

Just as a desperate hope was beginning to enter fans' eyes and rumours of a fold had reached even the most inefficient of newshounds (me), it's more from DAVE LANGFORD, 94 LONDON ROAD, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG1 5AU, UK. Subscriptions: still 5 issues for £2 sterling: cheques/money orders to **Ansible**, Giro-bank transfer to a/c 24 475 4403. Or: \$3.50 to US agents Mary & Bill Burns (23 Kensington Court, Hempstead, NY 11550); \$4A to Aussie agent Irwin Hirsh, 2/416 Dandenong Rd, North Caulfield, Vic 3161. Sample issue: send SAE or IRC (but if reading this, do you need a sample?). Phone: Reading (0734) 665804 and be ready to shout. Electronic mail: no more, since I have finally and happily said Poot to stingy Prestel. Mailing labels, as I write, are in turmoil and doubt: credit probably goes to Hazel. **Data Protection Act**: should you be unwilling to have your name, credit rating and intimate sexual details kept in computer storage, please send a postcard with this standard form of words -- "Dear Dave, kindly remove my name from the computer and spend the rest of my **Ansible** subscription on beer." Art by Pete Lyon (right), D.West (with-in), Dan Steffan (back); clipping via T&P Nielsen Hayden.

PROFESSIONAL FOULS

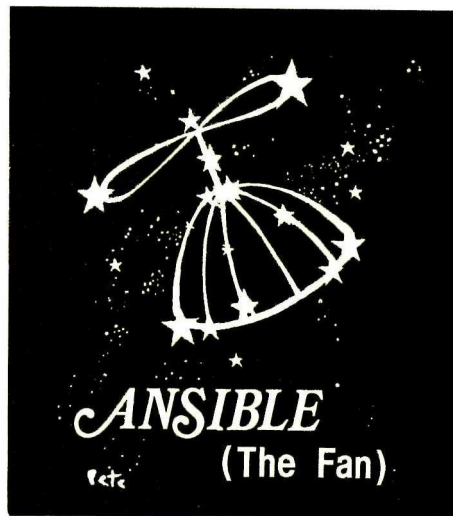
BSCFA Award: the final ballot has just arrived, and has its moments of exceeding tastefulness. Shortlisted: **NOVEL Belliconia Winter** (Brian Aldiss), **The Anubis Gates** (Tim Powers), **Kiteworld** (Keith Roberts), **The Warrior Who Carried Life** (Geoff Ryman), **Free Live Free** (Gene Wolfe); **SHORT "A Young Man's Journey to Viriconium"** (M. John Harrison), "Cube Root" (me, whoopee), "Kitemistress" (Kite Roberts), "O Happy Day!" (Geoff Ryman), "The People on the Precipice" (Ian Watson) -- all from **Interzone** and its anthology; **MEDIA Brazil**, **Max Max II -- Beyond Thunderdome**, **Max Headroom**, **The Terminator**, **The Tripods**; **ARTIST** Jim Burns, Peter Jones, Rodney Matthews, Ian Miller, Tim White.

Rob Holdstock (for it was he) received **Ansible's** award for most memorable award acceptance speech, when at a BFS open night he was given his World Fantasy Award (for **Mythago Wood**) by sensuous Jo Fletcher. The World Fantasy Award, you will recollect, is a head of H.P. Lovecraft bizarrely crafted by Gahan Wilson. Rob regarded this for a timeless moment, and said, approximately, "This is going to be an amazing day to write up in my diary! Got up -- went to the pub -- had a great time -- was given head by Jo Fletcher...."

After which Geoff Ryman's bemused reception of a similar trophy for his "The Unconquered Country" (best novelette) had in it I know not what of anticlimax. Other WFAs went to Barry Hughart's **Bridge of Birds** (tie with **Mythago Wood**), **Clive Barker's Books of Blood** (collection), Scott Baker's "Still Life with Scorpion" and Alan Ryan's "The Bones Wizard" (tie: short), Edward Gorey (artist, and about time too), Chris van Allsburg's **The Mysteries of Harris Burdick** (wot?) and Stuart David Schiff's **Whispers** (semipro thing). Theodore Sturgeon got a long overdue Life Achievement trophy as the customary reward for being dead, and Evangeline Walton had a Special Award for her literary triumph of being World Fantasy Con guest of honour.

Lisa Tuttle notes: "There's a new(ish) US magazine called **Stardate** (billing itself as The Multi-Media SF Magazine), edited by David Bischoff, and though it doesn't have British distribution, David is eager to have stories by British SF writers. So he's asked me to act as a kind of agent/first reader, in case the cost of US postage seems prohibitive. Anyone wishing to sell stories to **Stardate**, therefore, can send them to me and (if I like them -- the stories, I mean, not the writers; buying me a drink at the Tun is **not** obligatory) I'll pass them on to David. Stories under 5,000 words preferred, although after the magazine goes monthly (February) they will also be buying some longer stories, up to 10,000 words. No fantasy or horror -- stories must be SF, although what **kind** of SF is flexible." (1 Ortygia House, 6 Lower Rd, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 ODA)

Down the Tubes in 1985: **Space Voyager** and **Starburst**, the latter subsequently flogged by Marvel to an unpromising outfit called Visual Imagination, who produced issue 88 (full of stuff for which Marvel had wittily paid off invoices at 50%) and subsided in a scuttle of contributors fleeing new, even



lower word rates... John Brosnan's film column was first to go, being regarded by the new order as inadequately supportive and toadying: "In my final column I ripped to shreds Chris Priest's favourite movie, the execrable **Cocoon**. So I'm going to relish the thought of all those **Cocoon** fans frothing at the mouth and writing in to complain, only to discover that the magazine has finished and their letters attacking me will never see print. Heh heh." [JB]... Melbourne's famous **Space Age Books** has had to go into liquidation: "our main American supplier really screwed us up by not supplying all the books we needed," says Merv Binns (see COAs)....

Colony Earth is a UFOlogy mag with the characteristic stigmata of total credulity and partial literacy: famous unpublished novelist Charles Stross bought the "pre-launch" issue and responded with a novel-length critique which (after a flurry of phone calls from worried publishers Bracebeck Ltd -- anyone heard of them?) seems to have put paid to the whole project. An example of **CE's** rigorous analysis: the "Here men from Earth first set foot on the Moon" plaque is severely criticized for its assumption that the Moon dwellers to whom it is obviously addressed would be able to read English....

BFS Open Night: the usual drunken fun was had on 29 Nov, albeit with serious purpose -- raising cash for noted fantasy author Manly Wade Wellman. Details of what happened to him tend to have been glossed over, no doubt for excellent legal reasons, so I'll stick to a hypothetical case based on remarks by Jo Fletcher, thus: Should one enter hospital, comatose and with a broken arm, and should a doubtless wholly justifiable failure to turn one in bed lead to (in succession) bedsores, gangrene and the amputation of both one's legs, one might be a trifle depressed were the hospital to charge in excess of a quarter of a million dollars for its care and attention. Back in reality: Wellman ran out of medical insurance, forcing the sale of his home and entire book collection. US friends including David Drake and Karl Edward Wagner are reportedly trying to organize something on the legal side ("could take six years"). Meanwhile, Di Wathen of the BFS can accept cheques, to "British Fantasy Society" with "Wellman Fund" on the back, at 15 Stanley Rd, Morden, Surrey.

