

August 2000

Issue 347

# BRUM GROUP NEWS

Price: FREE

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The monthly newsletter of the Birmingham Science Fiction Group

(Honorary Presidents: Brian W Aldiss and Harry Harrison)

Group Chair-Vernon Brown, Secretary-Dave Hardy, Treasurer-Alan Woodford, Newsletter & Publicity-Martin Tudor,

Ordinary Members-Anne Woodford & William McCabe, Novacon 30 & 31Chairman-Tony Berry.

**This month's meeting is on 11<sup>th</sup> August,  
7.45pm for 8pm, in the Lichfield Lounge,  
second floor, Britannia Hotel, New Street,  
(entrance in Union Passageway).**

**Admittance: Non-Members £4, Members £3.**

**Concessions for full-time students & unwaged.**

**This month's speaker is:**

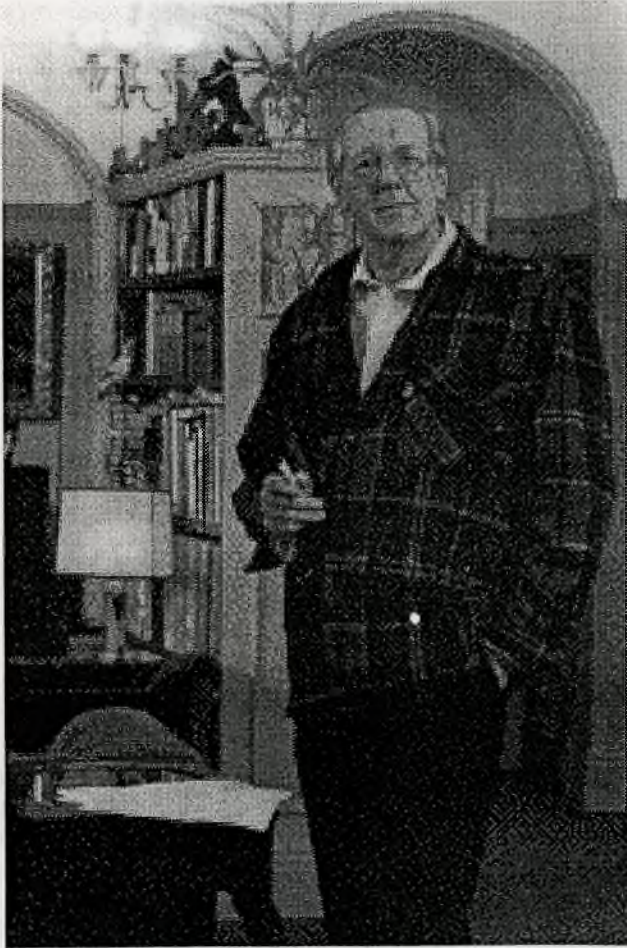
# Brian W. Aldiss

## **Next month's meeting:**

"Our September meeting this year has been double-booked (hotel's fault) against FantasyCon so we cannot meet as usual. However, your Committee has made a special arrangement with the Con to let BSFG MEMBERS in FREE all day Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September on production of their current membership card. As day membership of FantasyCon 24 is £30 this is a bargain! If you cannot find your card see Alan Woodford at the August meeting or send him a self-addressed, stamped envelope no later than 18<sup>th</sup> August. More details in the September newsletter." -- Vernon Brown, Chairman.

**More details of meetings  
on the back cover.**

**This month's speaker is: Brian W. Aldiss**



*[Photo by Marisa D'Alessandro (1995), from  
the GROLIER MULTIMEDIA ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF]*

Brian Aldiss, writer, anthologist and critic, was born in 1925 and was, according to the Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia of SF, “educated at private schools, which he disliked. He served in the Royal Signals in Burma and Sumatra, was demobilised in 1948 and worked as an assistant in Oxford bookshops. He began his writing career by contributing fictionalised sketches about book selling to the trade magazine *The Bookseller*,” these were later assembled as his first book, *THE BRIGHTFOUNT DIARIES* (Faber & Faber, 1955).

Brian’s SF career began with the publication of “Criminal Record” in the July 1954 edition of *Science Fantasy*. By 1957 his first short story collection, *SPACE, TIME AND NATHANIEL* was published. Always a prolific writer of short stories (his total well exceeded 300 by 1995), almost all under his own name, though he has used the pseudonyms C.C. Shackleton, Jael Cracken and John Runciman for a few items.

