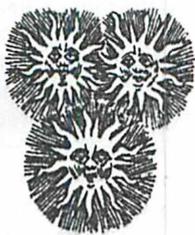


# Ansible



Ansible 74 September 1993

From Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU. Fax 0734 669914. ISSN 0265-9816. Logo by Dan Steffan. *Ansible* can be had by accosting the editor, by making him rich, or for stamped addressed envelopes (1 per copy).

**CROSSOVERS:** Court action against *Vogue Interzone*, the ersatz *Vogue* produced by artist Christof Kolhofer, prompted *Interzone's* David Pringle to issue a reflexive statement about the merger. 'Neither *Vogue* nor *Interzone* subscribers will be disappointed—all the familiar features will be preserved, including Brian Stableford's "Yesterday's Bestselling Cosmetics" series and John Clute's in-depth fashion analyses....' [*Guardian* Aug]

## The Cosmic Cocktail Party

**John Brunner** repented within mere days of his 'marital woes' circular (A73), reckoning that poverty is their real trouble. He and LiYi now plan to sell the famous South Petherton mansion and move to somewhere cheaper in a city, perhaps Brighton. 'Ah, David Pringle, your social life is about to change.' [DW]

**John Clute** jubilates (after awesome delays at Little, Brown): 'I and John Grant [Paul Barnett] have agreed with Orbit to do an *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* for Spring 1995 publication. It will cross-refer to the *SF Encyclopedia* and will have a similar setting and format, but entry structure and the balance between theme and author entries will differ. Contributing editors will be Roz Kaveney, David Langford and Brian Stableford.'

**Ellen Datlow** of *Omni*, whom I always imagined as sprawling on a golden throne while her fiction slushpile was sifted by gangs of toiling sycophants, complains: 'My assistant Rob Killheffer has been promoted to associate editor of nonfiction and I'm not getting a new assistant.... Right now I have a free intern reading slush but she leaves the end of August. They always do this to me whenever I lose an assistant: "You don't really want someone to read all the slush, do you?"'

**David Garnett** hears from Gollancz that 'New Worlds 3 will be out "between October and November". But there isn't anything between October and November, so maybe they're trying to tell me something.' He adds that *NW4* is now complete apart from the *hard* bits—the introduction and biographies.

**John Grant**, proofreading his 10th *Lone Wolf* fantasy, finds that 'We thought you were a mercenary bursting in here in search of plunder' has been hugely improved to: 'We thought you were a mercenary bursting in here in search of a plumber.'

**William James's** *Before the Sun Falls* will be published on schedule by Orbit after all, despite the wicked gossip noted in A73. 'It's going to be fun reading the reviews, isn't it?' [PB]

**Arnie Katz** sends a harrowing account of how a fogged membrane in his eye (following cataract surgery) was successfully zapped by mighty laser bolts. It was hard to follow the details with both hands clamped fast over my own eyes....

**Harry Adam Knight** is relaunching his dinosaur novel (Gollancz, Sept). 'A LONG, LONG TIME AGO—LONG BEFORE JURASSIC PARK—THERE WAS CARNOSAUR ... During the party there will be a video screening of Roger Corman's film version of *Carnosaur*. Attendees are permitted to shout abuse at the screen.'

**Terry Pratchett** is at it again, completing what is apparently the first *Discworld* rock'n'roll novel. 'My hero cwymys from Llamedos, knywn for singing, sheep and stone circles....'

**Chris Reed** of *BBR* boasts smugly of his win under 'Magazines—Fiction' in the 1993 Readercon Small Press Awards. (Novel: *More Than Melchisedech*, R.A.Lafferty. Collection: *Globalhead*, Bruce Sterling. Nonfiction mag: *SF Eye*.)

**Thog the Mighty**, pervading presence of the Helicon newsletter, was bemused to learn of his spin-off Sou'Wester panel

to be called (provisionally) *Thog vs the Zeitgeist*. Pardon?

**Auberon Waugh** offers a £100 prize for best bad sex—that is, for the worst submitted passage of sexual description from a novel published since Sept 90. Surely our favourite genres must be rich in possibilities? Entries by 18 Oct to *Literary Review*, 51 Beak St, W1R 3LP; write SAVE THE NOVEL on the envelope.

