry Rhodan books into English, and also translator of *Hard to be a God* by Arkadi and Boris Strugatski, died on 5 March, 1990, aged 76. Born Tilly Wahrman, she was briefly the wife, then later the long time companion of leading American fan, Forrest J. Ackerman.

Karl Brown, cinematographer who helped to develop the process used in *King Kong* by which models could be made to appear as monsters, and who went on to make many of Boris Karloff's low-budget shockers, has died aged 93.

Stephen Frances, founder of PENDULUM PUBLICATIONS, the first publisher of *New Worlds*, died in October 1989, aged 72. Frances founded PENDULUM in 1945 and published books by Frank Arnold, John Russell Fearn and John Carnell, as well as the first three issues of *New Worlds* before it folded in 1947. Frances also wrote gangster novels and SF under the name Hank Janson before selling the rights to the name in the late '50s when it was taken up by a number of other writers. Among his later books was *The Disorientated Man* (1966, as by Peter Saxton) which was filmed as *Scream and Scream Again*.

Leo Giroux, author of horror novels *The Rishi*, *The Dark Ashram* and *The Black Madonna*, died on 3 March 1990. He was 55.

Harold Leland Goodwin, who used to pen-name John Blaine to write twenty four Rick Brant Science Adventure books for boys between 1947 and his death, died on 18 February 1990, aged 75.

Donald Hutter, London-born senior editor with HOLT and SIMON & SCHUSTER in America, died at the age of 57 on 22 February 1990. He was J.G. Ballard's American editor, and also edited Robert Heinlein's *Friday*, as well as being responsible for a number of the Nebula Awards anthologies.

Lisa Novak, former editor at BANTAM SPECTRA responsible, among others, for books by F.M. Busby, George Alex Effinger, Mike McQuay and William Sleator, was raped and murdered on 17 March 1990. She was 30, and her husband was also killed in the attack.

David Rappaport, the actor who appeared on stage in Ken Campbell's *Illuminatus* in 1976 and went on to fame as one of the *Time Bandits* in the film of that name, died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds on 2 May 1990. He had stopped growing at

the age of seven, but took a degree in psychology at Bristol University and taught in Yorkshire prior to acting. He turned down a part in *Star Wars* because he "did not want to play a puppet or a robot" and always preferred to be known as a little person, rather than as a dwarf.

PUBLISHING

LEGEND has commissioned a series of novellas which will begin to appear in August. The idea is not new to the company, since CENTURY HUTCHISON has already published a series of mainstream novellas which included *Ruins* by Brian Aldiss and *Running Wild* by J.G. Ballard. The new series of SF novellas will be published by Greg Bear, Ramsey Campbell, Jonathan Carroll, Lucius Shepard, James Morrow, Frederik Pohl and Michael Swanwick.

The exodus of authors from GOLLANCZ in the wake of Malcolm Edwards's departure to GRAFTON has not yet been stemmed. We have already reported that Brian Aldiss, J.G. Ballard, Michael Moorcock and Robert Silverberg have departed. Other recent departures include Greg Bear, who has followed Edwards to GRAFTON, and Gene Wolfe, whose long-awaited *Soldier of Arete* has just been published by NEL. However, Ian Watson and Paul J. McAuley remain within the fold with new sales reported elsewhere this issue, and Gwyneth Jones has also moved to GOLLANCZ.

HEADLINE has bought the entire Dean R. Koontz backlist from STAR, and is reselling them three at a time. By the end of this issue, it is anticipated that all of Koontz's horror novels will be in print in this country.

Zenith 2, the latest volume of David Garnett's anthology of new British science fiction stories, will be published by ORBIT on July 26. (The contents were listed on p 6 of *Matrix* 87). On July 28, Forbidden Planet in London will be hosting a signing for the anthology, to be held at 1 pm in the Cafe Munchen, around the corner from the New Oxford Street bookshop. It is hoped that ten of the twelve authors will be able to attend: Michael Moorcock, Brian Stableford, John Gribbin, Lisa Tuttle (whose story in Zenith 1 won the British Science Fiction Award), Storm Constantine, Ian McDonald, Colin Greenland, Stephen Baxter, Eric Brown and Simon Ings. Plus the editor. (The other two authors, Garry Kilworth and Jojo Bling, will be overseas: Hong Kong and Vancouver Island).

ANTHOLOGIES & COLLECTIONS

Carol Emshwiller has a collection of short stories, *The Start of the End of it All*, out from WOMEN'S PRESS. The stories, gathered from places as diverse as F&SF, *Dangerous Visions* and *Oz* range from 1958 to 1990. They are: "The Start of the End of it All", "Looking Down", "Eclipse", "The Circular Library of Stones", "Fledged", "Vilcabamba", "Acceptance Speech", "If the Word was to the Wise", "Living at the Center", "Moon Songs", "But Soft, What Light ...", "Pelt", "Debut", "The Institute", "Woman Waiting", "Chicken Icarus", "Sex and/or Mr. Morrison" and "Glory, Glory".

Also from WOMEN'S PRESS is *Skin of the Soul*, a collection of original horror stories by women edited by Lisa Tuttle. The stories are: "Lightning Rod" - Melanie Tem, "Boobs" - Suzy McKee Charnas, "Walls" - R.M. Lamming, "Anzac Day" - Cherry Wilder, "The Night Wolf" - Karen Joy Fowler, "The Ancestress" - Jefferies Sexton, "Getting Away from it All" - Ann Walsh, "Loophole" - Terry McGarry, "The G.K. Sprinkle" - Alan K. Brown, "The Elphinstone's Hands" - Lisa Tuttle, "Serenade" - G.K. Sprinkle, "Trick or Treat" - Pauline E. Dunagate, "Titanus's Child" - Sherry Goldsmith, "The Dream" - Dyan Sheldon, "Listening" - Milissa Mia Hall, "Pregnant" - Joyce Carol Oates, "Hantu-Hantu" - Anne Goring.

Frederik Pohl's *The Day the Martians Came* (GRAFTON) is a novel made up of several related short stories, climaxing in his contribution to *Dangerous Visions*. The contents are: "A Martian Christmas", "Sad Screenwriter Sam", "The View from Mars Hill", "Saucery", "The Beltway Bandit", "Too Much Looseshire", "Triadiska's Martians", "The Missioner", "Across the River" and "The Day after the Day the Martians Came".

Red Thirst is the latest collection of *Warhammer* stories, edited, as usual, by David Pringle (GAMES WORKSHOP). It contains: "Red Thirst" - Jack Yeovil, "The Dark Beneath the World" - William King, "The Spells Below" - Neil Jones, "The Light of the Transfiguration" - Brian Craig, "The Song" - Steve Baxter and "The Voyage South" - Nicola Griffiths.

The Pendragon Chronicles, edited by Mike Ashley (ROBINSON), describes itself as a collection of "heroic fantasy from the time of King Arthur". All the stories have been published before are consist of: "Chief Dragon of the Island" - Joy Chant, "The Dragon's Boy" - Jane Yolen, "The Knight with the Two Swords" - John Steinbeck, "Morte D'Alain" - Maxey Brooke, "King's Man" - Sasha Miller, "Sir Percival of Wales" - Roger Lancelyn Green, "For to Achieve Your Adventure" -

Theodore Goodridge Roberts, "The King's Damosel" - Vera Chapman, "The Lady of the Fountain" from *The Mabington*, "Buried Silver" - Keith Taylor, "Jaufrey the Knight and the Fair Brunissende" - rendered into English by Alfred Elwes, "Son of the Morning" - Ian McDowell, "The Lady of Belec" - Phyllis Ann Kerr, "Artes, Son of Marius" - Andre Norton, "An Entry that did not appear in Domesday Book" - John Brunner, "Midnight, Moonlight, and the Secret of the Sea" - Darrell Schweitzer; in addition there's a survey of Arthurian literature by Ashley which contains a useful listing of 116 works of fiction about Arthur that have appeared in the last hundred years.

NEW & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

APRIL - JUNE 1990

Piers ANTHONY *Man from Mundania* (NEL hb £12.95, pb £7.95) 1st UK edn of the latest Xanth novel

Mike ASHLEY Ed. *The Pendragon Chronicles* (ROBINSON pbk £5.99) 1st edn of reprint anthology of Arthurian anthology

Isaac ASIMOV & Robert SILVERBERG *Nightfall* (GOLLANCZ hb £13.95) 1st UK edn of novel version of the classic short story

J.G. BALLARD *The Drought* (PALADIN pbk £3.99) Reprint (Cape 1965) of superb disaster novel about the world drying up; *The Unlimited Dream Company* (PALADIN pbk £3.99) Reprint (Cape 1979) of exquisite table set when imagination takes over Shepperton

Gael BAUDINO *Dragon Sword* (LEGEND pbk £4.50) 1st UK edn of 1st vol in new fantasy trilogy

Greg BEAR *Tangents* (VGSF pbk £3.99) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of short story collection

John BLANCHE & Ian MILLER *Ratspike* (GW hb £12.99) 1st edn of collection of artwork

David BRIN *Earth* (MACDONALD hb £13.95) 1st UK edn of new novel about a black hole falling into Earth's core

Terry BROOKS *The Scions of Shannara* (ORBIT hb £12.95) 1st UK edn of the 1st Shannara novel in 5 years

Edward BRYANT, Dean R. KOONTZ & Robert R. McCAMMON *Night Fears* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99) Reprint (Headline 1989) of collection of horror stories

Jack L. CHALKER *Lith: A Snake in the Grass* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol 1 of *The Four Lords of the Diamond*; *The Maze in the Mirror* (NEL pbk £4.50) 1st UK edn of G.O.D. Inc No 3

C.J. CHERRYX *Sundial* (MANDARIN pbk £3.50) Reprint (Futura) of collection of linked stories about the fate of Earth's cities in the far future

Grace CHETWIN *The Atheling* (CORGI pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol 1 of *The Last Legacy*

Hugh COOK *The Wishstone and the Wonderworkers* (CORGI pbk £3.99) Reprint (Colin Smythe 1990) of Vol 6 of *Chronicles of an Age of Darkness*

Brian CRAIG *Play Daemon* (GW pbk £4.99) 1st edn of *Warhammer* novel, the sequel to *Zargos* by the pseudonymous Brian Stableford

Brian DALEY *Fall of the White Ship* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of 3rd novel about Alacrity Fitzgibbon & Hobart Floy

Charles deLINT *Moonheart* (PAN hb £13.95, pbk £7.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy linking ancient Wales and modern Canada

Link DILLE, Abigail IRVINE, M.S. MURDOCH, Jerry OLTON, Ulrike O'REILLY & Robert SHECKLEY *Arrival* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of collection of Buck Rogers stories

Carl DIERASSI *Cantor's Dilemma* (MACDONALD hb £12.95) 1st UK edn of mainstream novel about a biochemist working on an experiment to back up his revolutionary discovery concerning cancer

Les EDWARDS *Blood and Iron* (GW hb £12.99) 1st edn of collection of artwork Carol EMHSWILLER *The Start of the End of it All* (WOMEN'S PRESS pbk £4.95) 1st UK edn of collection of short stories

Mick FARRER *Armageddon Crazy* (ORBIT pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel about special effects used to overthrow right-wing regime in America

Neil FERGUSON *Double Helix Fall* (ABACUS pbk £3.99) 1st edn of novel set in America controlled by the computers of the Protocol Organization

Carlos FUENTES *Aura* (ANDRE DEUTSCH hb £9.95, pbk £5.95) 1st UK edn of novella of erotic ghost story originally pub in 1962, accompanied by an essay on the writing of the book

Patricia GEARY *Strange Toys* (CORGI pbk £2.99) 1st UK edn of Philip K. Dick Award winner

David GEMMELL *Quest for Lost Heroes* (LEGEND hb £11.95, pbk £5.95) 1st edn of 4th part of the Drenai Saga; *The Last Guardian* (LEGEND pbk £3.99) Reprint (Legend 1989) of the latest Silprassi novel

Charles L. GRANT *In a Dark Dream* (NEL pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of horror novel Barbara HAMBL *Dark Hand of Magic* (UNWIN pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of a new adventure for Sun Wolf and Star Hawk

Thomas HARRIS *The Silence of the Lambs* (MANDARIN pbk £3.99) Reprint (Heinemann 1988) of urban thriller

William Hope HODGSON *The House on the Borderland* (GRAFTON pbk £2.99) Reprint (Chapman & Hall 1908) of classic horror story, with new afterword by Iain Sinclair

Mike JEFFERIES *Glitterspike Hall* (FONTANA pbk £3.99) Reprint (Fontana 1989) of Book 1 of *The Heirs to Gnarlmyre*

Stephen KING *The Stand* (HODDER hbk £14.95) 1st UK edn of the complete edn of a novel 1st pub in 1978 minus 150,000 words

Dean R. KOONTZ *Strangers* (HEADLINE pbk £4.99), *Darkness Comes* (HEADLINE pbk £3.99), *Chase* (HEADLINE pbk £3.50) Reprint (W.H. Allen 1986, 1984, Arthur Barker 1974) of horror novels (Chase 1st pub as by K.R. Dwyer)

Tanith LEE *The Blood of Roses* (LEGEND hbk £14.95) 1st edn of massive (678pp) novel of vampirism

R.S. MacAVOY *The Third Eagle* (BANTAM pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel about a red indian in space

Anne McCAFFREY *The Renegades of Pern* (BANTAM hbk £12.95) 1st UK edn of latest Pern novel which runs concurrently with the events in *The White Dragon*

Robert R. McCAMMON *Blue World* (GRAFTON pbk £4.50) Reprint (Grafton 1989) of collection of horror stories

Michael MOORCOK *The Eternal Champion* (GRAFTON pbk £2.99) Reprint (Collins 1970) of 1st part of fantasy series

Janet MORRIS & Chris MORRIS *Outpassage* (NEL pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of novel about rebellion on Earth's mining colonies

M.S. MURDOCH *Rebellion 2456* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Buck Rogers novel

Fredrick POHL *The Day the Martians Came* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of collection of related stories

Terry PRATCHETT *Pyramids* (CORGI pbk £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of BSFA Award winning novel

Terry PRATCHETT & Neil GAIMAN *Good Omens* (GOLLANCZ hbk £12.95) 1st edn of novel subtitled "The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch"