His first novel, *Non-Stop* (1958) is an accepted classic of the field, whilst *The Long Afternoon of Earth* (fixup 1962 US; Hothouse 1962 UK) won him the 1962 Hugo (short story) award for its original appearance as a series of novelettes. Amazingly, despite many nominations, this remains his only Hugo award for fiction to date – although his *TRILLION YEAR SPREE* picked up the non-fiction Hugo in 1987.

My personal favourite amongst his novels is *GREYBEARD* (1964), which is often acclaimed as his finest sf novel. To quote the *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF* again it “deals with a future in which humanity has become sterile due to an accident involving biological weapons. Almost all the characters are old people, and their reactions to the incipient death of the human race are well portrayed. Both a celebration of human life and a critique of civilization, it has been underrated, particularly in the USA” – too true.

Heavily involved with “New Wave” sf in the late 1960s, he even helped *New Worlds* magazine obtain an Arts Council grant in 1967. Brian published increasingly unconventional fiction, culminating with the collection *Barefoot in the Head: A European Fantasia* in 1969.

Despite his comparative lack of success in the Hugos, other awards have poured in: his 1965 novella, “The Saliva Tree”, won a Nebula; the collection *THE MOMENT OF ECLIPSE* won the BSFA award in 1972; *BILLION YEAR SPREE* a special BSFA award in 1974; *HELLICONIA SPRING* won the BSFA, the John W Campbell and the Kurd Lasswitz awards 1983/4; *HELLICONIA WINTER* won the BSFA award in 1986; he has won two Observer short story awards; the Eurocon award; the Prix Jules Verne (Sweden); the Cometa d’Argento (Italy) and *TRILLION YEAR SPREE* won both the Locus and J. Lloyd Eaton awards. More recently he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and

## *The Newsletter of the Birmingham Science Fiction Group*

this year he has been elected a Grand Master of the SF Writers of America.

Of course, the above *very* brief outline doesn't even scratch the surface. On the 18<sup>th</sup> August (the Friday after he speaks to us), Brian will celebrate his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. During his three-quarters of a century he has displayed his considerable skills as a distinguished contemporary novelist, a poet, a SF writer, critic and historian, a dramatist, a performer, a celebrated essayist, entertaining speaker and the Birmingham Science Fiction Group is honoured to have him as one of our honorary Presidents.

Happy Birthday Brian. - MT.

### **Forthcoming Events by Martin Tudor**

**6-7 AUGUST 2000: FAHRENHEIT 451** at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for details.

**11 AUGUST 2000: BRIAN W. ALDISS** will speak to the BSFG at the Britannia, 7.45pm for 8pm. His talk will be followed by an informal discussion.

**12 AUGUST 2000: METEOR MADNESS** from 8pm until late. Meet at Beacon Lodge (off Beacon Road, Great Barr). Spend the night on Barr Beacon with members of the Great Barr Astronomical Society and Planetary Society. No booking necessary.

**27-28 AUGUST 2000: PROSPERO'S BOOKS** at the Midlands Art Centre cinema, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Call 0121-440-3838 for details.

**30 AUGUST 2000: IAIN M. BANKS** will speak and sign copies of his new Culture novel, *LOOK TO WINDWARD* (Orbit, £16.99) at Waterstones, 128 New Street, Birmingham, from 7pm. Tickets £2.00 (redeemable against book purchase on night). Call 0121-631-4333 for details.

**5 SEPTEMBER 2000: The Black Lodge**, informal discussion group for those interested (mainly) in horror/SF movies, meets at the Hogshead, Newhall Street, Birmingham city centre from 8.30pm. Contact Steve Green on 0121-706-0108 for further details.

**8 SEPTEMBER 2000: Joint meeting with FantasyCon 24 at the Britannia. Confirmed**



Author photograph © Craig Street

guests so far include Stephen Lawhead, Doug Bradley, Storm Constantine and Stan Nicholls, whilst included amongst the con's activities on Friday is the Fantasy Quiz. See cover for details – more information next time. NB: You must be a BSFG member to attend (or join FantasyCon).

