

Brum Group News

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

JUNE 2003

ISSUE 381

Honorary Presidents:

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Committee:

Vernon Brown (Chairman)

Vicky Cook (Secretary)

Pat Brown (Treasurer)

Rog Peyton (Newsletter Editor)

+ Steve Jones & William McCabe

NOVACON 33 Chairman: Martin Tudor

June Meeting (Friday 13th at 7.45pm)
Local author

IAN R MacLEOD

This month's speaker is somewhat of a mystery man; a local author - he lives in Sutton - who no-one really knows. I've met him only a few times - He used to come into Andromeda but never introduced himself. Only when I noticed the name on his credit card did he admit to who he was. He's also far better known in the US than he is here in the UK.

Ian started selling short fiction in 1989 with a story in INTERZONE. Most of his short fiction has appeared only in the USA in ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE and to date has had two books published - both in the USA, not in the UK. June sees the publication of his third book - LIGHT AGES - which is appearing simultaneously in the US and the UK. Copies of the UK edition of this book will be on sale at the meeting but supplies will be limited (I can't carry that many!) so if you KNOW you want the book, please let me know asap (replayer@rogpeyton.fsnet.co.uk. The book - an alternate-world novel - is detailed and pictured on Ian's website - www.ianrmacleod.freemove.co.uk.

RGP

July Meeting - we're pleased to announce that **Jasper Fforde** will be our speaker. Fast becoming a cult figure - we're told we may have several attendees at the meeting, as his fans will travel a long way to hear him...

OUR NEW MEETING PLACE

Currently we meet at The Old Joint Stock, ideally situated in the city centre, a few minutes walk from road, rail and Metro stations, in Temple Row overlooking St Philips Cathedral. It's in the upstairs room - through the pub on right hand side, right to the back corner and up the stairs. Our meeting room is opposite the top of the stairs, slightly to the left. But the doors should be open...

RGP

DAVE MOORING 1961-2003

It is with much sadness that we report the death of SF fan and artist Dave Mooring at 10.30pm on 21st May from pancreatic cancer. Earlier that day at 11.30am he achieved his wish and married his fiancée of 20 years Sarah Dibb.

Dave was well-known to the Brum Group having been to many NOVAConS in the 80s and early 90s. His work was always prominent in the art show and Chris Morgan and I must have auctioned dozens of pieces of his art over the years. We both remember that he ALWAYS came up to thank us afterwards, usually buying us a pint or whatever in the bar. He was winner of the NOVACon Award for fanzine art no less than four times between 1989 to 1993.

A great talent. He will be missed.

RGP

2003 HUGO NOMINATIONS

Best Novel: **KILN PEOPLE** by David Brin (Tor US/Orbit UK); **THE SCAR** by China Mieville (Macmillan UK/Del Rey US); **THE YEARS OF RICE AND SALT** by Kim Stanley Robinson (Bantam US/HarperCollins UK); **HOMINIDS** by Robert J Sawyer (Tor US); **BONES OF THE EARTH** by Michael Swanwick (Eos US)

Best Novella: "Bronte's Egg" by Richar Chwedyk (F&SF 8/02); "A Year in the Linear City" by Paul di Filippo (PS Publishing UK); "The Political Officer" by Charles Coleman Finlay (F&SF 4/02); "In Spirit" by Pat Forde (ANALOG 9/02); "Coraline" by Neil Gaiman (HarperCollins); "Breathmoss" by Ian R MacLeod (ASIMOV's 5/02).

Best Novelette: "Madonna of the Maquiladora" by Gregory Frost (ASIMOV's 5/02); "The Wild Girls" by Ursula LeGuin (ASIMOV's 3/02); "Presence" by Maureen F McHugh (F&SF 3/02); "Halo" by Charles Stross (ASIMOV's 6/02); "Slow Life" by Michael Swanwick (ANALOG 12/02)

Best Short Story: "Creation" by Jeffrey Forde (F&SF 5/02); "Lambing Season" by Molly Gloss (ASIMOV's 7/02); "Falling Onto Mars" by Geoffrey A Landis (ANALOG 7-8/02); "'Hello' Said the Stick" by Michael Swanwick (ANALOG 3/02); "The Little Cat Laughed to See Such Sport" by Michael Swanwick (ASIMOV's 10-11/02).

STRANGER THAN FICTION - Vernon Brown

Jules Verne did it with caves, the film did it with a machine but US scientists writing in NATURE have come up with a somewhat different way of getting to the centre of the Earth. They propose using nuclear bombs and molten iron.

