



ANSIBLE 33 the slightly tardy post-Easter (June) issue of a frequent (allegedly) SF (allegedly) newsletter (alleged) from a purported DAVE LANGFORD at his rumoured address 94 LONDON ROAD, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG1 5AU—a whole year there, and 3 fans a week are still asking whether the postcode means we're 465 million miles from the nearest post office. SUBSCRIPTIONS, tediously and regretably, are up again: £2 for 7 issues anywhere (airmailed outside UK). Sterling notes or cheques to me, also \$ bills; Giro transfer to a/c 24 523 0408, \$US cheques to Burns, 23 Kensington Ct, Hempstead, NY 11550; Euroshekels to Goudriaan, Postbus 589, 8200 AN Lelystad, Netherlands. Groveling thanks to Keith 'Labels' Freeman, ever ready to SUBDUCE lapsed fans, to poll-topping artist Pete Lyon (above) and to Leigh Edmonds for madly volunteering to distribute Aussie copies. Also, thanks and a free issue each to the Ansible Poll voters: Ashworth (H&M), Bailey, Berry, Brazier, Brown (S), Carol, Charnock (G), Collins, Connor, Coxhead, Darroch, Day, Earp, Edwards (LAM), Ferguson, Ford, Frost, Garnett, Goudriaan, Hanna, Hansen, Harries, Hill, Jarrold, Lake, Frost, Lowe, Neilsen Hayden, Nicholas, Ounsley, Owen, Palmer, Pardoe, Polley, Robertson (J), Rose, Shearman, Sherwood, Suter, Taylor, Thomas, Tudor, Vincent, Wareham, Warming, Watkins, Wells, West, Whiteoak, Wood, Yon. While we're still in the boring small print, I offer by unpopular request the fabulous Circulation Figures. As of 31 May, Ansible has 327 unlucky recipients, 259 in the British Isles and 68 outside. In detail: England 220, Scotland 27, Wales 7, N. Ireland & Eire 2 each, 10M 1, USA 35, Australia 11, Sweden & Canada 5 each, W. Germany 3, Finland 2, Belgium, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Japan & Netherlands 1 each. Print run is currently 400; many back issues available at ludicrous prices. Yawn...

THE 1982-3 CHECKPOINT/ANSIBLE FAN POLL: A record 52 fans voted in this, the 12th annual informal poll covering UK fan doings from Easter to Easter. Here we go—

BEST BRITISH FANZINE: 37 titles (and an apa) nominated. 5 points given for a 1st-place vote, 4 for 2nd, etc (same system in next two categories); **ANSIBLE** ineligible; last year's positions in brackets after score.

- 1) **TAPPEN** (141pts) (1st): Malcolm Edwards, 28 Duckett Rd, London N4 1BN; available whimsically; two issues, #4 and #5, in 1982-3. *Tappen's* popularity is loathsomely displayed by Malcolm's success in publishing the best single issue, with the =best cover by the best artist plus the best article from the almost best fanwriter. Good grief. Such elitism...
- 2) **STILL IT MOVES** (47pts) (2nd): Simon Ounsley, 21 The Village St, Leeds, LS4 2PR; available for the usual; one issue, #3. Another fat genzine like *Tappen* though a little sloppier; eccentric material (eg. article on Constable) and nifty personal stuff from famous S.Ounsley.
- 3) **EPSILON** (43pts) (4th): Rob Hansen, 9a Greenleaf Rd, East Ham, London E6 1DX; available for usual; at least two issues, #12 and #13. Despite occasional contributions, *Epsilon* scores highest for its letter column and Rob himself talking sense about whatever burning fannish issue is going.
- 4) **INDIAN SCOUT** (34pts) (7th): the Red Army Choir c/o Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Tce, Blantyre, Scotland, G72 9NA; available inexplicably; the single issue of the year is billed as #19 but appears to be #2, or maybe... h'm. Noted for triffic (and even =best) covers and violent outbreaks of street credibility—also for leaving BSFA reviewers and *Ansible* editors at a loss for words.
- 5) **TWLL-DDU** (32pts) (-): me; available usually; one issue, #20, which I still haven't finished distributing because I am a lazy sod. Contains, almost exclusively, me.

Also with 5+ points: *Out of the Blue* (29); *Drunkard's Talk*, *Microwave*, *Wallbanger* (28); *This Never Happens* (23); *Crystal Ship*, *Tiger Tea* (22); *The Chocolates of Lust*, *The Zine That Has No Name* (14); *Second-Hand Wave* (13); *Nabu*, *Small Friendly Dog*, *Twentythird* (12); *Pig on the Wall* (11); *Felicity* (10); *Creature from the Typing Pool* (6). Also 8 points were scored by *The Women's Periodical*, which as an apa is presumably not a single fanzine... or is it?

BEST BRITISH FANWRITER: 43 fans were nominated.

- 1) **DAVE LANGFORD** (91pts) (2nd)—er, thanks; 2) **D.WEST** (88 pts) (=12th)—another vote would put D first, an index of the huge reaction to his famous and only 1982-3 article 'Performance'; 3) **LINDA PICKERSGILL** (69pts—h'm) (=10th)—both triffic and prolific, Linda had more pieces nominated as best article than anyone else; 4) **CHRIS ATKINSON** (66pts) (1st)—still in the realms of glory despite publishing only a couple of pieces, both nominated etc etc; 5) **JIMMY ROBERTSON** (53pts) (3rd)—confused everyone by folding then reviving 23rd but still has Street Credibility, whatever that is.

Also: *Simon Ounsley* (46); *Malcolm Edwards* (33); *Skel* (20); *Alan Ferguson* (17); *Rob Hansen* (14); *Phil Palmer* (13); *Eve Harvey*, *Christina Lake* (11); *Chris Evans* (10); *Owen Whiteoak* (9); *Nick Lowe* (8); *John D Owen* (?); *Bill Carlin*, *Kate Davies* (6).

BEST BRITISH FANARTIST: 31 British residents nominated, plus 3 ineligible Americans (all scored <6pts, plus 'No Award' (ditto). I'm too cautious to comment here on Art...

- 1) **PETE LYON** (128pts) (1st); 2) **ROB HANSEN** (94pts) (2nd); 3) **HARRY BELL** (57pts) (5th); 4) **D.WEST** (54pts) (4th); 5) **JIM BARKER** (49pts) (3rd). Not much movement in the 'top 5'.

