



**ANSIBLE 4** from Dave Langford,  
 22 Northumberland Ave,  
 Reading, Berks. RG2 7PW, UK. Cost  
 4/50p Europe, 3/\$1 NA, Africa,  
 5/\$1 Australia: credit given for  
 news, art, articles, newszine  
 trades. Subscriptions have been  
 transferred from *Checkpoint* and  
 also the long-deceased *SF Inter-*  
*national News*: kindly Keith Free-  
 man arranged the latter and is  
 responsible for the snazzy BSFA-  
 style mailing labels with their  
 oh-so-subtle hint at the number  
 of the last issue you will receive  
 without further effort. If you  
 don't have one of these suave  
 labels it means that (a) you have  
 no credit whatever and have mere-  
 ly talked me into giving you a  
 copy---shame; (b) I haven't got  
 your address into Keith's files  
 yet; (c) the label fell off; or  
 (d) some other doubtless excell-  
 ent reason applies. This issue  
 is dated November 1979.

**OBITUARY:** Dr Christopher Evans died on 10th October. He was 48. By profession a psychologist and computer scientist, he had a long-standing interest in science fiction. He edited two anthologies of psychological sf/horror stories, *Mind at Bay* and *Mind in Chains*; was on the masthead of *New Worlds* as science editor for issues 175-194 (and also published articles and 'computer fiction in the magazine); and was a contributing editor to *Omni*. His books include *Cults of Unreason*---an entertaining and perceptive study of scientology and other pseudoscience---and the recently-published *The Mighty Micro*, on the likely impact of the microprocessor revolution. A six-part TV series written and presented by him, based on *The Mighty Micro*, was to have been broadcast starting in early September, but has been delayed by the commercial TV strike here; presumably it will still appear. He contributed sf-related material to *Penthouse*---including interviews with Asimov, Ballard and Bova---and appeared quite regularly on TV and radio in this country. He was a member of the Science Fiction Foundation.

He had been seriously ill earlier this year, but had appeared to be recovering at Seacon, where he gave a talk on machine intelligence; it proved to be almost his last public appearance. He became ill again on 8th October, and evidently deteriorated very rapidly; the suddenness of his death seems to have been a shock to everyone around him.

Those are the cold facts. What should be added is that he was a friendly, unpretentious and extremely intelligent man. (*Malcolm Edwards*)

**SPACE-EX 1984:** This colossal multimedia event is scheduled for 4-11 August 1984 in the Wembley Conference Centre, covering spaceflight, astronomy, sf and UFO interests plus "every kind of spin-off you can imagine":

perhaps even a bar, though this unashamedly commercial exhibition (as opposed to convention) may not be catering for every little minority. The current budget of £280,000 makes Peter Weston's wildest dreams seem a trifle paltry. Attendance will cost £3/day, "and for the Enthusiast who would like to literally escape into this world of Fantasy £12 for the whole seven days" (£15 in '81, £17 in '82, £21 thereafter). Rush £12 for your VIP Ticket to The Interplanetary Space Travel Research Assoc, 21 Hargwyne Street, Stockwell, London, SW9 9RQ. One planned feature is a 'Trading Post' where dealers can set up shop in futuristic surroundings for an old-fashioned £2000 (fan tables at £100). Success in 1984 could lead to repeats, perhaps every other year: ISTRA are already eyeing significant years like 1999 (as in Space) and 2001 (as in Odyssey). Of course it's too late for a Space-Ex 334, but think of the polished perfection attainable by 5,271,009... If by some miracle I achieve a monthly schedule I'll have 67 more chances for pre-exhibition comments on this event. Watch this space.

negotiation. Please contact me about attend at:  
Adeptus, 110 Tottenham Court Road,  
London W1. Tel. 01-388 5965.  
●PHOTOGRAPHER/ARTIST needed,  
good freelance pay. J.L.A.S. Action  
Committee, 864 1957.  
●LEGAL AID SOLICITORS in Camden  
Town require someone as receptionist/  
Duties include...

