



CHECKPOINT

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT
AND SOME OTHER STUFF

Winter 1977

Checkpoint 85 is produced by Peter Roberts, 38 Oakland Drive, Dawlish, Devon, UK. It's available for news, selected trades, interesting letters, fine old fanzines (send list first), Star Wars bubble gum cards (one pack per issue), other fascinating things, or cash: 5/50p (UK & Europe), 5/\$1 (America airmail), or 7/£1 (Australia & NZ airmail). Heading by Don West. Restormel Press Pub: 122.

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NO ESCAPE from the clutches of *Checkpoint*, even if it has been a couple of months since the last issue. I have my excuses, however: food gets short here in the winter fogs of moorland Devon and I've been out collecting fungi to last me through to the Spring. There, bet you thought I was going to blame it all on the strains of writing a TAFF report. Hell no. I can only kid the readers so far, and no further. Still, here we all are again. This issue is just a brief one to catch up on some stuff. Future issues will be at least double the size, thanks to the new metric weight levels that the GPO have just invented. The disappearance of the old 15gm limit puts paid to the usual six-page *Checkpoints*, so I'm upping it to eight or ten pages (with a slight price increase - see above). Deadline for the next issue is January 15th - may your news and letters pour in by then.

LEEDS BID FOR EASTERCON: The Leeds Sf Group are intending to bid for the 1979 British Eastercon. The committee includes David Pringle as Chairman and Mike Dickinson as Vice-Chairman. Don West, their PR man, no less, tells me that they're investigating the Leeds Dragonara Hotel, site of a past *Star Trek* con and big enough for an Eastercon. At the moment this seems to be the only positive bid for the 1979 con.

THE GUARDIAN AWARD FOR FICTION was recently presented to Mike Moorcock for his novel, *The Condition of Muzak*, last of the Jerry Cornelius series. And that's all the sf news you're likely to get this issue - unless you hadn't noticed a new BBC tv sitcom featuring a housewife marooned on a space station, if indeed that's even worthy of note.

NOVACON 7: This year's Novacon, held at the Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham (Nov. 4th-6th), was an entirely cheerful and pleasant affair. Around 300 fans attended, including a couple of stray Americans and token Belgians and Swedes. Chairman was Stan Eling and John Brunner was Guest of Honour. The programme, as usual at Novacons, was fairly light, with a couple of panels, a couple of films, a Disco that seemed adequate, auctions, and a banquet.

I arrived on Friday afternoon and sat chatting in the bar till the Suncon Slide Show in the evening when Rob Jackson and Mike Meara showed off their photographic talents with assorted views of American fans and the Worldcon. Saturday started early with the Jim White Chat Show which featured Brian Lewis and myself as guests, with Brian talking about odd happenings in his work as artist, cartoonist, and rock world mover, and me telling anecdotes about anything I could think of, which included obscene fungi and submarines. I went out with a few fans to a vegetarian restaurant for lunch and discovered that *chili con carne* was the meal of the day; Andrew Stephenson also insulted his apple crumble, so there was a certain strangeness to the meal. Rog Peyton and I auctioned books and fanzines in the afternoon and in the evening some nineteen of us went off for an alternative banquet in the only decent Indian Restaurant in Birmingham. I leapt into the first taxi for this outing and ended up having to push it part of the way, which was a trifle daft; also rather silly was the final bill for the meal which came to £99.99 exactly. Sunday was quiet, most people leaving in the afternoon; but there were a couple of dead dog parties that night. The last stragglers left on Monday and I thought for a moment that I was actually the last fan left in the hotel by late afternoon; but a group of Sheffield fans reappeared, waiting for a concert in the city that evening.

A very enjoyable convention, though without any great events or happenings. Dave Langford's *Troll-ddu* won the Nova Award for Best British Fanzine. Next year's Novacon will move to the Holiday Inn in Birmingham, the Royal Angus being too small to cope with the increase in con attendance.

CoAs: Rog Peyton, 19 Eves Croft, Bartley Green, Birmingham, B32 3QL
Alyson Abramowitz, 5334 Beeler St, Pittsburgh, PA 15217
Sarah Symonds Prince, 2369 Williams (Apt A), Columbus, OH 43202
Archie & Beryl Mercer, Lyonesse, Post Office Lane, Mount Hawke, Truro, Cornwall, TR4 8DW
Bruce Arthurs, 4522 E. Rowker, Phoenix, AZ 85040
Patrick Hayden, Annie Hall, 656 Abbott Rd, E. Lansing, MI 48823
Ken Josenhans, (as above)
Gary Farber (c/o, as above)
Jerry Kaufman, 606 15th St E, Seattle, WA 98112
Suzanne Tompkins (as above, from Jan 1st)
Don Markstein, 1005 Willow, Austin, TX 78702
Tom Perry, PO Box 2134, Boca Raton, FL 33432
Darroll & Ro Pardoe, 38 Sandown Lane, Liverpool, L15 4HU
Ian & Janice Maule, 18 Hillside, 163 Carshalton Rd, Sutton, Surrey
Carey Handfield, PO Box 91, Carlton, Vic 3053, Australia
Ben Zuhl, 7660 N. Sheridan Rd, Chicago, IL 60626
Ross Chamberlain, 90 Pinehurst Ave, 6F, New York, NY 10033

BRITISH FANZINE BIBLIOGRAPHY: The first part, covering the years 1936-1950, is now available; it's been printed as a ten page pamphlet and contains listings & information on each issue of every British fanzine known from the period before 1950. Three further parts dealing with fanzines from 1950-1975 are in preparation. The first part is priced at 50p(\$1), mainly for the benefit of libraries and other institutions who plague me with invoices and suchlike. Readers of *Checkpoint* and other fans can get a copy for 35p (inc.post); overseas fans can send me three International Reply Coupons for a copy, or a \$1 bill (and I'll keep note of the change and knock it off the price of the next part). Anyone who wants ten copies for any reason can get them for £3 (\$6).

