

BRUM GROUP NEWS

THE *FREE* MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION GROUP

JANUARY 2010

ISSUE 460

HONORARY PRESIDENTS: **BRIAN W ALDISS, O.B.E.**
& **HARRY HARRISON**

COMMITTEE:

**VERNON BROWN (CHAIRMAN); PAT BROWN (TREASURER);
VICKY STOCK (SECRETARY); ROG PEYTON (NEWSLETTER EDITOR);
DAVE CORBY (PUBLICITY OFFICER); WILLIAM MCCABE;
NOVACON 39 CHAIRMAN: ALICE LAWSON**

WEBSITE:

www.birminghamsfgroup.org.uk/

EMAIL:

bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk

Friday 8th January

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and AUCTION

A Happy New Year to all our members from the committee. We hope that you enjoyed your Christmas and that the New Year will be a good one.

Our Annual General Meeting - a legal necessity - is traditionally held in January and is the time for you to voice your views on the Group. It is also the time for a new committee to be elected and we sincerely hope that we get some volunteers this year!!! Full details of committee member requirements were included in the December newsletter so we trust you've all had time to peruse at length and decide which of the committee posts you'd love to stand for. We *must* get some kind of changeover in the committee each year, otherwise the Group could suffer. Do you really want the same old thing year in, year out? We've had the same committee, more or less, for several years now and although we have the members' approval, there is always the risk of those same few people doing things the same old way where just one change in a committee post could bring a new, fresh look at the way things are done. When Dave Corby joined the committee a couple of years ago, he brought fresh ideas. We need more of that! **VOLUNTEER NOW!**

The AGM should be over very quickly and we can get on with the main

**February 14th – the QUIZ versus the Birmingham University
SF Society. A pub-style quiz with prizes for the winners.**

event of the evening – the Auction. Once again, I will try to empty your wallets/purses with as little pain as possible. But I do need items to sell so please donate. Other members *need* the items you've finished with. They are not aware of that yet but that will be my job to 'persuade' them.

All the proceeds go to help the running of the Brum Group – without the money raised from auctions we'd most likely have to increase the membership fees. So please bring a few items with you – books, magazines, fanzines, artwork, posters, videos DVDs, CDs, etc. RGP

The meeting will take place in the conference room on the first floor of the Old Joint Stock, Temple Street, just off Colmore Row. From the Briar Rose, continue up the hill, take first right, first left and it's about 4 or 5 buildings down on the left.

The doors open at 7.30pm and the meeting will commence at 8.00pm so please arrive early, get your drinks from the bar on the ground floor, and be seated in plenty of time. Members' admission is usually £3.00; non-members' is £4.00 but there is no charge for the AGM/Auction.

ROBERT HOLDSTOCK 1948-2009



It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of Robert Holdstock on the morning of Sunday, November 29th after almost two weeks in intensive care battling a severe *E. coli* infection. He was hospitalized after collapsing on November 18 and put on life-support, with multiple-organ breakdown, including his liver, kidneys, and heart. The *E. coli* infection was discovered the next day. He was only 61.

He was the author of numerous books, from his early SF – EYE AMONG THE BLIND (his first novel in 1976), EARTHWIND and WHERE TIME WINDS BLOW - and his award-winning fantasy MYTHAGO WOOD through to his last published fantasy novel, AVILION which was a direct sequel to MYTHAGO WOOD. As

well as writing many other fantasy novels, including several set in the same universe as MYTHAGO WOOD, he had also written horror as 'Robert Falcon' and under his own name, plus sword 'n' sorcery as by 'Chris Carlsen' and with Angus Wells as 'Richard Kirk'. Artbooks, an SF Encyclopedia, film and TV novelisations, etc., also appeared over the years.

