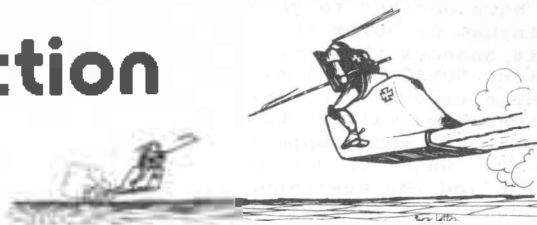


Birmingham Science Fiction Group



The Birmingham Science Fiction Group (BSFG) meets every month on the third Friday of each month. Meetings are held at the Imperial Hotel, Temple Street, Birmingham and the programme commences at 8pm. Membership is £1.50 per year - our treasurer is Dave Cox, 2 Allard, Glascote, Tamworth, Staffs. Non-members always welcome.

Newsletter editor: Rog Peyton, 19 Eves Croft, Bartley Green, Bham 32.
Assistant Editor: Steven Green, 33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull.

NEWSLETTER No 89

January 1979

The committee wishes all members a Happy New Year. We trust that all those people who have not yet rejoined the BSFG for 1979 will be doing so in the next few days. As mentioned previously - there is no change in the membership rate this year - still £1.50 per year for which you get a newsletter every month plus approx 50% reduction in monthly attendance rates (this works out to about 30p saving per month for 10 months - work it out for yourself just how much good sense it is to be a member!).

January 20th is the date of the first meeting this year. As in past years, it will be in two parts - the first part being our Annual General Meeting. Hopefully this will only take about half an hour - the usual treasurer's report, etc and election of a new committee. Nominations have been received for at least one person for each committee post - further nominations may be made at the AGM itself and voting will be by show of hands where necessary. This will be followed by the main part of the programme - a Grand Auction. This will be your chance to pick up SF books at bargain prices - anything from 1p upwards. If you have anything you would like to donate to the Group - old books you no longer want - please bring them along for us to auction. All proceeds from the auction will go to the Group funds. If anyone has expensive items they wish to dispose of - artwork, art books, first editions, etc - we will, if required, auction them for you and you may keep the proceeds yourself (with the customary 10% going into Group funds). The success of the auction depends entirely on the amount of stuff you bring along. Preferably SF, of course, but we'll auction anything - we've auctioned boxes of corn flakes before now!

In February we will be having a visit from Ken and Pam Bulmer. Ken's career in SF started way back in the early 50s and in recent years has had considerable success in the science fantasy field with the Scorpio series (written under the pseudonym Alan Burt Akers) and also in the historical field with the Fox series (under the pseudonym Adam Hardy). Pam is a first-rate SF critic who has taken part in many panel discussions at conventions.

Other speakers upcoming in 1979 include Brian Ball, Peter Nicholls (of the SF Foundation) and a probable return visit from Bob Shaw.

NOVACON 9

Despite the World Con being held in Britain in August this year, the BSFG have decided to go ahead with our annual convention here in Birmingham in November. Sufficient interest has been shown by many fans and it appears that more registrations were taken for NOVACON 9 than any previous NOVACONS! Many fans will undoubtedly be unable to attend after the huge expense of going to the WorldCon and we expect NOVACON 9 to be considerably smaller than the last couple. Yours truly (Rog Peyton) will be Chairman, ably supported by Stan & Helen Eling, Chris Morgan and Paul Oldroyd. Guest of Honour will be Christopher Priest, author of THE SPACE MACHINE and the newly-published-in-paperback A DREAM OF WESSEX. Chris has just had a novelet published in the January issue of FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. Titled "Palely Loitering", it is a story about a young man who grows to adulthood in an era when starflight is a thing of the past and time travel is routine but confined to a Victorian-like park. He has just finished his long novella "The Miraculous Cairn" which will appear in an anthology, NEW TERRORS, edited by Ramsey Campbell. BBC Radio 4 will be serialising THE SPACE MACHINE shortly and its due to be published in the USSR this year.

The convention will be held over the weekend 2/3/4 November and will almost certainly be held at the Royal Angus Hotel, though this has yet to be finalised. Supporting membership, which entitles you to all progress reports and a copy of the Programme Book together with any incidental convention literature, is £2 which should be sent to Stan Eling, 124 Galton Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands.