**8-10 SEPTEMBER: FantasyCon 24**, the annual convention of the British Fantasy Society at the Britannia Hotel, Birmingham. GoHs Storm Constantine, Stan Nicholls. Further information from 46 Oxford Rd, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 6DT, UK or <http://www.herebedragons.co.uk/bfs/files/fc200reg4.jpg>.

**13 SEPTEMBER 2000: PATRICK MOORE** "Into Space 3: Explorers of the Skies" - in this third talk of the series Patrick Moore continues his "exploration of the heavens and tells the story of the great (and often highly eccentric) people of Astronomy & Space in this amusing and entertaining talk, moving from ancient times to the present". Oakengates Theatre, Telford. Tickets £7.50 (£6.50) call the Box Office on 01952-619020.

**3 OCTOBER 2000: The Black Lodge**, informal discussion group for those interested (mainly) in horror/SF movies, meets at the Hogshead, Newhall Street, Birmingham city centre from 8.30pm. Contact Steve Green on 0121-706-0108 for further details.

**13 OCTOBER 2000: BSFG vs Birmingham University SF Society Quiz at the Britannia Hotel, New Street. 7.45pm for 8pm.**

**10 NOVEMBER 2000: Joint meeting with Novacon 30 at the Britannia, details to be announced.**

**10-12 NOVEMBER 2000: NOVA CON 30 at the Britannia Hotel, New Street, Birmingham.** Guest of Honour Chris Priest, Special Guest Rog Peyton, Guest Artist David A Hardy. Attending membership costs £32.00 in advance or £35.00 on the door. Contact: Steve Lawson, Registrations, 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ or <http://www.cookie.demon.co.uk/n30/n30.html>

**8 DECEMBER 2000: BSFG SKITTLES EVENING**, at the Selly Park Tavern, Pershore Road, Birmingham. (On 45 & 47 bus route, 10 minutes from city centre.) £10 per ticket, available at Group meetings or by post (cheques to "the Birmingham Science Fiction Group") from Alan Woodford, The Treasurer, 2 Old Port Close, Tipton, West Midlands, DY9 7XN.

**29 DEC 2000-1 JAN 2001: Hogmanaycon**, Central Hotel, Glasgow. GoHs: Spider & Jeanne Robinson, Sydney Jordan, Archie Roy, Vince Docherty, Oscar Schwighofer. Membership £35.00, contact: c/o 26 Avonbank Road, Rutherglen, Glasgow, G73 2PA; [john@gelsalba.demon.co.uk](mailto:john@gelsalba.demon.co.uk); [www.members.tripod.co.uk/Chris\\_Boyce/connage.htm](http://www.members.tripod.co.uk/Chris_Boyce/connage.htm)

**13-16 APRIL 2001: Paragon**, the British National SF (Easter)Con at Hanover International Hotel, Hinckley, with guests Michael Scott Rohan, Stephen Baxter, Lianne Norman, and fan guests Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer. Membership now £35 Attending, £15 Supporting, £17.50 Junior (12-16) and £15 Child (5-11), Infants free. Contact Steve Lawson, 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. Tel. 0114 281 1572. e-mail [steve.paragon@keepsake-web.co.uk](mailto:steve.paragon@keepsake-web.co.uk) or check the web site at [www.keepsake-web.co.uk/paragon](http://www.keepsake-web.co.uk/paragon).

**29 MARCH-1 APRIL 2002: Helicon 2**, the British National SF (Easter)Con, at Hotel de France, Jersey. Guests tba. Membership £30 Attending, £15 Supporting/Junior. Contact 33 Meyrick Drive, Wash Common, Berkshire, RG14 6SY.

*Although details are correct to the best of my knowledge, I advise readers to contact organisers prior to travelling. Always enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope when writing to any of the above contact addresses. Please mention the BRUM GROUP NEWS when replying to listings or advertisements.*

*If you know of any events which you think may be of interest to members of the BSFG please send details to me, Martin Tudor, (e-mail [empties@breathemail.net](mailto:empties@breathemail.net)). If you have attended any events or seen any films or videos that you would like to recommend to other members (or warn them about) please feel free to write a report or review and send it to the editorial address - MT.]*

## **The Jophan Report #133 by Martin Tudor**

Steven Spielberg has announced that he is to direct the film of the late Stanley Kubrick's long-running project A.I. You can read the Brian Aldiss' short story "Supertoys Last All Summer Long" – which forms the basis for the film – on The Official Brian Aldiss web site at [www.brianaldiss.com](http://www.brianaldiss.com).