I clearly remember my last two meetings with Rob. In February 2007 he was due to speak to the Brum Group, but appalling weather conditions resulted in only three members turning up. Rob and his partner Sarah had started out from London early so that they made it to Birmingham with little trouble. But

from mid-afternoon the weather got far worse – it took me four and a half hours in a taxi to travel the seven miles into the city centre. No meeting was held but the five of us sat in the bar of the Britannia drinking. Rob and I lasted until about 1am after drinking several bottles of red wine. A year later he returned to talk to us and after the meeting Rob and I once again sat in the bar drinking red wine until the early hours.

He had a wonderful outgoing personality and a huge appetite for life. After 35 years of friendship with Rob, I am still finding it difficult to believe that he has gone. I know that we'll all miss him. I certainly will.

Our condolences to Sarah and Rob's family.

RGP

MAKING TRACKS by Chris Morgan

His one small step is forever: no weather
to rake over that dusty surface;
like crop circles where crops never grew,
no spring corn will ever fill those marks;
like dents and sandcastles on a popular beach,
no tide can flow in to smooth them,
pristine and untouched after forty years.
Perhaps gradually, over millennia,
meteorites will impact with the surface
to blur the crisp edges, but that historic step
and its thousand relatives will remain there,
a gallery installation dedicated
to the tread of boot and tyre, an almost
regular curlicued pattern surrounding
expensive, abandoned hardware.
These are the ammonites and dinosaur
bones of Tranquility, surrounded by ghosts
of Chesley Bonestell paintings:
jagged mountains and crater rims,
sleek moonships, needle-pointed and finned,
almost sixty years old now, but fading
in memory, supplanted by the real thing.
Or was the reality a deserted site in Arizona
or Texas, or a vast hangar, mocked up,
all the evidence long destroyed?
Man must go, or go back, to make sure.

<<Thanks to Chris Morgan for permission to print the above poem, commissioned for the NOVACON 39 Programme Book to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Moon Landing. Sadly, it never appeared there... RGP>>

JASPER FFORDE MEETING

Jasper Fforde will be visiting the BSFG to talk about his work on Friday 14th May 2010 at 8pm (entry from 7.30pm). Due to Jasper's immense popularity tickets need to be bought for this visit in advance – and that includes BSFG members. Posters will be put up for the general public at the end of January. We accept payment by cheque, PO or Paypal; please email bhamsfgroup@yahoo.co.uk, or ring Vicky on 07845 897760 for details of the latter and to book your place. Please book by 28th February to avoid disappointment, as we cannot guarantee any sales after this date. Price: £4 BSFG members, £5 non-members.

100 BOOKS THAT DEFINED A DECADE

“Sorry, Stephenie Meyer! A movie made from your books may have won the weekend at the box office, but your novel TWILIGHT only came in at #32 on a list of 100 books that defined a decade.

“Topping the list is J.K. Rowling's HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS, which the *Telegraph* said, ‘stands as a cornerstone of the decade, a melding of high and low culture that appeals to all ages and nations.’

“While Rowling ‘is never less than absorbing’ and ‘makes reading a 700-page book seem easy.’ Meyer's first novel, though considered influential, is described as ‘astonishing, mainly for the ineptitude of her prose’ and ‘teen vampire schlock.’ Ouch!”

Other novels with a science fiction, fantasy or horror slant that made the list include:

- 3 THE DA VINCI CODE by Dan Brown
- 36 MIRACLES OF LIFE by J.G. Ballard
- 43 THE AMBER SPYGLASS by Philip Pullman
- 52 THE ROAD by Cormac McCarthy
- 54 THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA by Philip Roth
- 72 THE LOVELY BONES by Alice Sebold
- 76 THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE by Audrey Niffenegger

NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

.... Author **Harry C. Crosby, Jr.** (b.1925), who wrote as **Christopher Anvil** died on November 30. Crosby had numerous short stories appear in *Astounding/Analog* as well as many novels. Recently, Baen Books has been republishing omnibus editions of many of his novels and short stories Bibliographer **Ignatius Frederic Clarke (I.F. Clarke)** (b.1918) died on November 5. Clarke published VOICES PROPHEYSING WAR in 1966 and followed it up with a multi-volume history of British science fiction in 2001. In 1974, Clarke won the SFRA's Pilgrim Award for distinguished contribution to science fiction and the organization's Pioneer Award in 1997 for his essay “Future-war Fiction: The First Main Phase 1871-1900” Agent and

editor **Don Congdon** (b.1918) died on November 30. Congdon began working for **Lurton Blassingame**, eventually gaining his own clients, including **Ray Bradbury**. In 1944, he was hired as the editor of *Collier's* and in 1946 he was working as an editor for Simon and Schuster. He returned to agenting in 1947 and founded his own company in 1983. Congdon also edited several anthologies Actor **Gene Barry** (b.1919) died on December 9. Barry is best known in SF circles for starring in the 1953 version of WAR OF THE WORLDS. He also had a bit role in the 2005 version of the film **Joe Haldeman** has been named the next SFWA Damon Knight Grand Master. Haldeman, whose novels include THE FOREVER WAR, FOREVER PEACE, CAMOUFLAGE, and many others, will receive the honour at the Nebula Award Weekend, May 21-23, 2010. Haldeman will be the 27th Grand Master **Harlan Ellison** has settled his lawsuit with Paramount over the company's failure to pay royalties on their use of the *Star Trek* episode "City on the Edge of Forever". Settlement figures were not disclosed but Ellison is said to be 'very, very pleased with the outcome.' **Michael Moorcock** is to write a Doctor Who novel for BBC Books for publication Christmas 2010 The December issue of LOCUS contains an article looking back at the SF books by our co-President **Brian Aldiss** The Cosmos Books license to Wildside Books will be terminated at the end of 2009 and will revert back to original owner **Phil Harbottle** who will restart the Cosmos Books programme himself **Mickey Zucker Reichert** will write ROBOTS AND CHAOS and two other books for Berkley Books about **Isaac Asimov's** robopsychologist Susan Calvin Film rights have been sold to **Graham Joyce's** forthcoming novel THE SILENT LAND Artist **Frank Frazetta's** son, **Alphonse Frank Frazetta**, was arrested on December 9 while trying to steal approximately \$20 million of his father's art from the family museum. The younger Frazetta, who was helped by two men, one of them operating a backhoe, claimed he had permission to remove the artwork, an allegation denied by his father. A dispute over the artwork arose shortly after the death of **Ellie Frazetta** earlier this year **Douglas Cohen** has been named editor at *Realms of Fantasy*. Cohen has previously served the magazine as a slush reader, assistant editor, non-fiction editor, and art director **J.R.R. Tolkien** showed up at No. 5 on the annual Forbes list of top-earning dead celebrities this year after raking in \$50 million between October 2008 and October 2009, mainly due to the settlement over the movie rights RGP

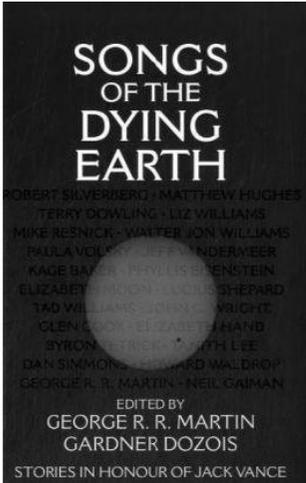


BOOK REVIEWS



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

SONGS OF THE DYING EARTH: Stories in honour of Jack Vance edited by George R.R. Martin & Gardner Dozois
HarperVoyager / 660pgs / hardcover £25.00 / ISBN: 978-0007277483
Reviewed by Peter Weston



Rog may still remember that meeting of the ‘old’ Brum group in 1963 when Cliff Teague showed me the newly published Lancer paperback of Jack Vance’s *THE DYING EARTH*. It was already the stuff of legend since it had previously only appeared in a old 1950 Hillman Books edition and was long out of print. Instantly I shot out of Charlie Winstone’s front room and caught a bus to the newsagent up the road who, fortunately for me, was still open, and even more fortunately, had one last copy on his rack. I was thrilled just to hold the book in my hands; it was wonderful, evocative stuff. Everybody thinks so.

