

# AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

ISSUE # 14

50¢

## The Australian Professional Scene

### THE LITERATURE BOARD OF AUSTRALIA AWARDS FELLOWSHIPS TO SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS

A very significant stage in the writing and publishing of science fiction in this country was reached this month, with the announcement of the Literature Board Fellowships. Three authors on the list we know as sf writers are CAPTAIN A. BERTRAM CHANDLER, who has received a seniors two year fellowship, DAMIEN BRODERICK and WILLIAM NOONAN have received one year fellowships.

A. Bertram Chandler is well known to all of us as the author of the Grimes space series (see letter this issue). Damien Broderick is the editor of the Angus and Robertson publication, THE ZEITGEIST MACHINE and has been plugging away at the sf field with determination, and it is great to see him getting this support. William Noonan we do not know personally, but we are told he is best known to Sydney people as the sf reviewer for the Sydney Morning Herald.

Congratulations to them all and it is great to see them getting the recognition and the assistance they deserve.

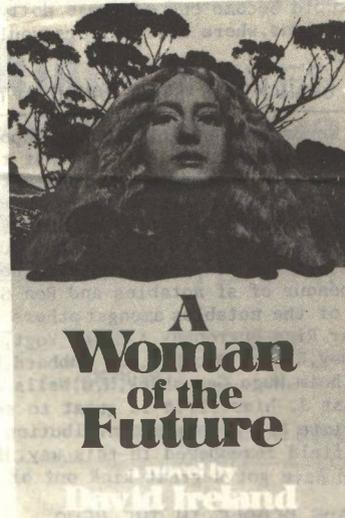
CHERRY WILDER has sold THE LUCK OF BRIN'S FIVE to Pocket Books along with the rest of the series set on her planetary creation "Torin". The second book THE NEAREST FIRE is due for publication in the USA very soon by Atheneum. It is to be hoped that Angus and Robertson's will publish the second volume, or some other British publisher, very soon. Pocket Books are also interested in another novel called SECOND NATURE, which is set on another world called Rhomary.

DAMIEN BRODERICK'S novel DRAGON DREAM is expected to be published by Pocket Books early in 1980.

The revised version of FALLEN SPACEMAN by LEE HARDING will appear early in 1980 from Harper and Row in the USA. Some delay was caused by the artist John Schoenherr, who is doing the cover and twelve interior illustrations, being tied up with other work.

Two of LEE HARDING'S books have been getting good reviews in the American Press. DISPLACED PERSON and THE ROOMS OF PARADISE.

CRUX is a new small circulation local sf magazine. It is produced and edited by Michael Hailstone. Copies are available from P.O. Box 45, Kings Cross, NSW 2011 or S.A.B \$1.50 plus postage.



PENGUIN BOOKS AUSTRALIA under their hard cover imprint ALLEN LANE, are publishing in November what could be one of the milestones of Australian literature. The book is A WOMAN OF THE FUTURE by David Ireland. Mr Ireland is a twice winner of the Miles Franklin Award.

The setting of the novel is an indelible future. The main character is Althea Hunt. Through diaries, letters and papers, her experiences and imaginings become a satirical criticism on the Australian

society as it is and as it developing. The apathetic attitude of the average Australian is one of our greatest faults. I think Mr Ireland is trying to make us ashamed of this and realise our potential.

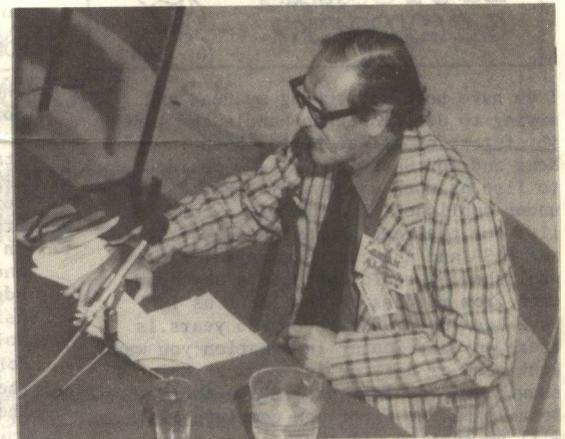
A glowing review in the New York Times used this quote: 'If the people could expand and flex brain and muscle ... break chains and ties then would the people of this "continent of dreams... a waiting continent" bloom there.'

A comprehensive review will appear in a future issue of the NEWS.

Changes are taking place in the Penguin sf line according to a letter in LOCUS from NORSTRILIA PRESS partner, Carey Handfield. Apart from an effort to increase the output and promote their range, they are considering publishing original Australian material in Australia. (Nice to have a bit of information about what is going on here, even if I do have to read it in LOCUS first. M.B.)

## SEACON '79

37th World Science Fiction Convention



British Guest of Honour

**DRIAN ALDISS**EDITORS SEACON REPORT  
ON PAGE THREE

### THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN COMICS PUBLISHED BY CASSELL

Australia's leading expert on comics, JOHN RYAN, has just had published by CASSELL AUSTRALIA, an excellent volume on the history of comics in Australia. PANEL BY PANEL is the book all comic fans have been waiting for. It is fitting that JOHN RYAN has been the one to put it together. One can only be astonished at the amount of work that has been done, and a parallel can be drawn between the comic industry in Australia and the cinema, in that the importation of overseas comics killed the production of original local comics. The talent to produce them however has always been there, both story wise and art wise. Many people will now be looking for these comics but because of the small print runs, and the few collectors of comics in Australia, they will be pretty well impossible to obtain. John Ryan is probably the only person in Australia with an Australian comic collection, and we thank him for sharing it with us in PANEL BY PANEL.

John has managed to include a page of the unpublished strip by STANLEY PITT of Alfred Bester's TIGER TIGER novel or GULLY FOYLE as it was to be called. This project to illustrate the novel was unfortunately a little bit premature, before all this illustrated sf craze started, and after what I understand was

some rather unhappy dealings with the author or his agents, the project was dropped. It is rather ironic that a two volume comic strip version is just being published in the USA.

STANLEY PITT is without a doubt the most outstanding artist this country has produced in the sf field. His magazine covers and comic strips like SILVER STARR, were equal if not better than the original American FLASH GORDON strips, and a lot of the work being done today. Because of the poor deal Pitt got from the sf field and the state of the comic publishing business in Australia, we have missed the enjoyment of seeing more work by this highly talented artist.



I am have been scratching my head and trying to decide how to handle the listing in future of all sf titles. Both in the News and for Space Age. I have decided to list as much as possible in the News under publisher, and produce a combined list for the News and Space Age, of all the F&SF and associated material being published. I would appreciate any comments from readers on the lists as I have been doing them over the years. Is there any particular information you want continued or not, or is there anything I should add, for instance ISBN numbers. Details on the first new complete list will be sent to all subscribers to the News and Space Age customers as soon as I have decided cost and other details.

For some time I have had an idea to produce a Readers Guide to SF, with lists of all the best books to read and other basic information on sf. Well I have been beaten to it, but it took another bookshop based fan orientated group to do it. Baird Searles and his crew at The SF Bookstore in New York have A READERS GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION out from AVON in September.

There are a number of wordy volumes now available on sf literature criticism and evolution, and a few encyclopedic type books, but the need for a good basic guide in pocket book format has at last been filled. It is to be hoped that it receives wide distribution here.

Merv Binns/Editor

### AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

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### FOREST J. ACKERMAN IN THE NEWS

When a local journalist friend of mine was moving over to California for a change of pace and an inside view on the Hollywood scene, I told him there was one guy he must go and see. He did! Forest J. Ackerman, and the result was a double page spread in the Saturday 3rd of November Melbourne Sun, by Keith Dunstan.

I got a great reception myself from FE and his assistants on my recent visit, and spent a number of hours inspecting his amazing collection of science fiction and movie memorabilia. It is to be hoped that the authorities in Los Angeles realise what they have got there, and help Forest J. to establish his collection in large suitable premises, where it can be seen by everybody. It could become one of those Hollywood attractions, where all visitors would have to go.

### RON GRAHAM HAS STAR NAMED AFTER HIM

The November issue of Starlog reports on Forest J. Ackerman's advice, that the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory Star Catalog now lists star number 000-222 with the designation of Sci-Fi. The term FJA is said to have coined. Other stars in the vicinity have also been named in honour of sf notables and Ron Graham is one of the notables amongst others such as Edgar Rice Burroughs, A.E. Van Vogt, Isaac Asimov, Robert Bloch, L. Ron Hubbard, Don Wollheim, Hugo Gernsback, H.G. Wells and Forest J. himself. It is great to see the late Ron Graham's contribution to the field remembered in this way. He would have got a great kick out of it.

