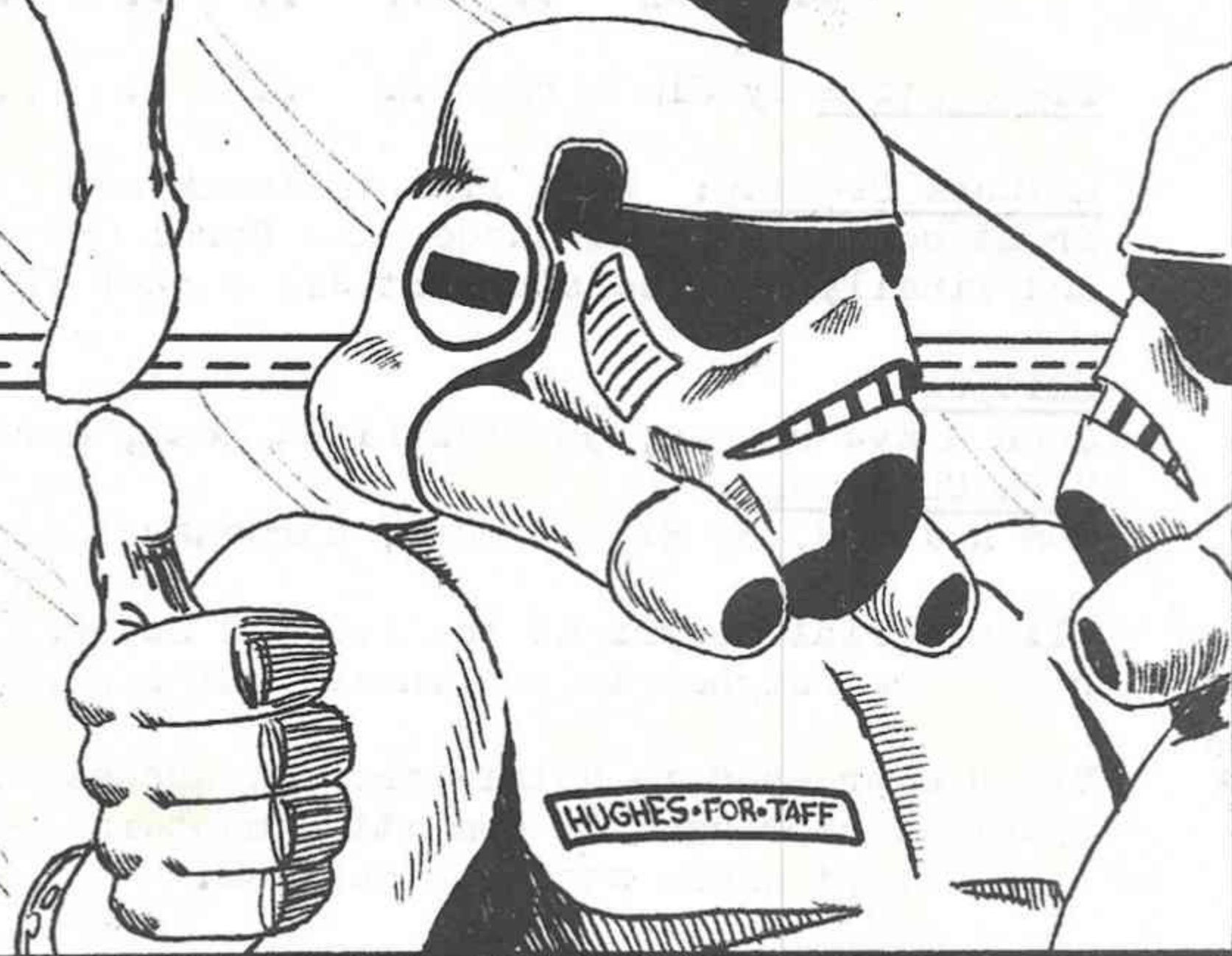


MATRIX 22

HANSEN '79...



...SAID SOMETHING
ABOUT IMPROVING
HIS IMAGE.



MATRIX 22

February 1979 ISSN 0307 3335

The Newsletter of the British Science Fiction Association

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EDITORIAL

Traditionally the editorial is the last thing that gets written for a magazine and the first thing you read (or skip over!). So as I write this it's probably a little over a week before you'll be reading Matrix 22 and there's still lots to do on it! One job I hadn't realised the enormity of was the collation. Perhaps you might like to know the inner workings of the great BSFA machine.

Matrix 21 and Vector were collated in December. On occasions like these officers of the BSFA (and others masochistic enough to volunteer) descend upon the nerve centre of their mighty organisation at its secret location somewhere in the heart of the Applied Maths Dept at Reading University. Typically Eve and I hadn't finished duplicating Matrix when we arrived on Saturday and so I was manacled to the Roneo "Rack" and spent an afternoon feeding paper and stencils into its ever-open mouth. Next door Vector was being collated. Paul Kincaid was staying with us that weekend and we had contrived to lure him to the salt mine. Those twin fiends Freeman and Jones had a BSFA Robot helmet on him in seconds and thus reduced to a zombie, he was placed in front of the collating machine. I can only judge by his careful excuses the next day that the removal of this helmet returned him to normality. The Sunday found Eve, Keith, Tom and I working on Matrix and by the end of the day the room was not a pretty sight. Piles of BSFA magazines littered the floor - one even contrived to trip Eve up and send her sprawling. Hastily we hid the evidence promising to dispose of it via the Royal Mail at a later date - the publications not the remains of Eve. Another of these exciting weekends approaches rapidly - who will be the unwilling prisoners this time - will we live to tell the tale? Any volunteers?

This issue of Matrix sees the introduction of a couple of new regular (we hope) features. The first is our COMMENT column which this time features Dave Pringle's views on Hugo nominees. Those of you who are members of Seacon should already have the ~~nomination~~ forms with Progress Report 3. Use your right and let's see a few British people taking Hugos this year.

Our other new feature is Jim Barker's THE CAPTIVE. This being the first episode, it is rather longer than future strips - Jim envisages one or two sides but he has appealed for future plot ideas based on the basic idea in this issue. So let's see what you can do - anything from a one-line suggestion to a full story, and Jim'll illustrate those he likes.

In the next Matrix I'd like to be able to start a "Query Column" so how about a few "Who wrote...?", "Is Mike Moorcock a pseudonym?", "What colour socks did Doc Smith wear?". Any topic from hardcore sf to softcore fandom and we'll try to get you an answer and print the most interesting. Rog Gilbert will still be doing his service and we'll probably run this column in conjunction with him. So if your question isn't answered in Matrix you can expect an answer from Rog.



(1) The "Sort of stuff" most likely to sell. The quick answer is that I don't know, and if you find out please let me know pronto. The long answer, and the only true one, is of very little help.

The sf market is now very broad in its range, and there is room for many different types of writer. In short, this means that if your name is Fred Bloggs, then your best chance is to write the sort of stuff Fred Bloggs is best at. Put another way, you should be true unto yourself. Write what interests you, what concerns you, what moves you. If you do it well, the market will grab you.

Consider the alternative. There are a number of fashions in the sf category, and in associated genres. Take sword and sorcery, or "heroic fantasy", which has a bit of a vogue at the moment. With a bit of shrewd market research, you could probably come up with a sort of pseudo-Moorcock or pseudo-Howard. You might even get it published. But so what? Do you, Fred Bloggs, want to be known as a sort of second-rate Moorcock? Does any writer, however new, want to be a stand-in for someone else? Do you want to sell, or do you want to be a writer?

Finding one's own voice is hard, and often frustrating. But in the long term it is the only thing that counts, that brings satisfaction, that brings a readership.

(2) Agents. The relationship between writer and agent is curiously like a marriage. It usually lasts a long time, it consists of sharing the good and bad, a considerable degree of trust is necessary, there is a large element of mundanity and a split-up can be traumatic for both parties. Also, like marriage, people do not always find the perfect partner at the first go. An agent, like a member of the opposite sex, sometimes seems from a distance to be rather attractive, but a degree of intimacy might reveal quite the opposite. Marry in haste, and repent at leisure.

Even recognizing all this, the new writer can't help but wonder whether his work would stand a better chance of being published if it was handled through an agency. It might... but it also might not. In the short term, an agent will not necessarily improve a new writer's chance of selling. As I have said, most publishers with an sf list are constantly on the lookout for fresh material. It is very rare indeed for real talent to go unnoticed in the sf category.

The long term is a different matter. Remember that agents are businessmen in business. They cannot spend too much time on writers who are writing for their own vanity, or to impress their friends. An agent is most interested in the writers who, over a period of time, are going to sustain a career, who are going to grow and develop.

Therefore: if you mean business, if you mean to write and go on writing, and write well and make something of it, then you must eventually hire the best agent you can. Indeed, it is not going too far to say that you would be foolhardy not to have an agent.

(3) Contracts. Assuming, though, that for the moment you are working without an agent, and further assuming that you actually get an offer for something, you will have to negotiate your own contracts. What should one look for?

This is a subject that can fill a book, but there are a few very fundamental

things that can be said.

Firstly, some reassurance. You can take it that the regular publishers of sf - Faber and Gollancz in particular - will present you with a standard form of contract that you can sign with safety. There is always room for improvement in a publisher's contract, but in general you will not jeopardize your rights if you are working with established, reputable publishers.

The principal rule is always to read a contract, and try to understand every single word of it. If you do not understand, ask. If you still do not understand, ask again. If there is anything you are concerned about, ask for the clause to be reworded, or even deleted. Publishers will not take umbrage over a writer taking an intelligent interest in his contract.

In a book contract, the sort of things you should be looking for will include: has the publisher given a date by which he will publish the book?; in which territories will he be publishing his own edition?; which subsidiary rights is he also buying?; what percentages will he pay you for the use of those subsidiary rights?; is he paying you an advance against royalties, and how will those royalties be calculated?; is there a procedure by which you can get the rights to the book reverted to you when the book goes out of print?

You will find that a book contract deals with many more matters, but from the writer's point of view, those are the most important.

For the sale of a short story, your principle concern should be to establish that whoever is buying the story has only the right to publish it as a part of the larger whole (i.e. as part of a magazine or anthology). If the publisher or editor wishes to re-sell the larger whole containing your story, ensure that you will be paid for the secondary use. Never release the right to re-sell the individual story, except within the larger whole.

And more besides. You might prefer to hire an agent.

(4) Manuscript presentation. Boring as it undoubtedly is, the following cannot be repeated too often: Type your manuscript on white paper. Your lines should be double-spaced. Leave a margin of at least one inch in all directions. Number the pages. Put your name and address on the first page. Use a good, dark ribbon. Keep your typeface clean.

I've never understood the sloppy attitude many writers have about their manuscripts. The MS is the first, last and only chance the writer gets to set out his work in the way he intends it to be read. It is simply not good enough to get the words written down any old how, and trust to the hope that if someone eventually publishes it the editor or printer will somehow guess the author's intentions.

An editor will usually try to follow the author's meaning, and will interfere only when the meaning isn't clear. The manuscripts which are most interfered with are, in general, those where the author simply hasn't bothered to be consistent with his spelling, punctuation, paragraph-layout, typing, grammar, etc etc. If you send in a careless manuscript it is an open invitation to someone else to start mucking about with it. Human nature is such that if someone is given the undoubtedly boring job of correcting an author's spelling, it won't be long before he decides to liven up the day by contributing a few of his own ideas to the plot or style.

Printers, incidentally, are trained to be obedient to the text that is sent to them... whoever sends it. If a bored copy-editor has thought up some spiffing new ending to your novel, it won't be the printer who changes it back for you. By the time you see it, the text will be locked in the permanence of type.

Therefore, a manuscript should be typed as neatly as possible. If you make hand-corrections, make them clearly. Use the same typewriter for the whole MS. The overall layout should be clear and consistent. (eg. each line should be, within reason, the same length as all the others, and there should always be the same number of lines on each page.) Check your spelling. If you don't know the rules of grammar and punctuation, learn them; they are to the writer what paintbrush and pigments are to the artist.

The manuscript as a whole should be easy to hold and read, and neither bound so firmly that it is unopenable nor held together so loosely that the whole thing disintegrates as soon as it is picked up. (I once read a MS for a publisher: it was 450 pages long, and held together in one corner by a loop of yellow wool. Another MS went to the opposite extreme: it was bound by an arrangement of springs and clamps of such ferocity they could only have been stolen from an osteopath. The first 75 pages were almost unopenable, but when you reached page 76, the whole thing sort of exploded in your face.)

None of this means that you have to invest in an electric typewriter and use only the most expensive paper. The poshest appearance in the world won't disguise poor writing (and in fact only emphasizes it). A good manuscript should be, in effect, invisible. It should be capable of being read without the editor being constantly reminded that he is grappling with 400 pages of assorted sizes, each of which has been typed by an orang-utan, and all of which have been bound by an all-in wrestler.

Anyway.

Nothing in the foregoing will make a non-writer into a writer. That has to come from within. An article like this is, at best, the offer of lubricant to an engine. The petrol has to be provided by the writer, and the octane rating is determined by a number of different constituents the writer supplies. These would include: the degree of his or her ambition, the degree of taste, the degree of willingness to self-criticize and examine and correct, the degree of energy and, irreplaceably, the degree of native talent.

But to those who try, and go on trying: take heart! In spite of the awfulness of much that is published in the sf category, there is still a general sensibility to excellence. A genuinely promising writer will find encouragement at every step of the way. Magazine and anthology editors are constantly seeking new talent. Publishers actually brag about new writers they have discovered. Even the established writers are a friendly, if over-thirsty, lot, and well-timed applications of booze work wonders. They won't introduce you to anybody important, they won't give you any tips, they won't tell you the password, but so long as you're in the convention bar with them they'll be very encouraging.

Christopher Priest

NEWS

BSFA FILE

1. Vice-Chairman

Yes, someone has actually volunteered to do the job! This daredevil individual is Alan Dorey. Seriously, Alan has a lot of experience in both the serious and fannish side of science fiction. To give you some idea, Alan used to edit Leeds University SF Group's fanzine, BLACK HOLE and for a year ran the Leeds University SF Group. At present Alan is the secretary for YORCON (the 1979 Easter convention) and edits two fanzines, a personal zine called GROSS ENCOUNTERS (which won the Nova Award at Novacon '78 for best fanzine), and a serious sf fanzine, SIRIUS.

Alan has been very critical of the present committee and certainly he and I do not see eye to eye on certain points but Alan has the qualities which a VC needs, enthusiasm and a desire to help, and perhaps it's an advantage to be something of a rebel in that it adds new energy to a group.

Providing we don't receive a sudden influx of applications Alan will take over as VC following the AGM at YORCON.

2. Help

We need assistance. The library catalogue is, to put it mildly, in something of a state. At present it consists of the last published catalogue, some ten years old plus a supplement, about 5 years old, and the lists of recent additions Dave Winrove has printed in VECTOR. We need someone to put these three sources of information together. This will involve not only considerable typing effort but also some communication with the SF Foundation, where the library is held, so that books which have been damaged beyond use, lost or stolen can be removed from the listing. It is also the committee's intention to list certain books (old, rare and fragile) as not available for postal loan. This is not an easy task and will require considerable time and effort, perhaps a group of people might be able to undertake it?

If you can help with either task then please write to Tom Jones.

3. Worldcon

We've kindly been given space in the Fan Room at Worldcon and if we are to have a table and try to drum up some business we'll need volunteers to put in some time. I know this is a lot to ask of someone going to Worldcon but it just might be fun.

4. The Unhired Help

A few issues ago I said I'd run a spot where committee members told you what they did, I started it off by telling you what a tremendous person I was, so now it's time to let some of the others have a go. This issue we'll deal with the unsung jobs, Business Manager, Membership Secretary, Treasurer and Company Secretary.

Business Manager - Trev Briggs

I chase review copies of all vaguely SF/Fantasy books I know about, tell DJW (Dave Wingrove) what I've got, and he tells me he doesn't want to review any of them and I send them all to the BSFA Library. Seriously folks, I despatch them to reviewers as per Dave's instructions. Also trying to get publishers to part with some of their hard-earned money to have their names immortalised in the pages of VECTOR, while arranging trade ads with other mags and societies and simultaneously trying to get money out of (censored, sorry, edited out).

