

ANSIBLE 30 is the 30th issue of ANSIBLE (this has been the True Fact Of The Month) and is brilliantly edited (we had to run out of true facts sometime) by DAVE LANGFORD from 94 LONDON ROAD, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG1 5AU, UK—telephone (0734) 665804. Subscriptions held stable despite rising costs for 6 whole weeks now: £1 for 4 issues anywhere on Earth, or £2 for 8 if you like—don't send more than £2, please. Sterling cheques/cash/POs to me, Girobank transfer to a/c 24 523 0408, \$US equivalent to US agents Mary and Bill Burns at their *new address* 23 Kensington Ct, Hampstead, NY 11550, Euro money to Euroagent Roelof Goudriaan, Postbus 589, 8200 AN Lelystad, Netherlands. Rush money if your mailing label, exquisitely crafted by traditional native Keith Freeman, bears a Politely Uncomplaining Reminder (SUB DUE) or, worse, a Discreet Cough Of Forthcoming Severance (****). All artwork by ATOM; all typos courtesy of Sperry-Remington; all interjections of 'Have a triffic Christmas' by the editor and Hazel. Next issue in 1983...

*** NOVACON 12 * BIRMINGHAM 5-8 NOV * JOSEPH NICHOLAS ***

(Editorial bits in this typeface are interspersed with these highlights from Joe's 50,000 word draft Novacon report—DRL)

These days a Novacon is much like all other Novacons, held in the same hotel (Royal Angus) and city so that memories of them blur together and one has difficulty remembering not only what happened when, and in which order, but also whether one enjoyed it... I didn't see anything of Friday evening's silly games and films, and instead seemed to spend hours running to and from my room to dispose of the mounds of fanzines everyone was giving out. Vague flashes of (in no particular order) Kev Smith telling me what a nice guy Ted White is really, Mickey Poland giving me a collection of BAOR photos of Lynx & Puma helicopters, Eve Harvey falling off a table and spilling her drink down my trousers (you may wonder what she was doing on the table in the first place. Me too), and Tim Illingworth giving me the number of the Cambridge room party, which I then forgot until Judith came to lead me away to bed and it was too late...

(As usual Jim Barker was to blame for the silly games. What is his weird charismatic power, that at his bidding respectable fans will stand on their heads telling Irish jokes while miming 97-word book titles and playing the kazoo? I think we should be told. Novacon 12's programme was deliberately 'slender', notes the Brum Group's own newsletter, fine for fans but 'perhaps not for newcomers'. My own neo-ish desire to see TIME BANDITS at last was thwarted by scheduling that film to clash with Saturday's breakfast—because, say my spies, 'Rog Peyton doesn't like it.')

Judith was the star of Saturday's fanzine panel, nominally chaired by committee member Eunice Pearson, who was obviously too traumatized by the experience to say much. The discussion floundered for 15 minutes, with D. West in the audience growing visibly more bored: when he left (I imply no causal connexion) it suddenly got better. Abi Frost, also in the audience, clobbered panel members Christina Lake and Lilian Edwards over the artwork presentation in their fanzine; Judith clobbered Eunice for publishing a fiction fanzine at all, and kept talking for the rest of the hour, as a result of which she was invited to chair a similar panel at Albacon. Subtle moral lesson to be learned here...

Afternoon brought another Phil Strick compilation of clips from Really Bad films, out of which Chris Priest walked muttering that it was too easy to get laughs from such material. Toby Roxburgh's 'The Economics of SF Publishing' answered traditional auctorial moans with the publisher's moans instead—given his quoted figures, it does seem mad to hope for any profit at all from publishing. 'An excellent demonstration of why bumblebees can't fly,' said Jack Cohen from the audience; and GoH Harry Harrison, and Brian Aldiss, rose repeatedly to respond with tales of their own experiences. 'The bumblebee is about to fly again,' reassured Roxburgh, plunging into the mysteries of inflation and interest rates: his talk was intelligent, amusing, and insightful, probably the best item of the entire weekend.

(The Aldiss horror-story concerned Tom Maschler of Cape, who bullied BA into abandoning HELLCOMIA SUMMER to spend 6 weeks compiling—with Margaret Aldiss—an anthology of mini-sagas. The mini-saga format (a 50-word story, no more or less—see A27) was invented by BA and sparked a TELEGRAPH competition receiving 33,000 entries of which the 300 best form the anthology... which has now seized up thanks to furious copyright disputes between Cape and the TELEGRAPH, making the planned Spring publication a hollow mockery and leaving the Aldisses with, so far, a return for their labours of £0.00p. Logomachy continues. Watch this space!)

After a gap (it's the drink, squire, the drink) came the auction with R. Peyton in fine form, flogging yards of Brian Stableford paperbacks at £6-£7 the throw for GUFF, and I'd thought I'd have to pay people to take them away. Star item was a mystery package which went for a staggering £3.40—staggering when you consider that everyone else dropped out at the £2 mark, the remaining cretin (er... bidder) ignoring Peyton cries of "Stop bidding—stop—it's rubbish" while being given 10p bits by his friends to carry on and secure... four copies of Eando Binder's *Night of the Saucers*.

Another gap (the drink, squire) and it was time for the disco (out of which Chris Priest walked muttering that he came to cons to avoid such mundane crap): I discovered that several years of not dancing had turned my limbs to wood—Judith could bounce with the best of them while I had trouble even waving my arms coherently, until the rather inept DJ played an old Stones number and I too began leaping up and down, thrashing away at an imaginary guitar and landing on my head with every third chord. All I remember after is a fascinating conversation with Eric Bentcliffe about fan history and tradition, and, much later, stepping out of the lift en route to bed and tripping over a G. Webb pekinese.