They suggest blasting a hole in the planet's crust, then pouring a few million tons of molten iron into the cavity. This would melt the rock beneath it so that the iron tide would swiftly sink to the Earth's core while the liquid rock left behind would quickly solidify to seal the hole. The temperature would be maintained by the heat of the Earth. A grapefruit-sized probe would be carried along by the iron stream and send back information about the conditions that it found.

A thought though! Would a novel based on this idea be SF or Fantasy? The suspension of disbelief needed appears a bit excessive. VB

<<Sounds like pure fantasy to me Vernon! Millions...MILLIONS of tons of molten iron??? Sounds a little far-fetched! I've seen the two reports on this - the one in the MAIL says 'millions', the one in the SUN says 'billions'! Learn from that! - RGP>>

SF MOVIES - SO THERE ARE A FEW GOOD ONES!

Our May meeting was organised very quickly after we failed to get a speaker. The idea of the subject came to me while chatting on the phone to Dave Hardy and so it was that Dave and I were joined by our resident film expert Vicky Cook and 'Mr Novacon' Tony Berry to provide the evening's entertainment. We thought it went well on the evening despite a very poor turnout from the membership, but imagine my shocked surprise when, a few days after the event the following piece was sent in by our Chairman Vernon Brown....

In recent years in-house programme items have tended to have smaller audiences than usual and the May meeting was no exception. However, if you did not join us from choice rather than necessity you have only yourselves to blame for missing what was arguably one of the best in-house items we have ever had and, in my opinion, one of the top ten most enjoyable programme items ever!

In theory Rog was moderating a panel of Vicky, Dave and Tony who would, with a little help from the audience, come up with a list of top ten films based on stories and top ten films written specifically for the screen. In practice things were a little different, every member of the audience contributing suggestions and comments that ranged over the spectrum of SF films from Melies' LE VOYAGE DANS LA LUNE to THE MATRIX. Which is not to say the discussion was a general melee - Rog did an excellent job of moderating

everyone while the panel acted as a focus or perhaps a filter for the dozens of titles suggested

It is no exaggeration to say that the time flew! Usually I keep checking my watch to estimate whether a speaker is running to time but when I remembered to do so this time I saw with a shock that it was 9.45pm - and we had started at a couple of minutes past eight! Coincidentally or otherwise just then Rog was collating the voting figures so, after he announced the final lists we drew the session to a close. After a (very) quick beer break the discussion continued on an informal basis until it was time to go home.

We don't want to overdo a good thing so perhaps we should wait a year or so before discussing top ten books, authors or fantasy films. If and when we do, I hope that everyone who can will turn up. I know that many of the people who missed this time would have contributed greatly to the evening as well as thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Vernon Brown

Thank you Vernon for those kind words - I know I enjoyed myself and I'm sure the panel did.

So for those people who didn't make it to the evening, what conclusions did we come to? Are there any good SF films? Well, apparently, yes. Many nominations were made on the evening and we whittled the list down, eventually voting by a show of hands the films that each person would call a 'classic'. Then we had a show of hands from people who did NOT like the film.

Here are the two lists - slightly different from those announced at the meeting as I found an error in my lists (BLADE RUNNER had been omitted)...

TOP TEN SF FILMS ORIGINATING FROM A PUBLISHED WORK

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 1= | DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (1951) (ss Harry Bates/dir: Robert Wise) | 6 votes |
| | THE POSTMAN (1997) (n David Brin/dir: Kevin Costner) | |
| | THE TIME MACHINE (1960) (sn H G Wells/dir: George Pal) | |
| 4= | 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968) (ss Arthur C Clarke/dir: Stanley Kubrick) | 5 votes |
| | CHARLY (1968) (ss Daniel Keyes/dir: Ralph Nelson) | |
| | INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1956) (n Jack Finney /dir: Don Siegel) | |
| 7= | BLADE RUNNER (1982) (n Philip K Dick/dir: Ridley Scott) | 4 votes |
| | FAHRENHEIT 451 (1966) (n Ray Bradbury/dir: Francois Truffaut) | |
| 9= | ALIEN (1979) (ss A E van Vogt/dir: Ridley Scott) | 3 votes |
| | THINGS TO COME (1936) (n H G Wells/dir: William Cameron Menzies) | |

