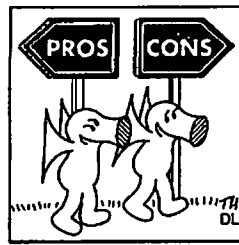


# Ansible



**Ansible 133 August 1998**

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**FRUSTRATION.** The time is out of joint, O cursed spite: this month *Ansible* goes to press one day before the blasted Hugo announcements....

## The Xochitl Sodality

**Jim Baen** says he'll accept any reasonable offer for the 100,000 copies of Newt Gingrich's skiffy epic 1945 still cluttering the warehouse. In a cunning bid for publicity, he's now come clean about the famous 'pouting sex kitten ... sitting athwart his chest' sentences which let Gingrich in for so much teasing: 'Basically, I wrote them to spice the book up.' Baen still feels a modest pride in having restored popularity to the moribund terms 'sex kitten' and, of course, 'athwart'. [MMW]

**David Brin** attracted much gossip this summer after emerging from a Los Angeles sf party to find his car had been broken into, and declaring it to be almost certainly the work of the Swiss. This nation, he explained, was out to get him after dark revelations in his nonfiction writing. Bystanders thought DB was joking, until the police arrived and he repeated the same accusation to them.... Fellow-pros at Westercon in July planned heart-warming acts of support, such as sending Mr Brin parcels of Swiss cheese and chocolate (Gardner Dozois's suggestion), or phoning him at odd hours to play recordings of cuckoo clocks. Tut, tut.

**Harlan Ellison** made a surprise appearance at Readercon (USA, July), loudly announcing in the lobby that he had come to punch out Gregory Feeley. An interested crowd gathered, but it was felt that the absence of G.Feeley himself—who had unknowingly taken his children home to bed—caused this mighty clash of Author vs Critic to lack a certain something. Also at Readercon, 'Bill Gibson attended as a fan and was much in evidence. [...] It was a superb con in many respects.' [DH]

**John Gribbin (PhD)** knows all about Malcolm Edwards's Archer/Pratchett scuttlebutt (A132): 'I can confirm that Malcolm Edwards is apocryphal. There is no such person, because letters sent to that name are never replied to. • As for Lord A, I confess that I am one of the foot soldiers employed by Terry Pratchett. From Monday to Thursday each week for the past month I have been travelling around Britain visiting all the shops that contribute to the best seller list. There, I diligently buy 2 copies of *The Last Continent* and one copy of whatisname's book. To fund this enterprise, I sell the latter in the European book collector market at an inflated price, because of the rarity value of unsigned copies (the method I use to remove the signatures is a professional secret). My arrangement with a certain organization in Littlehampton sees the Pratchett volumes cunningly recycled into the system. By this means, although only 250 copies of the book have ever been printed, it can be number 1 on the best seller list indefinitely. • In return, Terry has promised that when he gets his knighthood I can have his OBE.'

**Tom Holt** has the inside story: 'Enquiring minds might want to know what was in the mystery parcels handed to Messrs Boxleitner & Co by two damozels dressed in white samite at the orgiastic climax of the recent *SFX/Babylon 5* thrash, just outside the lost city of Heathrow. When, awestruck, Boxleitner tore away the shimmering gold paper, he was delighted beyond words to find he'd been given a pictorial history of the River Thames. So stunned was he by the munificence and aptness of this gift that he omitted to take it with him when he left the stage.'

**Diana Wynne Jones** survived another long and dangerous spinal operation on 2 July, and was rapidly reported as grumpy ('Anaesthesia always puts her into a filthy temper') but on the mend. She returned home on 8 July; it's hoped that no more surgery will be needed. [CB]

**Terry Pratchett** collectors are doubtless fighting over copies of the *Legends* (ed. Robert Silverberg) anthology sampler issued by Harper-Collins in July: two complete stories bound back-to-back, being a new Discworld tale and something by a chap called Feist. (*Who he?—Ed.*) Meanwhile, see inside the Post Office presentation pack of 'Magical Worlds: Classic Children's Fantasy' stamps for further TP ubiquity.

**Ron & Gail Walotsky** were forced out of their Florida home by the threat of fires. She: 'Grabbed 1/3 of the paintings. Ron wasn't going to leave—until I broke down in tears because I wouldn't leave without him.' [4 Jul] Happily, they soon returned to an undamaged house.

## Conferva

15 Aug • **BFS Open Night**, Princess Louise pub, Holborn, 7pm on.  
21-24 Aug • **The Wrap Party** (B5 etc), Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Heathrow, London. £80 reg at door. Contact (SAE) PO Box 505, Reading, Berks, RG1 7QZ.

26 Aug • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Jubilee pub, nr Waterloo. 6pm on. With Chris Priest, doubtless talking about his new book *The Extremes*.