(But there was uproar in the bar as famous Prof. Tom Shippey let down his lack of hair. "I liked your book on Tolkien," said your editor to Tom. "But I noticed a couple of mistakes," I continued boldly. "Aargh," I interrupted as Prof. Shippey seized my ear in steely fingers and twisted it round and round. Later, the highest brow in British fandom lurched on a trail of mayhem and molestation [Eileen Weston was reported to be deeply unamused] while fans soothed the bar staff with such unconvincing remarks as, "It's all right, he's a Professor of Mediaeval Literature...")

Sunday was the usual blur. I found time to watch *Closet Cases of the Nerd Kind* and *Hardware Wars*, two triffic spoofs which would have raised more laughs if shown in reverse order—*HW*, its irons and toasters and eggwhisks screeching through space on wires borrowed from *Dr Who*, was obviously the cruder, with less structure and impact, whereas *CCNK* had sophistication and a larger budget. Also on Sunday... D. West approached Judith asking her to become one of his groupies, making me wonder if he'd suddenly given up on pretty young men: but all he wanted was a drink. Geoff Ripington handed me a heap of *Vector* review copies containing a James Michener novel so heavy and so horrible that I had to run away and hide it before everyone started laughing. Judith did not appear to lead me to bed, having returned to London to face the dread spectre of work on Monday morning, and at some godawful early hour of same I fell asleep in a corner of the bar, waking to find Tony Berry had decorated my hands with a red felt pen and was just about to start on my face... I had a good time; roll on next year. (JN)

(Since I too left early, it seems unfair that I should have to insert coverage of Sunday night's sword ceremony. The Nova awards went to Rob Hansen (fanartist—rumoured

runners-up Lyon and Barker), Chris Atkinson (fanwriter—r.r.u. Hansen and Ounsley), and Hansen's EPSILON (fanzine—r.r.u. ANSIBLE and TAPPEN). Kevin Smith gloated at length over the power of his Nova recommendations in the progress reports. The COFF—Concrete Overcoat Fan Fund—trophy went to the fake Bob Shaw, who had precognitively donned a three-piece suit and tie to accept it. He got 62 votes; runners-up were Steve Green [56] and just about every other British fan, down to folk like Joseph [2] and Martin Hoare [1]. Even I got several votes after annoying ***** at Channel-con. Artshow award to Fangorn [Chris Baker]... DRL)

*** WITH ROD & GUN THROUGH THE SAVAGE WORLD OF SKIFFY ***

THE BSFA (LTD.) ON THE BRINK: A Final Notice to the directors of the BSFA has come from the jolly Registrar of Companies, who speaks soothingly of overdue annual returns and accounts, of directors' (ie. council members') personal responsibility, of fines up to £1000 all round... 'I can sort it all out,' said ashen-faced company secretary Kevin Smith, leaving Novacon hastily and prematurely...

MORE THREATS have been arriving on Faircon committee members' doorsteps, from Golds, solicitors of Bob (fake) Shaw (who says he got the idea from Duncan Lunan). Since the Faircon folk were 'party to a fraudulent pretence whereby our client was wickedly misled into diverting his considerable effort and energies into this event' (ie. since the committee failed to come to heel when instructed by Bob to jettison chairman Joan Paterson—see A28), they are now being threatened with proceedings unless they cough up £300 apiece, or possibly £300 between them. The legal term for this is, I believe, 'trying it on'. Our Bob has meanwhile issued a preliminary Faircon 84 Progress Report which rather mysteriously requests 'presupporting memberships' at £5 a head—presumably a pre-emptive strike lest other members of the Faircon 82 committee get ideas about carrying on to run the 1984 event...

CANADIAN SF & FANTASY AWARD: voted in some manner not described in the release, the single annual award can be (rather bizarrely) presented for a story, novel, antho, mag, artwork, film or litcrit item—1982's went to Phyllis Gotlieb for her novel *Judgement of Dragons* and also for lifetime contributions to SF. Meanwhile, the egregious Spider Robinson constantly demands to be made eligible for the CSFFA on grounds of Canadian residence (while refusing to abandon the advantages of US citizenship)...

BEN BOVA left *Omnif* some while ago, a news item so tedious that I forgot it until reading in *Patchin Review 5* that 'when *Locus* printed Ben's report that he'd resigned, many people were confused and surprised—not least, at *Omnif*...

MAXIM JAKUBOWSKI, overlord of 'Zomba Books' (to be launched in Spring or so), will be publishing all manner of strange things—eg. a Moorcock nonfiction work under the mysterious Zomba imprint 'Bee In Bonnet'. Maxim's Allen&Unwin fantasy anthologies *Lands of Never/Beyond the Lands of Never* (June/Sept 83) are now closed, with stories by (his ordering!): Langford, Silverberg, Kilworth, Holdstock, Pollack, Jakubowski, Ableman, Ballard, Chant, Chilson, Horwood, Lee, Gaskell, Salmonson, Carter (not Lin), Evans (C), Tem, Grant, Aldiss and Watson.

