

BRUM GROUP NEWS

THE *FREE* MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

MAY 2004

ISSUE 392

HONORARY PRESIDENTS: BRIAN W ALDISS & HARRY HARRISON

COMMITTEE: VERNON BROWN (CHAIRMAN); VICKY COOK (SECRETARY);
PAT BROWN (TREASURER); ROG PEYTON (NEWSLETTER EDITOR);
TIM STOCK (PUBLICITY); STEVE JONES & WILLIAM MCCABE;
NOVACON 34 CHAIRMAN: MARTIN TUDOR

Friday May 14th
Novacon 34's Guest of Honour

IAN WATSON

Ian Watson is making his first appearance at the Brun Group this month! L-o-o-o-ng overdue, you may think, especially considering that Ian has been a full-time writer since 1976. Before that he taught Future Studies at Birmingham Polytechnic, just across the road from the fledgling Andromeda Bookshop in Summer Row. That was when I first met Ian and I was rather stunned when told that he'd never talked to the Group! His first novel was in 1973 - THE EMBEDDING and he won the British SF Award with his second novel THE JONAH KIT. Whilst writing mainly SF, Ian has also written horror - THE POWER and MEAT, comedy - EVOLUTION and fantasy such as QUEENMAGIC, KINGMAGIC as well as fantasy gaming books in the WARHAMMER 40,000 universe. We're pleased to be able to finally correct our oversight and trust that you will come along and hear Ian talking about his multifaceted career. RGP

The meeting will take place in the Lichfield room on the second floor of the Britannia Hotel,

.....
: JUNE MEETING - 11th June :
:

: Bestselling comic fantasy author Tom Holt will be visiting the :
: Group. :
.....

New Street (entrance in Union Passage almost opposite the Odeon. At the bottom of the ramp from New Street Station, turn right, cross over the road and you'll find Union Passage about 20-30 yards along). It will commence at 7.45pm so please arrive early, get your drinks from the bar and be seated in plenty of time. RGP

Errata - SCIENCE (FICTION) UPDATE - Vernon Brown

Apologies to Vernon and to the members. When retyping Vernon's article last month, I inadvertently missed out a whole line from the first paragraph. The missing line is in capitals below. - RGP

1) - Remember THE DEATH OF GRASS by John Christopher where scientists eliminated a viral disease of food cereals only to release a more virulent strain that attacked all grasses and caused civilisation to collapse? It appears that vaccinating exposed chickens in China against the current bird flu outbreak rather than killing them, creates an abnormal environment for the flu virus that allows it to evolve unpredictably. Currently it only spreads bird to bird or bird to human, which is fatal to the **LATTER, BUT THE FEAR IS THAT IT WILL EVOLVE TO SPREAD PERSON TO person** (probably a relatively minor change - VB).

Both items last month should have been credited to NEW SCIENTIST 27 March 2004.

2003 NEBULA AWARDS

Presented April 17th in Seattle.

Best Novel: THE SPEED OF DARK - Elizabeth Moon (Orbit UK, Ballantine USA)

Best Novella: CORALINE - Neil Gaiman (HarperCollins UK)

Best Novelette: "The Empire of Ice Cream" - Jeffrey Ford (Sci Fiction 26/2/03)

Best Short Story: "What I Didn't See" - Karen Joy Fowler (Sci Fiction 10/7/02)

Best Script: THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS - Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, Stephen Sinclair & Peter Jackson (New Line Cinema)

Grand Master: Robert Silverberg.

2004 HUGO AWARD NOMINATIONS

Best Novel: PALADIN OF SOULS - Lois McMaster Bujold (Eos)

HUMANS - Robert J Sawyer (Tor)

ILIUM - Dan Simmons (Eos)

SINGULARITY SKY - Charles Stross (Ace)

BLIND LAKE - Robert Charles Wilson (Tor)

Best Novella: "Walk in Silence" - Catherine Asaro (Analog 4/03)

"The Empress of Mars" - Kage Baker (Asimov's 6/03)

"The Cookie Monster" - Vernor Vinge (Analog 10/03)

"The Green Leopard Plague" - Walter Jon Williams (Asimov's 10-11/03)