### MORE PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

BRUCE GILLESPIE has completed an issue of SF COMMENTARY, Number 55/56. This is the tenth annual issue. He hopes to keep it on a regular basis from now. Number 57 will be out in November. Because of many requests from readers all over, Bruce is reprinting first year of SFC (1969), and we expect it will be out sometime early next year.

SUE PAGRAM and DAVID GRIGG just back from a trip to England for SEACON, have announced their engagement and set the date for December 1st for their wedding. I am glad they have not kept it secret like some people we know.

KAREN TINGWELL of Space Age Books is getting married to GRAEME EAVES also on December 1st. Karen has been an integral part of Space Age almost since we started, and we wish her all the best.

### THE WORLD FANTASY AWARDS

Life Achievement: Jorge Luis Borges  
 Best Short Fiction: "Naples" By Avram Davidson (SHADOWS, ed. by Charles L. Grant)  
 Best Artist: Dale Enzenbacher & Alicia Austin (tie)  
 Best Novel: GLORIANA by Michael Moorcock.  
 Best Anthology/Collection: SHADOWS edited by Charles L. Grant  
 Special Award-Pro: Edward L. Ferman (editor of THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION)  
 Special Award-NonPro: Donald H. Tuck for THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF & FANTASY.

And Kirby McCauley was presented with the Special Convention Award. (Kirby is the agent extraordinaire for such people as Stephen King, Charles L. Grant, Frank Belknap Long and Spider Robinson).

Also, the SFWA Editor/Publisher reception will be held at Statler Hilton Hotel, in New York city, on November 12th, 1979, from 8:00pm until midnight. (It is usually the Monday night after PHILCON, and we try to keep it that way.)

The only other news is a bit of a surprise: NIGHTMARES, and anthology of original & reprint horror stories, edited by Charles L. Grant (yes, again) was Playboy Press's best selling book in September. In fact, their warehouse sold out in three weeks, and they are just going back today for a second printing.

This report received with thanks from PETER D. PAUTZ, Executive Secretary the Science Fiction Writers of America.

### OTHER AWARDS & AUTHOR NOTES

MICHAEL MOORCOCK withdrew his nomination for 'The Gandalf Award' as he felt that his type of fantasy writing was not consistent with Tolkiens, and therefore it was not appropriate that he should be included. He did however win the JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL AWARD for the best SF Novel of 1978 with GLORIANA. The award is now recognised as one of the most prestigious given for SF, was presented at a conference held in Kansas, and was accepted in Moorcock's absence by Charlotte Donsky.

GLORIANA was published by Fontana in Britain and Avon in the USA. The two runners up mentioned by the Campbell Award Committee were... AND HAVING WRIT by Donald R. Benson and ALTERED STATES by Paddy Chayefsky.

A STORM OF WINGS by Moorcock will be published in the near future by Sphere, while new editions of other Moorcock titles are due to be published in a uniform edition by Archival Press in the USA.

Stephen Donaldson won the J.W. Campbell Award for the Best New Author at the World Con, and the basis of his winning this award, THE CHRONICLES OF THOMAS COVENANT THE UNBELIEVER, will be published by Fontana in a one volume edition. A UK publication around Christmas, but not likely to be on sale in Australia till well into 1980.



## SEACON '79

37th World Science Fiction Convention  
METROPOLE HOTEL, BRIGHTON, U.K.  
AUGUST 23rd - 27th 1979

### A REPORT

BY MERV BINNS

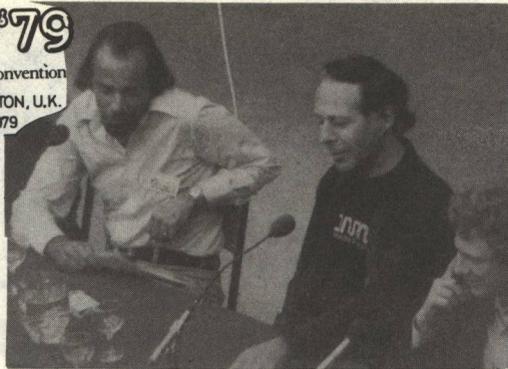
The largest WORLD CON held outside the USA was a great success. From the first fanfare of trumpets to the last, the 3,000 plus attendees enjoyed every minute of it. The organisation was well handled, and the only sour note was a programme mistake rather than bad organisation. A meet the authors item, was doubled with a rock band and dancing. Many of the authors just walked out, as did a lot of the fans, but a lot of others thoroughly enjoyed the music and the dancing.

Most fans got to talk to their favourite authors if they were patient enough. If they did not way lay them often coming off the stage after a panel, they caught up with them during the book signings or wandering around the hotel. Some of the most accessible authors were Jerry Pournelle, Brian Aldiss, Jack Chalker and Ben Bova. But I feel there could have been a little more contact between most of the other authors and the fans. My other World Con experience of TORCON and AUSSIECON was that fans found meeting and talking to all the authors, much easier. At AUSSIECON with only 800 people or less, this was understandable, even the usually quite reticent Ursula LeGuin was on hand at specific times. At Toronto there was always groups of fans clustered around authors almost at any time during the convention. I found that this was not as evident at SEACON, but some people may disagree with me.

One author I saw rambling round the hotel more than any other, was R.A. Lafferty, and I got the impression his ghost will be seen slowly gliding up the passageways of World Convention hotels still a hundred years from now.

It was of course, impossible to see all the items on the programme as there was multiple programming going on most of the time; so I will just attempt to point out some of the highlights. It was obviously going to be a fun convention when, after a pipe band did their thing up the centre aisle of the hall, Peter Weston and his Brighton bathing beauties in 1900 costumes worse luck, declared the convention open. The lack of bare skin of these young ladies was however, amply made up for by some of the costumes or lack of same in the fancy dress parade, but more on that later.

The first item on the programme was an excellent speech by FREDERIK POHL, followed by a panel on EPIC FANTASY with L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP, TANITH LEE, FRITZ LEIBER and KARL WAGNER. A talk on FAR OUT PROPULSION: CONCEPTS OF INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL given by Dr. Robert L. Forward was also very well received by the audience. Films were being shown continuously and included 'THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH!' a French film of THEODORE STURGEON'S "BRIGHT SEGMENTS" and "PHASE ONE". In the



Robert Silverberg, Ben Bova & Norman Spinrad

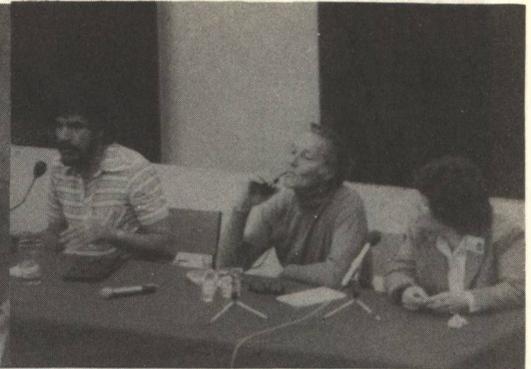
evening an advance presentation on the new 'STAR WARS' film 'THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK' with clips, and commentary by Gary Kurtz, was screened, followed by SUPERMAN. The British radio programme, A HITCHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, which was an hilarious account of the demise of EARTH to make way for an intergalactic freeway, and running for several hours, was also being played. Most of the British fans were I think, quite disappointed this did not win the HUGO. Another dramatic presentation, a play based on Theodore Sturgeon's 'SOME OF YOUR BLOOD' was also repeated during the convention. Sturgeon himself congratulated the two actors on their excellent performances, one who I believe was an Australian.

The second day of the convention started off with MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY, A. BERTRAM CHANDLER, ANNE McCAFFREY and LARRY NIVEN talking about series writing. PETER DICKSON gave an illustrated lecture on DRAGONS, which tied in with a book he has just had published, FLIGHT OF DRAGONS published by NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY.

Movies on the second day included 'THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH', 'SON OF THE BLOB' and 'PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK'. Other highlights of the day's many faceted quadruple programme included JOHN BAXTER interviewing NIGEL KNEALE about his 'QUARTERMASS' films, 'FIFTY YEARS OF SF' panel with ALFRED BESTER, THEODORE STURGEON, TERRY CARR and JACK WILLIAMSON, a speech by JOHN BRUNNER about the failure of SF to accurately predict the future. In the fan room where bidding tables were set up and piles of fanzines were on sale, a panel was held on AMERICAN FANDOM and 'TAFF' and 'GUFF' winners TERRY HUGHES and JOHN FOYSTER were interviewed.

