



## Ansible 57½ Easter 1992

From Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU. Fax 0734 669914. ISSN 0265-9816. Logo: Dan Steffan. Available at random fan gatherings, by whim or for stamped addressed envelopes—sorry, no paid subscriptions.

**STOP PRESS:** There is no page two. This is a special 'lite' edition produced for paper-plane fandom at Illumination. OK?

### Four Hundred Billion Fans

Isaac Asimov's death on 6 Apr, aged 72, apparently came as no surprise to those in the know. Personally I had no idea. The sad event received the wide media coverage Asimov deserved, with John Clute being tactful on the radio (parrying queries about the scientific impact of the Laws of Robotics with a remark that they'd had more *literary* influence; unobtrusively praising IA's science writing rather than his fiction since 1970 or so) and Brian Aldiss's lively *Guardian* obituary summing him up as 'a most admirable monster' of prolificity—this followed by warm letters from Arthur C. Clarke and Harry Harrison. Somehow I never met Asimov. Now I wish I had.

Vine Clarke looks backward: 'A biography of Frank Edward Arnold by '70s British fan Dave Rowe is due in a forthcoming *Outworlds* from Bill Bowers; '60s fan/author Mary Long has been divorced in the US and is returning to Britain; and if anyone knows of old-time artist Bob Clothier's address, there's someone wanting reprint permission for an illo that appeared in a '51 *New Worlds*. All old-fashioned, see?'

David Gerrold, erstwhile skiffy author, has been devoting his time to a vastly oversized and naff IBM program called Prism that *changes screen colours*, gosh wow! 'You can end up with 16 shades of green if you like,' enthuses Terry Pratchett. 'Great for those blocked moments—you can always go in and tinker with the colour scheme and still think you're working.'

Steve Green was first with the bankruptcy news: 'Pegasus went into receivership on Thursday. No great surprise to anyone who ever dealt with them or (more rarely) managed to track down a copy of a Pegasus magazine on the newsstands. All three titles, *Academy*, *Siren* and *Gamesman*, had crap distribution, astoundingly amateur subbing/layout, and (in the genre titles at least) a complete lack of direction. Turning a fairly successful title like *Fantazia* into a non-descript *Empire* rip-off [i.e. *Academy*] takes a special kind of stupidity. Doubt that many will be wearing black armbands at Eastercon, aside from the numerous creditors. I hear the original printer is owed the thick end of £100,000.' [9 Apr]

Dave Langford still seeks a Worthy Fan Cause which will sell subscriptions, print and mail out *Ansible*, and pocket the vast profits. His irrational dread of mailing lists continues.

David Pringle muses on his *Million: The Magazine Of No More Contributors' Payments*. 'Oddly enough, the two or three other contributors who have asked for gift subs in lieu have also nominated their mothers. Our printer's mother reads it; my mother reads it; it's definitely a Mum's Magazine. Whenever I receive a phone call from a middle-aged or elderly woman I automatically assume it's going to be about *Million*—and I'm always right. We have a few Old Boys too.'

### The Almost Factual Fan

... is the title of *Jeanne Bowman's* TransAtlantic Fan Fund report-in-progress. I think she might be aiming at the drabble market. 'Edit it down,' she cried, but I don't see how:

*Wednesday*. Heathrow. Judith Hanna greets at tube—move into Frinton Road—Joseph Nicholas is Attila the Tidy. Dinner: ABIGAIL FROST, Woman of Presence. Labour victory certain.

Linda Krawecka's gumbo: yum. *Thursday*. Walked. Trafalgar Square, Kew Gardens, rhododendrons not as good as home. Judith's home-cooked feast, then election. Fuck the Tories. *Friday*. Slept in. British Natural History Museum. Dinner: Anne Hamill, Jimmy Robertson. Jimmy at 9:20: 'That's a bomb.' (It was.) Ethnic food intro: Irr Bru. *Saturday*. Shopping with Pam Wells. Wore shoes. *Sunday*. Judith escorts to Reading. Martin Hoare's Birthday Party. He is late for it (pub). Ethnic drinking. *Monday*. Hazel Langford lured into our [i.e. *Jeanne's and Don Herron's*] first literary pilgrimage and hometown tour: Amersham & Arthur Machen. Lunch in AM's local, The King's Arms. Describe Dave L. as exotic. Walk Oxford. Learn of Dave 'PV=nRT' Langford's explosive student days. Ethnic Turkish food. *Tuesday*. On to investigate henges, 'Hills of Dreams' and Welsh slag heaps.... [14 Apr, 11:15-11:30am]

### Condyloma: Updates

18 Apr • **Martin Hoare** is 40, ho ho. • Please rush me other appalling sf anniversaries in the period 8-12 Apr 93, for the Helicon newsletter. • After the collapse of the **Contact** bid for Eastercon '94, rumourmongers are now hinting at hideous, unspecified problems with the **Sou'Wester** bid's Bristol hotel.

30 Apr - 3 May • **Warp One**, 35th UK Trek con, Middleton Tower Holiday Centre, Morecambe. £30 reg, rooms from £26.70/person/night full board. To boldly contact 69 Merlin Crescent, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6JB....

18-26 Jul • **Minehead Space Age Festival**, Exhibition Centre, Market House Lane, Minehead. £1/day. Expected: Arthur C. Clarke (a Minehead lad), Patrick Moore, J. Brunner, T. Pratchett, etc. Contact Town Clerk, Town Hall, The Parade, Minehead, TA24 5NB. [D.Redd] Clashes interestingly with:

25-26 Jul • **Hasticon**, Library, Hastings. GoH David Gemmell. £2.50/day to Hastings Arts. Contact 53b All Saints St, Hastings, TN34 3BN. B&B list available. *Membership limit 60*. A 'decoding' of *Little, Big* 'by the architect who designed the Glasgow Exhibition' is promised. Bar: in nearby pub.

30 Oct-1 Nov • **Who's 7, Dr Blake** con; Moat House Hotel, Telford. Contact 137 High St, Plaistow Broadway. E13 9HH.

1-3 Oct 93 • **VoCon**, Hitcher con; Tollgate Hotel, Grave send. £15 reg. Contact 17 Guildford St, Brighton, BN1 3LS.

### Found on a Computer Net

Ever notice that the second or third time you read a book, you discover all sorts of typos and misprints? The more often you read a book, the more typos you will find.

These typos are read-errors: mistakes introduced by reading the text. To preserve accuracy, you should purchase a new edition each time you wish to read a book. Most of all, avoid used books, pirated editions and books from unknown sources.

Public libraries are especially dangerous! Library books are read many times, introducing uncounted read-errors. Worse, borrowers (and some unscrupulous authors) can infect books with literary viruses (analogous to computer viruses) which can be transmitted to other readers. You can avoid these problems by reading only new books, and purchasing fresh shrinkwrapped volumes at your local bookstore. Hardback editions are most resistant to typos and literary viruses; get these whenever possible.

A public service message brought to you by a disinterested party—*Clifford Stoll*.  
[via Instant Message #509]