SILICON 2: (*You're right, it has been a long time since the last CP; but here's a report from Joseph Nicholas for historians amongst you*) "Silicon 2, organized by the ever-active Gannets, was held in the Imperial Hotel, Newcastle, over the weekend of 26th-29th August. It was the fine fannish event all had expected it to be, marred only by a cretinous manager who closed the bar early and took the pool cues away to prevent the clicking of balls on the table from disturbing the sleep of the residents.

"Friday night passed without this idiocy manifesting itself and Saturday morning brought the first of the scheduled programme items, a panel entitled "The Brains Truss", intended as no more than harmless fun until certain members of the audience revealed themselves as the founding fathers of the Norwich Sf Group and demanded to know why this wasn't a full-fledged sf convention. They had, it appeared, been passed information to this effect by no less than the BSFA... as a result of which all the old arguments about fannish and sercon fandom were trotted out in a vain attempt to show them the error of their ways.

"The tv-football tournament was in progress that evening when we heard that negotiations with the manager had broken down and the bar would shut at 12.30 despite the bar staff's willingness (all one of her) to keep working till 4.00am. With her cooperation we stole the seized pool cues back and it wasn't until the manager returned at 1.30am that he was able to prevent her from raking in the money. Acrimony and agitation all round and threats to write to the director of the hotel chain were voiced.

"Sunday morning brought an horrendously imbecilic monster movie before our gaze. Not realizing that it was Japanese, Dave Langford spent five minutes trying to lip-read it. People disappeared off to local off-licences to stock up for the night and when the bar closed we repaired to the tv lounge upstairs. When the manager complained about the noise, we went back downstairs and made even more noise till the alcohol ran out.

"The Royal Station Hotel will almost certainly be the venue for next year's Silicon." (*J.N.*)

WEIRD TALES: Richard McMahon, who may or may not be off to Zambia next year, reports the appearance of an sf club in Croydon and district. At least two meetings have been held so far with about half a dozen people turning up. The person to contact is: John Hunt, 39 Stoneyfield Rd, Old Coulsdon, Surrey. // Elst Weinstein (7001 Park Manor Ave, North Hollywood, CA 91605) has sent along a copy of his sf game, *For This, You Die!*; Elst is selling copies for \$3.00. I may get hold of some shortly for sale in Europe - price, &c, later.

CONVENTIONS FUTURE: The next UK convention is the small Faancon to be held at the Lansdowne Hotel, Manchester, over the weekend of February 3rd-5th. There's no formal programme and membership is £1.50 (with a refund at the door). Make cheques payable to Faancon 3 and contact Gerald Lawrence, Tower 6-13-16, Owens Park, 293 Wilmslow Rd, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6HD. // Also in February (17th-19th) is Boskone 15 at the Sheraton-Boston Hotel. Guest of Honour is John Brunner with Arthur Thomson as Official Artist. Membership (till Feb 1st) is \$6 to: Boskone, PO Box G, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139. // Finally, Beneluxcon 6 will be held in Eindhoven, Holland, on the weekend of 9th-11th June. Chris Priest is the Guest of Honour. Membership is £2.30 to Vernon Brown, Pharmacy Dept, Univ.of Aston, Gosta Green, Birmingham, B4 7ET.

CONVENTIONS PAST: Colin Lester attended the Sfancon in Ghent in September and sends a brief report: "Good. I'm told there were 250 or so people there, but it seemed more like 150. About fifteen British fans turned up, including GoH, Bob Shaw. There were five films, a very small fancy dress parade, enlivened by Martin Hoare's impressions and the fact that two people had been body-painted by Karel Thole, and about twenty other items, half-a-dozen of which were in English. Ghent, by the way, is a nice place to visit, though a trifle smelly." *Something to do with rotting flax, if I remember correctly. You're right though - the stench from the canals beggars description.* // Alan Bostick sends a final few notes on the Westercon: "Attendance was actually only 858. This is a Genuine Real True Fact, since I had the job of counting them. Your report also failed to mention a hazard of the UBC facilities that I doubt even Owens Park had: the shower curtains in the bathrooms had a strong tendency to attack the occupants of the showers, causing much distress among those attendees who had seen *Psycho* before the con."

NEED ILLUSTRATIONS? I've a selection of about fifty pieces of artwork from my own and Jonh Ingham's files that neither of us are ever likely to use. Some fifteen fan artists are represented. Any faneditor is welcome to a batch - just drop me a line and include return postage.

AND FINALLY: *Seasonal Greetings to you all.*

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Need help and advice?
Tough. Here's:

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By air mail
Paravion

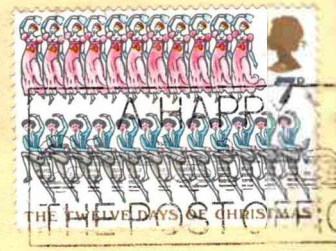
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