Various authors gave readings from their works during the convention, starting with C.J. CHERRYH. I might add that both she and TANITH LEE, the other successful science fantasy authoresses, are very attractive ladies. Various artists were interviewed about their work during the convention, while an excellent display of artwork for sale, and a special display by DRAGONS WORLD Publishers were open during the day. Amongst the superb work by a number of British, was a set of paintings by PATRICK WOODROFFE for a book to be published along with a double record album. The title escapes me, but it stood out with its sheer brilliant of technique, as well as superb imagination, amongst all the other truly marvellous paintings on display.

Photos this page by John Foyster



Peter Nichols, Richard Cowper & Vonda McIntyre

Also open from 9 to 5 daily were two rooms full of booksellers and dealers in everything from books and magazines to badges, posters and calendars. A full range of both British and American books and magazines were on sale, including many items unfamiliar to me.

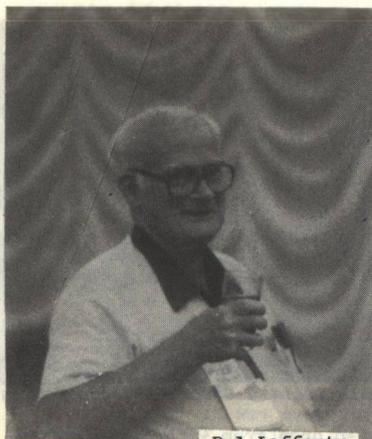
A distinguished panel including BEN BOVA, ARTHUR C. CLARKE and JOE HALDEMAN, discussed 'MAN'S FUTURE IN SPACE'. An advance presentation on the film ALIEN with slides and film clip was given in the evening. Films screened today included ALLEGRO NON TROPPO, PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE, STAR WARS and FLESH GORDON.

The MEET THE CELEBRITIES PARTY fiasco occurred this night. This should have been an excellent time for all the fans to talk to all the pros, but the music made it impossible. The lounge of the 'Metropole' Hotel and the adjoining bar was a popular meeting place, both this night and all during the convention. Although room parties were being held and I did attend some, they were hard to find. Part of the problem was that the publishers had their rooms in other hotels, which I did not find out till later, and as I particularly wanted to talk to the publishers and authors, I was a bit disappointed.

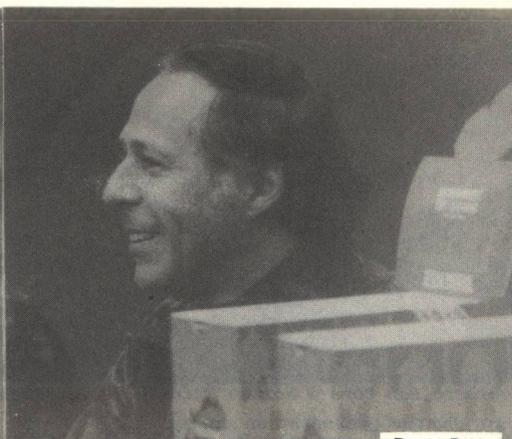
The number of authors attending SEACON was probably the largest at any World Convention ever, which was what I expected, and one of the reasons I expected this to be a great con for me. Four hundred was a figure quoted, and it was not a matter of who was there, but who was not there. Many authors took part in book signing sessions organised in the hucksters room.

Justin Ackroyd and I did have a very enjoyable couple of hours on the night we arrived at Brighton, with BRIAN ALDISS and friends, including DAVID HARTWELL of Pocket Books.

On Saturday, the early morning business session again rejected the move to establish a four year rotation system for World Conventions outside America. The Australian group as a whole, were strongly opposed to this move. It is a great pity that less than 100 people out of 2,000 attending, were at this meeting; but I believe that this is about normal. The situation now remains that an overseas bid can be put in any year. It is bad enough that the World Con is only held outside America rarely, but to bring about a situation whereby another country must hold it every



R.A. Lafferty



Ben Bova



Juanita Coulson

fourth year, was just not on. It is much better that the countries put in their bids when they are good and ready to do so, rather than be coerced into doing so when they are not really ready.

Today's highlight was THE GUEST OF HONOUR SPEECH by BRIAN ALDISS. He was as interesting and witty as ever, and the crowd loved it. ARTHUR.C.CLARKE also gave an illustrated talk on his life in SRI LANKA, than a panel including GREG BENFORD, C.J.CHERRYH, JOAN VINGE, IAN WATSON, JAMES WHITE and HAL CLEMENT talked about creating alien environments in the 'ALIEN CONDITION'.

Amongst the readings today were LARRY NIVEN and ROBERT SILVERBERG reading from his yet unpublished novel, 'LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE.'

Looking back through the programme, I see how many items that I missed that I really should have seen, but it was just impossible. JOHN FOYSTER and I had to race off to a champagne party given by GOLLANCZ PUBLISHERS at the incredibly bizarre building, the ROYAL PAVILLION, which looks like something out of the Arabian nights gone wrong. I was just getting nicely sozzled and starting to talk to the attendees who were, without a doubt, a who's who in SF world, when we had to leave to get back to the METROPOLE HOTEL to get on our costumes for the fancy dress parade. Just about fainting in the hot and constrictive costumes designed by JOHN BREDEN, and worn by JOHN FOYSTER, GEORGE TURNER and I, we suffered through nearly four hours of pre-judging, photography, the parade, and then waiting for the announcement of the winners. This was a bit much to take. Much to the disgust of the Scandinavian fans who are opposing our AUSTRALIAN bid for the WORLD CON IN 1983, our presentation of characters from CORDWAINER SMITH'S 'NORSTRILIA' series with the three Lords mentioned above, JUSTIN ACKROYD and ALEX WASILIEW as Roman Soldier Robots, SUE PAGRAM as 'C'MELL', CHRIS JOHNSON as 'ROD McBANN', CHERRY WILDER as 'MOTHER HITTEN' with DAVID GRIGG and BRUCE BARNES as 'underpersons', got a great reception from the audience. After carrying GEORGE TURNER on in a hastily rigged sort of 'sedan chair', we switched on his electronic gear. He rose and after nods of ascent from the other two Lords, a banner was unfurled by the robots saying, 'OLD NORTH AUSTRALIA IN '83'.

Apparently, very little was known about our bid for 1983 before this convention, and although we have to do a great deal more before we have any chance of winning it, everybody knows after our presentation that WE ARE IN THE RACE FOR 1983. So the time, cost and effort put into the presentation was all worthwhile. (Anybody want to buy some slightly used fancy costumes.)

WILSON TUCKER the author, also known as BOB TUCKER the fan, introduced all the contestants, and there were some beautiful and hilarious presentations. The best of the night were Kathy and Drew Sanders who came as the "King and Queen of Pentacles", in red and black costumes, Kathy's forming sort of wings when she lifted her arms above her head. A very beautiful presentation which won them the Contestants choice and Best of the Show. Working out the contestants choice vote is no doubt what kept us sitting around extremely uncomfortably for over three hours. This was a pretty stupid idea and I hope future con fancy dress organisers do not make the same mistake.

The best costumes from an authentic point of view were without a doubt George R. Paczolt and Sally C. Fink as Cutter and Leetah the ELFQUEST series. They were very nice, and spot on as the artist depicted them.

The most spectacular was a little lady, wearing little else but a giant pair of ten foot wings, supported by her two handmaidens. This brought the house down for the obvious reasons.

Not to be outdone by the female contestants, a would be swordsman, wearing little else but his sword, brought howls from the audience. The Scandinavian contingent, in answer to our NORSTRILIA presentation, were the last on, with what seemed a rather hurriedly put together act.

There were a few open parties during the late hours, but I met and spoke to many people in the lounge and bar. Lots of people did try the dozens of small and moderately large restaurants in walking distance from the hotel, but you could always get moderately priced food and drinks in the hotel. The range available would get a bit monotonous after awhile, and the coffee was frightful stuff. The Hotel management were very happy about everything, and were delighted to tell the con-com that the members had consumed well over

nineteen thousand pints of beer. Some of the stuff they call beer is almost undrinkable by Australian standards, I kid you not, but I found the lagers not to bad. Even tried one with a dash of lime juice which is a popular local alternative.

Believe it or not, I did not get to see much of the film programme, but after all, you can see films any old time. Meeting people is what conventions are all about, and I am only sorry I did not get to meet many more people there. Most of those I did talk to were American's and I had little contact with the British fans who seemed to keep to their own groups. 'These damned colonials you know!', seemed to be the attitude. I found people at TORCON much easier to talk to and make friends with, but maybe it was my own fault. The film programme today did include DARK STAR, THE THING, The tv QUARTERMASS, and two films I knew nothing about, JUBILEE and THE SPACE MOVIE.