NOTHING EXCEEDS LIKE EXCESS

So what **have** I been doing all these aeons? Embarrassed hanging of head, shuffling of feet. In October, I and erstwhile author Chris Priest got involved in being "Ansible Information", peddling literary software to the gentry, gaining vast egoboo from computer-mag reviews, getting shortlisted for British Microcomputing Awards, and generally mortifying our sensitive fannish souls in the temple of Mammon. Where will it all end? Probably in court, since old habits die hard and in spare moments I've been gleefully libelling incompetent manufacturers and shifty dealers all over the country....

On a still less elevated literary plane, "John Grant" and I have delivered **Earthdoom**, the ultimate disaster novel, in which **every** disaster happens. The awesome pattern of doom

escalates from tiny beginnings (Nick Austin of Grafton buys the book) to the final Armageddon of a review in **Vector**. This exclusive extract from a draft blurb (which Nick may or may not have the sense to tear up) should give the flavour: "HAD THE SUN GONE NOVA? Astronomers had trained their mighty infrared telescopes upward, night after night, to unravel the enigma. But then... IT happened!" Wait, in dread, for 1987.

The Transatlantic Hearing Aid is the collected Langford TAFF report, lovingly produced by master craftsmen at Inca Press (oh, all right, Rob Jackson): 74pp of photo-reduced print enshrining cosmic truth, inner secrets of US Worldcons, and both my popular jokes. £2.25 post free; or a mere £2 if you collect it in person from my soiled hands.

Lastly... extremely sincere thanks to those **Ansible** subscribers who didn't complain about the gap between issues occasioned by all the above. Both of you are just wonderful.

SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION: The Letter Column

Wm Gibson: "Dear Fellow Hugo-Winner... I would like to point out, for the benefit of my massive and utterly devoted British following, that the version of my second novel, **Count Zero**, which will run in serial lumps (three) in **Asimov's SF**, is a special Lite version with reduced **motherfucker**-count and no graphic but intensely poetic and moving descriptions of oral sex. "At **IASFM**," I was told, "you can't come in anybody's mouth." I should also point out that these changes were made under my supervision and with my express approval. I agreed to go along with them, after due soul-searching, when it was pointed out to me how urgently young people in small towns in the US need fiction of this sort, and how much my new car is going to cost.

"But with Collanz, friends, you get it all!" [WG]

Jeffrey Archer (replying to George Hay's plea for the Conservative Party to "enlist the interest of British youth in space developments"): "Thank you for your recent letter expressing your ideas for helping with unemployment in this country, especially in the context of expanding the frontiers of Space. I read your letter with great interest but I regret that I do not consider myself a great expert in scientific affairs and I think would be unable to contribute with any knowledge to your debate...." Practised Parliament-watchers have interpreted this to mean "Piss off."

Joseph Nicholas: "I see you misspelt globalised hegemonisation (in one of my bits) as global hegemonization (whatever that may be). Tut. This dreadful lack of acquaintance with contemporary political theory...."

[Later] "I can just about understand your objections to 'globalised hegemonisation': at first sight, it does appear to have one too many suffixes, and is in any case rather a mouthful both to say and to read; but to omit that crucial suffix from the first word of the pair is to completely alter its meaning, to transform a process into a property, and abstraction into a reality: to de-theorize one of the crucial (several yards of political rhetoric omitted in the interests of sustaining your attention). Improving Marxist texts to rectify this deficiency will follow shortly." [JMN]

This reminds me of the no longer hot news item that Joseph was not only planning to stand as a Labour councillor somewhere in darkest London, but had applied to become a magistrate (JP) with summary powers of high, middle and low justice over counter-revolutionary parking offenders throughout the breadth of Pimlico. Attempts to publicize the Nicholas name have already been noted in the **Grauniad** Foot In Mouth competition results: "Bearing in mind that competition rules excluded Jeffrey Archer, entrant after entrant put up **Lord Gowrie** for saying his £33,000 ministerial salary was not enough to live on in central London. The winner is Joseph Nicholas (who lives in Pimlico in central London, but does not give his salary) for the citation: 'The noble lord demonstrated his deep insight into and understanding of the problems of inner city deprivation.'" [2 Jan] How well I remember that lightning wit which once had crudzine editors trembling from Lancaster to, er, Lancaster.

John Brosnan: "The despicable plot by Birmingham door knob manufacturer Peter Weston to interrupt Rob Holdstock's GoH speech at Fantasycon with [another] stripper-gram was foiled

when his henchman Leroy Kettle lost his nerve and cancelled the stripper at the last moment.

"Weston, who wasn't at the convention on the day of the speech, had set up the plot the previous night, phoning to book the stripper and handing a drunken John Brosnan a cheque for £28 to give to the stripper's minder. 'I had no idea what I was doing,' an ashen-faced Brosnan said later. 'Weston and Kettle tricked me into it. When I woke up the following morning I was overcome with a wave of sexist guilt. I then managed to persuade Kettle to call up and cancel the girl...'

"When Kettle, posing as Weston, rang the stripper, she said with surprise, 'But Mr Weston, I just rang your wife and she confirmed the booking.' Kettle thought fast and told her that his wife was at home whereas he was at the convention and therefore aware that the GoH, Mr Holdstock, had been taken ill and was in no condition to be subjected to a lot of bare female Birmingham flesh.... As for the cheque, Brosnan later sent it to Oxfam. 'Serves that running dog of a capitalist right,' he said. 'And a fitting use for money originally intended for evil, sexist purposes.'

"Mr Weston was too busy taking over another small door knob company to comment." [JB]

Martin Morse Wooster: "Well, **Contact** has been published. No, I'm not reading it, even though Gloria Norris of the Book of the Month Club says that Sagan is 'a lively mind taking an H.C. Wellesian (sic) relish in conjecture... [his extraterrestrials] make the standard creatures of space literature -- the blobs and ET's and little green men with antennae on their heads -- seem dull and simplistic.'

"Meanwhile, the **Washington Post** asked a certain Peter Nicholls to review the timeless drama. 'It is a rather preachy book,' Mr Nicholls reported, overflowing with 'a good many discussions about religion in which the word "numinous" plays a prominent role... the tone is earnest, very much that of a youngish university lecturer talking about the state of the world after a few but not too many drinks.' Golly, Mr Nicholls, what about the plot? 'The plot itself is one that will be recognized by SF fans who like books by professors of astronomy, for it is very similar (in the first half at least) to a book called **A for Andromeda**....'

"Back in the publicity department, the Book-of-the-Month Club invited cosmic-minded people from around the world to ask Sagan questions. Mr Arthur C. Clarke of Unsafe, Sri Lanka, had all sorts of questions, but only one is worth retelling. 'Why is the hero of **Contact**... a woman?' (Shock! Horror!)

"GHASTLY SENTENCE OF THE MONTH: 'The peculiar DNA complement I call my own echoed her momentary objectivity.' -- a memorable love scene from **The Gallatin Divergence** by L.Neil Smith." [MMW]

Anthony Burgess ("whose" letter accompanies a doctored copy of a glossy freebie mag about Jaguars):

"Dear Mr Langwood,

"Greetings! Here is your voucher copy of the first issue of our brilliant new monthly magazine, **Legend**. We hope you will agree that it is streets ahead of other amateur magazines, such as your own, for instance.