"Just Like the Ones We Used to Know" - Connie Willis (Asimov's 12/03)

Best Novelette: "The Empire of Ice Cream" - Jeffrey Ford (Sci Fiction 26/2/03)
"Bernardo's House" - James Patrick Kelly (Asimov's 6/03)
"Into the Gardens of Sweet Night" - Jay Lake (Writers of the Future XIX)
"Hexagons" - Robert Reed (Asimov's 7/03)
"Nightfall" - Charles Stross (Asimov's 4/03)
"Legions in Time" - Michael Swanwick (Asimov's 4/03)

Best Short Story: "Paying It Forever" - Michael A Burstein (Analog 9/03)
"A Study in Emerald" - Neil Gaiman (SHADOWS OVER BAKER STREET)
"Four Short Novels" - Joe Haldeman (F&SF 10-11/03)
"The Tale of the Golden Eagle" - David D Levine (F&SF 6/03)
"Robots Don't Cry" - Mike Resnick (Asimov's 7/03)

1953 RETRO HUGO AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Best Novel: THE CAVES OF STEEL - Isaac Asimov
FAHRENHEIT 451 - Ray Bradbury
CHILDHOOD'S END - Arthur C Clarke
MISSION OF GRAVITY - Hal Clement
MORE THAN HUMAN - Theodore Sturgeon

Best Novella: "Three Hearts and Three Lions" - Poul Anderson
"Un-Man" - Poul Anderson
"A Case of Conscience" - James Blish
"The Rose" - Charles Harness
"...And My Fear is Great" - Theodore Sturgeon

Best Novelette: "Sam Hall" - Poul Anderson
"The Adventures of the Misplaced Hound" - Poul Anderson & Gordon R Dickson
"Earthman, Come Home" - James Blish
"The Wall Around the World" - Theodore Cogswell
"Second Variety" - Philip K Dick

Best Short Story: "Star Light, Star Bright" - Alfred Bester
"It's a Good Life" - Jerome Bixby
"The Nine Billion Names of God" - Arthur C Clarke
"Seventh Victim" - Robert Sheckley
"A Saucer of Loneliness" - Theodore Sturgeon

Wow! Just take a LOOK at that list! Classics! Only one I haven't read - started it but couldn't finish it. I shall now have to go back and try it again. I trust that ALL of you have read most of them, if not all. If not, WHY not?

How can anyone choose between those novels? Try it! Send me the list numbered one to five before the end of May and I'll publish the results next month We'll then see how our little Group compares with the results in September.

email: rog@rogpeyton.fsnet.co.uk

or: 19 Eves Croft, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3QL

NEWS IN BRIEF

... this year's winner of the British SF Award for Best Novel was FELAHEEN by Jon Courtenay Grimwood. The Short Fiction winner was "The Wolves in the Walls", by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean ... Richard Morgan has won the Philip K Dick Award for paperback original for his novel ALTERED CARBON ... The winner of this year's James Tiptree, Jr. Award has been announced. Matt Ruff will receive the award for his novel SET THIS HOUSE IN ORDER: A ROMANCE OF SOULS ... The ANALOG AnLab winner in the Best Cover category was someone called David A Hardy. Who he? ... David Pringle is giving up INTERZONE. Early reports are that it has been sold to Andy Cox who currently owns TTA Press and edits THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE. Pringle's last issue will be the Spring issue due later this month ... Coincidentally, in the USA Gardner Dozois has announced he is giving up editorship of ASIMOV'S ... The May issue of LOCUS has an article by Terry Pratchett, "21 Years of Discworld" ... Luxembourg has issued a new stamp in honour of Hugo Gernsback, commemorating the 120th anniversary of his birth and the centenary of his departure to the USA ... The SciFi Channel has announced plans to produce a four-hour miniseries based on Larry Niven's Hugo and Nebula-Award winning novel RINGWORLD. No production or broadcast dates have been announced ... Red Eagle Entertainment have purchased exclusive movie rights, distribution rights, video games, toys and other merchandising rights for THE EYE OF THE WORLD by Robert Jordan. Apparently, Jordan's *Wheel of Time* series has now sold over 15 million copies in the USA alone and there are over 65,000 *Wheel of Time* websites!!!! ... Meanwhile, back in the real world, NASA manager Firouz Naderi has announced that NASA has extended the estimated life of the two Martian rovers, *Spirit* and *Opportunity*, to September, noting that both could continue to function long after that date. Both rovers were designed to operate for 90 days and *Spirit*, which has already done so, has met all its mission objectives

RGP

A DRABBLE - 4th in an irregular series...