It was Sunday already, and the HUGO's were on that night. To start the day however, FRITZ LEIBER's GUEST OF HONOUR SPEECH was the main item. JOHN BAXTER, VAL GUEST, FORREST.J. ACKERMAN, HARRY HARRISON and DENIS GIFFORD were the panelists in a session about SF films. GEORGE TURNER took part in a panel with RICHARD COWPER, THOMAS.M.DISCH, VONDA McINTYRE, PETER NICHOLLS and CHRIS PRIEST. George incidentally, was more than once taken for a British author. This again indicates that we need to blow our trumpet a lot more in Australia to let SF people all around the world know we are here, and that we are a rapidly growing force in the SF field.

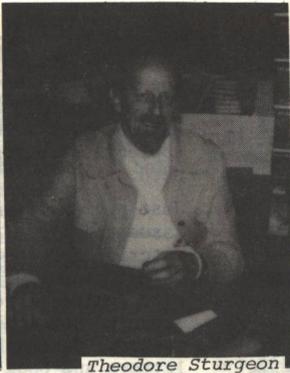
Another talk by that very funny writer and fan BOB SHAW, called EAU DE CLONE: BIZARRE BIOLOGICAL REVELATIONS, was very popular, but it was one of those many items I missed. THE INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS was also screened. I actually got to see part of QUARTERMASS and THE PIT.

THE PEOPLE THAT TIME FORGOT and NIGHT OF THE EAGLE were two of today's films. Things were always happening in the fan room and Fan GOH HARRY BELL and PETER ROBERTS were on today's programme.

ROBERT SILVERBERG and FREDERIK POHL had a very interesting dialogue about their work and ideas about the SF field. Other speakers today included



Bob Shaw



Theodore Sturgeon



Robert Silverberg



Norman Spinrad



Jack Chalker

ALFRED BESTER and CHARLES SHEFFIELD, while FREDERIK POHL, JOAN.D.VINGE and IAN WATSON gave readings.

THE BANQUET was the best of the three WORLD CON BANQUET's I have attended. It came fast and hot, and the whole thing was handled like a military operation. The wine and banquet cost itself, was most certainly quite expensive. The HUGOS were presented in the main hall after the Banquet, and there was another foul up here which, in that Banquet attendees were supposed to have reserved seats but.... Not that it worried me much, as I got down on the floor at the front taking photos. Before we left the Banquet room, DITMARS were presented to:- ANNE McCAFFREY, CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and SUSAN WOOD. If I remember correctly, Robin Johnson presented them, not myself as was reported by C.N.B. in LOCUS.

The HUGO AWARDS presentation M.C. was BOB SHAW, who received the fanwriter award himself. (Details of the award winners appeared in the last issue of the NEWS). I was personally very pleased that VONDA McINTYRE won the BEST NOVEL with DREAMSNAKE, but I feel that WHITE DRAGON by Anne McCaffrey would have stood a better chance if it had not been nominated for, and won the GANDALF AWARD for BEST FANTASY. I still say it is not fantasy and should never have been nominated for that award. Some books such as Andre Norton's and C.J.Cherryh's for instance, are a mixture and it would be arguable as to which category they really belonged in, but the DRAGON series are most definitely science fiction.

'STAR WARS' produce Gary Kurtz presented the dramatic award to CHRISTOPHER REEVE for 'SUPERMAN' but judging by the applause when the nominations were read, most of the audience wanted HITCHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY to win. (A book of this is due from PAN soon on HITCHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, who inexplicably changed their cover design by the way, from a very appropriate SF scene to a plain unimaginative 'title only' type design. The editor or who ever is responsible, is I feel, completely out of touch with the market. See the article last issue ASFN #13 on SF COVER ART).

Presenter CHARLES BROWN had difficulty in getting anyone to accept the fanzine HUGO award for RICHARD GEIS, who edit's 'SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW'. Like Charlie Brown himself, who won a number of times with LOCUS, Dick Geis must be, by now, also using theirs for doorstops.

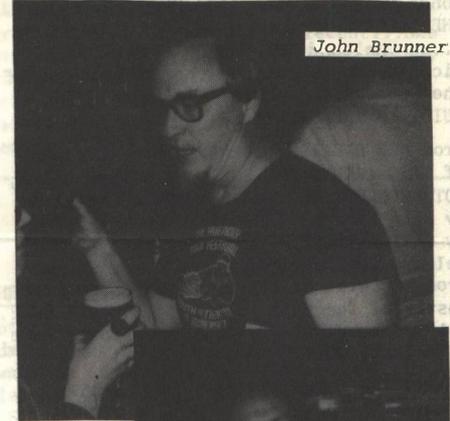
Different publishers sponsored the programme each day, including POCKET,

SPHERE, PAN, GOLLANZ and OMNI on the last day. IAN BALLANTINE, ROGER DEAN, HARRY HARRISON and others on a panel, discussed NEW DIRECTIONS IN SF PUBLISHING. The most significant being the boom in the illustrated book. This was followed by THE HAZARDS OF PROPHECY, a speech by BEN BOVA, in which he pointed out that SF was not doing such a good job in prophesing the future. MADNESS AND METAPHYSICS was a panel with TERRY CARR and others which I missed, and a panel on SF AND THE REST OF THE WORLD with JOHN BRUNNER, SAM LUNDWELL, DON WOLLHEIM and MAXIM JAKOBOWSKI. I was rather peeved about this last panel, that not even a passing reference was made to SF in Australia and that no Australian representative was on the panel.

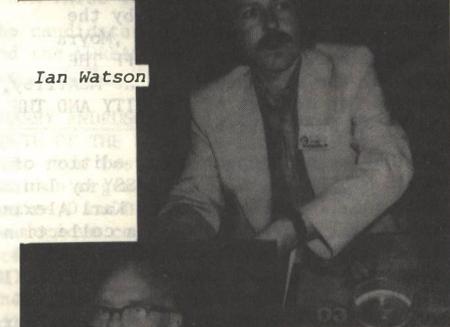
In the afternoon, further discussions was held on the current boom in SF and where it was leading to in THE STARS OR BUST with ALFRED BESTER, BEN BOVA, JOE HALDEMAN & FREDERICK POHL, I believe. JERRY POURNELLE gave a very interesting talk finally, refitting the concepts put forward in the book LIMITS TO GROWTH. He said everything I have been trying to say myself on the world situation regarding the use and conservation of resources. ARTHUR.C.CLARKE summed it up somewhere also, when he said that we are not lacking resources, we are lacking the brains to use them properly.

Well, what did I think of SEACON finally? It was for a start, bigger and more crowded than I hoped it would be. Consequently, I did not see all that I wanted to, and I did not meet or talk to all the people I wanted to, and this clouds my judgement somewhat. However, I must admit that SEACON was well organised except for the two or three minor things mentioned. Things will go wrong with World Con's in particular, and I think it is a matter of trying to avoid making too many mistakes. I do get the impression however, that I was not entirely alone in my bitching about not meeting all the people I wanted to, or getting to parties. SUSAN WOOD, in a report in LOCUS, says that some fans said it was difficult to meet British and European fans, and the British fans said there were too many Americans in the way. The latter did, I believe, make up more than a third of the attendees. Two hundred of them went on to LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY for the NORTHAMERICON, but that is in my next report on my world travels.

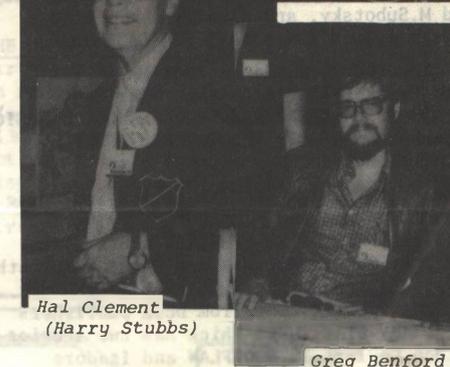
I hope these photos reproduce ok. I had to borrow some colour photos from John Foyster and Alex Wasiliew, as my own undeveloped rolls of black and white film were stolen. M.B.



John Brunner

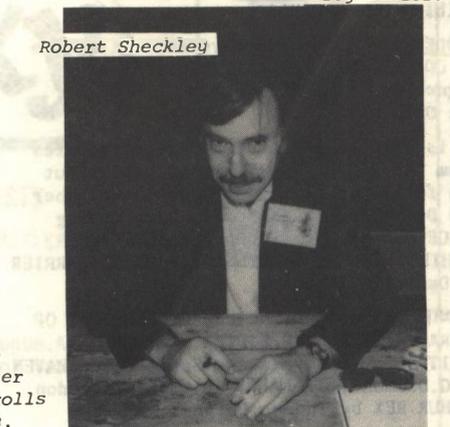


Ian Watson



Hal Clement  
(Harry Stubbs)

Greg Benford



Robert Sheckley

## NEW RELEASES FROM AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTORS

**WILLIAM COLLINS** .In the Fontana series for the current two months they will be distributing CURE FOR CANCER and THE ENGLISH ASSASSIN both by Michael Moorcock, THE WALKING SHADOW by Brian Stableford, and COLLISION WITH CHRONOS by Barrington J.Bayley .