26 Aug • **Murder One 10th Birthday Open Day**, Charing Cross Rd. With crime/sf/etc guest authors all day, and an evening party.

4-6 Sep • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Sacha's Hotel, Manchester. GoH Gerry Anderson and others. £55 reg to Society of Fantastic Films c/o 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN.

4-7 Sep • **Cult TV**, Telford Moat House. £49 reg, closing 31 Aug. Contact (SAE) PO Box 1701, Peterborough, PE7 1ER.

11-13 Sep • **Fantasycon XXII**, Albany Suite, Posthouse Hotel, Queensway, Birmingham. Now £55 reg (£45 BFS members). Contact (SAE) 46 Oxford Rd, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 6DT.

18-21 Sep • **Discworld Convention II**, Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. A few memberships still available at £40, £30 unwaged. Contact (SAE; even newer address) Suite 35, 29 High St, Romford, Essex, RM1 1JL.

13-15 Aug 99 • **Wincon V** (Unicon), King Alfred's College, Winchester. Now £25 reg. £15 supp. Contact 53 Havant Rd, North End, Portsmouth, Hants, PO2 7HH.

29 Dec 00 - 1 Jan 01 • **Hogmanaycon**, Central Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Spider & Jeanne Robinson, Sydney Jordan, more. £25 reg, £5 supp to Apr 99. Contact 26 Avonbank Rd, Rutherglen, Glasgow, G73 2PA.

**Rumblings • Pirate Gold.** 'That is not dead which can eternal lie, and with untold eons, even The Scottish Convention may pass along funds to Bucconeer, in the sum of £1,250.' [JGD]

## Infinitely Improbable

**Pseudonym Mysteries.** The Sci-Fi Channel spinoff novel *The Guardians: The Krilov Continuum* (Millennium) is by 'J.M.H.Lovegrove', identified as 'the pseudonym of an Arthur C. Clarke Award shortlisted author.' Intense study of the 1998 Clarke shortlist suggests that the man behind this cryptic nom-de-plume might just be ... James Lovegrove. • Although a mild stir resulted from the A131 identification of 'David Farland' as Dave Wolverton (and informant Ian Covell grumbles that this sensitive datum was cut from his *Locus* column), several fans point out that the Farland title appears on the 'Other Books By' page of *The Lord of the Seventh Swarm* (Tor pb) by, er, Dave Wolverton.

**More Awards.** The John W. Campbell Memorial Award went to Joe Haldeman for *Forever Peace*, and the Sturgeon Memorial Award to Michael F. Flynn for 'House of Dreams' (*Asimov's* Oct/Nov 1997).

**Random Fandom.** *Ken Bulmer* was deeply moved by UK fans' donations for equipment to help him write. 'I'd don't quite know what to say—it's marvellous that people have got together like this....' His recent operation was for cancer of the jaw: 'I am recovering nicely thanks, although I still can't speak properly and am on a puréed diet. My son has already got hold of a voicewriter but unfortunately it won't accept my voice at the moment.' The £200 raised should buy the still-needed printer. Special thanks to Pamela Boal, Vince Clarke, Roger Earnshaw, David Redd and the 1997 World Fantasy Con. • *Teresa Nielsen Hayden* sends a useful 'five-*Ansible* headline' which (like Beachcomber's classic SIXTY HORSES WEDGED IN CHIMNEY) merely awaits its matching story: LESBIAN IN SABLE SALE BIN IN BASEL NABS LEI. • *Rae & Marcus Streets* announce a pregnancy: 'due Dec 24th, but then it's a family tradition to keep the midwife waiting over Christmas.' • *Bridget Wilkinson* underwent a hysterectomy on 22 July; all seems well so far, and we wish her a speedy recovery. Roger Robinson is acting as stopgap editor of the Fans Across the World newsletter. • *David Wake* seeks would-be thespians, dogsbodies, stagehands, etc, for a play to be staged at Reconvence next Easter: 160 Beaumont Rd, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 1NY.

**Rhysling Awards** for sf poetry: 1997 LONG Terry Garey, 'Spotting

UFOs While Canning Tomatoes'; SHORT W.Gregory Stewart, 'Day Omega'. 1998 LONG Laurel Winter, 'why goldfish shouldn't use power tools'; SHORT John Grey, 'Explaining Frankenstein To His Mother'. • 'They did them both together because they got a bit behind, I'm told.' [TG]

**C.o.A. Ken Chestin**, 29 Kestrel Rd, Halesowen, W.Midlands, B63 2PH. Vince Clarke (home again, but still weak and unable to climb the stairs), 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BN. Steve & Jenny Glover, 3f2 (top right) 2, Trinity Court, Trinity, Edinburgh, EH5 3LE. John Richards, 11 Cardiff Rd, North End, Portsmouth, PO2 9EA. ('As of 2 Aug the SHSPG will give up possession of 59 North End Ave, which over 13 years has housed no fewer than 7 of our membership.') Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, Africa House, 64-78 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6AH. Mike (Simo) & Hillary Simpson, 405 Saffron Lane, Leicester, LE2 6UF.