"**Legend** (pronounced 'Leg-End') is published by the newly formed Aldiss Appreciation Society in conjunction with Jaguar Cars. We aim, as you see, to cater for the chief interests of both groups, starting with a modest print of one quarter-million copies.

"Each month we plan to bring you more fascinating insights from the glamorous world where literature, leisure, limousines and litigation meet. Our next issue will contain an all-new novella by Brian Aldiss entitled **Helliconia Hardtop**. Be sure to look for it!"

(This particular Anthony Burgess appears to have borrowed a well-known Oxford SF author's typewriter.)

SUE THOMASON'S MILFORD REPORT

Scant weeks after my first public appearance as a neopro at Milfcon '85 (guests of honour John Clute, Richard Cowper, David Garnett, Neil Gaiman, Colin Greenland, Gwyneth Jones, Garry Kilworth, Paul Kincaid, Rachel Pollack, Alex Stewart and Lisa Tuttle) I received my First Commission, in the form of a grubby postcard from the Editor of This Esteemed Scientific Journal. They warned me things like this might

appen after Milfcon.

'Okay, Dave,' I riposted mentally, inserting a nice fresh piece of unsullied blank vagueness into my mental typewriter.

Richard Cowper instantly manifested in his avuncular Gravesian role of The Reader Over My Shoulder. "Well..." he gestured expansively. "There are far too many adjectives here. And here's a split infinitive, and you haven't accurately imagined your typewriter which you earlier described as a word processor. Have a glass of wine," he smiled.

"Aren't you going to tell them about the swimming pool," inquired Lisa Tuttle.

"Oh, you mean how I jumped in after John Clute's splendid attempt to decapitate someone with a frisbee? That man's a homicidal maniac manqué, and he gets up at 5.30 in the morning..." I quipped.

"No," she expostulated. "I was thinking of the time I went swimming, and discovered that the whole bottom of the pool was **crawling** with spiders. Also I think you should mention all those walks we had down on the beach...."

"Not all of us," Garry Kilworth intoned, laying aside his trombone and suspending himself horizontally from a lamp-post. "Garnett swears he never has been down to the sea at Milford, and he never will. It's a matter of principle."

John Clute wandered in, scowling like a bear, then wandered out again.

"What's he doing?" gasped Kilworth.

"Oh, I've mislaid something," Clute lipblatted, wandering in again.

"What?" Kilworth strained.

"Oh, just an entablature of salamanders performing a myoclonic can-can*," Clute interlocuted, wandering out again. "I'm sure it's round here somewhere...."

"What about the time I was telling them about a drug that you snort by sticking a five-foot-long blowpipe up your nostril, then inhaling as someone blows the drug down it from the other end? It's supposed to make you feel as though you've been hit on the nose by a brick, then you drip green snot all over everything for about five minutes; then you have to do it all over again with the other nostril," Gwyneth Jones reminisced, obviously contemplating the tasteful additions this effect would produce on her THIS WAS SEPPUKU t-shirt.

"Yes, and Colin Greenland whipped out his notebook and pencil and asked if anybody knew the name of the stuff," laughed Paul Kincaid.

"Bet you can't make that into a limerick, Neil," challenged Alex Stewart.

"Five minutes," Neil Gaiman retorted. "I did it for **Lord of the Rings**, I can do it for **that**...."

"Do you want your Tarot reading now, Sue?" called Rachel Pollack from the garden.

"Oh, my dear girl, I don't really think that this will do at all," twinkled Richard Cowper. "You set yourself up as a fantasy writer, but **look**; this report hasn't got a map, it hasn't got a glossary, I admit it's got some silly character-names, but **nobody sings**. Have a glass of wine."

We also read and criticized a couple of stories.

APPENDIX A

words superlatively misdefined in a session of Call My Bluff
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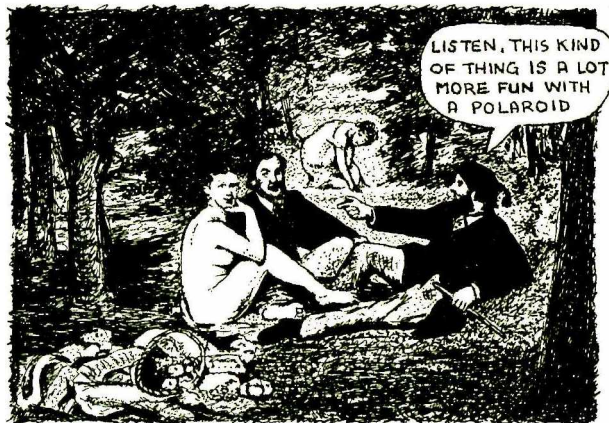
APPENDIX B

superlative definition of a forgotten word in Call My Bluff
"Tasmanian god, who instead of creating the world, went out to the corner shop for a packet of fags and was never heard of again."

APPENDIX C

a word John Clute didn't know at Scrabble
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* EDITORIAL FEETNOTE. The starred phrase, from John Clute's story, became a byword. Alleged exchange: "Isn't that rather a far-fetched image?" "No, in chapter 2 I actually **introduce** an entablature of salamanders performing (etc)...." Worst kept secret of the week: the contemporaneous publication of **The Voyeur's Guide to the Movies** by "Tom Peep" (Futura), a heavily veiled D*v*d G*rn*tt's guide to cinematic rude bits. "This book tells you what you need to know.... How much bum and tit are you going to see? And whose?"



DO YOU REMEMBER NOVACON 15?

A long time ago, you know, in a Coventry far away: it all feels hazy now. Even the bar prices seem shifty and uncertain -- come to think of it, they were at the time. Had the De Vere Hotel really shrunk so much since 1977? I was a guest but nobody wanted me to do anything before a talk scheduled 48 nail-biting hours into the con. James White (the more famous guest) and Peggy managed to forgive a certain cretin for parodying the Sector General stories in the GoH souvenir fiction booklet (an Ace Double). Obligatory programme collapse was hastened by the non-appearance of various promised speakers such as Robert Rankin. As time oozed gently by, appalling rumours did the rounds: surely Chris Chivers hadn't learned only days before that he was (a) coming, and (b) organizing the sound systems? Surely Gerald Bishop didn't discover only at Novacon that he was supposed to be showing films **all Saturday night**? Fans were not deterred from having fun (a part of course from those who suffered the Langford speech. "Too humorous" -- **Brum SF Group Newsletter**), but the committee bared their teeth at one another, quite a lot.

Lovable Toby Roxburgh of Futura gave one of his cosy fire-side chats about the wonderful world of publishing. He worries deeply about being embarrassingly quoted in **Ansible**, but only the most innocuous snippets reached my notebook: "I feel no social responsibility in this at all... Sex does **not** sell... Out there the public is not as stupid as we think... If books are worthy, we don't publish them... Plagiarize, for Pete's sake!" Strangest programme item was a "debate" chaired by Greg Pickersgill, between macho, MCP "Venture SF" (Rog Peyton and Rod Milner) and life-enhancing Women's Press, perpetrators of the "SF anthology with the dreadful title" (**Despatches from the Frontiers of the Female Mind**), who may not previously have realized they were in opposition. As an added filip, the committee neglected to invite any WP representatives: the gap was plugged by Avedon Carol and Sherry Francis, to the vast later annoyance of genuine WP person Sarah Lefanu ("Who are these people? How can they speak for us?"). Gosh.