EXTRO POST-MORTEM: Paul Campbell tried recently to collect the £1100 or so owed him by Seymour, the distributors, for copies sold. He reports a phone conversation: "Seymour's clerk—'Yes, there is money here for you. No, I don't know when it'll be through. Give me two minutes. (...) Yes, there's money there alright. But they say down in accounts that it'll have to go up to the circulation manager for decision. I'll check with him. Give me two minutes. (...) Dear me, but he says you won't be getting anything. In fact you might owe us money. That's a joke. No, whatever you get it won't be worth waiting for. You know how it is when you go broke. (Whine, whine) It isn't my fault.' That's the bare bones, fairly verbatim. Scandalous, criminal; but verbal, unwitnessed and unpublishable. They followed up with a statement of account saying *Yo Ho Ho, Look at how many copies of EXTRO we've just destroyed*. I've a sneaking suspicion that when I've got round to sorting out all my accounts, I'll find that Seymours destroyed more copies of the magazine than I ever sent them... Lots of sympathy

cards, by the way, but none with large cheques from millionaires saying *I've been a fan of SF since I was a child. Will this help? ...Know anyone who needs a reviewer?*" (PC)

ARTHUR C. CLARKE WRITES: well, merely his secretary Paul Heskett. "Granada's proof copy of *2010: Odyssey Two* was bloody appalling, littered with mistakes and painful to read. Del Rey have done a far better job... ACC says 'it's the best thing I've done': from personal experience he's said that about two other works of his. Frankly, I was disappointed with *2010*. It has some inspired moments but the characterization is weak." *Ansible* found some super misprints in the final Granada edition, like 'feather' for 'feature' and 'intelligent' for 'unintelligent'; the book's weakness comes partially from the fact that *2001* ended on the brink of Truly Cosmic Developments which no sequel could quite deliver—*2010* scores such planet-busting points as it can and for want of a better ending stops on another and more familiar brink. (Less disappointing than *Foundation's Edge*, wherein liberalized Asimov modifies his Politically Unsound Imperial Goals to the extent of converting the Foundation trilogy to a chronicle of misguidedness.) Also to hand is "the most important thing I've ever done" (ACC), a speech to the UN Committee on Disarmament—subsequently entered into the US Congressional Record—calling for a 'Peacesat' International Satellite Monitoring Agency to promote global togetherness. Meanwhile ACC would 'like to go back to Russia'; Russia may be less keen, *2010* being part-dedicated to the persecuted physicist Sakharov...

JOIN WOOSTER AS HE STALKS THE STREETS OF NEW HAVEN WITH THE MEN WHO MAKE YOUR NIGHTMARES! Thus the US newspaper syndicate ad for Martin Morse W's World Fantasycon story, now released unexpurgated: "800 attendees. Winners of 'Howard' awards included: NOVEL *Little, Big* (perhaps in gratitude for Bantam Books providing con attendees with free copies), NOVELLA 'The Fire When It Comes' (Godwin), SHORT 'The Dark Country' (Etchison)/'Do The Dead Sing?', LIFE ACHIEVEMENT Italo Calvino... A cross between a Nebula banquet and a Worldcon, the con had 100+ pros in attendance, including marginal fantasy writers like historical hack Morgan Lillweyn (*conceivably Llewellyn?* DRL), Ronald Reagan's Favourite Novelist: 'Hey, don't hold it against me,' she says. High points included the preview of *Creepshow*, an unmitigated comedy of grave-robbing, birthday cakes and supernatural comics, and the Ace party, which metamorphosed into a Berkley party at suspicious intervals. Here everyone's favourite midAtlantic fan, tastefully black-leather-clad Mr Charles Platt, proceeded to shake up a can of beer and douse Miss Ellen Datlow, Hero Fiction Editor, *Omnif*, with foamy brew. As Mr Platt was given the boot by Susan Allison, Savage Lord of the Berkley Empire, Datlow was overhead to say: 'I think we won't see Platt's work in *Omnif* for quite some time...' Also overheard: 'Yes, I liked *Helliconia Spring*, but it won't even be nominated for a Nebula.' 'Why not?' 'Look at the cover. It's got a 16th century painting on it, and SFWA members won't vote for things they can't understand.'" (MMW) Alexis Gilliland, recently praised in the *Washington Post* as a writer of Bureaucratic SF, refutes Mr Wooster's A29 "assertion that I am the *third* WSFA (A as in Association) to win the John W Campbell Award, after Sucharitkul and Chalker. Martin, who aspires to be a fan-historian, is incorrect. Chalker was nominated in 78 and 79, but did not in fact win the award..." (AAG)

RABBIT HOLE is the mind-numbing Newsletter of the Harlan Ellison Record Collection, containing several words about records and whole pages covering HE's amazing acts of philanthropy, huge advances, failure to get LDV into print, remaindered books for sale at vast prices, etc—ostensibly written by Shelley Levinson, Director of the Collection, but in prose strangely reminiscent of HE himself. After all, who's better qualified to eulogize Ellison than...?

IMAGINE™, conceivably pronounced 'Imagnet'm', is the British TSR™ mag about D&D(R): assistant editor Paul Cockburn™ is offering up to £30/thousand words for related fiction (but ask first), subject to such constraints as the appalling TSR™ CODE(R), a document written by Gary Gyga+ warning that (e.g.) no TSR™ publication may depict the defeat of authorized law enforcement officers. Register your name as a trademark and contact TSR™ (UK) Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge, CB1 4AD. Launch in Spring(R).



FENCON :: CAMBRIDGE 16 OCTOBER :: JUDITH HANNA

It was an upstairs, downstairs sort of con. Real stairs, not lifts. Upstairs on the 3rd floor was the main hall where important events were held. Downstairs (1st floor) were the bar, bookselling tables and a smaller programme area. In between were café and coffee lounge. The 200 members distributed themselves more or less randomly among the levels.

Highlights... The Celebrity Panel, with Brian Aldiss on the trauma of having some idiot bump into his car en route, Charles Platt opening up his heart to us all and frankly confessing that he'd returned to SF because he'd discovered while interviewing for *Who Writes SF* that "I really liked all these people... I just love you all out there... Quote me on that." Asked about the recent fantasy upsurge, he suggested it arose from 'nut-cults' of the 60s 'hippy revolution'. Fred Pohl disagreed: "Books are written by individuals, not the times," a reasonable-seeming assertion which however implies that writers aren't affected by the times they live in.

