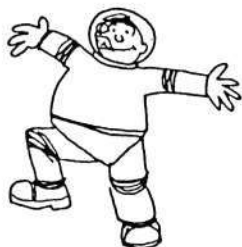


Birmingham Science Fiction Group

(Honorary Presidents: Brian W. Aldiss
and Harry Harrison)



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The Newsletter is published once a month and is distributed to all members of the Birmingham Science Fiction Group. Membership rates are £5 per person or £7.50 for two people at the same address. The treasurer is Stan Eling, 124 Galton Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B67 5JS to whom all membership fees should be sent.

The Birmingham Science Fiction Group has its formal meeting on the third Friday of each month in the New Imperial Hotel in Temple Street, Birmingham City Centre. There is also an informal meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at the General Wolfe pub, on the corner of Aston Road and Holt Street (near Aston University and the science park). Newcomers are always welcome

MEMBERSHIP STATUS

If your membership has expired or expires this month you will find a cross in the box below.

Please renew.

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EDITORIAL

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Well, all was revealed last month - the mystery event turned out to be a screening of the BBC programme on the 1979 World SF Convention hosted by Britain in Brighton. Chairman for the convention was our very own Pete Weston and he introduced the programme for the members present and related some of the comical tales of the convention - such as the pyramid of beer cans the hotel management found one morning - all empty of course.

I enjoyed the chance to see the programme again and to see some of the younger looking but still familiar faces.

THIS MONTH-- FRIDAY 18TH MAY

This month we have a guest speaker, someone new who has not been to the Group before - Douglas Hill.

Douglas is a 35 year old Canadian who is an editor, critic, poet, novelist and historian. For some years he was the SF editor for Pan Books. He has four anthologies to his credit including THE DEVIL HIS DUE, THE SHAPE OF SEX TO COME and WARLOCKS AND WARRIORS. He has written a best selling series of novels published by Victor Gollancz (GALACTIC WAR LORD etc) and should prove to be an entertaining and interesting speaker.

NEXT MONTH - FRIDAY 15TH JUNE

Next month we have our old friend Dr Jack Cohen who is going to be giving a new talk entitled "East of Eden" explaining how he has provided the science fictional background for a new novel by Harry Harrison called ... EAST OF EDEN. The book is being launched in the summer and we're hoping that Harry Harrison himself will be in the area to do a signing session for Andromeda Bookshop. If he is then it is possible we'll be able to persuade him to come along to the Brum Group to tell us all about his new book

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks this issue go to Martin Tudor for providing the jophan report and because I've been so busy I've had to use Martin's original typewritten sheets instead of retyping them.

Artwork is, as usual, by John Dell with the exception of the BRMB Walkathon illustration which is by Trevor Mall.

Also thanks to Margaret Thorpe for her review and to the various publishers for the review books.



the jophan report

— MARTIN TUDOR.

Well SEACON '84 has been and gone, scattering behind it a million and one awards.... Firstly we have the 1984 BRITISH SF ASSOCIATION AWARD. All members of the BSFA and all attending members of SEACON '84 (the combined 35th British SF Easter Convention and EUROCON 1984) were eligible to vote for the best novel, short fiction, media presentation and artist of 1983 as nominated by members of the BSFA. The nominations were as follows:—

NOVEL

- Brian Aldiss - HELLICONIA SUMMER
- Michael Coney - CAT KARINA
- Mary Gentle - GOLDEN WITCHBREED
- John Sladek - TIK-TOK
- Gene Wolfe - THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH
- No Award

SHORT FICTION

- Scott Bradfield - "The Flash! Kid" (INTERZONE 5, Autumn)
- Richard Cowper - "The Tithonian Factor" (INTERZONE 5)
- John Crowley - "Novelty" (INTERZONE 5)
- Malcolm Edwards - "After Images" (INTERZONE 4, SPRING)
- John Sladek - "Calling All Gumdrops" (INTERZONE 4)
- No Award

