

# **Brum Group News**

The *Free* Monthly Newsletter of the  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
**SCIENCE FICTION GROUP**

APRIL 2001 ISSUE 355

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**Alan Woodford (Treasurer)**

**Rog Peyton (Newsletter Editor)**

**+ Steve Jones & William McCabe**

**NOVACON 31 Chairman: Tony Berry**

Friday 20th April

## **A SURPRISE SPEAKER**

Yep, a surprise speaker - actually it'll be a surprise to your committee as well!

As you are aware, the normal meeting falls on Good Friday and all good SF fans will be at the annual Eastercon. This year it is being held relatively local in Hinckley, near Nuneaton. It's on the main train line - you've no excuse!

Soooo...the April meeting had to be put back a week to the 20th. There'll be many Big Names at Eastercon and we are hoping to get someone very tipsy in the bar and strike at their weakest moment, getting them to agree to come along and entertain us. Well, you have to have some game plan...

We've had this problem in the past and more times than not, we've ended up with an extremely good speaker, occasionally someone from the States who's come over for Eastercon and decided to stay another couple of weeks. or so. Yes, there have been those years when we haven't been lucky - how many times have I heard the excuse that because they're at Eastercon, they've got to take the wife out the following weekend!

But, trust us, even though we're leaving it till the last minute, this year we'll be getting an excellent speaker for this April's meeting. Honest, guv. RGP

*Our guest speaker will be giving their talk in the usual place at the usual time. Which is in **the Lichfield Room on the second floor at the Britannia Hotel, New Street (entrance in Union Passageway opposite the Odeon)**. The talk will commence at 7.45pm so please arrive early, get your drinks from the bar and be seated in plenty of time. Non-members always welcome.*

### **DAN DARE DISPLAY**

The Fifties spaceman lives on! Frank Hampson, Dan Dare's creator, was supposedly so accurate in his technological predictions that the Ministry of Defence had a weekly order for the EAGLE, the comic in which Dan Dare appeared.

The display, at Croydon Clocktower, features models of spaceships, a replica of

Hampson's studio and a statue of Dan's evil adversary, The Mekon. Visitors can have a go at drawing a Dan Dare strip and find out more about the EAGLE in hands-on computer displays.

The display has already opened and will run till June 3rd. More information from 0208 253 1030.

*VB/TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT*

## SKETCHES FOR 2001 FOUND

Almost 100 minutely detailed technical illustrations used in the making of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, have been rediscovered after 30 years in the garage of a former NASA employee now living in Britain.

The drawings by Harry Lange were commissioned by Kubrick to design the spaceships, spacesuits and sets for a project with the working title A JOURNEY TO THE STARS.

Lange, who also worked on STAR WARS and MOONRAKER, found his old work in several mouldy cardboard boxes in his garage in Ruislip.

The drawings will be on display at the Museum of Oxford but for how long we don't know. *VB/DAILY TELEGRAPH*

## FANDOM RIPPED OFF?

"Is there nothing left in this world that can't be patented, copyrighted or trademarked? The latest move in the stampede to slap intellectual property rights on everything that exists is the attempt to register trademarks on words that are already in everyday use.

For example, a California company called Fandom has applied to the US Patent and Trademark Office for a trademark on the word 'fandom' for its online entertainment and information service. The application claims that the first use of the word in business was in 1999. That comes as a big surprise to science-fiction fans who've been using 'fandom' to describe their community for decades - as in the popular phrase 'fandom is a way of life'."

*VB/(from NEW SCIENTIST Mar 3rd)*

## CLASSIC HARDCOVER REISSUES

Gollancz will be reissuing DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS by John Wyndham in hardcover in late May - the 50th Anniversary Edition. This ties in with the new sequel by Simon Clark mentioned last

month ..... Gollancz are also issuing new hardcovers of CHILDHOOD'S END by Arthur C Clarke, DUNE by Frank Herbert, THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS by Ursula K LeGuin and A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ by Walter M Miller Jr., all in May. In Junewill be new hardcovers of THE STARS MY DESTINATION by Alfred Bester, MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE by Philip K Dick and THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS by Robert A Heinlein.