Want to write a drabble? Each one must be exactly 100 words long (excluding the title)... Go on, you can do it! Brum Group members are invited to try their luck. There might even be a prize at the end of the year for the best one...!

TEDDY BEARS' PICNIC by Jinnie Cracknell

The anthropomorphic naturalist checked his costume nervously. No one had ever infiltrated the infamous Teddy Bears' Picnic. As soon as they knew humans were around they raised magical shields and all you'd see was stuffed toys and picnic things. Despite the costume, he would stay in the bushes. If challenged, he'd say he was new.

He observed quietly, hardly daring to breathe. Suddenly, it started. He watched in shock as the teddy bears started drinking heavily, smoking, doing drugs, and having lots of kinky sex.

“Well, at last we know why ‘You’re in for a big surprise’ ”, he thought.

JC

INTERVIEW WITH SIMON CLARK

Born, 20th April, 1958, Simon Clark is the author of such highly regarded horror novels as *NAILED BY THE HEART*, *BLOOD CRAZY*, *DARKER*, *VAMPYRRHIC* and *THE FALL*, plus the SF novel *THE NIGHT OF THE TRIFFIDS* (sequel to the John Wyndham classic) while his short stories have been collected in *BLOOD & GRIT* and *SALT SNAKE & OTHER BLOODY CUTS*. He has also written prose material for the internationally famous rock band U2.

Raised in a family of storytellers - family legend told of a stolen human skull buried beneath the Clark garage - he sold his first ghost story to a radio station in his teens. Before becoming a full-time writer he held a variety of day jobs, that have involved strawberry picking, supermarket shelf stacking, office work, and scripting video promos.

He lives with his wife and two children in mystical territory that lies on the border of Robin Hood country in England.

Simon has recently had his Doctor Who novella *THE DALEK FACTOR* released by Telos Publishing.

Steve Mazey: Which Doctor Who did you write about in *THE DALEK FACTOR* and what made you choose him?

Simon Clark: A-h ha! Something for readers to investigate for themselves! I'm being deliberately mysterious for a reason and don't want to reveal any spoilers.

SM: If you were to write a Doctor Who novel about the next Doctor Who, who would you like it to be? (*question asked prior to the announcement of Christopher Eccleston*)

Simon Clark: The only Doctor Who I've ever seen in the flesh is William Hartnell many years ago at the Finningley airshow. I was a wee nipper then but a huge Who fan. So I'd probably aim to write a story that featured 'Billy'.

SM: How did you find writing in someone else universe (Doctor Who or John Wyndham's)?

Simon Clark: A little unusual. Usually I invent my own universes, so to adopt someone else's means that you're having to accept their rules to a certain extent. But there's always some leeway. For example in *THE NIGHT OF THE TRIFFIDS* the story starts twenty-five years after the end of the original book when survivors have fled to the Isle of Wight. So I could imagine that there had been some

developments in society but the popular culture preserved in records and films would have been frozen like a fly in amber. With Doctor Who that universe covers a huge canvas so there is more freedom to invent.

SM: Are you a Doctor Who fan and how did that affect you when writing this book?

Simon Clark: A big fan. I was there at the very first episode and rarely missed one. And that's some achievement as most episodes were never repeated and screened in the pre-video era. To write a Doctor Who story when you're a fan is like a Man U fan being called from the crowd to play for the team. It's a fabulous honour but you're also scared you're going to cock it up. So at first it was inhibiting, very inhibiting. But once I got into it the story flew out on its own accord.

SM: With Doctor Who about to restart as a TV series, what would you hope the TV exec's do and don't do with this franchise?

Simon Clark: Indeed, nervous times as well as exhilarating times. Fans are just praying that they don't make a mess of it. But it does look to be in good hands. If anything, I just hope they don't make it too much of a comedy and jam in 'witty' one-liners every twenty seconds. Doctor Who could be dark and grim at times.