Also: *Atom* (35); *Margaret Welbank* (31); *Anne Warren* (25); *John McFarlane* (21); *Shep Kirkbride* (19); *Martin Helsdon* (14); *Dave Harwood* (11); *Dave Collins*, *Harry Turner* (6).

BEST SINGLE ISSUE: 36 issues of 29 different Britzines nominated, plus one ineligible US zine (1 vote only).

- 1) *Tappen* 5 (Malcolm Edwards) (20 votes); 2) *Felicity* (Jimmy Robertson) (13); 3) *The Zine That Has No Name* 3 (Skel) (11); 4) *Tiger Tea* 1 (Linda Pickersgill and her Periodic Women) (10); =5) *Indian Scout* 1983 Annual (Red Army Choir) & *Still It Moves* 3 (Simon Ounsley) (each 7).

Also: *The Chocolates of Lust* 2, *Microwave* 5, *Tappen* 4, *When Yngvi Was A Louse* (4); *Epsilon* 13, *Out of the Blue* 4, *Spook* 1, *Twll-Ddu* 20, *Wallbanger* 6 (3); *Crystal Ship* 6, *Shallow End* 1, *This Never Happens* 3 (2).

BEST ARTICLE/COLUMN: 58 items nominated.

- 1) 'Performance'/D.West/Tappen 5 (24 votes! Never seen anything like it); 2) 'Desert Island Lavatories'/Nick Lowe/Chocs of Lust 2 (5); =3) 'Desperate Fun'/Linda Pickersgill/OotB 4, 'How Women Get Pregnant'/Linda P/OotB 5, 'Return to Red River'/Bill Carlin/*Indian Scout*, 'When Fandoms Collide'/Bob Shaw/TZTHWN, [Untitled house-move horror stories]/your editor/Cloud Chamber 13/17 (all 4 votes).

Also: 'Asking For It'/Atkinson/Tappen 5, 'Bangers & Mash'/Lyon/2HW, 'Life with the Loonies 2 1/2'/Atkinson/T4, 'Making of BOLLARDS II'/Ounsley/SIM 3 (all 3); '...Blue Eyes...'/Robertson/Felicity, 'Case of Home-icide'/Ounsley/SIM, 'Fan Wars'/Davies/TT, 'Go for your Goon'/Atom/Mic 5, 'Making the Most of your Woodcock'/Welbank/TT, [untitled?]/Ferguson/Felicity (all that bloody long list with 2 votes exactly). Incidentally, Linda Pickersgill collected 10 votes spread over 4 separate articles.

BEST FANZINE COVER: 32 covers from 26 different fanzines were nominated, plus a single vote for 'Hold Over Funds'.

- =1) *Pete Lyon/Tappen* 5, *John McFarlane/Indian Scout* (8); 3) *John McFarlane/Felicity* (7); =4) *Pete Lyon/2nd Hand Wave* (Autumn 82), *Margaret Welbank/The Chocs of Lust* 2, *Harry Hansen & Rob Bell/Epsilon* 13 (all with 6 votes).

Also: *Barker/Wallbanger* 7, *Steffan/Tappen* 4 (5); *Lyon/SIM*, *Hanbellsen/Epsilon* 12 (4); *Fox/Crystal Ship* 7, *Pickersgill* (presumably)/*Tiger Tea*, *Turner/Microwave* 3, *Hansen/TD20* (3); *Bell/Mic* 4, *Lyon/Earthquake County* (2). Here P. Lyon got 23 votes spread over 7 covers, and I let D.Steffan in since though a colonial he did a British fnz cover...

WORST THING OF 1982-3: no less than 68 items nominated.

- 1) **THE FAKE BOB SHAW** on numerous counts (14 votes); 2) **JOHN BRUNNER** (6); 3) **KEITH WALKER'S FANZINES** (5); =4) **ROB HANSEN** for unprintably sexist reasons—shame on a certain caddish voting bloc in Leeds, *SHALLOW END*, *OUR WONDERFUL TORY GOVERNMENT* and *THE VICTORY OF THE BRIGHTON 1984 EASTERCON BID* (all 4 votes). Both Keith and Bob were mentioned last time.

Also: *Convention Bid Fanaticism*, the Falklands Affair, the Mysterious Nonappearing Matrix, *Novacon* 18 (all 3); *Albacon II Hotel Food*, *Crystal Ship*, ET, *Joe Nicholas* (all 2). After the extravagant pro and con reactions to 'Performance' I thought it might figure here as well as in 'Best Article': not so, unless we conflate the categories (1 vote apiece) 'Performance' and 'The D.West Cult'. Cult?

THE DEAD PAST: Ten years ago, Peter Roberts's *Checkpoint 36* featured the second British fan poll 'since the days of *Skyraak*'. 24 fans voted and the favourites for best fanzine, writer and artist were, respectively, *Egg* (P. Roberts), Ian Williams and curiously timeless Harry Bell. Ten years before that, Ron Bennett's *Skyraak 51* revealed the 26 voters' favourites in the same categories to be *Skyraak* itself, Walt Willis and curiously timeless Arthur 'Atom' Thomson.

BSFA AWARDS: Almost as cosmically influential as the Ansible Poll, the BSFA non-trophies for 1982 work were presented, as it were, at Albacon II—to *Heliconia Spring* (novel), 'Kitemaster'/K. Roberts (short), *Blade Runner* (media) and Tim White (artist).

NEBULA AWARDS were this year unenlivened by withdrawals and acrimony (though on a recent US trip Lisa Tuttle was depressed to hear the total coverage of *SFWA Forum* of late was 'Tuttle and word processors'). NOVEL *No Enemy But Time* (Bishop); NOVELLA 'Another Orphan' (John Kessel); NOVELETTE 'Fire Watch' (Connie Willis); SHORT 'A Letter from the Clearys' (also Connie Willis).

HUGO NOMINATIONS: the award that's almost as respected as the Soviet electoral system. Data arrived in predictable stages: over a period of about three weeks came *File 770*, *Locus* and *SFC*, all with detailed voting statistics; then at last I had a letter from the Worldcon breaking the glad news of my nomination (no other details); and finally came a release for *Ansible* scoop publication, with all those difficult statistics omitted. Not that I would complain, oh no.