It is not known at present whether these will have a uniform appearance, a type of hardcover 'SF Masterworks', or not. Only the Bester title has appeared in the 'SF Masterworks' paperback series though I'm sure Malcolm Edwards would dearly love to be able to include all the others. Unfortunately, the rights to paperback editions of the others were leased out years ago and are still retained by Pan, Orbit and Hodder. *RGP*

## ARTHUR C CLARKE AWARD

The nominees for Best Novel published in the UK during 2000 are:-

### PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

by Octavia E Butler (Women's Press)

### ASH: A SECRET HISTORY

by Mary Gentle (Gollancz)

### COSMONAUT KEEP

by Ken MacLeod (Orbit)

### PERDIDO STREET STATION

by China Mieville (Pan Macmillan)

### REVELATION SPACE

by Alastair Reynolds (Gollancz)

### SALT

by Adam Roberts (Gollancz)

The winner will be announced at the Science Museum, London on Saturday May 19, and presented with an engraved bookend a cheque for £2001. *RGP/LOCUS*

## DSFA AWARD NOMINEES

The nominees for best of 2000 are:-

### Best Novel:

### PERDIDO STREET STATION

by China Mieville (Pan Macmillan)

**redROBE**

by John Courtenay Grimwood (Earthlight)

**PARADOX**

by John Meaney (Bantam)

**REVELATION SPACE**

by Alastair Reynolds (Gollancz)

**ASH: A SECRET HISTORY**

by Mary Gentle (Gollancz)

**Best Short Fiction:**

**"Destiny on Tartarus"**

by Eric Brown (SPECTRUM #2)

**"La Vampireesse"**

by Tanith Lee (INTERZONE #154)

**"Adventures in the Ghost Trade"**

by Liz Williams (INTERZONE #154)

**"Singing Each to Each"**

by Paul di Filippo (INTERZONE #155)

**"The Suspect Genome"**

by Peter F Hamilton (INTERZONE #156)

**Best Artwork:**

**"Physiognomies of Flight"** China Mieville

(Cover, VECTOR #213)

**"Hideaway"** Dominic Harman

(Cover, INTERZONE #157)

**"Afetere's Eyes"** Gerald Gaubert

(Cover, SCHEHERAZADE #19)

The winners will be announced on the Sunday evening at Eastercon. *RGP/LOCUS*

**NEWS IN BRIEF. . .**

Tad Williams will be doing an informal signing at ANDROMEDA for his latest hardcover - OTHERWORLD 4: SEA OF SILVER LIGHT - probably on April 25th ..... There's a new Alfred Bester volume out from ibooks (Simon & Schuster US/UK), called REDEMOLISHED which is a collection of 10 previously uncollected shorts, including the short novel "Hell is Forever", 3 articles, 4 essays and 5 interviews Bester conducted with John Huston, Rex Stout, Woody Allen, Isaac Asimov and Robert Heinlein but most importantly, includes the previously unpublished prologue to the 1953 Hugo winner, THE DEMOLISHED MAN. It's a large format yuppyback - sadly, there's no hardcover .... Paper Tiger are issuing an art book in May devoted to Fred Gambino.

He'll be at ANDROMEDA to sign copies in early June - full details next month .... The March 2001 issue of LOCUS features an interview with Frank Kelly Freas on his 50 years of SF art

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**May 25-27. ECLECTICON 21** at the Holiday Inn, Leicester. Guests are Storm Constantine, Gareth Thomas, Jacqueline Pearce, Ed Bishop, Frank Maher. Membership £50. Info from 47 Bennetts Court, Bristol BS37 4XH.

e-mail [eclectic21@burble.com](mailto:eclectic21@burble.com)

website [www.eclectic21.co.uk](http://www.eclectic21.co.uk).

**May 25-27. SECOND** at the De Vere Hotel, Swindon. Guest of Honour Paul J McAuley. Info from 19 Hill Court Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL52 3JJ.

e-mail [second@sjbradshaw.cix.co.uk](mailto:second@sjbradshaw.cix.co.uk)

website [www.seecon.org.uk](http://www.seecon.org.uk)

**Jun 28-Jul 1. 2001: A CELEBRATION OF BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION** at the Foresight Centre, University of Liverpool, Liverpool.