In memorium

Robert Bruce Montgomery ('Edmund Crispin'), author and anthologist, died recently, aged 57. Among his books are THE MOVING TOYSHOP (1946) and GLIMPSES OF THE MOON (1977); he wrote incidental music for many British films, especially during the 1950s. He began the BEST SF series of anthologies in 1955 and followed with five sequels, also editing two volumes of BEST TALES OF TERROR and several SF juveniles. In the mid-1960s he was President of the British Science Fiction Association.

Other news

Stanley Schmidt has replaced Ben Bova as editor of ANALOG...Bova is now editor of OMNI, the new SF magazine from the publishers of PENTHOUSE - despite comments from the SF 'hardcore' fraternity, the magazine looks like being a commercial success with the second issue print-run being increased to 1.3 million and the third issue apparently being upped to a 2 million copy print-run. Copies of Issue 1 disappeared from the shelves immediately.

On November 9, 1978, Ted White terminated his editorship of AMAZING and FANTASTIC. The January 1979 FANTASTIC and the February 1979 AMAZING are the last under his editorship. The magazines are now the sole property of Arthur Bernhard. The next few issues of each magazine will most likely consist of reprint material - it is intended to restore the original comet logo to AMAZING.

G Harry ('Hank') Stine is the new editor of GALAXY, whose wordrates have just dropped to 1 cent per word while debts to writers of \$15,000 are cleared up.

Robert Heinlein plans to attend the World Con in Brighton in August...Phil Strick is to present a one-day survey of robots in films entitled "War with the Robots" at North East London Polytechnic on February 17 with BSFG co-President Harry Harrison as guest speaker...20th Century-Fox have filed suit against MCA/Universal, who they claim have ripped-off ideas from STAR WARS for BATTLESTAR: GALACTICA; they have now received a counter-suit from MCA/Universal, who claim STAR WARS itself stole from their properties, BUCK ROGERS and FLASH GORDON; SF fan Joe Nicholas has the best suggestion so far - sue 20th Century Fox and MCA/Universal ourselves for stealing all their ideas from SF in general...Arthur C

Clarke's new (and, he claims, final) novel is published by Gollancz on the 25th of this month - title is THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE and a serialisation appears in PLAYBOY commencing in the January issue... Chris Foss recently signed copies of his artbook, 21st CENTURY FOSS, at ANDROMEDA BOOKSHOP - while there he revealed he was currently working on an illustrated edition of the FOUNDATION TRILOGY... Fred Pohl's latest novel, JEM, is currently being serialised in GALAXY - his last 2 novels, MAN-PLUS and GATEWAY, were the 1977 and 1978 Nebula Award winners

BOOK REVIEWS STEVE GREEN

(Review rating code:- 5-excellent...4-recommended...3-good... 2-average...1-poor...0-avoid)

BEYOND THE BARRIER by Damon Knight (Hamlyn 80p) - a fairly absorbing novel (expanded from an F&SF novella) concerning an alien amnesiac and those who seek to restore his memory, and original mission, to him. Although the plot and ending are pretty superficial, Knight maintains the pacing of the novel quite effectively and the result is reasonably enjoyable.

Rating: 2

MINDBRIDGE by Joe Haldeman (Orbit 85p) - Joe's masterful second novel, now re-issued with new cover artwork mildly reminiscent of the CLOSE ENCOUNTERS poster, recounts an encounter with alien life forms vastly removed from Steven Spielberg's conceptions. An elite group of 'Tamers' - reconnaissance explorers searching for prospective colonies - are sent to the star system of Archenar after an earlier team has vanished. What they find there is to have an irrevocable effect upon the future of Earth and, in particular, Jacque Lefavre, one of the principal explorers. The story is told in a sporadic fashion with the action hurled forwards and backwards through Lefavre's life, from the days before he joined the Tamers to the moment of his death. Although not quite as good as his earlier THE FOREVER WAR, this book is an example of the kind of excellent SF Haldeman is capable of writing when he really tries.

Rating: 4

OUT OF THIS WORLD

A Season of Science Fiction and Fantasy films to be shown at the Arts Lab Cinema, Holt Street, Birmingham B7 4BA. Price of admission to each performance is £1 - membership is not necessary. Tickets may be booked in advance either at THE ARTSHOP in the arcade between Union Street and the back of C&As, or by writing to the Arts Lab itself. Telephone bookings are not taken.