TOP TEN SF FILMS ORIGINATING FROM A SCREENPLAY

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| 1 | BACK TO THE FUTURE (1985) (dir: Robert Zemeckis) | 10 votes |
| 2 | THE TERMINATOR (1984) (dir: James Cameron) | 7 votes |
| 3 | THE MATRIX (1999) (dir: Andy & Larry Wachowski) | 6 votes |
| 4 | STAR WARS (1977) (dir: George Lucas) | 4 votes |
| 5 | SILENT RUNNING (1971) (dir: Douglas Trumbull) | 3 votes |
| 6= | DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE (1961) (dir: Val Guest) | 2 votes |
| | THE FINAL COUNTDOWN (1980) (dir: Don Taylor) | |
| 8= | DARK CITY (1998) (dir: Alex Proyas) | 1 vote |

GATTACA (1997) (dir: Andrew Niccol)

PITCH BLACK (2000) (dir: David Twohy)

You can't get more varied than that! 1936 through to 2000! Films nominated that didn't make it included METROPOLIS, MINORITY REPORT, STARGATE, E.T., BRAZIL and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (ended up with minus five!!! It should be first - on the list of all-time worst movies!!!).

So there you have it - now you can try to see all the ones you've missed. I've already started, having watched THE MATRIX a couple of weeks ago. Maybe next year we can just do the voting again and see how the list changes.

Also received a few days after the last meeting, a letter from Dave Hardy....

Last Friday's meeting (9 May) was very enjoyable -- it's just a pity that there weren't more members there to enjoy it. I was glad to be on the panel, but it didn't really matter, since the members of the audience were able to take an equal part in the discussions/arguments!

However, within the last couple of days I have thought of a number of movies which, though not great, must have been at least equally eligible for the final list, and it's quite surprising that nobody came up with them -- to the best of my memory, anyway. Probably members reading this will think of many others. . .

Older films: OUTLAND, LOGAN'S RUN, ZARDOZ, MILLENNIUM

More recent: DEEP IMPACT, ARMAGEDDON, MISSION TO MARS, RED PLANET, MARS ATTACKS! (hilarious!), SPACE COWBOYS

Oh yes - and how could we have missed JURASSIC PARK? Definitely a ground-breaking film technically, and not at all bad apart from that.

And my own favourite trilogy (yes, even up with BACK TO THE FUTURE!): TREMORS. About giant worms (so definitely SF) this is a very funny set of movies, with some good acting and special effects.

Dave Hardy

I'll tell you how we missed JURASSIC PARK, Dave - it's a terrible movie! Not quite the worst in SF history - but not far off. Nice special effects so I can see how you as an artist would be impressed (and I was too!). But we did all agree at the May meeting that we would ignore movies that RELIED on special effects. JURASSIC PARK's poor excuse for a 'plot' was just a series of clichés - so much so that I started wondering if it was a remake of a movie (or movies) I'd seen before! I remember how angry I felt after watching this movie - terrific effects totally wasted on a piece of (censored!).

I'm afraid the plot is STILL the most important element in a film (or a book) for me. Pretty it up by all means but without a first class plot it's still an also-ran. Of the others, I personally have only seen LOGAN'S RUN (average movie with stilted acting), ZARDOZ (instantly forgettable - and thankfully I

have!), MILLENNIUM (Cheryl Ladd saved an otherwise mediocre movie) and ARMAGEDDON (quite good visually but, again, a clichéd plot).

NEWS IN BRIEF

.... THE SEPARATION by **Christopher Priest** was the winner of this year's Arthur C Clarke Award. This book has already won the British SF Award. But nobody can find copies! The first hardcover edition will be published by Gollancz in November winner of the Australian Ditmar Award for Best Australian novel was ECHOES OF EARTH by **Sean Williams** and **Shane Dix** **Carol Emshwiller's** THE MOUNT was the winner of the 2002 Philip K Dick Award **Harlan Ellison** has resold rights to STRANGE WINE collection. If Ellison has any fans left, they'll no doubt be pleased to know it will include one brand-new story! Once again, he rips off his fans **Anne McCaffrey** and **Elizabeth Ann Scarborough** have delivered the manuscript for ACORNA'S TRIUMPH

RGP



BOOK REVIEWS



(REVIEWERS please note:- all reviews should be emailed direct to me at rog@rogpeyton.fsnet.co.uk) Deadline for each issue is 14 days prior to the date of the monthly meeting.