From PAN,Collins will have THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED LOVE AT THE HEART OF THE WORLD by Harlan Ellison,GNOMES by R.Poortvliet, FAERIES by David Larkin,DREAMSNAKE by Vonda McIntyre (The 1979 HUGO WINNER), THE SECOND PAN BOOK OF HORROR STORIES by H.van Thal,and THE MASTER MARRINER by Nicholas Monssarat,and the full script of the BBC radio production,A HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY .

From NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY a new edition of RING AROUND THE SUN by Clifford Simak, NOT BEFORE TIME and DRAMATURGES OF YAN by John Brunner ,THE SAXTONBURY PRINTOUT by Phil Smith.The big one coming up for release we expect in December or January from NEL will be the novel by Allan Dean Foster of the Walt Disney film BLACK HOLE. Collins have not given us a definite date of release yet.

**GORDON and GOTCH** .In the CORGI series in November we can only expect TEMPLE OF THE SUN a juvenile fantasy by the author of SHADOW ON THE STONES ,Myra Caldecott.In December is GET OFF THE UNICORN by the very popular Anne McAffrey, and a reprint at last of THE CITY AND THE STARS by Arthur C.Clarke.

In PANTHER we can expect a new edition of ASIMOV'S MYSTERIES, ALIEN EMBASSY by Ian Watson, and TIME AFTER TIME by Karl Alexander. December will see LAST ORDERS a collection by Brian Aldiss,THE MAN WHO ATE THE WORLD by Frederick Pohl and also his SURVIVAL KIT, DYING OF THE LIGHT by George R.Martin,SEX IN THE 21ST CENTURY edited by Michael Parry and M.Subotsky, and finally a reprint of Philip K.Dick's NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR.

In the other Granada imprint MAYFLOWER more Fritz Leiber's Lankhmar series ; SWORDS OF LANKHMAR and SWORDS AND ICE MAGIC. December sees only THE CHINESE AGENT by Michael Moorcock.

There will be four BANTAM titles including THE MICRONAUTS and MICROCOLONY by Gordon Williams,FATE OF THE PHOENIX a Star Trek novel by Sondra Marshak and Myrna Culbreath, and the science fantasy CARNELIAN THRONE by Janet Morris. One from DELL publishers is BINARY STAR THREE which has two stories by Ron Goulart-DR SCOFFLAW and Isadore Haiblum-OUTERWORLD .

**HODDER and STOUGHTON** have two titles due in CORONET;NIGHTWINDS by Karl Edward Wagner and STRANGE STORIES OF UFOS by Len Ortzen .

It is hard to get accurate release dates from the RICAL/KENNARD distributors,but the following titles are due in November and December.HAMLYN series have coming SPACE ONE by Richard Davies,DRINKING SAPPHIRE WINE by Tanith Lee,PROJECT BARRIER by Daniel F.Galouye.

MAGNUM series due include CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST by P.K.Dick,MASTERS OF SOLITUDE by M.Kaye and P.Goodwin,THE HAVEN by G.Diamond,STARMAKER by Olaf Stapledon, ARTHUR REX by Thomas Berger.

WYNDHAM as usual have a lot of DR WHO books including K9 AND OTHER MONSTERS, WAR GAMES,PYRAMIDS OF MARS ,DALEK SPECIAL, THREE DRS,TOMB OF THE CYBERMEN.They also have an illustrated book on the making of the great new science fiction horror film ALIEN,which should be available by December New editions of THE MANITOU,THE DJINN and THE SPHINX in the horror series by Graham Masteron are due also, as well as John Norman's BEASTS OF GOR.

The big title currently from TUDOR book distributors is the novel of ALIEN by Allan Dean Foster.They are also expecting the large format photo story edited by Richard Anobile of the movie ALIEN,both of which come from FUTURA.Also due from this publisher is Frank Herbert's THE DOSADI EXPERIMENT which we did list for October,but it is not due now till late November.Other f and sf due from FUTURA includes ALL THE HEADS TURN WHEN THE HUNT GOES BY by John Farris,THE FURY by John Farris,LUPE by Gene Thompson,IF YOU COULD SEE ME NOW by Peter Straub,all of these are in a special horror promotion.The second book in the BATTLESTAR GALACTICA series THE CYCLON DEATH MACHINE came out in October.

STAR TREK :The Movie,by Gene Rodenberry himself is expected before Christmas in FUTURA also. The BALLANTINE/DEL REY titles due November from Tudor are SORCEROR'S SON by Phyllis Eisenstein,JANDRIX by Syd Logsdan,and THE QUESTOR TAPES by D.C.Fontana.

### LOCUS

We can only report part of the news that we consider important to our readers, and the American SF Newspaper LOCUS has it all.It also includes book reviews and columns on writing and publishing sf, which are of particular interest to new authors in this country trying to break into the field.

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## MORE EDITORIAL NOTES

I keep telling myself that the size of the News will have to be reduced,because I am losing \$50 and \$100 each issue.It has recieved a lot of praise which I do appreciate ,but subscriptions are what we need.

Just over half way through putting this issue together I realise I have enough material for another issue almost already. I just cannot afford to increase the page size ,unless I recieve more advertising support from fans, conventions and publishers.I do thank readers for their letters and book reviewers for their work, but some things just have to be held over including Lee Edmonds Fanzine Reviews .

The complete F&SF listing is the next job on my agenda, and I should have it out by December 3rd.I know how anxious many of our readers are to recieve it. Much more news on new books will be included in the next issue of the News also.

## CONVENTIONS & FAN EVENTS

Because of space limitations this issue I will not detail all the upcoming conventions, but I will cover all major and minor events next issue.The next major event is UNICON 6 at THE VICTORIA HOTEL in Melbourne next Easter, when Joe Haldeman will be Guest of Honour.

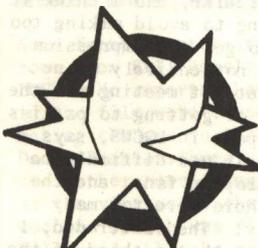
CINECON '81 is running into venue problems,but we hope to have them sorted out before Christmas.

WELLCON,the first New Zealand Convention was quite successful we have been told, and we hope to have a report next issue. The New Zealanders expect to have another convention next October,which we regret is a most inappropriate time for us.

### THE AUSTRALIA IN 1983 BID

I can not emphasise more strongly the importance of joining the DENVER WORLDCON in 1981 so that you can all register your vote for Australia in 1983.Carey Handfield is Australian agent,as he is chairman for the A'83 bidding committee.I am not certain of the membership cost but I do know it goes up in January,so contact Carey now for details if you want to support the A'83 bid in the most practical way you can.

## AUSTRALIA IN '83!



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# People and Publishing

ROGER and JUDY ZELAZNY became parents for the third time on September 1st. The new baby, their first girl, was named Shannon Arlene. JACK WILLIAMSON who attended both SEACON and NORTHAMERICAN, received the annual Governor's Award for literature, from the Governor of New Mexico, Bruce King on September 28th. FREDERICK POHL'S short story "The Martian Star-Gazers" is now a planetarium show in Denver. (I wonder if it will be still showing for the World convention there in '81. I saw two planetarium shows in London and at the Aeronautics and Space Museum in Washington on my recent trip. They were a little disappointing, mainly I guess because they were too brief. M.B.)

Two authors who have made more money out of general fiction than sf, FRANK ROBINSON and THOMAS SCORTIA, who wrote the original book of 'Towering Inferno', have completed a new novel on the borders of sf about a submarine, GOLD CREW. Warner will be publishing it in May 1980 with a big promotion.

FRITZ LEIBER has sold movie rights to "Four Ghosts in Hamlet" to (Wait for it!) an Australian movie company. (I still think fans of sf could be a big thing for the Australian industry if they get stuck into it now.) The Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser stories have been optioned by Wizard Productions.

URSULA K. LEGUIN'S novel LATHE OF HEAVEN will be shown as a TV special in January. Her mother THEODORA KROEBER-QUINN, author and anthropologist, died in her Berkeley home in July. She was the recipient of many literary prizes and wrote several juvenile fantasy novels including CAROUSEL.

KELLY AND POLLY FREAS have quit the Donning Company who have been publishing the STARBLAZE Series. They have been editing and illustrating the trade paperback format series, which has so far seen eleven titles. A twelfth one is being completed by the Freases as well as Michael Whelan's art collection WONDERWORKS. The later was due to be published in October. Hank Stine, the editor of Galaxy is to take over on Starblaze series.