MEDIA PRESENTATION

- ANDROID (dir. Aaran Lipstadt)
- THE DAY AFTER (dir. Nicholas Meyer)
- Laurie Anderson - UNITED STATES PARTS I - IV PERFECT SHADOWS (dir. Derek Lister)
- WAR GAMES (dir. John Badham)
- No Award

ARTIST

- Peter Jones
- Ian Miller
- Bruce Pennington
- Tim White
- No Award

.....and the winners were (gosh. Just like the Oscars innit? Okay, please yerself...) —
BEST NOVEL John Sladek's TIK-TOK; BEST SHORT FICTION Malcolm Edwards' "After Images";
BEST MEDIA PRESENTATION ANDROID; and BEST ARTIST BRUCE PENNINGTON.

No. Don't bother waking up yet there are lots more to come you may as well carry on dozing, because next we have the ultra exciting EUROPEAN AWARDS. I won't bother listing all of the winners as I doubt that the Western and Eastern European Winners would mean much to anybody reading this. Here, however, are the Award Winners in the UK Section: —

SPECIAL AWARD to "Science in SF" (Nicholls, Langford and Stableford).
BEST NOVELIST — John Brunner. BEST SHORT STORY WRITER — J.G. Ballard.
BEST GRAPHIC ARTIST — D. HARDY! BEST PUBLISHER — Collanca.
BEST PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINE — Foundation. BEST FANZINE — EPSILON (no doubt for it's ultra-

European slant.....)

SCREENWRITER — No Award. FILMDIRECTOR — No Award.
SPECIAL SPECIAL AWARD — SEACON '84.

Well that's the more trivial awards out of the way now onto the IMPORTANT stuff. Yup. Who won the GREAT PORK PIE RACE? This years winner was part-time gaffiate ROB JACKSON (with

his revolutionary Waste Paper Basket) but he was closely followed by longtime BSFGer ALAN CASH (and his Steam Powered Pork Pie...) The other major event of the Convention was of course MARTIN HOARE'S BEER TASTING at which the winning beers were: —

DRAUGHT BEER.....GALES BBB
BOTTLED BEER.....CHIMAY
STRONG BEERS
& BARLEY WINES.....TRAPIST ROCHEFORD

If all goes well there will be a repeat performance of the wonderful MHBT at NOVACON 14 this year. (Membership still only £6.00 from ANN GREEN at 11 Fox Green Crescent, Acocks Green, Birmingham. NOVACON 14 : Venue The Grand Hotel Birmingham. Date November 9th - 11th 1984.)

Finally the last group of results from the SEACON '84 votathon come from the 1985

EASTERCON BIDDING SESSION: — FALKON '85 (the Falkland's Bid) 17
YORKON III (the Leed's Bid) 49
REGISTERED ABSTENTIONS 70

Obviously Leeds is not a popular bid...but nonetheless YORKON III will be next years EASTERCON full details are available from MIKE FORD, 45 Harold Mount, LEEDS, LS5 1PW.

Okay. Wake up now! The first part of the boring lists has finished. So now we have a short break for a worthy cause...take it away Matt; " 55,000 registered blind people in this country each week make use of the Royal National Institute for the Blind's Talking Book service. The Editors of the fanzine THE HEAD are attempting to collect £500 from all corners of fandom and sponser an SF novel through this scheme. The £500 is quite simply used to record the novel onto special tape cassettes, pay for legal fees in negotiating copyright and put towards the library and mailing service. There are some SF books already available - however, the number is very low.

Help promote Science Fiction by contributing to this appeal; £500 is not a great deal of money especially when the promotion is to a captive audience of 55,000 people.

To choose which novel is to be sponsered, anyone contributing at least 50p will be entitled to one vote, £1 two votes, £1.50 three votes and so on. So vote for your favourite novel and vote early. Contributions should be sent to: —

MATT SILLARS, THE HEAD APPEAL, c/o 8 BEAVERBANK PLACE, EDINBURGH, EH7 4ER.