Mick Lowe expounded 'The Well-Tempered Plot Device', a theory which bids fair to rival the Theitis factor in critical discourse, opening with a round of 'clench-search' (4 people hold 4 Covenant books, on the word opening them at random and start skimming in search of the word 'clench'—the game seldom takes long). A plot device is of course something like a Ring or Staff of Law: a device which gets and keeps the plot moving. There are also 'plot coupons'—wishes, special gifts, red kryptonite—which may be brought into play like wild cards to get the plot moving again when it's ground to a dead end. My own contribution to this theory is that trading-in plot coupons is like playing Finchley Central—the longer you delay, the more finasse.

'So You Fancy Yoursaif A Writer', chaired by Steve Knight, with contestants Joseph, Colin Greenland, Phil Masters and Geoff Ryan, was a game in eight rounds: invent a first sentence, a last sentence, padding, bluffing, overwriting (Colin: "This beer is so tasteless that given a chance it'd watch *Crossroads*"), retitling (the Bible—Colin: "Universe of Shame"; *The Sex-Goblins*—Joseph: "Micro-Servants of the Wank"), alien gastronomy, last and by now means easiest a complete SF story in eight words (Phil: "And God said, 'I don't think I'll bother.'"). One of the best con games I've seen,

but hell to score: with all contestants within .01 of a virtual Smartie of each other, J. Nicholas was declared winner.

There were three particular eccentricities: the Space-Time Masquerade—4 devilishly complex pictures provided clues to where and when one might catch the 'Fenc'—someone did figure it out and wore a placard proclaiming 'I Found The Fenc' for the rest of the day; there was 'Spot the Wandering Alien'—later admitted to be an entity which transferred between committee members when they came into contact, the clue being a sideways jump. Spotting Spot was confused by local CUSFS members settling in circles on the floor to play Sprodzoom, a game which required them to perform numerous alien contortions.

Yes—it is possible to work up a con 'high' in just one day, and it debilitates the fannish organism less than the usual weekend-long immersion. Fencon was a good thing. (JH)

SCIENCE FICTION UNLIMITED: BRIGHTON 23 OCTOBER

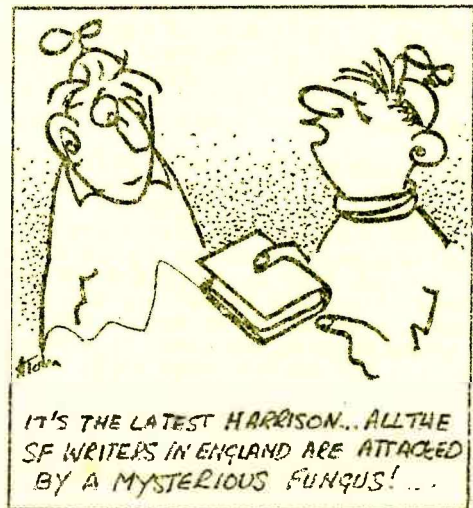
a collation of reports from Joseph Nicholas and, distinguished by typeface and indenting, David S. Garnett. Another ANSIBLE first...?

DG: Brighton Museum are holding an exhibition imaginatively titled 'Out of This World' during October and November, and in conjunction with this a one day seminar/forum/whatever was held in the Royal Pavilion—which is an old building near the sea front which ought to have been pulled down and replaced with something useful like a multistorey car park, but probably never will be because it was built by some king or other. (No, he didn't build it himself. He had this gang of Irish labourers, but he got all the credit.)

JN: Drawing about 200 people, it was held in the William IV room of the Royal Pavilion, a perhaps incongruous site for an SF event...

At 10.30 there was supposed to be a talk on 'Dan Dare and His Creator' by Paul Clark—followed an hour later by 'Saviours From Space—or Cosmic Conmen: The Enigma of Alien Visitors' a talk by Hilary Evans of the Society for Psychological Research. I missed them both.

Judith and I arrived late, missing chairman David Pringle's welcome and the first 15 minutes of Hilary Evans's 'critical survey of the various types of contact that are claimed with alien visitors'. Critical it certainly was: Evans is concerned as much with exposing the fraud and self-deception



surrounding such phenomena as with convincing us that there maybe some truth to them; his lecture was devoted to both the absurdity of the purported aliens' behaviour and the quasi-religious fervour which which 'contactees' expound their experiences. Such literature, he remarked, tells more about the psychology of its writers than anything else—for them it's science fact rather than SF. For us, it's not even SF; but in passing Evans drew attention to a story, 'The Green Man' (*Amazing* 1946), which is the prototype of all contact experiences—silvery cigar-shaped ship, beams of energy which stop car engines, a glowing visitor who tells a lone traveller that he's been chosen as the aliens' Earthly representative. Another brick in the wall of SF's past misdemeanours, eh what?

Another audiovisual presentation followed: graphic designer Paul Clarke on Dan Dare. This started well with an account of the strange genesis of the *Eagle* and the working practices of Frank Hampson's team, but declined into interminable gosh-wowing over an equally interminable succession of slides as Clark's enthusiasm got the better of him. Nostalgia suffused him, superlatives fell from his lips... Personally I think it's time the Dare enthusiasts stopped simply eulogising their hero and made way for sociologists and anthropologists to decode the strip's subtext and demonstrate how and to what extent it embodied the hopes and fears of British society in the 50s.