I contented myself with having a great time except on Sunday night, which saw me cornered at a room party by the most boring/belligerent fan in the universe. Tact was of no avail. Shouting "Fuck off!" was of less avail. Eventually the remnants of the party ran for it, with Tedium Incarnate in lumbering pursuit, emitting tightly incoherent beams of Scots ennuil on wavelengths which paralysed the forebrain. "In here!" cried escape artist Jan Smit, and we found ourselves partying in whispers and a bathroom while pyjama-clad Larry van der Putte, Hero of the Republic, denied everything. Later, a mass break-out made it to the fire stairs before Nemesis ("I'm waiting right here till you come out!") could mobilize his flab. Only at breakfast did I learn that this ghastly presence had lingered in the Smit/van der Putte room until 6am, delivering himself of maudlin death threats and painting a grisly picture of what he'd do with a broken bottle to one Langford. Who said Novacons are predictable?

Earlier memories of Sunday night are mercifully few. Cap'n Probert and First Mate Eunice (plus sister Carol) were over the side and swimming hard at first sight of enemy COFF awards, leaving the rest of the committee glazedly watching

Novacon go down on an even keel. Nova Awards went to John Jarrold's **Prevert** (fanzine, "clear winner" over runners-up **Stomach Pump** and **Nutz**); Abi Frost as fanwriter (D.Langford and Linda Pickersgill gnash their teeth in outer darkness); Ros Calverley as fanartist (while Ashley Watkins and Dave Harwood continue in obscurity). Quoth John Jarrold later: "Alun Harries cheered me up with, 'Congratulations, John. I thought Steve Higgins should have won it....'" Did I really fill a gap by drunkenly presenting fifty awards while inexplicably garbed in a mortarboard and gown? Enough, enough.

Steve Green provides a sunny afterword: "The usual secret process has taken place and Martin Tudor has dilly 'emerged' as Novacon 16 chairman in much the same way Margaret Thatcher became Tory leader: the venue is the De Vere again. Looks like Novacon 15 will not make a loss after all -- the BSGF is investigating the wording of its insurance policy, and Rog appeared quite optimistic when we spoke. Novacon 14, meanwhile, has cleared its bank account, having donated £90 to the Head Appeal [SF for the blind], which Matt Sillars assures me is all that's required to get the tape into production (we did debate making that a block vote in favour of a story by Rob Holdstock, seeing as he was our GoH, but decided that would be unfair), plus £20 to COFF (no target nominated) and £10 set aside to answer an appeal from the Soviet 'Winds of Time' SF group for an SF text (we're sending the Nicholls encyclopaedia)." [SG] Sickeningly virtuous, eh wot?

CONDOM

"**Camcon** [Unicon 6, Cambridge] was a very good con," says Colin Fine in a PS, "though those staying in the college complain that it was very cold. Considering that the entire committee were new at it, a very creditable performance, with no glaring hiccups, and (I thought), innovative programming. John Christopher was a welcome addition to the ranks of the professionals to be seen at cons -- though they were a bit thin on the ground at Camcon, it must be admitted: Alex Stewart is the only other that comes to mind. Arch-whinger was Ken Lake, who afterwards wrote a letter to the committee explaining why it was a rotten con, chiefly for the cardinal sins of having members who didn't talk to him in the corridors, and not having Brian Aldiss or Bob Shaw as members. He seem to be happy enough to me during the con, but I must have caught him at a moment when somebody was talking to him, ie. me. They apparently made a profit, even after passing the required sum on to Unicon 7...." [CF] See **Concept**, below.

Cymrucon, which readers will recall was cleverly scheduled to clash with Novacon, was at the last minute put forward to clash with **Mexicon**, and then shifted again to March.... Our man in S.Wales, Mike Sherwood, gleefully reported "there'll supposedly be a flyer out to all who've actually sent any money; it may be the first cancellation sent out after the publicized date of occurrence. The Central Hotel is still [mid-October] under the impression that it's booked up for the weekend!" [Later:] "At least 30 turned up to find no Cymrucon. Complaints to the only man in Cardiff who'll admit to being on the Committee... ring Cardiff 563005."

28-31 Mar: **Albacon III** (Eastercon), Glasgow. GoH Joe Halde-man, Fan GoH John Jarrold, Artist Pete Lyon. Membership £9 to 1 March, then £12: 20 Hillington Gdns, Glasgow, G52 2PR.

10-13 July: **Ballcon** (Eurocon), Zagreb, Yugoslavia. £12 (US) supp, \$25 att: c/o SFera, Ivancigradska 41 A, 41000 Zagreb. No recent information. Anyone there, Krsto?

18-20 July: **Mythcon**, Nottingham. GoH Marion Zimmer Bradley. £10 to 53 Glencoe St, Hull, N Humber-side, HU3 6HR.

8-10 Aug: **Concept** (I know it's the 7th Unicon, but the name still seems a bit odd for August): U of Surrey. £4 supp £8 att to 9 Graham Rd, Wealdstone, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 5RP.

22-25 Aug: **Rubicon**, Chequers Hotel, Newbury, Berks. Intended to fill the vacant shoes of **Silicon**. £5 to K.Oborn, Bishops Cottage, Park House Lane, Reading, RG3 2AH.

Ditto: **Koancon**, Warwick U... clearly a fantasy games con, the GoHs being noted games groupies Pete Tamlyn and Dave L*ng-f*rd. SAE to Alex Zbyszlaw, 123 Hollis Rd, Stoke, Coventry.

28 Aug - 2 Sept: **Confederation**, 44th Worldcon, Atlanta GA, USA. GoH Ray Bradbury, FGoH Terry Carr, "Toaster" Bob Shaw. \$25 supp \$45 att to Colin Fine, 205 Coldham's Lane, Cambridge, CB1 3HY (who is also UK agent for Holland in 1990, below, and supposedly able to supply info on Ballcon, above).

13-14 Sept: **Rocky Horror Shock Treatment Weekend** (oh god!)

at Shepperton Moat House Hotel, Denton. Info: 16 Tonbridge Rd, West Molesey, Surrey, KT8 0EL.

26-29 Sept: **XIIcon**, Glasgow. GoH Harry Harrison (who let slip to an **Ansible** mole that he had indeed done the peculiar alien words in **West of Eden** in first-drafting in English and using the "global replace" on his word processor -- I wonder if C.J.Cherry, who now writes her letters in fifteen type-faces on a laser printer of colossal ostentation, does it this way too?). £3 supp £9 att: "Beachfield", Calmuir Rd, Lenzie, Glasgow, G66 3JJ.

Nov: Novacon 16, De Vere Hotel, Coventry (I think). £8 to 86 Berwood Farm Rd, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B72 1AG.

13-15 Feb 1987: **Conception**, Leeds. A celebration of 50 years since the first-ever SF con (Leeds 1937). £6 to 12 Fearnville Terrace, Oakwood, Leeds, LS8 3DU. (This fashion for names with the "con" at the beginning rather than the end is snowballing. Is a limited fannish vocabulary to blame? Be nice to see an **Ostracon**, at which COFF voting would involve scrawling committee members' names on potsherds....)