NOVEL: *Foundation's Edge*, *The Pride of Chanur* (Cherryh), *2010, Friday, Courtship Rite* (Kingsbury), *The Sword of the Lictor*. (Voting spread 96 to 189 votes.)

NOVELLA: 'The Postman' (Brin/*IASEM*), 'Brainchild' (Delaney/*Analogue*), 'Another Orphan' (Kessel/*F&SF*), 'Unsound Variations' (Martin/*Amazing*), 'Souls' (Russ/*F&SF*). (52-77)

NOVELETTE: 'Nightlife' (Eisenstein/*F&SF*), 'Swarm' (Sterling/*F&SF*), 'Aquila' (Sucharitkul/*IASEM*), 'Fire Watch' (Willis/*IASEM*), 'Pawn's Gambit' (Zahn/*Analogue*). (43-49)

SHORT: 'Sur' (LeGuin/*Compass Rose*), 'Melancholy Elephants' (Robinson/*Analogue*), 'Spider Rose' (Sterling/*F&SF*), 'Boy Who Waterskied To Forever' (Tiptree/*F&SF*), 'Ike at the Mike' (Waldrop/*Omni*). (36-55)

NONFIC: *The World of the Dark Crystal* (Froud), *Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of SF* (Gunn), *Engines of the Night* (Malzberg), *Reader's Guide to Fantasy* (Searles/Meacham/Franklin), *Fear Itself: The Horror Fiction of Stephen King* (Underwood/Miller). (32-60)

DRAMATIC: *Blade Runner*, *Dark Crystal*, *ET*, *Road Warrior* (*Mad Max II*), *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. (119-278)

PRO EDITOR: Terry Carr, Ed Ferman, David Hartwell, Stanley Schmidt, George Scithers. (85-191) (same as last year)

ARTIST: Kelly Freas, Don Maitz, Rowena Morrill, Barclay Shaw, Darrell Sweet, Michael Whelan. (49-188)

FANZINE: *Fantasy Newsletter*, *File 770*, *Locus*, *SF Chronicle*, *SF Review*. (45-123)

FANWRITER: Dick Geis, Mike Glycer, Arthur Hlavaty, Dave Langford. (same as last year) (32-46)

FANARTIST: Alexis Gilliland, Joan Hanke-Woods, William Rotsler, Stu Shiffman, Dan Steffan. (19-65)

A total of 660 ballots were rushed in by a membership of about 4500 (it's since topped 5000)—about 15% turnout.

JOHN W CAMPBELL AWARD for most overrated new writer: Joseph H Delaney, Lisa Goldstein, Sandra Miesel, Warren G Norwood, David R Palmer, Paul O Williams. (19-34)

PHILIP DICK MEMORIAL AWARD for best 1982 original SF paperback went to Rudy Rucker's *Software*, with a runner-up award to Ray Nelson's *The Prometheus Man*. Deciphering the delicate euphemisms of US newszines leads one to believe that Rucker was understandably as gratified as a newt. Next year's judges: Algis Budrys, John Clute, Anthony Wolk.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER AWARDS: American Book Award (original pb) to Lisa Goldstein's *The Red Magician*; £1000 Scottish Book of Year award to Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*; the little-known Balrog fantasy award is working at becoming less known (reports Darrell Schweitzer), with successive ballot forms arriving after the nominations deadline and the actual presentation, with numerous ineligible items on the ballot (*SFC*), with Stephen King shortlisted as Best Artist... Dittmar (Australia) has, in the International section: *No Enemy But Time*, *The One Tree*, *Ridley Walker*, *Roderick*. (*Thyme*)

MARKET MEANDERINGS: *Reality*, the magazine of 'technology fiction' still hangs fire though not for the usual financial reasons—it seems that despite submissions from such as van Vogt, there's a distinct 'tf story flow problem', exacerbated in the eyes of mastermind Maurice Goldsmith by sf authors' depressing distrustfulness of wonderful future technology... *Interzone* has lost Malcolm Edwards, who is overcome with Gollancz and freelance responsibilities (not to mention the staggering realization that selling stories to *IZ* is far more profitable than being an unpaid editorial collectivist): the official address is now Dave Pringle's, 124 Osborne Rd, Brighton, BN1 6JU... *Imagine*, the TSR adventure games mag, has reached its 3rd issue at £1 a go; games fans were apparently unimpressed by the first two, but fiction is being bought by jolly Asst Ed P. Cockburn, TSR(UK)Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge CB1 4AD... *White Dwarf*, longer-running games mag, appears to be reacting to *Imagine*'s challenge by also running a book review column (I do *WD*'s and Dave Pringle does *I*'s—so all you authors/publishers make sure we get your stuff, eh?), with regular fiction—both f and sf—likely to appear soon: 27/29 Sunbeam Rd, London NW10 6JP... *Imago: The Worlds of Fantasy* is planned for July, chief editor Richard Monaco: said to be glossy, highly visual, 96pp, initial printrun 180,000 copies, planned fiction payments 5-7¢/word. Chief promised attraction is a gossip column by Charles Platt, who is folding *Patchin Review* owing to lack of time, after the coming 7th issue (*CP*)... *Network News Inc* (224 E St NE, Washington DC 20002) may pay for your old fanarticles, hints newly-apotheosed Associate Ed. Martin Morse Wooster: 'always interested in offbeat, "fannish" looks at life overseas... Write for me as you would for *Tappen*, not *New Statesman*.' Martin wants no grubby fanzines sent to his work address, however. (D. West Interjects: 'Being briefly in possession of a copy of Curtis Smith's *20th Century SF Writers* I noticed a couple of entries by *Ansible*'s very own Martian Moose Worster. I see he credits both Ted White and Dick Lupoff with being sole founders of Comics Fandom, and speaks less than respectfully of TW's achievements as a pro. Does this mean anything? I think we should be told.')... **DRUNKEN DRAGON PRESS:** for the umpteenth time I've carefully observed a DNQ request only to be scooped in print for my pains (by Mike Yon). Rats. This is Rog Peyton's long-dreamed-of small publishing house, aimed to produce signed limited editions of (a) assorted Lisa Tuttle stories to coincide with her *GoH* appearance at Novacon 13; (b) all of Jim White's out-of-print 'Hospital Station' books, in sequence; (c) ???... **LONDON BOOK FAIR:** 'Next to nothing of sf interest,' reports Paul Barnett: 'Tried to say hello to Peter Nicholls at the Multimedia stand, but every time I went past he was deeply involved with earnest discussions with rabid Yanks. Or his colleagues were doing the earnestly discussing bit while he nodded his head and grunted every 30 seconds or so to show he was listening—certainly there was a strong glaze on the eyeballs... This wasn't true of Maxim Jakubowski who, in the shape of Zomba Books, was adopting an upfront, thrusting, aggressive posture. Zomba had a launch party at which, so MJ tells me, a rock group did their best to annoy Langford, only Langford wasn't there. On the Zomba stand I spotted the second frankest exploitation title of the Fair, *Shape Up For Sex*. The first frankest exploitation title was on the Multimedia stand: in the wake of *Manwatching* and *Mindwatching*, they had the dummy for *Sexwatching*. I probed the deepest recesses of my brain trying to work out what the hell the book could actually be about...' (*PB*) **RESHUFFLES:** Wm. Collins have bought Granada for £7.9M, probably bad news for sf as the exiguous Fontana/Collins and the extensive Granada sf lines are unlikely to go on competing (& Collins own a third of Pan too)... Lovable Richard Evans of Arrow sf fame is now an editorial director at Futura, some way from the sf front line, with Peter Lavery (Lavery? Depends who you ask) from Hamlyn cracking the whip over hapless sf authors at Arrow... Frederick Muller Ltd, the hardback house, was just bought from HIV by two of its directors, Anthonies White & Blond: Langford cringes, having a contract with FM... Greg Benford reports: 'Sf business scene looks bleak over here with slow recovery starting. The Baen/Dell deal, whereby Tor would package & Dell distribute a new line of pbs, is dead—leading to Baen releasing titles held for possible buy...' ☆

