

# BSFA

## NEWSLETTER

Nº 13

And why weren't you at the Easter Convention? You missed a wonderful experience.

This isn't actually meant to be a Convention Report but I thought you might like to know some of the things that happened there; especially those concerning the Association.

Although this was my 5th British Convention, I felt very much as if it were my first; there seemed to be so many people there I'd never met before. We had 6 fans over from Germany who proved to be interesting company and good fun. We also had an American fan over from Los Angeles as this years

delegate on the TransAtlantic Fan Fund (TAFF). As Guest of Honour there was Tom Boardman, publisher, editor and lover of SF. Too, there was Mike Rosenblum who has been a fan from way back when..... I tell you, it was a ball!

Some of the more interesting items on the programme were talks by either one or a collection of the various professional authors who were there. On Saturday E.R. James gave a talk during which he tried his hand at defining Science Fiction. Later in the day, Brian Aldiss introduced Tom Boardman who tried to show us the publisher's side of any stories written and submitted. He tried to shock us by telling us that all of the publishers in the business were in it to make money; seems that if the stuff they launch is good, that is merely incidental. It was fascinating to listen to him and he packed up all too soon for questions from the audience. On Saturday night was held the Traditional dance. The room was crowded and, as I was holding a joint party with Ethel later that night, I left early to get changed into slacks and get the room set up for our guests. The party was a success, I think, and both Ethel Lindsay and I wondered if we'd wake in time to attend the AGM of the BSFA which was scheduled for early the following morning. We made it, just.

Editor

Ella

A.

Parker

I won't take up space telling you all that was discussed at the meeting; you'll be reading the minutes in the next issue of VECTOR. Officers for this next year were duly elected and are as follows:

CHAIRMAN: B.T.Jeeves, 30, Thompson Road, Ecclesall. Sheffield.

V.-CHAIR: R.Gray(Mrs.), 14, Bennington Road, Cheltenham. GLOS.

SECRETARY: K. Cheslin, 18, New Farm Road, Stourbridge. WORCS.

TREASURER: G.Adams,(Mrs.),54, Cobden Ave.,Bitterne Park, Southampton.

PUBLICATIONS: E.A.Parker(Miss), 151, Canterbury Road,West Kilburn,  
London. N.W.6.

LIBRARIAN: P.Mabey, 10, Wellington Square, Cheltenham. GLOS.  
(130 London Road,(Basement), Cheltenham. GLOS.),

As there was some reluctance apparent to assume the post of Publications Officer, most of us already being pretty busy people, it was agreed to share out the work. As it says up there, I have adopted the mantle but will have all the help I need from other members. For instance, the editor for the past two years has been Jimmy Groves, and a wonderful job he has done, too. He will continue as editor of the letter-column in VECTOR so, any of you wanting to send in letters of comment, please send them to Jimmy at his home address: 29 Lathom Road, East Ham, London. E.6. I have someone willing to do the duplicating, Mike Rosenblum, but all mss should be sent to me for consideration, please.

Later that same day, Ken Slater put on a SF. quiz which won the first prize for Jimmy Groves; as the prizes were awarded on the blind chance method, he was quite surprised to get it, a bottle of whiskey. In the late afternoon, Mike Rosenblum gave an interesting talk about fandom and SF way back 25 years ago. It's really surprising to find that fans, and that means us, are still talking about the same things as they did then and making the self-same criticisms of SF as they did. Maybe they took themselves a lot more seriously than we do but that seems to be true of early SF fans all over the world. Before Mike's talk we had the panel for which we had all been waiting; that of the authors. Harry(DEATHWORLD) Harrison, Brian Aldiss, E.R.James, Stephen Hall and James(SECTOR GENERAL) White, were the speakers. Brian and Harry are the only two capable of throwing their voices out so a large audience can hear them properly. James White did well when he remembered he had an audience; the other two were pretty quiet and difficult to hear. We heard them discuss how they get some of their ideas for stories; on some of them they played it cagey not wanting to give away trade secrets. They mentioned that reading some SF set them off on a different trail in treatment of a theme they had read. They told us which of their stories they liked best, not necessarily the ones that had sold either. This was something to which we could have listened for hours. All too soon it ended.