Jim Goddard reports that he will shortly have copies of an Aldiss booklet I'm publishing, A CHINESE PERSPECTIVE (£7.95 postage included. 30% discount on three or more copies to groups and dealers). Adding that it should have been published the end of July but when it arrived the printer had transposed a couple of pages, and so it is being reprinted - expected early August. Contact Jim at Solaris Books, (e-mail [jim@solaris-books.co.uk](mailto:jim@solaris-books.co.uk)). Don't forget to check out the Official Brian W. Aldiss (run by Jim at [www.brianwaldiss.com](http://www.brianwaldiss.com)).

Stephen King's much-anticipated memoir ON WRITING is due for publication 31<sup>st</sup> October, meanwhile after spinning the biggest e-book success story ever with the short story "Riding the Bullet", King is back on the net with his first on-line novella "The Plant", to be presented in instalments at his official site. Although it is available for just \$1 per instalment there is a catch - it's on the honour system: you read, you pay. If 75% or more of readers *don't* pay up, no one will see the next instalment! (<http://www.stephenking.com/download.html>)

Pleased with the demand so far for his first online novella, King has confirmed he will proceed with a third, 25,000-word instalment on 25<sup>th</sup> September which will be sold for \$1. Writing on his official Web site, King said 152,132 people had downloaded the first part, and 116,200, or 76.38%, had paid \$1. In addition, 23,000 have promised to pay later, King said. Part two goes up 21<sup>st</sup> August.

"The pay-through rate has been higher than I dared hope," King said, adding that the next few segments would be considerably larger than the first ones. "Instalments four through seven or eight would be much longer - perhaps as long as 25,000 words - and the download price would go up to \$2.50," King said. "What do you think about this? Will it work?" he asks.

King said he paid \$124,150 for print ads in Publisher's Weekly and USA Today, to test the Web servers, for project management fees, for server set-up fees and compositor's fees and other costs. He added that he has not been disappointed that downloads of "The Plant" have lagged behind those for his short story "Riding the Bullet," which drew more than half a million downloads.

There are, reportedly, free downloads of both "Riding the Bullet" and "The Plant" available from [www.hauntedhalloween.com/alucard/stephen\\_king/stephen\\_king\\_riding\\_the\\_bullet\\_free\\_ebook\\_download.htm](http://www.hauntedhalloween.com/alucard/stephen_king/stephen_king_riding_the_bullet_free_ebook_download.htm) - let me know how you get on, when I tried I got trapped in a maze of registrations for cheap ISPs etc.

Harry Harrison has confirmed that he will possibly have a walk-on part in the Stainless Steel Rat movie and that "As of right now, CIRCUS is the last" Stainless Steel Rat book. (For more info check out the Harry Harrison web site at [www.harryharrison.com](http://www.harryharrison.com).)

Anne McCaffrey has announced that she has a brand new website for her fans - [www.annemccaffrey.org](http://www.annemccaffrey.org). Her son, Alec Johnson, is her new webmaster though they are both grateful to Steve Taylor for his work on the first two websites. She also announces that the 16<sup>th</sup> book about Pern should be available in the Spring of 2001.



On 15<sup>th</sup> July *the Daily Mail* destroyed the dreams of 40,000 British youngsters who had been auditioned for the part of Harry Potter in the forthcoming movie by revealing that director Chris Columbus has got his way and Liam Aiken, ten, is in negotiations with Warner Brothers to take the role – despite author J. K. Rowling's insistence that the star be British.

Aiken was directed by Columbus in the Julia Roberts film *STEPMOM*, and it has been no secret that Columbus has wanted him to play Potter all along.

Brits Dame Maggie Smith, Robbie Coltrane and Tim Roth have, however, been lined up for major roles in the movie and insiders at Warners are quick to point out that Aiken's mother is British, adding "it could be seen as a compromise. After all, he is half

British." The £85 million film is due to start production at Leavesden Studios in Hertfordshire in September so casting must be completed imminently.

There has been one major British success as far as casting goes – Harry's faithful white owl, Hedwig, will be played by Ook – a 16-year old great white owl from the Midlands!

A long-range rover designed to sniff for water will be launched to Mars in 2003 in a mission similar to the wildly successful Mars Pathfinder mission, NASA announced in July.