Several Words on Albacon II :: yet another boring ANSIBLE Convention Supplement

AVEDON CAROL rushed the full, uncensored text of her Albacon notes: "They tell me that Albacon II was Not So Hot as Eastercons go, organizationally a mess and all that, but I couldn't tell. I had the good luck to be mostly unfamiliar with the normal run of local fanpolitics, and I wasn't in on the gory details, which I must say I found refreshing. Dave Langford showed up when he was supposed to, which was good enough for me. I had no trouble finding the Fanroom, and therefore the fans, which is the main thing. So as far as I was concerned everything was fine. My room was comfortable and conveniently located. I loved being able to make myself a cup of tea in the morning without having to get dressed first, and there were plenty of towels... Must say I got a bit tired of the same old fish for lunch every day, and breakfast was too early. I certainly would have preferred a better grade of soft drink, but the bartender who kept grabbing his crotch supplied an interesting floorshow. I do wish, however, that D. West would take up a game which makes a more interesting spectator sport... And everyone was really just absolutely triffic and you see if I write my TAFF report right now it will be all mushy and effusive and dumb and even maudlin and not very funny and—shit, now I know why no one ever finishes a TAFF report." (AC)

TERRY CARR was suspicious: "I wonder if [Avedon] proved to be as wonderful as you expected. So far I have only her report-in-part on her trip, which seems to make it clear that *she* at least had a fine time; but I know you Brits, your politeness and all, especially to TAFF delegates, and I have to wonder: Sure, I know you threw up on her shoes and called her 'chick', friendly as you are, but what else? Did you show her the Tower of London where uppity females were incarcerated before you cut off their heads? Did you induce her to eat fish-and-fries, that Brit dish that makes McDonald's burgers taste like manna? Did you introduce her to a modern incarnation of Richard III without having Josephine Tey to stand by and explain that everything he did to her served a greater purpose? I bet you didn't; and I further bet that Avedon will be too polite to mention it in her TAFF report..." (Elsewhere in the same letter:) "Can it be that even Mal Ashworth has become staid as he's grown older? This is a question that strikes close to my heart: I wasn't surprised when Heinlein and Bradbury became oldpharts, but *Mal Ashworth...*?"

Wizened MAL ASHWORTH staidly retorts: "Confidence in Albacon's prospects had been soaring for some time, after progress reports failed to live up to the promise of the early one which contained a Kidney Donor card, and no Last Will & Testament form appeared. The Unreal Bob Shaw's prophesies of doom and destruction for any event not organized by himself proved no truer than for any other Eastercon, and the committee showed that they couldn't hold a candle to the attendees for that Mindless Incompetence with which they'd been tagged. On Sunday night a lift full of three lifts-full of fans driven into suicidal ecstasy by the Brum Fan Room Party plummeted—well, 'descended rather hastily'—to the bottom of its shaft. The laws of the known universe, baffled as to how to gelatinize further such an oversaturated mass, settled for an injured ankle. In this suspension of the natural order of things, it seems that I resolutely and repeatedly attempted to pioneer a fourth-dimensional route to the loo through the trouser press attached to our bedroom wall: the only reportable results were of anatomical rather than metaphysical interest.

"Appropriate to Easter, there was both Good News and Bad News. The good news was that cheap food was available almost continually in the hotel, as was good

and reasonably priced real ale. The bad news was that the food was so staggeringly awful that even the hotel staff gave up and didn't bother to cook most of it, while the beer ran out on Saturday night.

"I gave my word not to mention that I missed Marion Simmer Broadly's GoH speech, but it doesn't mean much these days. I did hear her fulminate fulsomely in the bar about over-sexy covers on her books ("After all, a spaceship never offended anyone"), an example which converted all the boringly intellectual and literary conversations going on into talk of tits and bums—amid which I recalled that the covers of John Norman's novels culpably *undersold* the porny potential of the interiors... Faintly puzzled punster James White (known in this ludicrously overdemocratic age as 'Jim') was the hardworking, ubiquitous and unfailingly entertaining Fan GoH, and for a Sunday follow-up to those recovered from James's quietly funny speech, Bob Shaw took time out from being 'strangely fascinated' by Lilian Edwards (and why not?) to tell of his friend von Donegan's latest invention, a solar-powered sunbed. Suitably horrendous, too, was the Vagon poetry competition—a shame that the clear winner received no recognition. This was the Central Station announcer, who with enormous enthusiasm kept relaying his entries, in a Vagon voice of vast verisimilitude, direct into hotel bedrooms long after the competition had ended, in a desperate bid for the popular vote. More successful in this respect was John Brunner—as, of course, One of a Team—who secured the popular vote for Brighton rather than Blackpool, for Eastercon, Eurocon, Life, the Universe and Almost Everything. Both bid committees earned undying admiration for their valorous survival of a Trial by Trivia before a large audience ("How far would the Book Room be from the Breakfast Suite," demanded Ken Slater, convincing me that There Are Subtleties In All This That I Shall Never Understand). US fan Joe Siclari was wide-eyed at both the fine detail and what he politely called the 'spirited' nature of the rival presentations, surpassing aught of that ilk encountered in the States. (One-night stands with trouser presses notwithstanding, the high point of *my* con was being able to introduce avid fanhistory resurrectionist Joe and D. West, and suggest they must have much in the way of putative joint projects to discuss.)