Guests of Honour - Brian Aldiss, Stephen Baxter, Nicola Griffith, Gwyneth Jones, Ken MacLeod, John Clute. Guest Artist Judith Clute. Membership (including meals) £130. Authors and students £72. Info from Dr Farah Mendlesohn, Middlesex University, White Hart Lane, London N17 8HR. e-mail Andy sawyer at [asawyer@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:asawyer@liverpool.ac.uk)

website [www.liv.ac.uk/~asawyer/200.html](http://www.liv.ac.uk/~asawyer/200.html)

**August 24-26. EBORACON MMI (UNICON 2001)** at Langwith College, The University of York. Guests: Douglas Hill, Stan Nicholls, Anne Gay, Diane Duane and Peter Morwood. Membership £25 (students £20). £30 on the door. Info from 'Sparks', Mike Rennie, 68 Crichton Avenue, Burton Stone Lane, York YO30 6EE, UK.

e-mail: [eboracon@psych.york.ac.uk](mailto:eboracon@psych.york.ac.uk)

website: [www-users.york.ac.uk/~amr107/](http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~amr107/)

[eboracon/index.html](http://eboracon/index.html)

**November 9-11 NOVACON 31** - the Birmingham SF Group's own annual convention. This year at the Quality Hotel, Walsall. Guest of Honour will be Gwyneth Jones (who also writes as Ann Halam). Venue to be announced. Details from Steve Lawson at the address above.



Although details are correct to the best of our knowledge, we advise contacting organisers before travelling. Always enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope when writing to any of the above contact addresses.

Any information about forthcoming SF/Fantasy/Horror events are always welcome - please send to me at [rog@andromedabook.co.uk](mailto:rog@andromedabook.co.uk), tell me about it in the shop or phone me at the shop on 0121 643 1999.



## BOOK REVIEWS



Rating system:-

- 5 star - excellent. A must to read.
- 4 star - very good.
- 3 star - good but flawed.
- 2 star - very average.
- 1 star - read only if there's nowt on telly.
- 0 stars - Turkey! Turkey! Turkey!

### **A FIRE UPON THE DEEP**

*by Vernor Vinge*

Millennium / 400pgs / £6.99 / pbk

Reviewed by Pauline Morgan.

Rating \* \* \* \* \*

I found this volume a little difficult to get into because it took some time to be comfortable with the range of new concepts propounded here.

Vinge's galaxy is layered into zones. Most of the space-travelling sentient races live towards the edge, in the Beyond, where the laws of physics are different enough to allow faster-than-light travel and computer systems with a far greater ability than those we are familiar with. Earth is in the next zone, closer to the galactic core, called the Slowness. Some races have gone further out into the Transcend and become god-like Powers.

A group of humans, working in a long dead archive revive a Power which begins to destroy the civilisations of the Beyond. They were not entirely stupid as one ship did manage to escape from the disaster area and land on a primitive planet near the bottom of the Beyond, near the boundary with the Slowness. Here, after a bumpy landing, the ship is attacked by the indigenous species. The children, Jefri and Joanna survive but

wind up on opposite sides, both believing that the other is dead and the opposing group is the enemy. This race, marvellously portrayed, are pack animals. Each person consists of several dog-like members which are in constant telepathic contact and which cannot stray too far from each other without becoming disorientated and losing their intelligence. They have no hands but manipulate things with their mouths, demonstrating a perfect co-ordination between members. As children, Jefri and Joanna have the flexibility to adapt to their new environment.

Meanwhile, the Blight that is the new Power, destroys the worlds of the Beyond and Ravna, a librarian on the archive planet of Relay, begins to realise that the ship might have aboard the only thing that can counter-act the ravages of the Blight. She, Pham Nuwen (a human-seeming emissary of a Power called the Old One) and two Skoderiders (normally sedentary aliens resembling sea-lillies whose short-term memory is enhanced by the electronic skrodes that they ride), decide that their only chance is to reach the ship and gain control of the Countermeasure it carries. For both Ravna's party, who are pursued by a fleet of Blight controlled ships, and the children, whose friends are intent on destroying each other, it is a race against time.