((Since writing this Trev has taken on the job Phil Stephensen-Payne was doing which involves scouting round for suitable places to put ads for the BSFA which are both going to bring in new members and which we can afford.))

Membership Secretary - Dave Cobbledick

I'm having a whale of a time! Memsec job can be divided into two parts:-

- (A) ENQUIRIES: which I view as threefold (I hope I'm not boring anyone) -
 - (1) ENQUIRY - in return a person is thanked and a membership form sent out;
 - (2) SAMPLE MAILINGS - usually asked for after an enquiry, person thanked and reminded only an additional £4 required for full membership;
 - (3) COMPLETED MEMBERSHIP - persons are thanked and supplied with membership cards, queries (if any) are dealt with and other bits of info given.
- (B) CASH SIDE & BOOK KEEPING; again threefold -
 - (1) ENTER members into membership book and, in doing so, allocate number, date of birth, enquiry etc
 - (2) ENTER cheques, PO, cash into account book, noting particulars - i.e. cheque number, sorting codes, account numbers, with relevant membership info;
 - (3) CASH in at the bank by direct debits and send accounts info to treasurer; membership forms and details to Keith Freeman.

Basically that's what I do. Enquiries on a daily basis, memberships, accounts and general book-keeping on a weekly basis. Full stop.

Treasurer - Chris Umpleby

- (1) Keep "books" of accounts, receipts and payment vouchers, etc.
- (2) Prepare accounts on a yearly and at least a 6-monthly basis.
- (3) "Advise" committee/Council on financial matters.
- (4) Prepare budgets of income/expenditure (eventually).
- (5) Sign cheques (rare!)
- (6) Answer questions at AGM.

Company Secretary - Kevin Smith

- (1) Maintains statutory books.
- (2) Notifies Registrar of Companies of changes in Directors (ie. Council Members), Registered address, etc.

- (3) Completes Annual Return and sends to Registrar of Companies
- (4) Kicks auditor up backside to get accounts audited on time.
- (5) Kicks Treasurer up backside to get accounts ready for auditor.
- (6) Kicks anyone else up backside to get all expenses to Treasurer in time to prepare the accounts.
- (7) Makes sure the final accounts are in acceptable form.
- (8) Drafts "Directors' Report" to go with accounts.
- (9) Takes minutes of Council Meetings and AGM.
- (10) Deals with Inland Revenue.
- (11) Signs cheques (TAJ tells me).

To some extent I've overlapped into the Treasurer's territory, but they're all jobs which have to be done.

In summary

These job descriptions are taken direct from the Round Robin which circulates amongst the committee members, which is strictly a committee "tool" in which people are encouraged to be outspoken. But this still gives you an idea of the kind of time and energy these people put into the running of the BSFA. So whilst they may not be to the fore as much as the editors of the journals (or even the VC) the Association could not function without them.

Tom A Jones

TANGENT

As you will know, Tangent was due to go litho in the next issue. Since M21 there have been further developments on the Tangent front which were discussed at the last Committee meeting. The following letter from Tom Jones to Ian Garbutt explains the Committee's decision. Tom felt that it ought to be published in Matrix so that the BSFA membership could have the opportunity to comment.

Dear Ian Garbutt,

I have been instructed to write to you by the Management Committee of the Council of the BSFA concerning the BSFA's publication 'TANGENT'.

1. A lithoed TANGENT is not to be produced. We must rescind the decision taken at the Novacon Council meeting to contribute £15 to the cost of a lithoed magazine. This decision was taken because TANGENT is a BSFA publication and thus the BSFA could be liable for the full costs should you in any way default (this in no way suggests you would default but we must be very aware of all our legal obligations in this matter).
2. The BSFA is not willing to contribute to a private fiction magazine produced by yourself, or anyone else, at this time as this would set a precedent which could lead to other fanzine editors asking for a "subsidy" to produce their fanzines.
3. The Committee is unhappy with your editorship of TANGENT. In particular the agreed guidelines, ratified at the Committee meeting on 11 June 1978 do not seem to be being adhered to.
4. Your letters in various fanzines have been a considerable embarrassment to the BSFA. The editor of any magazine must be able to accept criticism in an objective manner and, if necessary, produce a reasoned reply, this

does not seem to be the case with you where TANGENT is concerned.

5. You have shown an inability to work within the committee structure of the BSFA and several times you have stepped beyond the authority delegated to you. For example, you announced TANGENT was to go litho before approaching the Committee for their approval on this matter; further you also threatened to remove someone from the TANGENT mailing list which is not only beyond your authority but also that of the Committee.

6. As you were not at the Committee meeting on 28 January 1979 and the Committee feels you must be given the right to reply to these charges we will wait until the Council meeting prior to the ACM to vote on a motion removing you from the editorship of TANGENT. Until that motion is put we will neither pay for nor publish any further issues of TANGENT.

7. This letter will be published in MATRIX so that the membership are fully aware of the situation and may make their feelings known.

8. The Committee does not intend to terminate TANGENT, indeed it fully supports the need for a writers' magazine. Our only quarrel is with the way you have edited the magazine and the path down which you have been taking it.

Yours sincerely

Tom A Jones
for the Committee of the BSFA

OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

WHOOOPS!

Hopefully this will not be a regular feature, but a couple of errors crept into the news in M21 and so we thought we'd allow space in this special section for corrections.

The new editor of Galaxy is Hank Stine, not G Harry (Hank) Stine - they are in fact two different people! How dare two people have such similar names.

Brian Stableford will be writing more 'serious' books, what he won't be doing is any more series books. Sorry about that but it was late at night, and it was speltright - that's what you tend to look for in proof-reading! It won't happen again, promise.

Shoot the copy-typist! Still, not too many for 5 sides of news really, at least we didn't get things as wrong as Victoria Vayne in DNQ13. She reported to the amazed Americans that Liese Hoare had resigned as Secretary of Seacon, a bit difficult since she was never on the Committee and it was Eve who resigned and swapped jobs with Pat Charnock. Still, at least they got the right sex!

SNIPPETS

From the State Journal-Register, Illinois, comes plenty of science news for those of you who are that way inclined. Did you know that Boeing Aerospace are at present exploring power generation through solar cells on satellites? Yes, bug-eyed monsters are not the only ones with antennae, we're going to have massive big ones to collect the microwave beams from the satellites. Electrifying isn't it! Sorry about that.

Onward with bug-eyed monsters. All those hiding away here in the outer-spiral arm of the galaxy can now rest easy in your beds. SETI - the Search for Extra-terrestrial life project set up by NASA - have recommended serious research into this but the Carter administration are studiously ignoring it. Now the scientists are too busy worrying whether they'd get their hands smacked if they go ahead without daddy's permission that nothing will get done. In addition, radio interference is making the search harder so they might even decide it isn't worth it anyway! That's positivism! NASA are still pursuing their favourite hobby - getting rid of our scrap metal by shooting it into space. In 1979 they plan to launch 16 Satellites (including the first orbital test flight of the space shuttle and close approaches to Jupiter and Saturn). What will they do next, we're all asking ourselves.

Yet another piece of vital information without which your lives just won't be complete is that the Caribbean island of Grenada, dissatisfied with merely producing a Miss World, has now produced the world's first set of postage stamps hailing UFO research, showing various UFO's and 'strange sightings'. Thought you could get arrested as a peeping tom for that! The 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ p man had better watch out too, a New York inventor has made himself a machine that straps on your back and enables you to run at 20 mph. Very useful for catching the train in the morning (if there is one).

MEDIA NOTES

Rock stars Debbie Harry (Blondie) and Robert Fripp (founder of King Crimson) are to star in a remake of 'Alphaville'. Actor Keir Dullea, who starred in Kubrick's '2001' is to appear in a NBC adaptation of Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World'.

Battlestar Galactica (CIC) (Subtitled 'saga of a star world'). This is scheduled to open at the Empire, Leicester Square on April 12 with soundtrack in Sensurround. Three versions of Battlestar Galactica exist: the three-hour TV movie, a 2-hour version and a 1 hour 45 minute version (this latter being the most likely one to be shown in the UK). Despite erratic Nielson ratings, ABC have commenced production of 17 1-hour TV episodes. The TV series has been sold to a UK TV station and should arrive on our screens next September.

The Boys From Brazil (Lew Grade & 20th Fox). This is directed by Franklin Schaffner who also directed 'Planet of the Apes', 'Patton' and 'Papillon'. Following a series of villainous roles, Laurence Olivier is once again on the side of Law & Order portraying the role of Lieberman, an ageing Nazi hunting Mengele (Gregory Peck), the 'Angel of Death' of WW1 prison camps. The key element in the film which sets it apart from others in the genre is cloning. The 'Boys from Brazil' are 94 clones that Mengele has produced from a small portion of tissue taken from the dying Fuhrer.

Invasion of the Body Snatchers (United Artists). The original version of IBS, directed by Don Siegel, has developed something of a cult following during the years since its release in 1956. The current version was scripted by W D Richter and is also based upon the original novel by Jack Finney.

Donald Sutherland takes over the McCarthy role as the major protagonist who helplessly watches the people around him succumb to the alien menace and the action is centred around San Francisco. The new feature acknowledges its debt to the earlier film by including Don Siegel and Kevin McCarthy in cameo roles. McCarthy managed to evade the alien pods in 1956, but in the new film he is the first person to be taken over!

Films Currently in Production

SATURN 3 (ITC). Ms Fawcett-Majors and Kirk Douglas star with a robot in this Shepperton-based production written by Martin (New Statesman) Amis. CLASH OF THE TITANS (MGM) The plot of this \$16m film is loosely based upon several tales from Greek mythology with stop-motion special effects by Ray Harryhausen, producer of some classics of the genre. FLASH GORDON (Dino De Laurentis) This movie, announced in October 1977, marked De Laurentis's first venture into the SF genre following his success with disaster movies and KING KONG. Since the initial announcement the film has had to be rescheduled twice and is now finally due to start principal photography at Pinewood Studios next April. THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (Star Wars Corp & 20th Fox) Filming is due to start at the UK EMI studios in June for release in the US during 1980 (at the same time as SUPERMAN 2). To explain Mark Hamill's facial injuries incurred during a car crash, he will be hurt during the opening scene in a conflict with an ice-planet snowbeast. The Luke, Leia, Han triangle will be resolved with the latter pair falling in love. THE BLACK HOLE (Walt Disney) (Original title: Space Probe 1) A new computer controlled camera system, ACES (Automated Camera Effects System) has been devised by the Disney technicians and will be used for the first time on this film with sets designed by NASA artist Bob McCall.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (Columbia) A new version of CE3K is due for release during 1979 including many of the out-takes which were originally left on the cutting-room floor. Several major changes will be made on the weak central section of the film to reduce audience boredom and new key special effects scenes will include shots of the interior of the mothership. Following his current involvement as director of the comedy '1941', Spielberg hopes to commence work on the CE4K screenplay and explore further SF themes by directing a film which George Lucas will produce.

Creeping Titles

Following the disasters of 'Meteor' we are likely to return to more conventional disasters in 1979: Airport '79 Concorde (Universal) will cater for those who dislike flying, while hydrophobists may enjoy Beyond the Poseidon Adventure. Following on from THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN (1957) we now have The Incredible Shrinking Woman to provide 'newer vistas of cosmic terror'. Such terror is no doubt contagious in view of the announcements that both The Plague, an SF-thriller, and The Plague Dogs will be produced in 1979 together with horror of a related species in Wolfen where "...a pack of superhuman wolves terrorise New York...". Another film cashing in on the weather (eg. Weatherman/Weatherwar) must be The Fog based on the James Herbert novel in which green fog (hence the expression pea-souper) sends people crazy. In fact the plot is reminiscent of Romero's The Crazies.

Due Extraterrestri Poro Emmolto Terrestri (Leono films) I am assured may be translated as "Two outer space men really meant for earth" is on location in Arizona and Columbia have their own answer to Superman - Spiderman Strikes Back which is due for US release. Marlon Brando filed a \$25m suit against the Superman producers claiming that they failed to honour an agreement to give him a percentage of the box office. Following on in

this vein, a Hollywood independent has announced that they will produce The Gay Superman. Whatever next!

MAGAZINES

Ted White has definitely resigned as editor of Amazing and Fantastic and it looks as though the magazines will now revert to their mainly-reprint policy of the mid-1960s. (Under Cele Goldsmith from the late 1950s to 1965, Fantastic and Amazing were lively and important magazines; 1965-8 was a dull period, however, in which - for the most part - the two magazines published reprints. Ted White, when he took over in late 1968, succeeded in making them lively and interesting once more, publishing much of the early work of Tiptree, Effinger, George R R Martin and others, as well as good serials by Shaw, LeGuin, etc. In the last two or three years the magazines have suffered severe financial difficulties, and now - with White gone - it looks as if a glum period is about to set in again.)

Issue 2 of Ad Astra, the new Astronomy/SF magazine is out now and certainly seems to be getting wide distribution. Looks fine if you want mainly astronomy with a certain amount of SF thrown in, in a New Scientist/New Society format. Hopefully we'll feature a review of it in a future Matrix.

EVENTS

Fantasycon 5, The Fifth Annual British Fantasy Convention will be held at the De Vere Hotel, Coventry next weekend (23-25 February). Full details from Mike Chinn (Fantasycon 5), 1 Buttery Road, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands - send registration fee of £1.00.

Jet-setters amongst you might like to know that Fool-Con 2 will take place on 31 March and 1 April at Overland Park, Kansas, USA. Main Guests of Honour Catherine and L Sprague de Camp and the convention is instigating a new award for Fantasy called the Balrog.

If you had the money, a jet plane and the inclination you could probably spend every weekend of the year at a different convention in the USA and still miss many! Those of us in Britain are less fortunate (?) and will have to console ourselves with Yorcon, the 1979 Eastercon at the Dragonara, Leeds with Guest of Honour Richard Cowper. Lots of fun for all (you might even see the Matrix editor make a fool of himself!). Information and membership (£5) from Alan Dorey, 20 Hermitage Woods Crescent, St John's, Woking, Surrey. Even more fun and frolics for sf fans may be had in August at Seacon '79. This is the first World SF convention to be held in Britain since 1965. The location, Brighton Metropole Hotel; Guests of Honour, Brian Aldiss and Fritz Leiber. Membership stands at over 3,000 at the moment ensuring that this will be the biggest ever SF event in Britain. Details and membership (£11) from Seacon '79, 14 Henrietta Street, London WC2.

Finally, for those of you in the Salisbury area, the St Edmunds Arts Centre is planning to launch its first ever Fantasy and SF Festival. This will take place from Friday 9 March to Friday 23rd at the Arts Centre. There will be a permanent display of fantasy and science fiction ideas from 1800 to today and a programme of events. Enquiries to Gary Nunn, St Edmunds Arts Centre, Bedwin St, Salisbury, Wilts.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Norman Spinrad's major new novel, A World Between, will be published by Jove Books in April 1979. A large new novel by Michael Bishop, Catacomb

Years, was published in January by Berkley/Putnam.

Gollancz are publishing Richard Cowper's new humorous SF novel, Profundis on April 12th - just in time for his appearance as Guest of Honour at Yorcon in Leeds! Ian Watson has delivered his new novel, God's World to Gollancz (it may be published before the end of the year). His first short story collection, The Very Slow Time Machine, has just appeared this month (February).

The fifth novel in the "Daedalus" series by Brian Stableford, Balance of Power, has just come out from DAW Books, and the final one, The Paradox of the Sets, should be out later in 1979. These are Stableford's last series novels. In March Hamlyn will be publishing the second book of the series in hardback (the paperbacks appearing before the hardbacks) Critical Threshold. DAW are also producing a new novel by C J Cherryh this year, Fires of Azeroth.