David PRINGLE Ed. *Red Thirst* (GW pbk £4.99) 1st edn of latest Warhammer anthology

Robert REED *The Hormone Jungle* (ORBIT pbk £3.50) Reprint (Orbit 1989) of exotic first novel

Daniel RHODES *Adversary* (NEL pbk £4.50) Reprint (NEL 1989) of horror novel

Jennifer ROBERTSON *Daughter of the Lion* (CORGI pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 6 of *Chronicles of the Cheysuli*

Marquis DE SADE *The Gothic Tales of the Marquis De Sade* (PETER OWEN hbk £12.95) Reprint (Neville Spearman 1965, as Eugénie de Franval and Other Stories) of collection of supernatural tales

Charles SHEFFIELD *Summeride* (GOLLANCZ hbk £13.95) 1st UK edn of Book 1 of *The Heritage Universe*, set 4,000 years in the future

Dan SIMMONS *Carion Comfort* (HEADLINE hbk £14.95, pbk £8.95) 1st UK edn of novel about mind vampires

John SLADEK *Roderick at Random* (KEROSINA hbk £13.95, Sp. Edn £40) Reprint (1983) and 1st hbk of his "Further Education of a Young Machine"

Guy N. SMITH *Phobia* (GRAFTON pbk £3.50) 1st edn of horror novel

Kevin STEIN *Brothers Majere* (PENGUIN pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of *Dragonlance* Preludes 3

John E. STITH *Redshift Rendezvous* (ACE pbk £3.50) 1st edn of novel set aboard a hyperspace liner where light travels slowly enough to be observed

Keith TAYLOR *The Wild Sea* (HEADLINE pbk £3.50) 1st UK edn of *Bard III*

Lise TUTTLE Ed. *Skin of the Soul* (WOMEN'S PRESS PBK £5.95) 1st edn of orig. anthology of horror stories by women

Robert E. VADEMAN *Masters of Space* (NEL pbk £4.99) 1st UK edn of omnibus comprising *The Stellar Death Plan*, *The Alien Web* & *A Plague in Paradise*

William T. VOLLAMAN *The Ice-Shirt* (DEUTSCH hbk £14.95) 1st edn of novel that brings Norsemen and American Indians together in the 1st part of a fantastic history of America to be known as *Seven Dreams*

Elizabeth VONARBURG *The Silent City* (WOMEN'S PRESS pbk £4.95) 1st UK edn of novel set when people live in the City deep underground, kept alive by machines

Lawrence WATT-EVANS *The Cyborg and the Sorcerers* (GRAFTON pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of novel about cyborg warrior still killing Earth's enemies 300 years after Earth has perished

Robert Anton WILSON *Schrödinger's Cat Trilogy* (ORBIT pbk £5.99) 1st UK edn in 1 vol of *The Universe Next Door*, *The Trick Top Hat* and *The Homing Pigeons*

Robert Charles WILSON *Gypsyair* (ORBIT pbk £6.99) 1st UK edn of novel about someone who can open doors between universes

Gene WOLFE *Soldier of Arete* (NEL hbk £13.95) 1st UK edn of the sequel to *Soldier in the Mist*; *There Are Doors* (ORBIT pbk £4.50) Reprint (Gollancz 1989) of comedy about a goddess from another world

T.M. WRIGHT *The Waiting Room* (GOLLANCZ pbk £3.99) 1st UK edn of horror novel

Tim WYNN-JONES *Voices* (HODDER hbk £12.95) 1st UK edn of horror novel

Cry "Fanac..."

This is a series on the things BSFA members can do apart from just reading science fiction. Last issue, **Valerie Housden** described *Ilk*, folk songs mostly adapted to science fiction themes, next issue will have **Chris Bailey** on the *Confessions of a Book Collector*. After that, it's up to you.

There are a number of groups of people who write for Amateur Publishing Associations (or apas for short). Apas provide as much writing exercise as each member feels capable of aiming for and a chance to communicate with people interested in science fiction in different parts of the country - or world. Here's **Ian Bambo**, who is the administrator for *Pieces of Eight*, to describe what being in an apa could be like. So are the other administrators. Other apas are women only, for gay people and sympathisers, for soft toys (though I have often wondered how the soft toys type: this apa has a lot of satire, so I've heard), for people serious about writing, for people interested in comics ... if you are interested, please write for details to the editorial address (16 Avlary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP).

PIECES OF EIGHT - The Friendly APA

When Jenny asked me to address you all this evening, I wasn't as shy as I might have been two or three years ago. Compared with *Pieces of Eight*, a formal presentation at the Matrix Banqueting Hall in front of the shining, up-turned faces of the entire BSFA feels like specifying after talking in the kitchen at one of the better kinds of parties. But regular practice in an apa where you can be yourself and develop in your own way is as good a basis as I know for any kind of writing and any kind of audience.

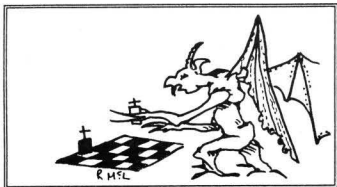
I should say what *The Pirate Apa*, the good ship, *Pieces of Eight*, is not: it isn't a writers' workshop though you can experiment and get responses; it isn't a debating society though there are few subjects that have not been discussed; it isn't just an adjunct of science fiction fandom though many of us came in by that route; finally, it's not just a cosy little pen-pal club though it's relaxed rather than acerbic, responsive rather than judgemental. As Administrator, I don't see it as my role to strut and fret: they'd only mutiny.

To be more positive, what it is in content and atmosphere is the amalgam of who is in the apa at any given time. The who determines the what. You'll know some of the names. Past and present members include the published writers, BSFA notables and others familiar from fanzines and conventions. Then there are some modest though meritorious persons who find it suits them to make *Pieces of Eight* their main or only forum. Current membership spans from Oban to Cornwall and from Kent to Kentucky. Ages range from post-graduate to post-retirement. The ongoing conversation of contribution and comment draws on members' backgrounds and interests as various as science, drama, teaching, law, travel, computers, printing, marketing, piracy, linguistics and the arts generally. Contributions might be about dinosaurs or getting ripped off in Bangkok or something more personal. As you will.

To be more explicit, what it is in essence is an opportunity for people who like writing to write - not in a private notebook, but in a considered way for a small, interested audience. There are some rules: rule 1 is membership - open to anyone; rule 2 is subscription - currently £8 per annum for postage etc. - and the only other thing which really matters is minimum activity - two sides in one out of three of the monthly mailings, a small but important commitment to ensure that members are active rather than passive, contributing as well as receiving. This, to me, is the crux: to be writing and for an audience that shares at least one sympathetic vibration, the impulse to put words to paper. We are all in the same boat.

You've been a lovely audience. Thank you and have a safe journey.





COMPETITION CORNER

GENERAL INFORMATION

After my whinge in the last issue about lack of entries, and my pleas for comments, I would like to thank ALL of you who entered and will analyse your comments and suggestions (journalists for "pinch all I can"). However, I still don't know whether it was the style of the competition itself or my pleading that elicited a (for me) record entry. The address for all competition entries and comments - Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Ave, Harold Wood, Essex RM3 0RG.

RESULTS OF COMPETITION 87 - BEASTLY NUMBERS

Firstly the answers I intended when I set the quiz! - then a few comments about what other people thought I meant, then the roll of honour.

One	1	When Harle Was One	Gerrold
	8	Our Friends From Frolix 8	Dick
	0	Count Zero	Gibson
	5	The Luck of Brins 5	Wilder
Two	4	Four Dimensional Nightmare	Ballard
	2001	2001 A Space Odyssey	Clarke
	1984	Nineteen Eighty Four	Orwell
	100	Midsummer Century	Blish
Three	334	334	Disch
	451	Fahrenheit 451	Bradbury
	2	The Ballad of Beta 2	Delany
	9	Nine Princes in Amber	Zelazny
Four	1982	1982 Janine	Gray
	10	The Machine in Shaft Ten	M J Harrison
	1985	1985	Burgess
	3	The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch	Dick
Five	2080	War in 2080	Langford
	14	Utopia 14	Vonnegut
	3	Three Eyes	Gordon
	2100	Revolt in 2100	Heinlein
Six	2262	Trullion Alastor 2262	Vance
	933	Marune Alastor 933	Vance
	933	Marune Alastor 933	Vance
	1716	Wyst Alastor 1716	Vance
Seven	7	The Seven Saxons	Tenn
	2419	Armageddon 2419 A.D.	Nowlan

NOTES

1. Sorry, the clue to the last line in Sum 1 should have been T * D N. I omitted "The" - but fooled nobody.
2. The trick in Sum 2 was that M * was "Midsummer Century" by Blish, not "100th Millennium" by Brunner. The Brunner would have needed a clue of * M.
3. I omitted the subtitle of the Langford book in Sum 4.
4. The other trick in Sum 4 was deliberate - Utopia 14 is the alternate title of Player Piano (but it is the copy I have).
5. The (unintentional) most difficult part was Sum 5. I had not realised that the British edition of Marune Alastor, plus the Nicholls Encyclopedia, plus other reference sources has number 993, while my American edition has 933. Also some of you didn't realise that this title appeared twice. The rules said you needed 25 titles, but there were 26 lines, so this might have given you a hint.

ROLL OF HONOUR

A very high number of entries with, to my surprise, several fully correct ones. Not only a record number of entries, but also a record number of countries represented - West Germany, Norway, Hong Kong, Czechoslovakia, Finland and all four "home" countries.

WINNER of £5 book token - Terry Broome (first out of the hat)
 RUNNERS UP (all correct) Nigel Parsons, Andy Mills, Dave Langford, Vaclav Kriz, David Bruce
 NUMBER OF ENTRANTS - 40 (average score 46.5 out of 52)

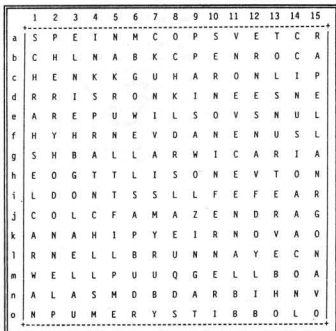
COMPETITION NO. 88 'ELLISH WORD SEARCH

Most of the entrants in the Christmas multi-competition seemed to enjoy the Word Search, so here is another one, but just that bit different.

All you have to do is list all the SF words you can find in the grid, following these (simple) rules.

- (1) all words must be L shaped (with one 90 degree turn)
- (2) all words must be four letters or more
- (3) words can overlap and/or cross each other
- (4) all words must be sf related (in a very broad sense)
- (5) only horizontal and vertical words (no diagonal ones)
- (6) the L-shape can turn to the left or right.

To help me judge this, please list the words with their starting square and the "type" (eg d7 - NIVEN - author). Types are books, authors, characters etc etc. Good luck. Note that I haven't given any target as there may be some words in the square that I didn't intend to include!



Members' Noticeboard

WANTED! One copy of Bruce Stirling's *The Artificial Kid*. Contact Steve Trease, Flat 5, Westholme, The Firs, Bowdon, Cheshire WA14 2TE. Tel: 061 928 6778 (evenings)

STORM CONSTANTINE: Is there anyone with an interest in the work of Storm Constantine, and the ideas behind the *Wraeththu* novels, and in the Thirteenth Key Projects' *Paragenesis* magazine? If you would like further information or to help with, or contribute to, a newsletter/magazine to take up the ideas explored by *Paragenesis*, please get in touch with: Steve and Vikki Lee, 2A Villa Road, St. Bernards Hospital, Uxbridge Road, Southall, Middx UB1 3EU

FOR SALE: Moorcock: *The Jewel in the Skull* published by Loadstone, very good condition US paperback 1967? £3. *The Man from Uncle* four paperbacks nos 1, 2, 3, 4. All in good/very good condition £3 the set. Dennis Wheatley hardback first editions all with dust jacket: *The Wanton Princess* (1966) very good £4; *Evil in a Mask* (1969) dust jacket marked price cut out and inscription on fly £3.50; *Gateway to Hell* (1970) price cut out £4.50. The set for £10. Dennis Wheatley: *Who Killed Robert Prentice*, a curio from the forties. The book is a compilation of police statements, copies of letters, other evidence and newspaper cuttings. You have to find out who did it. A collector's item in fair condition £10. Dr. Who game (Tom Baker) Box slightly damaged, but otherwise complete £10. I will consider offers on any item - Mark Greener, 38 Dunmow Road, Bishops Cleeve, Herts CM23 5HL

SHORT STORIES WANTED: Stephen Kruger is looking for contributors to his anthology of SF short stories. The stories he wants must: (1) be previously unpublished (2) of more or less usual length (rather than novellas) (3) dealing centrally with a legal theme (though the law may be fictitious) and (4) involving uninvited technology in some way. Examples of what he is seeking include Asimov's *A Point of Law*, Kilgore's *Caveat Emptor* and Wells's *Origins of Galactic Law*. Interested parties can contact him at 405 West 6th Street/San Pedro, CA 90731, USA or telephoning 213-832-5945 (his local office)

SHARDS OF BABEL: I would be very interested in seeing a complete (or near-complete) run of this European newswire. Is there anybody who can lend me one? I would be happy to pay the cost of postage, including registration if desired. Please write to: Cyril Simsa, 2 The Hexagon, Fitzroy Park, London N6 6NR

THE NORTHERN FILK MEETINGS: THE NIGGLE, for filk singers north of Watford, takes place in Leeds on the third Saturday of each month. Details from Steve Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Armley LS12 2NP. The newsletter, *Leaf*, is produced by Dave Bell, Church Farm, North Kelsey, Lincoln LN1 6EQ

HULL SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS GROUP: We are holding a writers weekend workshop over the weekend 16-18 November 1990. This will be held mainly at the Hull University Union Building, with a social evening at a local pub. The weekend will be very participatory - ie everyone will be expected to work - there will be no one teaching (although we are hoping to get a published author to come and give us a talk). If you are interested, please send a sae to Carol Ann Green, 5 Raglan Avenue, Raglan Street, Hull HU5 2JB. Note there are only nine places available, and these are on a first come, first served basis