**Thog's Physics Masterclass**. Q. Out there in the vacuum of space, how can we fasten things together? A. 'The team had been well drilled and soon the tanks were up, then pressed down so that the ingenious suction cuppings would keep the tanks firmly in place until the special glue set.' (Anne McCaffrey, *All the Weyr's of Pern*, 1991) [RP/RS]

**R.I.P. John Baltadonis** of First Fandom, a founder member of the Philadelphia SF Society (1935) and FAPA (1937), died on 19 July. • **Ann Layman Chancellor** ('Chance') died in Minneapolis on 11 July from liver disease and kidney failure, aged 50. An artist, costumer and filk fan, she was much involved with NESFA, the Cincinnati Fantasy Group, and the New Orleans Worldcon. (On a personal note, her cheery conversation in parties and bars at Minicon over Easter had had Martin Hoare and myself hoping to meet her again some day. Alas.) • **Paul Lehr** (1930-1998), legendary sf artist since 1958, died of pancreatic cancer on 27 July. As the end approached with dismaying speed, **Bob Eggleton** wrote: 'He is a major star in the SF art universe: most recently, and thankfully given what's happening, his work was showcased in Vin DiFate's *Infinite Visions* book—and on the cover.' • **Robert A.W.Lowndes** (1916-1998) died on 14 July aged 81. A member of the famous 1930s-40s Futurians group, he edited many genre magazines from 1941 to 1970; as a writer, he published both solo and in collaboration with Futurians, including Donald A.Wollheim and James Blish.

**Mythopoeic Award** winners: *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* ed. John Clute & John Grant (Scholarship, Myth & Fantasy Studies), *A Question of Time: J.R.R.Tolkien's Road to Faerie* by Verlyn Flieger (Scholarship, Inklings Studies), *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye* by A.S.Byatt (Adult Fiction) and Jane Yolen's *Young Merlin* trilogy (Children's Fiction). [DB]

**Small Press. Noesis** is another new sf magazine, to appear this autumn: quarterly with fiction, science fact and the usual sort of features. Contact 61 Pengarth Rise, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 2RR. • *The Tall Adventurer* is a detailed E.G.Tubb bibliography, covering all known printings, translations, etc. 200pp; £12 or \$20; available mid-Aug from Beacon Publications, 75 Rosslyn Ave, Harold Wood, Essex, RM3 0RG.

**Cry Wolf (Again)**. J.M.Straczynski announced that, following his wrath that £20/ticket was being charged for that 'free' *Babylon 5* showing in London, the Wolf 359 Ltd con-running outfit 'has been taken out of the loop ... All monies paid by anyone will be refunded. The screening of "In the Beginning" is a FREE SCREENING, as was intended.' • Past JMS objections to Wolf and its organizer Bryan Cooney concern things like: stiff extra charges to fans for e.g. sitting at the Straczynski table; horrendously mismanaged autograph lines; the sanctioning of heaps of pirated *B5* merchandise in the dealers' room; and repeated illicit showing of advance US *B5* material in defiance of the great man's repeated warnings. Meanwhile there's a background hum of worry as to whether—with Wolf rumoured to be badly in debt despite the big money that's been sloshing around—all of the substantial sums raised specifically for charity at Wolf events have actually found their way there. (E.g. £17,000 from the auction of two group visits to the *B5* sets.) We assume that B.Cooney was speaking solely as a charity promoter in the overheard and much-quoted remark to a dealer at Wolf 1996: 'Look—you are in this to make money, I am in this to make money....'

**TAFF**. Nominations for the 1999 eastbound race to Reconvene have been extended to 15 Aug. North American candidates need three NA and two European nominations (signed), to be sent with a 100-word platform and \$20 bond to Ulrika O'Brien at 123 Melody Ln, #C, Costa Mesa, CA 92627, USA. (Not to Maureen Kincaid Speller, who is already on her US TAFF tour and will be out of Britain until late Oct.)

*Odyssey* magazine survived its one-year trial period: in June, Dave Ryan of publishers Caliver Books confirmed that it would continue. [LH]

**Group Gropes**. 'The Gathering' is a new Welsh collectable card game (sorry) Jubilee-style open pub meeting: Bar Emporium, St Mary's St, Cardiff, from 7:30pm, 2nd Thur eve monthly, beginning 10 Sept.

**Hugo Nominee Memorabilia**. This year, LoneStarCon sent out nominee pins to be worn at that Worldcon, only 7 months late; Inter-  
section despatched nominee certificates, 3 years late; and Buccaneer also sent tasteful certificates, 2 weeks early. The showoffs....