The mission is expected to cost \$350 million - \$400 million. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory will build the rover.

The next rover headed to Mars is designed to be even more ambitious than Pathfinder's Sojourner was. Officials are also looking into the possibility of sending a second rover to a different location on the Red



Planet - an unprecedented feat that, if successful, could shore up the agency's bruised image at Mars.

If that course is taken, it would be an additional \$175 million - \$200 million and would be launched on a separate rocket.

The twin-rover idea "could be an amazing opportunity, as well as a challenge," NASA space science chief Ed Weiler said in a statement.

NASA has selected this rover concept by Cornell to land on Mars in 2003. "I intend to make a decision in the next few weeks so that, if the decision is to proceed with two rovers, we can meet the development schedule for a 2003 launch," he said.

After a launch atop a Delta 2 rocket on June 4, 2003, and a cruise of seven and a half months, the rover mission should enter the Martian atmosphere 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2004. Surface operations are expected to last about 90 days, until late April 2004.

"This mission would give us the first ever robot field geologist on Mars," said Scott Hubbard, NASA's Mars Program Director. "It not only has the potential for breakthrough scientific discoveries but also gives us necessary experience in full-scale surface science operations."

The 300-pound Mars Exploration Program Rover would be a larger version of Pathfinder's rover Sojourner and land with Pathfinder-type bouncing air bags. The exact landing site has not been chosen but NASA expects to choose a location such as a former lakebed or channel deposit, where water once might have flowed. That could help scientists determine whether life ever existed on Mars or may still exist today.

The choice of a landing site will be made after NASA studies data from the Mars Global Surveyor - as well as images from a Mars orbiter that will be launched in 2001.

The 2003 rover would have a far greater capability than its predecessor. The new rover could trek up to 110 yards (100 meters) cross the Martian surface each day - almost as far as the little Sojourner went in its entire lifetime. The rover will carry among its six instruments a colour camera as well as a detector to search for evidence of liquid water that may have been present in the planet's past.

"We're ready to go," said Steve Squyres, the principal investigator for the rover's science payload and a professor of astronomy at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.



The rover, Squyres said, would be equipped with "20/20 vision, an ability to look inside of rocks, microscopic imaging capability, and three different spectrometers to tell us what things are made of."

"The idea is to go someplace where water has been active on the surface, and to use all these tools to read the geologic record and find out how habitable the conditions were," he said.

Last month's announcement came just days before the agency's self-imposed 1<sup>st</sup> August deadline to pick a mission to dispatch to Mars. Any later than that and mission planners simply would not have had time to prepare any sort of spacecraft in time for a 2003 launch.

The decision was especially critical because launch opportunities occur only every 26 months, when Earth and Mars are aligned in such a way as to minimise flight times to the Red Planet.

The debate over what to send to Mars was part of an ongoing dilemma over how best to explore Mars in the wake of last year's failures of both an orbiter and a lander. NASA originally had planned to announce its decision on 24<sup>th</sup> July at a press conference. But that was postponed after NASA, in a statement, said the decision proved "much more complex and difficult than anticipated."

Squyres said he would be hard-pressed to think the choice between an orbiter and a rover came down to the science value of either.

"Clearly, both missions were going to do outstanding science," he said. "But I think one of the primary reasons you would favor a rover over an orbiter, for one thing, it's time to get back down to the surface of Mars. You can't understand Mars without getting down onto the surface."

Noel Hinners, vice president of flight systems for Lockheed Martin Space Systems, which would have built the orbiter that lost out to the rover for the 2003 slot, agreed that "the science per se was not the discriminator."

"The fact that we have the Mars Global Surveyor there, we have the 2001 orbiter going, ESA (the European Space Agency) is looking at Mars Express, Japan has Nozomi. Part of it is there is a slew of orbiters there already," Hinners said. "Very clearly too, the pizzazz of the Sojourner has gotten people to say these rovers get a lot of attention and good science, so let's go that way."

Two teams at NASA's JPL in Pasadena, California, conducted separate two-month studies to determine the likelihood for success, cost and readiness for flight.

"The rover offers never-before possible opportunities for discoveries about the Martian surface at scales ranging from microscopic to that of gigantic boulders," said Jim Garvin, a Mars project scientist at NASA Headquarters. "This is a key stepping stone to the future of our Mars exploration program."