THE IONIST ART GROUP - WANTED, NEW MEMBERS: The IONIST ART GROUP is an international multi-disciplinary organisation which has been formed to bridge the gap between art and science on a practical level. The group aims to bring together artists working in all fields and scientists/technologists to exchange ideas and to create opportunities for collaboration on a variety of joint projects. The group will explore and promote all forms of art with a scientific and technological bias. The ION EXCHANGE is a quarterly publication which aims to encourage an informal dialogue between artists and scientists. Everyone is invited to send in articles and letters on relevant subjects for discussion. The publication is free, but a nominal sum (£2.50) per annum to cover production and postage costs is appreciated (cheques made payable to Gerald Shepherd). ZWITTERION is the "artletter" of the IONIST ART GROUP. It will contain science-related artwork, science-orientated poetry and science fiction short stories. The maximum amount of art and the minimum amount of writing about it! There is no formal application procedure to become a member. Anyone interested in art and science is most welcome to join the group. Informal group meetings are held on the first Saturday of every month in London. A number of specialist groups (starting with "Engineering in Art" and "Optics in Art") are being formed to allow artists and scientists to compare notes and work together in a specific area of science-art. The first "SCIENCE IN ART" exhibition at Bournemouth & Poole College of Art & Design went very well and more IONIST GROUP art shows are being planned. Contact: Graham Yates, 40 Queensway, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 1BJ

URGENTLY WANTED: SCIENCE-FICTION titles from the authors listed below. If you have any for sale, let me know what you have and how much you want for them. And we'll take it from there. Okay? (Original paperbacks preferred, but will take re-prints). Paul ANDERSON, Isaac ASIMOV, Greg BEAR, Gregory BENFORD, James BLISH, John BRUNNER, Arthur C. CLARKE, Gordon R. DICKSON, Joe HALDEMAN, Edmund HAMILTON, Harry HARRISON, Robert A. HEINLEIN, Frank HERBERT, James P. HOGAN, Trevor HOYLE, Charles Eric MAINE, Richard C. MEREDITH, Larry NIVEN, Frederik POHL, Jerry POURNELLE, "Perry Rhodan SF", Bob SHAW, Robert SHECKLEY, Robert SILVERBERG, Clifford D. SIMAK, E.E. "Doc" SMITH, Brian M. STABLEFORD, A.E. VAN VOGT, James WHITE, Jack WILLIAMSON, George ZEBROWSKI

VIDEOS: Are there any SF video (VHS) buffs out there? I'm interested in buying or borrowing any "decent" science-fiction. Particularly any films made from the (classic) Perry Rhodan Adventure SF series; also STAR TREK episodes, BLAKE'S SEVEN episodes. If you think you can help, contact me with a list of what you've got, thanks: Chris Bailey, 52 Druids Walk, Didcot, Oxon OX11 7PF

DRAGON CARDS FOR SALE: The Ian Brooks hatching dragons shown in this issue are available in notelet form at £2 for a pack of 10, including envelopes (single design or a mixed pack) + 50p P&P for any number of packs from Ian Brooks, 14 Gowlind Drive, Cannock, Staffs WS11 1TG. A3 prints (limited edition of 250 signed and numbered) of the cover drawing for *Vector* 154 - £5 each + £1 p&p (I send them in a strong cardboard tube)

COLLATING WEEKEND: The BSFA collating weekend is AUGUST 4-5 and all help would be extremely appreciated. The inexhaustible Keith Freeman directs it at the Department of Applied Statistics (which is a wooden hut) by the carpark next to Blandford Lodge, which is very close to the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading. More details from Keith Tel: 0734 666142 (home) or 0734 318022 (work). People who come get tea/coffee provided, lunch at a local pub and an extra month on their subscriptions.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS: Jo Raine would like to apologise to new members who have not yet received cards. There have been some difficulties with their production. But, while on the subject of new members, 203 joined in 1989, 183 from the UK, and mentioned *Interzone*, word of mouth or a convention as the most common ways they found out about the BSFA.

SF IN BELGIUM: Belgian fans, please remember *Beneluxcon* in Antwerp this November. There are sf meetings at The Drum, Avenue Auderghem, Brussels (Metro Schumann) every second Wednesday and details can be obtained from David Stewart (Tel: 675 01 28 (h) or 672 62 09 (o)) who reports that Le Soir has a sf column on alternate Wednesdays.

TECHNICIAN (MARS) REQUIRED: Andy Sawyer knew he worked for a really go-ahead authority (hollow laugh), but he didn't know they had an option on Mars ... do they offer free travel? The technician is needed to work as part of a team to keep up to date a computerised data base called - shamel - Merseyside Address Referencing System.



North of the Border: BSFAns in SCOTLAND

		FIFE (Cont'd)		St. Andrews 3 Tayport 1		STRATHCLYDE (Cont'd)		Glasgow 10 Greenock 1 Lochwinnoch 1 Oban 1 Paisley 2 Saltcoats 1 Wishaw 1	
BORDERS	Galashiels 1	GRAMPIAN	7	Aberdeen 6 Lhanbryde 1					
CENTRAL	Falkirk 2	HIGHLAND		Aliness 1					
DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	4	Castle Douglas 1 Dumfries 1 Kelholm 1 Stranraer 1	11	Edinburgh 10 Inveresk 1 Kirkwall 1		TAYSIDE	6	Dundee 3 Kinesswood 1 Minathort 1 Monifieth 1	0
FIFE	6	Kirkcaldy 1 Lochgelly 1	21	Blantyre 1 Dunoon 1 East Kilbride 1 Erskine 1		WESTERN ISLES			52
						TOTAL			

Write Back

Arthur C. Clarke
Colombo, Sri Lanka

I was saddened to see in the February-March issue of *Matrix* that James Reynolds has just died. Technically speaking, he was not my first editor, since I had had a good deal published in magazines of various kinds from 1938 onwards. Probably Walter Gillings should be considered my first editor.

However, Jim was certainly my first hard-cover book editor with *Interplanetary Flight* (1949). I owe him a great deal, because he talked me into writing a popular book on astronautics, which turned out to be *Exploration of Space*. I see to recall that I wasn't particularly keen on the idea! However, it led to the Book of the Month Club selection in 1952 and my subsequent career of crime...

Roger Waddington
4 Commercial Street, Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 9ES

Can you really recommend to anyone else, what you've personally enjoyed? SF is maybe a more subjective field than most: with so many divergent opinions as to what it actually is, you can't just point to one, say good sf, and expect everyone to agree. Suppose all you can really do is point to books you may have enjoyed; and be pleasantly surprised if they enjoy them as well.

Then again, like you, I've been reading as much mainstream as sf, if we can still distinguish the categories; maybe more now, having to depend on the depleted shelves of libraries - though I've also been building up a stockpile of sf - though always with the intention of improving my mind. But even before, my reading was always eclectic, down to the traditional cornflake packet; my last library books included *Coasting* by Jonathan Raban and a history of *The Times* personal column.

Actually, what drew me towards sf, or what might have made me more receptive, was a childhood appetite for tales of exploration and true adventure; which is why I was so interested to hear of your discovery of *The Moon Man*. No doubt there's something very psychological behind all this, being born and brought up in the country with no wider horizon than the next village; but it seems to me that from reading about strange tribes with alien ways in wonderful landscapes, it's hardly a step at all to imagining those same scenes on other planets, and all the other visions of science fiction; I certainly found it very easy.

Sherry Goldsmith
PO Box 330, Hutto, Texas 78634, U.S.A.

John Peter's review of *Abyss* seems more of a reaction to hype than a critical assessment of Cameron's film. His assertion that the characters do not convince is particularly astonishing since this is the film's most remarkable strength. In the film, a woman engineer, the first person to see the aliens, tries to persuade disbelieving oil rig workers that she has seen something extraordinary. Ed Harris, the rig's foreman, and the other hands on the rig are wholly convincing in their dubiety. Their suspicion of anyone in management clothes and capacity, and their dislike of the mindless authoritarianism that the military represented was instantly recognisable.

The women characters, an engineer and a submersible pilot, were brassy, brave and smarter than the men around. The film plausibly dealt with the tensions around career and romance. And though Cameron did not look at the inevitable difficulties that a woman would have on a rig (and I'd like to point out that this was a rig in the Gulf of Mexico where women are allowed to work), he did show these

particular women as being exceptionally capable of having conquered any such difficulties long before the film began.

So what are Mr. Peter's problems with the characters? We are only given one clue and this is the portrayal of the military as being anti-communist. This assessment is wrong on so many counts it's difficult to know where to begin. I have to admit that I haven't spoken with any soldiers lately (I wonder if Peters has), but I do live in America and I read the constant stream of anti-communist propaganda on the letters pages - where veterans and mid-rank brass frequently exercise their pens - and in the daily press. I can assure him that anti-communist opinions are not going away. Mainstream Americans may not be quite so anti-Soviet in the future, but they will continue to be violently anti-communist, and to confuse autonomous liberation movements, socialist programmes, students' organisations - perhaps even aliens - with Stalinism.

The film opens when an American submarine is destroyed. Even I, an implacable foe of the bourgeoisie, would think that the Soviets, not luminous aliens from the deep, were the cause; the three naval officers (called Seals) not surprisingly think the same thing. If Peters cannot imagine that two of the three Seals, one of whom is suffering from clinical psychosis, would not perceive the aliens, whom they never see themselves, as a camouflaged Soviet threat, then I can only wonder what planet he's been living on. I think the real reason for his criticism is his discomfort with the target of Cameron's political vision: militarism and goose-stepping masculinity. Anti-communism doesn't enter into it unless, like Peters, you're simply seizing an opportunity to say that communism itself is outmoded and hence anti-communism no longer exists.

It was encouraging to see Cameron confront militarism with a woman's perception that the aliens were not a threat and that paranoid nationalism was deluding. Feminist ideas are slowly trickling into the mainstream. Perhaps it is this that moves Peters to attack the strengths of *Abyss* and ignore its real faults. Cameron did make egregious mistakes in plotting the film and controlling its pace. He also over-used the "death in deep waters" motif.

I am very grateful that Cameron did not, as Peters wished, spend more time on the nature of the aliens; the people were too interesting in their own right and the aliens were there only to play an emblematic and enigmatic role, something they did well enough. *Abyss* is the first film in which working people are not patronised and are not seen as dirty brutes who'd do anything for a beer and a brawl and a good lay on Saturday night. Despite the film's faults, it is this portrayal of blue collar workers and its portrayal of women that is wholly refreshing.

Chris Bailey
52 Druids Walk, Didcot, Oxon OX11 7PF

On page 5 of M87, I couldn't help but pick up on a comment that the well known sf author, Christopher Priest, was said to have uttered concerning the genre of science fiction (from an interview that he gave in the *Sunday Times*). I find myself rather shocked, in a way, to read what he said which was "Science fiction is a genre that no longer interests me, it's a worked-out form, and was only ever a marketing thing". I never heard such a load of bunk coming from the author of *The Space Machine*, amongst others of like ilk. Christopher Priest has long been among my favourite sf authors, since he became a full time writer back in the late sixties, early seventies, and I simply cannot accept that he, of all people, should feel the need to express his views in this way.

I would like to correct a "slight" mistake on my part, in including Roger Zelazny's *The Dream Master* in the science fiction list. You are quite correct, most of Roger Zelazny's works are fantasy, with a little bit of science fiction thrown in and I stand corrected. I read this title at an impressionable age, but that's the story of my life.

I'm fascinated with the concept of **time** as we know it. I, for one, would very much like to be able to return in time, only I wouldn't waste my "time" on recorded history. I would very probably go as far back as the beginnings of the Universe, perhaps stopping first to see just how the Dinosaurs really died out.

John Welsh
3 Russeldene Road, Wigan, Lancashire

I will leave it to others to comment on Christopher Bailey's list of recommended sf, and suggest instead that it might be more fun, in a blood sports kind of way, to run an alternative list - books which are always praised but are in fact even worse than most of Christopher's favourites. It would be against the spirit of the game to suggest obvious targets such as *Stranger in a Strange Land* or *Always Coming Home*. Players should restrict themselves to the genuine darlings of the genre and give reasons, though not necessarily rational ones. Anyway, it's easier to demonstrate than explain, so here are my six to avoid:

The Book of the New Sun (Gene Wolfe) This runs to nearly a million words and you'd have more fun counting them than reading them
The Bones of the Moon (Jonathan Carroll) The fact that he is called Jonathan should be warning enough for all right-thinking folk
Mythago Wood (Robert Holdstock) The woods most people know are full of old beer cans and used condoms, which is a better use for them than Mr. Holdstock can contrive
Golden Witchbreed (Mary Gentle) If you buy this to read on the train, take the bus instead
Falling Free (Lois McMaster Bujold) How did this win a Nebula? Why have the reviews been so favourable? I blame the ozone layer, me.

Don't worry about lit-credibility or about hurting somebody's feelings - you've probably paid four or five pounds for the privilege. Besides, your choices, sadly, will not want for defenders. People in the sf club consistently overpraise the work done in the genre, then whine when the Mainstream (SFese for the real world) ignores it. It's depressing, frustrating and self-perpetuating because it nurtures a chosen-few mindset inside the field and patronising amusement outside it.

I have not been constructive about the books I have listed for the precise reason that too many people have gone to unreasonable lengths to find good things to say about them. This attitude of adoration in the face of minor talent (extremely minor in the case of Ms. Bujold) is something I find more embarrassing than the harmless dork in Bacoli at conventions who are the usual targets of wildly misplaced adoration.

Kenneth R. Lake
115 Markhouse Avenue, London E17 8AY

Contrary to the scientific-environmental image of the "Federation" ad that appears in *Matrix* 87, the outfit may prove as sinister as Scientology. Write in, and you get 14 A4 pages. One bears an illegible signature of the "Membership Officer/Level 1" and all show a total lack of understanding of apostrophes and only a vague acquaintance with commas, making the text sometimes even more cryptic than one might fear.

The Federation has a "Chief Executive" or Dictator - as explained, he brooks neither argument nor dissent, his decisions are "to be considered final". He is "non-elected ... for life" and the decisions of the "Central Council" are final only when "countersigned by the Chief Executive". All "Officers" in "Levels 1 and 2" are either "nominated" with "the approval of the Chief Executive" or "directly appointed by ... " guess who? What's more, "interpretation of these rules and constitution shall at all times be judged by the Chief Executive".