During the lunch-break there was time to visit the museum exhibition. I didn't quite manage to get there, but I'll quote a couple of Famous People: "It's very pop--Daleks, K-9, movie stills, R2D2, lots of antique toy robots, lots of Dan Dare stuff." (Colin Greenland) "Lots of paintings from Rob Holdstock and Malcolm Edwards books." (Malcolm Edwards) Colin opened the afternoon proceedings, and he should have been speaking on 'The Meaning of SF', and that's what it might have been, as I arrived just as he was finishing. (The night before, Friday, was a mate's last night in the UK and we went out for one or twelve drinks. I know there were at least five pubs... And so Saturday morning I leapt out of bed bright and early, then went back to bed again; got up, threw up, retired once again. Third time lucky and I succeeded, drawn by the promise of an *Interzone* cheque waiting for me in Brighton.)

Colin Greenland spoke on 'Multiplied Visions: The Meaning of SF', contending that by virtue of the different perspectives or ourselves and our world that SF offers it is capable of enhancing and multiplying our visions of same—and demonstrating that SF is so ramified and multiplied, and has become so integral a part of our culture, that it's now almost impossible to speak of a 'thing' called SF.

I sneaked into the Pavilion's William IV room around 3.20pm. Or I thought I sneaked in, but I'd been spotted by the eagle eye (the left one, I think) of chairman and *Foundation* supremo D. Pringle, who pointed me out to the assembled throng (around 100) as a pretext for advertising *Interzone*. Must have worked, as all copies were sold and I even had to surrender one of my own which young Malcolm had given me wrapped in a cheque... I did see the next talk, which was supposed to be John Brunner talking about John Brunner—and wasn't. Or not much. John is mellowing.

John Brunner, the fourth and final speaker, delivered a short anecdotal piece on his early days in SF... the day closed with a short film called *The Tom Machine*, made by a National Film School grad-

uate, with almost the same theme as Dick's *Time Out Of Joint*. The performances are a little wooden and the revelations somewhat cryptic and drawn-out, but it's an excellent, unpretentious film which should go down well at conventions. All in all, it was a good and enjoyable day. I wonder if anyone's thinking of a similar such seminar next year? (JN)

The best Brighton SF event was back in May '68, as part of the Brighton Festival, when they invited the whole *New Worlds* crew down for 2 days. There were about 20 people on the stage and a similar number in the audience (which included Ted Tubb and Ken Bulmer). On Saturday night everyone went to Henekeys... but got thrown out, which could have had something to do with pouring drinks from the balcony on the multitudes below. Tom Disch threw his drink in the manager's crotch, and when the police arrived he got in the Black Maria as he said he wanted to be arrested. We all wandered off to another pub, 'The Heart & Hand, and Brian Aldiss ordered 20 halves of bitter, and there was change out of a pound note. Those were the days! (DG)

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS...

PETER NICHOLLS: "Old much-loved and much-loathed girl friend and ex-fiancée Janet Pollak gave birth to a 5.5 week premature baby Thomas weighing in at 5lb 4oz three weeks ago (*letter dated end Sept*). I have temporarily (only) moved in with her to give moral support by being kept awake every night. The child is clearly mine, as its saturnine expression and grotesquely huge big toes makes quite obvious. I am hoping to bring him up to be a pawnbroker, or to work in some other substantial money-making career. Anything other than writing.

"Multimedia flourishes in the usual racketsy manner of packagers. Haven't got round to commissioning anything from you yet, and maybe never, because of insistence on big names. Big names captured so far are not really suited for a good 5-a-side team—Harold Evans, Peter Medawar, Sir Edmund Hillary, Bernard Dixon, Frank Barnaby (the latter two being more your middle-sized sort of name). Am currently working on Lord Lever. Everybody loves a Lord. Once you are Lord Langford (with 3 lovely daughters if possible) all sorts of doors, including my own, will open to you. Love and kisses—"

IAN WATSON: "How quaint of Brian Aldiss to figure (*in A29*) on a certain letter in *Tribune*, a political newspaper, which was of course the point of the letter. Now who was it who wrote to *Foundation*, journal of general criticism, a while ago in a vein of bile to browbeat 'this stropky little man' Brian Stableford for presuming to criticise that visionary socialist tract *Enemies of the System* and to puff another forthcoming long political novel by the same author which might likewise be in danger of maltreatment by the humourless, hubristic bindweed? Oh yes, I remember. Brian Aldiss himself. Don't do as I do; do as I say."

JOYCE SCRIVNER: "DUFF candidates this year are Alexis Gilliland, Charlotte Proctor, Jan Howard FINDER & Jerry Kaufman. It should be a great race.

"I found Chicon exhausting—collapsed during the Hugos and wasn't seen again 'til Monday. On the 'Two Ocean Fanzine Panel' (J.Foyster, K.Smith, T. White, I & J.H.Finder) we played 'keep the mike from Jan', shouted 'DIM, DIM, DIM!' while holding a JLAS sign, and with Kevin's help were absurd. At Plergcon the next weekend Kevin revealed his camouflage green jockey shorts while four women massaged him; Peter Toluzzi (DUFF winner) revealed black silk bikini shorts while five women worked on him; the infamous group shower incident followed..." (More!)

||||||| THE ANSIBLE CONVENTION SUPPLEMENT |||||||

Fencon (p.3) has happened, but Lillian Edwards also sent a report: "...It's no bad thing when the worst criticism levelled against a con is that the programme was so good; people kept having massive identity crises over which items to miss. It was indeed the basic excellence of both the conception and execution of the programme which made the event so cohesive and friendly; most people spent most of their time in close proximity... Some mention *must* be given to the So You Think You're A Writer panel, where C.Greenland became an instant star with his SF-story-in-less-than-8-words (*Aliens disguised as typewriters? What non—*); the Ultimate Questions panel where scientists and philosophers vied to explain the Mysteries of Life, flummoxing the entire con with the deceptively simple problem of a man trying to get past his mirror image in a narrow doorway (try it); the Total SF Quiz, simply the funniest ever devised, whose cosmic absurdity was reflected in the result being decided by the number of orange Smarties each side ended up with... No real plans for a Fencon 2; we live in hope..." (*LE, cut by DRL because JH got there first*) Only Brian Aldiss was less than enthusiastic about Fencon, apparently only because of its all being over in a single day.