This is an excellent, hard SF novel of a calibre that is becoming rare. PM

### **ACROSS REALTIME**

*by Vernor Vinge*

Millennium / 532pgs / £6.99 / pbk

Reviewed by Pauline Morgan.

Rating \* \* \* \* \*

This book follows the trend of publishing together two manageable, but related, volumes as one doorstep. And with a new title. Maybe some people will make the mistake of thinking it is a brand new book. It keeps the author in the public eye at a time when the next opus is probably overdue.

This omnibus contains **THE PEACE WAR** from 1984 and **MAROONED IN REALTIME** from 1986. The common factor is bobbles. In the first book, anything dangerous or dissident has been surrounded by a silver sphere. The technology enables peace of a kind to be held, but what the enforcers do not realise is that the bobbles have a limited life. The main thrust of the story involves the complications that arise as the bobbles begin to burst, releasing the people and dangers that have been locked in stasis into the current world.

The second book extrapolates further. Here a group of people are time hopping. Every so often they emerge into realtime to look at the changed world. In one hop, when Marta gets left outside in realtime, this is regarded as a bizarre form of murder and Wil Brierson is asked to investigate.

Both these books are excellent and deserve reprinting. Well worth reading. *PM*

### **TIK-TOK**

*by John Sladek*

**Gollancz / 184pgs / £9.99 / Trade pbk**

**Reviewed by William McCabe**

**Rating \* \* \* \***

Sladek's approach to robots was always going to be different to Asimov's. From the parody, written as 'I-click as I move', to the 'asimov circuits' in this book, that are probably no more than a scam perpetrated by the makers robots to convince buyers that the machine they just bought is going to do as it's told and not go on some kind of killing spree, it becomes quite obvious that this is the other side of the coin. This is the story of a robot that decides to find out what it is capable of. It goes from the killing of a blind girl to bank robbery and general slaughter, with real problems.

The story shifts between the present, with Tik-Tok discovering his artistic and criminal genius; to his previous life as a slave, to being part of an eccentric family (one of whom blows the family fortune on a full-sized replica of the great pyramid in gold); to a nanny to two brattish children in

the suburbs. The human characters all veer between the slightly eccentric to the outright lunatic, with the harmless being there to be exploited by the psychopathic. The other robots, convinced that they are performing well within their imposed limits, assume that Tik-Tok is really relaying instructions from some human. They have no problem with armed robbery, or planting the odd bomb on a passenger aircraft..

Of course this is a mad world and, when it all comes down to it, who else would they want to run the show?

Good, solid black comedy. *WAM*

### **NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR**

*by Philip K Dick*

**Millennium / 225pgs / £6.99 / pbk**

**Reviewed by Dave Hardy**

**Rating \* \* \* \***

This is volume 36 in the SF Masterworks series. I have to admit that I haven't read many PKD books. No particular reason - I just haven't. I have heard it said that the more you read his body of works, the more you enjoy each book. That could well be true. Certainly I enjoyed this one which was first published in 1975, so it's relatively late. I must read more.

One thing that I always find distracts me in books of this era is not the presence of 'futuristic' technology, but its absence. This story takes place in only 50 to 60 years' time - 2055 or so - and one can fly to cities on Mars in a matter of hours (if only!), yet they use 'tape projectors' for entertainment.

This is a story to make your brain hurt. Our hero, Eric Sweetscent (yes, really), via his estranged wife, becomes involved with a new drug which has been developed for use on the enemy *reegs*. Or is it Lilistar and its 'Starmen? Nothing is spelt out; you have to work out what is going on as you read. But the drug JJ-180 has the strange side-effect of taking the user backward or forward in time. Which is where the brain-hurting comes in, as Eric flits back and forth in time, at one point meeting himself. Eric's temporary



boss, Gino Molinari - 'The Mole' - whom he is supposed to keep alive, seems to exist in several forms, one constantly sick and dying, one strong and fit, and one already assassinated. Are these persona from other timelines, or are they mere robants? Does it make any difference? In some futures he is regarded as a traitor, in others as a saviour. But the future of the Solar System depends upon his survival, so Eric had better make the right decisions. Read this and find out for yourself if he does.

One minor quibble I'd like to make as an artist - the otherwise nice cover by Chris Moore is rather 'killed' by the bright magenta blob at the top of the cover, which attracts the eye away from the art itself.