- Sun Feb 4 (6pm) THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN and SECONDS
- Mon Feb 5 (7pm) THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL and FANTASTIC VOYAGE
- Tue Feb 6 (7pm) THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL and FANTASTIC VOYAGE
- Wed Feb 7 (3pm) CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON and SILENT RUNNING
- Fri Feb 9 (3pm) CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON and SILENT RUNNING
- Fri Feb 9 (11pm) CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON and SILENT RUNNING
- Sat Feb 10 (11pm) CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON and SILENT RUNNING
- Wed Feb 28 (3pm) INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1956) and THE THING
- Wed Feb 28 (11pm) INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1956) and THE THING
- Fri Mar 2 (3pm) IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE and DARK STAR
- Fri Mar 2 (11pm) IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE and DARK STAR
- Sat Mar 3 (3pm) IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE and DARK STAR
- Sat Mar 3 (11pm) IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE and DARK STAR
- Wed Mar 7 (3pm) DR STRANGELOVE and THX 1138
- Wed Mar 7 (7pm) DR STRANGELOVE and THX 1138
- Fri Mar 9 (3pm) SLEEPER and BED-SITTING ROOM
- Fri Mar 9 (11pm) SLEEPER and BED-SITTING ROOM

Sat Mar 10 (3pm) SLEEPER and BED-SITTING ROOM
 Sat Mar 10 (11pm) SLEEPER and BED-SITTING ROOM
 Sun Mar 11 (6pm) WAR OF THE WORLDS and THINGS TO COME
 Mon Mar 12 (6.30pm) THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN
 Mon Mar 12 (8.45pm) THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN
 Tue Mar 13 (6pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Tue Mar 13 (8.30pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Wed Mar 14 (3pm) FORBIDDEN PLANET and DENON SEED
 Wed Mar 14 (6.30pm) LOST HORIZON (1936 - not the musical)
 Thu Mar 15 (6pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Thu Mar 15 (8.30pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Fri Mar 16 (2.30pm) LOST HORIZON (1936)
 Fri Mar 16 (6pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Fri Mar 16 (8.30pm) LOST HORIZON (1936)
 Fri Mar 16 (11pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Sat Mar 17 (2.30pm) LOST HORIZON (1936)
 Sat Mar 17 (6pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Sat Mar 17 (8.30pm) LOST HORIZON (1936)
 Sat Mar 17 (11pm) 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY
 Wed Mar 21 (3pm) ALPHAVILLE and ANTICIPATIONS
 Wed Mar 21 (6.30pm) BARON MUNCHAUSEN and Extracts from G Melies films
 Wed Mar 21 (8.45pm) ALPHAVILLE and ANTICIPATIONS
 Fri Mar 23 (3.30pm) SOLARIS
 Fri Mar 23 (11pm) SOLARIS
 Sat Mar 24 (3.30pm) SOLARIS
 Sat Mar 24 (11pm) SOLARIS
 Sun Mar 25 (6pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Sun Mar 25 (8.30pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Mon Mar 26 (6pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Mon Mar 26 (8.30pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Tue Mar 27 (6pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Tue Mar 27 (8.30pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Wed Mar 28 (3pm) THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
 Wed Mar 28 (evening) Programme to be confirmed
 Thu Mar 29 (6pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Thu Mar 29 (8.30pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Fri Mar 30 (3.30pm) THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
 Fri Mar 30 (6pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Fri Mar 30 (8.30pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Fri Mar 30 (11pm) THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
 Sat Mar 31 (3.30pm) THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
 Sat Mar 31 (6pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Sat Mar 31 (8.30pm) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND
 Sat Mar 31 (11pm) THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
 Sun Apr 1 (8.30pm) THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH
 Wed Apr 4 (6.15pm) Philip Strick gives an illustrated talk on SF films

RED FLAME

The further adventures of 'Red' Blame have had to make way for the film info above but he will return in the near future. Apologies to Stan for the delay in continuing these adventures.
 The answer to the last puzzle was E...N...T. (One..Two..Three..Four..Five..Six..Seven..Eight..Nine..Ten)