Philip Jose Farmer has an entirely revised version of his famous and long-out-of-print novel The Lovers due from Del Rey Books this year. Borgo Press will publish Earth is the Alien Planet: J G Ballard's Four-Dimensional Nightmare by David Pringle in October. This is part of Borgo's continuing series of in-depth studies of major SF and fantasy writers. A critique of James Blish by Brian Stableford will also be published by Borgo around the same time.

Foundation 15 was published at the end of January by the SF Foundation, N E London Polytechnic, Longbridge Rd, Dagenham RM8 2AS. It contains a major article by Michael Moorcock (on New Worlds) as well as contributions by Thomas M Disch, Stanislaw Lem and others. Foundation is available from the above address (£3 for a year's subscription).

In the last Matrix we mentioned that Philip Jose Farmer's The Magic Labyrinth was the fourth and final Riverworld Novel. This, it appears, is not wholly correct. Farmer has recently signed a 6-figure contract with Berkley which involves a fifth Riverworld novel. This will be the first in a series of "Sidestream" books but these are not part of the main sequence of which The Magic Labyrinth is the final novel.

The first UK publication of Tanith Lee's fantasy Shadowfire will be available from Futura at the end of February. Also from Futura is Andrew Stephenson's second novel, The Wall of Years, which is scheduled for publication at the end of March.

Hamlyn will be publishing F Paul Wilson's Healer in February. Later in the year they are planning new editions of classics such as Henry Kuttner's Mutant, Daniel F Galouye's Dark Universe and Frederick Brown's The Mind Thing. Also new novels by Marta Randall, M A Foster and Tanith Lee should be appearing later in the year.

A new anthology of SF edited by Maxim Jakubowski entitled Twenty Houses of the Zodiac will be published by New English Library to coincide with this summer's World Science Fiction Convention, SEACON. Contributors include Brian Aldiss, Robert Sheckley, J G Ballard, Arkady & Boris Strugatsky, Bob Shaw and Michael Moorcock.

Newshounds Credits

Thanks for supplying this issue's news go to David Pringle, Mary Long, Martin Hatfield, Tom Jones and Keith Freeman.

Working at the Science Fiction Foundation sounds to me a good excuse for being paid to read your favourite books. However, David Pringle assures me that he spends most of his time studying "heavy" criticism. Either way he should know a little about the subject and the following should provide some 'food for thought'.

COMMENT

From David Pringle

Since the World Science Fiction Convention is being held in Britain in 1979, British fans have an almost unprecedented opportunity to influence the outcome of the Hugo ballots in favour of British and British-based authors. The Worldcon committee ~~have sent~~ cut Hugo nomination forms this month with Progress Report 3. All those who have registered for the convention (Supporting as well as full Attending) have the right to nominate contenders for the Hugo Awards, and, subsequently, to vote upon those nominations. The fiction must have seen first publication in 1978, and it will be divided into four categories: Novel; Novella; Novelette; Short Story.

Here are some of the titles by British and British-favoured authors which will be eligible. Use your power of nomination, and then use your vote!:-

- Novels: Cowper, Richard. The Road to Corlay. Gollancz
 Harrison, Harry. The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You. Michael Joseph.
 Kilworth, Garry. The Night of Kadar. Faber
 Moorcock, Michael. Gloriana. Allison & Busby, and Fontana.
 Shaw, Bob. Vertigo. Gollancz.
 Sheckley, Robert. The Alchemical Marriage of Alistair Crompton. Joseph.
 Watson, Ian. Miracle Visitors. Gollancz.
- Novellas: Aldiss, Brian. "A Chinese Perspective." In Anticipations, Faber.
 Aldiss, Brian. "Enemies of the System". F&SF, June, and Cape.
- Novelettes: Disch, Thomas M. "The Man Who Had No Idea". F&SF, October, and Winter's Tales
 Harrison, M John. "The Incalling." In The Savoy Book.
 Leiber, Fritz. "Black Glass." In Andromeda 3, Futura.
 Priest, Christopher. "The Watched." F&SF, April.
 Watson, Ian. "The Very Slow Time Machine." In Anticipations, Faber.
- Short Stories: Ballard, J G. "Having a Wonderful Time". Bananas 10.
 Disch, Thomas M. "Planet of the Rapes". Men Only, and The Shape of Sex to Come, Pan.

(Fritz Leiber is included in the above list because he, of course, will be our Guest of Honour - besides which, we love him.)

And finally, how about "The Hitch-Hikers' Guide to the Galaxy" for best Dramatic Presentation? Just a few thoughts to go to sleep on. Has anyone else got any ideas on possible nominations?

FAN WORLD

We've managed to keep the fanzine reviews under control for this issue with only one guest reviewer, Joseph Nicholas. Joseph's made quite a reputation as a writer of long letters to fanzines and, recently, has been making even more of a name for himself as a fanzine reviewer as he brightens the pages of Ian Maule's Nabu. His latest exploit was to 'organise' the Fan Room at Novacon 1978.

THE BEAT GOES ON

... but you could be forgiven for thinking otherwise. The period between Novacon and Eastercon is a traditionally slack one for fanzines; it's not that Christmas completely sapped everyone's financial resources, it's just that pubbing your ish at the time of a convention - particularly when they're as close together as these two - seems The Natural Thing To Do (not to mention the saving on postage that invariably results). So there obviously isn't much to hand for review at this moment, and what there is constitutes a typically mixed bag; each fanned pursuing his chosen goal with a dedication that would, in a perfect world, call down upon him the admiration of the readership but which, more often than not, calls down their approbation instead. And I'm no exception.

Dave Wingrove's Kipple 2 is perhaps best described as "exceptional", but only in the sense of being "different"; it is, without doubt, the most unique fanzine I've ever seen. In point of fact, Wingrove claims that it isn't really a fanzine at all, which seems rather a strange claim to make; it is, after all, an amateur magazine edited by a fan and containing material written by other fans... but then, on reflection, his claim might just hold water; even the most cursory glance through the magazine reveals that both its tone and its content are so untypical that they can easily be said to have no connection whatever with any branch of fandom. Kipple's nearest equivalent is the kind of "little magazine" subsidised by the Arts Council (Bananas, New Review, Ambit, et al), in this case subsidised by the editor instead; and therein lies its downfall, for it is thus unlikely to reach the same people who read Bananas et al and hence won't generate the type of response that its contributors might feel their efforts require. Distributed to other fans, the greater part of Kipple's response is likely to consist of sneers of "poser!" or "pseud" or some such similar epithet not calculated to fuel the aspirations of those aforementioned contributors; and in consequence they'll probably feel that they've simply been wasting their time. And perhaps they have; in their striving after erudition and effect, Wingrove and his contributors appear to have forgotten that art isn't everything and that a little humour can often go a long way; Kipple 2 is so earnest and deadpan in tone that it becomes ultimately tedious and indigestible.

Leeds University Union SF Society's Black Hole 15 is equally poor, but

for different reasons. Whereas Wingrove realises that to apply the term "sercon" is also to apply a high degree of critical discrimination, Black Hole's two editors - Tony Berry and Immo Huneke - obviously don't, equating it instead with the (currently widespread and wholly deplorable) attitude that "it's SF, so it therefore must be good"; the twenty Perry Rhodan books that filled several pages of the previous (14th) issue - certain evidence that the editors have no critical discrimination whatsoever. But then to call them editors is to credit them with skills that they manifestly don't possess; Berry and Huneke are no more than compilers, printing whatever material comes to hand in the vain hope that it might provoke a response from someone, somewhere... Their fanzine has no coherence of viewpoint, being instead a messy agglomeration of witless schoolboy-style humour, pseudo-serious fact articles, plot-synopsising book "reviews" and that perennial staple of university clubzines, fan-fiction whose subject-matter is so cliched and whose presentation so hamfisted that it not only strains the reader's patience to an almost uncontrollable degree but actually defies readability. Just like Black Hole 15, in fact.

But then if they and Wingrove are merely pursuing their own individual goals, why should I or anyone else bother to complain? For one very simple reason; although fanzines are basically a means of self-indulgence for the editor and his readers, any editor who carries his self-indulgence to extremes usually ends up alienating his readers altogether, because fanzines are also a specialised form of communication, and for any communication to be worthwhile it must be a two-way process. The fact that only eight people bothered to respond to Black Hole 14 (which, as a university-funded venture, must have a print-run totalling some two or three hundred at least) is a sure sign that the communication is, in this instance, anything but two-way. And if response - worthwhile, usable response - is what a faned is after, then he has no option but to take into account the whims of his readers as well as his own.

A faned who has listened to the demands of his readers - sometimes to the extent of completely subordinating his own personality - is Geoff Rippington, whose Arena has now successfully shaken off the stigma of its immediate predecessor (the awful, typically-neoish-crudzone Titan) and is beginning to shape up as one of the few good serconzines currently being published in the UK (but then there are only two other serconzines - Sirius and Vector - anyway, so such a preferential ranking can only be considered as suspect at best). This latest (8th) issue isn't as good as the previous, however; the interview with Kurt Vonnegut is interesting but too rambling and inconclusive to be termed anything other than "superficial", and Brian Stableford's article on Vonnegut's work is too devoted to synopsising the plots of his novels to be genuinely provocative. Its letter column, however, compensates for the lack of bits elsewhere in the fanzine; with its 43 WAHFs and 14 printed extracts, it shows just how much Rippington is actually communicating - but its one disturbing feature is the amount of space it devotes to the responses of Big Name Authors (some of those responses being no more than "Thanks for Arena" squibs of stunning vacuousness). Only four of the fourteen letters are from genuine fans; the WAHF doesn't list the names of everyone else who wrote, but mentions enough of them to give me an uneasy feeling that fans comprise the bulk of it. Now I'm not going to be so foolish as to deny the right of an author to write to or for a fanzine, but, generally speaking, authors are too busy earning their living to maintain their response on a continuous basis; only fans such as you and I have both the time and the energy to do that. Moreover, fans write to get published, and any fan who finds himself pushed down into the WAHF column in preference for a "Thanks for Arena" from a Big Name Author in

issue after issue will eventually stop responding to the fanzine altogether... which obviously bodes ill for Arena's future if Rippington maintains this practice. But then perhaps I'm worrying unduly; he says he just ran out of room and it could be that his decision to accept advertising as from the next issue is a ploy to increase the money available for each issue and thus add extra pages. Never mind perhaps also increasing the frequency of publication; to be worthwhile and, above all, topical, a serconzine must appear more than just once or twice a year.

No such constraints apply to fannish personalzines, however; they, more than any other type of fanzine, are entirely subject to the editor's whims and take no account of the whims of their readers - mainly because the audience at which they're aimed is pretty much in tune with the editor anyway. You're either fannish or you're not, and the latest (5th) issue of Kevin Smith's personalzine Dot is a good example of the sort of esoteric nonsense with which this sort of fanzine is usually filled. Although convention reports, Dot 5's main subject-matter, are now very old hat, this one (about Novacon 7) has been treated in a refreshingly different manner, the various fans attending being compared to exhibits in a motor show (which means that he'll have to think of some different comparisons for future reports, of course; the Boat Show, perhaps, or the Ideal Home Exhibition, or...). The writing is a model of all the things that good fannish writing should be - relaxed, clever, witty and acerbic by turns, and hence a pleasure to read. If only more fanwriters were so capable....

And as thought to demonstrate just how incapable some fanwriters can be, through the door (even as I type!) has fallen the fourth issue of Dave Cobbledick's Tiofart, the crudzine that makes all other crudzines look like potential Hugo-winners. Like Black Hole's Berry and Huneke, Cobbledick is anything but an editor; his fanzine resembles theirs in its gung-ho "everything but the kitchen sink" approach and the schoolboy-style humour with which the contents appear to have been saturated is (if such a thing is at all possible) even more witless. Although the layout has undergone a vast improvement since the first, terrible issue, it is now, paradoxically, more of a hindrance than a help; by making the contents legible, it has revealed the utter paucity of those contents. The general level of thinking displayed in some of the contributions would shame even a five-year-old (and the level of spelling shame even a three-year-old; what is this strange thing called a "vaccum"?).

Cobbledick seems to me to be typical of the new generation of faneditors now arising; a generation that seems to neither know nor care about what they're doing. It's as though the actual making of a decision to produce a fanzine has so exhausted them that they have no energy left to devote to the mental and physical mechanics of carrying that decision through. Although I shouldn't have to point out that the mere existence of a fanzine is not in itself enough to justify it, far too many faneds seem to feel that this is exactly the case; which is why they receive the criticism they do, and will continue to receive that criticism until they wake up to the realities of life. Fanzines may be no more than a goddamn hobby, but if a hobby is to be at all worthwhile then it must be pursued in a reasonably serious manner, otherwise the endeavour will represent nothing more than money down the drain. And I'm sure that nobody is willing to admit that they can be quite as wasteful as that.

Joseph Nicholas

RECENT FANZINES

Once again here are some short notes on a few fanzines which might be of interest to you. All are available for the 'usual' (ie request, response, stamps, SAE, trade, etc.) except where stated.

In a letter to Matrix, Mike Cross chastised me for not mentioning Algol, Locus and SFR. My only excuse is that I don't normally see these 'fanzines'! I put the word fanzines in inverted commas because these three are really semi-prozines (ie available mainly for subscription and accept ads); in fact their editors like to think of them as prozines. For those of you who are interested in these "American glossies" I'll start my listing off with them. (NB If you want a sub for these, cheques should always be made payable to the British Agent)

ALGOL Edited by Andrew Porter, this is a very professional looking magazine and regularly features 'name' writers such as Pohl, Haldeman, Di Fate, etc. Four issues per year, the British subscription is £4-75 (or £9 per 2 years. Available from their British Agent, Ethel Lindsay, 69 Barry Rd, Carnoustie, Angus, Scotland DD7 7Q9.

LOCUS Billed as the Newspaper of the SF field, this magazine is edited by Charles N Brown and features lists of new books, convention dates, news items, etc. Available from P R Weston (British Agent), 72 Beeches Dr, Erdington, Birmingham B24 0DT, at an annual subscription of £9 air mail or £4-50 sea mail. It appears monthly (approx!)

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW - SFR Edited by Dick Geis, this zine features sf articles and reviews and appears bi-monthly. Subscription is the sterling equivalent of \$8 per year and the British agent is William Dawson & sons, Common House, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5EE.

You should be able to find copies of the above zines at the specialist SF bookshops (Dark They Were etc) so you can see for yourself what they're like before lashing out on expensive subscriptions. Here are the details of the fanzines Joseph Nicholas discussed in his review column.

KIPPLE 2 David Wingrove, 4 Holmside Court, Nightingale Lane, Balham, London

BLACK HOLE 15 Leeds University Science Fiction Society, Leeds

ARENA 8 Geoff Rippington, 15 Queens Ave, Canterbury, Kent

DOT 5 Kevin Smith, 7 Fassett Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey

TIOFART 3 Dave Cobbledick, 245 Rosalind Street, Ashington, Northumberland

FAN'S ZINE 16 A personal zine from Wally Stoelting, 852 Old Brook Rd, Charlottesville, Virginia 22901, USA

MUNICH ROUND UP 147 A long-running (as you can see from the issue number) fanzine mainly about SF and conventions written entirely in German! Which is not surprising since it comes from Waldemar Kuming, Herzospitalstabe 5, D-8000 Munchen 2, Germany. There is an English summary of the contents bound in though!

EPSILON 6 A fanzine from Wales edited by Rob Hansen who takes the honours for the cover of this issue of Matrix. Completely written by Rob, this issue contains two convention reports as well as editorial and letters. Not up to his usual standard though. Rob Hansen, 22 Llanthewy Rd, Newport, Gwent

SCOPE 1, 2 & 3 University of Keele SF Society's zine which features the
(continued on p.22)

All seems to have gone quiet on the Bill Little front - come back Bill, all is forgiven! Bridging the gap until Bill's return are Dave Langford and Kev Smith who have unearthed some little-known SF clubs.