The many vaguely worded concepts listed as "Aims" might just sound reasonable until you think about them. There is to be "no subjugation of national or political sovereignty in Europe" although apparently these are OK elsewhere in the world; Scotland and Wales are to be given "Independence ... pending the results of a referendum" (surely backward? - and surely they already voted against all this? - and what about the Six Counties of Northern Ireland?); forestry development in Scotland (but not elsewhere) is to be stopped "immediately", all major road building is to be "suspended" and the penal system is to have a "complete overhaul" - though whether he intends to bring back the rope and the birch, or set 'em all free, is not made clear.

Furthermore, although "all levels of the organisation can vote for policies ... Final decisions are ... taken by the Central Council or the Chief Executive". Believe it or not, this means that since "decisions ... are voluntarily accepted by Federation members" therefore "no coercion is necessary".

The anonymous sender, and his anonymous colleagues on all five levels (if indeed any exist outside his fertile but megalomaniac imagination) lay claim to a non-political stance, yet arrogate unto the Chief Executive powers that would turn Pol

Pot green with envy. Can anyone throw any light on the persons behind this sinister outfit, from "K. Squiggle", the "Membership Officer" of Pages Green Farm, Stowmarket, to the semi-divine Chief Executive (who may, of course, be the same man)?

Should *Matrix* be carrying ads like this?

David Langford
94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU

I noticed your plea for J.J. Connington info in *Matrix*. He was mainly a detective story writer; the *SF Encyclopedia* refers to *Nordenholt's Million* as his one sf novel. I have a copy of the essay collection *Alias J J Connington*, but don't, off hand, remember any of it there.

Les Hurst
7 Andrew Avenue, Ilkeston, Derby DE7 5EB

J.J. Connington wrote a lot of detective stories, but only the one science fiction novel. His autobiography, published in 1947 (according to Nichols' *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*) was *Alias J J Connington. A Catalogue of Crime* by Jacques Barzun and Wendell W. Taylor (Harper and Row 1989) has about four pages of bibliography of his novels. They call *Nordenholt's Million* "this remarkable piece of science fiction", and in a sense it is not clear why he went on to write detective stories, as his first two, *Death at Swaythling Court* (1926) and *The Dangerfield Talisman* (1926) are described as amateurish, improbable and pathetically bad, but JB and WHT rate the later ones better.

In the book about the detective story, *Snobbery with Violence*, Colin Watson coins the phrase *Mayhem Parva* to describe the world of Miss Marple villages where people get bumped off, but the name is actually an echo of a Connington title - *Nemesis at Raynham Parva*.

David Haggle
Room 6066, British Broadcasting Corporation, Broadcasting House, London W1A 1AA

I've just been speaking to **Colin Greenland**, who recommended that I drop you a line. I am currently producing a series of short features for Radio 4 which, roughly speaking, are about lifts. The idea is that each programme will tell a different story. In one, for example, we will look at the lot of residents of a poor council block where the lift breaks down and in another we'll be visiting a building site on a working lift to look at how building techniques are affected by architecture.

But in other programmes in the series, I want to look at the way a lift is used in film and fiction - the lift as a focus for fear in one programme, and in another, the lift as a vehicle to travel to other worlds. The idea here is that the lift journey can be used in fiction as a path to other dimensions or times. The problem I've got is that while there are examples of this device in children's literature, *Road Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* for example, I'd really much rather look at science fiction. But I don't know whether in fact the lift has been used in this way in sf books and films.

I would be most grateful if any readers could come up with any examples, from the wealth of published sf, of interesting ways in which the common lift has been turned in to something a little more uncommon.

Letters DEADLINE Saturday 14th July

Address: 16 Aviary Place, Arnley,
LEEDS LS12 2NP West Yorkshire

Fire and Hemlock: Fanzine Review

Nic Farey

Further to last issue's column, the argument of "what is a fanzine" needs to be developed. Defining terms in these instances is often a spectacularly futile exercise, but a fanzine, comparably with any project, requires some sort of benchmark test against which it can be measured.

Such tests should taken into account both the editor's intent and circumstances. I doubt if there is a fanwriter around who would not wish to produce something of the quality (in production terms, at least) of *Concatenation*, despite the fact that circumstances may dictate that only a *One Shot*, *Two Stabbed* can be managed. If the clear intent, therefore, is to produce a "Concat", then due vilification can be expected if the result is something resembling a convention auction listing.

This is where the Easton fanzine panel rears its collective psyche. The contention was voiced by a certain **Dave Wood** that the photocopy was the worst invention as far as fanzines are concerned, because it makes production too easy. "Real" fanzines are, of course, duplicated. This courageous statement consigns Dave's own *Xyster* to the also-ran category, and though I suspect the original statement was not entirely serious, the good and great **Harry Bond** spluttered into agreement with the "least cost" argument. Sturgeon's Law got in there somewhere too. Let me debunk these two spurious arguments immediately. "Least cost" for many people means sneaking into work out of hours and pilfering the use of the photocopier. The more moral specimens may even buy their own paper to avoid major recriminations, arguing all the time that this simple reproduction facility which easily handles double-sided copying, collating and so on is a damn sight better than mucking about with filthy stencils for a weekend, thank you very much. Secondly, it is equally spurious to say that, because photocopying has increased the number of fanzines available, there are therefore a lot more dodgy ones around. If the number of fanzines has doubled, Sturgeon's Law suggests that the number of good and worthy ones will also have doubled. There's just more dross to wade through to find them. The one area of agreement, it seemed, was something touched on last issue - that of editorial personality. To be worthy, and indeed unique among the masses, a fanzine must convey this most important of features. Then, and only then, can the reviewer begin to make subjective judgements concerning the interest value of the publication in question. So how do the latest batch measure up?

Partan 1 is a rather mixed bag from Aberdonian **Barbara**, of whom some unkind souls might say the same. Nominally produced by the Union of Soviet Socialist Gophers, the personality undoubtedly shines through this zine. The content is a ragbag mix of conpro, information, comment and politics, quite a lot to cram into ten pages, and all delivered in a fine humorous style. A number of in-jokes, but it's not worth letting these mar your enjoyment.

Judith Hanna and **Joseph Nicholas** are now editors of the stripped-down title *FTT*, although the preamble states that these initials have mutated from *Fuck the Tories to Flatten the Toads*. A general mix of personal statement and what the less charitable might call "right-on" politics does indeed lend character to the product. **Judith** abandons the traditional fanzine review for an assessment of "feminist" attitudes and how they can differ, with a nod and a dig here and there at some men's "more feminist than thou" attitudes. This piece (*Peach Fuzz, Bums and Feminists Against Censorship*) is a particularly well-argued essay from an intelligent pen. The rest of the issue measures up well.

Maverick 10 walked onto the mat with its 1901 *Punch* illustrations. Only mildly interesting, I'm afraid. The volume of zines to emerge from the Glover household perhaps owes more to some misguided attempt at the Guinness Book of Records than any real desire to improve the zine market. As with the daily statement on BBC Radio: "The preceding feature, *Steve Wright in the afternoon* is protected under copyright 1990, one is driven to ask the reasonable question "Why?" Jenny's editorship of *Matrix* has clearly curtailed her writing activities, and who knows what Steve is up to? A *Maverick* written almost entirely by other people? A page and a half of Ashley drive? Harry Bond writing in his sleep? Nuclear Power? No thanks.

A brief mention to *Turkey Shoot 2*, in that it provoked a small argument arising from Dave Wood's "editorial personality" criterion. *Turkey Shoot* advertises itself as "The fanzine of classically bad st", and as such generates giggles if not guffaws with its contents. Where, however, is the editorial personality? There is none, despite the arguments of its supporters. All *Turkey Shoot* tells you about its editor is that he is interested in "bad" st. This is not a known personality trait. I would still recommend the zine, perhaps the exception that proves the "personality" rule.

And so to **Wood**. How does the man's own *Xyster* match up to the law of fanzine success? Photocopied? Oh dearie, go to the bottom of the class. Editorial personality? Of course it has. The whole issue is suffused with **Dave's** own dry

wit and a certain amount of cunning. As a lover of wordplay and wordgames myself, I particularly enjoyed **D West's** *Anagrammy Revisited*. Finding the anagrams of the (in)famous can be quite revealing. I seem to recall this harmless pursuit being the subject of a *New Statesman* competition many years ago, where the winner was **Spilo Agnew** (Grow a Penis). Also worthy of note is *Putting the Boot in the Wellington*, a lighthearted A to Z of the first Thursday in the month. It is now confirmed that L is for LEEDS: A Profanity.

I would also like to note the receipt of *Dreams from Within - Part VI - The Slaying of Time*. Darren, producer of this zine, is either involved with or is a subscriber to the *Storm Constantine Information Service* and when I tell you that DFW could best be described as a "lifestyle" publication, you will probably have a good idea of what to expect. Worth more than one look, even at a cover price of 70p.

Concatenation: Tony Chester, 44 Brook St, Erith, Kent DA8 2SQ
One Shot, Two Stabbed: Harry Bond, 6 Elizabeth Ave, Bagshot, Surrey GU19 5NX
Partan: Barbara, 47 Devonshire Road, Aberdeen AB1 6XN
FTT: Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Rd, Stamford Hill, N15 0NH
Maverick: Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP
Turkey Shoot: Ian Sales, 56 Southwell Rd East, Mansfield, Nottingham NG21 0EW
Xyster: Dave Wood, 1 Friary Close, Marine Hill, Clevedon, Avon BS21 7QA
Dreams from Within: Darren, 74 Montleth Crescent, Boston, Lincs PE21 9AY

WITH A HOST OF FURIOUS FANZINES

Fanzine listing with comments by Jenny Glover.

Most fanzines are available for "The Usual", which is normally a polite request, but can extend to a LoC (Letter of Comment), an article, or simply trade for your own. Editors always like to know what people think of that effort they have slaved over. Or at least they say they do.

ARROWS OF DESIRE: Thematize this time on Hate, Fear and Loathing, next time will be on Death, round about November. Some moving writing here, some writing which tries to be; from S V O'Jay, PO Box 29, Hitchin, Herts SG4 9TG

CEREBRETORN 8: Gamesine with unlikely fiction - how many people say "Oh sweet Allah!" when faced with a creature, screeching like a snarled bird? Edited by Alex Bardy, who doesn't give his address

COLLAPS 28, 33: Polish, including the strip cartoon of Rossana who has adventurous bathtimes. One gathers that *Nie* means "No". From Radoslaw Kleczynski, ul. Korsarzy 12E, 80-299 Gdansk, Poland

CONCATENATION: Annual freebie at Eastercons and Worldcons, this one feels the lack of reader response. Next issue will be a readers' special. From Tony Chester and Jonathan Cowie, 44 Brook Street, Erith, Kent DA8 1JQ

DINOSAURS AND DISKETTE FAILURES 4: The Glovers consider life without each other. Sentimental, but not slushy. From Steve and Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP

DR 65: Computer chat and brief reviews from Arthur D. Hlavaty, PO Box 52028, Durham, NC 27717, USA

DRAUGED KICKING AND SCREAMING INTO THE 1990s 12: Wacky and fun, look for his artwork elsewhere in this issue. From Ian Gunn, Iguauna Productions, PO Box 65, Ashburton 3147, Australia

FAT KNITE 4 & 5: Gamesine with *Neighbours* rpg and interview with Tolkien. Offbeat, but interesting. From Steve Bincos, 46 Laburnum Way, Littleborough, Lancs OL15 8LS

FLATTEN THE TOADS 9: Rather aggressive feminism, balanced by a monologue on museums from Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH

HARDCORE 2b (cost £1): The cover's great, but the fiction involves brittle boned characters. Mostly a gamesine, with a William Gibson interview. From Jael Nult, c/o 1st Floor Flat, 212 Croydon Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4DE

INCEPTION: Small fanzine on the *Storm Constantine* information service. Shows potential from Steve Jeffrey and Vikki Lee France, 2A Villa Road, St. Bernards Wing, Uxbridge Road, Southall, Middlesex UB1 3EU

LARRIKIN 22: The last. One co-editor has moved to work in Britain, the other is facing latharhood. One moving article on the death of a baby is countered by a set of "Tan" stamps, of which my favourite is the *Weapons Freak* saying plaintively *Sorry, but I didn't think my atomic particle beam laser was loaded!* to a smoking

sizzle. From Perry Middlemiss and Irwin Hirsh, 26 Jessamine Ave, East Prahran, Victoria 3181, Australia

LIFE DURING LUNCHTIME: Gossip from Leeds, fanzine reviews, introspection. Moody and lyrical from Kev McVeigh, 37 Firs Road, Milnthorpe, Cumbria KA7 7QF

MAVERICK: Topical *Punch* cartoons and ideas on fan funds. Michael Ashley tries to be nice. From Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP

MIMOSA 7: A conversation with Bob Tucker is followed by "Let-ettes", stories consisting of three chapters, each chapter containing but one word. From Dick and Nicki Lynch, PO Box 1270, Germantown, Maryland 20874-0998, USA

ORPHIA: New monthly sf magazine from Bulgaria in English. Details from Rob Meades, 75 Hecham Close, Walthamstow, London E17 5HT

PARTAN: Thin, the best thing is an *Ozymandias* pastiche. A product of the Union of Soviet Socialist Gophers, who also socialise extensively, from Barbara, 47 Devonshire Road, Aberdeen AB1 6XN

PULP 16: Moving tribute to ATom from co-editor Rob Hanson, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London

REAL SOON NOW #2: According to this, the BSFA has all the public presence of a puzzle wrapped in an enigma, which has then been buried in some remote spot, according to the markings on a shredded and burned map, by an anonymous band who promptly committed suicide. From Dave Bell, Church Farm, North Kelsey, Lincoln LN7 6EQ who welcomes correspondence

SGLODION 2: Any Dave Langford fanzine is entertaining, but this one is serious and concerns the *MJ-Balls Affair*. Basically, Jenny Randles mentioned how idiotic US UFO searchers were to her local newspaper, who wrote it up in an equally idiotic way. A visiting ufologist is now suing her for £10,000, as his scientific reputation has been damaged. One hesitates to comment on how or why this Stanton Friedman should choose to sue the author rather than the newspaper, especially when the newspaper has distorted Jenny Randles' comments. Dave Langford says it better (of course) and asks if sympathisers can send some money to help pay for the good fight to him or Paul Barnett, 17 Polsloe Road, Exeter, Devon EX1 2HL. Cheques payable to MJ-Balls please. Dave Langford is at 94 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU

SHIPYARD BLUES 4: Wonderful cover as tribute to ATom, of the contents, only *Andy Sawyer* languishing in his daughter's grey sweater due to a frozen shoulder stick in one's mind. From John Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 9AZ

SPANISH ARMADILLO 2: The material by Shep Kirkbride, Martyn Taylor, Paul Ward, Terry Broome, Edward Miller, Chuck Connor, Ken Lake, Christina Lake, Dave Windett, Terry Frost and Philip Collins is interesting. Sadly they're let down by the rest. From George Bondar, 33 Ragstone Road, Slough SL1 2PP

STRANGE FRUIT 1 (costs £1): Very graphic graphics and interview with Grant Morrison. Recommended for Scottish adults, fascinating in an odd way. From Gary Gilman at Community Industry, 420 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3EQ

STUNGUNNS & FLAGONS: Conventional roleplaying game, rather Oz biased, but I've never laughed so much. It is wonderful, my favourite of all the fanzines this issue. From Ian Gunn, Iguana Productions, PO Box 65, Ashburton 3147, Australia. It may cost \$2, but be warned, the next one will focus on media fandom

TALES FROM THE BROKEN DRUM #3: Clubzine concentrating on sf humour, including *Olaf*, the time-travelling Viking cartoon character, who gets to every historical event at the wrong time. Details from Gary Starr, 46 Arnside Road, Bestwood Estate, Nottingham NG5 5HE

THE WAKING EDGE: University clubzine which actually appears to be about science fiction, and good stuff at that (Watch out, *Black Hole*). From Amanda Baker, Imperial College Science Fiction Society, c/o Union Building, Prince Consort Road, South Kensington, London

XYSTER: Superbly fascinating article on Anagramancy, interesting even if you don't know the people. From Dave Wood, 1 Friary Close, Marine Hill, Clevedon, Avon BS21 7QA

Soap Box

Soap box is a space free for you to write on anything which makes you feel strongly or just plain mad. Any subject at all, sf and beyond, is fair game. But be warned; the discussion can be carried on in the letter column, or even in future *Soap Boxes*, if you strike oil. Previous Soap Box sagas have varied from the recent discussions of *Why Scientists are Idiots* through the analytical *What is Science Fiction Anyway?* to the controversial *Wither (sic) Charity* which hit out at peoples' reactions to Disaster Funds and Famines.

This issue, Rob Gray explores our modern Acts of Faith - and wonders with what they'll be replaced.

Two Finger Exercise or, Cathedrals of the 20th Century

Roy Gray

They are still finishing one off in Liverpool and their repair and renovation continues, but the era of cathedral building is over. So what is our equivalent activity? There must be a substitute because history shows that societies with an excess of affluence build their own cathedrals, henges, pyramids, temples, armies of statues etc.

First, I ought to define "cathedral" or rather "cathedral building": an activity which extends the bounds of local art and technology, using a large proportion of the community's resources and skills to produce something without any obvious economics benefit. (History may show a return that could not be predicted initially). Extra requirements are faith in the future, for example that one's descendants will continue to worship god and, initially, good will from the citizens, or at least the opinion forming class. It has to be an activity with a definite conclusion and there has to be some element of striving to know the unknown, or unknowable.

Hence, the objective must appear immensely useful at the start. On completion it must be satisfyingly beautiful, imposing or inspirational. Then, generations later, despite the burden imposed, people will be glad you did it, but would not do it themselves.

Now, when building high is easy, cathedrals are less of a challenge. What replaces them? My contention is that the cathedrals of our age have names like *The Apollo Program*, *Mariner*, *Voyager*, *Joint European Torus*, *LEP*, *Magellan* and *Galileo Space Telescope*. Our forefathers left beautiful art and imposing architecture. We will leave vast archives and awe-inspiring information.

If "big science" is the new manifestation of cathedral building, it leaves the uncomfortable thought that my postcestors' attitude to science will be the same as mine to religion. It also prompts the thought that the substitute for our version of cathedral building is even now gestating in the laboratories of the developed world. The interesting question is: what could it be?

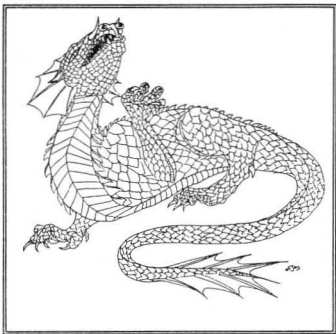
It may be early to be asking that question, as the present phase has plenty of life yet with the *Superconducting Super Collider* and *Human Genome Project* still at the planning stages, but we can still speculate.

Several activities could lead to an equivalent to cathedral building. The Green movements - restoring and cleaning our lands, rivers, oceans and skies, seems an activity which fulfils all the criteria. It also seems a little too much like wish fulfilment. Restoration of extinct species, especially some of the larger dinosaurs, seems suitably long term and expensive.

Computing has its acolytes and can be likened to a religion. The construction of an artificial intelligence could meet all the criteria given previously. Mathematics is entering the era of chaos and "game of life" and its derivatives. There may be something underlying all this we do not yet comprehend.

SETI (Searching for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) and especially transmitting, rather than just listening, would be a good choice if it was unsuccessful, but success would rather spoil my thesis. Attempts to create artificial life, decommissioning nuclear power stations ... There is an argument for each.

Leastways, let's hope it's not henges again.



Media File

John Peters

The classic SF novel *The Forever War* by Joe Haldeman has been optioned by Richard Edlund's Boss Films. Edlund won four Oscars for his six work on the *Star Wars* trilogy. *Alien II* could begin filming in September with Sigourney Weaver likely to return, having been promised script approval. Blob remaker, Chuck Russell is to film William Gibson's *Neuromancer* real soon now. *Predator II* stars Danny Glover, Marie Conchita Alonso, Bill Paxton, Gary Busey and Kevin Peter Hall as the alien; Stan Winston provides the creatures again - the aliens go on the hunt in New York. *Back to the Future II* has been a big success, taking over \$80 million in its first three weeks in America.

Latest from *Frankenstein Unbound* is that among its many six director Roger Corman has promised a bizarre mating dance between artificially created humankind. Corman is quoted as describing the film as "one third science fiction, one third fantasy, one third horror - and one third humour!" Producer and director Charles Band has stated production on *Puppetmaster II*, with David Allen providing the six again. Jenny Agutter and Gerrit Graham (remember him - he was bumped off in *Phantom of the Paradise* by a killer electric guitar) are to star in the inevitable *Child's Play II*. Having found a new topee, Sean Connery is in Argentina filming *Highlander II: The Quickening* - Russell Mulcahy directs again and Michael Ironside and Virginia Madsen have to work out Christopher Lambert's French/Scotts accent and Connery's Scots/Spanish one. While the Robert Englund version of *Phantom of the Opera* has yet to be released here, a sequel has already begun shooting - *Phantom of Manhattan* is set in the present day. Word is that the new version is well filmed and stays close to the original story, except for some very graphic effects (which are unlikely to remain after the BBFC get their hands on it).

The newest addition to the recent spate of Edgar Allan Poe remakes is *The Black Cat* starring Caroline Munro - and, also showing an interest in Poe, Sylvester Stallone has announced a project on Poe's life, starring himself as Poe. *Heirloom III* is on the cards from New World/Transatlantic, Tony Randall will direct again. James Cameron will direct *Terminator II*, Arnold Schwarzenegger will also return; Cameron then intends to make *Burning Chrome* from a Cameron/William Gibson script. Sylvester Stallone is also shifting to the future, 2047 to be exact, for his next film. *Dead Reckoning* is a sf thriller where "Da Rambrod" finds humanity living under huge domes as the atmosphere deteriorates. Even Roman Polanski is returning to the genre with *Mary Reilly* for Warner Brothers, which will star Jack Nicholson and Polanski's wife, Emmanuelle Seigner. Century 21 have reportedly begun shooting their long-announced \$21m version of *Spiderman* (a wild rumour claims that Tom Cruise will be Peter Parker/Spiderman). The recent stage production of *A Clockwork Orange* fuels speculation that the Kubrick classic may finally be released in the UK, probably on video. *The Wizard of Oz* finally receives its premiere in East Germany, fifty years after the rest of the world. After completing *Basketteer II*, Frank Henenlotter is currently shooting *Brain Dead*. Clint Eastwood returns to the beat in *The Rookie*.

The first fantasy hit of the year in the US is a low budget sf comedy called *Tremors*, where giant worms attack a small desert town. Clive Barker's *Nightbreed* opened in the US in February to a disappointing reception, the critical view varied from mixed to positively vitriolic. One reason for the poor showing is the reported lack of faith in the film by Twentieth Century Fox, whose poster campaign has been described as "dismal and misleading". James Caan stars as the injured writer in Rob Reiner's adaptation of Stephen King's *Misery*. Nicholas Meyer will direct *Dinosaurs*, a spy thriller starring Gene Hackman and Mikhail Baryshnikov. Al Pacino, back on form in *Sea of Love* is allegedly unrecognisable under the makeup he wears in his next two films: *Dick Tracy* and *Godfather III*. Charlton Heston gets promoted to godhood in Paul Hogan's *Almost an Angel*. *Hole in the Sky* is a new sf thriller that looks closely at holes in the ozone layer.

There seems to be plenty of genre activity on the horizon, though little of it is reaching the big screen at the moment - *The Amityville Curse* sounds like a real spiffy time down at Butlins; *Spontaneous Combustion*, Tom Hooper's latest, is said to be pretty naff; William Shatner directed *Kingdom of the Spiders II*, so expect a horde of Tribble-huntin' creepy crawlies singing around the campfire... The Edgar Allan Poe revival gets under way with *The Raven*; *The Black Cat*; *The Haunting of Morella*; *House of Usher*; *Buried Alive*. Most seem to have Donald Pleasence, whose agent must have been offering a three for one bargain sale last year. Also coming is *Hardware*, which seems to have coined the acronym SPLART to depict a SPLATTER ART film - filmed mostly in THE ROUNDHOUSE, venue of many rock gigs back in '70s London. It cost £800,000 of Palace Productions and BSB's hardearned ready to depict a bleak futuristic world; director Richard Stanley is being touted as a man to watch. Japan is sending *The Twilight of the Cockroaches* - a fun sounding animated/live action feature all about ninja 'roaches.

Other indispensable offerings include *Lord of the Flies*, a remake of William Golding's classic, but the biggie this summer will be *Total Recall*, Paul Verhoeven's Martian thriller with Big Arnie. Others you may want to see (or avoid) - *I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle*; *Demon Wind*; *The Runestone*; *Voodoo Dawn*, where the Duke of Hazzard turns Boss Hogg into a zombie. Of more interest, though, is Nic Roeg's *The Witches*, where wicked with Angelica Huston campaigns to turn all children into mice.

The Saturn Awards for SF/Fantasy and Horror film have been announced - Best horror film was *Beetlejuice*, which also won awards for best supporting actress (Sylvia Sydney) and best make-up. *BIG* won awards for best actor (Tom Hanks), best supporting actor (Robert Loggia) and best script. Best Fantasy Film: *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, which also won for best director and best special effects. Best SF film: *Alien Nation*. Other awards went to Catherine Hicks (*Child's Play*) for best actress, and best juvenile performer went to Fred Savage for *Vense*.

TV SCENE - While *Beauty and the Beast* has been cancelled by CBS, apparently a series of alternative c- tions are being considered by the producers - one obviously being a possible film. CBS are preparing a pilot based on *The Pink Panther*; MGM/UA, Schenck/Cardea Productions and Mirisch-Geoffrey-DePatie-Freleng have teamed up for the project which will feature both live action and animation; I can recommend a very good new Inspector Clouseau for them - *Rapido's* presenter, Antoine de Caunes. *War of the Worlds*, as yet unseen here, has been renewed with an order for a 22-episode second season. Zorro camps it up again with Duncan Regehr in a 22-episode series for The Family Channel. Roger Corman, ever ready to cash on events, is planning a mini series called *Quake*, loosely based on the San Francisco earthquake last year. Corman is also planning TV series based on *Death Race 2000* and *Night Call Nurses*. Turner Broadcasting has just signed Tom Cruise, Whoopie Goldberg, Richard Gere, Ed Asner, John Ratzenburger and LeVar Burton to provide voices for characters in a new animated series, *Captain Planet and the Planeteers*. *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* is also going under the pen for a series of "Rad" goings on. Bill Bixby and Lou Ferrigno return in *The Death of the Incredible Hulk* where, once again, the jolly glum giant battles his alter ego and terrorists who want to know his secret for life, the universe and how to get rid of acne.

It can't have missed your attention that you can now use two different sorts of dustbin lid to receive satellite TV - Sky have been losing money for the last year, and now BSB have joined them in offering programmes that you have seen a million times before, or at least thought you had. Said to be the nadir of BSB's schedule is *Jupiter Moon* - a thrice weekly soap with the acting qualities of *Plan Nine From Outer Space* calibre, set on an orbiting space polytechnic somewhere in the vicinity of a pulsating orange; costing over £5 million of Andromeda Productions money, and filmed at Central TV's studios, it's produced by an expatriate from *The Archers*. As few people have dishes, or are likely to be able to get one even if they tried, *Jupiter Moon* is going to be incomprehensible before it ever attracts anything like a reasonable audience, which probably explains why BSB have bought up as many *Dr. Who*, *Blakes 7*, *The Goodies*, *Fingermouse* and *The Incredible Hulk* episodes as they could.

SOUNDTRACK - Silva Screen Records are releasing a new recording of the Franz Waxman score for *The Bride of Frankenstein* - Silva Screen are also releasing new recordings of Hammer films suites - *Dracula* (1958), *Taste the Blood of Dracula*, *Hands of the Ripper* and, acclaimed to be the best, *Vampire Circus*.

Plymouth -- The High Frontier

The city of Plymouth, home of this writer and gateway for countless expeditions to unexplored lands, is soon to leap into space -- at least, a fictitious version is. There are many Plymouths dotted across the world, mainly in America, where several small towns were founded after the Pilgrim Fathers made their historic voyage and opened the land to later generations of settlers. It is one of these Plymouths, a fictitious town on the north-western seaboard, that is the namesake of a new two hour TV movie currently in production by Walt Disney TV, Italy's RAI Channel Uno and producer/director, Lee David Zlotof. This Plymouth will be unique, however, as the town is transferred, lock stock and barrel, to the Moon!