SM: Who/what are you favourite Doctor Who 'baddies'?

Simon Clark: Daleks, naturally. But then I thought the yeti could be unnerving. And of course, who could forget The Master?

SM: Having written a Doctor Who story are there any other shared universes you would like to write for?

Simon Clark: It would probably have to be for my own enjoyment but I'd like to write a story for Terry Nation's SURVIVORS. And I'd find it hard to resist writing a story for Garth Marenghi's DARK PLACE! Also, last year I wrote a period piece with Tim Lebbon called "Exorcising Angels", which to a certain extent inhabits the universe of Arthur Machen and his story "The Bowmen", which created national hysteria during the First World War when millions believed that angels had saved the British army from being wiped out in the trenches.

SM: Who do you think will be the audience for the new Doctor Who series - will it be the thirty/forty-somethings who used to cower behind sofas in the 1960's & 1970's, or will Doctor Who find a new audience?

Simon Clark: Can I be greedy and hope it appeals to both? I think initially the audience will be the Doctor Who fan. With luck it will go on to captivate a whole new generation.

SM: How much of a challenge was it writing the sequel to DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS?

Simon Clark: I'd ached to write it for so long I think I had the entire story in my subconscious. So when I started on page one I couldn't stop. I'd spent a heck of a lot of time getting in character by reading Wyndham and listening to Wyndham audio books when I took the dog for a walk. Before I did begin writing I had the

same kind of anxieties I had with Doctor Who. Here I am working with legendary figures, even though they are fictional. Again, it was a labour of love and I'm proud of it and thank my lucky stars I was given the opportunity to write both a Triffids story, and Doctor Who AND the Daleks novella.

SM: What are you currently working on?

Simon Clark: I'm writing some short stories at the moment and correcting proofs for *IN THIS SKIN*, which will be published in the States this year by Leisure and in hardback in the UK by Robert Hale.

SM: Is there a book or story you wish you had written?

Simon Clark: Probably just about everything by John Wyndham, William Golding's *PINCHER MARTIN*, and for TV Stephen Volk's *GHOSTWATCH* and Russell T. Davies's *SECOND COMING*.

SM: Is writing your full time occupation, if not what is?

Simon Clark: Writing's the day job!

SM: What was your first professional sale? How did it feel when you received the acceptance?

Simon Clark: One of the first was a short story sale to BBC Radio Leeds. I was paid ?15 for it and must have spent several times that much celebrating. After a long haul learning how to write and submitting story after story and receiving heaps of rejections it was such a good feeling. The first story to appear in print in a professionally published book was "Beside The Seaside, Beside The Sea". It appeared in Chris Reed's *BBR* magazine and then was picked up by Karl Edward Wagner for *THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR*. Coincidentally both involved the ocean. And my first novel *NAILED BY THE HEART* involved the ocean, too. Maybe there's a thread emerging here.

SM: Who is your favourite author?

Simon Clark: Classic authors would have to include Arthur Machen, William Hope Hodgson, Shirley Jackson, John Wyndham (naturally), Dylan Thomas. More recent writers: Stephen King (especially his earlier work), Stephen Baxter, Joel Lane.

SM: Are you a music fan? If so, what?

Simon Clark: Initially I was drawn to music with a sci-fi feel so I was listening to Pink Floyd, Hawkwind and electronic music, including Tangerine Dream. I'm also a total Hendrix fan. Later stuff, I like The Coral, Pulp, REM, Bill Nelson.

SM: Is there anything else that can be done with Alien Invasion, Time Travel or Robots?

Simon Clark: I'm sure there is. Fiction writers are eternally inventive. Just when you think Time Travel's been done to death someone will give it a fresh spin.

SM: Is there anything more that can be done with vampires, demons and zombies?

Simon Clark: God, I hope so! That's my day job. Those kind of monsters pay my mortgage and put food on the table -- not literally you understand.

SM: Given the high quality of horror fiction available, why do you think there are so few great horror movies?