GREGORY BENFORD has sold a new novel called "Timescape" to Simon and Schuster for a very nice advance figure. He will receive full credit for the story but his sister in law Hilary Benford, who is a writer of historical novels was partially responsible for the first draft. Both Simon and Schuster and Gollancz will market the book as a straight novel, rather than sf.

Benford has been one of the most successful of the major new authors over the last few years. 'Stars in Shroud', "In the Ocean of the Night" and "Jupiter Project" which he was recently revising, all received critical acclaim. SHIVA DESCENDING which he wrote in collaboration with WILLIAM ROTSLER is yet to be published. The fact that the plot deals with a meteorite or similar object colliding with Earth, might account for the delay.

FREDERICK POHL'S new novel JEM sold almost 20,000 in its first three months of publication. Another indication that sf is a very hot property for publishers right now.

Editor, Author TED WHITE who was editing AMAZING and FANTASTIC until recently, has been appointed editor of HEAVY METAL sf comic magazine. If you have not seen HEAVY METAL it is a reprint mainly of strips from a French publication called METAL HURLANT. The artwork is usually very good but the subject matter tends more to some of the very good underground comics. It has included sections from things like MORE THAN HUMAN, ILLUSTRATED HARLAN ELLISON, ILLUSTRATED ROGER ZELAZNY and Alfred Bester's TIGER, TIGER, all of which have since been issued in book form.

A lot of good work is being done by the French artists and it is a great pity that more is not reprinted in English, however HEAVY METAL will now be doing more original material such as the above mentioned items and using very little of the French material. Limited stocks of the French edition have been on sale in Australia and will continue to be. The new policy of TED WHITE however for HEAVY METAL, does open some interesting possibilities, and it is going to be very interesting to see how the magazine develops over the next year.

TANITH LEE'S ELECTRIC FOREST will be published by DAW soon. Spring '80 SABELLA also DAW. A young adult fantasy will be published by MacMillan soon. The sequel to SHADOWFIRE, called SHADOWFIRE II is also due soon. A radio play 'Death is King' is due to be aired early 1980 by the BBC.

PETER TREMAYNE is the pseudonym of a writer who under his own name, is an expert on Celtic mythology, history and culture. He is also the author of the definitive history of the Cornish language and its literature. He has written a number of novels of a horror nature featuring Dracula. Bailey Brothers and Swinfen are to publish soon a series of three books, set in the world of Celtic mythology by Tremayne. A 20th century botanist, Frank Dryden is propelled back into the past in THE FIRES OF LAN KERN due for early publication, followed by DESTROYERS OF LAN KERN, and BUCCANEERS OF LAN KERN.

PAUL COLLINS has been asked to judge the short story competition for the Melbourne Freelance Writers, which might explain why people have not heard from him recently. He expects to get back his normal routine mid November.

## OBITUARIES

WALTER H. GILLINGS, 67 British fan, editor, and writer died in August. He was one of the earliest known British fans and was also involved in writing and publishing fantasy and sf in Britain. He was one of the founders of 'Nova Publications' along with Ted Carnell, Frank Cooper and others, which revived the magazine 'New Worlds'. He was editor of 'Tales of Wonder' and worked as a literary agent. Stories he wrote appeared under the names of Geoffrey Giles and Thomas Sheridan.

PEG CAMPBELL the wife of the editor of Analog/Astounding SF magazine for many years, John W. Campbell, died recently. She and John were a team, says Isaac Asimov in a remembrance in Locus. She added the human touch to the team that John sometimes lacked. An era has certainly ended in the sf field.

## FAN NEWS

### THE DOWN UNDER FAN FUND

Voting forms are now available from the administrators: Paul J. Stevens, c/o 305/307 Swanston Street, Melbourne, 3000 or Ken Fletcher and Linda Loundsbury in the U.S.A. Also the candidates of course.

The candidates for the trip to the USA and the NOREASCON at BOSTON next August, are Jack Herman and Keith Curtis.

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK is the new editor of SOUTH OF THE MOON apa-index. He took over from Lester Boutillier. He needs information urgently on Australian apas. SF, comics, D and D and whatever. He would like to receive copies of the Official Organ from each apa, not the whole mailing, and he is prepared to pay a subscription for these. His address is 6933 N. Rosemead Blvd., #31, San Gabriel, CA 91775, U.S.A.

THE DR WHO FAN CLUB is holding a 16th Birthday Celebration on Saturday Nov. 24th. Information can be had from Adrienne Losin, c/o Croydon High School, Croydon Road, Croydon 3136. Please send stamped address envelope. Activities will include a Masquerade, displays, auction and prizes. The venue will be Grey Hall corner Albert and Lansdowne Streets, Melbourne. Cost \$3.00

# Galaxy

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## ALIEN The Science Fiction Film of the year.

Everybody must have heard about this new science fiction horror film that was released in the USA a few months back. It will be screening in Australia by the first week of December. The novel based on the film from FUTURA is now on sale, and other illustrated books, including a comic strip from HEAVY METAL are coming.

The plot of ALIEN is an old one and some people including A.E. van Vogt, say that it is a rip off from a chapter of 'Voyage of the Space Beagle'. That is an alien monster loose in a space ship way out in the middle of nowhere, killing off the crew right left and centre. Dan O'Bannon who wrote the original story for the film says it is just an extension of the plot of DARK STAR, and I for one agree. If Van Vogt sues the makers of ALIEN I hope he loses his case, because I do not believe there is enough similarity in the stories to merit his objections. What is more, film makers will be forced to try and find original ideas and many of the good plots in sf waiting to be filmed will be ignored. To simplify this problem of course the film makers should be encouraged to buy books already published, even if it does mean completely re-writing the book after the film is made. After all what have the JAMES BOND films now got to do with the books of the same name? Very little!

Personally I do not like that idea and I would prefer to see original movies having nothing to do with books, unless they stick more closely to the story as the author wrote it. Alternatively make a new movie story with a new title and just say the movie is based on the ideas as presented in such and such a book, by so and so author.

ALIEN has been well written up in the sf film mags and everywhere else, and this is not the last reference it will get in the ASFN, but I saw it in New York on my trip and I was very impressed and I must make some comments on it now. Starting with the visual aspects of the film the sets are great. They are not overdone and the scenes in space, on the planet, inside and outside the human space ship and the alien one, are simply very realistic and believable. The atmosphere that is created by sets designed by H.R. Giger is really tremendous, and the work done by other artists including Ron Cobb is equally more than adequate. The sets are not the whole picture by any means, because the story although relatively simple is good.

The sets in other words although visually exciting only add to the atmosphere of the film as a whole. Even the most incredible alien you have ever scene, designed by Giger who has been strongly influenced by the writing of H.P. Lovecraft, is only seen in quick close ups until the last reel. This technique I think enhances the tension built up in the movie, and makes you wonder just when it is going to turn up and what it will look like when you do see it as a whole. The monster which you do finally

see only briefly, is the most horribly beautiful creation you have seen yet.

This film will not necessarily appeal to the STAR WARS and GALACTICA fans, but it could start a new trend in the new wave of sf cinema popularity. In other words a relatively simple plot with ordinary people, in believable situations, and not just a vehicle for the special effects experts to show their stuff. The heroine of the story and it is somewhat of a change to see the heroine as the main character in films, well sf/films at any rate, is very well played by Sigourney Weaver, and I hope we see more of her.

Other films due for release here soon include LORD OF THE RINGS, METEOR, BLACK HOLE and STAR TREK. The less said about LOR the better but we will have a full review after it is screened here. METEOR will be on for Christmas but I have not seen any particularly good or bad news about that one. BLACK HOLE from Disney Studios will be the one to see if half the current ballyhoo they are giving out is correct. It can be taken for granted however that the special effects will be as good or probably better than anything seen so far, and it will probably have an intelligent story also. Disaster is the word for STAR TREK. The story given out was that the special effects were delayed and then not up to scratch. We have heard that the SFX might have been a problem at one stage, however the final problems that have become more than obvious when due for release, are much more basic. It is now scheduled for a local release over the Christmas holidays.

I am completely confused with BATTLESTAR GALACTICA as to what has been released here at the theatres and what we have not seen on TV. However I did see a film with Lloyd Bridges and a great space battle, which I did enjoy despite the bang, bang, shoot em up approach. A few other films are overdue, but that is not unusual for local film companies. BUCK ROGERS I missed and although I have heard it is certainly not the old Buck we knew, it has its moments. Just a few they tell me.

Many films are being talked about as being made. Variety's keep reporting new ones all the time such as; GANDAHAR vs THE METAL WARRIORS - a fully animated film by Rene Laloux who did 'Fantastic Planet'. SUPERSONIC MAN made in Spain and is a rip-off of 'Superman', complete with super hero from another planet, and other complementary characters, but the special effects are reported to be good.