But *THE DYING EARTH* is a hard act to follow and even Vance himself couldn’t quite manage to do it with the much later *Cugel* series. So, were other writers able to capture the same magic in this ‘tribute’ volume?

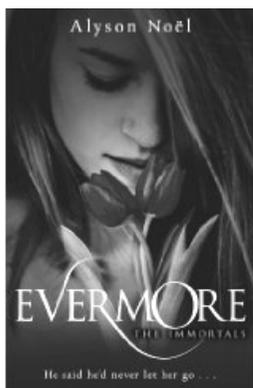
Most of the stories are set in familiar Vance locations (Almery, Ascolais, and so on) with established characters like the wizard T’sais, the witch Lith, even *Cugel* himself. They are told in the same overtly formal, archaic language, and in some cases even develop a tale from the original volume; for instance, Mike Resnick provides a clever prequel to “Liane the Wayfarer” while Phyllis Eisenstein offers a mannered sequel. The whole book has been put together in this way; twenty-two stories each trying to take us back to Vance’s world of the dying Earth.

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery but I don’t know. It seems to me that there’s still something missing, some intangible quality. It might be Vance’s sly wit, or the incredibly careful way he selected his words to convey exactly the right shade of meaning. It’s a style which looks easy to mimic but I don’t think it is, and most of the authors represented here can’t pull it off; some of them come nowhere near.

Vance’s stories were written by a young, talented writer just commencing his professional life, bringing qualities of freshness and originality and heart-felt meaning. By comparison these have been turned out to order and for the most part are derivative and stale. Some are feeble and over-long, others are just silly. And by the end of the book I was starting to feel that I’d really had more than enough of the Dying Earth. So – not recommended!

PRW

***EVERMORE: THE IMMORTALS* by Alyson Noël**
Macmillan / 356pgs / £6.99 paperback ISBN: 978-0330512855
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan



This is a book that will appeal to the teenage fans of Stephanie Meyers' TWILIGHT and its sequels. There are a number of familiar elements. Like Buffy (the Vampire Slayer) and Bella (from TWILIGHT) Ever is a teenager attending an American High School. Like Buffy, she is a bit of a misfit. Her friends are Haven, a Goth wannabe, and Miles who is gay. She instantly makes an enemy of the most popular girl in her year – Stacia. As in TWILIGHT, a gorgeous male classmate soon appears who acts mysteriously and is not what he seems.

Ever, though, is not an ordinary teenager. She was the sole survivor of a car crash which killed her parents, sister and dog. As a result of that accident (reminiscent of Charlaine Harris's heroine, Harper, of her *Grave* series of books), Ever has been left with psychic powers. She can hear other people's thoughts, see their auras and see the dead. In fact, her dead sister, Riley, keeps hanging around. Ever is ambivalent towards the new boy, Damen. He does not have an aura and when he speaks, the other voices go quiet. He keeps giving her red tulips, but flirts with Stacia. He induces her to play truant, then disappears. There are, however, no vampires or werewolves in Evermore.

Although this novel, the first of six projected books, may seem derivative to the well read reader, it is very enjoyable and catches the flavour of teen life. It ought to prove popular. PM

***FLASHFORWARD* by Robert J. Sawyer**
Gollancz / 319pgs / £6.99 paperback ISBN: 978-0575091016
Reviewed by Pauline Morgan



This novel was originally published in 1999 but set initially in April 2009 when the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) was due for its first run in the search of the Higgs boson. Most of us can remember what happened.