27 Aug - 2 Sept 1987: **Conspiracy '87**, 45th Worldcon, Brighton. GoH Alfred Bester & Doris Lessing, FGoH Joyce & Ken Slater, special fan guest me. £19.50 att to PO Box 43, Cambridge, CB1 3JJ -- please note this is the right address even though several letters have ended up with the former owners of PO Box 43 (Pye) and come back marked "unknown". This is a genuine GPO error, British-made through and through. "Not Our Fault," explained chairman Malcolm Edwards. "The first of many cock-ups," clarified a passing Leroy Kettle.

1988: the World Fantasy Con comes to Britain, c/o Jo Fletcher, Steve Jones and anyone they can draft. Jo confides: "It was forced upon us and we accepted ungraciously."

1990: Roelof Goudriaan begs a plug for the Netherlands Worldcon bid, now "all-Dutch" despite US beginnings (**Ansible**, **passim**) and with 100+ presupporters before Eurocampaigning began. £4 presupp. Honorary Dutchwoman Lynne Ann Morse edits the bid newsletter **High Tide**, c/o Holland in 1990, PO Box 95370, 2509 CJ The Hague, Netherlands. **Ansible** has already been hopelessly subverted by committee "El Presidente" Kees van Toorn's cunning ploy of buying a Langford story for his glossy Dutch SF mag **Orbit**....

THE TRANSFINITE C.O.A. LIST

Some of these are a bit musty by now, but One Has One's Duty: ALYSON ABRAMOWITZ, 132 Burnetts Grove Circle, Nepean, Ontario, CANADA K2J 1S9 (NB one-letter correction to the **A44** typo which enraged Alyson to the tune of many a sarcastic post-card.) :: HENRY BALEN, 69 Castlehill Drive, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 5LB :: DAVID V.BARRETT, 23 Oakfield Road, Croydon, CRO 2UD :: SALLY BEASLEY & DAVE LUCKETT, 69 Federal St, Tuart Hill, Western Australia 6060 :: MERV BINNS, 1 Glen Eira Rd, Ripponlea, Victoria 3182, Australia :: LINDA BLANCHARD, 605 Ballard Road, Seagoville, TX 75159, USA :: DAVE BRIDGES, as Linda Blanchard, it says here, following a "postal romance".... :: KEV CLARKE, 191 Valley Rd, Solihull, W Midlands (COFF voting address; also enquiries since "we're now taking ads." Ads?) :: CONFEDERATION (44th Worldcon), Suite 1986, 3277 Roswell Rd, Atlanta, GA 30305, USA :: JEREMY CRAMPTON, Dept of Geography, 302 Walker Bldg, Pennsylvania State U, University Park, PA 16802, USA :: STEVE DAVIES, 78 Bay Rd, Bullbrook, Bracknell, Berks :: LILIAN EDWARDS, 1 Braehead Rd, Thorntonhall, Glasgow, G74 5AQ ("this address is now permanent and any other[s] totally defunct") :: DANIEL FARR, 1750 Kalakaua Ave (403), Honolulu, Hawaii 96826, USA :: AL FITZPATRICK, PO Box 90, Pequannock, NJ 07440, USA (Al is remorselessly efficient about sending in COAs on Xmas cards addressed to 22 Northumberland Avenue, which we left in 1982.) :: JEANNE GOMOLL, Box 1443, Madison, WI 53701-1443, USA :: ANNE HAMILL (forget the Warren, folks), 46 Woodville Rd, Golders Green, London, NW11 9TN :: RICHARD KENNAWAY, School of Information Systems, U of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ :: CHRISTINA LAKE, 1st Floor Flat, 47 Whiteladies Rd, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2LS :: BERNARD LEAK, 115 Histon Rd, Cambridge, CB4 3JD :: STEVE LOCKLEY, 173 Derlwyn, Killay, Swansea, West Glam :: SETH "Stop printing boring news about Ted White and Avedon Carol!" McEVOY, RR3, Box 342, Ridge Rd, Sag Harbour, NY 11963, USA :: PATRICK & TERESA NIELSEN HAYDEN, 75 Fairview (2D), New York, NY 10040, USA (another one-letter change but an important one: former apartment 2B is now inhabited by a

GLASGOW HERALD

ALBAICON III

SCIENCE FICTION SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Next Easter Glasgow will be host for the third time to the annual British national science fiction convention.

Writers, editors, publishers, critics, and experts of all kinds will be gathered for a programme of talks, discussions, films, parties and general

meetings with readers and enthusiasts from all over the world. The event runs in the Central Hotel from March 28 to 31.

To encourage new talent in the field of science fiction the Glasgow Herald jointly with Albaicon III is sponsoring a competition for new short story writers. The prize is an Amstrad computer worth £450. The computer comes complete with a monitor, built in disk drive, keyboard and near letter quality printer. Supplied with a Locoscript word processor, the Amstrad is the ideal computer for an aspiring writer.

The winner will be announced and the prize awarded at the 1986 convention and the winning entry will be published in the Herald's Weekender section. The judges will be internationally acclaimed Scottish author Alasdair Gray, Archie Roy, Professor of Astronomy at Glasgow University, Chris Boyce of the Glasgow Herald, and Duncan Lunan, author and science fiction critic of the Glasgow Herald.

RULES:

1. All entries must be original works of science fiction or fantasy. Plagiarism will result in automatic disqualification. Submitted works must not have been previously published.
2. Maximum length of entries is 2000 words.
3. The contest is open only to those who have not had professionally published more than one novel or novella, or more than three short stories or novelettes.
4. Entries must be typewritten and double spaced on one side only of white A4 paper (or nearest overseas equivalent size) with broad margins at top, bottom, and sides. Author's name and story title should not appear on pages bearing text.
5. Entries must be accompanied by an A4 sheet (or nearest overseas equivalent size) bearing only the title, author's name, address, and telephone number.
6. Entries must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope bearing full return postage. While every effort will be made to return all entries, no liability can be accepted for manuscripts misplaced, damaged, or lost in transit.
7. Entries will be judged by a panel appointed by the Committee of the Albaicon III science fiction convention. Judges' decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. The winner will be announced and the prize presented at the Albaicon III Convention at Easter, 1986.
8. The winning entry will be published by The Glasgow Herald to coincide with the Albaicon III Convention. Copyright in all entries will be retained by the authors.
9. Entries must be submitted to Science Fiction Competition, Glasgow Herald, 195 Albion Street, Glasgow, G1 1QP, to arrive not later than February 28, 1986.
10. The winner(s) of the contest will be individually notified of the results by mail.
11. Employees of George Outram & Co. and their families, and members of the Albaicon III Committee and their families are not eligible to enter the contest.

SEFF-ballot '86

WHAT IS SEFF?

The Scandinavian-European Fan Fund has the aim to facilitate fannish contacts between Scandinavia and the rest of Europe (Britain included), by means of sending fans across the borders. Every second year a Scandinavian fan is sent to a European convention, and every second year a European fan is sent to a Scandinavian convention. SEFF was founded in 1983 and in 1984 the first SEFF-winner David Nettle was sent to Seacon 84 in Brighton. In 1985 the second SEFF-winner Jim Barker was sent to Swecon 85 in Stockholm. The travel-plan for SEFF will be slightly disrupted due to the fact that there will be a British Worldcon in 1987, so SEFF will send a Scandinavian fan both 1986 and 1987. It would be a shame to miss Conspiracy 87, wouldn't it?

HOW DOES SEFF WORK?