**Martin Morse Wooster** gloats: 'I have written the entries on you for the *Encyclopedia Galactica* and *Encyclopedia Fantastica*.'

## Condurrite

4-5 Sep ● **Panopticon** (*Dr Who*), Novotel Hotel, London.

8 Sep ● **BSFA** cancelled again. (A new pub was found, but it emerged too late that the Freemasons retained power to override others' bookings at short notice. Hang 'em all from bridges!)

10-12 Sep ● **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Sacha's Hotel, Manchester. £35 reg. Contact Society of Fantastic Films, 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. [SG]

10-12 Sep ● **Sto-Con-Trent** (RPG), Keele Univ. £15 reg. Contact 12b Sprowston Rd, Norwich, NR3 4QN.

27 Sep ● **The Glamour**, BBC Radio 4 19:45. 'Revised', as the first airing was fuzzy—re-recorded to speed it by 1 sec/minute and cure a 90 sec over-run, but on a duff machine. This time, author Chris Priest has *personally cut a scene*. It is traditional for new editions of this work to have a changed text....

1-3 Oct ● **Fantasycon XVIII**, Birmingham. £30 reg (BFS members £20, pet shoggoths half price). Contact 137 Priory Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 0TG.

1-3 Oct ● **British 20th Anniv Trek Con**, Holiday Inn, Leicester. £45 reg. Contact 17 Guildford St, Brighton. BN1 3LS.

1-3 Oct ● **VoCon** (*Hitchhiker*), Tollgate Hotel, Gravesend. £18 reg, rising to £20 on 18 Sept. Contact 17 Guildford St, Brighton, BN1 3LS. Wins *Ansible's* 'Most Demands For Plugs' award.

29-31 Jul 94 ● **Wincon III**, King Alfred's Coll, Winchester. PR1 now out. £20 reg, rising to £23 in mid-Nov 93. Contact 12 Crowsbury Close, Emsworth, Hants, PO10 7TS. 0243 376596. 'Intersection's decision to reset the Wincon III ad in its first PR (introducing "31th" to the language) and miss its deadline by several months (being told the rates rise on 17 April isn't a lot of use in late July) has led to Wincon getting a freebie in the next PR.' [SG]

4-5 Mar 95 ● **Timewarp** (*Trek*), Grand Hotel, Malahide, Dublin. Contact 30 Beverley Downs, Knocklyon, Dublin 16.

**Rumblings** ● *A Con Organizer Writes*: 'Please DON'T put this one in the *Ansible* list! Oh, all right. ● *ConFrancisco* introduced a thrilling new system whereby non-attending Hugo nominees who told the convention months in advance who'd be representing them at the ceremony must also provide the reps with signed credentials, the letter already on file (i.e. signed credentials) being deemed Not Good Enough. 'Idiots,' writes tactful Ben Yalow. ● *A Con Organizer Complains*: 'Confabulation wasn't in last month's *Ansible* con listings.' This is true.

## Infinitely Improbable

**Ambulatory Phlegm!** This is but one of many fascinating terms applied by nice Harlan Ellison to absent Andy Porter during an hour-long interview on US cable TV, possibly to the mystification of viewers. Practised Ellison-watchers infer that relations between HE ('Andy Porter!?' That suppurating bag of monkey nuts ... loathsome, detestable ... ennobled by the word "turd" ... monster....') and AP ('Harlan Ellison burns bridges before he crosses them.') may be less than wholly cordial. [GF, SFC]

**C.o.A.** *Steve Davies & Giulia De Cesare*, 52 Westbourne Terrace, Reading, RG3 2RP. *Anne Hamill & Jimmy Robertson*, 2 Dorset Rd, Salisbury, SP1 3BF. *Sally Ann Melia*, 3 The Square, Broughton-in-Furness, Lake District, Cumbria, LA20 6JF. *Alan J. Sullivan*, 30 Ash Rd, Stratford, London, E15 1HL.