In Sawyer's novel everyone in the world experienced a vision of themselves twenty-one years on, at the moment the LHC was activated. The vision lasted for two minutes and the obvious culprit for the phenomenon was the LHC. There were a number of deaths from people falling off ladders, down stairs and cars going out of control. The emphasis of the novel was the way in which people directly involved with the experiment coped with the after effects. Michiko Komura's daughter was killed by a runaway car in her school playground. She had been due to marry Lloyd Simcoe but in her vision she saw herself in Japan with a

young daughter. Lloyd had been in bed with another woman to whom he was married. They have to decide whether to go ahead with the marriage in the knowledge that it will fail. Theo Procopides does not have a vision. Detective work shows that he was murdered the previous day. While Lloyd believes the future is fixed, Theo desperately wants to believe that it can be changed and he will not die.

The problem with setting a novel so close to the time of writing is that the author is likely to get things wrong. Sawyer extrapolates but there are differences he couldn't foresee. As a result the technical background dates the book. It perhaps should have been revised before reprinting.

The TV programme FLASHFORWARD claims to be based on this novel. The only obvious connection is that everyone in the world experiences a two minute glimpse of the future and one of the characters is called Lloyd Simcoe. There the resemblance ends. The TV series is set in America rather than Geneva, the flashforward is six months rather than twenty-one years. There is a crime, but it involves a blue hand gang and lots of bodies and policemen. There are suggestions that terrorists or the Chinese are responsible. Basically, the American producers have taken the one central idea and turned it into an American style cop show.

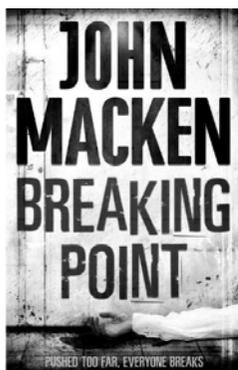
Although the book is dated, it has a scientifically plausible rationale at its heart and is internally consistent. The TV programme can be taken as a completely separate entity.

PM

***BREAKING POINT* by John Macken**

Corgi / 502 pgs / £6.99 paperback ISBN: 978-0552157568

Reviewed by Jim Pearce



This is the third book featuring ex CID detective and forensic scientist Reuben Maitland who has been sacked from his post as head of GeneCrime the elite UK forensics centre. Why he has been sacked is not made clear, but is alluded to as being due to using GeneCrime laboratory resources for conducting his own research. Although sacked he is still carrying out research into the use of DNA in behavioural profiling and has covert assistance from a few old GeneCrime colleagues. He has identified that there are five aberrant genes that make a person likely to be a psychopath. The more of these one has, the higher the potential for violence. To help identify these persons from their DNA, he has created a system he calls Psychopath Selection.

Reuben's temporary replacement, Mina Ali, discovers that a data base of the DNA profiles of persons excluded from enquiries has become rather large and has been moved to an unexpected position in the IT system. She also finds that it has been recently searched. This information is brought to the attention of the apparently new head of GeneCrime, a DCI Sarah Hirst without any great impact. Later she provided these profiles to Reuben who identifies that seven of them are potential psychopaths. It is also identified that six of these persons have recently become victims of violent crime and the seventh has committed a violent murder (described in the opening chapter) on apparently very little provocation. Reuben decides to contact these persons and inform them of the aberrant nature of their DNA and their potential for extreme violence, beseeching them to try to remain calm no matter how provoked. One of these persons is a violent criminal

with whom Reuben has crossed swords in the past. The provocation that he undergoes leads to a campaign of violence with Reuben being one of its victims.

At the same time, London is being terrorised by a serial killer who strikes on underground trains without leaving any trace. The mounting body count leads to panic and traffic chaos as passengers shun the use of the Underground. GeneCrime is puzzled as to the cause of death. Unknown to Reuben his actions in trying to help these potential psychopaths leads to a traumatic clash with the Underground Killer.