The way SEFF works is similar to the way all other fan funds work. You nominate, a ballot is issued, you vote, he/she who wins is sent to the convention SEFF aimed for that year, and the trip is paid for by the fan fund, which in turn is financed by voting fees, voluntary contributions and auctions of fannish material. This year we have some problems regarding which convention to send the SEFF-winner to. We had originally planned to aim for the British Eastercon in Glasgow in March, but the nomination-round was unfortunately delayed and we're now not sure if we have time to go through with a proper voting-round. We'll have a try with the Eastercon and the problems with proper time for voting will solve themselves thus: the preliminary deadline for votes is *February 28th*, and if we haven't received at least 50 votes by then, we'll continue the race until the new, definite deadline on *Mercer's Day* (April 31st; in Mundane this day is often - wrongly - referred to as »May First»). The winner will then attend another, major convention in Britain during 1986.

HOW DO I VOTE?

Anyone who can prove activity in fandom before *June 30th* (by stating a known fan or fan group as reference) is entitled to vote. Just fill in the form on the back of this sheet (or a copy/transcript of it) and send it to a SEFF-administrator; we would like to have it before the preliminary deadline *February 28th*, or at least before the definite deadline on *Mercer's Day*. Each vote must be accompanied by a donation of 50p, 5 SEK or local equivalent to be valid. The votes will be counted according to the Australian system (counting the votes in rounds: each round withdrawing the votes for the least popular alternative and re-distributing those votes on the remaining), so please do rank your alternatives: »1» for your first choice, »2» for your second, etc. The sharp-eyed reader notes that there's only two candidates this year, but since votes on »hold over funds» and write-ins are allowed, you can rank up to four alternatives. No anonymous votes. Only one vote per person.

HOW DO I SUPPORT SEFF?

SEFF wasn't founded because it's too expensive to travel to and from Scandinavia, but because we who founded it thought that more communication, cooperation and contacts between the fandoms in Scandinavia and the rest of Europe would be to the benefit of both sides. Everything you do to improve these inter-fannish contacts is, in spirit, helping SEFF. But less abstract support is also needed! Make SEFF known: write about the fan fund in your fanzine, vote, make your friends vote, run the ballot in your fanzine - or why not stand for SEFF yourself next time! Money is also needed: send donations in the form of giro-transfers to Ahrvud Engholm's Swedish postal giro-account 436 32 00-9, or as a cheque payable to a SEFF-administrator. You can also arrange auctions of books or fanzines donated to SEFF on local conventions.

WHERE DO I SEND THE BALLOT?

There are presently two SEFF-administrators. Both are happy to receive your filled in ballot or supply more copies of it if needed. If there's anything about SEFF you want to know, please ask them:

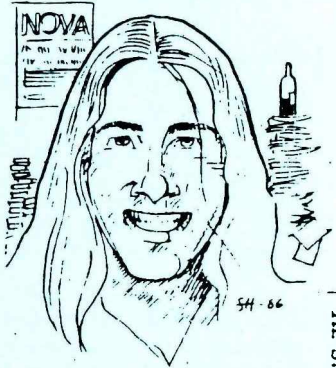
Ahrvud Engholm, Renstiernas Gata 29, S-116 31 Stockholm, Sweden

Jim Barker, 113 Windsor Rd, Falkirk, Stirlingshire FK1 1NH, Scotland

Reproduction of this ballot is encouraged. Please use your copy of it as original for printing.

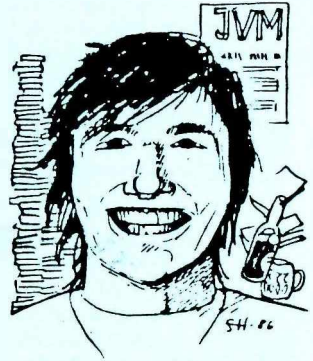
THE CANDIDATES:

LANDERS BELLIS: «Ghod! I am nominated for SEFF! How shall I ever win?» According to Ahrvid Engholm, I'm not even among the ten most well-known Swedish fans of today. Beats me why I got any nominations. Winning? No way! Anyway, here's some facts: - I'm 24 years old, and have published fanzines for ten years, several of them in English (like *Fanhome*, *Brick* and others, most of them distributed through FAPA, of which I'm a member). I've attended several foreign cons - like *Seacon 79*, *Denvention 81* and *Seacon 84* - so I certainly know my way around on them. I'm winner of the Alvar-award (a Swedish fan-Hugo) and known as a fannish fan. Once upon a time I co-edited the well-known weekly Swedish newswire *Vheckans Avfentyr*, but have since calmed down with doing the fandom-column for the prozine *Nova SF*. I have two passions beside this st-f-thing; the other one is heavy metal-music. If I go, I'll write a trip report.



Ill. Steven Hägg

MATHS CLAESSION: I have now reached the age of 26, but haven't done much to earn me fame. I dream a lot and I scheme a lot, to win a Nebula is my humble plot. I'm a member of BSFA since 1984, and I've published several fanzines in English, among them *Blast Off!!!*, a collaboration with the first SEFF-winner David Nettle, a real sheet-buster distributed through Eurapa. I'm a true faanish disciple with too many fanzines on my conscience, quite socialable and a happy, dedicated drinker at cons. And not a media-fan; I like my poison straight. I too am an Alvar-winner, once publisher of the often praised zine-review fanzine *Konturer* and columnist in the book-department of the prozine *Jules Verne Magasinet*. Oh! I almost forgot: I'm the proud holder of a student reduction-card of a Scottish bus-company, which will enable me to travel cheap to Glasgow and save the money you will kindly donate for a better purpose - the con-bars.



I prefer neither of the candidates, and instead make a write-in vote for:

I prefer that this year's funds are held over until next year's race.

Mark your first choice with »1«, your second with »2«, etc.

Name:

My signature:

Address:

Fan/group that verifies my fan-activity before 85.06.30:

50p, 5 SEK or local equivalent must be enclosed; you may send more, but not less! Ballots must be in no later than *April 31st* (Mercer's Day), but we prefer to receive them no later than *February 28th* (turn page for explanation). The addresses you shall use are on the previous page. A copy/transcript of this ballot may be used.

mail-eating beast in human form) :: ANDIE OPPENHEIMER, 69 Clare Ct, Judd St, Bloomsbury, London, WC1H 9QR :: PAUL PAOLINI, 186 Titwood Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4DD :: CHRIS PREIST (careful now), 72 George St, Stoney Stanton, Coventry :: DAI PRICE, Flat 2, 569 Green Lanes, Harringay, London, N8 ORL :: CHRIS PRIEST, 78 High St, Pewsey, Wilts, SN9 7AQ :: JIMMY ROBERTSON, as Anne Hamill :: KYRIL SIMSA, 2 The Hexagon, Fitzroy Park, London, N6 6NR :: KATE SOLOMON, a new name in fandom, does not wish to be known as Kate Davies, nor even Kate Chafen, OK? Her hubby, whose name I forget, still prefers to be called Malcolm Davies. :: DAVID STRONG & CAROLINE SAWKINS, 8 Five Acres Close, Lindford, nr Bordon, Hants, GU35 0SJ :: PHILIPPA SUTTON (see below), 38 Fern Ave, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 2QX :: MARTIN TUDOR, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 4SH :: LESLEY WARD, F103, Mulberry Court, Mulberry Street, Liverpool 7, Merseyside :: GLEN WARMINGER, Top Flat, 80a Waddington St, Norwich, NR2 4JS :: ASHLEY WATKINS, Flat B, 5 Avenue Rd, Westcliffe-on-Sea, SSO 7PN :: D.WEST, alas, was reportedly about to leave home and family in Bingley after a Split. :: MATT WILLIAMS, c/o 74 Grosvenor Rd, Coventry, CV1 3FZ ::