DAH

### **LION TIME IN TIMBUCTOO**

*by Robert Silverberg*

Voyager / 390pgs / £6.99 / pbk

Reviewed by Pauline Morgan

Rating \* \* \* \*

This is the sixth volume of the collected stories of Robert Silverberg and covers a period between 1989 and 1995. It doesn't claim to be all of his stories from that period, just the best of them, but since he has been published in such a wide range of magazines, it is unlikely that anyone will have stumbled across all of these. They are all excellent and cover a wide range of themes.

The title novella, "Lion Time in Timbuctoo", is an alternate history story, in which Islam is the main religion and Africa and America have not been colonised by Europeans. The relatively simple story of waiting for an African king to die, allows members of the different powers to gather, and subtly develop the differences in this world.

There are also stories of prescience, time travel, alien occupation and a War of the Worlds, as told by Henry James. All the stories contain surprises. Well worth reading.

PM

### **DISTRACTION**

*by Bruce Sterling*

Millennium / 489pgs / £6.99 / pbk

Reviewed by Chris Chivers

Rating \* \* \* \*

The world of American politics, along with an economy that makes the 1930's depression seem like a mere blip in one's bank statement, join forces to give a view of our possible future. The high-fliers of today's society have become a footnote in the pages of history and the bulk of humanity gets by on its wits and scrounging, and even federal buildings have been occupied by the homeless and dispossessed. But the semblance of normality is carried on by a government that has not caught up with the realities of the modern world.

Set forty-three years into the future, Bruce Sterling has set this novel in a world that is coming apart. In America, central government is a joke as IT and cheap transport have made the certain world of the ordinary citizen meaningless. Wars are fought over the internet and intellectual property has become freely available to anyone who wishes to download it. Into this world of a bankrupt American economy Oscar Valpariso is looking for his next project. Oscar, the chief political consultant for Senator elect Alcott Bambakias, is on a fact-finding mission for the Senator to the Buna National Collaboratory, a cloning establishment. The Buna National Collaboratory gives Oscar a weapon to fight the corruption within the American political establishment as federal funding for various projects is siphoned off into the politicians' pockets. After an inspection tour of the facility Oscar realises that the cloning lab is a goldmine that can once again give America a leading position in the world economy. As the story unfolds, Oscar's new aim in life becomes the clearing out of the political hacks along with a state governor who has virtually made his home state independent, and the uncovering of the projects that have

been bought out to protect what is left of American industry.

Bruce Sterling still has the power to surprise the reader, and in this latest offering he takes a journey into a world that could become all too real, as the speed of technology's impact on ordinary lives becomes faster and faster. The future's out there. Welcome to the middle of the 21st century. CC

*(Editor's note:* DISTRACTION was, of course, winner of the Arthur C Clarke Award 2000 for Best Novel)

### **THE SKIES OF PERN**

*by Anne McCaffrey*

Bantam / 447pgs / £16.99 / hcvr

Reviewed by Pauline Morgan

Rating \* \* \*

When Anne McCaffrey writes about Pern and its dragons, she is as magnificent as ever. These books have a sparkle that is missing in too many of the collaborations.

THE SKIES OF PERN takes off after ALL THE WEYRS OF PERN and focuses on F'Lessan, F'lar and Lessa's son. Although the Red Star has been diverted, thread is still falling and all the pressures on the dragons and their riders is still present. To add to the confusion is the belief by some holders that dragons are no longer needed - or soon won't be. Also, there are some people who think that the new technology, rediscovered with the finding of the colony's original landing site, is an anathema and should be destroyed or resisted at all costs. Into this scenario falls a cometary fragment. The resultant tidal waves destroy many coastal holdings. The up side, and developed within the novel, is the discovery that the dragons have the power of telekinesis. This suggests a hope that the dragons will still have a role after the final strands of thread have drifted from the skies.