References for this appeal can be obtained from: Dennis Wilson, the Royal National Institute for the Blind, Coates Crescent, Edinburgh, (tel: 031 225 6242). "

Such a short interlude and now yet more fascinating lists. This time courtesy of DAVE LANGFORD'S really triffic ANSIBLE (available from Dave for mere money, a trifling £2 for 6 issues. Dave still resides within the illustrious portals of 94 London Road, READING, Berkshire, RG1 5AU.) we have the wonderful HUGO and NEBULA award nominations. First the horribly elitist NEBULAS: — NOVEL:—"Against Infinity"- Greg Benford; "Startide Rising"- David Brin; "Tea With The Black Dragon"- R.A. MacAvoy; "The Void Captain's Tale"- Norman Spinrad; "Lyonesse"- Jack Vance; "Citadel of the Autarch"- Gene Wolfe;

NOVELLA:—"Hardfought"-Greg Bear; "Gospel According to Gamaliel Crucis"-Michael Bishop; "Her Habiline Husband"-Michael Bishop; "Esterhazy and the Autogondola-Invention"-Avram Davidson; "Homefaring"-Robert Silverberg.

NOVELETTE:—"Blood Music"-Greg Bear; "Blind Shemmy"-Jack Dann;

"The Monkey Treatment"—George RR Martin; "Black Air"—Kim Stanley Robinson; "Cicada Queen"—Bruce Sterling; "Slow Birds"—Ian Watson; "Sidon in the Mirror"—Connie Willis.

SHORT:—"The Peacemaker"—Gardner Dozois; "Her Furry Face"—Leigh Kennedy; "Cryptic"—Jack McDivitt; "Ghost Town"—Chad Oliver; "Geometry of Narrative"—Hilbert Schenck; "Wong's Lost & Found Emporium"—William P. Wu.

Now we have the nominations for the, to quote, Langford (out of context) "naff, downmarket, populist HUGO poll":—NOVEL:—"Millennium"—John Varley; "Moron: Dragonlady of Pern"—Anne McCaffrey; "The Robots of Dawn"—Isaac Asimov; "Startide Rising"—David Brin; "Tea with the Black Dragon"—R.A. MacAvoy.

NOVELLA:—"Cascade Point"—Timothy Zahn; "Hardfought"—Greg Bear; "Hurricane Claude"—Hilbert Schenck; "In the Face of My Enemy"—Joseph Delaney; "Seeking"—David Palmer.

NOVELETTE:—"Black Air"—Kim Stanley Robinson; "Blood Music"—Greg Bear; "The Monkey Treatment"—George RR Martin; "The Sidon in the Mirror"—Connie Willis; "Slow Birds"—Ian Watson.

SHORT:—"The Geometry of Narrative"—Hilbert Schenck; "The Peacemaker"—Gardner Dozois; "Servant of the People"—Frederick Pohl; "Speech Sounds"—Octavia Butler; "Wong's Lost & Found Emporium"—William Wu.

NONFICTION:—"Dream Makers II"—Charles Platt; "Encyclopaedia of SF & Fantasy Vol III"—Donald Tuck; "The Fantastic Art of Rowena"—Rowena Morrill; "The High Kings"—Joy Chant; "Staying Alive: A Maven's Guide"—Norman Spinrad.

DRAMATIC:—"Brainstorm"; "Return of the Jedi"; "The Right Stuff"; "Something Wicked This Way Comes"; "War Games".

PRO EDITOR:—Terry Carr; Edward L. Ferman; David G. Hartwell; Shawna McCarthy; Stanley Schmidt.

PRO ARTIST:—Val Lakey Lindahn; Don Maitz; Rowena Morrill; Barclay Shaw; Michael Whelan.

SEMPROZINE:—Fantasy Newsletter/Review; Locus; SF Chronicle; SF Review; Whispers.

FANZINE:—Ansible; File 770; Holier Than Thou; Izzard; The Philk Fee-Nom-ee-Non.