RGP

HITCHHIKER: A BIOGRAPHY OF DOUGLAS ADAMS

by M J Simpson

Hodder & Stoughton / 393pgs / £18.99 hardcover

Reviewed by Steve Mazey

Rating: * * * * *

This is the biography of the late Douglas Adams told by a journalist who is acknowledged as a world expert on Adams and his works. It tells the full story of Adams' life from his time at Brentwood School; through Cambridge University; Footlights; his association (although brief) with the Monty Python team; writing and editing Doctor Who episodes; the Hitchhikers radio series, TV series and books; and his subsequent and increasingly infrequent output. His life was one of continuously missing deadlines and longer and longer delays between releases, and we are treated to every detail - with nothing glossed over to protect Adams' reputation.

The author has told of Adams' flaws as well as his great talent - a talent which Simpson leaves you feeling was under-utilised through Adams' tendency to procrastinate and do anything but write. But not being a writer myself I probably cannot understand the concept of writer's block so I might be being a little unfair here.

It's a compelling read. Indeed for someone like myself having been a fan

of Douglas Adams since the days of the radio series (before the books or the TV series came out) to read this and realise that I probably would not have liked Adams the man, shows how good the book is.

I'm not a regular reader of biographies. I think the only ones I'd read prior to this were the Asimov books and Henri Charriere's PAPILLON. But having seen this on the shelf in the store and buying it on a bit of a whim, I skimmed through the first few pages and I was hooked. And I think most people who enjoyed Adams' writing will be likewise engrossed from page one.

Having read it though I was left feeling sad. A man of such immense talent never really reaching his full potential, and from Simpson's writing you get the impression that Adams himself knew this.

This book is a worthy accompaniment to Douglas Adams own works.

SM

UNTIED KINGDOM by James Lovegrove

Gollancz / 405pgs / £10.99 trade pbk / £16.99 hardcover

Reviewed by Tim Stock

Rating: * * *

UNTIED KINGDOM is about a future in which the United Kingdom has been isolated from the rest of the international community. Not only have essential supplies been cut off but the kingdom has also been bombed randomly leading to smaller communities being set up that are separated from a central control and protection. The whole incident is the result of an unlucky economic gamble of which the details are never revealed in the text.

The main characters are set around a small fictitious town in the south of England whose mayor is the legendary Green Man as many of the new towns leaders have based themselves on traditional characters such as Robin Hood, King Arthur, etc., to gain support. All is peaceful in the community until the town is raided by a gang of thugs who take away many of the town's women; including the wife of one chap, Fen, who is determined to get her back from the base of the thugs in London, so sets off on an epic journey to retrieve.

His journey is packed with adventures and a lot happens to the poor guy for such a short journey including run-ins with a psychotic ex-train driver with homosexual tendencies, a strange cult based on the writings of a thoroughly mediocre author intent on conversion and regular hallucinogenic/paranormal visits from the green man! However, as the tale develops and it becomes clear that his wife, Moira, is not totally averse to her new surroundings, it becomes more of a question of whether she wants to be rescued!

It was an interesting read and was kept fairly light-hearted in the main, and the politics not being delved into in too much detail. Also, the font of the text is varied when the reader is seeing a situation from the perspective of Fen or Moira, which is an interesting touch. However, sometimes this can be a shade confusing when the switching between the characters becomes ever more frequent.

Also, you do get the feeling that sometimes there is too much happening to this one poor fellow! Apart from this, it is an interesting look into a post-apocalyptic environment and what could be possible without many of the things we take for granted.

TS

SON OF MAN by Robert Silverberg

Gollancz / 192 pages / £9.99 trade paperback

Reviewed by Pauline Morgan

Rating: * * *

As SF emerged from the gutter in the 70s, there was, among some writers a deliberate attempt to give the genre respectability by moving away from the school-boyish excitement of the pulps into highly-crafted literary works. At the same time there was a desire to be at the cutting edge of both Science Fiction and literature. Sometimes the results were magnificent; at other times, the question that remained was Why? Silverberg's SON OF MAN could belong to either category, depending on who is reading it.

Originally published in 1971, the novel's central figure is Clay, a man of now, caught up in a time-flux and deposited in a very distant future. Here, the human race has passed through many incarnations, some of which may seem devolution rather than evolution, to arrive as a race that has diverged into five distinct groups. Clay falls in with a group of green-skinned Skimmers who are the dilettantes of the future able to change sex at will. Separated from the Skimmer group, Clay undertakes a journey of discovery in which he meets members of the other 'human' groups, all of which seem to have some aspect of the humans he shared his original world with, but distilled. He also meets examples of the intermediate stages who, like himself have been caught up in the time flux. And he passes through weird areas where his body becomes aged, or heavy or slow.