"The Book Room was one of those features designed to promote that healthy exercise so lacking at cons (others being high-speed potholing in crammed lifts and jogging from bar to bar in search of the last pint of real ale). Here the good old English game of Leapfrog was given new twists in the constricted aisles between loaded tables, the whole play area achieving a density equivalent to Saturday night in a black hole. Despite repeated visits which had little to do with buying books, Fate decreed I should fail to be projected into a plane of mind-blowing delights in a hyperspace encounter of the torrid kind with, for instance, the topologically improbable Lisanne Norman... Next door was the Video Room, with a continual and varied programme for those lobotomized hours or days at any con when one doesn't feel up to higher pursuits like standing up, moving about and so on. Interestingly, most of the audio that went with the video took place in the next (Alternative Programme) room: at last I saw the silent classic *Metropolis*, but to the accompaniment of a 70s US sitcom soundtrack, while Colin Fine's excellent talk 'Language in SF' battled with a hidden curriculum on communication consisting, as far as one could tell, of an unedited recording of World War Three. But it was all Good Fun.

"And so was watching the Bond-like suavity with which one DL of Reading detached gobbets of my wife's hair from his spectacles, mainly to assure himself that the Swedish room party surrounding him hadn't done a *Mary Celeste*. Luckily he completed this complex manoeuvre before midday on Monday, to regale an entranced and

evil-minded Fan Room audience with the *Ansible* review of the steamiest scurrilia of a steamy twelvemonth.

"TAFF winner Avedon Carol looked relaxed, happy and decidedly unlonesome; in this latter respect unlike Peter Weston, whose brave Fancy Dress Parade entry as Jophan, with brightly polished Shield of Umor, was met by a roof-raising cheer from the mighty BAFF (Born Again Fifties Fan) contingent in the hall (me), and bemused silence from the minority of 400 or so other fans. But there was plenty to keep *them* happy—colour, spectacle, sex, smoke-bombs, all that any fan could hope for. Except possibly the Other Bob Shaw. Pity he couldn't be there; he might even have enjoyed himself." (*Mal Ashworth*)

Albacon II reckons to have made around £1000 profit, but has received a £500 repairs bill for the famous plunging lift. (Katie Hoare, who knows everything about everything, thinks the hotel is culpable in having a faulty lift to begin with, as required safety cutouts should have immobilized the thing when overloaded. Any more experts out there?) As committee member Chris O'Kane just happens to be going out of the film projection business and into video, there are plans to buy up his equipment—two 16mm projectors, screens, etc—for free loan to any bona-fide con prepared to pay transport costs (from Scotland, hem hem). Also there's talk of buying ultrasonic alarms for Book Room etc security, available similarly. (*DRL*)

Further Convention Notes: Updates and Things

Beccoon 83 (29-31 July): GoH Ken Bulmer, rooms £15 sngl £26 dbl/twin including VAT but not breakfast; other details *Ansible 30*.

Great London SF Convention (12-14 Aug): see *A31*. The utter lack of UK publicity or a UK contact address for this US-run con has led some to speculate that it's a rip-off aimed at US visitors to the UK who will discover too late... Apparently the Grosvenor Hotel in London, the venue, admits only to a 'provisional booking'.

Triple C Con (26-29 Aug): see *A31*. Trekkiecon.

Silicon 7 (26-29 Aug): see *A31*. Rumour has it that the good old Grosvenor Hotel in Newcastle has changed hands following the bankruptcy of nice manager Mr Pepper, but that the new folk are friendly...

X-Con (2-4 Sept, Eindhoven, Holland): see *A30*.

ConStellation (1-5 Sept, Baltimore, USA): 1983 Worldcon. See *A30*.

Unicon 4 (2-4 Sept, U of Essex): see *A30/31/32*..

Mytheon (16-18 Sept, Brum): see *A31*. *Con With No Name* (ditto): see *A30*.

Invention 83 (23-25 Sept, Glasgow): see *A30*. *Galacticon* (29-30 Oct): see *A30*.

↓ *Novacon 13* (4-6 Nov, Brum): see *A31*. Worried by low registrations resulting from the glut of cons and N12's being the first Novacon to achieve Worst Thing Poll ranking, Steve Green begs you all to sign up (£3.50 supp £7 att to 46 Colwyn Rd, Beeston, Leeds 11) and flock to N13's 'high quality' filmshow and main, alternate, video and breakfast programmes. To titillate you he quotes from planned guest Toby Roxburgh's latest public utterances: "Isaac Asimov doesn't like flying, he doesn't like cars, he doesn't really like travel; he *does* like his wife, which I find astonishing... Bob Silverberg was a hack writer, a genius; a genius as a hack, not as a writer... Fritz Leiber looks like a bad El Greco sketch..." Back to Steve: "The major difficulty with this kind of high quality con is that if we don't get the attendance we (and the Brum Group) could well go under."

↑ *Fantasycon VIII* (14-16 Oct, Imperial Hotel, Brum) is listed out of sequence here owing to reasons. GoHs Gene Wolfe, Bruce Pennington etc... no other data as yet. Wolfe is visiting to promote the Arrow pb *Citadel of the Autarch* (signings expected at Andromeda, Forbidden Planet etc). By a wondrous coincidence the Book Marketing Council's SF promotion is planned for 10-22 October, with the BSFA's

very own Geoff Rippington as one of the sinister triumvirate in charge; lots of Chris Foss artwork is expected in the promotional material. (By the way, Mike Yon's catalogue/fanzine accuses me of being 'closely associated' with the promotion and of having 'voiced doubts' in *Ansible* about the BMC's restriction of the affair to 'hard' sf. I'm not and I haven't.)