Cymrucon (27-28 Nov, Cardiff) will be happening, or over, when you read this: having utterly failed to produce any progress reports, the committee has apparently subsided altogether (22 Nov), leaving 'GoH' Lionel Fanthorpe to rush out apologies to all other guests for the con's mysterious inability to print guests' urgently solicited stories and articles in the programme book. Good grief...

Santacon (14-16 Dec, Leeds Dragonara) purports to be a Trekkie/media/humour event: SAE to 10 Langford Rd, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 5BR.

Faancon would theoretically fall in February 1983, but it seems that no one wants to organize it: this tiny no-programme event has probably outlived its usefulness thanks to today's rash of conventions. Bye-bye, Faancon...?

Ra Con (4-6 Feb 83, Grosvenor Centre Hotel, Edinburgh): GoH Harry Harrison, FGoH Pete Lyon, £4 supp £8 att; 77 Baron's Ct Tee, Edinburgh, EH8 7EN.

Albacon II (1-4 April, Central Hotel, Glasgow): 1983 Eastercon. GoH Jim White & Tanith Lee, FGoH TAFP delegate (don't forget to vote for Avedon Carol before the 18 Dec deadline), toastmaster D.Langford (wow). £4 supp £8 att to 1 Dec, £5/£9 to 20 March, £10 att thereafter: c/o B/L 8 Highburgh Rd, Glasgow, G12 9YD.

Sol III (27-30 May, Grand Hotel, Brum): 15th—that's XV, folks, not III—official Trekkiecon. GoH J.Dochan, W.Koenig, A.McCaffrey, B.Shaw. SAE to 39 Dersingham Ave, Manor Park, London, E.12.

Beccon 83 (29-31 July, Essex Crest Hotel, Basildon): GoH Ken Bulmer; £3 supp £7 att to 191 The Heights, Northolt, Middlesex, UB5 4EU.

Silicon 7 (26-29 Aug, Grosvenor Hotel, Jesmond, Newcastle): membership £3.50 to, er, well, even Mastergannet Harry Bell doesn't know Sue Hepple's address—he advised me to ring Kev Williams (0632-375713). I did, but he wasn't in...

ConStellation (1-5 Sept, Convention Centre, Baltimore, USA): 1983 Worldcon. GoH John Brunner, FGoH Dave Kyle, \$10 supp \$30 att now, \$15/\$40 Jan-July; Box 1046, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA. 3450 members as of mid-Oct. This is as good a place as any to bury some stuff on the Hugos (did you notice that in *A29* I forgot to mention *Locus*'s 1982 Fanzine Hugo? Well, well): ConStellation is being urged by George Flynn (leader of Business Meeting and Rules fandoms) to take up its 'spare Hugo' option—the committee can add a category to the Hugo ballot for its con only—and adopt the additional Semi-Prozine Hugo. This was actually voted into the rules at Chicon but requires ratification at ConStellation. It isn't, as common sense might suggest, an attempt to acknowledge the current situation by retitling the "Fanzine" Hugo: it provides an *extra* award for "semiprozines",

defined as magazines meeting two of the following criteria—[1] print run over 1000; [2] pays contributors/staff; [3] provides at least half someone's income; [4] at least 15% full of ads; [5] calls itself a semiprozine. In other words, instead of muttering about the wicked, evil *Locus* and *SFR* getting all the Hugos, fandom will be able to mutter about a different selection of malefactors, possibly beginning with wicked, evil *File 770*. I submit that the whole idea does not make very much sense. We all knew that there was no justice and that huge-circulation fnz could always woo the unthinking hordes of Hugo voters. Now the biggies are exiled to the semipro category, and Real Fanzines have their chance to be voted on by... well, actually, the same enormous hordes of Hugo voters, most of whom won't have a clue. Which doesn't stop them voting even though "the voting population is at least 1000 to 1500 while most decent fnz have circs of 400 or less." (*Jerry Kaufman*) Quite. Voting will probably reflect circulation even though circulation—conceivably a measure of, say, novels' or magazines' popularity—has nothing at all to do with fnz quality. In addition the new rule produces extremely silly anomalies in the fanwriter and fanartist categories: exactly what sort of artist is Alexis Gilliland, for example, who mostly draws for *SFR*? There doesn't, you see, happen to be a semipro artist category... Piffle, piffle; the fan Hugos were silly enough before, and this amendment makes them less logical and more divisive (perhaps not in theory, but certainly, I think, in practice).

X-Con (2-4 Sept, Belgium): Beneluxcon 83. Approx £3.30 supp £7.15 att—SAE to Ken Slater, Fantast (Medway) Ltd, 39 West St, Wisbech, Cambs, PE13 2LX.

Unicon 4 (2-4 Sept, U of Essex, Colchester): GoH 'Unconfirmed', FGoH Ken Slater, Special Guest Garry Kilworth; £3 supp £5 att (£6 from Jan); no official address to be found, but probably c/o Alex Stewart, 11a Beverley Rd, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3NG. The shifted date (since *A29*) was caused by U of E doublebooking.

The Con With No Name (17-18 Sept, Leeds Dragonara): no idea what this one is, but *Matrix* reports a high committee turnover. GoH Dennis Spooner (who he?); £10 att to Leeds Rd, Liversedge, W Yorks, or maybe 111 Chesnut Gr, Conisboro', S Yorks.