FANWRITER:—Richard E. Geis, Mike Glyer, Artur Hlavaty, Dave Langford, Teresa Nielsen Hayden.

FANARTIST:—Brad Foster, Alexis Gilliland, Joan Hanke-Woods, William Rorsler, Stu Shiffman.

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD:—(for best nearly new writer) Joseph H. Delaney; Lisa Goldstein; R.A. MacAvoy; Warren Norwood; Joel Rosenberg; Sheri Tepper.

PHEN!!! In case you don't know in order to be able to vote in this years HUGO Awards you have to be a member of this years WORLDCON — LA-CON II; full details from PO BOX 8442, VAN NUYS, CA 91409, USA.....But if you ask me, a totally unbiased bystander (sic), you'd much better advised to spend your hard earned cash becoming at least a supporting member of AUSSIECON II —only £17.50— or perhaps even an attending member —only £28— pop down to Oz next year Melbourne is sure to be lovely in August (he sez fingers crossed). But seriously for a measly £17.50 (until 30th June) you will be entitled to vote for BRITAIN

IN '87...You do want a cheap Worldcon here in Britain in 1987 don't you? If you do that tiny sum that minute £17.50 will entitle you to vote in the site selection and by doing so you automatically get the cheapest membership rate for the '87 WORLDCON...you also get to nominate and vote for next years Hugos....and you are sent all the convention publications. Gowan send your £17.50 to the British Agent for AUSSIECON II; Joseph Nicholas, 22 Denbigh Street, Pimlico, London, SW1V 2ER before June 30th. You know it makes sense!

MARTIN TUDOR

Review

THE ISIS PEDLAR by Monica Hughes

Published by Magnet Books price £1.25. 121 pages.

Anyone need an SF based book as a present for an older child? The 'Isis' books by Monica Hughes would certainly fill the bill. This latest in the series matches up to the earlier two, with striking characterisation. Indeed the anti-hero Michael Flynn is particularly obnoxious. Selfish, uncaring and greedy, he takes advantage of the naive hard-working colonists to further his get-rich-quick schemes - preferably with no exertion on his part. His daughter Moira tries to keep him in check, but, in his greed, he is willing to sacrifice her to his ambition. David N'Kumo is the only inhabitant of Isis to mistrust the stranger, and with the help of the Robot Guardian of the planet, reveals the imposter Flynn in his true colours.

Fast paced and exciting, the story can be read on its own, but also ties in neatly and naturally with the previous books - KEEPER OF THE ISIS LIGHT and GUARDIAN OF ISIS.

The following books have been received for future review in the BSFG Newsletter:-

New English Library: MUTE by Piers Anthony

Granada: DARK IS THE SUN by Philip Jose Farmer
GREYBEARD by Brian Aldiss
GETA by Donald Kingsbury

Victor Gollancz: PAVANE by Keith Roberts
THE TITHONIAN FACTOR by Richard Cowper
THE BOOK OF THE RIVER by Ian Watson
A THEATRE OF TIME-SMITHS by Garry Kilworth
VALENTINE PONTIFEX by Robert Silverberg

 BRMB WALKATHON

Jan and I eventually got our sponsorship forms from BRMB to enter their charity walking marathon round the A4040, in fact we got two lots of sponsorship forms, with two different starting points! Naturally, we chose the one closest to us and at 9 a.m. May 6th Muhammed Ali started off the longest street party in the country ... 25 miles of people walking in aid of local children's charities, 30,000 people.

There were all sorts of people there, women with pushchairs, people in wheelchairs, youngsters, old people, people wearing sensible shoes, others wearing high heels, dozens of clowns, can-can girls, three female musketeers, a woman dressed in a black bin liner with rubbish stuffed inside, natives, criminals (well, we did pass Winson Green jail), a drunken duck, Bill and Ben the flower pot men, female fairies, male fairies, Sandra-from-Redditch and Sandra-from-Redditch imposters and as we walked around we noticed Noddy and Big Ears driving past us a couple of times in a car painted and looking exactly like Noddy's car.