It all begins with the terrestrial Plymouth suffering an ecological disaster triggered by its main employer UNIDAC, a mining company. At the same time, the company has a helium-3 mining operation on the Moon and is experiencing difficulties making an honest buck, due to crippling transportation costs and an inability in keeping miners on the Moon long enough for their stay to be cost effective. A deal between UNIDAC and Plymouth's mayor permanently relocates the town's population - all 274 of them - to the Moon after a new town has been built for them there. In return they will operate the mine profitably.

For once, it looks as if someone has got their act together and is trying to show what working in space will really be like - while there will be special effects, they apparently won't dominate the film and there will be no aliens or Moonbase Alpha-type dust-ups. As far as possible, the locality will be shown authentically - Plymouth is built in the shadow of a crater to protect it from the sun's radiation, and architectural drawings show a facility including residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial areas. The premise sounds unexciting for the action buff, but the space enthusiast/activist will see the film and possible series as a godsend. As the setting is 1989, it has a sf premise - an alternate history where the Americans don't abandon the Moon in the 1970's, but invested their wealth in developing near-Earth space and our planet's companion. There will be no anti-matter weapons, no teleportation or warp drive devices, just the reality of a new frontier and learning to cope with extreme solitude, solar flares and the problems of pregnancy in low gravity.

Using leading experts in the space sciences as advisors, the producers are hoping that *Plymouth* will be the most factual and technologically accurate film yet made about space. That, of course, remains to be seen, but advance publicity certainly sounds interesting.

"John Peters adds: "While I'm happy to answer any postal queries you may have regarding items in the column, I would ask you to include a sae if you want a reply. Likewise, if you have any media news of a local nature - SF plays, performances, readings, etc., that can use a little publicity, please send it to me at my address on page 2. Do bear in mind that *Matrix* is published approximately a month after the deadline listed, so the event should fall **after** that to be worth including. Again, if you attend a local SF event, you won't write a review - I'm sure Jenny would love to see it [*Jenny would -- What about 'Return to the Forbidden Planet', for example?*]. For those of you who can't get enough media news and trivia, I edit and publish a zine, *Flickers'n'Frames*, which has a revised and updated version of this column in each issue. For details, please send a sae to my address on page 2.

REVIEWS

INERTIA REAL

Performed by the theatre group "Glory? What Glory?" in the Glasgow Mayfest

Science fiction theatre isn't really something you come across very often, and when you do it's more than usually some form of camp self-parody, like the West End musical *Return to the Forbidden Planet*. So it was something of a pleasant surprise to come across a serious study of science fiction themes being performed on stage at the Third Eye Centre in central Glasgow.

The basic premise is that a group of astronauts are returning to Earth after a thirty year mission in space. Lights are used sparsely, but effectively, beams darting about the set, a simple framework of tubes and supports from which the five actors hang suspended in bucket seats. The music is also simple but effective, pulsing electronic rhythms that set a dark mood. We hear the innermost thought of each character, ranging from simple platitudes to the glory of a new age in space to creeping doubts as to what they will find after so long. Everything is white, sparkling. These people are The Right Stuff, boldly going where no man has gone before.

The play is split into five sections, each section superficially identical, but as each section is performed, there is a growing note of hysteria in each that becomes a scream by the end. The whiter-than-white smiles gradually fade. The actors dash

about frenziedly, lampooning our preconceptions of the future. The choreography is almost ballet-like, actors tumbling over each other as media images - admen's housewives striving for the perfect washing powder - are crushed underfoot.

In the end, they return to deep space rather than resume the roles demanded of them by human society. The performance is polished and often very funny indeed, educational while also being entertaining. All the same, it's intense stuff: the growing agitation on the stage mirrors itself in your own growing anxiety. It's true: good science fiction does not require a mountaintop special effects budget to be entertaining when given a visual performance. "Glory? What Glory?" are still touring around the country, so catch them if you can - **Gary M. Gibson**

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

Directed by John McTiernan (PG) Paramount

It may not be strictly sf, but with its hi-tech submarine and military trappings, *Red October* has the "feel" of several of the best sf thrillers of the last decade. But despite the familiar sf that rule most films nowadays, McTiernan has fashioned a very impressive thriller which works equally well as a taut ensemble piece. Sean Connery's Soviet (and timely Lithuanian) submarine captain gives the dominating performance - though Sam Neil (as his executive officer) is every bit as good as he was in *Dead Calm*. The premise of Russian officers hijacking their submarine may seem a bit hokey in the current political climate, but it is based on fact (a frigate in reality) and predates *perestroika*. While McTiernan's previous films, *Predator* and *Die Hard* were non-stop actioners, *Red October* works best in the tense waters of characterisation and atmosphere and allows the actors to put some meat on the standard Hollywood cyphers. It may not be *Das Boot* (still, in my view, the greatest submarine/anti-war film), and the sub. may be as large as an aircraft carrier, but the crampedness of being inside an artificial environment is well captured on the screen. It is slightly overlong, but this is a thrilling and never boring thriller that works in all the areas that last year's "soggy" sf films failed in. - **John Peters**

2001 - TWENTY YEARS ON

Shown as part of the Southampton Film Festival

Twenty two years ago, when the film *2001* was made, space travel was exciting. A man walking on the moon was soon to be a tangible symbol of mankind's mastery over nature. With the benefit of hindsight, that viewpoint seems hopelessly naive. Although outwardly civilian, the Apollo program was a military project by another name. Its prime purpose was a demonstration of American strategic might. Instead of "Moontown Keynes" new town, the legacy of the space age was more efficient death from above. Technology is now seen to be destroying Nature, rather than controlling it.

How strange, then, that a film that celebrates the beauty of Sixties technology should still be fresh and exciting today. Granted that the plot is unfashionably mystical, but the realisation of the plot is majestic.

Most of on film dates rapidly because it reflects the present rather than the future. Kubrick, however, seems to have deliberately erased all contemporary references from his film. No Hendrix soundtrack, no flared jeans; but rather gloriously timeless waltzes and functional suits. Social attitudes were changing rapidly in 1968. Predicting the attitudes of the future would have been fraught with difficulties. Of course, neither AIDS nor Kylie appear in this film, but the problem is neatly sidestepped by restricting our knowledge of the characters to a superficial level. The only insight provided into twenty first century man's behaviour is that he will still celebrate birthdays!

Likewise, little of the hardware we see is explained. Mostly it exists as sophisticated decoration. Thus, any anachronisms are few and insignificant. For instance, HAL is an awfully large computer, but artistic licence can forgive this, as it leads to the memorable shutdown scene. It is with some relief, too, that HAL's brain is revealed to be composed of abstract boxes rather than a mass of "tubes" and "condensers".

Only one gripe: Please next time can this film be shown on the giant screen and mega sound system that it deserves? - **Martin Thomas**

BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

(PG) - Directed by Stephen Herek

Two Californian high-school students who have taken their education far too easily are faced with total failure if they flunk their upcoming history test. They need to give a lecture to the whole student body on what a historical personage of their choice would think of San Dimas (their home town). Suddenly a time-traveller arrives from the future and loans them a time machine. (The traveller's future

world depends on their staying in high school: in his world these two idiots are regarded as some kind of rock gurus with their laid-back message of peace). After bringing Napoleon back by accident, Bill and Ted realise they could solve their problems by fetching more people into the present to speak for themselves, so they collect Billy the Kid, Socrates, Genghis Khan, Lincoln, Freud, Beethoven and Joan of Arc. After some nifty time paradox work, the guys assemble on the school stage and everyone is stunned by their excellent rehearsal!

It's a comedy which exploits the boys' witlessness and their Californian slang, but great care has been taken to make the historical scenes authentic. The characters speak their own languages, and lookalikes have been cast to complete the illusion. The 'time tunnel' is effective, and the people of the future are goofy in a Star Trek way.

The film's conclusion could disturb intellectuals of the Right and Left, with its assertion that life in 1989 California is the best of all possible worlds, as evidenced by the enthusiasm with which the historical characters take to a shopping mall and water-sports centre. But can this superficial rock culture surpass high art of the past? (We assume the famous people are returned to their own time - were their memories wiped, or did Napoleon give up war for water-sports? Did Beethoven live out his life fruitlessly longing after a synthesiser?) Provocative then, but a good introduction to historical clichés for telly-bound kids, and from the enthusiastic reaction of my own, an 'excellent' choice as a children's film for sf cons. - **Jessica Yates**

REACTION TO THE TV SERIES QUANTUM LEAP

Commenting on John Peter's media review of the American tv sf series *Quantum Leap*, in *Matrix* 87, I thought that to be honest, the pilot film was reasonably well made, and brought to the British screen a refreshing change to my usual viewing. *Quantum Leap* is based on the well-worn theme of Time Travel, and goes about it in a rather unusual way. A scientist has been propelled backwards through time by the actions of an experiment that went wrong. The Genius Type scientist (Scott Bakula) finds himself inhabiting body after body but with an interesting 'twist' to it. Every time the scientist finds himself in another body, and he looks into a mirror, he sees not himself, but the image of the person he is in possession of. More than once, this has had me in fits of laughter.

John Peters says in his review that he thinks *Quantum Leap* will, in all probability, become decadent and a flop. Well, at the moment, *Quantum Leap* has certainly had me on the edge of my seat, it's that good, as sf series go. Of course, it's not to be compared with *Star Trek* or *Blake's Seven*, but it was worth watching and I look forward to the next series, later on this year. - **Chris Bailey**

STRIP SEARCH

Comics exhibition at the Swiss Cottage Library

This also included **GRAPHIC NOVELTIES?** a discussion on the future on comics. The catalogue may still be available, enquiries to: Paul Collett, Visual Arts Officer, Swiss Cottage Library, 88 Avenue Road, London NW3 3HA.

Strip Search, sponsored by a mix of mainstream and specialist comic-book publishers, including Penguin, Methuen, Speakeasy and Titan Books, has been an extremely popular exhibition, which may be shown at Backnail Arts Centre in July and the Edinburgh Book Fair in 1991. It consists of panels of original artwork, grouped under catchy and punning titles like *The Brit Pack* or *2000 AD* and *Counting*. The history of graphic novels is traced from classics like *Tintin* and *Dan Dare*, Marvel in the '60s and Raymond Briggs' *When the Wind Blows*, through *2000 AD* to *Moeblis* and *Violent Cases*.

The catalogue includes three critical essays in addition to plentiful b/w illustrations and a list of stockists and publishers. Although local papers did the exhibition proud national coverage was muted, though no doubt everyone was invited. The exhibition inaugurated Camden Libraries' policy of stocking graphic novels for loan: the good news is that you can sample them before buying. The bad news is that graphic novels may end up being published in hardback first, like ordinary fiction, for the libraries' benefit.

As the exhibition closed, a discussion was held: speakers included Paul Gravett, co-editor of *Escape*, Martin Barker, critic specialising in comics, Dave Gibbons, illustrator of *Watchmen*. A few points from this discussion were: we are happy with the term 'graphic novels'; graphic novels need more women readers, but the convention of violence alienates women and should comics go on the top shelf with *Penthouse*. General bookshops should stock comics; the independent network has ensured a market for graphic novels so far, but some of the speakers wanted the genre to break away from its traditional association with SF/fantasy.

VIDEO REVIEWS

First, apparently the current reissue of *The Blues Brothers* does not have the extra twenty minutes of footage that was reported last issue - director John Landis changed his mind about re-editing the 1980 film.

RCA/Columbia have recently announced that they are producing a special subtitled version of *Ghostbusters II* for the hard of hearing; *See No Evil, Hear No Evil* will follow, and then at least another twenty titles during the summer. Congratulations to RCA/Columbia, this is obviously good news for the hard of hearing, but you'd think that this facility could have been prepared earlier by all the video companies, wouldn't you?

CINEPLEX - B.O.R.N. 1990 (18) 87 mins The black market Body Organ Replacement Network supply those with the dosh with new organs in this gory (and chilling) thriller. Despite acting so bad that the scalps should have won Oscars, I hope Mrs. T doesn't get to see this guide to a successful NHS. I'm sure that *Come* did a similar story much better.

GUILD HOME VIDEO - FOOD OF THE GODS II 1990 (18) 83 mins Hilarious turkey! A romp in the science lab leads to mutated rats, brats and extremely kinky sex! I particularly liked the student going for a pee and being chased by a giant rat chomping away at his levis. With a laugh a minute script, the cast have a great time hamming it up - this is a must for those nights you get depressed after watching *Brooksie*.

KWEST - BATMANIA: FROM COMICS TO SCREEN 1989 (U) 45 mins A galloping history of the Caped Crusader from comic strip to last year's film, but the emphasis is on the early film serials and legendary tv series. There's a lot of behind-the-scenes material, which make fascinating viewing and the sight of an overweight Adam West in batusit at a personal appearance is marvellous. Unfortunately, the picture quality is marred by the obvious fact that a US master tape has been converted to the UK standard, leaving a fuzzy image at times and the sound is less than lively.

MGM/UA - Masque of the Red Death 1989 (18) 80 mins What a disappointment! A lacklustre production that does no favours for producer Roger Corman, and only makes his '60s version more of a classic than ever. Where Vincent Price made a colourful *Prince Prospero* (helped by Nic Roeg's camerawork!), Adrian Paul's price is more interested in incest and angst than making deals with the Devil; Patrick Macnee's *Machivael* - (aka *Death*) is too debonair for belief, spoiling any aura of evil that should be there.

Wicked Stepmother 1988 (PG) Writer/director Larry Cohen is an erratic talent at best, and for every *Q the Winged Serpent* and *It's Alive* he's made an equal amount of rubbish, but this is a very funny comedy in the *Bewitched* style here with Bette Davis (in her last film - how did Cohen get her to appear?) and Barbara Carrera chewing the wallpaper for all their worth. Carrera, in particular, thoroughly enjoys herself as a very sexy witch that would have made Samantha blush. David Rasche (tv's *Sledge Hammer*) also displays his excellent comedy talents in a rare film appearance, and it seems that everyone had a great time making the film. Recommended if you want a good laugh.

