

# RETRO

RETRO #2 (June '96) is by Rob Hansen of  
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for the 2nd mailing of FHAPA.

c Rob Hansen, 1996

FHAPA #1 arrived here 16 May 96, announcing 1 June as deadline for this mailing so, postal times being what they are, I'm not going to have time to actually read and comment on it. Fortunately, since I'm primarily using already written albeit unpublished, material in RETRO, I'm able to get this issue together in time to hit that deadline. So, picking up where we left off last time....

## THE 1980s: Part 2 - APRIL TO AUGUST, 1980.

A new title in April was the first issue of Mike Paine's OVERGROUND, but more significant was the eighth issue of Dave Bridges' ONE-OFF which carried the 20-page D West article originally intended for OCELOT. Titled 'Ah, Sweet Arrogance!' (after 'Ah, Sweet Idiocy!', the magnum opus of 1940s US fan Francis T.Laney) it was West's latest major piece of fanzine criticism and was, of course, An Event. West's commitment to fandom and his sheer writing ability ensured an avid audience for each new piece, however much readers might disagree with individual judgements. Also published at some point early in 1980, despite being dated November 1979, was Rob Hansen's one-off STARFAN. This was a 26-page satirical comicbook telling the story of an alien neofan's interaction with British fandom and featured a number of fans of the day in cameo roles. A strip version of STARFAN would later be carried in ANSIBLE.

Without a doubt the most significant fanpublishing event of the year occurred in April when the long-delayed WARHOON 28 finally saw print. Published by American fan Richard Bergeron, the 632-page perfect-bound hardback volume was a collection of the very best of the writings of Walt Willis. WARHOON 28 was to be responsible for a bout of renewed interest in the work of Willis, particularly among younger fans who hadn't previously been able to find much of it and, indirectly, for the reforging for a few shining years of the strong transatlantic link between US and UK fandom that had existed during the 1950s. Ironically, Richard Bergeron would also ultimately be responsible for that link being broken again.

ANSIBLE 9 (May '80 - tho' misdated 'April') opened with the results of the TAFF race, which Langford won with 83 votes (44 US & 39 Europe) against Barker's 38 (15 & 23). Jan Howard Finder immediately launched a BARKER TO BOSTON fund, but when Finder phoned him about this Barker replied that he might not be able to attend the Worldcon as he could be in prison then. This situation had arisen, improbably enough, thanks to Barker's admiration for an episode of the old Outer Limits TV series scripted by Harlan Ellison. As Martin Easterbrook reported in SMALL MAMMAL:

"After leaving a resin model of the hand from 'Demon With a Glass Hand' to set at his work overnight, Jim arrived in the morning to find a full-scale bomb alert in progress. This was caused by suspicion of cables trailing from the lights within Jim's 'hand'. Jim, artist of the BSFA's 'Captive' strip cartoon, was subsequently arrested and charged with wasting police time. Jim now shares with his TAFF rival Dave Langford the distinction of having been arrested for 'terrorist' offences."

"I made the unfortunate mistake of being born 3000 miles away so the postage is a bit dearer but this obstacle is what used to be the mountain that I've chiselled down to a mere boulder. I've been tempted to use dynamite but I'm not partial to extremes unless all else fails. For those of you who are unaware of the fact - I have every intention of relocating my body and energies to England. The intense intrigue I've had for All Things British over the past several years has flourished into a mad obsession."

Within a year Reynolds had indeed relocated, and was thereafter a feature of British fandom.

MATRIX 30 (June/July '80) carried news in its 'Fanworld' section of the University of Exeter SF Society, which reportedly "was accidentally formed about six months ago at an astronomical society meeting when a group of us discovered a mutual interest in SF" and published a fanzine called EXOSPHERE. Also in that same section of MATRIX was a report on the Warwick University group by member Christina Lake and requests for fans in their areas to contact them with a view to forming local SF groups from Steve Green in Solihull, Caroline Mullan in Belfast (who was unaware of New Irish Fandom, then still going strong), and Alex Stewart in Colchester (this mention leading, the following month, to the formation of the Stour Valley SF Group). All four were to become well known in fandom as the decade progressed.

The Cardiff SF & Fantasy Group held its inaugural meeting at The Crwys, a pub on the city's Crwys Road, on Sunday 20th July 1980. President was R. Lionel Fanthorpe, Secretary Tony Donovan.