Invention (23-25 Sept, Central Hotel, Glasgow): replaces Faircon for 83. GoH Chris Boyce, FGoH Jim Barker; £5 supp £9 att to Easter—memberships to 10 Woodlands Gdns, Bothwell, Glasgow, G71 8NU.

Milford (UK) Writers' Conference: 25 Sept to 1 Oct almost certainly. Ask me.

Galacticon (??? Oct 83): planned mediacon, esp *Blake's Galactica*—weird flyer asks £2 but looks outdated; con may well have been cancelled; anyone know?

Frankfurt Book Fair (12-17 Oct, Frankfurt)—not relevant for most of you, but this is the time of year when your favourite publisher may be hard to find...

Novacon 13 (4-6 Nov, Birmingham): £7 att to 46 Colwyn Rd, Beeston, Leeds, LS11 6PY. Once again there are rumours of a possible venue change to the Grand Hotel ('Rog Peyton doesn't like it'): most of the people at Novacon 12 were in overflow hotels, inevitably, and many were eager for a change. But who knows?

Orwellcon 83 (11-13 Nov, U of Antwerp): GoH Anthony Burgess. IRC to A Vermeghenlon 21, Bus 20 B-2050, Antwerpen, Belgium. Odd year for an Orwellcon...

EASTERCON 1984 (20-23 April, two bids): Seacon 84 is the chosen name for the Brighton bid which plans to combine Eastercon with the 1984 Eurocon (see flyer this issue). A small steering committee has been selected from the millions of former 'Committeepeople'. The 1984 World SF Meeting will be held in Brighton from 17-19 April if Seacon 84 succeeds... £1 pre-supp to Pauline & Chris Morgan, 39 Hollybrow, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 4LX. ||| 1984 Con is the Blackpool bid, also full of worthy folk (NB: Pat Charnock, fearful that *A29*'s phrase 'Linda Pickersgill replaces Pat Charnock' might imply Ugly Rifts, wishes it to be known that she [Pat] merely resigned owing to lack of time). £1 pre-supp to 28 Duckett Rd, London, N4 1BN. *Ansible* will carry a 1984 Con flyer when they do one that fits!

COA GEOGRE [sic] BONDAR, 33 Ragstone Rd, Chalvey, Slough, Berks, SL1 2PP ||||
MARY & BILL BURNS [see masthead] |||| JON COWIE, Flat 63 Rm 29, Castle Ir-
well, Cromwell Rd, Salford, Manchester [to June 83] |||| DAVE LOCKE & JACKIE CAUS-
GROVE, 6828 Alpine Ave #4, Cincinnati, OH 45236, USA |||| KEN MANN [temporary] c/o
B.Smith, 60 Crofton Rd, SE.6 |||| HELEN McNABB, The Bower, High St, Llantwit Maj-
or, S Glam |||| DAVE MONTGOMERY, The Flat, Tankerton House, Basingstoke Rd, Spen-
cers Wood, Reading, RG7 1AB |||| CHRIS PRIEST & LISA TUTTLE, 1 Ortygia House, 6
Lower Rd, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 0DA [Devon house now sold] |||| PETER SINGLETON,
Eliot Ward, Park Lane Special Hospital, Maghull, Liverpool, L31 1HW |||| JOHN
SLADEK, 13 Elmsdale Rd, Walthamstow, London, E.17 |||| MARTYN TAYLOR, Flat 2,
17 Hutchinson Square, Douglas, Isle of Man |||| remember to notify COAs to me!

INFINITELY "When You Write The Book, It's A Virgin" explained D.M.Thomas to
IMPROBABLE *Esquire*. "Then when it sells, it loses its virginity. It's the *off-*
white hotel now..." Oh. DMF's next one is about "a contemporary Sov-
iet poet, torn and divided emotionally and politically... he travels to Armenia,
meets a blind Lesbian, and spins tales of an imaginary voyage to America which
will complete a Pushkin fragment." (*MW*)... Forthcoming Publications: Chris Atkin-
son and Linda James both plan to perpetuate the species next year, Linda taking
peculiar pains to target the birth for Bob Dylan's birthday... World SF has voted
that its International Standard Subscription should be quoted in Swiss francs *only*
—despite not having a Swiss bank account. Fearlessly I reveal the official UK
equivalent, £7 to 2 Cowper Rd, Cambridge, CB1 3SN, bringing the limitless benefits
of 1983 membership, such as newsletters telling you the subs in Swiss francs...
Elitist Conspiracy spreads further through the world of letters!—conveys Colin
Greenland, winner of 2nd prize in *Fiction Mag* short-story comp. with a 'new wave'
skiffy tale. Meanwhile David Pringle begs a plug for *Interzone 3*, containing 4
extra pages and some interior art at last (nobody will tell me what obscure coll-
ective sublimation is responsible for the picture of Peter Nicholls being strang-
led on p.7). *IZ* apparently has some 850 subscribers but sells many more copies—
print run 2-3000... Arena is the provisional name (assuming Geoff Rippington and
some other party fail to complain) of Hutchinson/Arrow's new upmarket Picadoresque
pb imprint—the first two titles when it's launched in Spring will include *The*
Affirmation by C.Priest. The upmarket and KingPenguinish cover is a great disapp-
ointment to those who hoped it would follow Arrow tradition and depict, say, a
garishly spacesuited man clutching a luminescent football... RIP—John Gardner of
Grendel fame (in a motorbike crash); Frederic Dannay of 'Ellery Queen' fame (the
other half of EQ, Manfred B.Lee, died in 1971: SF relevance is of course that 3
'EQ' potboilers were ghosted by Jack Vance, plus 'major' EQ novels by Sturgeon
[*Player on the Other Side*] and Avram Davidson [*And On the 8th Day; 4th Side of the*
Triangle]); Stanton Coblenz of 20s/30s pulp fame... Malcolm Edwards rises to new
power on April 1 (h'm) as the Gollancz SF editor—John Bush is stepping down from
both that role and the Gollancz chairmanship. Tremble, fans, and obey... Remember
Thor Five! Peter 'peter pinto' Pinto and Derek 'Dark They Were And Golden Eyed But
Not Any More' Stokes are operating in Lancaster as 'Interstellar Master Traders'
(selling SF), the latter playing a minor role partly because of "people's unwill-
ingness to accept that dtwage's limited liability company status should not apply
to the money *they* were owed when it collapsed" (*PP*). The Shaw/Craig 'Photon Books'
empire in Glasgow has now become 'Future Shock' (Craig) and 'Second Foundation'
(Shaw, who thinks he's ahead on acronyms if nothing else)... DUFF: as per Joyce
Scrivner's note (p.4), the new US → Australia race is on. Voting fee \$2 min; dead-
line 31 March 83; address J.Scrivner, 2732 14th Ave S Lower, Minneapolis MN 55407,
USA or P.Toluzzi, PO Box HL43, Australia Sq, NSW 2000, Aus. Ballots: ask them or me.