Later that evening, we saw the film A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH with David Niven and Raymond Massey. I had forgotten how good it was and was glad of the chance to watch it again. Half-an-hour after this

finished we were shown some slides of American fans by Ron Ellik our TAFF Delegate from Los Angeles and then broke up to go to various parties.

This, officially, was the end of the Convention. I did say I wasn't going to give a full report and believe me, I haven't. This is the sketchiest description of what was a marvellous weekend. I do hope more of you will try to come next year; it is to be held in Peterborough. Details will be in the next VECTOR and you can join for 5/- whether you intend coming or not. By joining the Convention you get all progress reports plus the Programme Booklet as a souvenir. Why not come?

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#### Brian Aldiss Vs Patrick Moore.

Who saw our President on T.V. last week? The programme was on the BBC at 1.30 pm. and was called "LET'S IMAGINE." I saw another in the same series some time ago and liked it very much; more, I'm afraid, than this one. Kenneth Horne was being too facetious and ended up in such a silly way. Why is it, I wonder, that when anyone deals with Science Fiction on T.V. in any way, other than in a play, they try to act as if they'd never heard of it before, or as if just talking about it qualified them for the looney bin?

The programme opened with a voice (Brian's?) reading an excerpt from C.S. Lewis's "OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET" while we were treated to the spectacle of a rocket's blast-off. We were shown excerpts from a lot of old films, most of which I'd never seen before. I was particularly taken with the shots from one called: "ROCKET TO THE MOON". Actually, quite a lot of the programmed time was spent in showing bits of these films. Finally, we got to the discussion bit in which Horne asked Brian and Patrick Moore the usual type questions. I don't often agree with what Mr. Moore has to say, even less do I like the way in which he says it but, he did have a valid point when he criticized Lewis's choice of location for his storie above mentioned. As Moore said: "we have pretty well discovered via the telescope what Mars is like. It would have been better had he (Lewis) laid his tale in one of the others so far inaccessible to our sights, in another more alien planet." The man is right, you know.

I only hope that next time our President is asked to appear on TV he finds himself with a better M.C. than he had this time. I am still wondering why the BBC seems to encourage the derisive attitude towards Science Fiction, especially on TV. I suppose we should be thankful for the small mercy that they put the item on at all.

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#### A 'CAPSULE' COMMENT.

I went along to the Science Museum last Tuesday to see Col. John Glenn's space capsule. I had no idea where it was situated so went in by the main entrance, only to find it was outside and round the side of the building. I was made very much aware of the advances made in these things by the mere fact that in passing through the Museum I walked past Watt's steam engine still pounding away. From that to



Friendship 7 in a matter of 30 paces or so. There was a queue to see the film of the flight but I reckoned to put that off in case I lost the chance to get in to where the capsule was. It was just as well I did. Again there was a queue, a large one this time. It took me two hours to reach the entrance. I was astonished by the large numbers waiting to go in and it meant that once there you had to keep on the move all the time; no hanging about to take a good look inside. I had to climb some steps in order to see where they had the effigy of Glenn sitting and down the steps the other side. Once on the floor again you could stay and look at it for as long as you liked. I had taken my camera just in case photographs were allowed; I was lucky, they were. I smiled sweetly at the queue and inched my way in for another look in and took enough time to get a couple of shots. I don't know how they've come out, I don't get them until tomorrow. I also took shots of it from the floor. I discovered that the film of the flight is to be shown all next week, Monday to Friday, at the American Embassy in London. No tickets are needed; times of showing are: 12, 2 and 4. If you can go I should phone first and find out if they are, as they said they might, giving extra showings, some of them at a later hour. The number is GRO. 9000.

I was very impressed with this slight looking thing as a vehicle for a human being, I was even more impressed with how anyone, no matter how well trained they might be, being able to stay cooped up in that confined space for the hours Glenn was in it. I am thinking more of the hours he remained there before blast-off not knowing if it was 'on' or not. I am glad I went to see it, my admiration for those who go up in them has soared. I hope my films come out alright. I'll let you know.

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