It is quiet obvious that this is the third book in a series as there are many things left unsaid or taken for granted in its first half. For instance, early on the GeneCrime staff holds a wake to which Reuben is invited. But who has died is not made clear until halfway through the book: how he died never is. As a result I found the book initially unsatisfying, but as I progressed came to enjoy it more and more. I would strongly recommend that to get the most out of the book the other two in the series are read first. Is it science fiction? Probably but only because (to the best of my knowledge) the GeneCrime laboratory does not exist and neither does Reuben's Psychopath Selection system. JTP

***SKIN TRADE* by Laurell K Hamilton**

Headline / 594pgs / paperback £6.99 ISBN: 978-0755352555

Reviewed by Jim Pearce



SKIN TRADE is the latest (17th) of the *Anita Blake Vampire Hunter* novels. These are set in a world where vampires and were-animals exist and are part of society. That said there is a love/hate relationship with them being thought of as monsters by some ordinary humans. Consequently they have second class legal and 'human' rights and can be executed for minor as well as major offences, as long as a warrant has been issued by a court. Anita, currently a US Federal Marshal, hunts transgressors and executes warrants, so successfully that she is known as the Executioner by these supernatural species.

At the start of the series Anita is convinced that these creatures, especially vampires, are monsters but this viewpoint gradually changes and by the start of this book believes they, like humans, are mainly responsible citizens but also, like humans, some are monsters. The reason for this change of view lies in her, initially very much against her will, becoming involved with Jean-Claude the vampire Master of the City of St. Louis and becoming his human servant. This has developed her psychic powers, physical strength and powers of recovery from harm, but has also cursed her with Jean-Claude's *ardeur* which has turned her into a succubus needing to feed on sexual energy. Consequently she does not believe that she is human anymore and at one stage in SKIN TRADE she requests two vampire brothers (sent as body guards by Jean-Claude along with others to protect her and act as psychic food) to kill her if the *ardeur* overcomes her and she becomes evil.

SKIN TRADE opens with a bang when Anita receives a parcel containing the head of a Las Vegas cop. It has been sent by Vittorio, a very powerful vampire serial killer, who she first came across in the novel INCUBUS DREAMS. Only stopping to get her

vampire hunting kit, she flies off to Las Vegas where she meets up with three other Federal Marshals who have featured in previous novels. There she is immediately embroiled in local police politics when the Las Vegas SWAT team psychically tests her ability to work with them and not put them in danger. In addition she is interrogated by detectives as if she is a suspect/accomplice of the killer. Fuelling this attitude are rumours about her morals and that she is a publicity hound. It does not help that she is petite and cleans up well. She wins around the SWAT team, but the local under-sheriff and detectives continue to treat her as a suspect.

The case is complicated by her discovery that one of Vittorio's cohorts is a were-tiger and is also married to Bibiana a were-tiger queen who has her own agenda regarding Anita. In addition, Anita has previously been infected by were-tiger lycanthropy which makes her sensitive to Bibiana's powers. This also makes her vulnerable to Marmee Noir the Mother of All Vampires, a very ancient vampire imprisoned somewhere in Europe, who converts her body as a means of resurrection and is prone to attack when Anita's defences are weakened.

Overall the book is highly readable and full of action from start to finish. It is amazing how much can be crammed into a very short timeframe. As has been identified by other reviewers Anita is a complex and well developed character.

While it is strongly recommended that whole series be read in chronological order, this and the other novels are good stand alone reads. JTP

***GOD OF CLOCKS* by Alan Campbell**

Tor / 373pgs / hardback £17.99 ISBN: 978-1405090377

Reviewed by Dave Corby



GOD OF CLOCKS is Alan Campbell's final book in *The Deepgate Codex* series following SCAR NIGHT and IRON ANGEL, reviewed by myself in the Brum Group News (issues 457 and 458 respectively).

SCAR NIGHT described a gothic horror setting which played host to a fantasy tale. IRON ANGEL widened Campbell's fantasy world and showcased his ability to craft interesting characters with so much twist that there may be little left of anything else left. Through the first two volumes I found the author to be capable of inventive ideas and sometimes gripping action, but also often bogged down in over emphasised description.