VIRGIN - THE CLASS OF NUKE 'EM HIGH 1986 (18) 82 mins Tromatized comedy about toxic waste leaking into a high school. Extremely over the top 'yoo' comedy with some very brainless goings on - a six foot erection being just one 'highlight'. Some quite good sf, and a monster that makes 'Sooty' look like Cilla Black on crack. One for those who think green slime is tres chic.

Toxic Avenger II, Rabid Grannies and *Troma's War!* More classic stuff from Virgin. *Toxic* has to defend *Tromaville* with his mop and deal with a bad case of acne at the same time - look out for a bimbo that makes Sam Fox look like Einstein. The *Grannies* are a pair of loveable Belgian crones who wield a mean pair of sharpened knitting needles and dribble green gunge over their family at anytime - and that's before they become rabid. *War* is just an excuse for lots of explosions and mayhem, and several groped bosoms. What more do you want - blood? It helps to have a sense of humour when watching these!

Footnote on the current films being shown in Manchester from the Society of Fantastic Films. June 22: *The Green Slime* and *How to Make a Monster* with *Chapters IX and X of Captain Marvel*; July 13 *Strange Illusion* and *The Mole People* and the final two chapters of *Captain Marvel*. For details please telephone **Harry Nadler** evenings only 061 792 0991. And remember the 1980 SF, Fantasy and Horror Film Convention at the Parkers Hotel, Manchester, October 12-14, especially as the numbers are limited and tickets are provided on a first come basis. Details from **Harry Nadler**, telephone as above. Are there any other science fiction film societies out there?

Total Recall

Tommy Ferguson

This is a film based on the Phil K. Dick story "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale". Arnold Schwarzenegger stars with Paul Robocop Verhoeven as director: not an auspicious pairing. "Arnie" is the perfect choice for "the action" movie and has starred in a whole new sub-genre of these films which have loose sf plots: *The Terminator*, *Predator*, and, more recently, *The Running Man*. There is little to distinguish between these films and those of Stallone or Claude Van Damme, apart from a range of awful puns. Arnie has one serious failing: he can't act. I don't mean that he is a bad actor, he simply cannot string a series of words together and come out with a whole sentence. Given an obvious lack of such brutal action sequences in the story and a dearth of humour, I can see a script featuring Arnie as the main character bearing much relation to the story.

Paul Verhoeven was a little known Dutch director until his wildly successful film *Robocop*, where the sf element is merely a plot device to allow a lot of needlessly brutal violence. The main fault of the film was Verhoeven's complete lack of directorial ability, even the sf plot device could not lift the institutionalised violence from its *Rambo* level. Verhoeven obviously felt the "action" necessary for the structure of the film, but the atrocious method acting and a plot that Enid Blyton would have been ashamed of again leaves me feeling apprehensive about his influence on *Total Recall*.

The story concerns Douglas Quail, a clerk: not just a job description but a way of life. He dreams of travelling to Mars in the guise of a secret agent; knowing this to be impossible, he takes the next best thing: "Rekal Inc". This is a company which will implant complete memories of any fantasy into the brain, even placing artefacts of the "trip" in the home. But it turns out that Mr. Quail actually did go to Mars as an undercover agent, but has had the experiences wiped from his memory. When he realises this, a transmitter in his brain notifies the authorities and there is a brief chase sequence and a fairly predictable conclusion.

There are a number of important themes in the story that characterise Dick's work: the dichotomy between reality and perceived reality, the "little person" facing insurmountable odds and the effects drugs can have on people. But how can one film a "dichotomy of reality"? The previous attempt to do this, *Bladerunner*, had the immediate advantage of not being handicapped by the personalities involved (the Harrison/Hauer combination with Ridley Scott as director was inspired). But even with that talent, the film failed to illustrate what Dick puts his characters through: *Bladerunner* only bears a slight resemblance to the original story. I fear that when faced with similar problems, *Total Recall* will turn out similar results: what appears on screen. *Bladerunner* is an excellent film, but with very little relation to the original story and I think that *Total Recall* will not even be redeemed by impressive visual effects.

The main theme of "We can remember it for you wholesale" also featured prominently in *Bladerunner* (another title change from the original *Dream of electric sheep*). The idea of an ordinary person put in a situation which is very weird is a feature of both stories: how the characters resolve the situation takes one through the rest of the storyline. In *Bladerunner*, Deckard is told that "if you're not cop, then you're little people" and then is forced to "retire" (kill) five dangerous androids. Quail is told that, as a clerk, he will never get to Mars ("God in heaven, you're doomed, Doug") but, it is revealed, he's already been there. The problem with filming this idea is the casting: in *Bladerunner*, Harrison Ford was not my idea of a "little person" and Arnie is definitely not my idea of a clerk. In *Total Recall*, I fear that, similar to *Bladerunner*, the emphasis will be on the things the main characters battle with, rather than how those things affect them.

The other theme which the film must deal with is the contradictions inherent in the main character's view of reality. *Bladerunner* saw a half-hearted attempt to illustrate this with the character of Rachel, the cutsey conclusion being that reality doesn't matter and you can still ride off into the sunset with something that isn't "real". In "We can remember..." the reality conflict is not about something tangible like an android whose reactions you can test, but is going on inside the main character's head. It therefore poses a problem for the film maker. The voice over method (used in *Bladerunner*) has proved unsatisfactory more discerning viewers. The viability of this method to *Total Recall* is academic anyway: Arnie couldn't handle the lines. The method I think will be favoured is a series of flashback sequences, like those used in *The Terminator* (the ones which told you what the hell was going on). For the film's profitability, this is much more sensible; I would allow Arnie to show off his muscles as a secret agent in his previous life. With regard to the integrity of the storyline, though, I believe a little more consideration at the casting stage would have meant a more competent actor taking the lead role. He would be able to show the conflicts, desires and the alienation of Douglas Quail that his "true" reality brings upon him.

But how will the film treat the story? I think the story adaptation will merely rip off all the neat ideas and concentrate on the small chase sequence in the middle of the story. In doing this, I believe *Total Recall* will be structured like *Predator*, where the central idea was that the alien could see only in the infrared. In a similar way, the idea that Douglas Quail has a transmitter in his brain which allows two-way communication and tracking, and Arnie's attempts to elude the effects of this, will be the main plot of the film. Given this analysis, I really can't see, at this stage, any grounds for hope in the film - unless you are a big Arnie fan.

The Periodic Table

Jim Mowatt reports on his first sf con

What did I expect from the conference? I tried hard to have no expectations whatsoever. Obviously a few preconceived notions will have crept in, but I hope I approached the con in a reasonably objective frame of mind. I wasn't absolutely clear on my reasons for going. I'd heard about science fiction conventions, this one was in my home town, it was only six pounds for admission, so basically I thought "why not?"

Unfortunately, when I first arrived, there were no signs of activity at all. I stood and listened... there it was, a sound emanating from one of the rooms to my right. Like a bloodhound, I tracked it down and burst into the room, starting the single occupant, who was heavily absorbed in a Dr. Who video. Well, that's a start, I figured, Dr. Who is a SF type programme.

I soon tracked down the bar. Then people started to materialise in large numbers all around me. They'd been in a room down the hall and had transferred their activities to this room for the next event, which was a video containing snippets from various sf films with witty dialogue supplied by various people. This soon had the audience chuckling heartily.

By this time, I was starting to relax and enjoy myself. The atmosphere seemed reasonably warm and friendly and although I didn't actually feel completely integrated into the proceedings, I did feel sufficiently at ease to go with the flow.

I spent the next couple of hours relaxing by the bar and soaking up the atmosphere. I spent much of this time eavesdropping on conversations and taking note of the general social pattern. This was particularly interesting as it soon came to light that there were several different groups of people. There was the committee (the organisers of the event), but even this group was sub-divided into people whose opinions were held in high regard, general work horses (people who bustled about making sure something actually got done) and people who perhaps only joined the committee recently. There were other groups of friends who had obviously travelled to the con together and, of course, the guest of honour, Michael Scott Rohan, being interrogated on writing style by a potential author, perhaps.

The talk from Tom Shippey was, for me, the highlight of the day. He did everything wrong as far as making a presentation is concerned - he was seated throughout, he spent time fumbling with books - and yet still carried the whole thing through with a remarkably strong presence and keen literary critique. He introduced his subject matter as being either "books I have read recently" or, to sound less mundane, "current trends in modern sf". These trends were revealed as "cyberpunk", "steampunk" and another trend which involved the USA being controlled by another power. It was all quite fascinating and I could have sat and listened to him for considerably longer. After this, I headed back to the bar to ponder over some of his comments and to do a little more relaxing. I was becoming rather proficient at relaxing by this time.

To summarise then, I enjoyed the convention and would probably be keen to visit any more that were held fairly locally. As far as cons further afield are concerned, I doubt I would travel to them for the specific purpose of going to that event, but maybe I would use them as an excuse to meet up with friends who live in different parts of the country.

My fears [of elitism at cons] weren't entirely dispelled. I didn't really feel part of the community at any time: I actually visited the con with a friend and spent some considerable time engaged in chat with him. I would probably have made more of an effort to get to know the people at the con had I been alone. As for content, I appreciated the talks/debates, but was left cold by some of the more frivolous items, such as the turkey reagents and the make up a science fiction drink item. If there's a LUContinued Strikes Back, though, I'll be there.

CONTOUR MAPPINGS

EASTERCON NEWS

168 people voted for Illumination, the 1992 Eastercon, which will be held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool (which is due to have extensive refurbishments in 1991). Paul McAuley will be the main Guest - others are pending, including an American one and the Fan Guest of Honour will be Pam Wells. Ann Page will run the fan room and the members are D Clements, Matt Bishop, Rhodri James (Chair), Steve and Ann Lawson, Jason Stevens and Ivan Trowler. The Committee intend to have a strong workshop programme designed to get people involved, a major science element and one con theme will be The Fringes of SF, such as news ideas in horror, the cross over with science and foreign language sf. (Attending membership £15, supporting £10 from 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield S2 3HQ).

So far, there is only one bid for the 1993 Eastercon: Helicon '93, which will return to the 1989 site of the Hotel de France, Jersey. The committee consists of Tim Illingworth, Rob Meades, Martin Easterbrook, Chris Cooper, Martin Howe, Steve Davies, John Richards and Mike and Kathy Westhead. The programme aims to have two streams with a "sercon" flavour, 35mm films and smaller workshop

programmes. (Presupporting memberships £1 from 63 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1LQ).

The 1990 Eastercon, Eastcon, overcame problems with the hotel's booking system and attendees who waited until the last possible minute to register. The membership reached 850 on Friday, leaving the con solvent, but not too much so. The surplus will go to Stonehouse Hospital, announced **Helen McCarthy** at the Business Meeting at the end of the con. That is the hospital in Scotland which treated Ann Page for severe diabetic retinopathy last year. The money will go for cufly, bedsheet and all the necessities the NHS does not really seem to provide.

One of the most popular items was the *Masquerade*, which had different categories of costumes: old, new, borrowed and blue. The winner in the New category was *The Caterpillar*, a flexible and colourful ensemble made up of Stephen Baynes, Melinda Young with Barbara Cooper, Bazooka and Trevor and Zoe Barker. Section 6, the rear end, was commended. Winner of the Old category was the sombre and awe-inspiring figure of "*Bruce*" demonstrated by Neale Mittershaw-Hop. Undisputed winner of the Borrowed category was the vivacious *Pink Imp*, made by Christopher Anderson and designed and modelled with panache by Teddy Sidoli. The Blue category was interpreted in various ways, but Sue Mason and Gail Courtney won as imposing *Wood Warriors*. James Steel was commended, with the most marvellous *Gryphon*. However, his progress through the hotel could be tracked by the trails of moulting feathers. Finally, the *Smut* award was won by a determined group effort from *The Fifth*, a combination of Judith Looker, Nina Watson, Fiona Clarke, Ken Shinn, Doug McCallum and Paul Moseley, who suffered a grazed arm as he was dragged off a trifle too enthusiastically.

1990 CONS

There are several more cons in 1990 which could be described as sf: Chrono-clan (June 22-24, Pennine Hotel, Derby, £15 attending, £10 supporting from Neil Curry, 24 Peartree Road, Enfield, Middlesex) which now has a new Guest, Colin Greenland, in addition to Mary Gentle and Neil Gaiman. The programme will have a major strand on "The Next Ten Years in..." plus discussions of the (ab)uses of time and a chance to put a con fanzine together. The annual Unicorn is Unicornize (July 6-8, New Hall, Cambridge, £12 attending, £6 supporting from Unicornize, Clare College, Cambridge) which, in addition to several Peter Greenaway short films, has Bill Sanderson, Lionel Fantorpe, Ian Watson, Barrington Bayley and D Langford as Guests. It aims to have a traditional Unicorn shape complete with food tasting and a masquerade, with an unorthodox inside - according to Chair, Rhodri James.

August is the month of the Big One (ConFiction, The Congress Centre, The Hague August 23-27; £55 attending, £16 supporting from Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Road, Cambridge CB5 8HQ or ConFiction, PO Box 95370, 2509 GJ The Hague, Holland). Guests of Honour are Joe Haldeman, Wolfgang Jeschke, Harry Harrison, with Andrew Porter as Fan Guest of Honour and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro as Toast Mistress. This is the place to vote for the next Worldcon and Hugo, though if you prefer something a little smaller, there's always Niccon V a bit later in Belfast (September 21-22, Students' Union, Queens University of Belfast £5 attending, £2 non-attending, details from Tommy Ferguson, 90 Carnhill, Shantallow 3, Derry BT48 8BE, N. Ireland). The Guests are James White, Ian McDonald and the evasive Coner na Bralenn.

Still in Ireland we come October '90 (October 13-14, Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, IR£10 attending, IR£5 supporting, bank drafts only, details from 30 Beverley Downs, Knocklyon Road, Templeogue Dublin 16). This proposes to offer the usual with a new slant: the committee say that medieval swordsmanship, Celtic connections and a fancy dress party are on the cards. Meanwhile, November is the month of Novacon, (November 9-11, Excelsior Hotel, Birmingham, attending membership £15 to end of September from Bernie Evans, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley B66 4SH) which will celebrate both the 60th anniversary of British fandom and the 20th anniversary of the Brum group, with Jack Cohen as Guest. Then the year concludes with Spawn of Conine (December 14-16, Oxford Polytechnic, £9 attending, £5 supporting from Adrian Cox, St. John's College, Oxford OX1 3JPF). Ramsey Campbell is the Guest of Honour and the con theme is SF in Society.