Cymrucon III (26-27 Nov, Cardiff): GoH John Brunner, appearances promised from Dougal Dixon and *Warrior* mag, £7 att rising to £8 in Aug; The Bower, High St, Llantwit Major, S.Glam. (04465-4282)

Seacon 84 (20-23 April 84, Brighton Metropole): won Eastercon bidding at Albacon II and combines Eastercon with Eurocon. GoHs: Isaac Asimov, Chris Priest, Pierre Barbet, Josef Nesvadba, Waldemar Kunning (fan). Official rates etc should appear in PR1, due mid-May (hem hem): I'm fairly sure it's currently £8 att until November, less £1 if you were a presupporter, to 321 Sarehole Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 0AL. After some vacillation about 'keeping numbers down' the committee is going all out for a huge con with 3-5000 members, using the Brighton exhibition centre with the attached hotel as a mere fan room, applying for colossal UNESCO grants in view of the cultural wonderfulness of it all, etc.

Mexicon (25-28 May 84, Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle): new sort of alternative con aimed to stress written sf with minimal media catering. Committee: Williams (K&S), Bell, Pickersgill (L&G), Frost, Hansen. £5 att to any of them or to 19 Jesmond Dene Rd, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 3QT. Why the name? Aha...

Albacon 84 (20-23 July, Central Hotel, Glasgow): GoH John Sladek, £3 supp £8 att u.f.n. The lack of published address is because the committee (curiously similar to the Albacon II committee) is busy arranging a PO box; if in urgent need to contact them, try c/o 34 Peninver Dr, Linthouse, Glasgow G51. I gather that this would have been called Faircon 84 were it not for the Shaw Split and...

Faircon 84 (20-23 July, Ingram Hotel, Glasgow): GoH Sydney Jordan, £5 supp £8 att, 2/L 244 W Princes St, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow G4 9DP. Yes: to the annoyance of most runners of previous Faircons, Bob (Fake) Shaw is setting up on his own, with his solicitor (last seen writing threatening letters to previous Fairconcom members) and other equally fannish folk. To counteract the likely avoidance of this event by sf fans in general, Bob is pushing the comics side of things...

Oxcon (24-27 Aug, Oxford): see A31/32. The Stoke opposition having dropped out, this is the only Unicon 'bid' remaining just now—plenty of time for others to come forward, though, says Alex Stewart: "The Unicon charter is now in force, and sets down a few guidelines that should prevent anyone making too massive a cock-up. (It hasn't been officially ratified yet, as my copy went astray in the post, but the major clauses were agreed to verbally at Albacon.)" Since Oxcon planned to go ahead whether or not given the Unicon seal of approval, will it choose to do so rather than accept the Unicon Charter guidelines? We'll see.

Santacon (14-16 Dec, Leeds Dragonara): see A30/31.

Special BATTLEFIELD EARTH Update: George Hay reports that he's read the Hubbard epic and swears it's genuine Hubbard. In America, a weird charade involving special ink formulated by a forensics experts (in which Hubbard subsequently wrote documents later sworn to feature his own handwriting and fingerprints) is supposed to have proven the recluse's continued existence. (F770) Meanwhile NEL have cancelled their edition of *BE* despite extensive circulation of advance proof copies: most fascinating rumour is that this is due to pressure from the Scientology Org (but why?). US fans are still appalled by evil Charles Platt's failed attempt to discredit the Hugos by campaigning for *BE*'s nomination, but apparently not appalled by the similar campaign of nice John and Bjo Trimble, who actually like the book: it's not what you do, it's who you are when you do it...

The SF Lunch Club Shock Horror Supplement: or, Fear and Loathing on June the 1st

The rest of this issue was intended to be all of this issue: but in my folly I nipped out to today's SF Lunch Club thingy (a three-monthly affair costing one vast sum for such delights as struggling through crowded and red-hot Central London to eat hot food and subsequently listen to Garry Webb talk for hours while in the background restaurant flunkys inexorably dismantle the bar... but I digress). Here an ashen-faced Les Flood, with the air of the Ancient Mariner drawing attention to his albatross, produced the details of the Book Marketing Council's SF promotion... concerning which, and notwithstanding the previous page, I now begin to have opinions and even Voice Doubts.

The shortlist of 20 books for maximum-publicity promotion is as follows: Aldiss's *Helliconia Spring*, Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy, Ballard's *The Drowned World*, Benford's *Timescape*, Bishop's *No Enemy But Time*, Cherryh's *Downbelow Station*, Clarke's *2001* and *2010* (counted separately, making the Great Arthur the only author to officially figure twice—more of this anon), Donaldson's *White Gold Wielder* (so much for a 'hard sf bias'), Harrison's *The Stainless Steel Rat for President*, Herbert's *Dune*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, McCaffrey's *The Crystal Singer*, Moorcock's *Dancers at the End of Time* (one-volume edition from Granada later this year), Niven/Pournelle's *The Mote in God's Eye*, Orwell's *1984*, Silverberg's *Majipoor Chronicles*, Wolfe's *The Citadel of the Autarch*, Wells's *The War of the Worlds* (Best SF of 1898) and Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*.

Erk.

Now I should explain that this is a paperback promotion, and the 'sample population' consists of paperbacks available in October: those not yet out will appear as follows—*2010* Granada Oct, *NEBT* Sphere Aug, *DS* Methuen June, *WGW* Fontana Sept, *MC* Pan Oct, *CotA* Arrow Oct.

I thought about the list for a long while. I admired the daring risks taken in promoting all these unknown classics and bestsellers. I savoured the incidence of British authors in a British promotion—seven, including all three dead ones here. I merrily calculated the average publication date of the books featured—around 1966-7. I chuckled to see two series-end volumes which will be hugely promoted at the expense of the previous books. I laughed, I cried, I frothed at the mouth.

"The judges selected such titles as Clarke's *2001* and Orwell's *1984*, familiar to the general public, as the promotion aims not only to increase the sales among sf buffs but also to widen the market for the genre." Absolutely. The only way to sell books to the general public is to pick ones the general public have already read. (Quotation is from the official publicity flyer, courtesy of Les Flood.)