PECULIAR ACRONYMS ENDING IN FF

TAFF: the 1986 race is already open, between Simon Ounsley, Judith Hanna and Greg Pickersgill, who appear in this not very alphabetical order in the ballot. To vote, rank them in (some other) order and rush either £1 to R.Hansen, 9a Greenleaf Rd, East Ham, London, E6 1DX, or \$1 to P&T Nielsen Hayden as above. Said administrators will be glad to provide the ballot form, now too huge for inclusion here. As the 15 May deadline fails to loom, America trembles at the candidates' hidden assets: will Confederation be afflicted with glands, shingles or Joseph Nicholas? Meanwhile Eric Kentcliffe has discovered traces of his TAFF report in god knows what antediluvian recess: "a few near-mint copies at £6 or \$10, and some few more slightly soiled at £3/\$5" (17 Riverside Crescent, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, CW4 7NR). And Mike Glicksohn adds his name to the announced candidates for TAFF 1987.

GUFF is also beginning to stir into life for Conspiracy '87, as evidenced by death threats from our dynamic Down Under agent Irwin Hirsh ("Nominate me or I'll crumple up all those **Ansibles** you aren't sending"). Approximately 8 other Aussies are rumoured in **Thyme** to have delusions of Brighton's desirability, including Jean Weber and Valma Brown.

DUFF (Australia to Confederation) is also under way, with ballots featuring Sally Beasley, Terry Frost, Mark Loney & Michelle Muysert, and (take a deep breath) Lewis Morley & Marilyn Pride & Nick Stathopoulos. An acerbic source who insists on being nameless notes "the **unusual** level of vapid-ity in the candidates' platforms this year.... Will DUFF become the Fan Fund of Cretins?"

COFF's 661 unpopularity votes raised £66.10 for TAFF & GUFF, though "Kev Clarke the administrator did not enjoy being threatened and manhandled by an irate ex-Novacon chairman and COFF winner... [and] was seriously considering scrapping the award" (Martin Tudor). Top scorers were (1) Phill Probert, 253 votes; (2) Joy Hibbert 146; (3) Naveed Khan 50; (4) The Wimps Who Complained About Rob Holdstock's Strippogram; (=5) The Morons Who Got Rob Holdstock A Strippogram & Dave (Andromeda) Holmes; (7) Marty Cantor; (8) Steve Green... after which it gets a bit crowded.

SEFF's UK administrator is now Jim Barker, whose "short report from Swecon will appear in **Ansible**" (oh yeah?), according to Arhvid Engholm, who continues: "We've decided to have two SEFF races in a row to Britain, in order to be able to send a SEFF candidate to Conspiracy, as well as Albacon this Easter. Technically SEFF is open for other cons in Europe besides the Eastercon, but nobody seems interested in anything else but 'the real thing'." Jim promises a vibrant flyer which may well be enclosed, you lucky people, you.

OUR MAN WITH THE POPCORN: R.I. Barycz Again

When did it become customary to refer to the Strategic Defense Initiative (note Yankee spelling) as "Star Wars?" A long time ago in a galaxy not too far away, but nary a peep of protest from Lucasfilm as long as SW meant extreme severe disapproval of such things as DEWs, railguns, smart rocks, X-ray lasers, neutral beams.... Until the scientific/military empire struck back with a series of TV ads in the USA in

favour of DEWs, smart rocks, railguns etc, whereupon Lucasfilm roused itself and hit them with a writ to stop referring to the whole idea as "Star Wars" on the grounds it was a trade mark applied to biscuits, icecream, bedsheets, plastic figures etc and we don't care that the TV ads present both sides of the argument for and against DEWs, railguns, smart rocks etc, small children could get confused. They had no luck with the judge -- no way, he said, it is stretching the copyright and the trademark too far.... [R18]

INFINITELY IMPROBABLE

King Equals Wyndham. Andy Lulis sends a **Library Association Record** clipping, wherein one Chris Kearns extols **A readers' guide to fiction authors** (Loughborough U), intended to make it easy to find a book like the one you just read: "I first tested the **Guide** by looking up Stephen King. The suggested alternatives are Ray Bradbury and John Wyndham... It seemed to me that a good alternative to King is James Herbert, so I looked up his suggested alternatives. They are Ray Bradbury, John Wyndham and Isaac Asimov! Despairing of horror, I next turned to SF. Who would the suggested alternatives to Philip K. Dick be? Answer: Ray Bradbury and Isaac Asimov. What about Robert Silverberg? Isaac Asimov and Ray Bradbury. Robert Heinlein? Asimov, Bradbury and Wyndham. The **Guide** lists Asimov, Bradbury and sometimes Wyndham as alternatives to all SF authors, from Verne to Ballard...." This vital reference work was compiled by computer analysis of questionnaires filled in by 600 "practising librarians", and is even more indispensable for crime fans. "Raymond Chandler and James Hadley Chase are good alternatives to John Dickson Carr... P.G. Wodehouse is a rather neat substitute for Dorothy L. Sayers." A fanzine readers' version is clearly much needed.

Ideologically Invertebrate: John Brosnan reveals that "Kim Newman, film reviewer for London listings mag **City Limits**, described the plot of **Cocoon** in his review as 'broken-backed'. But the ideologically sound copy-editor protested at the term, calling it prejudiced against disabled people! 'I was described as 'disablist', said a stunned-looking Kim." Mr Brosnan has been commissioned by the BBC to outline a film about his speciality: giant zeppelins in Australia.

See Gygax And Die: "TSR has called on the US Consumer Product Safety Commission to check Dungeons & Dragons for safety. This resulting from a **60 Minutes** investigation which determined that about two dozen teenagers committed suicide after having curses placed upon them in D&D games. However, **60 Minutes** did not interview any right-wing fundamentalists seeking to have D&D banned as a Satanist plot..." [MMW]

The Glasgow Enigma: Why should anyone (anonymously) send **Ansible** a copy of a "Service Document (actions for payment of money only)" relating to Charles Robert Saunders, Collector of Taxes, Glasgow North, and his wish to extract £795.92 from "the whole partners of the now dissolved firm of Messrs [Fake Bob] Shaw and [Neil] Craig"? Fandom is strange.

TIBFP may or may not be the official acronym for a new "independent British fan poll", titled with pithy wit **The Independent British Fan Poll** and sporting a set of categories weirdly reminiscent of the departed **Ansible** poll (plus Best LoC Writer, and Best Interior Illustration -- you have no idea what effort it takes me not to make a joke here about Mr Higgins's **Stomach Pump**). Organizers: Rob Hansen, Steve Higgins, John Jarrold, Pam Wells. Ballots from any of these. Period covered: all 1985. Deadline: 28 February.