This is not the most accessible of Silverberg's novels and is a curiosity rather than a classic. Most readers would probably prefer something a little lighter, faster and less deep.

PM

JUPITER MAGNIFIED by Adam Roberts

PS Publishing / 104pgs / £10 trade pbk (ltd edn) / £25 hardcover (ltd edn)

Reviewed by Steve Mazey

Rating: * * * *

When it comes to SF stories this one certainly is original. The basic concept is, as the title suggests, that Jupiter appears in the sky magnified so that it covers half of the sky.

But it is not that Jupiter has moved to a position close enough to the Earth to fill half the space instead, as space probes soon confirm Jupiter is still in its own orbit, many millions of miles from Earth. This is good news to the population of Earth, as Jupiter really being close to fill half the sky would mean Earth would be

seriously disrupted by the immense gravity of the gas giant. This is an optical effect only, one which seems to baffle physicists.

Whereas with a lot of other writers you might expect this fact to be the central point of this tale, here it is merely background. Stina Eckman is the lead on a Swedish internet TV station dedicated to poetry. This book tells her story.

She is a frustrated poet, suffering from writer's block half way through completing a poetry cycle on the nature of light. With the appearance of Jupiter in the sky the whole nature of light changes. But can Stina use this to overcome her block and continue onwards with her project?

As I said at the head of this review, this is an original piece of work. The author has introduced a major global change, and yet brought the whole thing down to the effect on one person - a poet with no scientific inclination or ability. And once this event takes place we read of the effect it has on Stina, viewing this from her angle.

Adam Roberts has a very straightforward easy-to-read style. He tells a good story, explaining what he thinks he needs to, but not overlabouring the point or introducing unnecessary levels of description.

His characters are fully fleshed, flawed and totally down-to-earth human. They have their own motivations and desires and remain constant to these as life affects them.

His situations and locations are just that, they are where the story occurs and are unobtrusive, with just sufficient detail to anchor the story to Earth without counting the daisies or opening every door. I'm known to my friends as a fan of novella-length fiction, and Adam Roberts excels in this form.

And once more PS Publishing have produced a wonderful book. Their production values are exemplary. And this is no exception. The look and feel of this book leads you to believe it is something special. And the content once again does not disappoint. I would recommend anyone, SF fan or not, to read this.

SM

THE VISITOR by Sheri S. Tepper

Gollancz / 407 pages / £10.99 trade paperback

Reviewed by Pauline Morgan

Rating: * * * *

This science fiction novel reprises some of the themes that Tepper has explored in other novels, but with a different slant from any of them.

Like *A PLAGUE OF ANGELS*, this novel is set on a future Earth where the population, level of civilisation and amount of human inhabited land has been restricted by a catastrophe. In *THE VISITOR*, the diary of Nell Latimer, the ancestor of Dismé Latimer still exists. Dismé's story is interspersed with Nell's, telling how a dark asteroid appeared from the edge of the solar system and collided with Earth. Also, like *A PLAGUE OF ANGELS*, there are remnants of high technology surviving from pre-catastrophe times but whereas in the former, the

protagonists have little understanding of how it works, here, Nell and some of her colleagues have survived by using cryogenics and by waking shifts, have survived the subsequent thousand years.

The Visitor of the title is a god-like being from space. THE FRESCO also saw alien visitors, although the powers of these would only be regarded as god-like because humans did not understand how they worked.

Dismé lives in an enclave of the Saved - descendants of the religious sects that survived the catastrophe - and has been taught that there are no Saved, and therefore no people outside the area she lives in. As in many of Tepper's other novels, the solutions to the mysteries posed in the opening chapters are unravelled slowly, the readers knowledge keeping pace with that of the principle characters.

Tepper is one of those writers that it doesn't matter which of her body of work you begin with, they all have merit and if you have never tried one, do so.

PM

***ROMA ETERNA* by Robert Silverberg**

Gollancz / 384pgs / £16.99 hardcover & £10.99 trade paperback

Reviewed by Steve Mazey

Rating: * * * * *

This is an alternate history novel - a type I am rather partial to. The alternate history here relates to the Roman Empire - in this world, created for us by Robert Silverberg, the Roman Empire never fell.