The people in this period of Pern's history seem to have extremely eventful lives and sometimes it seems that the

solution of the problems is solved a little too easily. However, this book is guaranteed to pass away an idle hour or two of pleasant enjoyment. PM

### **GOING, GOING, GONE**

*by Jack Womack*

Voyager / 218pgs / £6.99 / pbk

Reviewed by William McCabe

Rating \*

Sometimes writers create alternate visions of the world as it is. In such worlds the characters tend to speak in languages that we can't necessarily understand. Take CLOCKWORK ORANGE, for example - it came complete with its own little dictionary of slang. The problem here is that you don't get the dictionary. The invented language isn't so far from English, it may even be something in regular use in some American ghetto (or university) but it is used enough to irritate.

This is a novel of alternate worlds. Mostly, just one but, towards the end, there's a couple of others. It is always New York, though.

The central character tests drugs for the government. Not the medical-breakthrough cancer-curing kind but the psychedelic mind-distorting sort that you drop on the enemy in times of war. It is no wonder that he's seeing things: or, at least, one thing. It seems to be a ghost but there are some really heavy women on hand who seem to know that it is something more than that. It's someone from an alternate reality - and so are they.

It would have been nice to have some of the plot lines start at the beginning and go all the way to the end, but none of them seem to. The fact that the whole universe changes in the last few pages sees to that. Nothing really seems to go anywhere except away. Difficult and unsatisfying. WAM

*(Editor's note* - this book is volume 6 in a loose ongoing series and, in fairness to William, no mention is made of this fact



anywhere on the cover or inside the book in this edition (it does acknowledge the series inside the US hardcover). Which goes a long way to explain why he found it difficult. I think - I may be wrong - but the dictionary to the slang appeared in AMBIENT - the first volume of the sequence. For the record, the other volumes were TERRAPLANE, HEATHERN, ELVISSEY and RANDOM ACTS OF SENSELESS VIOLENCE. All are currently available in the US in trade paperbacks. Ask at ANDROMEDA - 643 1999 - if you'd like to order copies).

## **THE DESCENT**

*by Jeff Long*

Orion / 561 pgs / £6.99 / pbk

Reviewed by Chris Chivers

Rating \*

Deep beneath the earth lie a maze of tunnels and caves that connect all the continents of the world. Ruling this subterranean world is 'Satan', alive and well. Over the years people have disappeared into caves and other recesses of the earth never to be seen again. Into this unknown world stumbles Dwight David Crockett - Ike to his friends - the leader of a party of trekkers into the Himalayas. Cut off from civilisation by a ferocious blizzard, Ike and his party take refuge in a mountain cave only to discover the remains of an RAF flyer encased in the rock walls of the cave and covered with strange markings. As the members of the party descend further into the warren of tunnels they discover they are not alone.

The return of Ike to the normal world triggers a massive move to explore the subterranean caverns beneath their feet, but

little do the explorers know the consequences of their actions. The battle that develops, between the subterranean dwellers and the invaders from the surface, forces the underground people further from their normal territories. A small, mysterious group, which has been watching and collecting data concerning the occasional forays of the underground dwellers into the surface world, is forced to stand aside and simply watch the events unfolding before it. The subterranean world has tricks of its own to play on the invaders from the surface, as the casualty rate on both sides climbs.

The blurb on the front cover reads: 'One major takedown of a read. A page-burner.' Unfortunately I cannot agree. This is a story, based on old myths and legends, that, like the story of Atlantis and the stories in the Bible, have been exaggerated and warped through the retelling. As a purely fictional work it could have been better crafted with more sympathy for the characters. The plotline loses its way, so that the whole book becomes a mishmash. The basic idea holds a lot of merit but I feel that the author was running to a publisher's deadline and what could have been a fine story has turned into a collage of scenes that only start to coalesce near the end.

One definitely for the insomniacs. CC

**Newsletter 355** copyright 2001 for the Birmingham Science Fiction Group. Designed by Rog Peyton. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the committee or the general membership or, for that matter, the person giving their opinion.

**The BRUM GROUP Website** address is [www.bsfgreeservers.com/](http://www.bsfgreeservers.com/)  
Contributions, ideas, etc. always welcome.

The BSFG meets on the second Friday of each month at the Britannia Hotel, New Street. Membership is £16 per year per person (or £21 for two members living at the same address). This includes the 12 free issues of the Newsletter plus reduced entrance fee at each meeting. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Birmingham Science Fiction Group' and sent to our 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))