ROUND THE CLUBS

Reading SF Group

Little is known (aren't you, Bill?) of the Reading SF Group, a group predictably devoted to Reading SF. Its activities are many. Keith Freeman reads SF in eastern Reading, I read it at the group's 22 Northumberland Avenue nerve-centre, and Martin and Liese Hoare read it in far flung Pangbourne. Yet even this strenuous programme does not satisfy the members' blazing apathy, and the group has become heavily involved in public-service work - a continuing quality check on the local Courage Directors Bitter. Keith Freeman works hard at not attending such gatherings, but he is a key member of the vital "Can I have some more cheap paper to produce Twll-Ddu?" subcommittee. (The ingeniously streamlined committee structure allows this subcommittee to meet by telephone - this concept may interest the BSFA, which is having more and more difficulty in squeezing its committee meetings into the Olympia centre.) RSFG's weekly beer tastings have often had an attendance in excess of three; featured speeches in 1978 included Martin Hoare on "How to Run the Computer Industry and Three Conventions Without Losing Weight", Liese Hoare on "How to Run Martin", Dave Langford on "The Care and Feeding of Rejection Slips" and Hazel Langford on the wagon. We have also had stimulating open discussions on such contemporary problems as beer-purchase precedence, alcoholic poisoning and Peter Weston.

RSFG is perhaps unique in having no chairman or president, no constitution, no membership fee and a regular 100% turnout at major conventions. Plans for the 1976 group fanzine are steadily being abandoned. We hope to make the organisation still less formal as the membership continues to drop.

Dave Langford

The Fassett Road, Kingston SF Circle General Secretary - Kevin Smith

The Fassett Road, Kingston SF Circle is one of the least known SF groups in Britain. Its membership has been constant for several years, but this does not imply lack of enthusiasm. On the contrary, it is very active and holds meetings almost continuously in such diverse places as Kingston itself, the City, and on the train from Surbiton to Waterloo.

On occasion the Fassett Road, Kingston SF Circle holds joint meetings with the Teddington group (President - Ian Robinson) usually at either The Spring Grove in Kingston, or the Anglers in Teddington. Only recently the Circle joined up with the Reading Group for future project talks; this occurred in The Pheasant in Reading. The Reading Group had erroneously billed this event in their widely advertised programme as a "Reading Group meeting with guest speaker Kevin Smith", but it was generally successful, even so.

The very small size of the group arises from three reasons. It is an extremely fannish group, which has hardly read a science fiction book

all year, and in fact much prefers Damon Runyon to Harlan Ellison or Samuel Delaney or Ursula LeGuin any day of the week, although Ursula LeGuin is not so bad, at that. It is also extremely jealous of its geographical catchment area, and refuses to countenance anyone outside Fassett Road, Kingston. Finally, the General Secretary is very elusive and refuses to respond to any and all membership enquiries.

The Circle always welcomes joint meeting proposals from other similarly established sf groups, however.

The South Ealing SF Society

President (non-executive) G Pickersgill

Secretary (Temp) S Walsh

The SESFS meets irregularly after work each evening for formal dinner, and at weekends. In its vast permanent premises at Lawrence Road, it boasts a printing works, a huge library - and even its own sf bookshop (which is open to non-members on enquiry). The Society is renowned for its lavish hospitality, the highlight to date being the Whitsun Convention, 1978 to which came representatives of many regional groups (including Reading and Fassett Road, Kingston).

Despite these immense resources and varied activities, the Society has no intention whatsoever of expanding on its current membership.

Kev Smith

Fanzines contd.

Usual assortment of fiction and articles you find in a University zine. I was rather amused to find that their reporter thought the Skycon hotel prices were exuberant! Fifteen pence for one or 45p for three issues from Dave Penn, "Hawthorns", University of Keele, Keele, Staffs.

DON'T PANIC A new newszine featuring plenty of fannish gossip from Graham England, 1 Fleet Way, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8BZ

GROSS ENCOUNTERS 5 More gossip and scandle from the typewriter of Alan Dorey. Like most personalzines it can only be fully appreciated when you know the people being discussed. Alan Dorey, 20 Hermitage Woods Crescent, St John's, Woking, Surrey

CHECKPOINT An occasional newszine edited by Peter Roberts who has also produced a 'Guide to Current Fanzines' which you might find interesting. Subscription - 5 Checkpoints for 50p and 35p for the Guide from Pete at 38 Oakland Drive, Dawlish, Devon.

SPANG BLAH 19 A special all Jim Barker edition with 14 sides of JB art plus a biography by Rob Jackson. 50p from Jan Howard Finder, PO Box 428, Latham, NY 12110, USA

BENZINE 1 This is probably quite old by now but I only received a copy recently. Best described as a genzine (articles of a general nature) I think. Ben Burr, 7 Egerton Drive, Greenwich, London SE10.

FANZINE FANATIQUE This is traditionally a badly printed fanzine listing. Useful for getting hold of new titles if you can read the printing. Keith Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quernmore Rd, Lancaster, Lancs.



First a thankyou to everybody who wrote to Matrix, even those just wanting the poll results, there were about 40 letters in all (a 7% response rate). Most of you liked the new look we've tried to give to Matrix which is encouraging. Still it wasn't a perfect issue and one or two folk picked up some flaws.

TOM JONES, 39 Ripplesmere, Bracknell Berks

Fanzines. There's a touch of overkill here. It is essential that MATRIX deal with fanzines and even more essential that there be a permanent reviewer so that one can correlate one's own taste with the reviewer's. I would like to see the listing (very comprehensive) plus the short comments plus one reviewer doing a more detailed look at a small number of zines. Who you choose is, of course, your prerogative but I would tend to avoid anyone who is heavily into the fanzine-fan set. (This is because I personally view their reviews with suspicion believing that personalities sometimes bias a review; in fact it would be impossible for this not to be the case at times. The fact you know and like Fred will tend to make you give him the benefit of the doubt whereas the fact you know and dislike George ensures he doesn't get a second chance.)

***** I quite agree, we did rather overdo the fanzine reviews in M21. As you can see there's only one set in this issue and that'll probably be the way we'll continue. I'm afraid I cannot go along with the ~~one~~ permanent reviewer idea. Any person will tend to have a bias whether they are 'heavily into the fanzine fan set', heavily into sf criticism or whatever. As to giving your friends the benefit of the doubt, I think it has the opposite effect since you not only expect more of them, you feel freer to say exactly what you think. Are you sure Tom you're not showing your own biases?

ANDY HOBBS, Rivelyn House, Hartingham, Notts

Specific criticisms are few, but there is one important thing I feel must be mentioned. I would have thought that for the BSFA to hold a poll was a correct and proper move. But, for the results to be by mail only seems gross folly. Or is it perhaps that the BSFA is so concerned with its inner squabbles and back-stabbing (yes, I had noticed - a mere novice - that a quarter of your (our) journal is for the most part devoted to this) that there isn't room. The Poll results show the individual members how the BSFA as a whole (or the majority of the BSFA - all right then, a large minority) thinks - can give individual members a guide as to their standing in the "new-old-no such things" argument - do most people think like me? Am I an outsider, a renegade? Does the fact that I like Asimov/Ballard/Dick/Sheckley mean I am depraved/imbecilic/a genius/beautiful in the eyes of my comrades? (Delete as necessary) Or perhaps none of this arises. Perhaps none of the membership cares what anybody else is reading and liking (or abhorring) and is quite content to see what happens when X slags Y and Z and how Mugglesford Minor set up his own mini world convention in South Norman-westfordton. (I quite liked that bit actually)

***** But the poll takes up 8 sides Andy! That's 25% of the magazine since Matrix should only be 32 sides (I know, we can't count!) Therefore we took the unilateral decision to make it available on request. The winners of those categories not mentioned in M20 are included in this issue and the second part will appear in M23. I personally think X slaging Y or Z is just as interesting as the poll and therefore we try to give them equal space.

GREG HILLS, 22a Polson Street, Wanganui, New Zealand

I feel that the reduction of the lettercol is to the mag's considerable detriment; and that, in fact, the general quality was down. Obviously there is a good case against excessive repetition, and against too much fannish chatter or irrelevant asides. But I think that the pruning has gone too far now. All the life has been squeezed from the lettercol, reducing it from the juiciest portion of the mag to a dry recital of facts and opinions. More, the pruning has evidently not extended to editorial comments. In places these take up more space than the letter, and say less. Okay in a perzine, but it is a little **smelly** in an official magazine of BSFA. Positive suggestions? Boost the lettercol back to 15-18pp; that, or take up the despised micro-elite (or photoreduce slightly?) for the letters. 10pp of letters is a little short for an organisation of 600 members. Did those 6 unprinted letters have so little of interest in them, that they should have been relegated to WAHF? Did they add no new slants on what you did print?

***** Greg was the only dissenting voice against my attempts at a 'tighter' lettercol. Not that I am totally ignoring his remarks - the editorial comments were too long in places and I'll have to take steps to keep them under control. I'm sorry though that I don't think we can take up any of your suggestions for lengthening Mailbag. It's my opinion that the lettercolumn should read in as continuous fashion as possible. As to the WAHFs, they definitely didn't add any new slants. I quite agree that the space given to letters from a 600+ membership is ridiculously low, but we can't ignore quality just to get the right quantity. If there is a substantial improvement in the quality of response then things will have to be reviewed.

PHIL WAIN, Keele SF Society, Students' Union, Keele, Staffordshire

I'd like to take issue with William Bain's contention that an attempt to define SF is ludicrous. This is in my opinion a cop-out. You and I know when we read an sf book that it is an SF book, and we know when we read a book which isn't SF. We know it but we can't put it into words. Yet the very fact that we know it must mean that there is something inherent in SF which distinguishes it from other forms of fiction. Just because we haven't yet found out what it is does not mean to say that we can't. We all have our own idea of what it is; we have all defined it for ourselves. Isn't that to say it is something worth trying to do? Instead of slugging someone off for attempting a definition it would be far more positive to offer constructive criticism. Remember, once we have found out what it is which makes it different we can defend it to all those people who think it is some kind of childish perversion to read Ballard. I won't attempt a definition here, as I don't think this is the place, although I think one thing has been missed from the definitions I have read, and that is that SF is not a type of plot, but a setting. Anyway, what does he mean when he says a description isn't a definition? What does he think a definition is?

DAVE COBBLEDICK, 245 Rosalind Street, Ashington, Northumberland

Hmmm, may as well throw my description of what SF is into the pot, seeing

as William Bains has had a shot at it. A description, mind you, not a definition...right? I see SF as being the Extrapolated History of the events, ethics, morals, politics and sciences of Mankind. Each and every thread of our history, ecological, technological and cultural, is extrapolated into a possible future setting. Every event is true whilst being a lie in the sense that Fiction is termed within. Howsat???? Oh yes, this being the case makes ALL literature the same... be it SF or mainstream, or even non-fiction. SF happens to be the one literature that attempts to speculate upon our future; the others merely pertain to the past and the present... which is why SF is true, but a lie.

Whoa! Whilst the BSFA depends on some of its members to help contribute to the zines and services, it is not in existence to get folk up off their fat arses and do something. The service that the BSFA renders to SF is to make people more aware of the literature and its values, and, to give insight to the other people in the genre. It is there as a service to SF fans, giving them a little extra by way of its publications, services and introduction to possible friendships; what more do you want? The membership have paid for these services and, in my opinion, have received value ten times over. They haven't joined to hear people make sarcastic remarks about their apathy. The members who need jolting are those who have something worthwhile to say, but can't be bloody bothered to do so. This may sound patronising in the sense that I may be infering that the majority of the membership are vegetating idiots; not so, it can't be expected for the majority to think along intellectual paths. I mean, look at me and this letter; half of it is unmitigated waffle and the other is a handful of opinions... imagine the problems of the editors if all 600 members did the same (Ghu forbid). I think Steev Higgins ought to go space himself!

***** Oh, we're back to the apathy bit. Well, whilst I cannot directly disagree with Dave (except about what Steev Higgins should do), I dig into my cliché bag and come up with "you only get out what you put in". So it's fine if all you want is the BSFAs magazines/services, that's what your money buys, but if you want more be prepared to put more in. I think I'd be in the Guinness Book of Records if all 600 or so of you wrote - but that would be fun!

JAMES ENGLAND, 'Houndel', Ounsdale Rd, Wombourne, Wolverhampton

My first point is inspired by your comment, "If too many of the membership are apathetic, they'll get the Council and magazines they deserve". Let me tell you that all the remarks (very frequent in recent months) castigating members for "apathy" are beginning to ring very hollow in my ears, as a result of my own experiences since joining the BSFA last March. Since that time I have written letters of comment to both VECTOR and MATRIX: neither of which has been published. I have asked for my first novel ('The Measured Caverns', Robert Hale & Co £3.75) to be reviewed in VECTOR, and not received the courtesy of a reply. (It was published in May 1978.) What is all this crap about apathy? Did not the editor of VECTOR say in a recent issue that he had "drawers full" of stuff waiting for inclusion in future issues? Do you not say, regarding MATRIX, that you have been "ruthless" in cutting letters and that "no letters will be printed in their entirety"? This doesn't sound like apathy on the part of members to me.

You quote the old adage that "one picture is worth a thousand words" as showing that TV SF has "more potential" than written SF. But I don't agree with the adage. Obviously, it depends on what pictures and what words. A picture can reveal an external landscape in more detail than a thousand words, but what about internal landscapes? Pictures aren't everything. I would go so far as to suggest that, in some contexts, a word might be worth a thousand pictures!

***** The 'apathy' accusation did raise quite a few shouts of anguish from various sources. One can understand the sense of exasperation Jim

is feeling, I hope I've now helped to renew your confidence. You have slightly misinterpreted my comments on the editing of letters - apathy is not just in the quantity of response, but the quality as well, as I've mentioned earlier - this is where the apathy lies, people just don't seem to want to take the effort to produce high quality locs (well, not enough given the large readership). Sorry, though, there's nothing I can do about getting your book reviewed.

I must confess that you are correct (although it is probably highly subjective), words are very important. The 'every picture tells a story' bit has always irritated me because I always need a caption/title for photographs and paintings. So my quoted comment was a bit of bait really, I was acting as devil's advocate and the truth probably lies midway between, with all forms of communication being equally important.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS, 2 Wilmot Way, Camberley, Surrey

I agree with Alex Pillai - filmed SF will always emerge a poor second to written SF. One picture may well be worth a thousand words, but this is a generalisation like all other generalisations; there are certain special cases in which it completely fails to operate. And SF is one of those special cases; as Baird Searles has often pointed out in his review columns for F&SF, SF stories require great amounts of explanation and rationalisation in order to make their invented societies and worlds at least half-way convincing. What can a film do but simply present the background of its story as a fait accompli, thus allowing no room for persuasion and demanding that the viewer accord it either instant acceptance or instant rejection? The usual viewer-response is rejection; devoid of its buttressing arguments, the background society of a filmed SF story often appears so implausible that to treat the film as a whole with contempt would be too much of a kindness.

It's difficult to respond to Dave Cobbledick's broadside against the value of fiction without becoming too pseudo-philosophical; but the response is nevertheless worth attempting. So... "fiction is a lie" says Cobbledick, and one can hardly disagree with him because, no matter how many semantic obfuscations one makes in attempting to define the word "fiction", one will still end up with something that means, in essence, "non-factual". But let's just ignore Science Fiction for the moment and concentrate on what's usually referred to as the "mainstream". If that is also referred to as a lie, then the world it depicts must also be a lie - yet that world is our world, the perceived reality that we believe ourselves to inhabit. (See what I mean about pseudo-philosophical?) And the characters with whom the authors have people their novels must equally be false - yet they exhibit characteristics that we know are exhibited by "real" people and are also, in many cases, people that we feel we could meet in the street (perhaps because they are actually based on "real" people - Virginia Woolf once sat opposite a woman in a train compartment who so intrigued her that she went home and wrote a story about her; and William Golding used to fill his novels with transcripts of conversations that he'd had with his friends).