[For much of the above news many thanks to: Steve Green; Jim Goddard; *MATRIX: the Daily Mail; the Mail on Sunday; the Express & Star*; Metro News; the BFS news service ([www.herebedragons.co.uk/bfs](http://www.herebedragons.co.uk/bfs)); Space News ([www.SPACE.COM](http://www.SPACE.COM)); FILE 770 (<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html>)]

## Book Reviews

**HAWK & FISHER 2: FEAR AND LOATHING** by Simon R. Green  
Millennium; 646pp; £6.99; p/b.  
Reviewed by Anne Woodford.

Reprinted as a collection this is three stories about two cops Hawk and Fisher a husband and wife team that would give Dirty Harry a good name. Written in classic “city cop” crime style the back drop is pure fantasy. While this is the second collection of stories about Hawk and Fisher they are self-contained and it is not necessary to have read the first collection. A good read for the beach or train this holiday.

**WORLD'S END** by Mark Chadbourn  
Gollancz; £16.99; h/b.  
Star Rating: \*\*\*\*  
Reviewed by Martin Tudor.

I should first declare a slight bias – I’ve been a fan of Mr Chadbourn since I read his second novel *NOCTURNE* some years back. At the time I bored all my friends recommending and enthusing about it and published rave reviews every where I could.

*WORLD'S END*, subtitled “Book One of the Age of Misrule” is (amazingly) every bit as good as *NOCTURNE*. Not as atmospheric perhaps, but every bit as enthralling – and with more volumes to come!

Drawing heavily on Celtic myth and British folklore in general, and Arthurian legend in particular (I’d love to see Chadbourn and Robert Holdstock discuss their differing approaches to these topics on a con panel sometime!), Chadbourn tells a tale of the end of the Age of Reason. As technology and science begin to fail Jack Churchill and Ruth Gallagher are forced to embark on a desperate quest for four “magickal”

items from the previous Age of Magic. If they find these there is a chance that there *might* be a place for humanity as the old order returns – but there are no guarantees and the big question is can the ancient “gods” be trusted?

If you're into dark, apocalyptic fantasy this is definitely for you, if not try it anyway – Chadbourn is a powerful storyteller and he might just convert you!

**GRAVITY DREAMS** by L. E. Modestitt Jr.

**Orbit; 502pp; £6.99; p/b.**

**Star Rating: \*\*\*\*\***

**Reviewed by Anne Woodford.**

Science fiction! A good post Holocaust novel well worth a read. The holocaust this time being as a result of nanotechnology and age control. The lead character has to come to terms with technology and new values. Aiming for one post as a respectable teacher in society he falls from grace, having all he loves taken away he has to run. Fleeing to the demons he has to start his life again and being stubborn ends up at the bottom before he can accept the talents he has in the new society.

**INVASION** by Eric L. Harry

**Hodder & Stoughton; £17.99; h/b.**

**Star Rating: \*\*\***

**Reviewed by Martin Tudor.**

I must admit I'd never heard of Eric L. Harry before, nor if I had would his previous “military epics” (ARC LIGHT and PROTECT & DEFEND) have appealed to me. (The term “military epic” when describing an SF novel, perhaps unfairly, always reminds me of the appalling David Drake series “Hammer’s Slammers”.) But as I frequently enjoy “alternate history/world” stories I decided to give it a go – I'm glad I did, this is a rattling good yarn.

The increasing political and economic strength of China force the West to make a number of seemingly innocuous concessions, including the dismantling of the West's comprehensive Spy Satellite network. As the Chinese expand throughout South East Asia the West, naturally, turn a blind eye – the Chinese provide a welcome stabilising effect in these previously worrisome areas. The West continue their policy of defence cuts in this increasingly war free world.

It is only when China turns its attention to the Middle East and swiftly conquers the precious oil field that the West suddenly becomes concerned. But, reduced to stone age, ground level, intelligence gathering, the West finds that the Chinese have the advantage of total surprise. When China brutally conquers Israel and Tel Aviv is razed by nuclear power the EC mobilises.

It is now that the lack of reliable military intelligence proves decisive – when the massed naval forces of Europe are destroyed by the sudden appearance of a totally unknown Chinese fleet. The EC swiftly capitulates and China is free to turn its attention to the US. Within weeks the continental US has been invaded and America finds herself fighting for survival.