Simon Clark: With horror fiction you can afford to fail when you write a bad story. If a producer makes a bad movie they're out on their ear. So there's a tendency for them to play as safe as possible so jam in a love story, comic interludes, a kitchen sink or two in the hope of mass-appeal. That's a bit sweeping really as there have been some terrific horror movies, but generally there's a tendency for bland-out.

SM: Short story, single novel or novel series - which do you think is the best medium for horror or science fiction?

Simon Clark: Probably short story is the perfect form as shown by H P Lovecraft, Shirley Jackson and the early Stephen King. But personally I find novels more satisfying to write. I like to think page one is the start of a long journey. A kind of quest that takes both reader and writer into a dark, dark landscape. Hey, that didn't sound too much like Garth Marengi, did it?

SM: Why do you think SF gets a bad press?

Simon Clark: I wouldn't claim to have such a full knowledge of SF to reply.

SM: Do you enjoy book signings/conventions?

Simon Clark: It's great to talk shop and meet people who've read my books or simply love the same kind of stories I love.

SM: What is the scariest story you have read?

Simon Clark: Stephen King's "The Monkey" still does it for me. A dark tale powerfully told. There are others I could add to my list, too, such as Algernion Blackwood's "The Willows". And then there's TV. Doctor Who; it scared me thoroughly at times.

SM: Have you won any awards for your writing?

Simon Clark: I won some local competitions for short stories. I've also won British Fantasy Awards for a novella, "Goblin City Lights" and THE NIGHT OF THE TRIFFIDS. I'm immensely proud of them and they flank my television in the living room.

SM: Plug away - what do you have coming out?

Simon Clark: VAMPYRRHIC RITES, a sequel to VAMPYRRHIC came out late last year and next up is IN THIS SKIN. And did anyone mention THE DALEK FACTOR?

SM: Many Thanks, Simon!

Simon Clark: Thanks for having me!



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

CHANGING PLANES by Ursula LeGuin

Gollancz / 214pgs / £8.99 / hardback

Reviewed by Chris Morgan

Rating: * * *

The dust jacket on this is the most slippery I've ever come across. I put it on a chair and it slid off. I piled books on top of it and they slid off. Now, while I don't really want to ascribe intelligence to book designers, that ultra-low coefficient of friction is a good metaphor for the whole volume. It's a collection of slippery concepts.

Let's call the contents sixteen slightly linked pieces which are mostly not stories. They are inventive, polished descriptions of other worlds which are reachable by a trick of mental agility rather than by conventional rocketships or matter-transmitters. It's a way in which people waiting at airports, with nothing better to do, can slip away to an alien planet, just to pass the time: changing planets while changing planes.

So the whole book is based on a pun. And LeGuin's means of travel is as much of a plot device as any rocketship or matter-transmitter ever was. More important are the other worlds visited, a peculiar mixture of the almost familiar, the satirical, and the downright surreal.

Communication problems loom large in several pieces. There are other worlds where genetic manipulation has changed everything, where seasons last for decades and seasonal migration dominates lives, where dreaming is communal, where there are sorts of Disney-worlds devoted to Christmas and Easter, where two sentient species interact in an unexpected way, and where a few of the population use their wings to fly.

I was reminded of some of Jack Vance's delightful planetary customs, of Robert Sheckley's early stories, and of Jorge Luis Borges's "The Library of Babel". But LeGuin, the daughter of noted anthropologists, has often written about odd, near-human civilisations. In this volume, despite some variation of intent, most of the pieces should be read as satires; the trappings of SF in the book are just devices, metaphors.

All the pieces are in their own way delightful, witty, surprising, though the lack of plots and characters makes it a dry read. Best dipped into, but worth rereading. CM

THE YEAR OF OUR WAR by Steph Swainston

Gollancz / 290 pages / £9.99 trade paperback

Reviewed by William McCabe

Rating: * * * *

I suppose the best description of this kind of novel is a 'page-turner'. It's not the sort of thing you feel compelled to finish in just one sitting but if you start there's a pretty good chance that you'll finish. It's an easy read with no real distractions or diversions. You follow one character through a perfectly linear story of the turning point of a war. The story isn't so long that you'll get bored with it or clichéd enough to make you skip the obvious parts.