**You Will Send Us a Birthday Card!** To ensure plenty of spontaneous congratulations on its 25th anniversary, *Locus* wrote to sf people requesting them. It is untrue that the letters contained even the slightest hint of 'Remember, we decide whether your next book gets reviewed....'

**Computer Sexism.** In a mouse manual: 'If the cursor moves too fast or too slow, the speed can be changed for your testes.'

**Anniversary.** 'David Sutton & Steve Jones "celebrate 15 years of *Fantasy Tales* by publishing an anthology which will contain a great many of the stories which are currently awaiting an appearance in the magazine". Which, I presume, means they're celebrating 15 years of *FT* by ceasing publication. *Fantasy Tales Presents* (Robinson) will therefore include a great many of the reportedly 100 MSS in *FT's* inventory.' [DG]

**Deep Waters.** A Millennium press release plugs spinoff books (by D. Duane and P. Morwood) from a new Spielberg TV series about a super submarine called *seaQuest* [sic]. 'The special effects, settings and technology will be absolutely extraordinary': I can hardly wait to open these hi-tech books. Early review: 'There's never been such an original idea as *Voyage to the Bottom of the seaQuest*, I mean *stingQuest*.' [G\*rry And\*rson]

**Superstardom!** Our mole enjoyed a Canadian *Trek* con 'with main guest Marina Syrtis. My, what a bitch. Her contract specified 3 hours on each of 2 days, remote luxury hotel room, luxury transport, limo at beck and call, no press, no videotaping, etc, for US\$15,000: the local Trekkies fell for it. She made horrific demands of the con's naive but devoted handlers; the committee jumped. Her talk about the show devolved into a sexist rant about males in the crowd fixated on her breasts and crotch: she was in a skin-tight black tube-style minidress, so everyone had something to look at. She proceeded to stand on a table on-stage, flip her dress up and flaunt said crotch at the crowd, and her handlers weren't sure she was wearing panties.... Some walked out, a few wanted their money back, many were disillusioned. The local press had a field day. Disillusionment was partly offset by genial George Takei, who posed for every picture and signed every autograph, even from a wheelchair; he'd just had corrective foot surgery.' [LP]

**'Science Fact, Not Science Fiction'**—says the deeply authoritative W.H. Smith *Bookcase* of Kim Stanley Robinson's *Red Mars*. So that's why it didn't win the Arthur C. Clarke award....

**I Have Seen the Future and It Coughs.** FOREST (Freedom Organization for the Right to Enjoy Smoking Tobacco) has an sf/fantasy/horror story competition: 'Health and Freedom' theme, but 'not propaganda'. £100 first prize; max 2,500 words and 3 entries per person; you must be over 18 by the 16 Jan deadline. FOREST STORY COMP, 2 Grosvenor Gdns, London, SW1W 0DH. Judges include George Hay. The flyer asks: 'Will smoking (and other private pleasures) be illegal in the future?' *Ansible* supports smoking as a private pleasure to be practised as freely as defecation, sex or singing in the bath.

**Litwatch.** Yvonne Rousseau dipped critically into Margot Arnold's *Desperate Measures*: 'Ballantine published this in 1986, supplying the author with a Hollow-Earther blurb writer ("Ms. Arnold has travelled extensively throughout the globe") but not, alas, with an editor—as is seen on p40 when our North American heroine first looks at the night sky of South Africa. "Is that the Southern Cross?" A perfect diamond crucifix blazed out of the sky." Most people Down Under would be sufficiently startled to see the Crux Australis looking like a "perfect diamond cross"—but if we were given Jesus-in-the-Sky-with-Diamonds as well, we'd all come out and stare.'

**Big Names!** 'Chris Priest may not have made the *Guardian* birthday list, but look who did: "Kathy Gale, publishing director, The Women's Press, 33." [13 Aug]. Shows how good Steve Jones is at publicity. A few days later Brian Aldiss made the list. Does that mean he's as famous as Kathy Gale?' [Anon]

**More Awards.** Campbell Memorial Award (novel): *Brother to Dragons*, Charles Sheffield. Sturgeon Memorial Award (short): 'This Year's Class Picture', Dan Simmons. [SFC]

**Overheard.** 'Arthur C. Clarke is an English gentleman, and far too polite to say that he didn't enjoy a book. After all, he even gave a cover quote to Ben Bova's *Mars*.' [Do not see A73.]