The advert on the left appeared in *Time Out* on 4 October---yet another repercussion of the Jackie Lichtenberg Appreciation Society. Famed author Chris Priest (whose phone number bears a striking resemblance to that given) was delighted to receive over 100 responses, even at 7.30am on the following Saturday: he managed to divert part of the initial flood to 01-727-6075, which had

appeared on several JLAS flyers and which proved, to everybody's amazement, to be the phone number of Charles Platt (who complained). Subsequently the phantom advertiser struck again: 'Overworked author requires secretary...' I have not confirmed the rumour that among the applicants was a sultry-voiced lady who, recognising the prospective employer as Chris, switched to more normal tones and announced herself as Roz Kaveney. The telephone is certainly a marvellous invention.

Chris is now giving up fandom for a bit---in order, he says, to write a book.

POLYCON: (*Phil James speaks and Langford savagely edits*) "...I can't comment on the events of Friday night. Not being as omniscient as some, I can neither confirm nor deny that two *Battlestar Galactica* fans suffered a quite interestingly revolting fate at the hands of their peers when discovered reading *The Dispossessed* in the lavatory, or even that Ian Williams, making a surprise visit to the con, circled the building for several hours on a push-bike threatening to crash into the wall unless someone published his novel.

Arriving at Hatfield station about 11am, it took me almost an hour to get to the Polytechnic; I was wearing my best pair of fannish-lounging-about-bars legs, unsuitable for cross-country work. The map was misleading---even hardened dungeon adventurers ended up in Bayfordbury or Hertford (send an unmarked envelope full of used small-denomination notes and I'll mention no names, Mr A\*e\*i-\*g\*n)---so I gave up and navigated by the hot October sun. One hour later, with visions of a tall cool glass of Harp\* awaiting me, I reached the bar.

It was closed.

Instead I joined Martin Easterbrook and Margaret Austin (known to wits at her workplace as 'Jane' for a reason that escapes me at the moment) in Elephant House, the con-hall, for Ken Bulmer's informal and interesting GoH speech. The hall was decorated with the Polycon logo and so much aluminium foil that GoH

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\* Ugh. Or perhaps Phil merely intended to pour it over his head... DRL

Mat Irvine confessed to feeling like an oven-ready turkey. Mat gave a good talk on his work in the BBC-TV Special Effects Department: series like *Dr Who*, *Spaceships of the Mind* and *Blake's Seven* were naturally highlighted, but contrary to popular belief he spends most of his time designing new radio controlled underwear display units for *Are You Being Served?*

Spent some time watching *Forbidden Planet* in the video room; ended up in the bar, which reminded me of a Doc Smith space dreadnaught---surrounded by a force field broken only by a large port through which a coruscating stream of ravening pints of real ale passed continuously, and a smaller side-port which opened intermittently to emit steaming quanta of pasties and wave-packets of crisps.

Inevitably, since Polycon comes so soon after, there will be unfair comparisons between it and Seacon. The worldcon had Filthy Pierre's wind-powered synthesizer whereas all Polycon could manage was Jake Grigg's musical calculator. Seacon had expensive keg rubbish whereas Polycon had only two or three cheap real ales... It is true that Polycon's support was somewhat muted as wallets across the land recovered from Seacon... Pleasant, unhurried, and after Seacon a more personal, intimate way of passing the weekend. The committee, after recovering from falling off the back of the convention stage, can feel reasonably pleased with its efforts. (*Phil James*)

COA: [NB: some of these, though not very new, appear by request...]

Rich Coad, 251 Ashbury #4, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA

Seth Goldberg, PO box 7309, Menlo Park, CA 94025, USA

Liese Hoare, 21 Farm Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks

Rob Holdstock, 38 Peters Avenue, London Colney, Herts, AL2 1NQ

Phil James, Room 2213, 22 Taviton Street, London, WC.1 [to June 1980]

Paul Kincaid, Basement Flat, 17 Radnor Bridge Rd, Folkestone, Kent  
[to 1 April 1980 at the latest]

John Piggott, 12 Devon Way, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9YD

Stu Shiffman, 59-17 162 St, Flushing, NY 11365, USA

Chris Walton, Flat 4, 5 Washington Rd, South Woodford, London, E18 2JZ

And Joe Nicholas and Alan Dorey ("Just good friends") should be moving by 11 November to an address in Harrow which for now is a closely guarded secret...