One is thus forced (by way of this argument, at least) to disagree with Cobbledick; because it is based on "reality" fiction has a strong claim to be considered as rather more than a lie - to call it a "half-truth" perhaps does it better justice. Even so, it's still "non-factual", so what use is it? Does it, in fact, have any purpose at all? It's at this point that the idea of the "writer's message to the world" comes in. By projecting our own emotions and expectations onto the characters in a novel, we can absorb the message better than if it were to be presented to us in the form of a lecture; the characters act as our sounding-boards, thus allowing us to see how we would react were we in their place. Admittedly the whole thing is conducted on a rather microcosmic scale; but then our lives are lived on a microcosmic scale and to involve the entire universe in a message that is

specifically aimed at us would be absurd, serving only to obliterate the message altogether.

And I'm afraid that I can't resist a parting - and rather cheap - shot, aimed specifically at Cobbledick. If, say, he wished to learn something about the way in which society works, which would he rather read - a series of novels that entertained him as they (painlessly) taught him, or a great thick university textbook on sociology?

DAVID WATKINS, "Gaycroft", Laleston, Bridgend, Glamorgan

In reply to Phil Rosenblum's letter defending Michael Moorcock: of course Moorcock is clever and talented. In fact it takes talent and hard work to write as badly as Moorcock does when he writes SF. What makes the Jerry Cornelius books so diabolically awful is the skill with which Moorcock strings the reader along, teasing him with the false promise that the next paragraph, or the next chapter, will reward his patience and make sense of what has gone before.

In "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" Auberon Quinn amuses himself by telling a series of totally unfunny, pointless "jokes" - each prefaced with a solemn little lecture on the aesthetics of humour - to his baffled and intimidated friends. It doesn't surprise me in the least that "The Condition of Muzak" won an award from the Guardian, which is written and edited by and for precisely the sort of vain, insecure, gullible people who are the natural prey of the Quinns and the Moorcocks.

DAVE WINGROVE, 4 Homside Court, Nightingale Lane, London

I won't argue with Paul Kincaid's reasons for wanting to be a fan. "As much as anybody I like to be part of the crowd", I quote. Fandom is self-derogatory, but only within itself - it takes an extreme dislike to criticism from without, what you might like to call a normal group tendency. As I've expressed to Paul elsewhere, I like many of the individuals I've met within fandom, yet I dislike something about the essential nature of fandom. If this amounts to arch heresy, so be it. The whole is decidedly less than its quite interesting parts. There are group reactions to various phenomena: an echo effect, much like the sound of bleating in an aircraft hangar. It is because of the individuals fandom has introduced me to (good friends) that I value this rather perverse social grouping, not for the generality of fandom. And it is distinctly different from other hobbyist-groupings in that it observes itself incestuously, gnawing at its own entrails and taking coloured photos of the process.

JIM BARKER, 113 Windsor Road, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Central Scotland

I was deeply shocked to learn of the death of Brian Lewis in the last MATRIX. He was one of my favourite artists and I'm pleased to have two of his drawings hanging on my bedroom wall. I can't say I knew him personally very well, though we did spend a very pleasant hour together at a Novacon a couple of years back, swapping diet stories. (I still can't quite believe that he got down to 10 stones...) It was only in the past few years that I became familiar with Brian's work in HOUSE OF HAMMER, STARBURST and 2000AD and other diverse places such as SWEENEY annual 1978 and SUPER-Wernesets ads. I'll go on record as saying that, after Frank Bellamy, I considered him Britain's most talented comic strip artist. And now they're both gone... and I know I'm going to miss seeing Brian's artwork as much as I miss Bellamy's.

Bob Shaw from Glasgow and I were both thinking of trying to set up an art award named after Brian to be a memorial, but after consulting Keith Freeman and Rog Peyton that's perhaps not a good idea. Awards tend to lose their meaning after a few years as people enter fandom not knowing the person after whom the award is named. Anyway, as Rog pointed out, if we name an award after every well-loved fan who dies we're going to have more awards

than people to give them to. Still, Bob, Rog and I and several other people would like to do something to keep Brian's memory alive, but we're not sure what. So if you have any suggestions, please contact me at the above address. We plan to get together to discuss it at Yorcon so I'd appreciate it if you'd get in touch before then.

GRAHAM ASHLEY, 86 St James Road, Mitcham, Surrey

If I could just take issue with Steev Higgins and his aversion to sf rock reviews. Whilst I can appreciate his feelings I tend to think that sf's 'colonial ambitions' only goes to show how far it concerns itself with the 'real world'. Practically everything which occurs in today's news has direct analogues in sf. However if Steev refers to sf claiming other art forms for itself (as I think he might) then doesn't this just go to prove that sf isn't the tight, insular society that everyone tends to think it is.

In terms of music specifically one can see how science fiction's 'new wave' almost has a perfect mirror in the punk 'new wave' of 1976/77, both seeking to purge themselves of the old, staid ways. (Is therefore McClaren the Moorcock of the late seventies? No? Oh well.) Having now crested and gone through a period of rationalisation, surprisingly the new music still has a similar direction and attitude to life as that found in the writing of certain modern sf authors. Yet it no longer uses the mechanics and conventions of science fiction (as Hawkwind and others used to), but has formulated its own set of values. The similarity however is still there and for this reason I feel it is wrong to dismiss it as 'another sf rock piece'. Both have the same goal in sight.

***** There used to be a parallel drawn between sf and jazz similar to this if my memory serves me well. There's nothing new under the sun!

ANDY SAWYER, 59 Mallory Rd, Birkenhead, Merseyside

It seemed strange receiving a Matrix without knowing the contents, stranger still reading it and letting the fact that someone else is responsible for the bummer sink in. I knew that you wanted to do something different and that you would: well, you did. And I enjoyed it. The change in layout is, as far as I'm concerned, a success. I hope the "Why I'm a Fan" articles continue (If I can make a suggestion, why not ask a new member with no previous fandom "record" to explain what he/she is joining the BSFA for?)

Can I, through Matrix, thank those people who wrote and wished me luck, sent Christmas cards etc. (Sounds as if I was inundated, doesn't it! Well, a public gesture of thanks is called for as I felt quite pleased that some people took the trouble to contact me.)

***** Well, anybody want to write something? I'm always ready to read people's offerings for Matrix. (Please remember though, Chris Priest's remarks about manuscript presentation apply to us too!)

SUGGESTIONS BOX

A couple of the letters we received contained some suggestion on how to improve MATRIX and this gave us the idea of instigating a new section along the lines Keith Freeman suggests in his following letter.

KEITH FREEMAN 269 Wykeham Rd, Reading

The BSFA has always suffered from the geographic scattering of its members (and, indeed of its Council /Committee at times). The format of MATRIX was designed to help members communicate - both with each other and with the Committee/Council. It has become apparent to me, however, that there is one small (?) fault - ideas from members are buried in letters which are, in turn, buried in the lettercolumn which is buried in MATRIX which is

buried in the BSFA mailing. (Maybe I've gone too far there - but what I'm getting at is that ideas in letters that are printed in Matrix can get overlooked - cf Paul Fraser in M17 & 18). My suggestion is this: A separate page in MATRIX (or a separate sheet altogether) should be reserved for people to (a) put forward proposals and (b) in the following mailing for these proposals to be voted on. With regard to (a) - obviously certain 'rules' would have to be adopted, such as a maximum number of words/proposals AND a maximum number of proposals/person/month! Alternatively a fixed length (eg 1 page) containing proposals 'as they come'... when full other proposals would be held for the next mailing. (b) is slightly different - the rules etc governing the BSFA mean the Committee would not, necessarily, have to take notice of a proposal even if voted for by an overwhelming majority of the members. However I'm sure the Committee would take notice of members' feelings as much as possible.

***** Well, I'm willing to try it. as you can see. Let's hear from you.

ALLAN LLOYD, Quebb Cottage, Eardisley, Hereford.

Someone last issue suggested more discussion of SF in MATRIX and was promptly shot down because it was said that VECTOR was covering that area. VECTOR's job, it seems to me, is to review the new books and provide in-depth articles on facets of author's works. I would love to write to VECTOR discussing book reviews but there is one obstacle. By the time I have bought the book in paperback, or found it in the library, the review is six months old. I keep my issues of VECTOR for reference and often look up books after I have read them, but that does not give much scope for topical letters. Why not present discussions of books reviewed in Paperback parlour, or ask some of your contributors for a comment on books on their current reading list? I feel that this would give the average reader more people to contribute.

Another suggestion for future issues. Why not give a list of addresses of book shops which specialize in SF or have a good SF department around the country. Also some of the market stalls and secondhand shops where all the old SF magazines seem to end their lives. I find nothing more frustrating than arriving in a strange city and spending all my time searching for shops which I know must be there but always seem to elude me.

***** The idea of a bookshop guide has been done before in MATRIX but that doesn't mean we cannot do another. If people would like to send in the addresses of places they know we'll compile them.

WAHF

I'm sorry we haven't any more room for letters and we'd like to thank the following people for taking the trouble to write. Keep on trying!
 Steve Edgell, Bill Bains, Nic Howard, David Lewis, Dave Langford, George Hay, Maxim Jakubowski, Wiktor Bukato, Kate McDermott, John Connor, P Dembind, Cyril Simsa, Ian Wright, Rolf Thompson, Clive Woodley, Dave Nash, Nigel Clark, Philip Muldowney, Terry Jeeves, Dave Penn, Phil Rosenblum, Alan Mattingly, Rich Philpot, Chris Furse, Laurence Dean, Steve Hawkins.

MISCELLANY CORNER

MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD

This is the MATRIX small ads section, if you have anything you want to sell or buy, if you are forming an SF group, want to publicise meetings, then do so here for FREE!

Rob Hansen would like to form an SF Group in the Newport area. If there's anybody interested please contact him at 22 Llanthewy Road, Newport, Gwent

Jim England wants to hear from other members in the Wolverhampton area with a view to forming an SF group. Jim's address is 'Houndel', Ounsdale Rd, Wombourne, Wolverhampton.

Face Out is a fanzine, edited by Chris Furse, which features the European Rock Scene. At present there is no SF in it but that depends on reader response. Chris would like to distribute it through the BSFA so if you are interested let him know. A copy of Face Out is free on request from 25, Lionel Ave, Wendover, Nr Aylesbury, Bucks.

COMPETITION

Firstly, let's catch up on M20's competition, so here are the answers: Michael Valentine Smith - Stranger in a Strange Land; Harry Purvis - Tales from the White Hart; Stevek - The Dispossessed; Billy Pilgrim - Slaughterhouse 5; Kim Kinnison - The Lensman Series; Jason din Alt - Deathworld series; Gulliver Foyle - Tiger, Tiger (The Stars My Destination) Jorj X McKie - Whipping Star and The Dosadi Experiment; Winston Smith - 1984; Mitchell Courtenay - The Space Merchants; Lije Bailey - The Caves of Steel and The Naked Sun; Simon Moon - The Illuminatus Trilogy

We did get one entry for this competition that was from Mick Cross who got 9 out of 12 so he wins that one.

It looks like our M21 anagrams took us longer to think up than it took some of you to do! All the entries were correct even if the anagrams weren't. We succeeded in losing an S from the first and gaining an E in the second, ah well here are the answers. If The Bad Terra Demons shelled me gives The Demolished Man - Alfred Bester, then Flee Deathray-G Pow! gives (less an E), Gateway - Fred Pohl.

Mick Cross (again) noted that we'd managed to choose the first ever Hugo winner and also the latest. Pure coincidence so no prize for that. Winner of this, courtesy of the time honoured "hat" is Laurence Dean. A couple of paperbacks each go to Laurence and Mick and commiserations to the losers and better luck next time.

One suggestion for a competition that we liked was a quote from a novel. So here are three opening lines for novels, we want the title and author. We'd also like suggestions for future quotes a la 'Daisy Chain' - they don't have to be first lines, anything memorable will do.

- (1) "My finger rests lightly on the black button. The street beyond this window looks quiet, but I am not deceived - for my death lies out there, waiting."
- (2) "The idiot lived in a black and grey world, punctuated by the white lightning of hunger and the flickering of fear."
- (3) "The man walks through his Thousandyear Eve in the House of the Dead."

POLL RESULTS (Those categories in Part 1 not mentioned by Andy Sawyer in M20.)

Best Fanzine - Of all time, GET FOKT; Today, MAYA.

Best Fanzine Editor - Of all time, DICK GEIS/PETER WESTON; Today, DICK GEIS/ROB JACKSON

Best Fan Writer - ROY KETTLE/DAVE LANGFORD SF Illustrator - JIM BARKER

Best SF/Fantasy Comic Book - HOWARD THE DUCK/CONAN Best SF Music - 2001

Best SF Singer/Band/Musician Etc - Hawkwind Best SF Award - HUGO

Best Novel Etc and Writer From: 30's - Books, LAST AND FIRST MEN (Olaf Stapledon), Writer, OLAF STAPLEDON. 40's - Books, 1984 (George Orwell), Writer, George Orwell. 50's - Books, THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY (Isaac Asimov) and A CATICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ (Walter M Miller Jnr) plus THE LORD OF THE RINGS (J R R Tolkien), Writers, ISAAC ASIMOV. 60's - Books, DUNE (Frank Herbert), Writers, PHILIP K DICK. 70's - Books, THE DISPOSSESSED (Ursula K LeGuin), Writers, LARRY NIVEN

Well, that's it for now as we've run out of space. Sorry to all those (well there weren't that many) who sent in contributions, we'll see what we can do next time. Bye, see you in two months.