Some further interesting comments on ALIEN come from Bill Rotsler in a letter to LOCUS. He reports that the main flaws in the film were caused by the producers making changes to the original script by Dan O'Bannon. Three scenes planned include rather horrifying one with the bodies of the victims of the alien hung up in cocoons, which was filmed, were dropped. Bill said that he hoped that O'Bannon and others will have more control over their films in the future. Meaning of course that the people who know something about sf are allowed to present a story the way it should be, or at least a more appropriate interpretation from our point of view.

To actually quote Bill further: "I have heard that the director of PROPHECY can-

not understand why his film is not a hit and ALIEN IS; 'Our Monster is more horrible than theirs!'. Once again, they are confusing hardware (i.e., monsters, rockets, glitter) with story, effect, emotion, tension, science-fictional content. Will they ever learn?"

An interesting observation was made by Charles Brown editor of LOCUS on the voting for the HUGOS, in that more people voted in the Dramatic Presentation than the Best Novel. It could mean that there is now more overall interest in films and TV, but I personally think it was just that a lot of people wanted HITCHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY to win, and so took the trouble to vote in that category when otherwise they may not have bothered. I also would like to think that more people are actually interested in the visual aspects of f and sf, and maybe these purists who say that anything except the written word in the field is a load of rubbish, and a complete waste of time, are beginning to accept the fact that cinema and TV are here to stay.

A.E. VAN VOGT has been involved with the making of a film of one of his stories which now we expect is well under way. JOHN VARLEY has had his story 'Air Raid' optioned by Hollywood

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK is apparently due for release around May, as Ballantine/Dei Rey have the book by Donald F. Glut from a story by George Lucas, due for a May release. I believe this is the first work of fiction by Don Glut, but I may stand corrected on that point. He has had published a number of reference and critical works on science fiction and fantasy films.

Work on the filming of the new 'Star Wars' film, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, is progressing well. A trailer featuring some of the special effects scenes was screened at 'Seacon'. An avalanche delayed the principal photography in Norway only a little, but it did make work more difficult. Filming was finally completed back in the English studios in August. Work on the construction and filming of the special effects is expected to continue until sometime early in 1980.

All the principals except Sir Alec Guinness will be back in 'Empire', the director is Irvin Kershner, the producer Gary Kurtz, George Lucas is Executive Director. The special effects and the sets should prove to be even more spectacular than STAR WARS. The SFX supervisor is Brian Johnson who worked on '2001-Space Odyssey' and 'The Day the Earth Caught Fire'. The screenplay was written by the late science fiction author and screenwriter Leigh Brackett. John Williams will once again be doing the music.

Russ Manning, the well known comic strip artist (Tarzan most recently) is producing a newspaper strip of 'Star Wars'.

For information about 'Star Wars' fan clubs write to Chuck Miller, P.O. Box 8905, Universal City, California 91608, U.S.A

STAR TREK THE MOTION PICTURE  
The Star Trek Fan Club AUSTREK is organising a picture night for the STAR TREK Movie on Friday December 21st, which is the first night Greater Union Theatres have announced. Contact Austrek at P.O. Box 46, Rosanna, Victoria 3084.

# LETTER COLUMN



John J. Alderson  
HAVELOCK. 3465.  
28.7.79

Dear Merv,

I read with interest your report of David Lake's GOH speech. Whilst his ideas may not correspond exactly with his, (how could they indeed!) I am in tentative agreement, excepting I don't think that "civilization" is going to necessarily "collapse" unless we get a "scientific breakthrough very soon". But I most certainly do not go along with your comments that "we must go into space if the human race is to survive."

You make this same mistake which plagues Morris' book "The Naked Ape" for you, like him, equates the technological society of north American with the evolutionary progress of the human race. Well it is not, it is a cultural cul-de-sac. As such studies as "Limits To Growth" point out, that society is self-destroying in so many ways, that it is impossible for it to survive in any tangible form. The bulk of American sf is now frankly escapist, either the "pie-in-the-sky" type which sees ultimate salvation coming from space, or the world-of-dreams fantasy, with perhaps some eat-drink-and-be-merry-for-tomorrow-we-die ones tossed in. Indeed the very idea of going into space is itself an escape from reality: our problems are here, the solutions are here on Earth.

It is perhaps that already the "breakthrough" has arrived but it is so different from the technological ideas that it has been missed. There are, as you know, two ways of obtaining raw materials,

1. We grow them. They are renewable, usually non-polluting and the process is called farming whether we get wool from sheep or penicillin from bacteria.
2. We mine them. The process is wasteful of energy, or natural resources, and usually cause massive forms of pollution. The products are non-renewable. This is mining.

The breakthrough has arrived in several respects in the first. There has been too, the development of a new philosophy which for instance has grown into a new understanding of mixed farming called Permaculture... takes it's name from the use of permanent crops rather than annual ones. The ramifications are immense. To misquote Shakespeare, the future is with ourselves, not in the stars and that's for us, and sf.

Darrell Schweitzer,  
113 Deepdale Road  
STRAFFORD. PA 19087

Dear Mervyn,

Thanks for the two issues of AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS you sent. It seems there is a great proliferation of news-zines those days, and yours is one of the best.

Diane Southgate's comments about "A

Fabulous Formless Darkness" are appreciated in that the caused me to go back and think about what the character actually is doing. I'm not sure he's a "silly immature idiot" as much as he is someone who can't make up his mind and commit himself solidly to anything. There's another story in the series in which Julian gets pretty good evidence that God really is mad, and his overall conviction is that he has been cosmically screwed (see "The Hag" in which his most noble deed is also his most sinful). As a result all his beliefs and ideals collapse. But he hasn't gotten to the point of realising that if God is not good, then a sin against him is nothing to worry about. I think of the whole thing as an inversion of Bergman's THE 7TH SEAL, in which the knight's problem was that God did not exist. My knight's problem is that he does. I suppose Julian would be happy by going back into an unthinking and conformist existence, but he has too much pride for that. In "The Veiled Pool of Mistorak" he was given such advice.

In any case, the series has been sold as a book. The title is WE ARE ALL LEGENDS, and Borgo Press will publish it in a couple of years. There are 3 more stories ("The Island of Faces", "The Unknown God Cried Out" and "Midnight and Moonlight & The Secret Of The Sea") in Paul Collins' backlog. Andrew Offutt bought "The Castle of Kites & Crows" for SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS V and "Divers Hands" appeared recently in THE YEARS BEST HORROR STORIES. "The Riddle of the Horn" appeared in HEROIC FANTASY last April, and "The Hag" was in S.A.D.3 the year before. You've seen the rest in Collins publication.

Other news: my next book will be SF VOICES 1, a book of interviews published by Borgo Press this October. It is not the same as the TK Graphics book of similar title.

My first novel, THE WHITE ISLE, will be published in FANTASTIC in the form of 2 novels, April and July 1980. It's really a serial. By all indications AMAZING and FANTASTIC are still going concerns. The current FANTASTIC has only one reprint in it.

By the way, I'm planning to publish another issue of my fanzine, PROCRASTINATION, by the end of the year and am looking for good articles of either a fannish or sercon nature. Also, humour wanted.

Captain A. Bertram Chandler  
Flat 23 Kanimbla Hall,  
19 Tusculum Street,  
POTTS POINT, N.S.W 2011

Dear Merv,

Herewith a couple of news items that you may find of interest:-

a) It seems that Alison & Busby are going ahead with the Grimes/Rim Worlds project, both hardback and paperback. They intend to launch some sort of advertising campaign. I shall keep you informed of developments.

b). Much to my surprise I have been awarded a Two Year Senior Fellowship by the Literature Board to enable me to write the Australian SF Novel. I've been applying every year- since my retirement

from the sea, just for the hell of it, but never thought that I should be able to get on to the Commonwealth pay-roll. It means that Grimes will have to take a spell of Long Service Leave. (An ancestral Grimes, however, will be playing John Paul Jones to Ned Kelly's George Washington...) Once I finish the current novel - TO RULE THE REFUGEES, in which Grimes gets involved in a re-enactment of the Rum Rebellion- I'll be getting dug into the Ned Kelly period research.

Meanwhile, I have received from the Australia-Japan Foundation the application forms for a Travel Grant. These I have passed on to the SSFF, who will be organising some sort of democratic process to select an applicant. There is no guarantee, of course, that an application will be successful but it's worth trying. I shall write to Japan to find out what Cons they will be having in August and September 1980.