Fantasia kicks off the rest of the 1990 media con season with Katherine Kurtz as Guest (The Lorne Park Hotel, Glasgow, June 22-24, £15 attending membership, £5 supporting from 10 Atlas Road, Springburn, Glasgow G21 4TE). Also in Scotland is Concert 2 (The King's Manor Hotel, Edinburgh, October 26-28, £17 attending, £7 supporting from Jetta Goldie, 97 Harrison Road, Edinburgh EH11 1LT) which has Fox, Diana Wynne Jones and Michael Mackenzie as Guests plus videos, a film trivia quiz and maybe even a slave auction. Coming south a little, Holodeck is the 30th British Star Trek convention (August 31-September 3, Stakis Norfolk Gardens Hotel, Bradford, £25 attending membership, £10 supporting from Holodeck, PO Box 628, Bristol BS99 1TZ). This has Joe Haldeman as Guest of Honour, in addition to Bill Thiesse and Richard Arnold.

Down in the deep south, Armadacon will appear with Anne McCaffrey, Brian Lumley, Adrian Cole and possibly Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred as Guests (November 10-11, The Plymouth Arts Centre, £18 attending membership from Mrs. Marion Pritchard, 4 Glenaele, Mannamed, Plymouth, please send sase). Then finally ConCussion will come (December 1-2, Diplomat Hotel, Cardiff, attending membership £28 from Dougie, c/o 32B Ballards Lane, Finchley, London N3) which will be multi-media and a chance, they say, to enjoy the unique silliness of the festive season with friends.

I've heard of just the one Games con - Conjunction of the Million Spheres (July 27-29, New Hall, Cambridge, £12 attending membership from 25 Wycliffe Road, Cambridge CB1 3JD). The Guest of Honour is Greg Stafford, discoverer of the Glorantha world and the programme includes The Miskatonic University 300th Reunion Party, The Tournament and The Masquerade.

In the foreign category, there is a flurry of Polish cons where the fee includes attending, board, accommodation and all Con materials. Babicon is the first con of Fan Women. Each woman can invite one or two men, preferably chic, handsome and "at disposal for 24 hours". This con takes place October 4-7 (fee \$76) and is run by the SF Club of Gdansk, who are also arranging Nordcon '90 (December 6-9, fee \$72 which also includes sightseeing in Gdansk, details from Gdansk Klub Fantastyki, 80-325 Gdansk 37, PO Box 76, Poland). The Polish National Con, Polcon '90, takes place from November 8-11 (\$84 paid at door, details from Warminski Klub Fantastyki, ul. Kaszaka 22, 10-349 Olsztyn, Poland). Polcon '89 had Brian Aldiss as Guest, with Michaelangelo Miani and Adam Hollane. The programme featured over fifty English language films.

1991 Cons

1991 is a very crowded year for cons. There are rumours of Protoplasm (a sf con in late June), Congregate II (in early/mid June) and Romanticcon (a literary con set in the Lake District).

Igor Tokolnikov writes that Brian Aldiss, Bob Shaw and Alan Dean Foster have expressed interest in Volgacon (September 8-14 on and around the Volga, details from Igor Tokolnikov, Volgograd-66, CPO Poste Restante, USSR); and the Eurocon in Cracow. Polish sf fans have had free or subsidised rates for several years at Western cons and are now repaying the favour, offering free membership to everyone who registers before December 31, 1990. Guests of Honour are Paul Anderson and Gianfranco Viviani. Fan Guests of Honour are Rolf Gucklmann and Boris Zavgordny. (Cracow '91, May 9-12, details from Wiktor Bukati, PO Box 983, 00-950 Warsaw, Poland). The year will end with X-Con in Germany with Guests Anne McCaffrey and Ian Watson (December 27-30, Hotel Inter-Continental, Dusseldorf, £27 attending, £7 supporting, from Oliver Gruter, Dept of Physics, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX). It's the first major German International sf con since Worldcon in Heidelberg and will focus on Science as well as writing.

The British cons are all totally different - starting with Treble, a filicon in Eastbourne with Bill Sutton and Zander Nyrod as Guests (£15 attending membership from G. North, 18 Glynde Road, Brighton BN2 2YJ) which contrasts with Reconnaissance - a very serious con, concerned with new works and new ideas in sf (£18 attending, £10 supporting, The Park Hotel, Cardiff, February 22-24, details from 5 St. Andrews Road, Garshall, Surrey CM5 2DY). Also in February will be LUCON III in Leeds (Details from Andrew Adams, Leeds University Union SF Society, PO Box 157 Leeds LS1 1UH). The Eastcon zooms north to Glasgow, and intends to have a "modular" programme - no less than ten specialist programme streams containing three items on average. The Guest of Honour at Speculation will be Rob Holdstock (The Hospitality Inn, Glasgow, March 29-April 1, £20 attending, £10 supporting from 35 Buller Road, London N17 9BA).

Still north, in Harrogate, will be Mexican IV, a con to focus specifically on written sf (£15 attending membership from 7A Lawrence Road, South Ealing, London W5 3XJ, May 24-27, Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate) which will contrast strongly to Soupcan, a lightly programmed relaxacon in Jersey (October 25-27, Hotel de France, Jersey, £15 attending, details from 63 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1LQ) and Albicon '91 at the Central Hotel in Glasgow in September (contact Karen Heenan, 1155 Pollokshaws Road, Glasgow G41).

The Union will be decided at Unicornize this July - but Imperial college are bidding for the 1991 Union as con '91. They want to put the science back into science fiction (£1 to pre-register from Tom Yates, Imperial College Students' Union, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB - proposed dates June 28-30).

Yoma Megary (The Crescent, Holywood, BT18 9AY, Co Down, N. Ireland) will distribute flyers in the Greater Belfast area for forthcoming cons, if consumers get in touch.

Local Fanomena

CLUBS COLUMN - Keith Mitchell

This month concentrates on University, College and Polytechnic societies. This is partly because of a recent development which may change the face of academic fandom in the UK. This was launched at this year's Eastercon, at a programme event called "Communicator: Higher Education SF Network". It seems the person behind it all is **Ian Brooks**, of the Manchester University of group, WARPED. The plan is to have an apa, and possibly other lines of communication, involving all the interested UK University and Polytechnic groups. I wish them the best of luck. It should create greater continuity amongst the groups, and perhaps give a forum for ideas and interests not catered for in other types of Fandom.

My own experience of University groups is that they often seem to exist in a vacuum, with little contact with the BSFA or indeed the rest of established fandom. Although I have quite a few groups listed below, it turns out only three of them have BSFA membership, namely Durham, Exeter and Manchester. If you are involved in a group, then why not give the BSFA a plug, and write and tell me what's going on too?

Quite a lot of the information is rather old/incomplete. If you know better, I would be very keen to hear from you. And please, if your group is not listed, let me know about it. I intend to pass all my contact information on to Ian, but if you think your group would be interested in the Network, I'm sure he would be keen to hear from you (2 Fairbank Avenue, Rusholme, Manchester M14 4PX).

There's one other snippet to report. **Dave Ellis** tells me that the Glasgow situation has deteriorated even more, with both groups (FOKT and FAB) having trouble keeping regular meetings going due to lack of suitable venues - phone before you go is my advice.

(The following groups meet only during term time unless stated otherwise)

BIRMINGHAM (BUSFG)

Meets at: See Students' Union for information

Contact: David Wake, 160 Beaumont Road, Boumeville, Birmingham B30 1NY
Last Update: Oct 89

CAMBRIDGE (CUSFS)

Meets at: College Bar, New Hall (term), Bird-in-Hand (others) Every Thursday
Contact: The Chairman, Cambridge University Science Fiction Society, c/o Students' Union, 3 Round Church Street, Cambridge
Last Update: Apr 90

COVENTRY POLYTECHNIC (CPSFS)

Meets at: Hand & Heart, Gosford Street, Alternate Tuesday
Contact: Ian Sales, Lynden House, 5 Spencer Road, Coventry CV5 6PA
Last Update: Nov 89

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN (DUSFS)

Contact: Ronan McGloaghan (Secretary) or Noel Mitchell (Auditor), DUSFS, Box No. 6, Regent House, Dublin 2
Last Update: Aug 89

DURHAM (Durham University SF Society)

Contact: SF Soc. Pigeonhole, The University, Dunelm House, Durham DH1 1AA

EDINBURGH (EUSFS)

Meets at: The Quill, George IV Bridge, Every Thursday
Contact: c/o Societies Centre, 60 The Pleasance, Edinburgh EH3 9JL
Last Update: Aug 88

EXETER (Exeter University SF Society)

Contact: c/o Societies Rack, Devonshire House, The University, Exeter, Devon
Last Update: Apr 90

HATFIELD POLYTECHNIC (PSIFA)

Meets at: See Student Union noticeboard Every Wednesday during term
Contact: The President, c/o Students' Union, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts.
Last Update: Aug 89

HULL (Hull University Union SF & F Society)

Contact: c/o Toivo House, The University, Hull HU6 7RX
Last Update: Jun 88

IMPERIAL COLLEGE (Imperial College SF Society)

Meets at: The Library Every Thursday
Contact: c/o Union Building, Prince Consort Road, South Kensington, London
Last Update: Jun 88

LEEDS (Leeds University Union SF Society)

Contact: PO Box 157, Leeds LS1 1UH
Last Update: Jun 88

MANCHESTER (WARPED)

Meets at: Students' Union, Oxford Road Every Monday 7.30pm
Contact: The President, Science Fiction & Fantasy Society, c/o Students' Union or Ian Brooks, 2 Fairbank Avenue, Rusholme, Manchester M14 4PX Tel: 061 226

7489) or Mark Slater, 28 Denham Street, Victoria Park, Manchester M13 0FJ (Tel: 061 225 9148).
Comments: Trying to start Manchester group
Last Update: Jan 90

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, BELFAST (QUB SF&F Society)

Meets at: Students' Union, University Road Alternate Thursdays
Contact: Noticeboard, Porters' Corridor or c/o Students' Union
Last Update: Feb 90

ST. ANDREWS (University of St. Andrews SF & F Society)

Contact: c/o Students' Union, St. Mary's Place, St. Andrews, Fife KY16 9UZ
Last Update: Jun 88

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER AT JORDANSTOWN (UUJ SF Society)

Contact: Damien Kearney, c/o Clubs and Societies Officer, Students' Union, UUJ, Jordanstown, N.I.
Last Update: Feb 90

WARWICK (University of Warwick SF & F Society)

Contact: Arts Fed Pigeonholes, Union Building, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL
Last Update: Jun 88



Information Service Update

Phil Nichols

I must apologise to anyone who has written to me recently and not yet received a reply - the Information Service has been put on hold while I've been moving house and changing jobs. Having now completed my relocation, the Service is once again in operation. I'd like to thank everyone for their patience: if you haven't received a reply from me yet, it's on its way. Honest.

I've referred in the past to the series of Information Service "All Points Bulletins" summarising unanswered (or unanswerable) questions members have put to me. The response to these APBs has been mixed. Occasionally, an APB will elicit heaps of mail about a particular question. Other times, no response at all. What with my recent upheavals, and the general slowing down of questions sent to me, I've decided to drop the APB idea for the time being. It will probably reappear later in the year, but for a while I'm considering alternative methods of getting the information I need out of you, the experts.

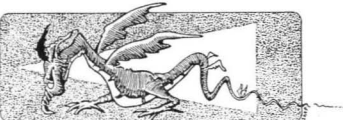
In place of the APB, I shall be posing unanswered questions in this column. I've resisted doing this in the past because of the time lag involved, but it's probably the only way of getting answers for those questions which are long overdue for an answer. So here goes:

***From Bulgaria comes a question about Alexander Vickers, who apparently had stories published in *New Scientist* and *Providence* in 1988. Anyone have any further details or copies of the stories in question?

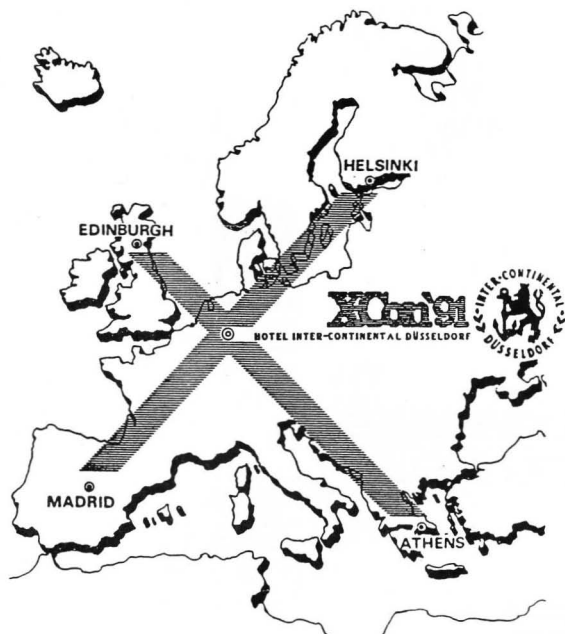
***On a similar theme, Chris Bailey is looking for copies of Brian Stableford's *Realms of Tartarus* and *The Paradox of the Sats*, neither apparently published in paperback in the UK. Anyone with copies available for sale or rent, or who knows where copies can be obtained, please let me know.

***And now, a scientific question for you all to consider. I shall quote this one in full, as it is very specific: "In the south of England, what are the chances of a type 1 skin-type person getting cancer in 1989? Would dark glass protect the skin, as in a helmet, and would it be effective in the year 2050 if no other solution has been found?" Well? Any dermatologists reading this?

That's all for now. Anyone who can help with these, please write to me at my new address, given below. The same goes for anyone who has a question related to any aspect of it. I shall endeavour to respond to (but not necessarily answer in full) all questions within fourteen days of receipt - provided you send a stamped addressed envelope [See Inside Front Cover for Address].



GERMAN INTERNATIONAL SF-CONVENTION
Dec. 27th to 30th 1991 , Düsseldorf



X-CON '91

ANNE McCAFFREY IAN WATSON

Attending £27 Supporting £ 7
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Information
Registration
Room reservation:

British Agent
Oliver Grüter
Dept. of Physics
RHBN College
Egham TW20 0EX

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