**Orion Magazine** begs a plug: 66pp A5 fiction (mostly), £1.75 from 3 Bower St, Reddish, Stockport, SK5 6NW. I read the first story (about John Lennon) as far as the word 'hypocrisy'....

**Ten Years Ago** a Japanese convention solicited numberless messages of support. The most memorable was J.G. Ballard's: 'That great feat of arms, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, must now be repeated in the realm of the imagination—let the sf writers of Japan set out across the skies of the human psyche, each carrying a piece of that explosive future which will torpedo the battleships of complacency and inertia! Oh.

## The Frost Report

*Continuing the brand-new TAFF tradition of instant Ansible publication, Abigail Frost whizzes us bits of her US trip report even as it happens....*

Jeanne Bowman requested silly things—'uniquely British, small, cheap, like silly condoms and beer mats'—to auction at ConFrancisco. Gee thanks Jeanne, my last day wasn't supposed to be spent in pubs and chemists'. Trawl of Bethnal Green Road produced: 1 can Irn Bru; several packets fumsized Mars bars etc; two vile 'jewel lollies', blue raspberry sour flavour, made in Thailand for Irish company; latest issue *When Saturday Comes* (football semiprozine); 1 Dennis the Menace mug; 1 *Thunderbirds* ditto; 1 tin Brick Lane curry powder; 1 *Bezer Quarterly*; Fun Fun Fun filling out customs declaration....

**New York.** When I told Andy Hooper I was staying with Gary Farber he seemed surprised. 'He hasn't the right to invite you ... he sleeps on Moshie's sofa ... he is in no position to be a host!' (GF is currently house-sitting for someone.) Gary: 'Tell him I'm pushing a cart around the lower East Side and I put you in the cart and covered you with a garbage bag.' So I did ... shame I got the giggles halfway through.

Farber talks. I'd forgotten this. Lunch with Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden. They talk too. Help. Voice already on way out. Please fax new larynx c/o Geri Sullivan. [19 August]

**Minneapolis.** ReinCONation fun but weird. A world of seraphically happy people who sing and read poetry at each other. Alternated between thinking oneself in Paradise surrounded by guardian angels and feeling like an alien. Asked to contribute reading to an open mike thingy on Sat night; commandeered Nigel Rowe (formerly of our own parish) to help. People were taking the evening's beatnik theme very seriously (eg readings from *Howl*). Sudden inspiration: I had some beatnik experimental writing to hand, the phoney Camcon report in the Mexican 2 fanzine. So handed Nigel a plastic tub which had contained pretzels till I brilliantly ate them all, told him to beat it at random while I read, and when called put on my shades and jumped on a chair and did all that stuff about cubes and Wittgenstein and Margaret Welbank in a rapid doomladen voice. Got the odd laugh.

ReinCONation news for *Ansible*: Twin Cities fan, poet, musician, storyteller and general Good Thing Elise Matthesen was having a birthday celebration with chums in hotel restaurant when the woman at the next table approached her—'You look so nice and so do all your friends, so who are you?' So Elise introduced herself and the con, so to speak. 'I'm Maya Angelou,' said the woman, and bought them some wine. 'Gosh wow er um,' said Elise....

So homesick I spent \$5 on *Independent on Sunday*. 'Not much seems to have changed at home ... BLOODY HELL IT'S LAST WEEK'S ISSUE.' Grr.

Why don't you fax me back, you bastard scum? [23 August]

**Seattle.** Read some article in some fanzine called *Mimosa* by some fellow who edited some con newsletter on some Channel Island or other. Doesn't it make you sick when people take all the credit for the Great British Con Newsletter without even mentioning *Cactus Times*? Went to zoo with Andy Hooper and took picture of racket-tailed drongo. Alas there was only one so can't say drongides.... Also got a photo of giant Washington slug at zoo (not encaged, just wandering over path). Marmots are ridiculous bloody animals. [26-7 August]

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