It's Fantasy. There are no pretensions here to either literature or science. There's even the obligatory map on the first page. There are creatures that are people with animal attributes, typified by the lead character who has wings and the speed of some mountain predator. Then again there is no great evil to be defeated, no quest to find the divine macguffin. The only real worry here is that this is just the first volume of a trilogy or (even worse) an endless series that was thought up while still in junior school.

The plot is simple. There are some really big insects (often described as 'Big as a pony'), they eat just about anything, they breed and there are an awful lot of them. The humans have a lot of trouble keeping their numbers down. They've had this running war for the last couple of millennia. Part of their problem is that their development is still at a mediaeval level. There is no overall government which means that if one local lord wants to pull his troops out of the field, there's nothing they can do about it. The armaments available (arrows aren't much good against these insect shells) mean that most of the fighting is hand-to-hand. On the positive side, they have the emperor (almost as old as God) and the immortals (some of whom have been around for almost as long) acting as advisors and attempting to co-ordinate a response. On the negative side, a new feudal lord has taken his troops out of the field and the rest of the country is starting to follow suit. On top of that, there's a whole lot more bugs coming from somewhere. Can they find out where before the insects take over?

There are some minor irritations. The worst is that the immortals seem to have a born name, a family name, a nickname, and a title – all of which they are called by at times and mostly only one at a time. It makes things very confusing if you haven't realised that a particular character is also called by one of his other names.

WAM

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Central Library SF and Fantasy Reading Group meets on Thursdays at 5.30pm 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 3398. Future meetings...

20th May - Joe Haldeman's **THE FOREVER WAR** (1997 version) discussed
10th June

Borders Book Shop are also planning several readers groups. They may include SF, fantasy and horror (separate groups!). For details contact David Massey dmassey@bordersstores.com phone (0121) 616 1094, Borders, Bullring, Birmingham, B5 4BE

Bath Central Library, in association with the **British Fantasy Society**, are holding a special 'Fantasy Week', May 17-23rd. Guests confirmed are Katherine Roberts, Ramsey Campbell, Juliet McKenna, Mike Chinn and Ron Tiner. Katherine and Ramsey will be holding readings during the week, and there will be two workshops on the Saturday - a writing one hosted by Juliet, and a graphic novels item hosted by Mike and Ron. Both workshops cost £10, contact aunico@hotmail.com to book a place. For more information please see the website www.britishfantasysociety.org.uk, or email aunico@hotmail.com

A COMMONWEALTH OF SCIENCE FICTION, Liverpool Foresight Centre, Liverpool, UK (Thursday 5 to Sunday 8 August 2004). Guests of Honour: Damien Broderick, Jon Courtenay Grimwood and Nalo Hopkinson. (An Event Organised By the Science Fiction Foundation).

NOVACON 34 - the Birmingham SF Group's very own convention will again be held at the popular Quality Inn, Walsall over the weekend of November 5th to 8th. Guest of Honour is Ian Watson. Cost of registration is £35 - send to NOVACON 34, 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.
email: x15@zoom.co.uk **BOOK NOW!**

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 OF THE BSFG

June 11th - comic fantasy author **Tom Holt**

July 9th - SF/Comics artist **Bryan Talbot** (awaiting confirmation)

August 13th - **Summer Social**. We'll be going to the **Black Eagle**, Handsworth - just a short trip from Snow Hill on the Metro - for a convivial evening of

food and drink. They have a selection of real ales and the food, while being traditional pub food, is excellent value at about £5 for a main course. But we have to book early - they are usually fully booked on a Friday or Saturday for nearly two months ahead. So we need to know who is coming and we need to know by the end of May!!!

September 10th - to be arranged

October 8th - Peter Weston will be returning from being Fan Guest of Honour at this year's Worldcon. Peter has written a 130,000 word history of his life in SF fandom and it will be published at Worldcon. It contains a LOT of history of the Brum Group and many of you are mentioned in it! Peter will be talking about the Brum Group part of the book and also signing copies of his book. He will also be talking about the WHOLE book in a talk at NOVACON 34.

December - Christmas Social - Skittles at the Selly Park Tavern

January 8th 2005 - Annual General Meeting

March 12th - Peter F Hamilton

Newsletter 392 copyright 2004 for Birmingham SF 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 the 'opinion'.

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.

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