After ten miles I got a blister, after seventeen miles Jan felt she couldn't go on - but did. After twenty one miles and having slowed to a pace of two miles an hour I decided to put Jan on one of the free buses running along the route. I told her I'd jog the last four miles and meet her back at the car. I jogged 100 yards and walked the rest of the way but managed to cover the distance in just under an hour. It had taken me 10 hours. The fastest person had done it in about five! I drove home feeling tired but also feeling that I could have carried on for longer. We sat down and put our feet up for half an hour and then found we couldn't move. The rest of the day we couldn't walk twenty five feet and Jason (our cat) just couldn't understand why we were crawling around on all fours!

It was worth it though. Jan and I raised £135 and we'd like to thank the Brum Group members who sponsored us so generously. However, we would like to get a few more science fiction group members joining in on the walk next year. Surely we could dream up some really outlandish and striking costumes that would attract the attention of the press and radio. You needn't be as idiotic as us and try to walk the whole distance...just as far as the nearest real ale pub would do.

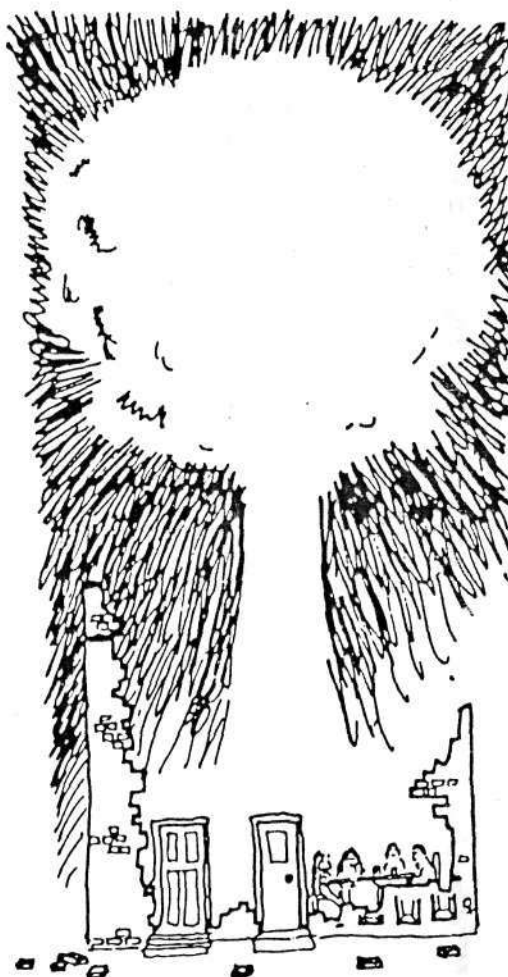
Graham Poole



NOTHING

STOPS A MISFITS MEETING!!

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.....BUT THE OCCASIONAL, VERY SPECIAL, CONVENTION CAN SHIFT ONE, SLIGHTLY, THROUGH TIME AND/OR SPACEBECAUSE OF THE CLASH BETWEEN THE THIRD MISFITS MEETING AND TYNECON II: THE MEXICON, THE VENUE HAS BEEN CHANGED...SAME TIME OF THE MONTH...SAME TIME OF THE NIGHT...BUT THIS MONTH'S MEETING OF THE MERCIAN SF TRIANGLE WILL BE HELD NOT IN THE GENERAL WOLFE BUT IN THE BAR OF THE ROYAL STATION HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE..... OF COURSE THERE WILL ALSO BE AN ADDITIONAL MEETING, FOR ALL THOSE BORING STAY-AT-HOMES, THE SPECIAL PSEUDO-MISFITS MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE A WEEK LATER IN THE GENERAL WOLFE (corner of Love Lane and Aston Road, Gosta Green, near Aston University) FROM 7.30pm ONWARDS ON FRIDAY 1st OF JUNE.....BE THERE!!

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