The Captive

STORY & ART: JIM BARKER

413 Windsor Road
Falkirk FK1 5DB
Central Scotland

Dear Sirs,

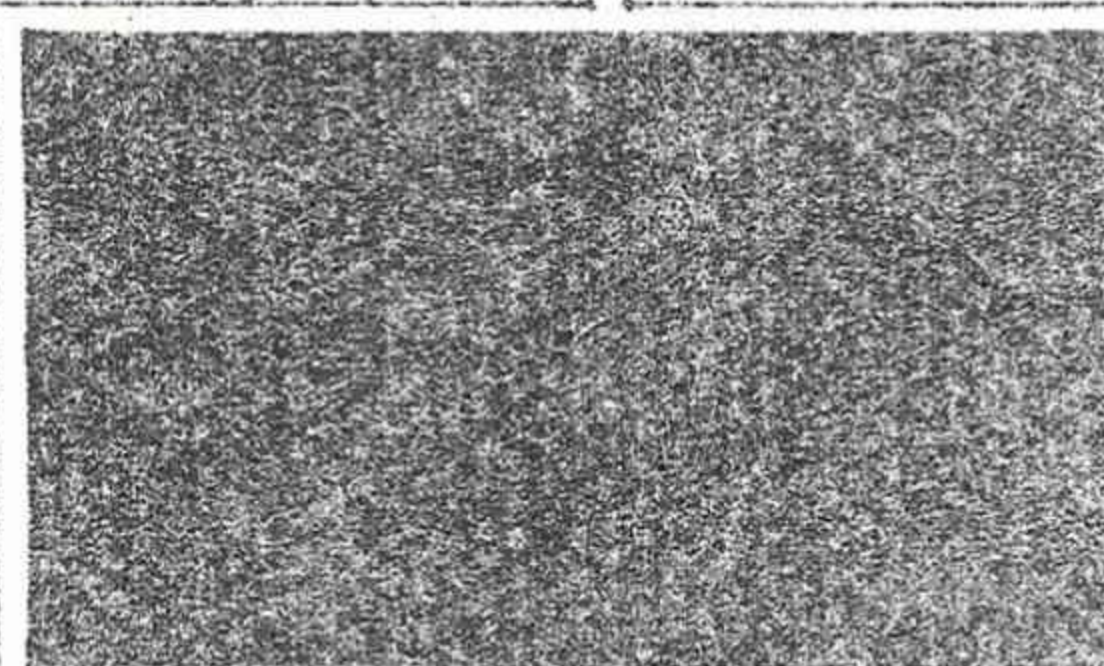
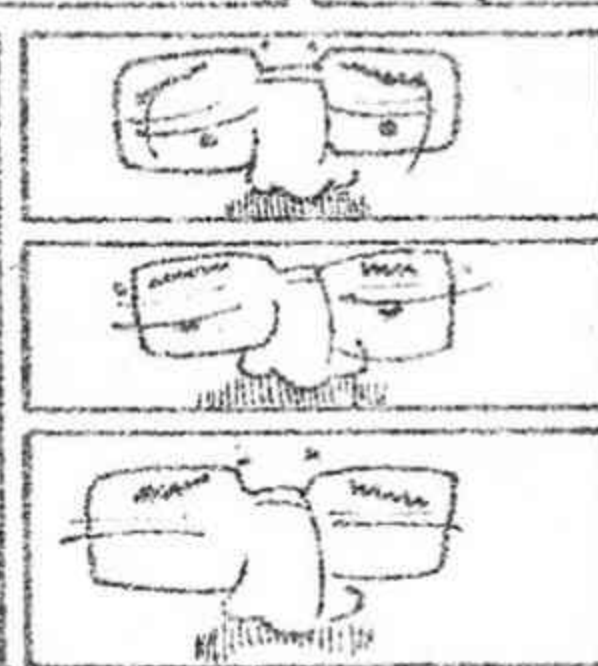
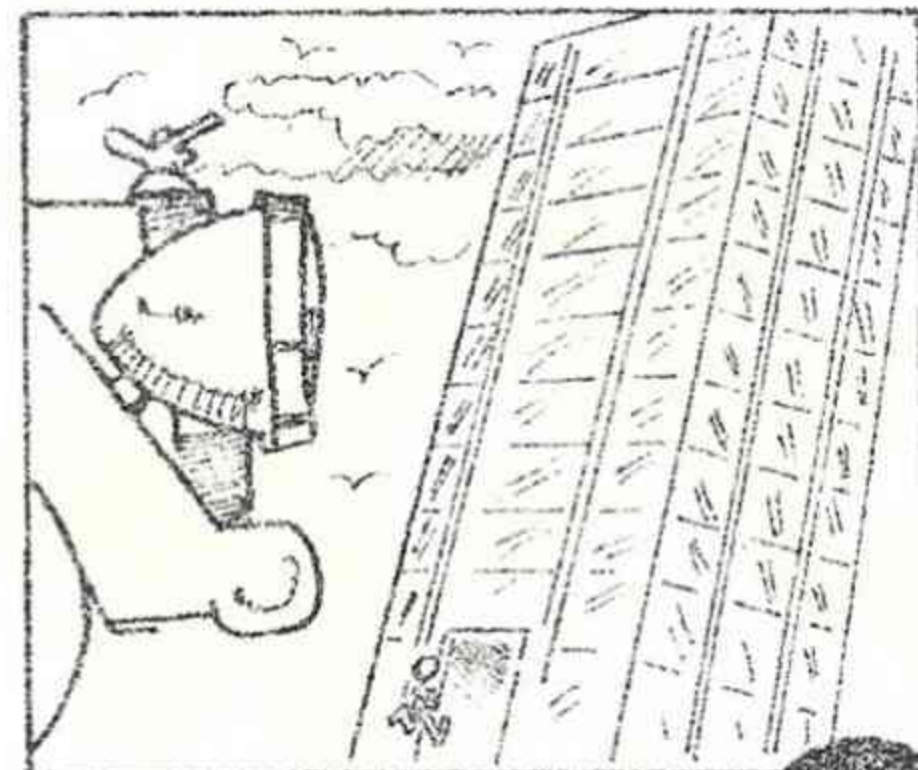
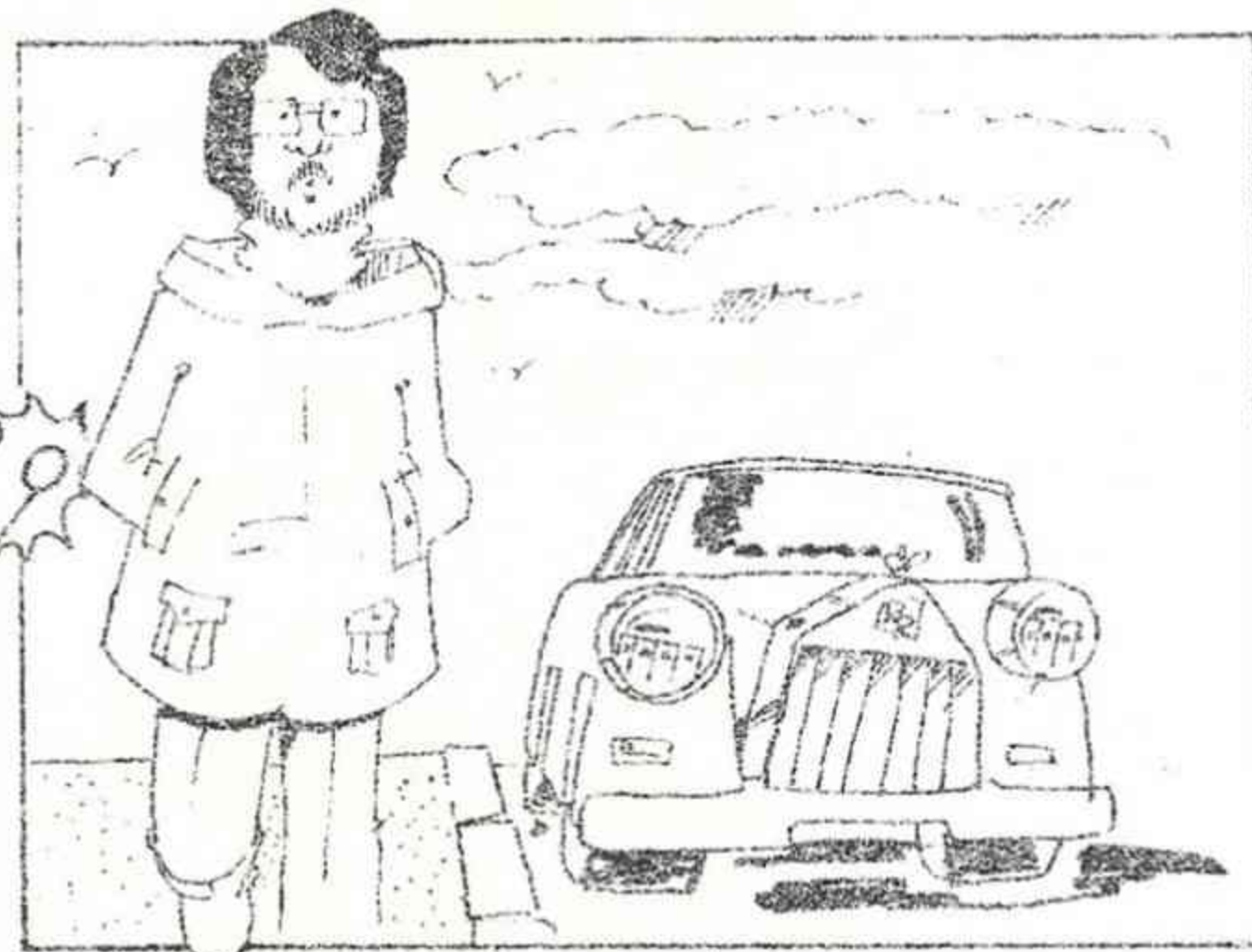
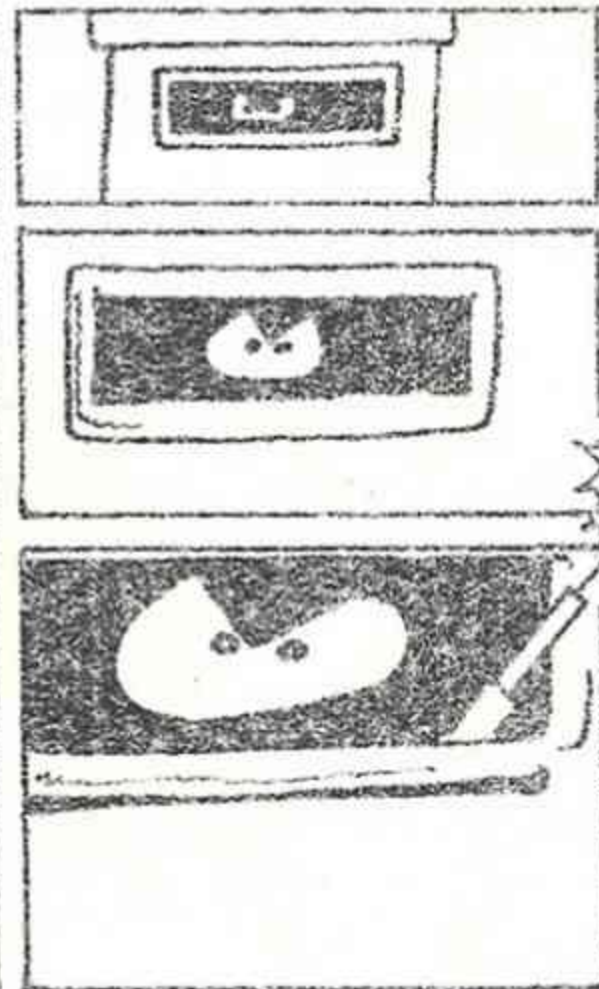
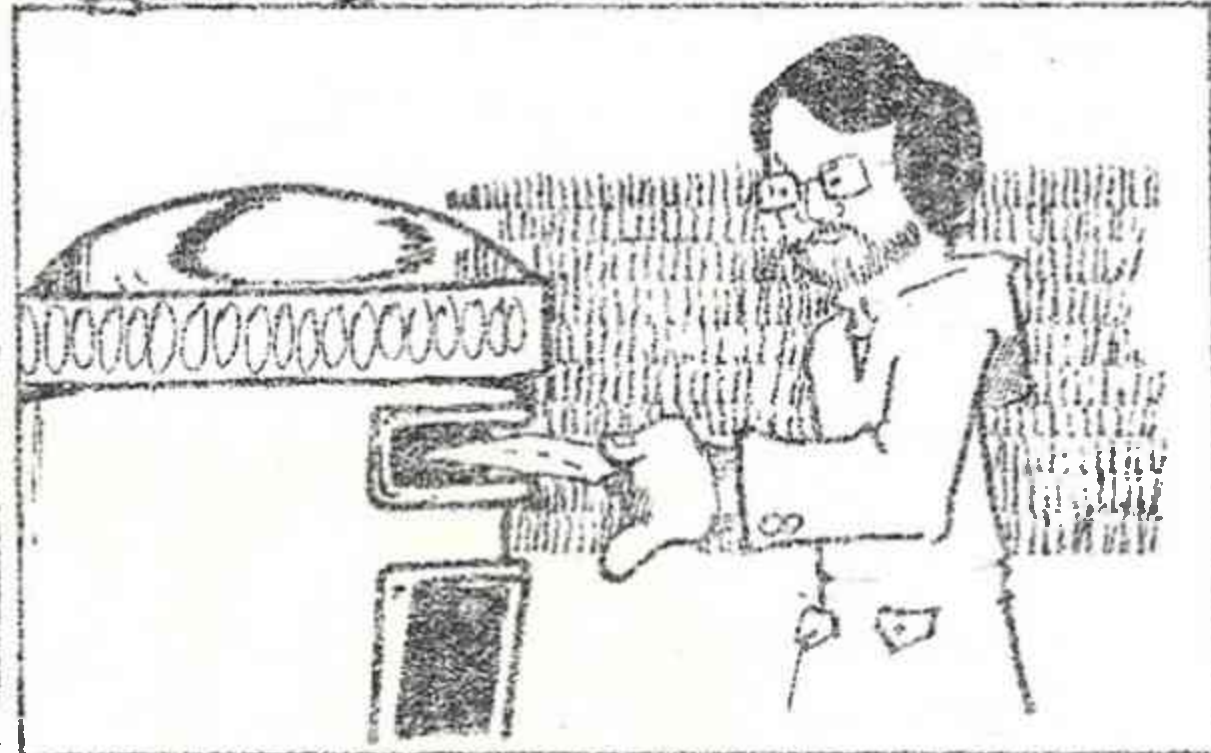
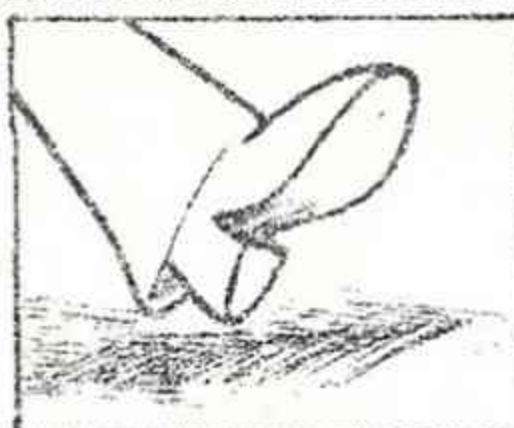
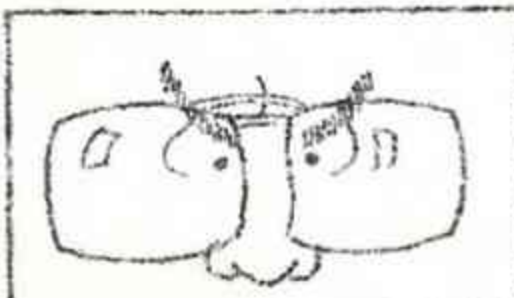


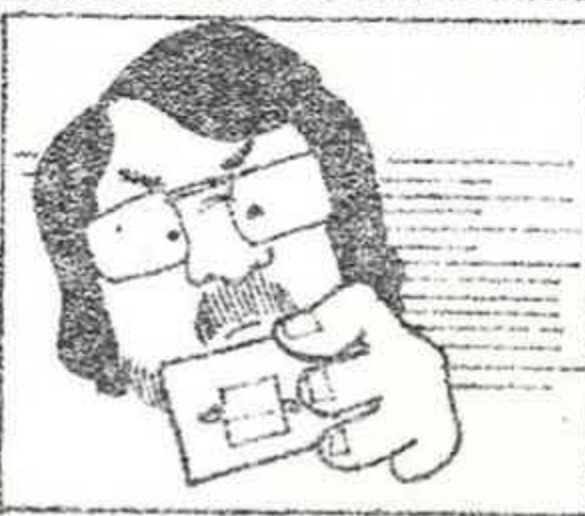
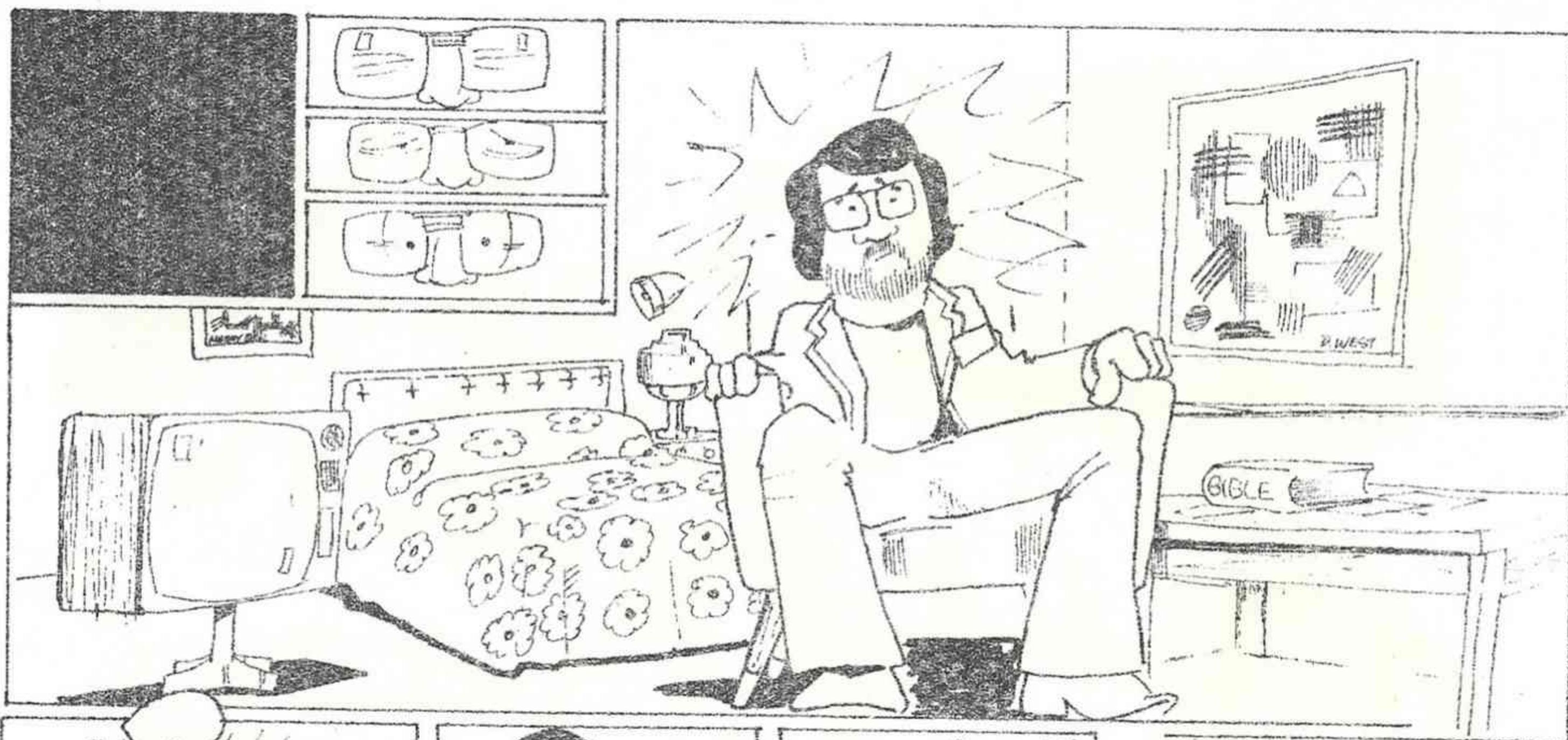
Sirs,
With much regret
resignation from
BSFA