**Harvia Horror!** Teddy Harvia has a little list, to which he e-mails early copies of cartoons. Things became doom-laden when, on receiving e-mail about fan art from fellow fan Donald E.Eastlake III, Teddy added him to the list (run from work: his company Ericsson Inc. allows private e-mail). Misinterpreting this mailing as wicked spam, DEE automatically bunged in a complaint, little knowing that Ericsson fire employees caught sending commercial or nuisance e-mail.... Teddy had a bad time with management but was at length cleared of wrongdoing. Phew.

**Barney the Dinosaur** rarely features in *Ansible*, but we must make an exception for Lyrick's *Barney Sing A-Long Songs* audiocassette—whose press release may have been drafted by someone under notice: '... they're perfect for short or long car trips anywhere! Instead of having those little shits clamoring to stop at the next McDonalds, or those interminable whines of "When we gonna get there" or "I really gotta go, Mommy", plug their little ears with these latest banalities from Lyrick and you're guaranteed to arrive free of stress.' [PS/PB]

**Locus Awards, 1998** ... SF NOVEL Dan Simmons, *The Rise of Endymion*. FANTASY NOVEL Tim Powers, *Earthquake Weather*. FIRST NOVEL Ian R.MacLeod, *The Great Wheel*. NOVELLA Allen Steele, '... Where Angels Fear to Tread'. NOVELETTE Connie Willis, 'Newsletter'. SHORT James Patrick Kelly, 'Itsy-Bitsy Spider'. NON-FICTION John Clute & John Grant, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. ART BOOK Vincent di Fate, *Infinite Worlds*. COLLECTION Harlan Ellison, *Slippage*. ANTHOLOGY Gardner Dozois, ed., *The Year's Best SF: Fourteenth Annual Collection*. ARTIST Michael Whelan. EDITOR Gardner Dozois. MAGAZINE *Asimov's* (published all three of the shorter fiction winners). PUBLISHER Tor.

**Outraged Letters** (on A132) ... *Lilian Edwards* takes the bit between her teeth: 'John Dallman's account of the Bug wedding misses out the best part, namely the Hen Night. This was also splendidly executed by Amanda Baker and Alison Scott, who had gone to especial (er) lengths, given Bug's chocolate obsessions, to acquire moulds appropriate for casting life-size chocolate willies.... In a room literally *throbbing* with digital cameras none of the hen attendees could be found willing to do the decent thing for the camera. Need I say yours truly was forced to perform the honours? The things I do for my friends.' • **Steve Gallagher** on that Hamilton 'collaborator': 'I can see how the confusion arose. R. Woodman is obviously Pete Hamilton's pseudonym from a separate career as a porno movie actor. A secret no more! Outed by Amazon!' • **Jane Johnson** of HarperCollins points out that their author Dr Alison Spedding—imprisoned and depressed in Bolivia—appreciates letters sent c/o Debbie Aliaga, British Embassy, Avenida Arc 2732, PO Box 694, La Paz, Bolivia. Unfortunately, however unfairly accused of dealing and singled out for search, the hapless Spedding does indeed acknowledge having 2kg of marijuana in her flat. Reportedly her lawyer's best hope is a 4-5 year sentence which might be halved by parole.

**Thog's Masterclass. True Romance Dept Returns**: 'He impaled her and their two bodies melted together, limbs fusing, faces haloed by radiant neural coronae that conjoined their brains. Their minds sang together in a duet of mental intercourse more ecstatic than that of the body. He opened his uttermost depths to her. She did not hesitate to reciprocate and in the aftermath of the ringing consummation they caught a brief glimpse of what they had been searching for.' (Julian May, *Magnificat*, 1996) [NE] • 'I don't think liquidizing a frog in a blender can be considered serious scientific research, Swire.' (Peter James, *Twilight*, 1991) [PB] • 'Neither was the fact that they smelled bad enough to gag a skunk. That would have to wait.' Our correspondent deplores the omission of the promised skunk-gagging scene. (Tom Clancy, *Rainbow Six*, 1998) [JMF] • 'Terry threw herself into the job like an impatient suicide off a low bridge.' 'Franco arrived home that evening with the haunted stare of a destitute diabetic in a strange city at night.' 'She succumbed to the rutting stamina unleashed by the notion that they were indifferent strangers chosen for selfish, carnal, anonymous pleasures.' (all Rock 'Son of Yul' Brynner, *The Doomsday Report*, 1998) [MMW] • *Dept of Mendelian Insight*: "'I wonder, John," said Piers to Rattray, "is this ability to engineer an antigravity drive a hereditary thing ...?"' (J.M.H. Lovegrove, *The Krilov Continuum*, 1998)

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