Urban Terrorists in Sussex Firebomb Assault! "CREMATED: my 1954 Morris Minor, veteran of 7 Milfords and more than a few conventions. Innocent victim of an arson attack. 'It wouldn't die, they had to assassinate it,' says sci-fi writer Garnett, aged over 21, sobbing into his beer...." [David G]

Barry Bayley took notoriously evil publishers Allison & Busby to court, having previously been unable to extract any accounts or royalties from 11 subsidiary editions (both here and abroad) of 7 SF titles from 1976 to 1979. Judgment: contracts all terminated, rights back to Barry, A&B to cough up £5360 plus costs and interest. Take that, scum!

R.I.P.: a depressing number of people with SF connexions died recently. In no particular order: Italo Calvino (Sept 19 aet 61), who wrote some of my favourite fantasies and occasioned a dismal display of US parochialism when given the 1982 World Fantasy Life Achievement Award ("How dare he get it, we've never heard of him," etc); Orson Welles of Martian and

much other fame (Oct 10 aet 70); Robert Graves of the SF novel *Seven Days in New Crete* aka *Watch the North Wind Rise* and the, er, seminal fantasy *The White Goddess*; Philip Larkin (OK, not much connexion, but I've always wondered whether a certain Heinlein was influenced by "If I were called in / To construct a religion / I should make use of water"...); Yul Brynner the berserk robot of *Westworld* (Oct 10 aet 64); Bernard Wolfe of *Limbo* aka *Limbo 90* (1952) and two condescending pieces in *Again, Dangerous Visions* (Oct 31 aet 70); Taylor Caldwell, who besides her best-sellers wrote preachy SF like *Your Sins And Mine* (Aug 10 aet 84); Grant Williams the *Incredible Shrinking Man* of film (July 28 aet 54); Walter B. Gibson, magician and pulp novelist who as Maxwell Grant created *The Shadow* for Street & Smith in the 30s and 40s (aet 88); L. Ron Hubbard, who needs no introduction (Jan aet 74); and, in a sort of way, that entire Shuttle crew. Charles Platt questions the good taste of premature obituaries on Judy-Lynn del Rey, whose Oct 17 stroke and continuing coma provoked *Locus* to eulogize her in the past tense and *SFC* (to which thanks for some of the above dates) to cheerfully explain, "Generally, people born as dwarfs do not live to great age, succumbing to a variety of diseases...."

Long Black Glistening Streaks Of People-Eating Death! Such is the subject matter of the "really tripp book" described in a press release from Roy Kettle. "Its author is a bright new star in the horror firmament -- SIMON IAN CHILDER. He is absolutely no relation to the late HARRY ADAM KNIGHT whose ashes were recently scattered over the customers in several remainder bookshops as per his dying wish." Once HAK, now SIC....

Trivial Tibbits from Neil Gaiman: "Arthur C. Clarke entered the 'win a copy of 2010 on video' competition in *Video World* magazine. And lost. His entry (words to the effect of getting HAL to sing Daisy Daisy to a disco beat) was deemed 'crap' by the editorial body. (It was a photocaption comp. He must really like that movie.) ...And on the subject of ACC, my copy of *The Sentinel* lists him as author of *Arthur C. Clarke's World of Strange Towers*... which is nearly as good as Sphere advertising *The Leaky Establishment* as by David Longford." Mr Gaiman is also good at cheering up authors with snippets like "I was talking to XXX at Sphere about *Leaky* and she said, 'Oh, we're not doing any publicity for it, so do give it a plug if you can.'" Purest invention. I hope.

Chris Priest has just enjoyed the sensation of having his second film deal for *The Glamour* fall through, but (swiftly donning his other hat as The People's Agent) has sold Wm Gibson's *Count Zero* to ever-perceptive Nick Austin, who for a trifling five-figure sum secured the book for Grafton.

Headless Monster Threatens Fandom! Ever since the resignation of Chairman Dorey ("Just for a handful of nappies he left us"), the BSFA has been having a leadership crisis, ie. no leadership....

Court Circular. Kev and Sue Williams write: "Michael, the heir to the overdraft, arrived 3 Dec -- backwards -- hence-

forth to be known in fandom as 'Wrong Way' Williams." Philippa Grove-Stephens has married again, instantly acquiring "two half-grown sons" courtesy of husband Mike, and is now Philippa Sutton (COA above). But: "Rumours of my marriage are premature," declares Lee Smoie in response to a suggestion in Leigh Edmonds's *The Notional* that her alleged "Help me immigrate" wall-signs at Aussiecon had been successful....

Robert Silverberg, interviewed in *The Australian*, said nothing to astonish: "Very little in American SF now pleases me -- except the sales figures. Frank Herbert or Isaac Asimov could write something in iambic pentameter and get it published, but otherwise the public wants the same simple-minded escapism they see in the George Lucas movies." And in the *Majipoor* books, perchance?

This Zine For Hire: Vinç Clarke sends the beginning of his *Total Fanzine List* (indexed by editor), with the complete opus due "probably in March". All items will be madly available on loan to the pure in heart, for the cost of postage. Send a few stamps for a copy of the List, to 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BN.

Award Odds: At a 1985 "fourth birthday party" for *City Limits* mag, tediously many awards were handed out, including one to Adams's *So Long, And Thanks For All The Fish* as best book of its year (!)... Ballard's "The Object of the Attack" topped the *Interzone* readers' popularity poll, with runners-up by Kilworth, Bradfield, Langford and McAuley; Jim Burns was most popular artist, trailed by Pete Lyon and Ian Miller. In the *Nebula* preliminaries, Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* remains in the lead. **British Fantasy Awards:** NOVEL *Incarname* (Ramsey Campbell), SHORT "In the Hills, the Cities" (Clive Blood), SMALL PRESS *Whispers*, FILM *Ghostbusters*, ARTIST **Stephen Fabian**, SPECIAL Manly Wade Wellman.... **Mike Glycer** would have it known that his *File 770* "Hugo withdrawal" was meant to cover 1986 only -- not 1987 or future years. "I am a bit dubious about making the world safe for Geis to win another Hugo, if Atlanta makes the mistake of accepting *SFR* in the Best Fanzine category...." Mike also got upset about other coverage: "After having the misfortune to witness Malcolm Edwards's gracelessness in almost every public forum at Aussiecon Two, when I read [Rob Hansen's] report of his presentation of Langford's Hugo, and what he said, I was afflicted with a world class case of sour grapes. Something to do with his statement, 'The Fanwriter Hugo has finally been sent to its rightful home: Britain.'" Cruel words, indeed.

Serious and Constructive: Patrick Nielsen Hayden is secret SF master of *Twentieth-Century American Literature Volume III* (Chelsea House). "You share presence in the Heinlein section, not only with longwinded wallies of serious litcrit like H. Bruce Franklin, but also with Walter A. Willis, from his in-depth character study of Mr Heinlein from 'Chicago Chicago', in that deconstructionist periodical of the SF field *Hyphen*. By contrast, I didn't use anything at all by the Panshins -- 'each sentence more exciting than the next'." [PNH]

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ANSIBLE

Hazel's Language Lessons
Number 36: SWAHILI

ngama [1] the hold of a vessel;
[2] the faeces passed by people
(also animals) sometimes when in
extremis, or which is forced out
when the corpse is being washed
preparatory to burial; [3] a kind
of whitish clay.

This has been the very tasteful
ANSIBLE 45
94 London Rd, Reading, RG1 5AU, UK

OK to issue 48
Dave Piper
7 Cranley Avenue
Huislip
Middlesex
HA4 6BX