So I rang Geoff Rippington, fandom's representative on the judging panel, and gibbered at him awhile. He filled in some background, as follows...

The panel was stuck with a 'History of SF' theme and therefore forced to include several oldies. Publishers were asked to nominate books from which the final 20 could be selected: the entire might of British paperback publishing managed to come up with 23, of which the judges couldn't bring themselves to accept more than 9 as being worthy. Rather than junk the promotion, the panel ransacked publishers' backlists in search of plausible stuff, and tried to persuade said publishers to sponsor their choices. A certain reluctance was met with, owing to the fact that to sponsor a book required that one cough up £500 towards the promotion—which is apparently why only the most recent Donaldson and Wolfe books are included, Fontana and Arrow being unable to afford the whole series. On the other hand, Granada sneaked through the *Foundation* trilogy by cunning negotiation, as a boxed set and thus a single item... Geoff also insisted that the panel was biased towards British

authors, quite strongly so, but with the exceptions on the list could find no British publisher prepared to sponsor any book by a British author which the panel thought worthy. (Given the general state of sf lists over here, it's hard to find British authors at all, but even I can think of a few like Watson, or Shaw, or Holdstock, or Priest—no, *he's* already been apotheosed...)

Oh well. One can hardly wait.

Also at the SFLC: Peter Nicholls revealed that he's slipped partially from the toils of Multimedia (see page 2) to be a freelance editorial director. George Hay and Roz Kaveney had a disappointingly polite confrontation concerning the very rude RK review of *Battlefield Earth* in *Foundation*, the which George considers unfair and wicked and to be taken up in letters to the editor. Malcolm Edwards made the shock horror revelation that he himself personally had just rejected *BE* upon its resubmission to Gollancz: probes in the direction of putative publishers NEL got the reply "we were going to publish it—we'd bought it from St Martin's in the US—but then we found we had to deal with these shady characters called Author Services Inc [*promoters of BE*], and so we dropped out..." (Or words to that effect.) Geoff Ryman gloated over having sold a story to *Interzone*, lucky sod, while John Clute mentioned that fantasy and stuff was easy to find for *IZ*, it was hard sf that was in short supply. Ken Campbell of theatrical fame leapt about explaining that he no longer wanted to adapt books and dramatize other peoples' boring old words: no, he wanted to do a 'companion piece' to Dick's *Valis*. Somehow this metamorphosed into an account of a Batty Therapy weekend he and a friend had recently undergone, a sort of est affair whose principal activity appeared to be hurling your arms with graphic violence into the air while synchronously shouting "HOO!" Afterwards he and friend were both struck by the same thought, "I could run Batty Therapy weekends just as good as that, and at £55 a head..." Move over, Scientology.

Malcolm (that man again) revealed a rumour that D. West had won the writer, new fan and fanartist categories of the Pong Poll, and grudgingly allowed that it would do no harm were *Ansible* to mention HOLDSTOCKWORLD—R. Hansen's name for the fabulously lucrative 'theme park' project to be based on the Holdstock/Edwards *Alien Landscapes*, providing Rob and Malcolm with luxurious all-expenses-paid trips to Canada for discussions, and thus enabling them to horrify and alarm Avedon Carol by welcoming her to Britain when she'd only got as far as Boston... Joy Chamberlain of Penguin insisted that the sf line was to be Rejuvenated in Spring 84: "You mean you're getting rid of Fred & Geoffrey Hoyle?" I asked with bated breath. "Oh God yes, they're so banal." Here, I realized, was a woman of rare scientificfictional taste. I leant closer. "You're getting rid of Jack Chalker??" Long pause. "Well, he does sell...."

Somebody cheered me up by revealing that the Frederick Muller stock (see p.2) had all been sold off for £1000 because the outfit was losing so much money. In whispers I was told of The Stephen King Story Nobody Will Print Not Even *Twilight Zone*: "It's about this surgeon cast up on a desert island," said omniscient Chris Priest, "and he can only survive by eating bits of himself... But even more offensive and tasteless is the new Monty Python film, which Lisa and I saw in America while you haven't, har har." Gamma of Forbidden Planet demanded massive publicity for coming signings, Moorcock (*The War Hound and the World's Pain*, 6 Aug) and Al-diss (*Helliconia Summer*, 8 or 15 Oct). An anonymous Gollancz sf editor confessed to having purchased a Pohl 'novel' of pieces written around 'The Midas Plague' (Nov publication). Gerry Webb, on Space or something, battled Maurice Goldsmith (on how science fiction is old hat and technology is more important than science and utopian tf will etc) in the Interminability Stakes, and fought to a draw...

COA CATHY BALL, 712 N Stewart, Norman, OK 73071, USA :: PAT & GRAHAM CHARNOCK ("Now we've got our own rotting old 5-bedroom house!"), 45 Kimberley Gdns, Harringay, London N.4 :: CHRIS HUGHES & JAN HUXLEY, 128 Whitley Wood Rd, Reading, Berks RG2 8JG :: ROY MACINSKI, 5 Bridge Ct, River Rd, Taplow, Bucks :: KEITH MARSLAND, 1 Northgate, Goosnargh, nr Preston, Lancs PR3 2BB :: PETER NICHOLLS (& Clare Coney), 83 Lavender Sweep, London, SW11 1EA until 27 June—then 5 Furlong Rd, Islington, London N.7 :: TERESA & PATRICK NIELSEN HAYDEN c/o Kaufman & Tompkins, 4326 Winslow Pl N, Seattle, WA 98103, USA :: BOB & SADIE SHAW, 90 Albert Rd, Grappenhall, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 2PG :: NICK TRANT as Roy Macinski :: KEV & SUE WILLIAMS, 19 Jesmond Dene Rd, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3QJ :: MIKE XDICKINSON & JACKIE ZGRESHAM (subtle concealment of sequence error), c/o 146 N Parade, Sleaford, Lincs NG34 8AP from end June :: JIM ZZBARKER hasn't really moved but now has a daytime office at 2 Manor St, Falkirk, FK1 1NH :: 31-5-83