Australia Again: Douglas Adams has been publicity-touring, plugging *LTU&E* and yet again explaining to huge audiences the supremely intellectual processes which led him to 42 as all-time funniest number (*Thyme*). It has come to *Ansible's* attention that some obscure hack called Lewis Carroll has made similar play with Mr Adams's number (cf. *Alice; Hunting of the Snark* [twice]): we trust that Mr Adams will sue... Bruce Gillespie has published a 200,000 word reset reprint covering the first year of *SF Commentary*--in its heyday one of the great critical fanzines--£25 to him at GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Vic 3001, Aus. And tiny Norstrilia Press (one-third Bruce) has one of its books, *The Plains* by Gerald Murnane, on the shortlist for the most prestigious local award 'The Age Book of the Year': the book is 'meditative fantasy set in an alternative Australia' (*BG*)... The Kid's Guide to Parents--Jim Barker recommends this £1.95 cartoon collection which not only aids 'Save the Children' (loud boos from Hazel) but also contains three masterpieces from a Falkirk fanartist whose name we have mislaid... APAs: Eurapa is of necessity a European apa, with 50-copy requirement, dues 10DM (=£2) yearly: Joachim Henke, Jahnstr.21, D-6551 Volxheim, Germany. Anzapa (Aus/NZ, of course) has meanwhile blown its credibility by voting Our Joseph not only as Best Humorist but as President... Bug Jack Barron (film version) is now said to have a \$21M budget, incorporating that of the cancelled *Firestarter* (watch for a title change to *The Bugging* or *Barron's Lot*). (*MMW*) Eurocon 7: Marjorie Brunner reproves Ahrvid Engholm (*A29*) for complaining about Germans speaking German, and for not mentioning famous Cherry Wilder (plus a million other English-speakers) or the award to French mag *Antares*... Ahrvid Strikes Back: "Swedish fan Eje Berggren recently went to a meeting called 'How to make your children avoid mysterious and dangerous sects like Hare Krishna, Devil-worshippers, comics and science fiction'... Danish fnz *Fantastiske Film* rumours that Steven Spielberg is in trouble--US author Lisa Litchfield claims that the MS of *E.T.* is very similar to one of her own (the play *Lokey from Maldnar*) and demands \$750 million in compensation" (*AE*)... The Best of Susan Wood, an 80-page anthology assembled by Jerry Kaufman, should be ready now, proceeds to the usual good causes--\$2 plus postage (a couple of £1 notes would be fine) to 4326 Winslow Place N, Seattle, WA 98103, USA... *OMNI* Flash: austere and remote Andie Burland writes to say that despite the 'separate' UK edition's demise (reports of which were mistaken by some as indicating that *Omni* would no longer be on sale here--"sales are falling but not that bad"), she's still at *Omni*, 2 Bramber Rd, London, W14 9PB, as 'acquiring editor' looking for science bits and--especially--fiction for *Omni* US... Con Updates--already, since pp 5-6--everything you know is wrong! SANTACON, thinks Ken Slater, is in 1983 not 1982: I now see that the given dates make no sense until 1984. SILICON 7: rates up to £4 att--2 Seaton Ave, Lewsham, Blyth, Northumbria. UNICON 4: memberships to 17 Laing Rd, Colchester, Essex. NOREASCON (1982 Worldcon) has revealed a profit of \$29,077.85 (to July 82), even more than Yorcon II, Channelcon or Novacon. MYTHCON (16-18 Sept 83, Brum): £2 supp to 133 Sheen La, SW.14, but first read *Ansible* 27. GALACTICON (29-30 Oct 83, London): SAE 171 Heath Rd, Hounslow, Middlesex... Starlight SF News goes on Prestel shortly (Micronet 800 pages): 'electronic *Ansible*' with Aldiss minisagas, Brunner news, Watson story--more soon.

HAZEL'S LANGUAGE LESSONS #21: Kikuyu

tombora to press a squashy object
all the way through something.
ruũka to become uncircumcized.

ANSIBLE 30 from DAVE LANGFORD
94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire
RG1 5AU, United Kingdom: 26 Nov 82

DICK BERGERON
BOX 5989
OLD SAN JUAN
PUERTO RICO 00905
U.S.A.



1092
DEC
4
PM
115

MERRY XMAS
ECONOMY STYLE
FROM

Dave & Hazel

BAH! HUMBUG!

letter follows/precedes ...