It is a testament to the writing ability of Harry (a descendent of Mark Twain according to the cover blurb) that this unlikely scenario comes across as eminently believable in this novel. (It would be interesting to hear the views of someone who knows China quite well, such as Brian Aldiss, on the plausibility of the events depicted ...)

It takes a lot these days to get me cheering on the Yanks (sick as I am of Hollywood's apparently concerted effort to re-write all recent history in a pro-American/anti-British manner – “special relationship” indeed!) but I did here. This is ideal holiday reading, perfect for long train journeys or on the beach – I may even check out his earlier works.

**THE TOWER AND THE HIVE by Anne McCaffrey,  
Corgi; 396pp; £5.99; p/b.  
Reviewed by Anne Woodford.**

The fifth book and advertised as the last in the sequence that started with *The Rowan*.

Very much a sequel with characters carrying forward such that reading previous books is a necessity. The heroes and heroines are psionics showing they are the best. The transportation of spaceships is by teleportation assisted with mechanical energy and communication is by messages sent the same way or by telepathy. This makes the universe small enough that any character can interact with any other. A comfortable read in the style of a soap but aiming for the grandeur of space opera.

**BSFG Web Site**

If you have a moment to spare in front of your browser why not turn it to William McCabe's BSFG web site at <http://www.bsfg.freesevers.com/>  
Comments, suggestions and any help will be welcomed by William who can be contacted by e-mail at [wam@wamccabe.freesever.co.uk](mailto:wam@wamccabe.freesever.co.uk).



# **Brum Group SKITTLES EVENING**

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2000**

**at the Selly Park Tavern,**

**Pershore Road, Birmingham.**

**(On 45 & 47 bus route, 10 minutes from city centre.)**

**Just £10 per person!**

Includes choice of meal (details to follow), skittles and the glorious prizes! Tickets available at Group meetings or by post (cheques to "the Birmingham Science Fiction Group") from Alan Woodford, The Treasurer, 2 Old Port Close, Tipton, West Midlands, DY9 7XN.

# **Novacon 30**

## **the Britannia Hotel,**

### **New Street, Birmingham**

### **10th-12th November 2000**



**Attending membership costs £32.00**  
**(£35.00 on the door), cheques payable to**  
**“Novacon 30” to: Steve Lawson,**  
**Registrations, 379 Myrtle Road,**  
**Sheffield, S2 3HQ, England, e-mail**  
**xl5@zoom.co.uk, or for further**  
**information check out [http://www.](http://www.cooky.demon.co.uk/n30/n30.html)**  
**cooky.demon.co.uk/n30/n30.html**

## **Brum Group Dates for your Diary**

11 AUGUST 2000: BRIAN W. ALDISS.

8 SEPTEMBER 2000: Special meeting at Fantasycon 24.

13 OCTOBER 2000: BSGF vs B'ham University SF Society Quiz.

10-12 NOVEMBER 2000: Special Meeting at Novacon 30.

8 DECEMBER 2000: SKITTLES EVENING at the Selly Park Tavern.

12 JANUARY 2001: Annual General Meeting.

## **Brum Group Meeting Information**

The **Brum Group** meets from 7.45pm for 8pm in the Britannia Hotel, New Street, Birmingham, (entrance in Union Passageway), on the second Friday of each month (unless otherwise notified). We usually have a Speaker 8-9pm followed by an informal meeting until 10.30pm. Drinks may be purchased from Harvey's Bar on the Mezzanine and taken to our meeting room, usually the Lichfield on the second floor. Admission discounts are at the discretion of the committee and will depend on satisfactory proof of status being produced.

## **Committee and Contacts**

**Group Chairman**, Vernon Brown, 106 Green Lanes, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5JH. **Membership** (which includes 12 copies of this newsletter and reduced price entry to formal meetings) is £16.00 per person, or £21.00 for two at the same address. Cheques to "The Birmingham Science Fiction Group" and sent to: The Treasurer, Alan Woodford, 2 Old Port Close, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 7XN (e-mail enquiries [bsfg@bortas.demon.co.uk](mailto:bsfg@bortas.demon.co.uk)). **Newsletter** Martin Tudor, address below. **Web**: [www.bsfg.freesevers.com/](http://www.bsfg.freesevers.com/)

## **Colophon**

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