INFINITELY IMPROBABLE Leeds in 1985? First '85 Eastercon flyer is to hand, begging us all to rush £1 each to Yoron III, 45 Harold Mt, Leeds LS6 1PW: other bids expected imminently... **Appalling Nicholls Revelations:** "We're being married at Islington registry office July 16, followed by a piss-up, then a flight to San Francisco and a week on horseback in the High Sierras. I hope I do better than Humphrey Bogart in the same area... Have now signed a contract on *Fantastic Cinema*, 83,000 words to be delivered by Dec 31, published by Ebury Press May 84. This time I will try to do the work all by myself." (PN)... **Things for Sale:** I have a few copies each of Jerry Kaufman's *Best of Susan Wood* collection (80pp+covers) and P.Nielsen Hayden's *Fanthology 1981* (66pp+covers: Hayden, 'Adverse', Atkinson x 2, White, Carol, Mayer, Smith, Bangsund, Priest, Langford, Benford)—each £2 post free, proceeds to Worthy Causes. This is not so of the fabulous signed copies of the incredibly rare hardback *War in 2080: The Future of Military Technology*, yours for £3 pf... **Fanfundery:** DUFF was won by Jerry Kaufman (other candidates being Jan Finder, Charlotte Proctor, Alexis Gilliland); he'll be at Syncon 83, the Australian national con. GUFF with luck will bring a strange Australian entity to Seacon 84, names mentioned in this context being: Justin Ackroyd, Roger Weddall, Jean Weber and Someone Else. TAFF will very likely inflict a Eurosomeone on the LA Worldcon (84): rumoured names are Rob Hansen and Harry Bell but not, according to D.West, D.West. Some fans are even thinking ahead to TAFF 1985: Jeff Schalles wants to come over, as did Ted White, only to be sabotaged by Another Project (rumoured to be a guest slot at the near-cert 1985 Melbourne Worldcon)... **The Seacon Secret:** "Any hope of success for the Blackpool bid was destroyed when Graham James rose to support them." (M.Easterbrook)... **Joe Nicholas Really Dave Langford!** Flushed with the success of his first professional sale (an Albacon II report to *Locus*), Joseph was bemused to learn that BSFA awards he distinctly remembers presenting at that event were, according to *SFC's* infallible newshounds, handed out by D.Langford... **Remainder Follies:** Fascinated as always by remaindering, your editor noticed various paperbacks going at 60-65p reduction in the local remainder shop—*Red Dragon*, *Fever*, a heap of Dick Francis thrillers, *The Golden Torc*, *The Nonborn King*... Simultaneously, all were being sold at full price in a respectable local bookshop, as 'new publications', and the first and last were even bestsellers. Would someone better acquainted than I with the Net Book Agreement explain all this to me?... **Ian Watson Gloats—**"Just sold a new novel to Gollancz for Feb 84 pub date: *The Book of the River*, to be serialized in *F&SF* between late 83 and early 84. Gosh..."... **Greg Benford Explains AGAINST INFINITY—**"I suspect that the entire subtext (as we intellectuals say) of reference to US lit traditions, the deliberate Southern storytelling voice that opens and concludes the book, the whole theme of southern concerns etc—all will be lost

on UK audience. In latest *Locus* I noted Chinese rug dealer reviewer was totally 'bewildered' by last third of book, even after Charlie the R relayed word to him that reading some Faulkner might be helpful. On the other hand we must remember that sf is a northern intel-lectual imperialism phenomenon anyway." (GB)... John Brunner Again—reporting annoyance at a surprise announcement that he'd be at Italcon (23-25 April Italy) despite having said he couldn't; despite this he got the Premio Italia 83, whatever that may be, at another Italian con a week later, and in May the Grand Prix of the 3e Festival de l'Insolite in Provence. (All I got on my 1983 hols was the Grand Prix de Barclaycard Overspending)... Mundanes, says D. Schweitzer, is what the new generation of US-mediafans likes to call the boring old farts who read books and fanzines... RIP: Max Ehrlich—*The Big Eye*—on 11 Feb; Rebecca West—*The Meaning of Treason* etc, but gets into sf newszines thanks to 10 years as great and good friend of H.G.Wells—on 15 March... That DUNE Film: media master R.I. Barycz sends mounds of wearily circumstantial data ("budget \$40M, shooting began 30-3-83 in Mexico City" etc). A pal of Paul Kincaid's has inside data corroborating this: "shooting scheduled to finish November... Francesca Annis plays leading female role, and apparently appears in virtually every scene... also due to appear briefly in the sequel already scheduled" (As Jessica, I suppose.) OK. I believe you all. Enough... **Puzzle Corner:** Which leading newszine complains about fans reprinting material without permission, yet swipes *Ansible* news without permission (which I don't mind) and without giving credit (which I do)? Clue: not *File 770*... Lisa Tuttle dared to defend the Best Young British Novelists campaign in *Time Out* recently, but was properly put in her place by erstwhile fan Chris Fowler, who wrote in to say she was "hardly a disinterested party, for she is married to none other than Christopher Priest." Ooh, savage... **Blood! Violence! Death! Acrimony!** Thus our Joseph's verbal account of his resignation as *Vector* reviews editor, depleted from a former 10,000 words by excision of libellous references to *V* editor G. Rippington... **End of the World News:** Leroy Kettle sends clippings revealing a) that flatulent termites are going to increase the world's mean temperature, while (b) the eruption of an obscure Mexican volcano will decrease the world's mean temperature. "The temperature has apparently dropped enough already to wipe out herds of anchovies (personally I'd have thought the tins would have protected them) so the termites have got quite a bit of farting to do to catch up. There's definitely a disaster novel in there somewhere."... **Stopped Press:** I really meant to publicize the SFF 'SF & Psychology' evening at the City Lit (23 May) and the Forbidden Planet signing of S. King's *Christine*, but King plus entourage appeared at the 2nd BFS pub evening on 13 May, and our roving reporter Nic Howard nearly touched him... **Last-Minute COAs:** ROELOF GOUDRIAAN, Postbus 1189, 8200 BD Lelystad, Netherlands (so much for the small print on page 1); JEAN WEBER c/o Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Ave, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia (temporary, while resting after operation)... Chris Atkinson (and to a certain extent Malcolm Edwards) heroically produced another potential future *Ansible* subscriber on 25 May, male and named ~~Tappan~~ Thomas...

Hazel's Language Lessons #24: Tibetan

gós-kyi yāb-mo byēd-pa: to beckon
 by waving one's clothes
dkan-yuyēr the wrinkles of the roof
 of the mouth

* ANSIBLE THIRTY-THREE *
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