Talking of Japanese cons - I struck an unexpected one myself when I was in that country. I was asked to be one of the GoHs at the Datecon ("e" accented) in Sendai. One of the other GoHs was Tekumi Shibano, whom you met at the Seacon. It was a small convention- about 200 attending - and their very first. Nonetheless their opening show was excellent with, eventually, a successful combination of our own sf mythology and the techniques of the Kabuki theatre.

There were three sketches. The first was a re-enactment of the "egg sequence" from ALIEN. The second was a duel to the death between Batman and Scorpion with the tough Third Mate from ALIEN and the inevitable Imperial Storm Trooper getting into the act somehow. The third was 2001, very well done and with the proper background music. But after the apeman had thrown his bone into the air there was not a shift to the various orbital vehicles but to the huge Jupiter ship. The long, long model was carried on stage by four Kabuki "invisible men" - the black-cloaked and hooded scene shifters, dressers and make-up artists whom you're not supposed to see. On the stern of the ship was the name, DATECON.

This time in Japan, although I had plenty of raw fish, I did not have any still alive and kicking. One thing I did have - and enjoyed - would not have appealed to quite a few Occidental tastes. It was the first course of a tempura lunch - tiny octopi, complete in every detail pickled in something or other....

Another meal could have been off-putting to many. It was at a restaurant in Tokyo, specialising in Fukuoka style chicken. Every course, except the last, is chicken, mucked up in various ways. (The last course is a sort of rice porridge with a soft boiled egg broken over it.) Anyhow, we got to the half chicken stage. Keiko's portion wasn't too well done. She turned it over and prodded the obscene looking, half-raw flesh with her chopsticks and said, "Look! Alien!" And it was just like that thing in the film.

Another meal was fun. That was in Sendai, after the Datecon, at a tempura restaurant. It got to the Waltzing-Matilda-singing stage.

Everybody knows the tune of Waltzing Matilda. Many people, everywhere, know the words of the chorus. That could never be said about that horrid, artificial apology for a National song, Advance Australia Fair. Oh, I recognise the tune but have no intention of learning the words. It's endurable only when it's tarted up = as ABC TV used to tart it up - with a military parade at Paddington Barracks and lots of drums. But WM needs nothing in the way of fancy orchestration.

In Japan I saw only one film - GALAXY EXPRESS 999, one of their superb animations. The old magic of steam trains mixed up with all the cliches of Space Opera. It was even "worse" than SPACE CRUISER YAMATO. (In fact, one of the pirate ships was Space Cruiser Yamato with an old-time galleon's poop tacked on to the arse end. The other one had a main hull like a dirigible airship with an old-time galleon, complete, slung under it like a gondola.)

Despite my monolinguality, I enjoyed every minute of it.

Capt. A. Bertram Chandler.

*I wish to thank our letter writers and apologise for not replying to them personally, but time and space do not permit. More letters coming up next issue, and I do hope you will keep them coming. I appreciate your comments and other readers I am sure are interested to hear other peoples opinions and points of view on things in and out of the NEWS.*

Merv Binns/Editor



FRITZ LEIBER: Swords & Deviltry Book One  
Swords Against Death  
Book Two

Reviewed by Rowena Cory.

To say these books are good sword and sorcery would be true; it would also be correct to say they are a cutting comment on humanity. Citing both the noble and innocent and the base, vicious and ignorant with equal impartiality and honesty. The world of Newhon is rich in imagery and in detail, and in essence reflects the author's view of our world.

There are six books in the series, some are collections of short stories in chronological order, some are novels and novelettes, and one is novel length. The first two have been reprinted by Mayflower. These covers are a definite improvement on the last series, and show a refreshing change of style; they should attract the eye of the sword and sorcery fan.

For the followers of Fritz Leiber's anti-orthodox heroes, the stories tell of the meeting of the twain and their subsequent adventures, the reason why they left Lankhmar, and their journeys when they meet their wizardly mentors.

I haven't the patience to read most sword and sorcery stories more than once, blood and violence depress me, but these books I have come back to time and again for the pure enjoyment of them. And through this introduction to the author I've discovered his science fiction which while varied, is equally bizarre and entertaining.

N.B. SWORDS IN THE MIST, SWORDS AGAINST WIZARDRY, THE SWORDS OF LANKHMAR and SWORDS AND ICE MAGIC are now all out or due within the next two months. All in MAYFLOWER - \$2.95 each.

RING AROUND THE SUN By Clifford Simak  
New English Library \$2.95

First published back in '52, this story shows how well he holds up against some of the bad writing that is touted as "Hugo Winning" material today. Simak's story is a mystery; who is making the everlasting lightbulbs, the razor blades that won't wear out and the motor car that can't go wrong? Where are people disappearing to and what is the significance of a simple toy top? Simak once again proves that he is one of the all time master story tellers of sf.

GATHER DARKNESS by Fritz Leiber  
New English Library \$3.25

Another classic now being reprinted by NEL, Leiber's GATHER DARKNESS! first saw the light of day as a novelette in 1943 in 'Astounding' and it shows it's pedigree. The story is set in a future where a tyrannical church has total control over a superstitious population and how one priest of the church rebels and uses witchcraft to bring down the church. A Must for the reader who loves the classic writing of the 40's and 50's.

THE DOSADI EXPERIMENT by Frank Herbert  
Futura \$3.25

We have here a not so classic story that is a sort of sequel to WHIPPING STAR. Plot within counter plot, as alien and human manoeuvre for final advantage in a galactic civilization. The final outcome of all this plotting rest with one planet where a gigantic social experiment has been illegally set-up, Dosadi. The final confrontation in an alien courtroom is tense, but somehow there seems to be something missing from the book and even after twelve months since first reading the book I have not been able to figure it out. This book will sell, but a Hugo contender it isn't!

PROPHECY by David Seltzer  
Granada \$3.50

There is a movie version of this story which is not very good I have heard. Full of blood and violence, just as this book is. The plot concerns the birth, thanks to chemical pollutants, of a monster who can tear apart giant bear for breakfast and who kills and can't be stopped. The usual scientist-environmentalist and his family find the menace and have to battle for their lives. Exciting for those who like this sort of stuff.

*Ed. Note: I saw HOLACAUST 2000 on TV last night. Along with a cop out at the end of the film, the whole story made little sense. I get the impression that a lot of these authors outside the usual sf field have very little scientific background*

*and after dreaming up a basic premise throw together a bit of meaningless jargon, spice it with plenty of human drama and adventure, and foist it off on the general public as scientific mysticism. PROPHECY is another one in this category and I am sure you can think of more.*

M.B.

XENO by Daniel F. Jones  
Sidgwick and Jackson HC NPA

Here we have another menace, this time alien in origin, that arises out of the reappearance of aircraft that had vanished months and years before. An exciting 'mystery' builds up and then is allowed to fall apart in the final section of the book.

With a better, more conclusive and upbeat ending this could make a good movie.

THIS DARKENING UNIVERSE by Lloyd Biggle Jr.  
Millington Books HC \$13.60

I have always been an admirer of Lloyd Biggle Jr, and particularly of the two previous Jan Darzek adventures. ALL THE COLOURS OF DARKNESS and WATCHERS OF THE DARK. In this third adventure, Jan Darzek is confronted with his biggest challenge, stop THE DEATH before it wipes out all life in the universe, but how do you stop something that you can't see, can't measure and can't understand? SUPREME, the galactic civilization's master computer sends Darzek to a planet in another galaxy, a trading planet with a unique and special secret that can, if understood in time, stop THE DEATH from destroying life in the universe. It is in this final section that the reader might find it hard to accept the author's solution and final resolution. I can only say that I have heard of the theory of the big bang theory of the creation of the universe, but this one is ridiculous. A Good story that is destroyed in the last few chapters.

BOLO by Keith Laumer  
Millington Books HC \$13.60

Future war has always been of great interest to me and Keith Laumer's invention of the ultimate super tank, the BOLO has been assured a place in sf history. There are six novelettes and short stories in his volume including one Retief. Most appeared in 'Galaxy' or 'Analog' and are not new.

CASTLE ROOGNA by Piers Anthony  
DEL REY FANTASY/Ballantine  
Distributed by Tudor \$2.95

Third in the series that started with A SPELL FOR CHAMELEON and THE SOURCE OF MAGIC, this volume tells of the adventures of Bink's son, DOR and his magical adventures in the land of Xanth, 800 years in the past, a past that was full of deadly dangers and not at all like the well ordered Xanth he knew. And then there was Millie, the fair maiden who was destined to die and become a ghost for 800 years, Jonathan her zombie boyfriend and Jumper the spider, not to mention Harpies, Monsters and deadly danger. A good, humorous fantasy by one of the better authors.

The last 8 reviews are by 'old caustic comments' himself, Paul Stevens.



FUTURA 

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