This is not an original divergence from history. I can think of two more such works easily (by looking at the shelves that surround me as I write), those two being Peter F. Hamilton's *Watching Trees Grow* and Philip Mann's *A Land Fit For Heroes* series.

This novel takes the form of a series of linked stories, all telling of important events in the course of fifteen hundred years of the Empire. It covers the great victory over the Goths to the North led by a truly Great Emperor; the period of decline in the Empire when the Eastern Roman Empire rose to prominence and ruled over the Empire of the West; and the re-emergence of Rome as the power base of the Roman Empire and onwards through the centuries of this richly imagined alternate world.

But these great events of Empire are told from very personal perspectives. The story of the threat from the Goths is told by a minor court official, and drinking friend of the ageing Emperor's second son, and chiefly involves a visit by a representative of the Eastern Greek-led Roman Empire. This tale sets the style for the book.

Although the history being wrought takes place on the whole World stage, the vantage point is a local one in each case. The stories are told by people on the edge of the Roman Court, a soldier here, a consular official there or an out-of-favour member of the Court sent to be the Roman Governor of a desert land.

This is what makes this book work, for in bringing the scope of the book

into the personal, the author involves the reader and familiarises him with the participants in the events described.

It also allows the author to deliver enough detail of the evolution in the lives of the people of the Empire through the centuries. He uses occasional, almost throwaway, lines to show the user aspects of his Roman Society.

He also develops his history in such a way as to allow the reader to spot the parallels with the history we all read about in school days. For instance we read of the time when America was discovered (here called Nova Roma).

Robert Silverberg is an old master at writing science fiction, and with this book he certainly proves he has lost none of his sharpness. With this book, I feel the first serious contender for Best Novel of 2003 has stepped up to stake its claim.

SM

THE RAFFLE

Raffle tickets are available as soon as you get to the meeting. You do NOT have to wait until the break when someone twists your arm - do it voluntarily.

The Group needs your cash to pay visiting authors' expenses, the salubrious surroundings of our regular meeting room, etc. It's just a quid - not even the price of half a pint! And you could WIN this month's prize...

SELLING YOUR WARES...

And don't forget that YOU can bring along your unwanted books, magazines, videos, etc., and sell them to other members - NO CHARGE, NO COMMISSION. Start rummaging through your collections - you KNOW you'll never read some of that stuff again. It was very welcome to see several people selling and buying at the last 2 meetings. BRING YOUR GOODIES!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Central Library SF and Fantasy Reading Group meets on Thursdays at 6pm to 7pm monthly, in GP5 on the 5th Floor at the Central Library, Chamberlain Square, B3 3HQ. It's a small friendly group meeting to discuss SF & fantasy books. Contact person is Pam Gaffney on (0121) 303 3634. Future meetings and subjects are:-

June 12th - Hall of Fame stories

July 10th - THE TOOTH FAIRY - Graham Joyce

August 14th - LUMINOUS - Greg Egan

September 4th - ENGINES OF GOD - Jack McDevitt

November 7-11 2003 - NOVACON 33 - the Birmingham SF Group's very own convention will be held at the Quality Hotel, Bentley, Walsall, UK. Guest of Honour -Jon Courtenay Grimwood, author of REDROBE, PASHAZADE, etc. Cost of registration is £35 - send to NOVACON 33, 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

email: x15@zoom.co.uk **BOOK NOW!**

November 15-16 2003 - The British Costume Convention (SF, Media and Historical) will be held in Leamington Spa. Registration is £35 until 6th October. Contact Alan Cash, 130 Hamstead Hill Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1JB

Website: www.britishcostumeconvention.org.uk

All 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@rogpeyton.fsnet.co.uk

FUTURE MEETINGS

July 11th - Jasper Fforde will be our guest speaker.

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Thanks to all the named contributors in this issue and to William McCabe who sends me reams of news items every month from which I sift through for the best/most entertaining items.

The **BRUM GROUP Website** address is www.bsfg.freesevers.com

NEW! ----The email address is bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk ----- **NEW!**

Contributions, ideas, etc. always welcome.

IF YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS, PLEASE SEND IT TO ME AT

rog@rogpeyton.fsnet.co.uk

IF WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES ON FILE AND WE HAVE IMPORTANT OR URGENT NEWS, WE CAN EMAIL YOU IMMEDIATELY.

ABOUT US...

The Birmingham Science Fiction Group meets on the second Friday of each month. 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, Pat Brown, 106 Green Lanes, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5JH