UNICON was held at Keele University over the weekend of 4th - 7th July 1980 with Harry Harrison as GoH, Keele graduate Peter Roberts as FGoH, Dave de Leuw as Artist GoH, Ashley Walker as Artist FGoH, and Bob Shaw as 'Special Guest'. John Fairey was Chairman. The main and alternative programmes included items such as Ken Slater on 'The Golden Age of SF', Harry Harrison and Bob Shaw interviewing/insulting each other, Alan Dorey on 'Getting Into Fandom', Peter Roberts comparing types of fanzines to kinds of animals, a 'Mastermind' quiz, etc. Bob Shaw was Toastmaster at a banquet whose goodies included the famous wines bottled especially for Keele University in Germany. The con was judged a great success and was to be the first in a series of UNICONS to be held at Keele by the university's energetic SF group whose most active members then included founder Phil Wain, Chris Hughes, Jan Huxley, Colin Hand, Chrissie Pearson, John Wilkes, and Paul Davies.

SILICON 4, organised as usual by Gannetfandom, was held at the Grosvenor hotel in Newcastle-upon-Tyne over the weekend of 22nd - 25th August. According to Dave Langford in the next ANSIBLE, it had...

"...about 60 fans attending, and great was the drunkenness there. I remember it with special fondness for the quiz, wherein Welshfandom (Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlilllantysiliogogoch Division) utterly defeated teams representing the Astral Leauge, 'L'academy de la chronically effete de la Surbiton' and 'The Peter Weston School of Gardening'. Need you ask which team I was on? A good con."

To be continued.....

Overleaf is #2 in my series of fannish resumé's. Oh, to get these online!

Fortunately, the charges against Barker were eventually dropped and he got to travel to America with Dave and Hazel Langford.

Other news in ANSIBLE 9 concerned the ongoing recession and its effects on fandom with Rob Hansen having joined the recently-redundant Peter Weston among the ranks of the unemployed. Weston would eventually start his own metalworking business, while Hansen found a job in London, where he would become an integral part of that city's fandom, moving to the capital at the end of May.

Also out in May was NAPALM IN THE MORNING 1, edited by Joseph Nicholas. With a title taken from a line uttered by the character played by Robert Duvall in the film Apocalypse Now ("I love the smell of napalm in the morning!"), the fanzine was largely a rewritten version of the apazine of the same name that Nicholas had contributed to FEAPA. The fanzine would see four issues before its demise in 1981. The other fanzine Nicholas produced at this point, PAPERBACK PARLOUR the SF reviewzine he edited for the BSFA, had changed its title to PAPERBACK INFERNO with its first issue of the 1980s. The change in title fitted in perfectly with the transformation the title had undergone since the days of previous editor Phil Stephenson-Payne, the reviews by Nicholas and his team of reviewers being much more robust and critical. This development was not universally popular with BSFA members, some of whom were outraged by his comments about giants of SF such as Clarke and Asimov ("has so prostituted whatever talent he may once have possessed in pursuit of the megabuck as to destroy his art beyond recovery" - Nicholas), the injection of his political views into reviews in order to rubbish books for ideological unsoundness, and by his elitist snobbery. That Nicholas had succeeded in turning a dull but worthy publication into one that was lively, quirky and iconoclastic seemed to matter less to his critics than that he had dared to attack their favourites.

The results of the 1979-1980 CHECKPOINT/ANSIBLE Fan Poll, as carried in the June ANSIBLE, were for TWLL DDU as Best British Fanzine (followed by DEADLOSS, DRILKJIS, DOT and SEAMONSTERS); Dave Langford as Best British Fanwriter (runners up being D West, Kevin Smith, Chris Priest, David Bridges, and Bob Shaw); Jim Barker as Best British Fanartist (runners up being Harry Bell, Rob Hansen, D West, and John Collick); Bryn Fortey's SEAMONSTERS 4 piece 'Charlie Was A Good Old Boy' as Best Article; and Best Cover to D West for INCA 1. The June VECTOR, issue 98 was put together by Alan Dorey, Kevin Smith, Eve Harvey, and Joseph Nicholas, following the departure of previous editor Mike Dickinson. Smith took over as editor with the next issue.