This third book is much closer to the second than the first; indeed it feels as if they might have been written back to back. Rather than more wild creation, the vistas opened up in the second volume are here developed further. So, too, are the characters that were introduced in IRON ANGEL, all of whom gain greater depth here, making them rather more interesting. The story carries directly on where IRON ANGEL left off (the latter having been something of a cliff-hanger).

I think it is notable that the invention in this final volume is, perhaps a little less wild than in the previous volumes, but it is also seems considerably better conceived. One or two of the concepts in GOD OF CLOCKS are actually thought provoking (!) and

satisfyingly complex. This is helped by this volume, being the final, providing all the answers and finally making sense (of sorts) of some of the more improbable seeming concepts introduced earlier.

Overall I feel that Campbell improves his writing throughout the trilogy; the third book feels tighter, with the description better balanced by the action (for anyone who missed my previous reviews I felt that the first book was so steeped in gothic horror imagery that the description overshadowed everything else, leading to an often rather turgid read).

GOD OF CLOCKS inherits its storyline directly from IRON ANGEL, and so does not meander like the former book. The plot winds pleasingly through battles in hell, personal journeys and an interesting quest through time to a reasonably satisfying conclusion. And the final question has to be: can I recommend the whole series? Well, I consider that the notably atmospheric setting and the highly curious characters will probably make it fairly memorable in comparison with many other fantasy 'epics', so I give this a tentative recommendation. Just be certain of what you are getting into – if you laugh in the face of high page counts, and fancy a trilogy steeped in blood and souls, this is quite possibly a pleasant diversion for you. Otherwise, I must suggest staying away...

P.S. I must note a particular personal criticism; if you are anything like me, you will expect that after some 1400 pages I expect a chapter or two at the end to show how the characters recover or otherwise live on after the grand climax; a 2 page epilogue following the very pages that resolve it all simply will not do to provide closure! DC

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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 contact addresses.

Any information about forthcoming SF / Fantasy / Horror events are always welcome – please send to me at rogpeyton@hotmail.co.uk

The Central Library SF and Fantasy Reading Group meets on Thursdays at 5.45pm 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.

Books to be discussed:-

Jan 21ST INCANDESCENCE by Greg Egan

Future books to be discussed will probably include

3001: FINAL ODYSSEY by Arthur C. Clarke

PAVANE by Keith Roberts

LET THE RIGHT ONE IN by Jon Avide Lindquist

THE CITY AND THE CITY by China Mieville

SOMNAMBULIST by Jonathon Barnes

THE MiSFiTs are an informal group of local SF fans who meet regularly at 7pm at the Wagon & Horses, Oldbury on the third Friday of each month. Real ale, good food, great company. Next meeting is on 15th January.

More details from Martin Tudor (empties084@btinternet.com).

STEAMPUNK ART - the world premiere exhibition of Steampunk Art is at The Museum of the History of Science, University of Oxford until 21st February. For more details and photos of art see <http://www.steampunkmuseumexhibition.blogspot.com/>

FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE BSFG

February 12th – QUIZ versus the B’ham University SF Group
March 12th – Gollancz editor JO FLETCHER returns with more amusing and interesting anecdotes of life in publishing
April 9th – tba
May 14th – comic fantasy author JASPER FFORDE
June 11th – tba
July 9th – SF/fantasy author STEVE FEASEY
August 13th – SUMMER SOCIAL – meal at The Black Eagle
September 10th – tba
October 8th – SF, fantasy author and satirist ADAM ROBERTS
November – SF author CHARLES STROSS
December 3rd – Christmas Social

BRUM GROUP NEWS #460 copyright 2010 for Birmingham SF Group. Designed by Rog Peyton (19 Eves Croft, Bartley Green, Birmingham, B32 3QL – phone 0121 477 6901 or email rogpeyton@hotmail.co.uk). 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 which I sift through for the best/most entertaining items.

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 Secretary, 10 Sylvan Avenue, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 2PG