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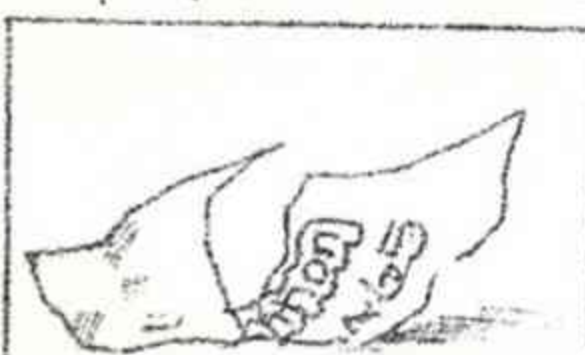


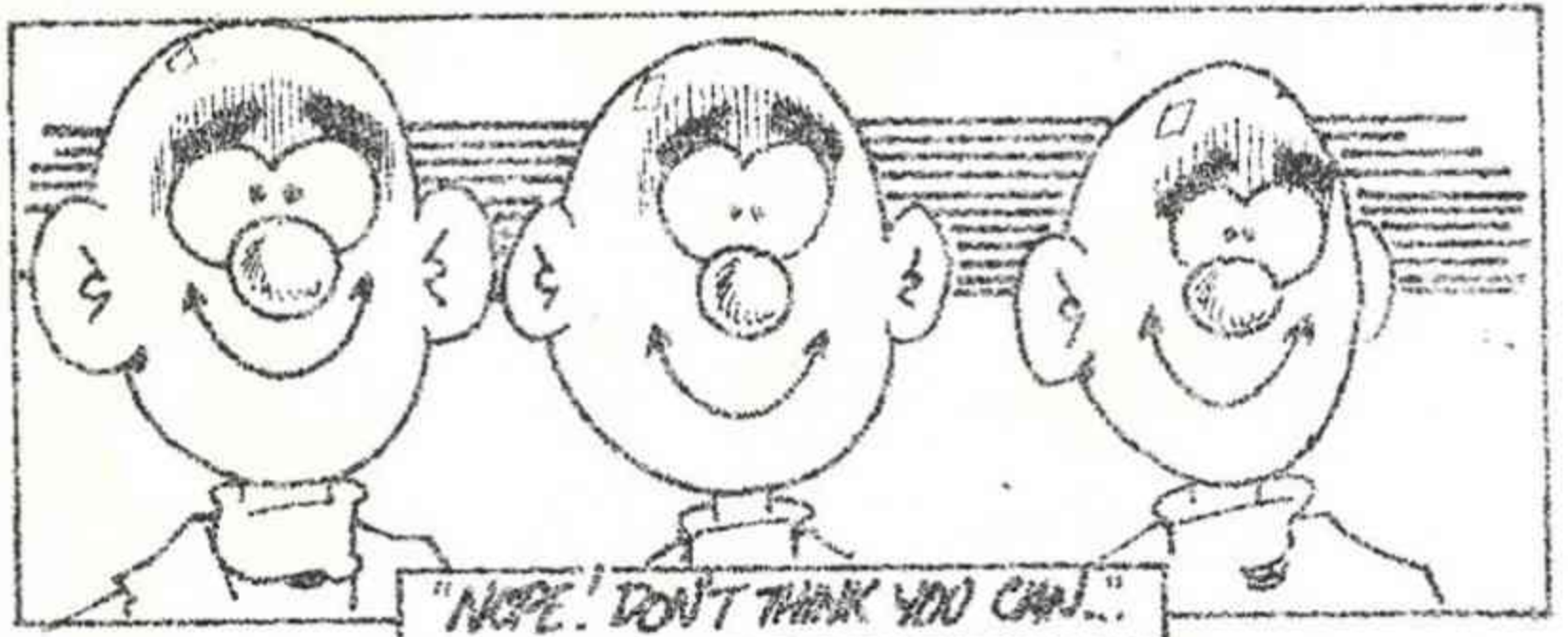
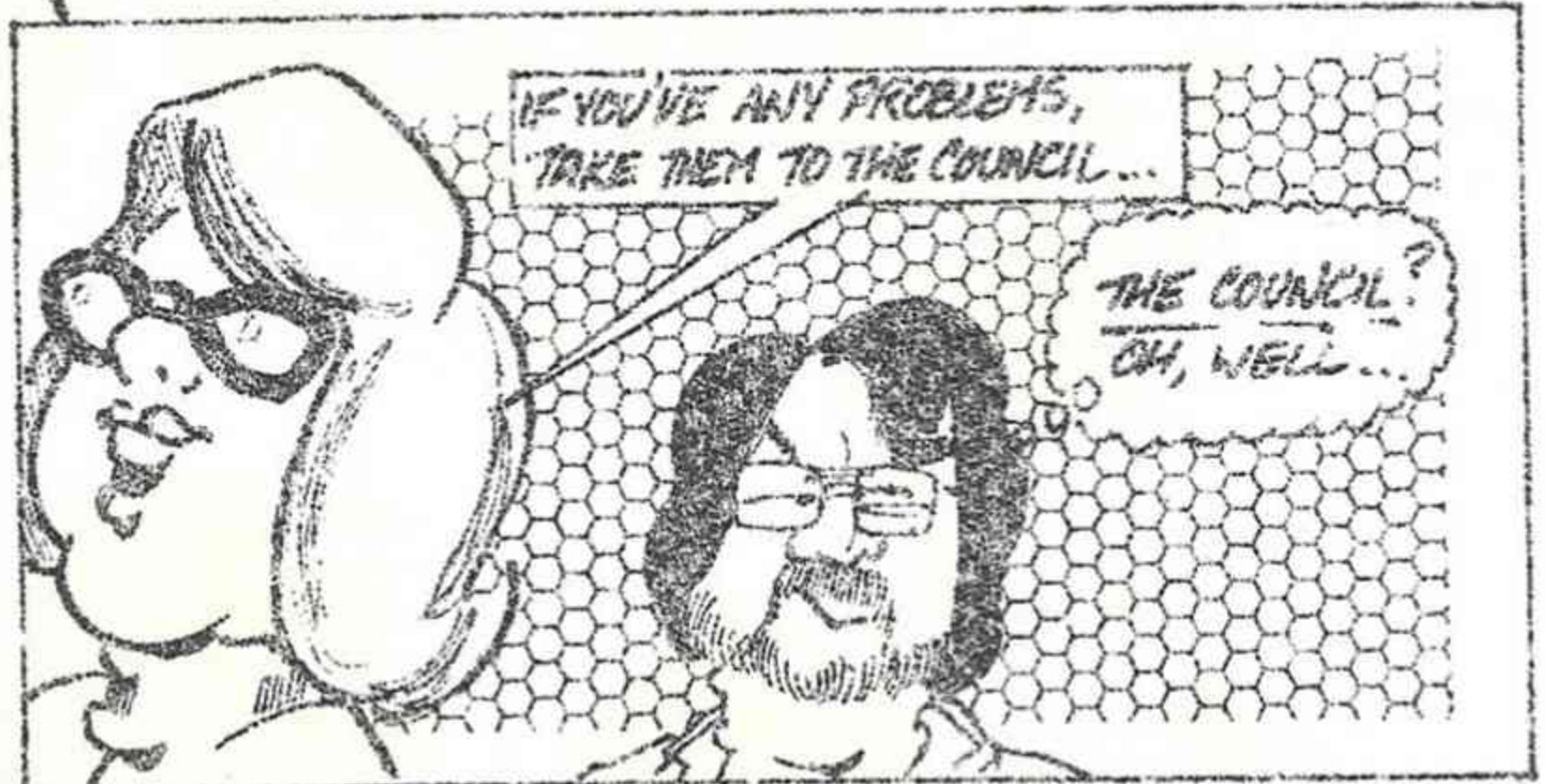
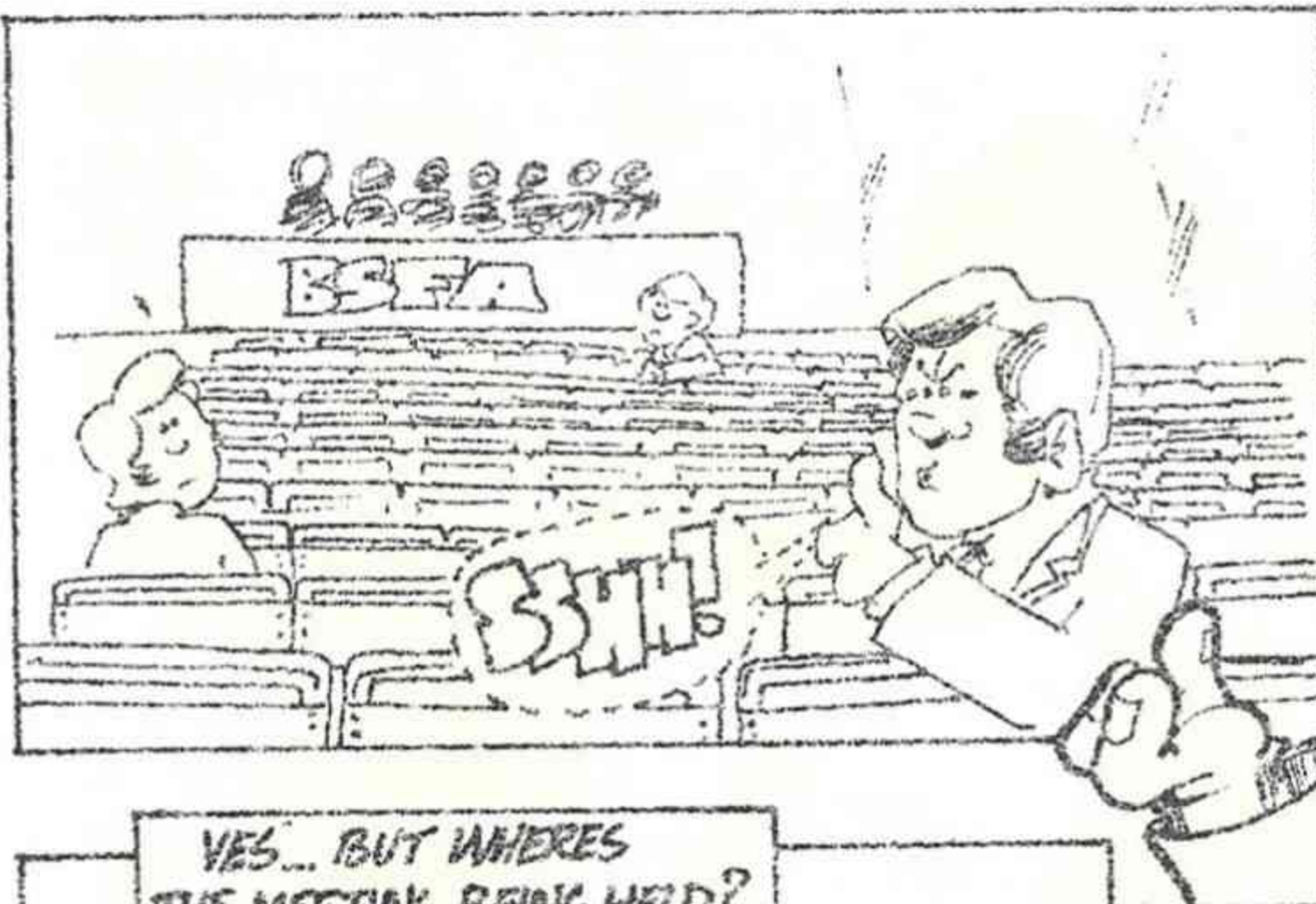
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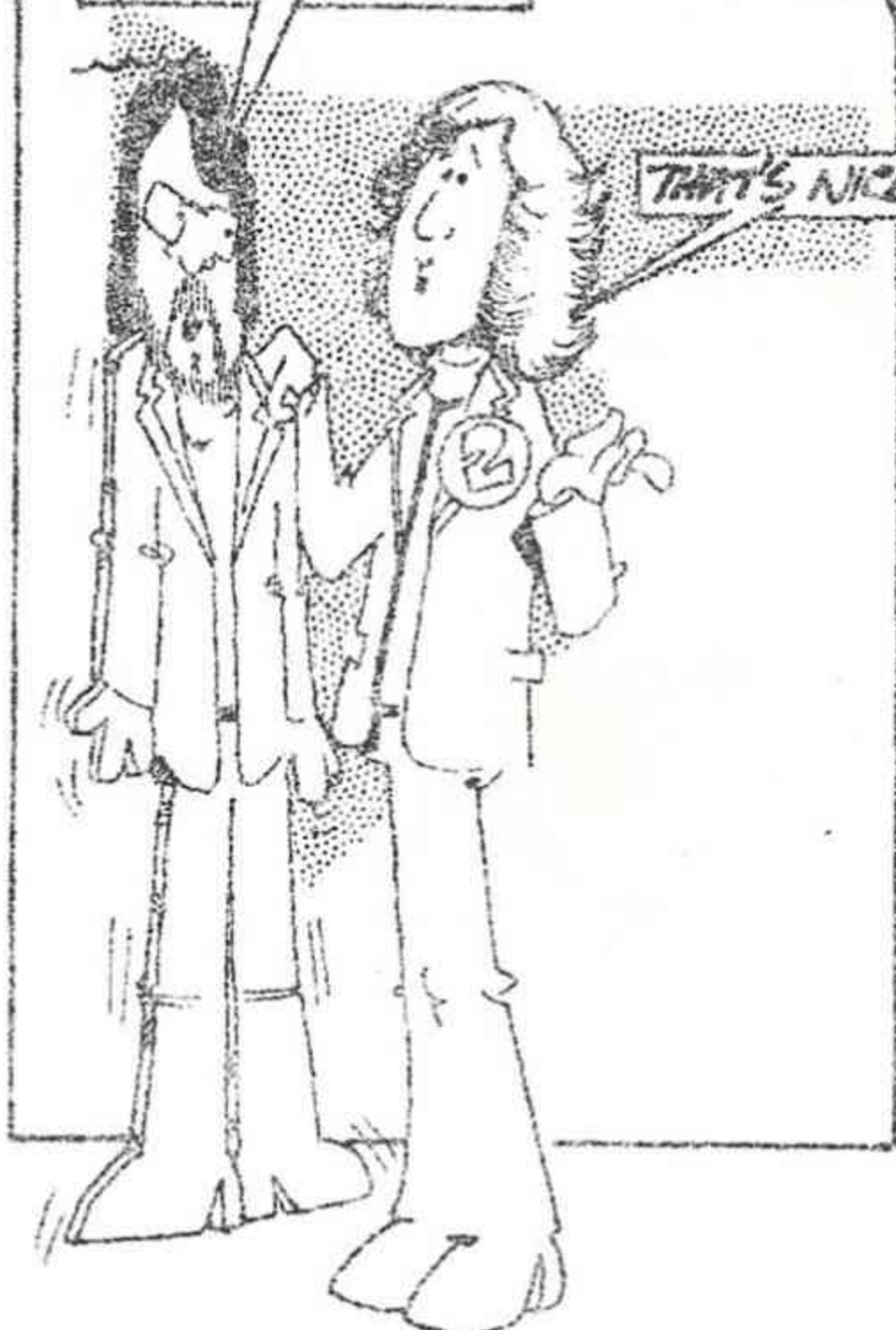
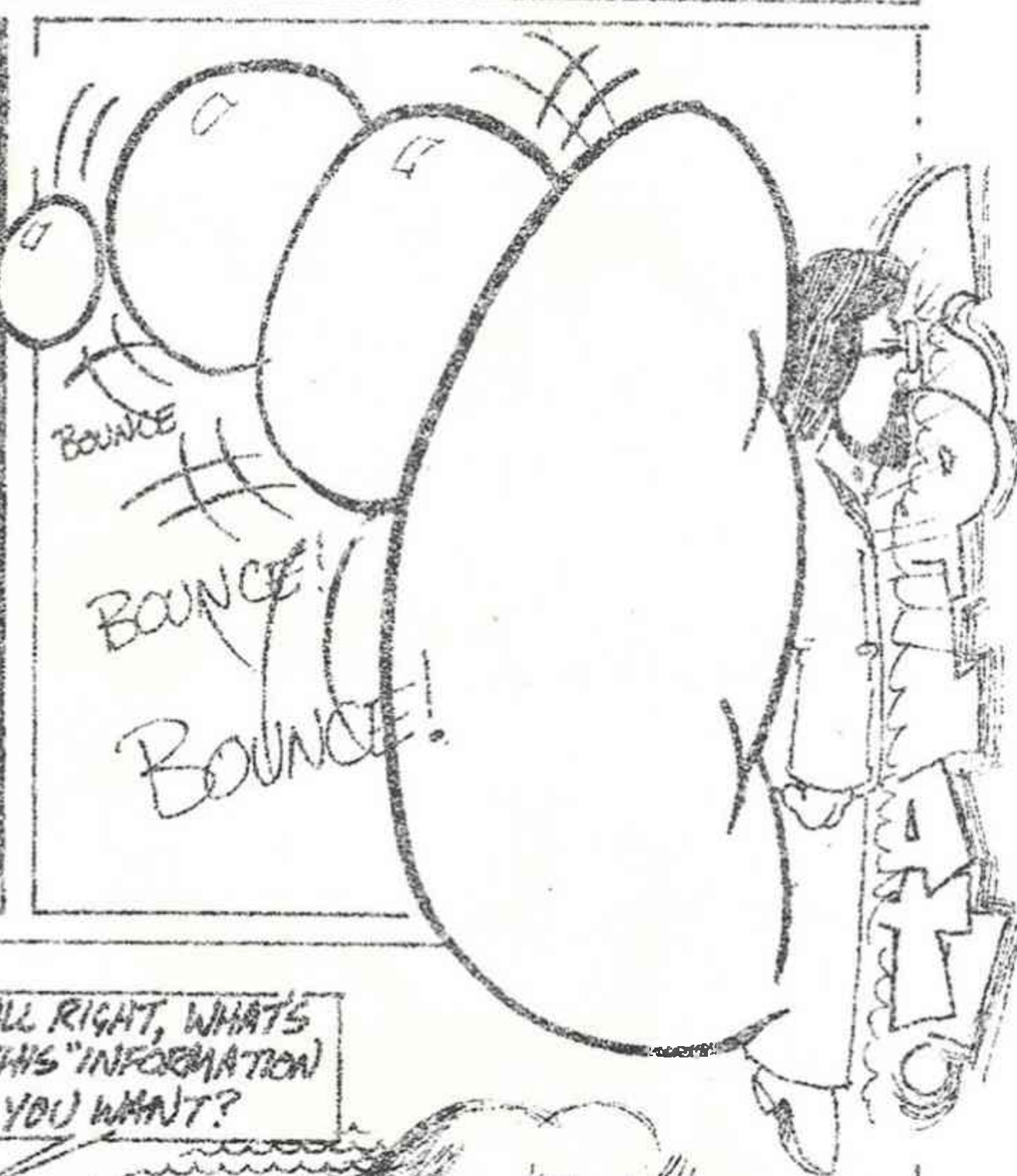
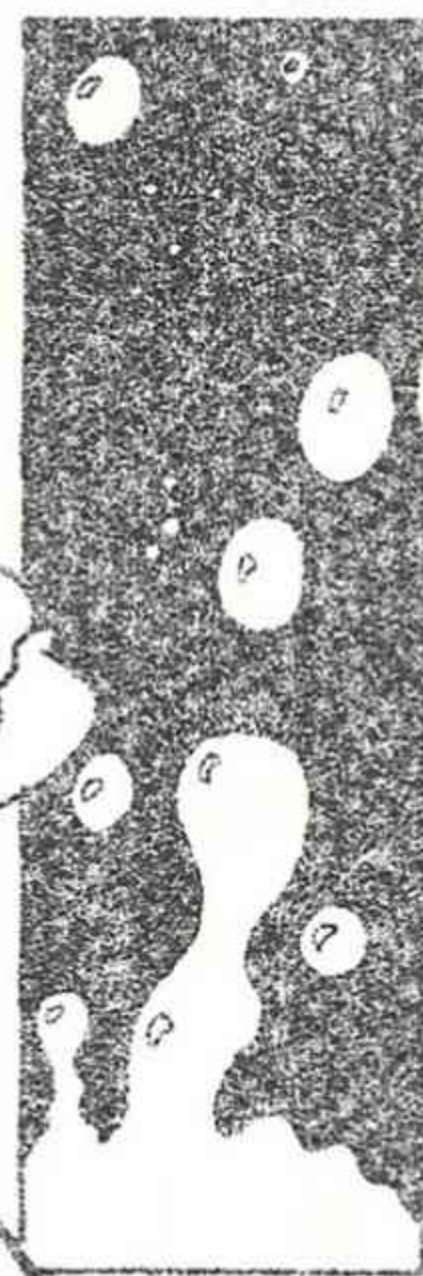
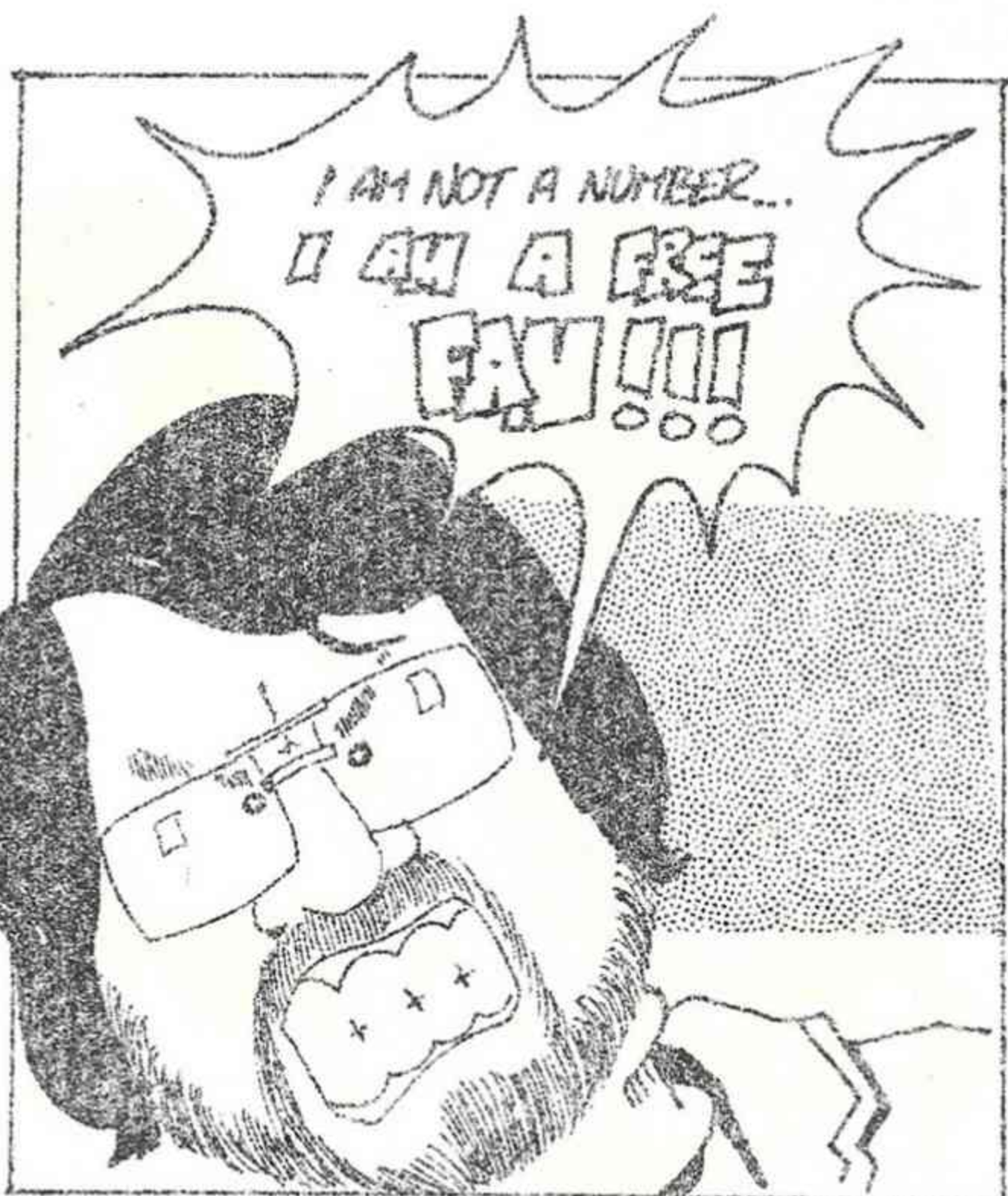