New to the fanzine scene in June and July were THE USUAL, from Nic Howard and Chris Lewis, two fans from High Wycombe; THIS FARCE, from Norwich Group members Glen Warminger and Alan Marshall; INSTANT FUTURE, a one-off in support of the 'Barker to Boston' fund by Jim himself, Eve Harvey, and others; DISCOUNT FUTURE, from London fan Clive Yelf; RING PULL, produced for the Aberdeen University SF Society by William T. Goodall; RAGNAROK, from Somerset fan John Shire; SNORKEL, from Harry Bell; and the Glasgow fanzines DRYGULCH and TWENTY THIRD, the former from Jimmy Robertson, Bill Carlin, and Sandy Brown, the latter by Robertson alone. This trio termed themselves The Red Army Choir and were part of a larger group of Glasgow fans known as Cretinfandom which had been formed earlier in the year by ex-FOKT members who had left that group after falling out with the fake Bob Shaw. They met on the same night as FOKT but at a different venue. The preliminary, unnumbered issue of Rochelle Reynolds' DRIFTWOOD is of note here because though published in the US it was intended solely for UK fandom and only distributed to them. As Reynolds explained within:

CLARKE, A(ubrey) Vincent 'Vinç' (1922- )

UK fanwriter/editor active since 1948 (though glancing first contact made 1938). Member of London Circle (1947-60), Kent TruFandom (KTF) (1982-90), and publications editor of the SFS (Science Fantasy Society) (1948-51). First winner of TAFF (Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) (1954), but never took trip. Co-founder in 1954, w/Ken Bulmer & Chuck Harris of OMPA, first UK apa. In 1958, provided inspiration for formation of British Science Fiction Association (BSFA). Quit fandom (1960-81). FGoH at CONCEPTION (1987, Leeds) and INTERSECTION (1995 Worldcon, Glasgow). Runs Fanzine Library (7000+ fanzines).

First Contact: Fanzines from Science Fiction Service (dealer) 1938.

First Con: WHITCON (1948 UK national convention)

Concoms: 1951, 52, 53, national conventions, LONCON (1957 Worldcon).

Fanzines: SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS (18 issues, 1948-60. 1-8 for SFS)  
SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS MINOR (4 issues, 1949, for SFS)  
INITIATIVE INCORPORATED (2 issues, 1952 no.3 ed. Norman Shorrock & John Roles)  
EYE (6 issues, 1954/5 ed.w/Joy Goodwin, Stuart MacKenzie, Jim Rattigan, Ted Tubb)  
OPERATION ARMAGEDDON (2 issues, 1954 - limited circulation)  
NOT SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS (3 issues, 1982/3)  
KTF XMAS CARD (3 issues, 1982-84 ed.w/Terry & Margaret Hill, ATom, Elda Wheeler)  
PULP (19 issues, 1986-91) gen. Occasional co-editor. (Others Rob Hansen, Pam Wells, John Harvey, Avedon Carol)

One-offs: SCIENCE FICTION FESTIVAL CONVENTION PROGRAMME (ed.w/Ken Bulmer for 1951 national convention, assorted con leaflets 1951-3)  
'OUR 'ZINE (1952 ed.w/Jim Rattigan, Fred Robinson, Bob Shaw, & Mike Wilson)  
ANGLO SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM (1953, directory of UK fans)  
PLONGE (1954 ed.w/Stuart MacKenzie & Ted Tubb)  
OPERATION SPLASH (1954 ed.w/Dave Newman)  
MOVE (1958)  
FANS & ETHICS (1960)  
THEME (1983)  
ATOM: A TRIBUTE (1990)

Apazines: TUCKER HOTEL (1 issue, 1952 ed.w/Chuck Harris, Bob Shaw, Ken Slater, James White, & Walt Willis), FAPA (US)  
OFF-TRAILS (first four issues, 1954/5 - Official Organ of OMPA)  
LAUNCHING SITE (7 issues, 1954-58), OMPA (UK)  
DYSTELEOLOGY (2 issues, 1954/5 ed.w/Ken Bulmer), OMPA (UK)  
ZYMIC (8 issues, 1954-58), OMPA (UK)  
DUPLICATING WITHOUT TEARS (1 issue, 1956), OMPA (UK)  
GOONCONTACT (1 issue, 1957 ed.w/H.P.Sanderson, Joy Goodwin, Chuck Harris), OMPA (UK)  
K (1990- ), PIECES OF EIGHT (UK)  
VINCENTIAN (1995- ) NAMELESS APA (UK)

See you all next time, hopefully with mailing comments.

Rob 16/5/96.