WELSHFANDOM MOVES: Pilgrims to Newport, Gwent (Hub o'the Universe, bach) on Friday nights may now find the cream of young Welsh manhood, plus Bryn Fortey, in "The Artful Dodger" on Chepstow Road (more or less opposite the "Odeon")---strangely close to Bryn's home, in fact...

IT'S THE ARTS: Bolton Little Theatre plans exhibitions of our great fanartists' work: Terry Jeeves after Christmas and Kevin Clarke of FOKT right after Novacon---provided the latter doesn't drop out for fear that BR staff may touch his pictures en route. In this case Novacon may feature a ritual disembowelling of said artist, says intrepid reporter Bernard Earp. Mr Earp also shyly confesses to being a stage star: "At the moment we are doing *Hadrian VII* and with my usual knack of getting the really great parts I'm playing the Pope's corpse." Which reminds me that the new Mekons album is out soon.

CONS: Albacon '80 has finally issued its first progress report, a mere six months after winning the bid (at this rate, look for the programme book in 1984): booking forms are enclosed. Note that the increased membership rates have been brought forward from 1 Jan 1980 to 1 Dec 1979, though what they will be is not stated: better get in quick with your £2 supporting or £5 attending membership fee. No further news of that rumoured Edinburgh '81 bid, except for

two snippets in the new *Matrix*---naughty Jim Barker has slipped an "Edinburgh in '81" graffito into his 'Captive' strip, while Simon Ounsley's clubs column mentions that the Edinburgh group is "just starting up".

INFINITELY IMPROBABLE: John Piggott wishes to announce that he and Pat Douglas were married at Southend Registry Office on 28 July; the baby is due around 15 November; "I can't think what Greg will say about this" // Brian Stableford has formed himself into "Cosmic Perspectives Ltd", following Messrs. Brunner, Aldiss, Fanthorpe and A.P.Herbert (who started it all by becoming "Haddock Productions Ltd"). // Rog Peyton has been on the wagon since shortly after Seacon: the consumption of his usual 50 gins&tonic at a Trekkie con *without discernible effect* worried him, as did the kidney pains which started a day or two later. Having already caused rioting in the One Tun by consuming tonic&tonic, Rog is trying to hold out until after Novacon. // Yes, there will be a Silicon in 1980, is the word from Harry Bell. // The 1979 Milford (UK) Writers' Conference is not reported here because it was cancelled---too many people dropped out as a direct or indirect result of Seacon. // D.West has been trying for a Civil Service job in order to feed the kids while the family breadwinner goes off to college: previously he'd been turned down as unwilling to make a true career of driving a van. // A feature of Polycon missed by Phil James was the horde of skinheads which burst in at 2am on Sunday and savaged a couple of committee members. Can it be coincidence that 2000 AD is planning to serialize *The Stainless Steel Rat*? // The BSFA Award nomination forms are going out with the November mailing: categories are Novel, Short Fiction, Media and Cover Artist. To revitalize the award a bit, all Albacon members will be able to vote (as well as BSFA members) on a slate of nominations chosen by BSFA members alone. // The strange and excellent cover of *Matrix 26* (remember it for the Ken McIntyre award and *Checkpoint/Ansible* poll) was sketched by Jim Barker and inked by Harry Bell, a labour-saving system which so delights Jim that his next piece will be sketched and inked by Harry on paper supplied by Jim... // On 25 October the new Langford opus, *An Account of a Meeting with Denizens of Another World, 1871*, was published by David & Charles. Buy it---or at least send along any reviews of it which you may see and thus increase your *Ansible* credit. // This issue produced just in time for distribution at Novacon.

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"An anagram of an ancient Flemish  
curse threatening swelling of the  
testicles, failure of brother's  
'musical' ventures and sterility unto  
the 7th generation" (Alun Harries):

ANSIBLE 4

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\* PRINTED MATTER \*