The Convention
No. 1465









BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

COUNCIL MEMBERS' REPORT

The council members submit their report for the year ended 31 December 1977.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

A C Clarke	Chairman
T A Jones	Vice-chairman
K Bulmer	
L Flood	
I Garbutt	Appointed 11 April 1977
M Haigh	
D Kyle (USA)	
A Sawyer	Appointed 6 November 1977
R Shaw	
P Stephensen-Payne	Appointed 11 April 1977
D Symes	
C Umpleby	Appointed 6 November 1977
D Wingrove	Appointed 11 April 1977
J White	

The council members during the year ended 31 December 1977 were those listed above and A Stewart (resigned on 1 March 1977), K Freeman (resigned on 10 April 1977), C Fowler (resigned on 6 November 1977) and D Lewis (appointed on 11 April 1977 and resigned on 6 November 1977).

ACCOUNTS

The council members submit the audited accounts for the year ended 31 December 1977. The excess of expenditure over income for the year was £899 and is dealt with as shown in the income and expenditure account.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY

The principal activity of the association during the year remained the publication and distribution of science fiction magazines.

AUDITOR

F J Steward, F.C.A., has indicated his willingness to continue in office and a resolution proposing his re-appointment will be submitted at the next general meeting.

By order of the council

K J SMITH
Secretary

39 Ripplesmere
Harmanswater
Bracknell
Berkshire

BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1977

	Note	1977	1976
		£	£
INCOME			
Subscriptions		1,902	1,079
Deposit account interest		8	20
Magazine chain subscriptions		61	26
Vector subscriptions and sales		854	325
Yearbook advertisements and sales		134	170
Sundry income		32	2
		<u>2,991</u>	<u>1,622</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Publications	2	3,283	1,326
Yearbook		-	198
Magazine chain		50	24
BSFA Awards		36	-
Badges	3	11	6
Advertising		<u>239</u>	-
		3,619	<u>1,554</u>
Administration			
Postage		118	58
Stationery		57	20
Registrar of Companies		20	20
Travelling		25	20
Audit fees		7	5
Sundry expenditure		<u>20</u>	<u>35</u>
		247	158
Depreciation		20	23
		<u>3,886</u>	<u>1,735</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME BEFORE TAXATION		895	113
Taxation	4	<u>4</u>	<u>58</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME		899	171
ACCUMULATED FUND AT 1 JANUARY 1977		<u>605</u>	<u>776</u>
ACCUMULATED FUND AT 31 DECEMBER 1977		<u>(£294)</u>	<u>£605</u>

BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 1977

	Note	1977 £	1976 £
FIXED ASSETS	5	209	229
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stocks of publications	2	235	120
Stocks of badges	3	51	62
Cash at bank and in hand		1,060	333
		<u>1,346</u>	<u>515</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors		1,818	103
Taxation		4	9
		<u>1,822</u>	<u>112</u>
NET CURRENT LIABILITIES (1976 - ASSETS)		(476)	403
		<u>(£267)</u>	<u>£632</u>
REPRESENTED BY			
MEMBERS' INTERESTS			
Accumulated fund		(294)	605
AWARD FUNDS			
Dr Weir Memorial Fund		15	15
British Fantasy Award		12	12
T A JONES } COUNCIL			
C UMPLEBY } MEMBERS			
		<u>(£267)</u>	<u>£632</u>

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS

I have examined the accounts of the British Science Fiction Association Limited for the year ended 31 December 1977 set out on pages 2 to 4. These have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

I have not been able to verify the existence or the value of the fixed assets.

Subject to this, in my opinion the balance sheet and income and expenditure account, prepared under the accounting convention stated above, give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association at 31 December 1977 and of the excess of expenditure over income for the year then ended, and comply with the Companies Acts 1948 and 1967.

F J STEWARD, F.C.A.
Chartered Accountant

LONDON

BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION LIMITED

NOTES ON THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- (a) Accounting convention
The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention.
- (b) Depreciation
The cost of the library and office equipment is written off by one tenth of their net book value in each year.
- (c) Stocks
Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

2. PUBLICATIONS		1977 £	1976 £
Stocks at 1 January 1977		120	124
Expenditure in year			
Printing of Vector	2,236		
Printing of other publications	393		
Postage of publications	<u>769</u>	<u>3,398</u>	<u>1,322</u>
		3,518	1,446
Stocks at 31 December 1977		<u>235</u>	<u>120</u>
Charge for the year		<u>£3,283</u>	<u>£1,326</u>

3. BADGES

Stocks at 1 January 1977	62	-
Expenditure in year	<u>-</u>	<u>68</u>
	62	68
Stocks at 31 December 1977	<u>51</u>	<u>62</u>
Charge for the year	<u>£11</u>	<u>£6</u>

4. TAXATION

Corporation tax at 42% on interest receivable	4	9
Corporation tax in respect of prior years	<u>-</u>	<u>49</u>
	<u>£4</u>	<u>£58</u>

5. FIXED ASSETS

	Library	Office Equipment	Award	Total
<u>Cost</u>	£	£	£	£
At 1 January 1977 and 31 December 1977	<u>913</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>1,007</u>
<u>Depreciation</u>				
At 1 January 1977	726	52	-	778
Charge for the year	<u>19</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20</u>
At 31 December 1977	<u>745</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>798</u>
Net book value at 31 December 1977	<u>£168</u>	<u>£14</u>	<u>£27</u>	<u>£209</u>
Net book value at 31 December 1976	<u>£187</u>	<u>£15</u>	<u>£27</u>	<u>£229</u>